

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
Nebraska

COUNTY:
Lincoln

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE
JUL 12 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
O'Fallons Bluff

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: **SE**
~~One mile south and seven miles east of Sutherland~~

CITY OR TOWN: ~~Vicinity of Sutherland Vic.~~ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: **3rd Congressional District**

STATE: **Nebraska** CODE: **31** COUNTY: **Lincoln** CODE: **111**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comment
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	rest area	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
State of Nebraska Department of Roads

STREET AND NUMBER:
14th & Burnam

CITY OR TOWN: **Lincoln** STATE: **Nebraska** CODE: **31**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
William T. Smith, Register of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:
Lincoln County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: **North Platte** STATE: **Nebraska** CODE: **31**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic Resource Study: Sites along the Oregon Trail

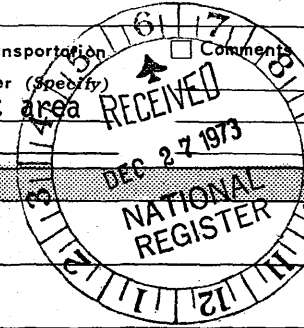
DATE OF SURVEY: **1973** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Denver Service Center, National Park Service

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Denver** STATE: **Colorado** CODE: **08**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

O'Fallons Bluff is a 20 mile section of hills located on the south bank of the south Platte River in Lincoln County, Nebraska. Near Sutherland the bluffs come very close to the river bank and the early travelers were forced to either travel very close to the bluffs or transverse the bluffs and travel overland (Mattes 1969:264 & Lass 1972:38-39).

Much of this rugged country has never been farmed and remains of the Oregon-California Trail are still quite visible.

During construction of Interstate 80 through Nebraska, the highway passed the area of O'Fallons Bluff. A rest area one mile south and seven miles east of Sutherland was constructed. At this location are some of the most clearly defined and preserved segments of the Oregon-California Trail. As hundreds of thousands of people travel I-80 East they have an opportunity to view evidence of the great western migration of the American people in the 1840's-1860's.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1846-67**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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 type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The early history of O'Fallons Bluff is not very clear even the origin of the name is different depending on who tells the story. Some travelers state that there was a trader who sold whisky to the Indians at this location. Others say Benjamin O'Fallon was murdered here by Indians. Frank Young stated that plainsmen dreaded the place as much as sailors dread Cape Hatteras because of the possibility of Indian attack (Mattes 1969:264).

The Overland Stage Station at O'Fallons Bluff was known as Half-way House, O'Fallons Bluff Station or Elk Horn Station. But whichever name is used the same place is meant.

The following are excerpts from travelers diaries during the 1850's and 1860's.

Wednesday, May 11 [camped east of Plum Creek]. . .A man was carried down in a wagon today - one John Snyder, of Massillon, Ohio - mortally wounded, he having been shot near O'Fallon's Bluffs. The circumstances under which he received his wound are differently related; one report is that he was shot for robbing, whilst another is that he was shot and robbed (Hafen 1942:127).

Wednesday May 18. . .Two miles further west of Cottonwood Springs is Ash creek - a dry run fringed with ash and box-elder. . .where there is a trading house, a stage station, a dwelling and a car-pender shop. These buildings are all constructed of cedar logs, procured from the ravines. . . . we noticed a number of fine hewed logs, the destination of which we learn is O'Fallon's Bluff (Hafen 1942:132-33).

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Carlson, Gayle F. "Highway Archeological and Historic Salvage Investigations in Nebraska, 1965 to 1968." In Archeological Salvage and Survey in Nebraska. Nebraska State Historical Society Publications in Anthropology No. 5, 1973.

Hafen, LeRoy E. "The Platte River Route: Diary of E. H. N. Patterson." Overland Route to the Goldfields, 1859. 1942.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	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	41°	08'	14" 14	101°	05'	52" 30	0		
NE	41°	08'		101°	05'		0		
SE	41°	08'		101°	05'		0		
SW	41°	08'		101°	05'	52"	0		

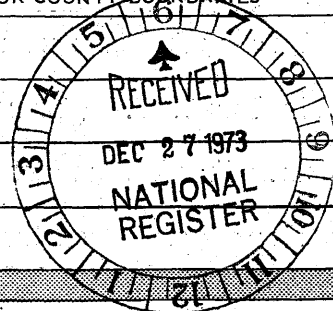
NO
LITM
CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 20 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: Ronald L. Kivett, Archeologist

ORGANIZATION: Nebraska State Historical Society DATE: December 5, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: 1500 R Street

CITY OR TOWN: Lincoln STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

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: Marion D. Kivett

Title: Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

Date: Dec. 12, 1973

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

[Signature]
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 7/12/74

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

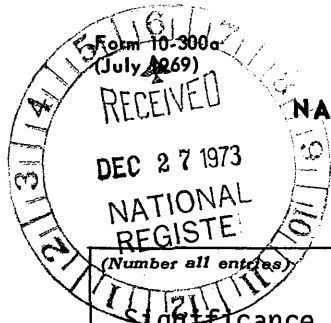
Date: 7/12/74

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Nebraska	
COUNTY Lincoln	
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Significance (cont.)

Friday, May 20. Left camp at six o'clock; one mile brought us to a point where O'Fallon's Bluffs strike the South Platte - where there is considerable brushwood and timber (the latter being on Shanghai Island), and the scenery is rough, rugged but romantic. The road now runs over the bluffs for three miles, to the stage station, where there is a trading post and some Indian tents (Hafen 1942:137).

Road passes O'Fallon's Bluffs. "Half-way House", a store and ranch, distant 120 miles from Fort Kearny, 400 from St. Joseph, 40 from Lower Crossing, and 68 from the Upper Crossing of the South fork (Platte River). The station is called Alkali Lake (Hafen 1942:302).

No game of any consequence will be found until after leaving Fort Kearny. From that point to O'Fallon's bluffs is the buffalo range. From Cottonwood spring to O'Fallon's bluffs there are roads all over the bottoms. All these roads lead to the river. The main road is near the bluffs. . . At O'Fallon's bluffs is a mail station, and one other trading-house, with plenty of goods of all kinds. This is the last settlement or trading post which will be passed until you reach St. Vrain's Fort, in the vicinity of the mines. Five miles above this point you will pass the last timber to be seen until you reach Beaver creek (Hafen 1942:141-42).

In 1966 staff archeologists tested a portion of a rectangular ditch with rather disappointing results. This ditch was located at the base of O'Fallons Bluff and may be attributed to the defense erected by the United States Army in the Indian war of 1864. To protect several overland stage stations in the area.

Only scattered animal bone was recovered in over fifty feet of excavated trenches (Carlson 1973:30). Descriptions of the army post state that an old ranch was occupied and stockade corrals were built to protect the enclosure from Indian raids.

Many departments in government are becoming aware of our historic

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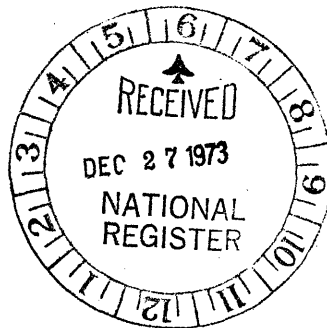
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Significance (cont.)

heritage. The Nebraska Department of Roads built a rest area at O'Fallons Bluff where the Oregon Trail ruts are still quite easily visible. The Department of Roads in cooperation with the Nebraska State Historical Society have placed historical markers at the rest area to briefly state the history of this area.

More and more of our visible historic Oregon Trail ruts are being destroyed by erosion and farming operations. It is a fitting memorial to those early pioneers who passed by O'Fallons Bluff that this unique site should be placed on the National Register.



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Bibliography (cont.)

Hafen LeRoy E. "Log of R. F. Burton's Stagecoach Trip, 1860." Overland Route to the Goldfields, 1859. 1942.

Hafen, LeRoy E. "A Guide to the Goldmines on the South Platte." Pike's Peak Gold Rush Guidebook of 1859. 1942.

Mattes, Merrill J. "The Great Platte River Road: The Covered Wagon Main-line Via Fort Kearny to Fort Laramie." Nebraska State Historical Society Publications Vol. 25, 1969.

Lass, William E. "From the Missouri to the Great Salt Lake: An Account of Overland Freighting." Nebraska State Historical Society Publications Vol. 26, 1973.



LEGAL DESCRIPTION

NOTE: Legal Description for publication.

O'Fallons Bluff

One mile south and seven miles east of Sutherland

Vicinity of Sutherland

Nebraska (31) Lincoln (111)

S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 34 T14N R33W



O'Fallons Bluff

One mile south and seven miles east of Sutherland

Vicinity of Sutherland

Nebraska (31) Lincoln (111)

ACREAGE JUSTIFICATION

An area large enough to include all of the land owned by the State of Nebraska was chosen for this nomination.

