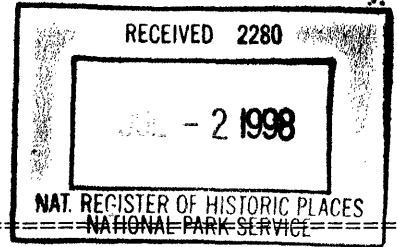


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Weston Bluff Skirmish Site

other names/site number (CN-4)

2. Location

street & number Ohio River Mile 875.5, Kentucky Shore not for publication N/A  
city or town Weston (unincorporated) vicinity N/A  
state Kentucky code Ky county Crittenden code 055 zip code ?

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant     nationally     statewide X locally. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David L. Morgan, Executive Director  
Kentucky Heritage Council & SHPO

Signature of certifying official

6-22-98  
Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register     See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register     See continuation sheet.
- See continuation sheet.

Patrick Andrews 8/13/98

\_\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_  
National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date  
of Action

=====  
5. Classification  
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- Site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
_____	_____ buildings
<u>  1  </u>	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   0  

Name of related multiple property listing

Caught In The Middle; The Civil War Years on the Lower Ohio River

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>  Landscape  </u>	Sub: <u>  natural feature  </u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>  Landscape  </u>	Sub: <u>  natural feature  </u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

=====  
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A  
roof N/A  
walls N/A  
other N/A

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.  
 B removed from its original location.  
 C a birthplace or a grave.  
 D a cemetery.  
 E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.  
 F a commemorative property.  
 G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Military History

Period of Significance 1864

Significant Dates June 21, 1864

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheet)

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References (see continuation sheet)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Kentucky Heritage Council

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 10 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	16	405080	4147920	3	16	405840	4148290
2	16	405490	4148280	4	16	405360	4147680

Verbal Boundary Description (see continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (see continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization History Pays! date May 30, 1998  
street & number 4215 Northwest Drive telephone (515) 274-3625

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50310

Property Owner

name Mr. Kevin Rayburn, Land Manager, ALCOA

street & number P.O. 10 telephone 812-853-4782

city or town Newburg, state IN zip code 47630

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

name of property Weston Bluff Skirmish Site

County and State Crittenden County, Kentucky

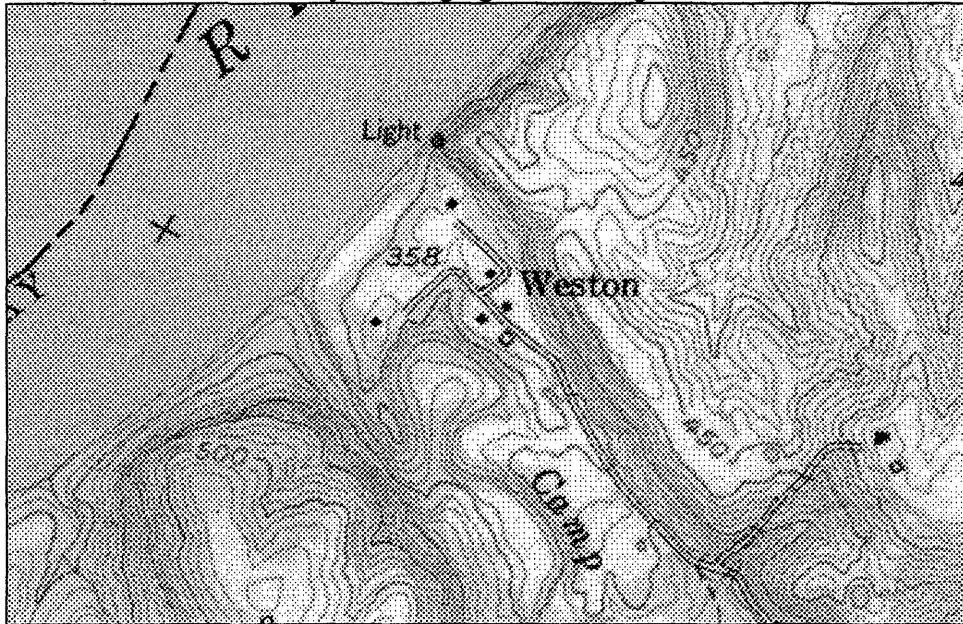
name of multiple property listing "Caught In The Middle; The Civil War Years on the Lower Ohio River"

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## 7. Narrative Description:

The Weston townsite and associated bluffline (CN-4) are located at the mouth of Camp Creek on the Ohio River (River Mile 864.5 from Pittsburg), in Crittenden County, Kentucky. The broad creek bottom meanders into the Ohio between two sets of flanking high bluffs, the easternmost of which is set immediately along the Ohio River bank, with the most adjacent high ground rising some 60 feet above the river.



Enlarged Excerpt, Repton Kentucky 7.5' Topographical Quad Map

The town of Weston was situated on a shelf of land which lay to the east and north of the creek. The townsite fronted on the Ohio River. The town was a thriving village as of 1860 but today it is an unincorporated fishing and river access settlement, with about 8-10 houses. These houses are clustered close to the river. At least one house is a large Victorian-era home. The townsite has no businesses, but there is a gravel boat ramp. The village is not the focus of this nomination but the surviving homes do mark the location of the larger mid-19th Century townsite.

While Weston was the scene of one minor Civil War event, the focus of this nomination is the bluffline or hill which stands immediately upriver from the townsite. The elevation is well defined on all sides. It consists of a shaley rock which is fractured and difficult to climb. The river front is steep and the bluff includes a number of steep rock chimneys and sheer walls. On top of the bluff is a cemetery and a new road is being completed to the cemetery by the ALCOA Company. The bluff descends precipitously to the east, beginning just beyond the cemetery. It similarly drops in elevation to the south and towards the Weston site to the west. The river level is 324 feet and the bluffline rises 500 feet, or 175 feet above the water level. The Civil War water level would have been considerably lower in an era before the navigation dams.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

name of property Weston Bluff Skirmish Site

County and State Crittenden County, Kentucky

name of multiple property listing "Caught In The Middle; The Civil War Years on the Lower Ohio River"

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The river front includes at least one lower shelf and a trail runs along this level. Otherwise the bluff top dominates the river and is well within musket range of the river. What is particularly striking is the great vista which the viewer can enjoy from the cemetery area. This vantage point views up the bend of the river toward Caseyville and west towards Cave-in-Rock and points beyond. The view is for miles either way so the bluff is an excellent observation point.

The cemetery which is located on top of the bluff is not counted as a contributing resource.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3<sup>3</sup>

name of property Weston Bluff Skirmish Site

County and State Crittenden County, Kentucky

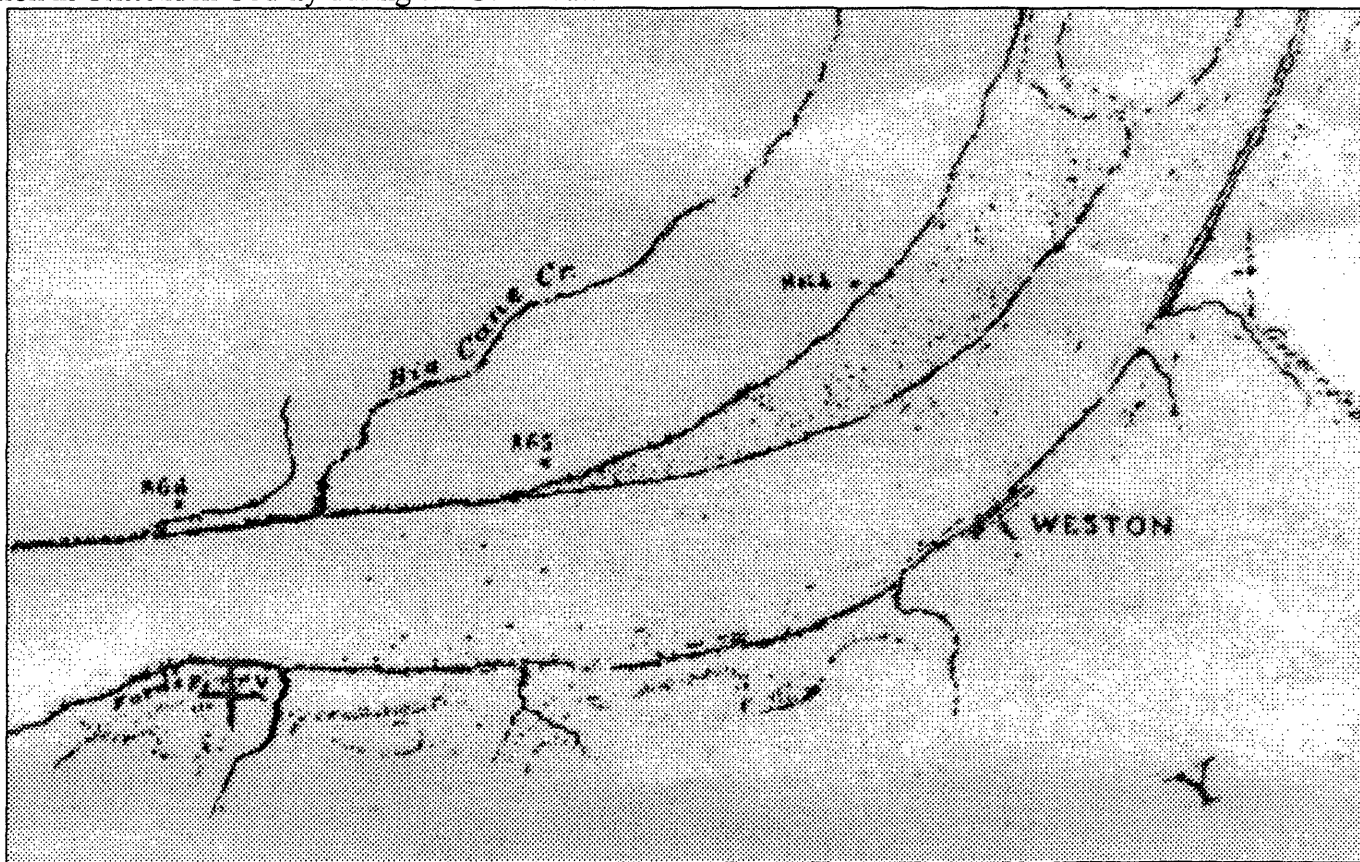
name of multiple property listing "Caught In The Middle; The Civil War Years on the Lower Ohio River"

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### 8. Significance Statement:

Located just upstream from the townsite of Weston, Kentucky (CN-4), this bluffline along the Ohio River is nominated as part of a Multiple Property Listing entitled "Caught In The Middle, The Civil War Years on the Lower Ohio River," within the contexts of "Federal and Confederate Military Operations On and Along the Lower Ohio River; the War on the River, 1861-65," and "Federal and Confederate Military Operations On and Along the Lower Ohio River; the War on the Land, 1861-65." The property is locally significant as an example of the property type "Scene of Military Conflict." The property meets Criterion A, with respect to that property type because this property was the scene of a large-scale military skirmish on June 21, 1864, the largest military action in Crittenden County during the Civil War.



Enlarged Excerpt, Map of the Ohio River...1867-68 (North to top of map)  
Note how the Ohio River channel constricted opposite Weston.

The property meets those registration requirements set forth in the associated historic context through its retention of the physical integrity of the location and setting of the associated scene of conflict. The bluffline was directly associated with the documented conflict and the cumulative integrity aspects of feeling and association are clearly retained.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

name of property Weston Bluff Skirmish Site County and State Crittenden County, Kentucky

name of multiple property listing "Caught In The Middle; The Civil War Years on the Lower Ohio River"

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This skirmish was significant militarily because it presaged the shift of active Confederate military attentions to the Crittenden-Union County sector of the river beginning in mid-June 1864. While one of a number of larger military encounters, this attack on river shipping was an early indication that Confederate offensive attention would be focused against that river traffic.

The following detailed account is offered as the best description (although one from the Federal perspective) of the skirmish, taken from the *Evansville Daily Journal* of June 23, 1864 (original mis-spellings are retained):

"Guerrillas on the Ohio--The Steamer Mercury Fired on--The Gyrills Catch a Tarter...

At two o'clock this afternoon [June 21], when five miles below Ford's Ferry, we were hailed by the officers of the Nightengale who informed us that they were fired on by guerrillas at Ford's Ferry. The 7th Ohio Volunteer Infantry being on board were ordered by their commanding officer, col. Saml. McClelland, to prepare for action.

On reaching the Ferry all was quiet. When we reached Preston [Weston], a short distance above, the ladies of the village waved salutes. On the northern extremity of the town is a bluff which our boat neared, as the channell at this point is close to the Kentucky shore. Suddenly the sharp crack of rifles and the whiz of bullets bore testimony that Kentucky neutrality had culminated in rebellion. Rocks, trees, houses, barns and sheds formed shelters for our Kentucky foemen. A well directed volley was poured into the lurking places and the rebels, when several were seen hastily retreating. Some took shelter behind a house. A volley was fired at the house and it was literally riddled. The rebels were now retreating in every direction carrying their wounded with them.

Hearing that two of the soldiers below were wounded, I hastened down to administer to their comfort. Desultory firing commenced ere I reached there, and finding some men behind temporary breastworks formed of piles of shingles, I asked one of them for the privilege of a shot at the rebels. He handed me the gun, and soon after pointed out a guerrilla whose horse had become restive. The rebel had dismounted and was endeavoring to curb his horse and conceal his person behind a tree, both of which he could not accomplish. I stooped down took deliberate aim--the distance was short--I pulled the trigger steadily and fired. The horse went off riderless. I received the congratulations of several of the soldiers for the act. If the man was wounded or killed it could not be easily known who performed the deed, as the firing from the boat was continuous.

The Colonel desired to go on shore and burn the town, but the Captain of the boat had positive orders not to land on the Kentucky shore.

...Will not the Government interfere and by swift and justifiable retribution terminate this attempted blockading[?]"

The Bell Coal Mines diarist, just upstream from the scene recorded what was most likely this same event, but credited it to June 22, noted "Guerillas shooting into boats at Weston."



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 5

name of property Weston Bluff Skirmish Site

County and State Crittenden County, Kentucky

name of multiple property listing "Caught In The Middle; The Civil War Years on the Lower Ohio River"

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Weston was the scene of another wartime event on September 14, 1864. Fourteen Confederate prisoners overpowered their Federal guards on board the steamer Colossus. The boat was heading up the Ohio River from Smithland when the prisoners revolted, killed two and wounded two of the six-man guard, forced the boat ashore at Weston and escaped inland with the arms of their former guards.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9-10 Page 6

name of property Weston Bluff Skirmish Site County and State Crittenden County, Kentucky

name of multiple property listing "Caught In The Middle; The Civil War Years on the Lower Ohio River"

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References:

*Map of the Ohio River Reduced from the following surveys...1867-68 [by] W. M. Roberts, U.S. Civ. Engr, Clipper Mills to Cairo, 696 miles, With additions & corrections from later surveys. Made under the direction of Major W. E. Merrill, Corps of Engineers. By C. Moser (Courtesy Louisville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)*

*Evansville Daily Journal, June 23, 1864.*

Simpson, George B., Early Coal Mining on the Tradewater River, From Heath Mountain to Anvil Rock, 1836-1867, Sturgis; Ky., GBS Printing Company, 1987, pp. 38, 41.

War of the Rebellion; Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Washington; U.S. Government Printing Office, 1901, Series I, Vol. 38/1, p. 503.

## 10. Geographical Data

### Verbal Boundary Description

A legal description has yet to be obtained. For now, the boundary begins along a tree line which marks the ALCOA boundary rises east up the bluff to the 450 foot elevation contour line and encircles the slightly higher blufftop and cemetery in a counter-clockwise fashion, following the eastern slope of the rise. The boundary then descends to the river bank and follows that shoreline downstream to the Weston Light and from that point follows the tree line to the place of beginning. This includes about 10 acres.

### Verbal Boundary Justification:

This nomination includes only the prominent bluff which featured in the associated military conflict. This bluff is well defined by its physical separation from any nearby bluffline or elevated point.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Other Page 7

name of property Weston Bluff Skirmish Site County and State Crittenden County, Kentucky

name of multiple property listing "Caught In The Middle; The Civil War Years on the Lower Ohio River"

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**Additional Documentation:**

Additional Documentation, Photographs:

Photographer: Ms. Allison Mick, Assistant Editor, *The Crittenden Press*, Marion, Kentucky  
Date of Photographs: March 13, 1998  
Negative Location: Kentucky Heritage Council

Photo Number:	View/Description:
1	Weston, view across Ohio River, view north
2	Rocky bluff face, view to east
3	same
4	Blufftop, view downriver, to west
5	View from blufftop cemetery, north across Ohio River
6	same, view to northeast
7	detail, bluff rock face and view upriver, view to northeast
8	vista to west/northwest downriver from blufftop