

PH 0075949

Form 10-300  
(Rev. 6-72)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Arkansas
COUNTY:	Clay
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	OCT 29 1974

## 1. NAME

COMMON:

Chalk Bluff

AND/OR HISTORIC:

## 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

N of St. Francis  
two miles north of St. Francis on the St. Francis River

CITY OR TOWN:

St. Francis vicinity

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

First

STATE

Arkansas

CODE

05

COUNTY:

Clay

CODE

021

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

## 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

Cecil Dalton

STREET AND NUMBER:

Rural Route

CITY OR TOWN:

Piggott

STATE:

Arkansas

CODE

05

## 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Clay County Courthouse, Eastern District

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Piggott

STATE

Arkansas

CODE

05

## 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:

☐ Federal☐ State☒ County☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

OCT 29 1974

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Crowley's Ridge is an unusual land formation running from east central Arkansas into southeast Missouri. Just below the Arkansas-Missouri Border the St. Francis River crosses Crowley's Ridge and causes a distinct break in the ridge line. Where the ridge ends just south of the St. Francis River is the area known as Chalk Bluff.

In 1857 Arkansas Geologist David Dale Owen wrote that "the base of the [bluff] is a potter's clay of considerable purity, and nearly as white as chalk; hence the name Chalk Bluff." Owen measured the height of the bluffs at 135 feet and observed that they were covered with a growth of black and white oak.

At present the bluffs are seventy to eighty feet in height and have serious erosion problems in spots. This may be due to a lack of ground foliage, possibly caused by the clay deposits of the bluff. Tree growth, mostly of black oak, seems to be retarded and may also be a result of the clay deposits. The ferry landing site and road are still recognizable, along with some remains of Civil War rifle entrenchments.

The Chalk Bluff road once crossed over Crowley's Ridge on its way down to the St. Francis River. The ferry site lay where the road met the river. This much traveled 19th century road is now no more than a gully. Both erosion and scattered undergrowth have made the original roadway barely visible today. Frequent flooding of the St. Francis often leaves the ferry site under water.

The rifle entrenchments used during Chalk Bluff's Civil War skirmish are still in evidence, though not readily visible. Vegetation now covers several scattered mounds of earth which once protected soldiers.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## 8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☐ Education☐ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion/Phi-☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry

losophy

☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☐ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☐ Art

Architecture

☐ Social/Human-☒ Commerce☐ Literature

itarian

☒ Communications☒ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Chalk Bluff site is important both geologically and historically. The Chalk Bluff overlooks the St. Francis River and lies at Arkansas' northeast point of Crowley's Ridge, an extensive ridge of land which extends from Helena in Phillips County north into Missouri. It is named for the white clay, nearly as white as chalk, which lies at the base of the bluff. In 1857 David Dale Owen, Arkansas' first State Geologist, began the first geological survey of the state at the Chalk Bluff.

During the 19th century Crowley's Ridge provided the best north-south transportation route across the lowlands of northeast Arkansas. An Indian trail and later a military road crossed the St. Francis River at the Chalk Bluff. About 1840 a ferry was established at the site.

The first permanent white settlers at Chalk Bluff arrived in 1840. The Seitz clan, Abraham, Jacob, David, and George, used the nearby open range to raise cattle and horses. Abraham Seitz put a ferry boat into operation between the Arkansas and Missouri sides of the St. Francis River, and opened a small store in his house for the provisioning of travelers.

A small hamlet soon grew up around the Seitz ferry and store, taking the name of the nearby bluff. In 1850 a post office was established at Chalk Bluff, and by 1860 the village had three churches, three merchants, two doctors, a brick mason, a gunsmith, a blacksmith, a cabinet maker, and a surveyor.





# 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Baker, Russell P. "Chalk Bluffs, Arkansas: A Brief History." Unpublished report, Arkansas History Commission, 1974.  
The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Washington, D.C.: 1880-1901, Series 1, Vol. XIII, p. 65; Vol. XXII, Part I, p. 230 ff.; Vol. XXII, Part II, p. 165.  
 Owen, David Dale. First Report of a Geological Reconnaissance of the Northern Counties of Arkansas. Little Rock: Johnson and Yerkes, State Printers, 1858.

# 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE			
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	0	36	28	41
NE	0	0	90	09	32
SE	0	0			
SW	0	0			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 1/2 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

# 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Russell Baker, Arkansas History Commission; Dianna Kirk, A.H.P.P.

ORGANIZATION  
 Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

DATE  
 May 28, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 Suite 1030, Plaza West Building

CITY OR TOWN:  
 Little Rock

STATE  
 Arkansas

CODE  
 05

# 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

# NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☒

Name William E. Henderson

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date June 11, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 10/29/74

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date 10-25-74

NO  
UTM  
CD  
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Arkansas	
COUNTY Clay	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	OCT 29 1974

(Number all entries)

8. Significance (Chalk Bluff - Page 2)

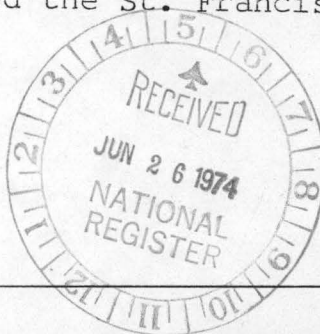
During the Civil War Chalk Bluff was a strategic point between Confederate Arkansas and Union Missouri. The Chalk Bluff overlooked the only major road between southeast Missouri and northeast Arkansas, and whoever controlled the Bluff controlled the road. Moreover, its location on the St. Francis River made the Chalk Bluff community the collection point for supplies to be shipped downstream to Confederate troops further south.

The first Civil War skirmish at Chalk Bluff came about in May, 1862, when Union forces attacked the area. Their aim was to destroy Confederate supplies stored at Chalk Bluff, and they were successful.

In the spring of 1863, the Chalk Bluff area was again the site of several minor military engagements. The Union cavalry attacked twice in March, destroying the ferry and burning several buildings. In early April, the Rebel forces retaliated against a small Federal force camped across the river from Chalk Bluff.

The engagement known as the "Battle of Chalk Bluff" occurred on May 1 and 2, 1863. In April Confederate General John S. Marmaduke had invaded southern Missouri with a force of 5,000 men. Their efforts to capture Union supplies were fruitless, and they were forced to retreat before superior forces. When they reached the Missouri side of the St. Francis River Marmaduke's men fought a successful delaying action while the bulk of the army crossed the swollen river on a quickly constructed floating log bridge.

Despite the heavy property damage in 1863, Chalk Bluff survived the Civil War and continued to prosper for several years. However, in 1882 the St. Louis, Arkansas, and Texas railroad crossed the St. Francis River two



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Arkansas	
COUNTY Clayty	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE OCT 2 1974

(Number all entries)

8. Significance (Chalk Bluff - Page 3)

miles south of Chalk Bluff. The town of St. Francis was laid out at the new crossing, and as the new community grew, the old community gradually died. About 1900 a high-way bridge was built at St. Francis, causing the Chalk Bluff ferry crossing to be completely abandoned. Like many early Arkansas communities Chalk Bluff had been totally dependent on traffic routes.

As an early river settlement and Civil War battle site Chalk Bluff was an important part of 19th century Arkansas history. Today the citizens and soldiers are long gone from the site, and even the Chalk Bluff has changed greatly in appearance since the old settlement took its name from the unusual color of the local geography.





PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM WHEN THE PROPERTY IS RESUBMITTED.

DATE:

8.26.74

NAME OF PROPERTY

Chalk Bluff, Ark

The attached National Register Inventory-Nomination form is being returned to your office for clarification of the information indicated below.

1. Name. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Location. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Classification. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Owner of Property. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Location of Legal Description. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Representation in Existing Surveys. \_\_\_\_\_
- X 7. Description. Has any archeology ever been done here? <sup>no</sup>  
Please describe the visible remains of human activity here. the road & ferry landing sites, the outcrops, etc.  
(IP added to section 7)
8. Statement of Significance. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Bibliography. \_\_\_\_\_
- X 10. Geographical Data.  
a. Longitude and Latitude Coordinates. <sup>10 secs.</sup> Longitude (or Latitude) appears <sup>33 secs.</sup> to be off by about Please check. corrected  
b. Acreage. How much less than 10 acres is this site?  
9 1/2
11. Form Prepared By. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Certification. \_\_\_\_\_
- Photographic Coverage. \_\_\_\_\_
- Map Coverage. \_\_\_\_\_
- X Other. Continuation sheets <sup>no</sup> seem to be Xerox copies - please provide original forms. - these are original!

Clarification or correction of the above items must be made prior to the initiation of our professional review. Correction of these technical errors does not necessarily insure that the nomination will then satisfy the National Register criteria in full.

Thank you for your attention to the above items checked.

SIGNED:

Thanks,  
Charles H. Hays

PROPERTY

Chalk Bluff

STATE

Arkansas

WORKING NUMBER

6.26.74.10.22

TECH REVIEW

PHOTOS

/

MAPS

/

CONTROL REVIEW

lat + long incorrect

cm

6.26.

74

HISTORIAN

Xerox continuation sheets - What about  
archeology? acreage?Return  
Huzar  
8/6/74

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

#7 doesn't say much about archeological  
remains. Has any archeology been done? Exactly  
how large is the site?Return  
JCT  
8/4/74

ARCHEOLOGIST

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up

Send-back

8.26.74

Federal Register entry

Re-submit

9.24.74

Entered

OCT 29 1974



PROPERTY

Chalk Bluff

CLAY CO.

STATE

Ark.

WORKING NUMBER

6.26.74.1022

TECH REVIEW

PHOTOS

1

MAPS

1

2nd Central  
Sheet  
74000470

CONTROL REVIEW

Chatman

cm

9.27.

74

OK

HISTORIAN

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

I share Mark's opinions

Accept  
Slovich  
9/30/74

ARCHEOLOGIST

The site would make an interesting  
historic of archeological site. The continuation  
sheets for section 8 do look like photo  
copies.Accept  
M. Barnes  
30 Sep 74

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept  
Cole  
10/17/74

BRANCH CHIEF

accept  
H. H. H.  
10/24/74

KEEPER

W  
10/25

National Register Write-up

11/13/74

Send-back

Federal Register entry

12/3/74

Re-submit

Entered

OCT 29 1974





Arkansas  
Clay County  
Chalk Bluff

View from the bluff facing EAST

FORM 10-301 A  
(6/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME

COMMON

Chalk Bluff

AND/OR HISTORIC

NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)

OCT 29 1974

2. LOCATION

STATE

Arkansas

COUNTY

Clay

TOWN

STREET AND NUMBER

2 miles north of St. Francis on the St. Francis River

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Robert Dunn

DATE

May, 1974

NEGATIVE FILED AT

AHPP

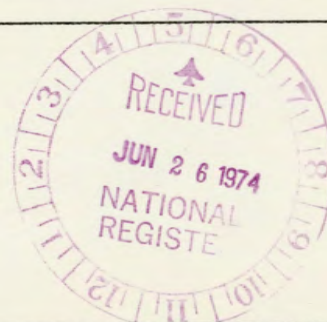
4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

View from the bluff facing east.

#141

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)*

**1. NAME**

COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE <i>(Assigned by NPS)</i>
Chalk Bluff		OCT 29 1974

**2. LOCATION**

STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Arkansas	Clay	

**STREET AND NUMBER**

two miles north of St. Francis on the St. Francis River

**3. MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE	DATE	SCALE
U.S.G.S. Map, Piggott, Arkansas, 15 minutes	1956	1:62,500

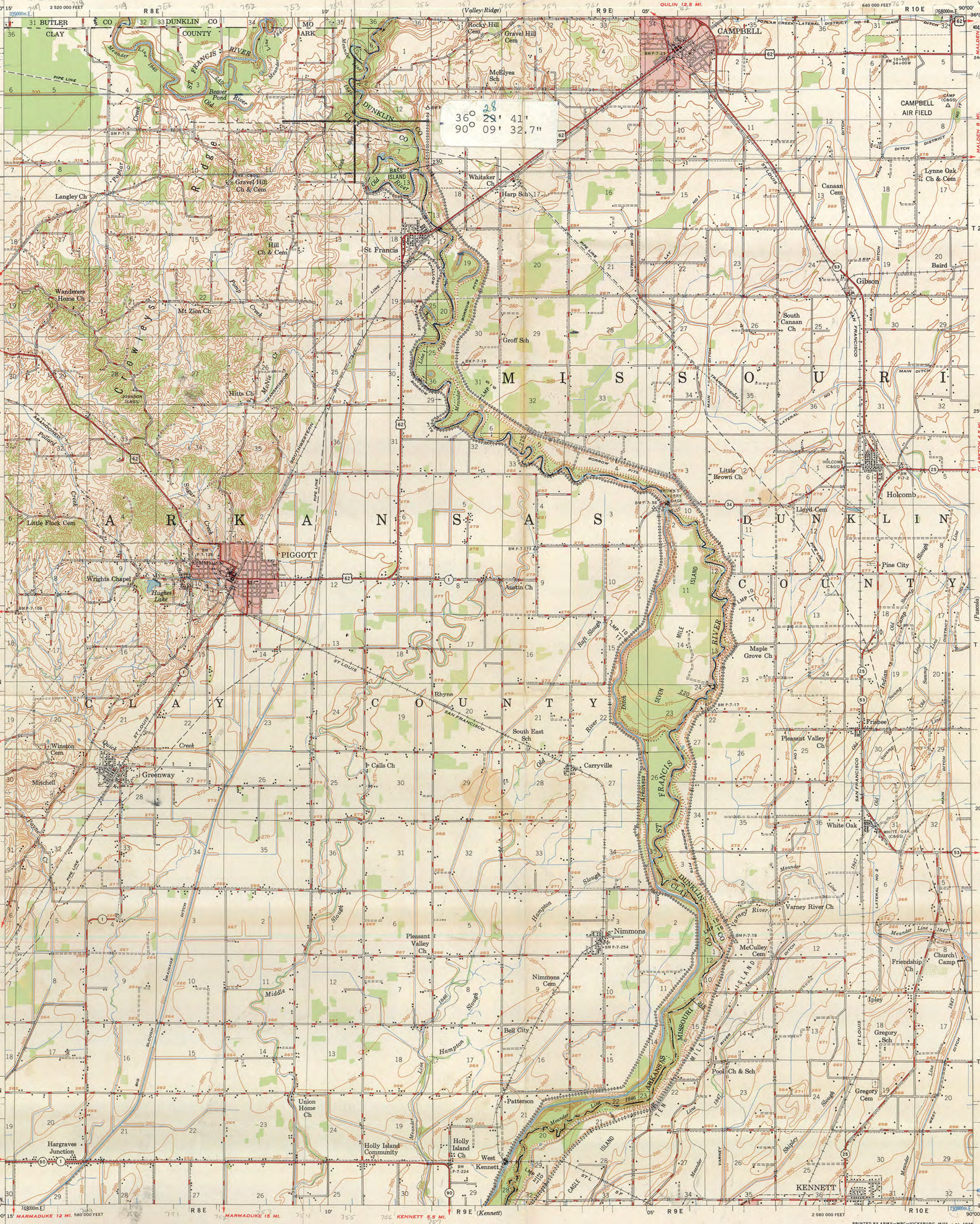
**REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW:**



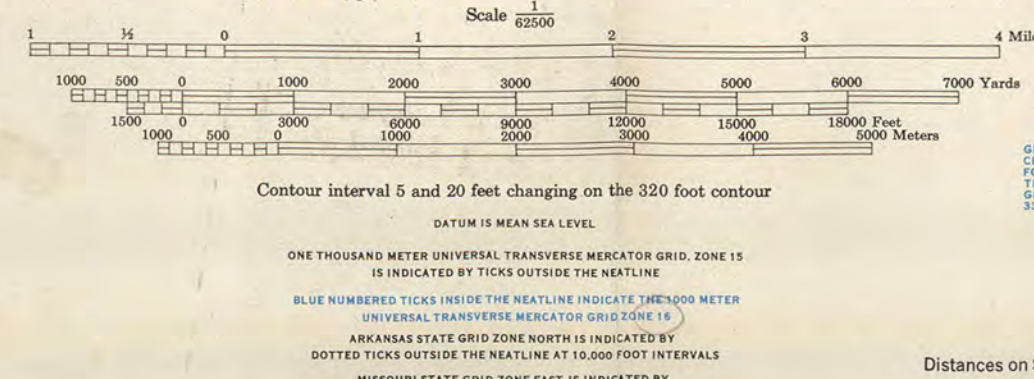


CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
U. S. ARMY

PIGGOTT QUADRANGLE  
ARKANSAS-MISSOURI



Prepared under the direction of the President, Mississippi River Commission by the Memphis District, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, Memphis, Tenn.  
Edited and published by Mississippi River Commission, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, Vicksburg, Mississippi.  
Control by Memphis District, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, Memphis, Tenn.  
Polyconic Projection, 1927 North American Datum.  
Descriptions, elevations and geodetic positions of permanent survey marks may be obtained from Memphis District, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, Memphis, Tenn.  
Topography by Memphis District, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, Memphis, Tenn.  
Aerial photography 1953. Planimetry and Topography field checked 1955.  
Political boundaries are shown according to best available information.  
Work under Flood Control Act shown as of March 1955.  
This map complies with national map accuracy standards.



PRINTED BY ARMY-MRC-VICKSBURG, MISS. 4-4 1035  
LEGEND  
Levee  
Retards and Dikes  
Revetment  
River Gate  
Secondary Levee  
Levee mile post  
Towhead  
LMP  
TH  
ROAD DATA 1955  
In developed areas, only through roads are classified  
Hard surface, heavy duty  
Hard surface, medium duty  
Loose surface, graded and drained,  
or narrow hard surface road  
Improved dirt road or street  
Unimproved dirt road or trail  
Route Markers: Federal, State  
PIGGOTT, ARK.-MO.  
EDITION OF 1956  
N3615-W9000/15

Additional copies may be procured from  
The President, Mississippi River Commission  
Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army  
Vicksburg, Miss. 20 cents per copy



# ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

1033 WEST THIRD STREET, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201 501 374-0375



SUITE 1030, PLAZA WEST, MC KINLEY STREET AND LEE AVENUE  
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, 72205 501 371-1639

September 18, 1974



Mr. Charles Herrington  
Office of Nomination and Review  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Herrington:

Thank you for your questions concerning our nomination of Chalk Bluff to the National Register of Historic Places. Our responses to your questions have been incorporated into the nomination, and are as follows:

1. Has any archeology ever been done here?  
No, not to our knowledge.
2. Describe the road, ferry landing site, and entrenchments.  
Two paragraphs have been added to Section 7.
3. How much less than ten acres is this site?  
9½ acres
4. Correct coordinates?  
These have been corrected.
5. Continuation sheets seem to be photocopies.  
No, only original forms are submitted, check paper size.

Please contact me if there are any further questions concerning this nomination. We look forward to having Chalk Bluff added to the National Register as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

*Dianna Kirk*

Dianna Kirk  
Staff Historian

DK:cm

Enclosures



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ARKANSAS

Date Entered OCT 29 1974

Name

Location

Chalk Bluff

St. Francis vicinity  
Clay County

Also Notified

Hon. J.W. Fulbright  
Hon. John L. McClellan  
Hon. Bill Alexander

Regional Director, Southwest Region

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. William E. Henderson, Director  
Arkansas Department of Parks and  
Tourism  
State Capitol-Room 149  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201