

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Wyoming	
COUNTY: Platte	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 70-4-49- 000 0006	DATE 4/3/79

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON:
Register Cliff

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 7: T. 26 N., R. 65 W.

CITY OR TOWN:
Guernsey

STATE: Wyoming CODE: 49 COUNTY: Platte CODE: 031

3. CLASSIFICATION

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

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
State of Wyoming, administered by the Wyoming Recreation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
604 East 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Cheyenne STATE: Wyoming CODE: 49

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Wyoming Recreation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
604 East 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Cheyenne STATE: Wyoming CODE: 49

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: .16

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Evaluation and Survey of Historic Sites in Wyoming

DATE OF SURVEY: 1963 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
National Park Service

STREET AND NUMBER:
Midwest Regional Office, Department of Interior

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 08

STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER: DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Register Cliff consists of a soft, chalky, limestone precipice rising over 100 feet above the valley floor of the North Platte River. The horizontal features of the cliff were created thousands of years ago by the erosive action of the river waters cutting through layers of soft sedimentary deposits. Below the cliff exists a level grass covered plain extending to the edge of the river. The processes of nature, primarily through the effects of wind and water erosion, are still slowly effecting changes in the cliff's features and surroundings. Some rock cleavage has occurred over the years, however, Register Cliff remains essentially the same as it did during the days of 19th century westward migration.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

B SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian <input type="checkbox"/>	16th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	18th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	20th Century <input type="checkbox"/>
15th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	17th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	19th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Overland migration</u>
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>transcontinental</u>
Art <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>travel</u>
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>		_____
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

Register Cliff is a definite link to the romantic era of overland migration in Western America. It was an important mid-19th century landmark along the route of travel to Oregon and California and a place where countless emigrants inscribed names, dates, origins and messages in the soft limestone cliff faces. Emigrants passing through what is now Wyoming spent less than thirty days in the State and left behind little evidence of their passage except for a few place names, wagon ruts, inscriptions on trail-side cliffs, and some graves. Although inscriptions are found at numerous places along the trail, Register Cliff represents one of the three best known "registers of the desert" -- the other two being Independence Rock and Names Hill. Register Cliff was the first night camp west after leaving Fort Laramie. Under the shadow of the chalky bluffs on the south bank of the Platte River the emigrants paused to set up camp, to pasture their animals, and to rest and recoup from the hardships of trail travel. This stopover gave the wayfarers time to record the names and dates which have now become an enduring aspect of an historic era.

Many of the names and dates at Register Cliff are well over one hundred years old and relate to the peak years of travel along the trail during the 1840's and 1850's. Several states are well-represented in the carvings with Ohio seemingly in the majority. It is likely that the cliff and its surroundings were a familiar stopping place during the fur trade era but inscriptions dating to this period that may have existed at one time have apparently weathered away. The earliest known date reads: "1829 This July 14", perhaps placed there by some French trapper or explorer to commemorate Bastille Day. One unusual series of names, representing three generations of Register Cliff scribes, are those of T. H. Unthank dated 1850, O. N. Unthank, 1869, and O. A. Unthank, 1931.

For some trail travelers Register Cliff became a final resting place. In crossing the plains during the peak years about one in every ten is estimated to have died en route. A number of graves have been discovered near the Cliff in recent times and these are now being protected.

Over the years various types of activity took place at Register Cliff. Ward and Gurrier established and operated a small trading post near the Cliff. This endeavor ended when Gurrier was killed by an exploding keg

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Henderson, Paul C., Landmarks on the Oregon Trail. (The Westerners, New York, N. Y. 1953) p. 24.
 _____, Annals of Wyoming (Wyoming State Historical Society, Cheyenne, Wyo.) Volume 27, Number 2, October 1955, pp. 187-189.
 _____, Manuscript file - Wyoming Recreation Commission.
 Larson, T. A., History of Wyoming. (The University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965) p. 10.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N42° 14' 54"	W104° 42' 33"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

NO
 CD

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Bill Barnhart, Historian

ORGANIZATION: Wyoming Recreation Commission DATE: Dec. 19, 1969

STREET AND NUMBER:
604 East 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Cheyenne STATE: Wyoming CODE: 49

12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 Paul N. Deselet

Title State Liaison Officer

Date December 19, 1969

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Ernest Allen Connelly
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date APR 3 1970

ATTEST:

William J. Smutagel
 Keeper of The National Register

Date FEB 17 1970

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Register Cliff

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance - page - 2

of black powder. The site of the trading post later became Sand Point, or Star Ranch Pony Express Station. All that remains of this station today is the base of a stone chimney.

Still visible on the cliff is the outline of a painted red horse and rider for use as a target. According to tradition, passing soldiers would fire at the target from a distance of about 200 yards. The bullet marks scattered over the painted figure reveal widely varying degrees of marksmanship.

Charles A. Guernsey, a pioneer cattleman after whom the town of Guernsey, Wyoming is named, established his ranch buildings a short distance from Register Cliff in the 1890's. Guernsey's successor to the ranch, Henry Frederick, donated the site to the State of Wyoming to be preserved as a memorial to the spirit and accomplishments of the pioneers. Though a relatively small area its historic significance is of sufficient magnitude to warrant recognition as a nationally registered historic landmark.



R. 66 W. R. 65 W. 42'30"

(GUERNSEY)

40'

