

PH0367213

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED OCT 18 1976

DATE ENTERED

AUG 24 1977

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin

AND/OR COMMON

Bone Cabin IN AGATE Fossil Beds National Monument off NE 29

2 LOCATION ~~Within the boundaries of the Agate Fossil Beds National Monument. 23 miles south of Harrison, Nebraska, on State Highway #29 and three miles east of Agate on county road.~~

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Agate

☒ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

Nebraska

CODE

31

COUNTY

Sioux

CODE

165

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☒ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

United States National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

VICINITY OF

STATE

Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.United States National Park Service,
Midwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Preservation in Nebraska

DATE

1971

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Nebraska State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

(See Continuation Sheet, page 1)

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
☐ EXCELLENT	☒ DETERIORATED	☐ UNALTERED	☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ GOOD	☐ RUINS	☒ ALTERED	☐ MOVED DATE _____
☐ FAIR	☐ UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Harold Cook Homestead Cabin, or "Bone Cabin," complex comprises just a few sites and structures set on one acre of flat grassy land in the valley of the Niobrara River and within the boundaries of the Agate Fossil Beds National Monument. The sites and structures are described individually below.

1. BONE CABIN (NO. HS 1)

The original "Bone Cabin," as built in 1904, was a small (15'6" x 11'5"), one-room, wood-frame, rectangular building. Old photographs indicate that it was oriented as it is now with its long axis and the ridge of the gable roof running north-south. The front door was on the east side which was protected by the roof's deep overhang running the length of the building. There was a square, four-light window on both the north and south walls of the cabin. The roof was covered with tar paper. The exterior siding was a crude board and batten. The foundation was loose-laid stone rubble.

Sometime prior to 1910, the rubble foundation was extended under the south side of the front overhang. A board floor was installed, it was enclosed with board and batten siding, and a porch swing was hung under the north half of the overhang.

Old photographs indicate that further alterations were made during the Harold Cook Homestead period, 1910-1914. Three rooms were added.

- 1) A small, wood-frame, gable-roofed room with a stove was added to the south end of the porch, opening on to it. This room had board and batten siding, tar paper roofing, a square four-light window on the south wall, and a loose-laid stone rubble foundation.
- 2) A small, wood-frame, tool shed with a lean-to roof was added in the corner formed by the south wall of the original cabin room and the west wall of the addition noted above. This room had board and batten siding, tar paper roof, and no foundation. This addition was eliminated in the 1930's.
- 3) A larger (11'7" x 12'3"), wood-frame room with a gable roof was added to the west side of the original cabin. The ridge of the gable roof on this addition is oriented on an east-west axis, perpendicular to the gable orientation of the original cabin's roof. This room had horizontal board siding, tar paper roofing, loose-laid stone rubble foundation, a square, four-light window on both the north and south walls, and an exterior door with stoop on its south side. That door and stoop no longer exist.

During this period, the porch swing was removed and the foundation and flooring extended to the rest of the porch.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 2)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☒ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☒ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☐ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☒ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1904-1930s

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Harold J. Cook

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bone Cabin complex is intimately associated with the scientific exploration of the Miocene fossil deposits now included within Agate Fossil Beds National Monument. Those fossil deposits have proved of international scientific importance in revealing the paleontological story of the "Age of Mammals," and the Bone Cabin structures represent the most tangible man-made artifact associated with the scientific investigators. Additionally, the structures are the particular handiwork of Harold J. Cook, pioneer paleontologist and son of Captain James H. Cook, noted frontiersman and friend of the Sioux leader Red Cloud.

Although James Cook discovered the first fossil bones at Agate Fossil Beds in 1878, the true importance of the deposits came to light when O. A. Peterson of the Carnegie Museum at Pittsburgh initiated the first scientific excavations at the site in 1904. He was assisted by Harold Cook, then 17, and it was at that time that the Bone Cabin was constructed to serve as headquarters for the investigations. The first year's excavations revealed the existence of a type of two-horned rhinoceros new to science, the Diceratherium. As a result, in 1905 and subsequent years the Carnegie expeditions were joined by those lead by E. H. Barbour of the University of Nebraska, and occasionally by teams from Yale University and Amherst College. Much of today's knowledge of the Diceratherium, the Moropus, the Dinohyus, the Stenomylus and Miocene animal life in general derives from investigations based at and near the Bone Cabin.

In 1910, Harold Cook filed a homestead claim to own and therefore protect the fossil quarries. He improved the property while occupying the cabin and conducting his own studies. After he obtained patented title to his claim in 1914, the structures again became the headquarters for fossil collecting expeditions, which continued until the late 1930s. Thus the structures are associated not only with important scientific endeavors, but represent Cook's imaginative use of the land laws to insure the protection of an important and unique scientific resource. The preservation of the fossil quarries and their incumbent scientific value, symbolized by the Bone Cabin complex, made possible the establishment of Agate Fossil Beds National Monument in 1965, an event facilitated by the interest and generosity of Harold Cook and his family.

In the late 1930s the land surrounding the Bone Cabin was leased for ranching, and the structures were altered to support those operations. The cabin has not been used as a dwelling since 1950.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 4)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Roberts, R. J., The History of Agate Springs, Nebraska History,
Volume 47, Number 3, September 1966, p. 287.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 13 60371010 46964010
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Richard I. Ortega, Architectural Historian (Engineer), MWRO

ORGANIZATION

DATE

National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office March 1, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1709 Jackson Street

(402) 221-3423

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Omaha

Nebraska

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ☒

NO ☐

NONE ☐

Maurice D. Knott
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ☐ National ☒ State ☐ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

John G. Wheeler
Deputy Assistant Secretary

DATE OCT 14 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Charles A. Smith
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8/24/77
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8-12-77

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 18 1976
DATE ENTERED	AUG 24 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

TITLE:
List of Classified Structures
DATE:
1975 Federal
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
United States National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office
CITY, TOWN: STATE:
Omaha, Nebraska

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED **OCT 18 1976**

DATE ENTERED

AUG 24 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

In the late 1930s, the "Bone Cabin" was again used as a ranch house and went through several more alterations, achieving its present appearance.

The south addition adjoining the porch was completely rebuilt, with a concrete floor and a new exterior door on the south wall and a square, four-light window flanking the door. The porch was completely enclosed and converted into a kitchen. It had a new exterior door on the east wall and two, new, four-light casement windows on the north wall. The door, on the south wall of the west addition, was blocked up and that room was used strictly as a bedroom. All the roofs were shingled with wood, and the exterior was covered with brown, simulated brick, asphaltic siding paper. Some concrete was poured along the loose stone foundation.

2. WINDMILL (NO. HS 2)

Old photographs indicate that, sometime between 1910 and 1914, Harold Cook erected a windmill several yards south and west of the cabin complex. Although the wooden derrick appears to have been altered, the galvanized metal blades and vane, and the rest of the windmill appear to be original. Stencilled on the vane are the following:

The Aermotor Co., Chicago

and

H. C. Colter, Mitchell, Neb.

3. SHED (NO. HS 3), and STORM CELLAR (SITES)

Historic photographs dated 1904, 1910, and 1914, show a rectangular shed south of the "Bone Cabin." It appears to be larger than the "Bone Cabin" with a tin, gable roof running north-south, board and batten siding, loose rubble foundation, a single four-light window on north and south walls, a metal stove pipe through the roof near the south end, and a narrow opening in the east wall. The 1914 photograph shows a wood shingle roof on the shed.

The 1914 photograph also shows an excavated structure to the south and west of the shed. It appears to be a storm cellar.

Neither of these structures exists today.
(See Continuation Sheet, page 3)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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DATE ENTERED AUG 24 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

4. DOG TROT SHED (NO. HS 4) (SITE)

An historic photograph, dated circa 1910, shows a rectangular shed east of the shed (No. HS 3). It had a tin, gable roof running north-south, large horizontal siding, and was open through the middle.

This structure no longer exists.

5. PRIVY (NO. HS 5) (SITE)

An historic photograph, dated circa 1904, shows a small privy south and east of the "Bone Cabin." It had board and batten walls, door on its east side and roof that sloped slightly rearward. It appears only large enough to accommodate one person.

This structure no longer exists.

6. FENCES (NO. HS 6)

All the historic photographs of the "Bone Cabin" complex show it surrounded by barb wire-and-post fences. It is presently surrounded by both barb wire-and-post, and wood board fences. The present fence system probably conforms to the original fence system, but is composed of bits and pieces of materials, especially barb wire, from several historic periods.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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RECEIVED **OCT 18 1976**

DATE ENTERED **AUG 24 1977**

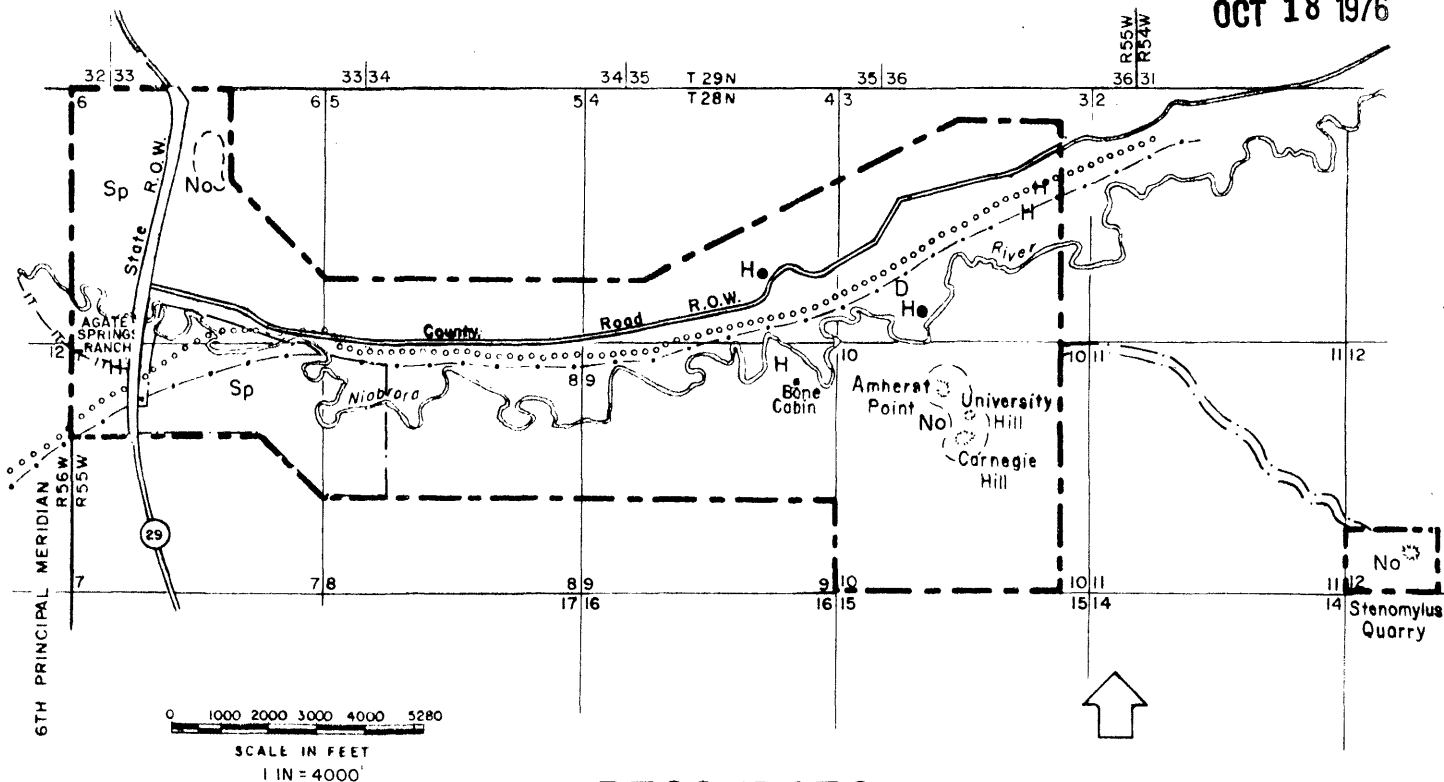
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 4

Although planning for the development and interpretation of the National Monument is still incomplete and no final decisions have been made as to the treatment of the Bone Cabin complex, it is likely that it will be preserved, perhaps partially restored, and used in the interpretation of the scientific investigations of the fossil quarries.

OCT 18 1976



RESOURCES

LEGEND

- — — — — Authorized Boundary
- — — — — Scenic Easement
- oooooooooooooooooooo Ft. Laramie - Ft. Robinson Trail
- IT—IT—IT—IT— Indian Trail
- Lieutenant Warren Trail

LAND CLASSIFICATION

N—NATURAL ZONE

No—Outstanding Natural Features Subzone

Outstanding Paleontological Resources

*SEE NOTE BELOW

H—HISTORIC ZONE

- H — Agate Springs Ranch
- H — Bone Cabin
- H — Trails
- H — Major Identified Archeological Site

D—DEVELOPMENT ZONE

Existing Development
Visitor Center & Parking

S—SPECIAL USE ZONE

Sp—Private Development Zone
Agate Springs Ranch
Scenic Easements

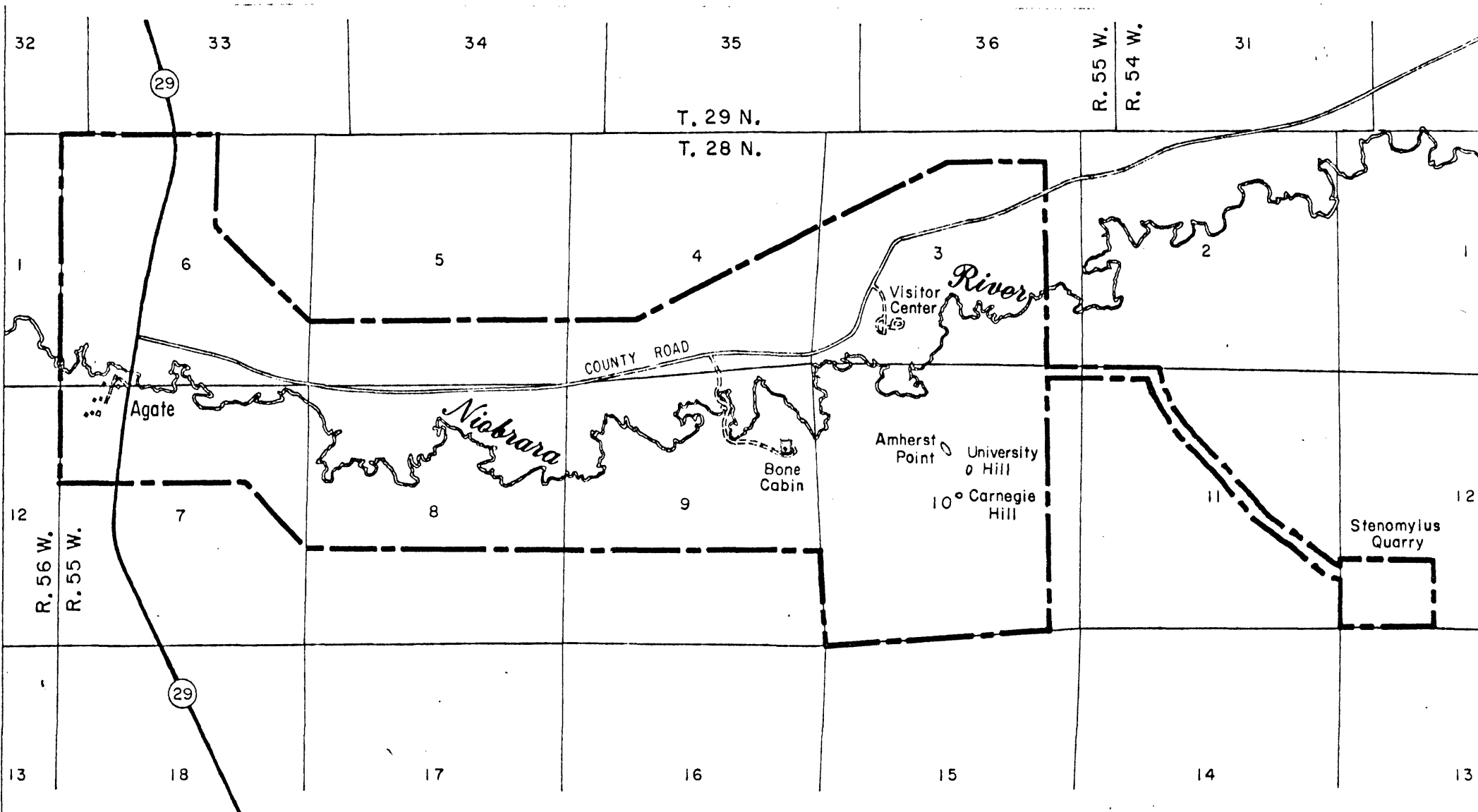
NOTE: *Remaining area not included with above designations is in the Environmental Protection Subzone of the Natural Zone.

**AGATE FOSSIL BEDS
NATIONAL MONUMENT**
SIOUX COUNTY,
NEBRASKA

DATE 12-19-75

DRAWN BY: ELQ CHECKED:

BASIC DATA: DWG. NO. NM-AFB
3002 DATED 11/19/65



NPS boundary: — — — —
 nominated boundary, 1 acre vicinity.

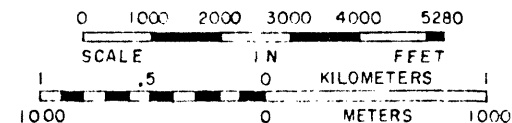
AGATE FOSSIL BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT

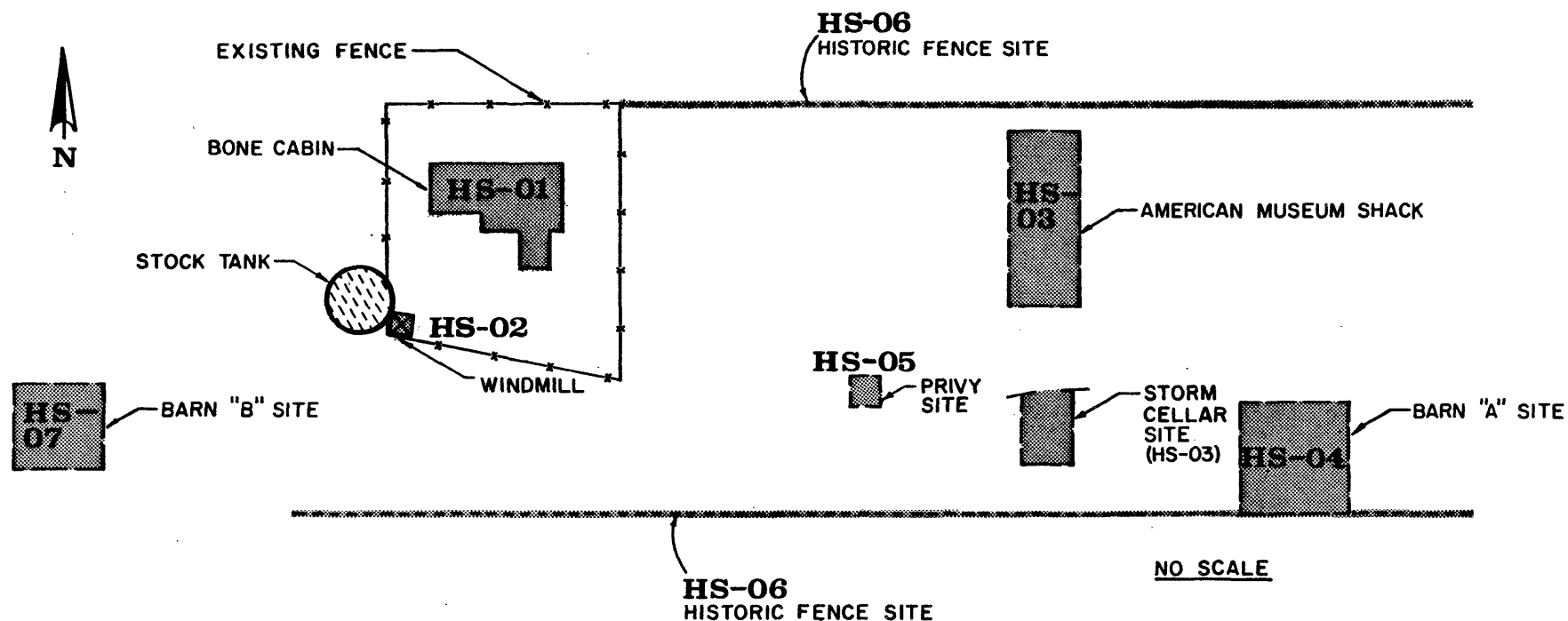
SIXTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN

SIOUX COUNTY, NEBRASKA



NOV 5 1966





NOTE:

SITE LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATED FROM HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS BECAUSE NO FOUNDATIONS OR OTHER ABOVE-GRADE EVIDENCE OF THESE ASSOCIATED STRUCTURES REMAIN.

Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin
Bone Cabin Complex,
Agate Fossil Beds National Monument
Sioux County, Nebraska

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 5 1986

DATE ENTERED DEC 19 1986

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin

(NeHBS #SX00-28)

AND/OR COMMON

Bone Cabin Complex

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Agate

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

Nebraska

CODE

31

COUNTY

Sioux

CODE

165

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☒ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESSN/A ☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

United States National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE

Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

United States National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

National Register of Historic Places

DATE

August 24, 1977

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDSUnited States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

NOV 5 1986

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
☐ EXCELLENT	☒ DETERIORATED	☐ UNALTERED	☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ GOOD	☐ RUINS	☒ ALTERED	☐ MOVED
☐ FAIR	☐ UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>N/A</u>

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

[The Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin (Bone Cabin Complex) was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 24, 1977. Subsequent research has revealed a number of errors in the original nomination form.]

The Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin (Bone Cabin Complex) comprises a few sites and structures set on one acre of flat grassy land in the Niobrara River Valley, within the boundaries of the Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, Nebraska. The structures and sites are described individually below.

BONE CABIN (HS-01)

As it existed in 1909, the original one-room structure was fifteen feet, six inches by eleven feet, five inches and was oriented as it is now with its long axis and the ridge of the tarpapered, gable roof running north-south. The overhanging east slope of the roof created a porch area. The front door was on the east side. There were square four-light windows on both the north and south walls of the cabin. The exterior siding was a crude board and batten. The foundation was loose-laid stone rubble.

During the Harold and Eleanor Cook homestead period in 1912, Harold Cook added three rooms. The first was a "summer kitchen." Cook extended the rubble and cement foundation approximately four feet to the east running the length of the structure and extending south approximately six feet past the same. The foundation was nine feet wide at the southern end and formed the base upon which the eight by six feet kitchen was built. A square four-light window was placed in the center of the south wall. The kitchen had a gable roof with its long axis running north-south and was tarpapered. A stove pipe protruded through the east roof's center. The walls were of board and batten siding. The east wall continued north under the original overhang which created a protected north entrance.

Also in 1912, a second room was added to the west side of the original structure. This thirteen feet, one inch by twelve feet, two inch wood-framed bedroom featured a tarpapered gable roof whose long axis ran east-west. The walls were covered with horizontal wood siding and rested on a foundation of loose laid rubble. The interior bedroom door is located on the north side of the shared wall and an exterior door is on the east side of the south wall with a small platform and three riser step. The bedroom also has two square four-light windows in the center of the north and south walls.

The woodshed was the third room added in 1912. It was located in the corner created by the west wall of the "summer kitchen" and the south wall of the original structure. It had a tarpapered lean-to roof that sloped away from the "summer kitchen." The woodshed was removed by the early 1940s.

NOV 5 1986

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION	
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☒ SCIENCE	
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE	
☐ 1600-1699	☐ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER	
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☒ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION	
☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		☐ INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1904-1920s BUILDER/ARCHITECT ~~ARCHITECT~~ Harold J. Cook

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin (Bone Cabin Complex) is within the Agate Fossil Beds National Monument in Sioux County, Nebraska. Harold J. Cook was a rancher, paleontologist, and son of James H. Cook, the famed frontiersman and Indian advocate. The Bone Cabin Complex is significant because of its utilization by the Cooks and other paleontologists during their excavations at the Agate Springs Fossil Quarries. The fossil deposits are of international scientific importance in revealing the paleontological story of the "Age of Mammals." The Bone Cabin Complex represents the most tangible man made artifact associated with the scientific investigations, and is, therefore, eligible for nomination under National Register Criterion A.¹ Among the institutions represented at Agate were the Carnegie Museum, Pennsylvania; University of Nebraska at Lincoln, Nebraska; American Museum of Natural History, New York; Yale University, Connecticut; Amherst College, Massachusetts; and others.

The Bone Cabin Complex is intimately associated with the scientific exploration of the Agate Springs Fossil Quarries. The fossil deposits are found in the 21,000,000-year-old Harrison formation of the Ariksee Group, Miocene Epoch. The sediments of this group are principally sandstone. An abundant concentration of Miocene fossil mammal bones are found in a two- to three-foot thick layer running through four principal fossil hills: University, Carnegie, Bear Dog, and Quarry A. The most common mammals are the Menocerus, a two-horned rhinoceros, the unusual-looking Moropus with its large claws, and the seven-foot tall pig, Dinohyus. One of the largest known carnivore den systems was found in Bear Dog Hill along with the fossil remains of the Bear Dogs, Daphaenodon and Temnocyon. The detached Stenomylus Quarry is known for its yield of the gazelle-like camel Stenomylus fossil bones.²

The date of construction of the Bone Cabin is not clear. One theory is that it was built by Harold Cook as early as 1904, when O. A. Peterson of the Carnegie Museum at Pittsburgh initiated the first scientific excavations at the site. A later date is more probable. There is no reliable documentation to support the 1904 date.³

The Cooks were concerned with the legal ownership of the Agate Springs Fossil Quarries.⁴ In 1908, Harold Cook filed a homestead claim for the land. By February 1909, Harold Cook began his residence on the land in a one-room

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

NOV 5 1986

Please see attached sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 13 603700 4696400
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 C

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin (Bone Cabin Complex of Agate Fossil Beds National Monument) is in the northeast quarter of Section 9, Township 28 north, Range 55 west, 6th Principal Meridian, Sioux County, Nebraska. It is three miles east of the Agate Springs Ranch and the intersection of Nebraska Highway 29 and Sioux County Road. Situated at the base of the two principal fossil quarry-hills in the Niobrara River Valley, the bone Cabin is 3,000 feet due west of the peak of Amherst Point. With the Bone Cabin the center, the nominated boundary is one acre and includes all its contributing support structures.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

11 FORM PREPARED BY

REVISED BY: Charles M. Trupia, Historian
 Midwest Regional Office,
 August 16, 1985

NAME / TITLE

Richard I. Ortega, Architectural Historian (Engineer), MWRO

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office

DATE

March 1, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1709 Jackson Street

TELEPHONE

(402) 221-3426

CITY OR TOWN

Omaha

STATE

Nebraska

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ☒

NO ☐

NONE ☐

James A. Hanson
 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ☒ National ☐ State ☐ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Edmund C. Brando

TITLE

Chief Historian, NPS

DATE

Oct. 29, 1986

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Beth Crover
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11/19/86

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received NOV 5 1986
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

From the mid-1920s through the early 1940s the land around the Bone Cabin was leased by various ranchers and cowboys. By 1942 the south door to the west bedroom was boarded over, the steps by this entrance removed, and the roof covered with wood shingles.

From 1942 through 1948, Edith and Emil "Junior" Murphy leased the property around the Bone Cabin Complex for ranching purposes. They resided in the Bone Cabin and enclosed the porch area thereby creating a combined kitchen and dining area. The Murphys applied simulated-brick, asphalt siding to the exterior walls for insulation purposes.

From 1949 through 1951, George and Margaret Hoffman resided in the Bone Cabin while they awaited the completion of their ranchhouse under construction a short distance to the west. A door was added to the south side of the "summer kitchen" which the Hoffmans used as a storage area. The southside window was moved to the east of the door.

The structure remained vacant and unchanged until 1973 when the National Park Service added an asphalt shingle roof. In 1978, the Service applied wood preservative to both the Windmill (HS-02) and the exposed wood on the Bone Cabin. In 1981, the windows were numbered and removed, and the openings were boarded over.

WINDMILL (HS-02)

Historic photographs indicate sometime between 1911 and 1914, a windmill was erected several yards south and west of the cabin complex. Although the wooden derrick appears to have been altered, the galvanized metal blades and vane appear to be original. Stencilled on the vane are "The Aermotor Co., Chicago" and "H. C. Colter, Mitchell, Neb."

AMERICAN MUSEUM SHACK (HS-03) [formerly SHED NO. HS-03], and STORM CELLAR (SITES)

5
In 1911, the American Museum of Natural History in New York provided funds to build a twelve by twenty-four-foot cook shack for the paleontologists working the Agate Springs Fossil Quarries. Used both as a cooking facility and sleeping quarters, the shack was east of the Bone Cabin and had a metal, gable roof with its long axis running north-south. It had two square four-light windows on the north and south walls and an open doorway on the east wall. In 1913, a heat-absorbing sod roof was applied to the American Museum Shack. A historic photograph indicates an excavated structure to the south of the American Museum Shack. It appears to be a storm cellar. Neither of these structures is extant. The shack was removed sometime in the 1950s.

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BARN A (HS-04) (SITE)

Between 1910 and 1911, Harold Cook constructed a wood frame, metal-sided barn to the southeast of the Bone Cabin. It had a tin shed roof which sloped to the east, large horizontal siding, and a wide opening on the east wall. The barn also had a wire-and-post corral connected to the east side. This structure is not extant.

PRIVY (HS-05) (SITE)

By 1910 Harold Cook constructed a privy to the south and east of the Bone Cabin. It had board and batten siding, a westward sloping shed roof, and a door on the east wall. This structure is not extant.

FENCES (HS-06)

Historic photographs show the Bone Cabin Complex surrounded by barbed wire and wood post fences. It is presently surrounded by both barbed wire and wood post, and wood board fences. The present fence system conforms to the north and south portions of the original fence, but the east portion has been altered to accommodate the Bone Cabin, the only extant building. It also contains materials from several periods.

BARN B (HS-07) (SITE)

Sometime after 1920, another barn was built. It appeared smaller than the Bone Cabin and had a gable roof with its long axis running east-west. A post-and-board fence system was connected to the north side of the barn. This structure is not extant.

NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE

A stock tank which supplied water for livestock was built in the 1950s. This structure stands immediately west of the Windmill (HS-02) and adjoins the existing fence which surrounds the Bone Cabin (HS-01).

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structure. Whether the structure was moved from another location or built by Harold Cook between 1904 and 1909 is not known. He did, however, add three rooms during his tenure on the homestead claim.⁵

In 1910, Harold Cook married Eleanor Barbour, daughter of paleontologist E. H. Barbour from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. By 1914, the Cooks "proved up" (fulfilled the homesteading law requirements) on the property and received a United States Patent for the land and moved to the main ranch house at the Agate Springs Ranch, three miles west.⁶

During their homesteading period, the Cooks became close friends with the internationally known paleontologist, Albert "Bill" Thomson of the American Museum of Natural History. By 1914 the Bone Cabin was vacant and Thomson moved his excavation headquarters from the American Museum Shack to the Bone Cabin. Thomson subsequently spent many years at what was called "East Agate." Thomson likely filled out his field notebooks and planned the next day's work during his many evenings in the Bone Cabin.⁷

From the mid-1920s to the early 1940s various ranchers leased the land surrounding the Bone Cabin, added wood shingles to the roof and made a few alterations to the building. From 1942 to 1948, Edith and Emil "Junior" Murphy leased the property and enclosed the front porch to create a kitchen and dining area. They also covered the exterior walls with simulated brick asphalt siding.⁸

Cook relatives George and Margaret Hoffman resided in the Bone Cabin from 1949 to 1951 while they awaited the completion of their new ranch house built west of the Bone Cabin.⁹

The Bone Cabin has been vacant since the 1950s. It has naturally weathered and deteriorated, but exhibits a high degree of integrity: location, setting, materials, feeling, and association. Since the June 5, 1965, authorization of Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, the National Park Service has applied a minimum of preservation and maintenance to the Bone Cabin. The Bone Cabin and its related structures and sites represent significant physical evidence of the paleontological excavations at the nearby fossil hills. There was an intimate interrelationship between the Bone Cabin Complex and noted American paleontologists representing a wide range of prestigious institutions. Of state and national importance, the property was entered on the Nebraska Historic Sites Survey, the National Park Service's List of Classified Structures, and the National Register of Historic Places (1977). This represents an amendment to the original 1977 nomination.

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Endnotes

1. Richard Ortega, "The Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin, National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form," (Omaha: National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, 1977).
2. Dr. Robert Hunt, The Agate Hills: History of Paleontological Excavations, 1904-1925, Prepared for the National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).
3. Ortega, "The Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin." The photographs used by Richard Ortega were not adequately documented and are, therefore, not reliable.
4. Charles Trupia, Historic Structure Report: History and Significance, The Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin, (Bone Cabin Complex), Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, Nebraska (Omaha: Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service, Nebraska, 1985), pp.25-31.
5. Ibid., pp. 34-49.
6. Ibid., pp. 54-67.
7. Ibid., pp. 81-90.
8. Ibid., pp. 95-96.
9. Ibid., pp. 97-100.

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- Trupia, Charles M. Historic Structure Report: History and Significance, The Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin (Bone Cabin Complex), Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, Nebraska. Omaha: Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service, 1985.



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED OCT 18 1976

DATE ENTERED AUG 24 1977

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC Harold J. Cook Homestead Cabin

AND/OR COMMON

Bone Cabin

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Agate

X VICINITY OF

COUNTY Sioux

STATE
Nebraska

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Unknown

DATE OF PHOTO Circa 1904

NEGATIVE FILED AT Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

View from the northeast of the privy (No. HS 5), in the background,
the Shed (No. HS 3), in the middle of the photograph, and the Bone
Cabin (No. HS 1), on the right side of the photograph.

PHOTO NO 1



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PHOTO CREDIT Unknown

DATE OF PHOTO Circa 1910

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PHOTO NO 2

View from the east of the Dog Trot Shed (No. HS 4), on the left, the Bone Cabin (No. HS 1), in the background, and the Shed (No. HS 3), in the center of the photograph.



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3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Unknown

DATE OF PHOTO Circa 1914

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PHOTO NO 3

View from the northeast of the Bone Cabin (No. HS 1), the Shed (No. HS 3) and the Storm Cellar. Top of the Windmill (No. HS 2) can be seen behind the Bone Cabin. Also note the fences (No. HS 6) around the complex.



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3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Unknown

DATE OF PHOTO Identified as
Circa 1914, but
may be 10 years
later.

NEGATIVE FILED AT Agate Fossil Beds National
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PHOTO NO 4

South side of Cabin (No. HS 1) as seen from the south looking north.
Part of the Windmill (No. HS 2) can be seen on the left side of the
photograph.



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Nebraska

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Roy W. Weaver

DATE OF PHOTO September 12, 1971

NEGATIVE FILED AT Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

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PHOTO NO 5

Front (East) and side (South) views of Cabin (No. HS 1) as viewed from the southeast.



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DATE OF PHOTO September 12, 1971

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Rear (West) and side (North) views of Cabin (No. HS 1) as seen from the northwest. The Windmill (No. HS 2) can be seen on right side of photograph.

PHOTO NO

6



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3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Richard I. Ortega

DATE OF PHOTO August, 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT United States National Park Service,
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The Windmill (No. HS 2), as seen from the east.
(New building in background.)

PHOTO NO 7



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PHOTO NO. 8

South side of Cabin (No. HS 1) as seen from the south.



Source: Agate Fossil Beds National Monument Collection, History file,
number A-238

Date: 1911

Photographer: Unknown

Description: View of northeast side of Bone Cabin (HS-01) in right background.
Northeast view of American Museum Shack (HS-03) in left foreground. Privy
(HS-05) in left background. Fences (HS-06) around the perimeter of complex.



Source: Agate Fossil Beds National Monument Collection, History file,
number A-239

Date: ca. 1911

Photographer: Unknown

Description: View of east side of Bone Cabin (HS-01) in left background. East
view of American Museum Shack (HS-03) in center. Barn A (HS-04) in left
foreground.



Source: E. H. Barbour Collection, University of Nebraska State Museum, Archives, number 85-507-2.

Date: October 12, 1912

Photographer: E. F. Schramm, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Description: View of southeast side of Bone Cabin (HS-01) in left background. Southeast view of American Museum Shack (HS-03) in center. Barn A (HS-04) in center foreground.



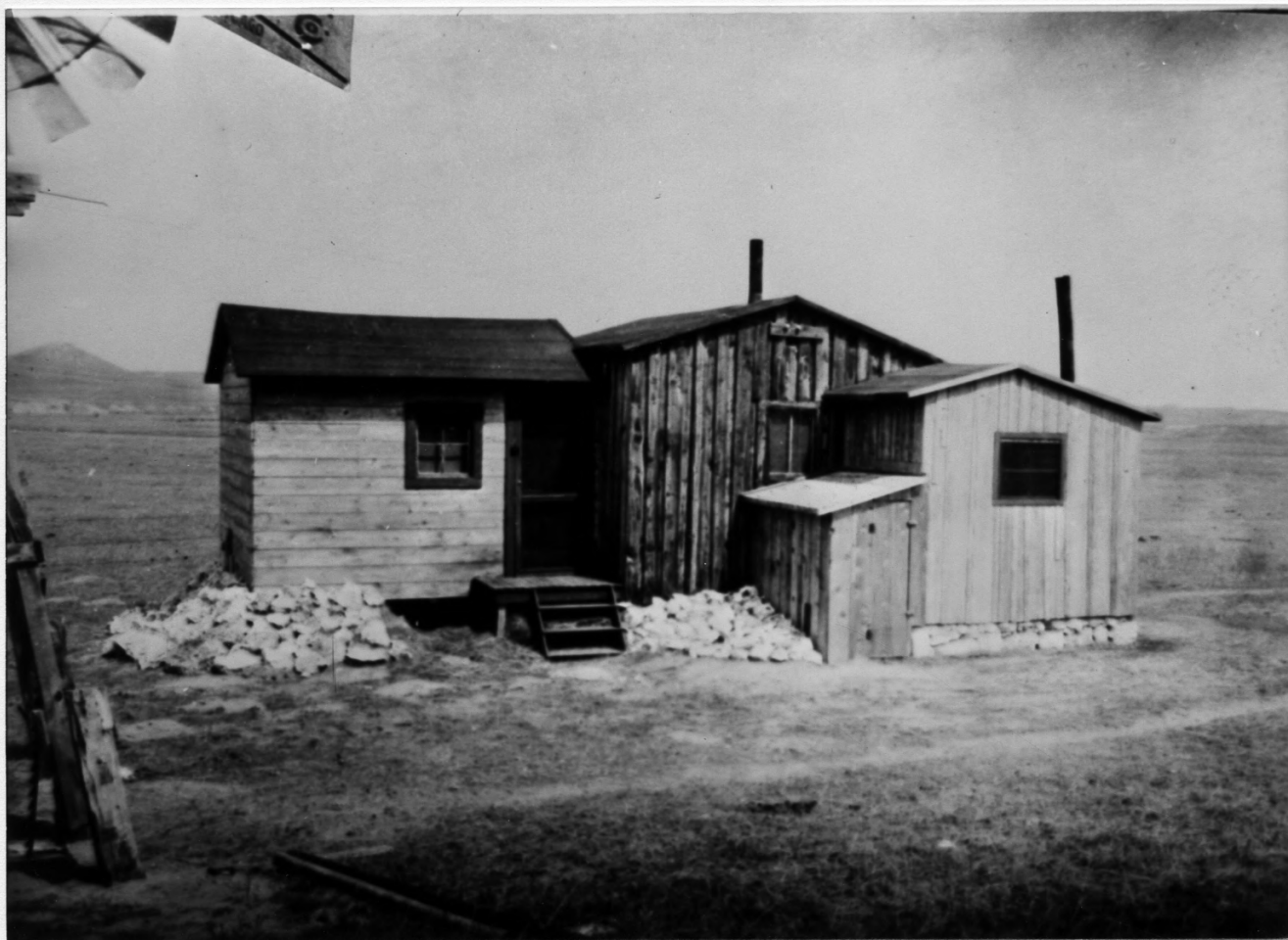
Source: Agate Fossil Beds National Monument Collection, History file,
number A-240

Date: ca. 1913-1914

Photographer: Unknown

Description: View of northeast side of Bone Cabin (HS-01) with alterations in
right background. Northeast view of American Museum Shack (HS-03) with sod roof
in center foreground. Storm Cellar (HS-03) in left background. Fences (HS-06)
around perimeter of complex.

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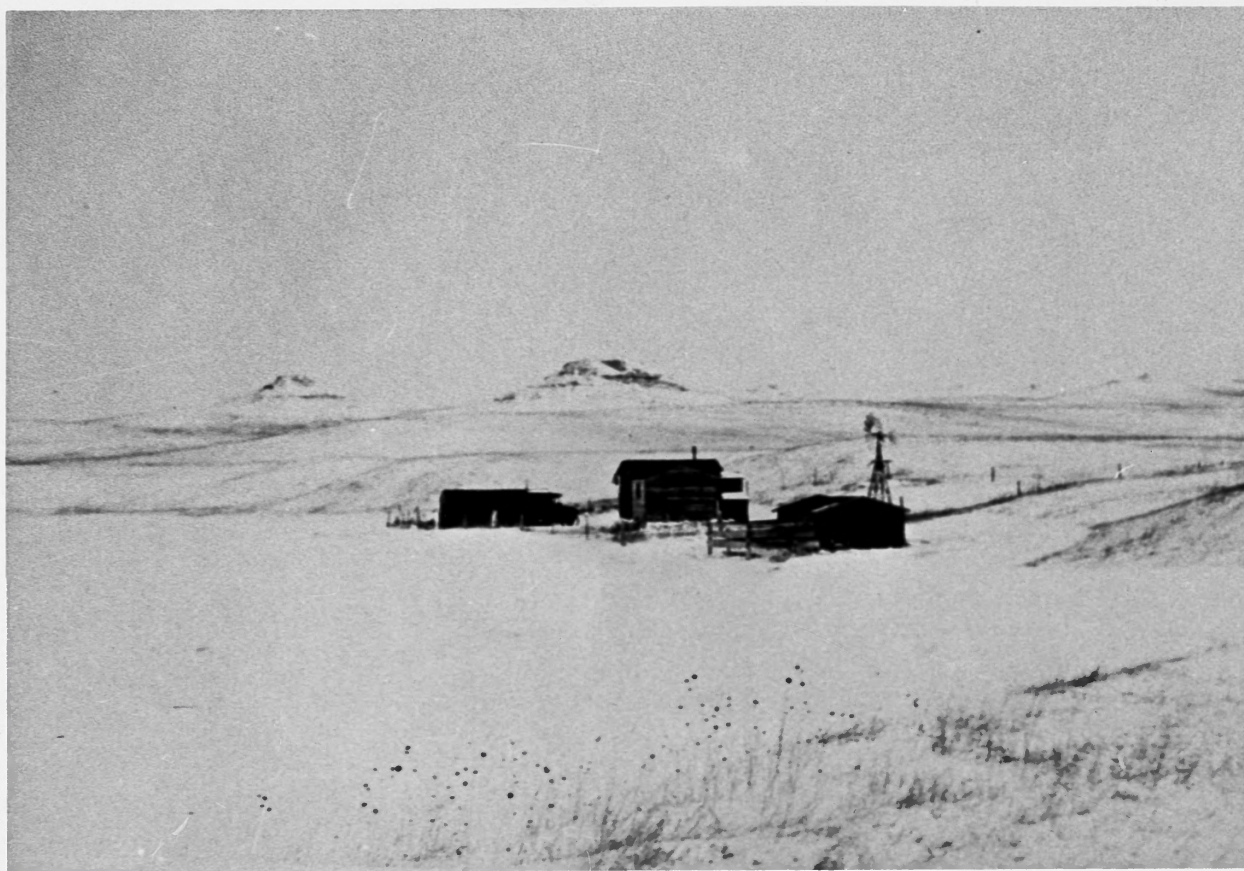


Source: Agate Fossil Beds National Monument Collection, History file,
number A-241

Date: ca. 1914

Photographer: Unknown

Description: View of south side of Bone Cabin (HS-01). Portion of Windmill
(HS-02) in left foreground.



Source: Cook Collection, Scotts Bluff National Monument, Box K, file "Misc."

Date: ca. 1920-1925

Photographer: Unknown

Description: View of east side of Bone Cabin Complex. Barn B (HS-07) in foreground.



Source: National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, Omaha, Nebraska.

Date: June 13, 1985

Photographer: Charles Trupia, Historian, National Park Service.

Description: View of northeast side of Bone Cabin (HS-01).



Source: National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, Omaha, Nebraska.

Date: June 13, 1985

Photographer: Charles Trupia, Historian, National Park Service.

Description: View of southwest side of Bone Cabin (HS-01).

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Source: National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, Omaha, Nebraska.

Date: June 13, 1985

Photographer: Charles Trupia, Historian, National Park Service.

Description: View of east side of Bone Cabin (HS-01). Windmill (HS-02) in left background.

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Source: National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, Omaha, Nebraska.

Date: June 13, 1985

Photographer: Charles Trupia, Historian, National Park Service.

Description: View of south side of Cabin (HS-01). Windmill (HS-02) in left foreground. Fences (HS-06) in foreground.

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