BATTLE OF NATURAL BRIDGE

U.S. 319, 6 miles east of Woodville
Leon County

At Natural Bridge in 1865, a battle was fought that saved Tallahassee from capture by the Federal forces, making it the only Southern capital east of the Mississippi that did not fall into Union hands.

On March 4, 1865, a fleet of 11 steamers and three sailing vessels landed a force of the Union Army at St. Marks lighthouse 20 miles south of Tallahassee at the mouth of the St. Marks River.

News of the landing reached Tallahassee, the militia was called out, and every man and boy who could bear arms did so. Cadets from the West Florida Seminary (now Florida State University) were among those who fought, thus earning the right to one of three Confederate battle streamers awarded to schools in the country today.

Gen. Newton, in command of the Federals, determined to try to cross at Natural Bridge several miles up river where the St. Marks goes underground. Gen. Miller anticipated the enemy's movement, and when the Federals arrived, they found the position well defended. After finding the Confederate position impregnable, Gen. Newton withdrew his forces to Key West.

Confederate losses in the battle were placed at three men killed. The Federals lost 148.

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

[Signature]
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register
Form 10-300

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

COMMON: Battle of Natural Bridge
AND/OR HISTORIC: Battlefield

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Six miles east of Woodville off U.S. 319
CITY OR TOWN: Woodville
STATE: Florida
COUNTY: Leon

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

OWNERSHIP
- Public
- Private
- Both

STATUS
- Occupied
- Unoccupied
- Preservation work in progress

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
- Yes
- Restricted
- Unrestricted

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Museum
- Park
- Private Residence
- Religious
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Division of Recreation and Parks
Department of Natural Resources
STREET AND NUMBER: Larson Building
CITY OR TOWN: Tallahassee
STATE: Florida
CODE: 12

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund
STREET AND NUMBER: Elliott Building
CITY OR TOWN: Tallahassee
STATE: Florida
CODE: 12

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Florida Historic Sites Survey 1940
DATE OF SURVEY: 1940
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Division of Archives, History and Records Management
STREET AND NUMBER: 401 East Gaines Street
CITY OR TOWN: Tallahassee
STATE: Florida
CODE: 12
The Natural Bridge of the St. Marks River is a swampy area near the southern boundary of Leon County, where the river passes through a series of underground passages between sinks and rises for a distance of perhaps half a mile. This produces an intricate series of disconnected short channels which, beginning at a rise, flow above ground for a short distance to disappear underground at a sink. The last rise is in a basin, from where the river flows above ground to its confluence with the Wakulla River. About one-half mile below the basin, the river is traversed and dammed by a ledge of lime rock.

The disappearance of the river between sink and rise forms a "natural bridge," and affords crossing of the St. Marks River.
In March of 1865, a Federal force of between 600 and 700 men landed at St. Marks, Florida and began their march inland toward the interior and the Capitol at Tallahassee. Upon arrival at Newport, it was concluded that passage of the St. Marks River at that point, either by way of the heavily defended bridge or by fording was impossible. At this point, the Federal commanders made a decision to make a night march to the so-called Natural Bridge and attempt a passage there.

The Federal force was met at daybreak on March 6 at Natural Bridge by a Confederate force of approximately 700 men including cadets from the West Florida Seminary at Tallahassee. The Confederate forces were deployed in such a manner as to permit a converging fire at the point where the Federal force meant to cross. Because of this superior position, they completely routed the Union force and drove them back.

The results of the Battle of Natural Bridge prevented the capture of the one State Capitol east of the Mississippi River that was not entered by the Union armies until after the close of the War Between the States.
### 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Archer, Sue. "Reminiscences of the Battle of Natural Bridge," Daily Democrat (Tallahassee), November 7, 1918.

### 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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### APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

**Six acres**

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

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### 11. FORM PREPARED BY

**Randy F. Nimnicht, Historic Preservationist**

**Division of Archives, History and Records Mgt.**

**Department of State, The Capitol**

**Tallahassee, Florida**

**DATE:** 3/16/71

### 12. STATE LIASION 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 [X]
- State [ ]
- Local [ ]

**Name:**

**Title:** State Liaison Officer

**Date:** April 29, 1971

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**ATTEST:**

**Date:**

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**Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation**

**Date:** SEP 10 1971

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**Keeper of the National Register**

**Date:** AUG 17 1971
**Form 10-301**

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)*

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<thead>
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FOR NPS USE ONLY

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**1. NAME**

COMMON: Battle of Natural Bridge

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:

Six miles east of Woodville off U.S. 319

CITY OR TOWN:

Woodville

STATE: Florida

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>Leon</td>
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**3. MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE: United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Woodville Quadrangle, 7.5 minute series (topo)

SCALE: 1:24,000

DATE: 1954

**4. REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.