

**Southern New Hampshire University**

Fort Laramie

A Historic Guide to the West  
Historic Buildings Guide

A Capstone Project Submitted to the College of Online and Continuing Education in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Master of Arts in History

By

Andrew Wayland

Torrington, Wyoming

January, 2018

Copyright © 2018 by Andrew Wayland  
All Rights Reserved

Student: Andrew Wayland

I certify that this student has met the requirements for formatting the capstone project and that this project is suitable for preservation in the University Archive.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'D. ...', written over a horizontal line.

February 2, 2018

---

Southern New Hampshire University  
College of Online and Continuing Education

---

Date

## **Abstract**

Fort Laramie National Historic Site in southeastern Wyoming recalls the days of the frontier period of the West (1760s to 1890s). From 1849 to 1890, the military fort at Fort Laramie was an important center of diplomacy, trade, and warfare on the Northern Plains. Many of the most important and vivid figures working to expand America passed through Fort Laramie. Trappers, fur traders, missionaries, overland emigrants, homesteaders, cowboys, soldiers, and Plains Indians all had an impact at Fort Laramie. Through various media resources, Fort Laramie's history is told and one of the most important aspects of this history, the physical historic structures is only briefly touched upon. The historic structures are just one of the many focal points that can be concentrated on during a typical visitor experience. A qualitative analysis into the archival documents through the Fort Laramie Library & Archive, Fort Laramie Interpretation Cache, interviews with National Park Staff at Fort Laramie and interviews with local historians are able to be compiled into a Historic Buildings Guide that fully explore the historic structures at Fort Laramie which are a significant part of its history.

## **Dedication**

Special thank you and dedication to Mom and Dad, Nick, Michaela, Daniel, Ben, and Grammie for put up with all my history leaps and inquires. I could not have done with without your support.

To my love, you are my rock.

Finally, to all future historians, keep at it and learn as much as you can. History is a wondrous field and we are lucky to be in this field.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iv
List of Figures.....	vii
Acknowledgments.....	viii
List of Abbreviations .....	ix
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Historiography.....	5
Chapter 2: Methodology .....	10
Chapter 3: Target Audience .....	17
Chapter 4: Project Plan and Topic Research.....	23
Chapter 5: Recommendations and Ethical Considerations <sup>[OBJ]</sup> .....	39
Chapter 6: Budget and Staffing.....	42
Conclusion .....	45
Appendix A: Historic Buildings Guide.....	47
Appendix B: Interview Consent Forms .....	62
Bibliography .....	66

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Recreation Visits by Year.....	18
Figure 2: Recreation Visitors 2017.....	19
Figure 3: Foreign Visitor Percentages .....	21
Figure 4: Proposed Budget.....	44

## **Acknowledgments**

I want to say thank you to the Park Rangers and Local Historians that helped me immensely with researching and creating this project:

Eric Valencia: Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services at Fort Laramie National Historic Site

Steve Fullmer: Park Ranger at Fort Laramie National Historic Site

Joseph Reasoner: Park Ranger at Fort Laramie National Historic Site

Don Hodgson: Retired College Professor, Torrington, Wyoming

Shelia Mulenkamp: Fort Laramie Historical Association

### **List of Abbreviations**

- ADA.....Americans with Disabilities Act
- Fort Laramie.....Fort Laramie National Historic Site
- NPS.....National Park Service

## **Introduction**

For a final capstone project for the MA History program in public history, the research project proposed is the creation of a Historic Buildings Guide that will explore a facet of the expansive history at Fort Laramie that cannot be covered in a typical visitor's experience. Research for the Historic Buildings Guide was gathered cooperatively with the National Park Service and Fort Laramie National Historic Site to deliver materials that are consistent with the site's mission statement. The Historic Buildings Guide provides an educational supplement to the materials already provided by Fort Laramie and the National Park Service. By using sources that incorporate historical documents written by former Fort Laramie staff, the Historic Buildings Guide gives the general public further knowledge of the vast history at Fort Laramie. This Historic Buildings Guide adds to the cache of interpretation materials available for visitors presented via the Park Service providing a resource that uses first person accounts, interviews, internal park documents, external documents giving visitors materials not readily accessible to the visitors enhancing their tangible and intangible experience at the Fort Laramie site.

Fort Laramie National Historic Site showcases the period of western expansion (1760s-1890s) and creates programming and educational materials to show visitors the history of the westward expansion period. Fort Laramie is part of the group of National Park System Historic Sites. Many of these sites present aspects of western history that can be very different than the expected idea of the American West. Fort Laramie is part of the National Park Service (NPS) and the Park Service defines Fort Laramie's mission as "Fort Laramie National Historic Site represents the National Park Service theme of westward expansion (1763-1898), with a sub-

theme of military-Indian conflicts.”<sup>1</sup> Fort Laramie was established as a military fort in 1849 to protect westward bound travelers on the Oregon Trail system. Fort Laramie played a key role in a series of military-Indian conflict campaigns in the 1870s and 1880s. Fort Laramie remained a military fort until 1890 when it was abandoned for more modern military posts.

Chapter one of this thesis includes a historiography that explores the sources available on the historic buildings and the surrounding history of Fort Laramie. Included in this chapter is an exploration of topics for further research when the need arises. Chapter two concerns the methodology associated with conducting research and designing the Historic Buildings Guide. This information discusses the roles of external institutions and individuals that played important roles in developing this Historic Buildings Guide. Chapter three focuses on the intended audience for the use of this Historic Buildings Guide. This chapter will also explore the general audience at Fort Laramie and the importance of the guide for this audience. Chapter four covers the plan for creating the Historic Buildings Guide, along with presenting an encapsulating history of Fort Laramie. Chapter five will discuss the project recommendations and any ethical concerns with regards to the historical narrative and other potential obstacles.

The primary research question being studied in this project is how can an updated Historic Buildings Guide be used as an educational material for visitors and is it worth it to develop a Historic Guide? This question is used to establish a need for the Park Service at Fort Laramie to have expanded supplemental sources on various aspects of the Fort Laramie site. This

---

<sup>1</sup> M. Louise Samson, “Revised Scope of Collections Statement for Fort Laramie National Historic Site,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1993), 3.

question is critical in shaping the research done on this project. Research for this project follows the primary and secondary sources written on aspects of the history of Fort Laramie as well as internal documents written by the Park Service and Fort Laramie Staff. Many of the sources exclusively discuss the history of Fort Laramie and the historic buildings included in the Historic Buildings Guide. And with this research question in mind, and designing a Historic Buildings Guide, it is important to answer this question to create a useful source for visitors. The selection of this topic comes from the National Park Service at Fort Laramie staff recommendation of an additional resource for visitors and the need to create updated documents with the most current information. The need to present materials that interpret the historic buildings allows for educational enjoyment for visitors.

A thorough understanding of the history surrounding the historic buildings will be beneficial in designing the Historic Buildings Guide. The final Historic Buildings Guide is based on the original Historic Buildings Guide with adding new findings, information not included in the original guide, and will be a creation that will allow the average park visitor to understand another aspect of Fort Laramie that they potentially could not understand during the average visit. In the final chapter of the thesis will discuss the budgeting and staffing options that will move the project from theoretical to functional. The specific details regarding the phases of the project as well as the details regarding costs and funding are also outlined. Following the conclusion, a copy of the finalized Historic Buildings Guide will be included in Appendix A. The original Historic Buildings Guide was used as a self-guided tour for visitors to view some of the buildings around the Fort with a more in-depth explanation of these buildings. The finalized booklet will include the nine buildings included in the original Historic Buildings Guide with

added information on other standing buildings around Fort Laramie including a section on the importance of the ruins and foundations of no longer standing buildings.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Steve Fullmer, "Historic Buildings Guide," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1983).

## **Chapter 1: Historiography**

As mentioned in places throughout this document, the majority of secondary sources cover a broad study of Fort Laramie including military history of the Fort and the significant events in Western History that took place around Fort Laramie. When visiting Fort Laramie, visitors can learn about military soldier life, the importance of the Fort to Wyoming history, and various topics about the history of Fort Laramie. In a typical visit to Fort Laramie, a visitor can learn over 12,000 years of history regarding the various periods of the region and only a fraction of this can be absorbed by the average visitor.

In the average visit, the Park Service Rangers and the materials provided to the visitors are only able to briefly speak about the buildings in conjunction with their main speaking points. Conclusions gathered from the research show that many of the secondary sources only cover the buildings peripherally and focus on the historical events and people that had ties to the Fort as a military institution instead. The secondary literature sources regarding the historical buildings available in materials for visitors is sorely lacking, leading to gaps in the historic source narrative at Fort Laramie and for researchers. The varying gaps, such as the limited amount of information exploring the makeup of the historical buildings provides an opportunity to create an original work that will cover the historical buildings in a way that can be used as a source to learn about the significance of the buildings that can tie to the historic event and people that were associated with Fort Laramie.

Currently, Fort Laramie and the NPS present information through a series of talks given by the Park Rangers, research done through the archives, and tours around the grounds of the Fort. Along with these things, the NPS in conjunction with the Fort Laramie Historic Association sells books and pamphlets on the history and other aspects of Fort Laramie. These books and

pamphlets have come from the NPS itself, local historians, and state historians. The Fort Laramie staff tries to create educational materials that can provide tangible and intangible experiences for the visitors that come to the Fort. The major historiographical debate that is associated with Fort Laramie is how to portray information about the Fort's history in a way that people will be able to learn about the differences between what historically happened and what the myth of what people think western history is about. The various secondary sources cover many aspects regarding Fort Laramie history and there are distinct sources where subject material is abundant.

The most current secondary source on Fort Laramie covers a comprehensive history of the stages of use of the Fort, which includes the period of the NPS. *Fort Laramie: Military Bastion of the High Plains* by Douglas McChristian explains that "Fort Laramie, more than any other military post during the frontier era, witnessed the salient events that shaped the western United States,"<sup>1</sup> McChristian makes the point that Fort Laramie was not just a military fort, but it was comprehensively the gateway to the western area and the Fort itself was instrumental in creating western history. McChristian looks at specific historical research done in the historic buildings and how these buildings played an important role in historical events. McChristian is able to compile a scope of research that is able to explore a fuller history of Fort Laramie that can be easily accessible to all people.

In the book, *Images of America: Fort Laramie* author Starley Talbott provides a visual historical collection of photographs related the various periods of use of Fort Laramie, the people

---

<sup>1</sup> Douglas McChristian, *Fort Laramie: Military Bastion of the High Plains*, (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 33.

who cohabitated in the structures, and how the historic structures have been used in the current period by the National Park Service.<sup>2</sup> Talbott created a resource that is visually appealing to both visitors and researchers by providing pictures from the Fort Laramie Archives and Library as well as pictures taken by the author. This book is a recommended resource for visitors wanting to know more information about certain historical points. This source is straightforward in its goal to show a progression of time at Fort Laramie. While this book does contain significant information regarding the historic structures, this source is best used in conjunction with more detailed sources to create a clearer picture of the historical elements of the history of Fort Laramie.

*Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West* is one of the earliest secondary sources written on Fort Laramie during the early period of the National Park Service period. Authors LeRoy Hafen and Francis Marion Young provide a resource that can be used as part of the study on Fort Laramie. This book is divided into two distinct parts. The first half of the book covers Fort Laramie as a fur-trading post from 1834 to 1849 and the second half covers Fort Laramie as a military post from 1849 to 1890. Included in this second section is a brief history of the early twentieth century period at Fort Laramie. This book is written in an easily readable and straightforward style that allows for readers to easily understand some events that transpired through stories and key points.<sup>3</sup> As this is an early source in the historical narrative, there is very little beyond stories that have little detail that seem to compress the history rather than give more

---

<sup>2</sup> Starley Talbott, *Images of America: Fort Laramie* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Edgar B. Wesley, review of *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West, 1834-1890*, by LeRoy R. Hafen, Francis M. Young, *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 26, no. 1 (June 1939): 105, accessed January 22, 2018. JSTOR.

clarifying explanations.<sup>4</sup> This secondary source is a must read for all incoming Park Service Interpretive staff and it is a recommended resource for visitors to learn about a basic but detailed history at Fort Laramie.

The Collection Management Plan was written in accordance with the NPS-28 document. The plan is “designed to assist each park or center in improving its museum collection management program.”<sup>5</sup> This plan uses internal documents, policies, and regulations along with NPS resources to determine the current conditions of the resources and collections at Fort Laramie during the military period. This source is used to provide recommendations “for improvement in collections management procedures and operation.”<sup>6</sup> This source covers each of the standing structures at Fort Laramie and gives improvement ideas and update options for each of the structures. This is a fundamental document for the Park Service when working to properly care and repair the historic structures. The information included in this source is of high quality and quantity as it is one of the only sources that explore the history of the historic structures as well as the preservation of the structures and artifacts held at Fort Laramie.

The Park Service has published secondary sources on various aspects of Fort Laramie and the history of the area. One such book is *Fort Laramie and the Changing Frontier* by David Lavender. This book is an Official National Park Handbook for Fort Laramie that explains that “the following pages tell the story of this great outpost of empire and its influence over a wide

---

<sup>4</sup> E. Douglas Branch, review of *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West, 1834-1890*, by LeRoy R. Hafen, Francis Marion Young, *Pacific Historical Review* 7, no. 4 (December 1938): 383, accessed January 22, 2018, JSTOR.

<sup>5</sup> Wendy C. Jessup, “Collective Management Plan,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1992), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Jessup, 1.

region.”<sup>7</sup> Lavender is a well-known author throughout the Park Service and his work and research using sources from Fort Laramie archives clearly relate to aspects of Fort Laramie history to visitors in a take home source. This source gives explanations of various western history events in a way that explores the historical history of each and dispels myths of the west. Overall, this book has a strong narrative that provides high quality and quantity amounts of information. At Fort Laramie, there is a very distinct telling of the history of the Fort to dispel the idea that people receive from western movies and this history is used to promote factual history.

Through research, it is shown that there are a select number of secondary sources that reference the historic buildings that reside at Fort Laramie. There is, however, a significant amount of information regarding the historic buildings that can be used as interpretive materials for visitor interaction through primary sources. The historic buildings are one of the most important pieces of historical interpretation at Fort Laramie and the site has the purpose to preserve, protect, and maintain the historic buildings, resources, and surrounding area. The NPS established a statement explaining this, “The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.”<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> David Lavender, *Fort Laramie and the Changing Frontier*, (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1983), 2.

<sup>8</sup> National Park Service, “NPS Mission and FOLA Purpose Statement,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2016).

## Chapter 2: Methodology

The primary methodology and historical lenses used in conducting research come from the social and cultural standpoints as well as the idea of local history. The social history combined with architectural history and the local history of the area aides in defining the different historic buildings at the site and the cultural history with social history defines the important of the buildings both in the past as well as how they are looked at in the present. The use of social and cultural historic lenses to look at the methodology in creating this project as well as research methods develops insights into the need for a project like this. In developing the most effective research process that encapsulates the greatest amount of information available, these lenses were researched together to develop the best understanding of the structure of the historic buildings and the cultural meanings behind the historic buildings.

To begin with, the necessity to establish what the historic buildings are, determine the parameters of this project themselves. This provides boundaries for research and creates a stopping point within the topic. A project covering the entire history of Fort Laramie would require years of study and significant work beyond a masters' thesis project. In building a research foundation, the research process began with the social history lens combined with a study of architectural history and local history lenses to show the importance of the physical historic buildings including the materials of what they consist.

Looking at the methodology of studying architecture at Fort Laramie can best be described by author Alison K. Hoagland. "Over time, the initial concept of the importance of a site may be influenced by the curatorial focus on different aspects of the past. [...] Restoration to a particular time period or reconstruction of a long-gone building reveals the site's underlying

interpretive strategy.”<sup>1</sup> Along with studying the architecture of the physical historical buildings, studying the methodology of local history is also important to this project. Local history is important to this project as Fort Laramie is an important cultural object to the Eastern Wyoming area. The local history can be microcosmic social history or a microhistory of the area at Fort Laramie during the time of military occupation, homesteading period, and the current Park Service period.<sup>2</sup>

The methodology of studying the cultural history of the historic buildings in a way that explores the past and present at Fort Laramie is significant when creating a Historic Buildings Guide. The cultural history of Fort Laramie is important as it can be used to interpret how the buildings were used by the people who lived or connected to Fort Laramie during its various periods of occupation. The use of cultural anthropology to study the community at Fort Laramie can also be used to handle the general facts and the more specific details known at Fort Laramie as well as to respect the culture of the people in the past and see the world as they saw it.<sup>3</sup> Local historians from the area use cultural history and cultural anthropology to study the cultural diversity that has always played a role at Fort Laramie. Local historian Don Hodgson explained that every person who came to Fort Laramie and the surrounding area has a story and these stories are important to tell while explaining the history of families in the area.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Alison K. Hoagland, “Architecture and Interpretation at Forts Laramie and Bridger,” *The Public Historian* 23, no. 1 (Winter 2001), 27.

<sup>2</sup> John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of History* (London: Routledge, 2015), 66-69.

<sup>3</sup> Tosh, 221-224.

<sup>4</sup> Don Hodgson (Goshen County Local Historian, Retired College Professor), interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Torrington, Wyoming, December 9, 2017.

These search terms provided multiple areas in which to work from including consulting the library and archives at the Fort Laramie site as well as using online journals found through search engines (i.e. JSTOR) to understand the particulars of the period that the building materials were made. Along with determining what the buildings were physically made of, using a cultural lens in research to determine the significance of the use of the buildings were identified.

Once the terms for researched were defined and arranged in searchable terms, general research was begun with the Fort Laramie National Historic Site Library and Archive, the Interpretation cache at the Fort Laramie Site and the Goshen County Public Library. Working with each of these institutions yielded information that provided insight into both the social and cultural history of Fort Laramie. At the Fort Laramie Library and Archive, the archival staff was extremely helpful with determining what primary and secondary sources could be used in a way that could work to create the finalized version of the Historic Buildings Guide. Along with the materials gathered from the Fort Laramie archival staff, Fort Laramie Park Rangers Steve Fullmer and Joe Reasoner found materials and sources in the Interpretation cache that explain periods of the historical source narrative at Fort Laramie. Park Ranger Joe Reasoner, in an interview with the author, explained that each source collected in the Interpretation cache is used by Fort Laramie staff to provide the visitors to the park with more connection points to the historic buildings as well as giving visitors more visual and auditory points to utilize.<sup>5</sup>

The original Historic Buildings Guide was used in this project as a basis to better understand how National Parks Service sources from Fort Laramie should look to provide

---

<sup>5</sup> Joe Reasoner (Fort Laramie National Historic Site Park Ranger), interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, September 29, 2017.

visitors with educational materials. Using this source provided points of contact with older sources during the research process. This Historic Buildings Guide was originally intended to be used as a self-guided tour through the Fort Laramie grounds to point out certain historic buildings and ruins. The methodology in using this source explains that the original Historic Buildings Guide provided additional historic understanding not provided by the Park Staff during the period in which the original Historic Buildings Guide was written.

The finalized Historic Buildings Guide created for the project is used by visitors and staff a resource that can be used both on Fort grounds during a visit, but it can also be used as a take-home resource that can continue to teach about the historic structures after a typical visitor experience. The methodology of this source will ultimately be used to as both a research and teaching tool for those who are interested in learning more about the historic structures and buildings around Fort Laramie. One important feature of this new guide is the inclusion of sources and further research opportunities. Using social and cultural historical lenses to study the historic structures and their meaning is helpful but there is another lens that this project involves. Historical memory is critical to creating a project like this. The Historic Buildings Guide and the original Historic Buildings Guide explore the meaning of historical memory.

Historical Memory teaches us about our present by looking at our past, but memory also looks at the past as it was. Memory is significant to this project as well as many aspects of the historic narrative at Fort Laramie. Many historians have studied memory as a look into the nature of history and this is clear when looking at the historical memory at Fort Laramie. One aspect of memory that historian Marc Bloch used is the idea that “within a generation or two, human affairs have undergone a change which is not merely rapid but total,” by using this to understand

memory at Fort Laramie, it can be seen the connections or disconnections the visitors have with the various historical aspects around the grounds.<sup>6</sup> As well as understanding the tying the historical buildings to items that visitors can connect. Using memory as part of the methodology of this project gives insights into how to use memory and experiences as source materials.

In continuing with historical memory in this project, the idea of collective memory is important to define the parameters of what this Historic Buildings Guide covers. Collective memory is a tool that is used often by the public when speaking about the Western United States. Many see this area as “the wild west” where there were gun fights and skirmishes with Native Americans, along with Manifest Destiny that “conquered the west”. Many visitors that come to visit Fort Laramie see the West much differently than what is presented. This collective memory as defined by Tosh as “how a community- whether national or local- visualizes its past conditions, its understanding of society [...]. All societies draw on memories that extend further back than the lifetimes of its present-day members.”<sup>7</sup> This idea is clear from visitors that want to know about the intense periods that took place in the west seen through media interpretations. Tosh explains this “the more remote past is not confined to history books and archives; it is present also in popular consciousness, fed by a variety of commemorative activities and recorded in a variety of media.”<sup>8</sup> Using materials such as Park Ranger talks, videos, books, audio talks, and the Historic Buildings Guide can work to add and correct the collective memory around Fort Laramie.

---

<sup>6</sup> Marc Bloch, “The Historian’s Craft,” in *Historians on History*, ed. John Tosh (London: Routledge, 2013), 186.

<sup>7</sup> Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 255.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Historical lens including social, cultural and memory were used to understand the primary and secondary sources found for this project. Many of the sources were found through work experience through the Park Service. Primary source reports were found in the Interpretation cache of materials and through the library and archive of Fort Laramie. The Interpretation cache is a small library of materials gathered by the Park Rangers who work in the interpretation department to give the part time park staff materials to learn about the Fort to prepare them to answer questions from visitors. This cache is extremely beneficial as it holds information and materials on many different topics about that tie to the history of Fort Laramie including the building reports, books on the history of the U.S. military, and interpretive materials. The library and archive at Fort Laramie have a significant amount of information gathered by Park staff and volunteers that covers the full history of Fort Laramie including primary and secondary sources. Through research done at the Fort Laramie site, there were primary sources found that were not included in the Interpretation cache and received good recommendations from the park curator as to how to best use the furnishing reports to find the information that will be most relevant to the final booklet guide.<sup>9</sup> There is only a select number of secondary sources that sporadically reference the historic buildings that reside at Fort Laramie. Because of underused primary furnishing reports in documentation and visitor materials, there is a significant amount of information regarding the historic buildings that can be used as interpretive materials. This project will help to cover some of the gaps in the literature by using the furnishing reports to create the Historic Buildings Guide. The historic buildings are one of the most significant pieces of historical interpretation at Fort Laramie. This project ultimately

---

<sup>9</sup> Steve Fullmer (Fort Laramie National Historic Site Park Ranger), interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, October 1, 2017.

will work to fill the historical gap that is found when regarding the historic structures and their importance to the narrative at Fort Laramie.

### Chapter 3: Target Audience

The target audience for a project of this scope is understood from the idea of creating the Historic Buildings Guide that will allow all possible visitors to use the guide during their visit and use it after they leave Fort Laramie. As Fort Laramie is a National Historic Site, the demographics can vary year to year. According to Steve Fullmer, Park Ranger at Fort Laramie, the Site is unique as there are people that visit from all 50 of the United States as well as from countries from all over the world in including a large group from countries like Great Britain, Germany, and France.<sup>1</sup> Along with the international audience that visits the site, there is a strong local resident presence at the site and this group has been a strong presence at the site since its inception. The local people who have had a strong presence at Fort Laramie is a good representation of the population of Wyoming. As of 2016, Wyoming's population had a 92.8% white origin and 84.1% of white not including people of Hispanic origin.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, there is not a readily amount of available information to be able to present statistics regarding the different variations of people who visit the site. Due to legal and ethical issues, the information available includes the number of recreation visitors by month and by year as well as traffic counts at the main gates.<sup>3</sup> Figure 1 shows Recreational Visitor statistics from the National Park Service Visitor Use Statistic website.

---

<sup>1</sup> Steve Fullmer (Fort Laramie National Historic Site Park Ranger), Interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, December 16, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> United States Census Bureau, "Quick Facts Wyoming," accessed January 31, 2018, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/WY/RHI125126>.

<sup>3</sup> "Recreation Visitors by Month Fort Laramie NHS," NPS Stats: Park Reports, last modified 2018, accessed January 23, 2018, [https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Recreation%20Visitors%20By%20Month%20\(1979%20-%20Last%20Calendar%20Year\)?Park=FOLA](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Recreation%20Visitors%20By%20Month%20(1979%20-%20Last%20Calendar%20Year)?Park=FOLA).

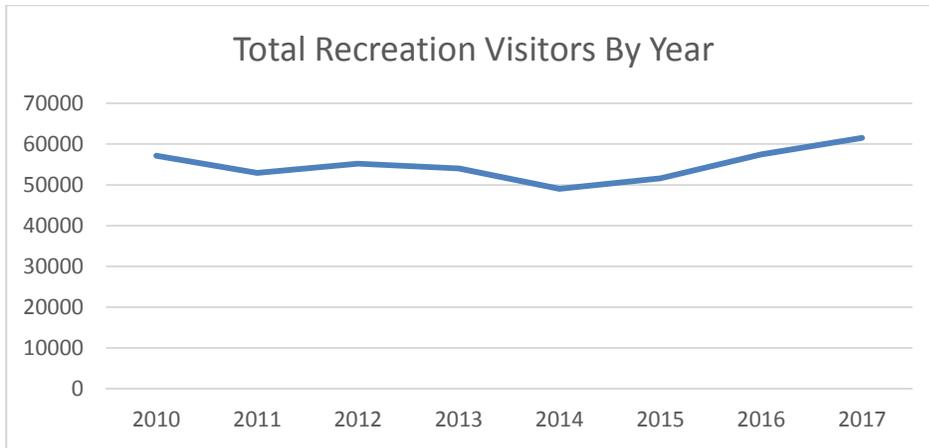


Figure 1: Recreation Visits by Year

Park Ranger Fullmer approximated the average visitor in the last few years: eighteen percent visit by tour bus, a significant number of visitors are mostly older and are most identify white/Caucasian.<sup>4</sup> Along with this average group, there are a significant number of school groups that visit the site from around the state of Wyoming as well as surrounding states like Colorado and Nebraska. Figure 2 shows Recreational Visitor statistics from the National Park Service Visitor Use Statistic website.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

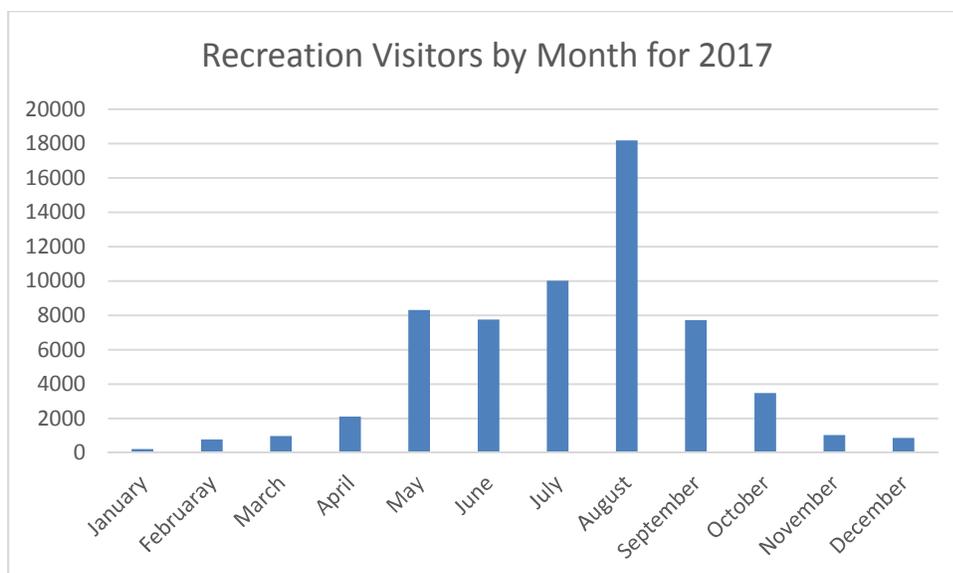


Figure 2: Recreation Visitors 2017

The overall target audience for the preliminary Historic Buildings Guide will be the average retired, white, English-speaking visitor. The Historic Buildings Guide will be written in a way that visitors from elementary age children to adults will be able to comprehend. Focus on these groups will allow for the site to study how the guide is used or purchased by the average visitor. The uniqueness of a National Park Site like Fort Laramie is that the demographics of visitors is always changing and the NPS always strives to be accommodating to all visitors. One significant minority group in the state of Wyoming is the Native American population. The Native American tribes from the area are important to the history of Fort Laramie and these groups could work with the NPS in the future to develop resources that pertain to the tribal history that took place at the site. This Historic Buildings Guide could be used as a measure to add more of the Native American history to the buildings. There are recorded sources that

explain the Native American presence at Fort Laramie.<sup>5</sup> These sources could be used to augment the Historic Buildings Guide. The NPS and Fort Laramie strive to include Native American history into its narrative and in the near future, there is a significant anniversary of one of the Fort Laramie treaty signings where there will be enormous involvement from many Native American tribes that have connections to Fort Laramie.

Along with the focusing on the targeted audience, this guide will be used with school groups that tour Fort Laramie. School groups of fourth and fifth graders come to Fort Laramie from August to October and then March to the end of the school year in May.<sup>6</sup> These school groups have a curriculum that teaches about the state's history and the schools use the field trip time to Fort Laramie as a tool for the students to connect to what they are learning. One of the goals in the creation of this Historic Buildings Guide is to have these fourth and fifth graders understand the guide and use it in their learning as it will be written at a reading comprehension level for all visitors.

It has been planned to have future options to translate the guide into other languages to provide for foreign visitors with a resource in their native language, guides that are ADA acceptable and the potential to create an online guide that can be accessed by a website provided by the Park Service.

As many foreign tourists from countries such as Great Britain, Germany, France, and from the rest of the world, the importance of having resources in multiple languages is important. Currently, there are very few resources at Fort Laramie that are in another language besides

---

<sup>5</sup> Steve Fullmer (Fort Laramie National Historic Site Park Ranger), Interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, December 16, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Joe Reasoner (Fort Laramie National Historic Site Park Ranger), interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, September 29, 2017.

standard English. One resource that has translated versions is the Touring Fort Laramie Map, translated into French and German and potentially in Spanish. In the past, there have also been secondary source books in the gift shop, however, when these books are sold out they are not often reordered, and this creates a lack of materials that foreign visitors can use.<sup>7</sup>

In statistical data from the last six years, there is been a continued rise in foreign visitors coming to National Parks. From 33.4% in 2012 to an estimated 36.5% in 2017, foreign visitors are becoming more interested in the National Parks.<sup>8</sup> In looking at the statistics of where foreign visitors are from it is shown that having a version of this Historic Buildings Guide translated into French, Spanish, and German will allow for opportunities to create more visitor experiences for non-English speaking groups. There is a potential to have these guides in other languages such as Chinese and Japanese as there has been an uptick in Eastern World travel to the National Parks.

Figure 3 shows Foreign Visitor statistics from the National Park Traveler article and website.

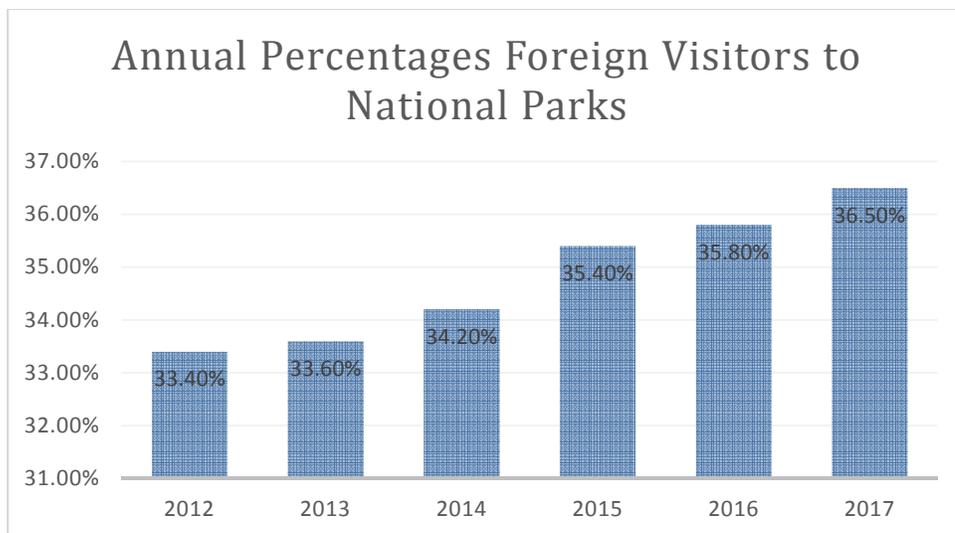


Figure 3: Foreign Visitor Percentages

<sup>7</sup> Reasoner, Interview, September 29, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> National Parks Traveler, "America's National Parks a Magnet for International Visitors," November 3, 2016, accessed January 23, 2018, <https://www.nationalparkstraveler.org/2016/11/americas-national-parks-magnet-international-visitors>.

Braille, audio, and other accessibility minded versions of the Historic Buildings Guide provided for ADA needs will allow for the wider use for visitors. Accessibility at Fort Laramie is highly important to both the Park staff as well as all visitors that come to experience Fort Laramie. Accessibility for a site like Fort Laramie is defined as “making the sites and exhibits and programs available to all visitors. The goal [...] is to eliminate most physical, communication, and policy or procedural barriers.”<sup>9</sup> Providing this Historic Buildings Guide in multi-form versions will begin to make the Fort Laramie resources more inclusive to all visitors. Fort Laramie is always working to make the site accessible to the broadest possible audience, regardless of ability or disability, educational background or learning style.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> American Association of Museums, “Everyone’s Welcome: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Museums,” accessed January 24, 2018, 3, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED437754.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

## **Chapter 4: Project Plan and Topic Research**

The selection of evidence for this project uses internal documents from the NPS including the original furnishing reports, master management plans, and collection reports. The evidence for this project has been selected through the process of availability of information on each of the sources. The professional standards for historians on the topic of Fort Laramie follow when selecting sources to establish conclusions is to find primary source documents written by NPS staff on various aspects of the history of the Fort. During the twentieth century, the park staff conducted research to create documents that establish missing historical information on the historical buildings at the Fort.

These documents, called furnishing plans, explore the outlines of each of the historical buildings and are used by many secondary source historians as background information within their research. The furnishing reports are held in high regard as these reports are used to preserve and maintain the historic buildings to interpret the diverse roles and significance of the vibrant cultures that interacted at the historic fort. Many of the furnishing reports were written in the 1960s and 1970s and are used in interpretive aspects. These reports were selected for this project because they create historical studies on the buildings on the Fort grounds. In selecting these reports for the booklet, the professional standards of finding primary sources that establish historical information aspects at the Fort. Applying the professional standards of selecting internal sources is significantly important to this project as these sources are used as interpretive information for staff to explain to visitors.

The research of this topic will reflect the professional standards established to interpret both primary and secondary sources. The research done for this project fulfills part of the need to

establish more supplement materials for visitor experience interactions. One source that reflects the professional standards established is the General Furnishing Plan, written in 1960. This plan is the base document that started the series of furnishing plans that were written covering the historic buildings. The argument made by the General Furnishing Plan is that “After all of the voluminous library, manuscript, archival, architectural, and archeological sources have been sifted, the solid residue of information about actual Fort Laramie contemporary furnishings is distressingly meager, as very few informants concerned themselves with this aspect of life at the post.”<sup>1</sup> This General Furnishing Plan, along with the other reports, was developed with the expectation that these reports could be used as primary sources.

The original Historic Buildings Guide was created as a self-guided tour route around the various buildings. This source is the original pamphlet that this project is based on. Steve Fullmer, Park Ranger at Fort Laramie, explains that this source was “created as a visitor source to develop a way for visitors to gain a better understanding through information given in the pamphlet.”<sup>2</sup> This pamphlet was used to provide visitors with supplemental information to better understand the some of the histories of some of the buildings on the Fort grounds. Included in the pamphlet are historic pictures taken of the buildings and pictures taken at the time when the booklet was originally published. Having pictures from this year will help to incorporate a more visual aspect into the final project by understanding what state the historic buildings are currently in. The original Historic Buildings Guide can be used as an interpretive source. This source has good information, but it lacks the new information gathered in the intervening years after it was published. This source is the basis for this project as it is considered out of date and has not been

---

<sup>1</sup> Sally A. Johnson, “General Furnishing Plan,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1960), 6.

<sup>2</sup> Steve Fullmer, “Historic Buildings Guide,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1983), iv.

available to visitors to use for a few years. This document is a clear source that explains the NPS history at Fort Laramie and using this pamphlet as a basis for this project will develop a new supplemental source that will allow for new visitor experiences. Using the information in the original Historic Buildings Guide in conjunction with the new information gathered can create a source that could be sold in the bookstore that can earn money to fund more programming for the Fort.

The primary sources used for this project are very similar to other studies' source bases as many of the projects on Fort Laramie use the same internal sources such as the furnishing reports to create new source materials. Many other historians have used the primary sources that are also used in this project. There are a select number of primary sources that describe the buildings at Fort Laramie and few secondary authors that focus on the historic buildings. Many authors tend to use the buildings as background to the events and people. Because of this, this project is using the sources in a way that different than others. Using the primary sources to create the Historic Buildings Guide will allow for information that is not readily known to be shown to a wide audience.

The primary sources used for this project include furnishing plans and NPS internal documents. One of the foundation documents for the furnishing reports is the General Furnishing Plan. The idea of creating furnishing plans came from the lack of sources on the historic buildings. The General Furnishing Plan author, Sally Johnson, was the Furnishing Curator during the 1960s and she found that "the solid residue of information about actual Fort Laramie contemporary furnishings is distressingly meager, as very few informants concerned themselves

with this aspect of life at the post.”<sup>3</sup> Johnson was able to see a need in the historical source narrative at Fort Laramie, because of this, Johnson helped to create and implement the furnishing report program for the park staff to have historical knowledge on the buildings. The General Furnishing Plan was the base document to which most of the other furnishing reports are modeled.

Another document that is important to this project is the Foundation Document for Fort Laramie. A foundation document is a report that provides the park service with basic guidance for planning and management decisions.<sup>4</sup> This document was created by the NPS staff including the head curator, interpretation rangers, and the superintendent to have a shared and planned understanding of what is important to the park. In developing a foundation document for Fort Laramie, each aspect including the historic buildings was studied to have “the opportunity to integrate and coordinate all kind and levels of planning from a single, shared understanding of what is most important about the park.”<sup>5</sup> This document layouts the current plan and historical significance of each building, the use of interpretation in the structures, as well as the policies of the artifact collections in the historic structures. This 2017 document was created by the Fort Laramie staff including the head curator, head of interpretation, and the superintendent. This source is the most current Fort Laramie NPS document and speaks to the need to present the historic buildings in more materials.

Another source that is important to this project is the Sutler’s Store Furnishing Report. This report is one of the most current furnishing reports. This report, written in 2003 by Staff

---

<sup>3</sup> Sally A. Johnson, “General Furnishing Plan,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1960), 6.

<sup>4</sup> National Park Service, “Foundation Document,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2017), 2.

<sup>5</sup> National Park Service, “Foundation Document,” 2-3.

Curator Jerome Greene, is an updated furnishing report to explain the developments and changes to the building since the original report was written. This report is the most current furnishing report detailing work done and the interpretive opportunities taken with this building in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.<sup>6</sup> The purpose of the furnishing report is to interpret for park visitors the role of the post sutler at Fort Laramie during the period of emigration, 1850s to early 1860s, during which time the sales room served not only the officers and men stationed at the post, but also citizen trappers and traders, Indians, and emigrant families traveling west.”<sup>7</sup> Overall, in the historical source narrative, this source’s language is easier to understand and details the purpose of the building that makes the past and present conditions of the building clear.

The Old Bedlam furnishing report, created in 1964, explores the need to protect and preserve one of the oldest buildings in the state of Wyoming. This report was written by Nan Carson, who was the Furnishings Curator during the period when the original furnishing plans were written, and Carson specifically wrote two reports as well as spent a significant research period exploring the history of the standing structures. This source not only covers the need and recommendations to preserve the building, but also relates the history of the building, and the uses for interpretive aspects of the building. The interpretive purpose and the reasoning to include this building in the guide is clear in the argument “the refurnishing of Old Bedlam to the appropriate period in its history and for the purpose of communicating and interpreting the significance of Fort Laramie and the West is clear to the National Park Service.”<sup>8</sup> The inclusion

---

<sup>6</sup> Jerome A. Greene, “Historic Furnishing Report: Sutler’s Store Sales Room,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2003), 3-5.

<sup>7</sup> Jerome A. Greene, “Historic Furnishing Report: Sutler’s Store Sales Room”, 3.

<sup>8</sup> Nan V. Carson, “Furnishing Plan for Old Bedlam,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1964), 4.

of Old Bedlam in the guide is also important, as it is used in most of the advertising materials for Fort Laramie and is a building that most visitors make a point to see.

The Captain's Quarters furnishing report, also known as Officer's Quarters A was written in 1961 by Sally Johnson, makes the argument that having reports on the military officer's homes can be used as a visitor interaction point where the setups of the buildings would detail a general soldier and his family rather than a specific officer.<sup>9</sup> The inclusion of the Captain's Quarters in the finalized guide is important as there a large quantity of information that explains the building but the building itself is not used in many of the interpretation aspects of Fort Laramie.

The Cavalry Barracks furnishing report, written in 1969 by Don Rickey Jr. and James W. Sheire is the "first cavalry barracks furnishing study undertaken by the National Park Service," to the extent that having the barracks studied and refurbished will make "a major contribution to completing the setting and atmosphere of this famous western outpost."<sup>10</sup> This report was written to interpret the history of the barracks to teach visitors about one of the more popular buildings on Fort grounds. As the Cavalry Barracks is continually used as an interpretation point, the structure is maintained by staff to the best of their ability. This report has a high quality and quantity of information included and is used by the interpretation staff for further information during Park Ranger talks. The inclusion of the Cavalry Barracks as part of the final guide is important as it is one of the buildings that the majority of the visitors' tour. Additionally, it is one of the most used structures at Fort Laramie by visitors and staff alike.

---

<sup>9</sup> Sally A. Johnson, "Furnishing Report for Officer's Quarters 'A'," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961), 12-13.

<sup>10</sup> Don Rickey Jr. and James W. Sheire, "The Cavalry Barracks: Fort Laramie Furnishing Study," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1969), iii.

The primary plan for this project is to create the updated version of the Historic Buildings Guide for Fort Laramie National Historic Site that will provide visitors with another supplemental educational material in addition to the materials already provided by Fort Laramie and the National Park Service. Currently, the publishing of the guide booklet includes creating the booklet in-house by the Park Service or working with the Fort Laramie Historic Association to develop the physical guidebook. As this is a material that will be used by the visitors during their visit, having the physical guidebook on hand will require staff to work to create the books as well as the materials that the book can be used with to provide a multi-sensory experience for the visitors.

Having a physical guidebook bring together materials, resources, and photographs to outline the importance of each of the standing historic structure as well as the importance of the ruins and foundations around the Fort Laramie grounds. It is through the Historic Buildings Guide that the majority of the research becomes relevant. This guide will create awareness for all staff to explore the historic structures in more detail during points of visitor connections and experiences. Appendix A includes an explanation of the Historic Buildings Guide as well as additional resources that can be used to better understand the full importance of the historic structures. Each historic structure and ruin is important to the overall experience at Fort Laramie and each building included in the final Historic Buildings Guide is important to speak about.

### **Commissary Storehouse/ Visitor Center**

The Commissary Storehouse built in 1884, was a lime grout concrete building that served as a food warehouse for the army. The Commissary Building currently holds the Visitor Center, Park headquarters, and the Fort Laramie Historical Association gift shop. The Park Service at

Fort Laramie plans to restore the building to the period of 1884 as a Commissary Storehouse to show visitors the purpose of the Commissary. The building would have had two small offices, which were used by the commissary sergeant and commissary officer with large rooms to store supplies.<sup>11</sup> Commissary positions at Fort Laramie were highly competitive as there only one sergeant allowed at each post. The sergeant was in-charge of the overall accountability of rations held in the warehouse. The warehouse was filled with canned and bottled goods, barrels and sacks of items that were all hauled overland or on railroads from Cheyenne or further places East. Goods were stored with preservation methods including salting, smoking, canning, pickling, and drying. Food items such as meat, potatoes, onions, bacon, and hardtack all needed to be inspected regularly. If the need arose, the commissary sergeant supervised the work of the duty men assigned to him. Along with the rations that were distributed from the commissary, extra rations could be bought by enlisted men and officers. Currently, the Commissary is one of the buildings at Fort Laramie that has the most foot traffic due to the gift shop and Visitor Center. The commissary is currently the permanent building for the Visitor Center, gift shop and Park Service buildings, although there is a hope to restore the commissary building permanently.

### **Old Bakery**

The Bakery, along with the Post Hospital, was one of the most important buildings to the general welfare of the enlisted soldiers at Fort Laramie. The Old Bakery, built in 1876, and the New Bakery Ruins, built in 1883, were used to bake the bread that was a primary element of the soldier's meal rations. The bakery was of paramount importance to the maintenance of the Army. During the military period at Fort Laramie, there were a total of four bakeries that were in use

---

<sup>11</sup> Sally A. Johnson, "General Furnishing Plan," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1960), 41-43.

until the ovens “burnt out.” The standing bakery was in use from 1876 to 1883 and held two ovens that each measured 6’5” by 8’ and had a combined capacity to hold 500 rations per baking. A bread ration consisted of one 20-ounce loaf. Along with the bread rations, soldiers only received a one-pound slab of salt pork and coffee. These rations were not considered sufficient for the well-being of the soldiers. The bakery was on the duty list for soldiers that lasted for 10 days, with very long hours for the men who worked in the bakery. It was very rare to find an enlisted man who had experience with baking and most of the time the men assigned to the bakery were ill-suited and the quality of the bread suffered. Brigadier General Robert Macfeely, Commissary General at Fort Laramie, believed that “the best flour in the hands of a bad baker will produce bad bread.”<sup>12</sup> Currently, visitors can go inside the old bakery to see what tools the enlisted men used, the ovens are closed for safety concerns presently but in the past, were used by the Park Service to make bread during events.

### **Old Guardhouse/ New Guardhouse**

One of the highlights of each day at a frontier military post was the ceremonial changing of the guard. The ceremony was performed in the morning and the soldiers on guardhouse duty were attired in their dress uniforms and white gloves. The ceremony consisted of the soldiers being marched to the parade grounds by the company first sergeant and then were inspected by the Sergeant Major and the Officer of the Day. When the password was then given, and the new guard replaced the old. Soldiers served as guards in a continuous 24-hour span and were stationed at strategic posts around the Fort. Usually, a soldier was on duty for two-hour intervals

---

<sup>12</sup> Jerome A. Greene, “Historic Furnishing Study: Restored 1876 Old Bakery,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1974), 7-8.

and then returned to a room in the guardhouse to wait for their next tour of duty. Guards waiting were not allowed to remove any part of their uniform except their hats and gloves while “resting”. The lower level of the guardhouse was designed to hold forty prisoners without any furniture, stove for heating or lights. There were also two separate solitary confinement cells for those who needed them. Prisoners were assigned less than desirable work details and at night huddled together for warmth with the few blankets they were able to bring during confinement.<sup>13</sup> The Old Guardhouse, built in 1866, was Fort Laramie’s second guardhouse and was used until the 1876 Guardhouse was built. Currently, visitors can walk inside the lower level of the old guardhouse and view the solitary confinement areas. The New Guardhouse was built in 1876 after many complaints from the post surgeon. The new guardhouse replaced the overcrowded and unhealthy older guardhouse. Currently, the new guardhouse is used to hold original armaments from the period including Mountain Howitzer Cannons and a Gatling Gun.

### **Captain’s Quarters**

Built from 1868-1870, these quarters were planned after the increase of officers and enlisted men to protect the western frontier and the emigrant trails in the post- Civil War period. This building was planned as the Commanding Officer’s quarters. However, before the quarters were completed the post commander decided to continue his stay in the building that he already occupied. Because of this the Fort Laramie Quartermaster changed the building plans and made the structure into a duplex with a staircase that is so narrow it is difficult to ascend. One aspect of living at Fort Laramie is that many Officers brought their families with them to live. The wives

---

<sup>13</sup>Sally A. Johnson, “Furnishing Plan for The Old Guardhouse,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961), 6-10

of the Officers would work to make their quarters more livable by bringing in furniture from elsewhere at the officer's expense or would purchase furniture from families who had been transferred to other posts. This work is reflected in the relatively comfortable living conditions seen. Another aspect of living at Fort Laramie was the "ranking out" system, in which officers and their families could be moved out of their quarters by a superior officer in rank or with a longer service record. This led to some of the lower ranking officers living in hallways and tents until new quarters were finished. After the Army vacated Fort Laramie, the Captain's quarters were bought by Mrs. Sandercock who was the Fort Laramie Postmistress and operated the post office from the house from 1890 to 1902.<sup>14</sup> Currently, the Captain's Quarters is available to visitors to view and is used in some events throughout the year.

### **Old Bedlam**

Old Bedlam was built in 1849 and is the oldest surviving Army structure at Fort Laramie and is thought to be the oldest standing military structure in the state of Wyoming.<sup>15</sup> During the Fort Laramie military period, Old Bedlam served as quarters for bachelor officers, housing for married officers and their families, and post command headquarters from its construction to 1868. From 1868 to 1881, Old Bedlam served as a place where people had to live because no other housing was available. Because of the lack of privacy in the bedrooms along with common hallways and common kitchens, there were only a select few who could endure these accommodations. After 1881, Old Bedlam was turned into a duplex. Old Bedlam was significant to the Western expansion story as many significant Western figures passed through its halls

---

<sup>14</sup>Sally A. Johnson, "Furnishing Plan for Officer's Quarters 'A'," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961), 5-8.

<sup>15</sup>Nan V. Carson, "Furnishing Plan for Old Bedlam," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1964), 1-4.

along with thousands of unnamed men who helped to shape this period. Old Bedlam is known as the “Queen” of Fort Laramie as the most recognized building at Fort Laramie. Currently, Old Bedlam is separated into two separate time periods that visitors can view, including what the bachelors quarters looked like in the 1850s and the 1863-1864 post headquarters, when Fort Commander Lt. Col. William O. Collins and his family lived upstairs, and the downstairs was used for official capacities. Old Bedlam is also used in promotional materials for Fort Laramie and is used by the Park Service, visitors, and visiting groups to explore the history of Fort Laramie.

### **Post Surgeon Quarters**

This double set of Officer’s quarters was typical of the quarters built in the 1870s and was completed around 1875. During the period from 1875 to 1890, this building was used by the Post Surgeon and his family. The Post Surgeon was a keystone of the Army medical care system. The Post Surgeon was charged with keeping up the health of all officers, their families, enlisted men and civilian employees of the U.S. Government who lived or came to the Fort. The Post Surgeon would also keep records of weather as well as collected and preserved scientific specimens, which provided crucial information to institutions further east.<sup>16</sup> The Post Surgeon was usually the most highly educated at an Army post and were held in high esteem. The Post Surgeon quarters have been restored to the 1880s period to show visitors the quarters of Post Surgeon Louis Brechemin and his family. Brechemin lived in these quarters from 1885 to 1889 where his study served as both an office and collection point for his many official and personal

---

<sup>16</sup> Nan V. Carson, “Furnishing Plan for The Post Surgeon’s Quarters,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1963), 31-33.

items of study and interest. Most patients were treated at the Post Surgeon's quarters before being sent to the hospital to recuperate. Currently, the Post Surgeon's quarters are open to visitors to view some of the aspects of Frontier Army medicine and treatment practices.

### **Lt. Col. Quarter's (Burt House)**

Built in 1884, this lime grout concrete building was one of two single family officer's quarters built at the Fort. Other structures that families lived in were constructed as duplexes that were designed for more than one family. This house has been restored to the 1887-1888 period when it was occupied by Lt. Col. Andrew Burt and his family. Lt. Col. Burt and his wife Elizabeth enjoyed relatively plain and traditional furnishings rather than the lavish décor that was used in most officer's houses during the Victorian period. This house reflects the high rank of Lt. Col. Burt and the impact of the railroad on Fort Laramie. By the late 1880s, Fort Laramie was within 40 miles of the nearest railway link. A unique aspect of this house is when the National Park Service curators were working to restore this building, they were able to work with Reynolds Burt, son of Lt. Col. Burt, to detail what the building was like when his family was living there.<sup>17</sup> Much of the building is enhanced by having several the original Burt family artifacts in the building, all donated by Reynolds Burt and are used in many of the rooms to show the Burt family's life in 1887-1888. Currently, the Burt house is open to visitors to view aspects of Frontier Army family life through the eyes of the Burt family.

---

<sup>17</sup> Sally A. Johnson, "Furnishing Plan for Officer's Quarters 'F'," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961), 24-25.

## **Post Trader's Store and Complex**

Built in 1849 and additions being added throughout the military period, the Post Trader's store was run by a civilian licensed by the army and was subject to Army supervision. Also called the Sutler's store in the early days of the building. The title of the building and title of the civilian in charge of the store was changed permanently to the Post Trader after the American Civil War due to the corruption in the Sutler system.<sup>18</sup> As the only Army certified civilian trader at Fort Laramie, the post trader was able to create a profitable business with soldiers, Indians, emigrants, gold seekers, and other Western figures. The Post Trader also provided to be an important adjunct to the Fort as he was able to supplement the basic rations that the Army provided to soldiers and was able to make life somewhat more bearable for those who were stationed far away from the comforts of the East. The Post Trader complex was built in various years including the north section, built of stone in 1852, which served as the trader's headquarters and for a time the post office. In 1883, additions were added that housed the officer's club and an enlisted men and civilian's bar. As the Post Trader was able to conduct business with a wide variety of people, he was able to make large profits from the wide-ranging endeavors that ranged from the goods in the store and dealt in beef, wood, and hay contracts. The Post Trader conducted business from the period that the building was open to the time that Fort Laramie was abandoned in 1890. Through the forty-one-year operation, the Post Trader was able to relieve some of the mundaneness of life at the frontier post of Fort Laramie. Currently, the Post Trader store is open for visitors to see what the store looked like in the 1860s. The Post Trader store is also used for Park Ranger talks and events throughout the year.

---

<sup>18</sup> Jerome A. Greene, "Historic Furnishing Report: Sutler's Store Sales Room," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2003), 13-15.

## **Cavalry Barracks**

The only surviving enlisted men's barracks at Fort Laramie was designed and built from 1872-1874 to add housing during the Indian Wars period. The building was completed in 1874 and the porch was added in 1883. This building was built to provide housing and other needs that supported two companies of soldiers. The two-story building held sleeping quarters, kitchens, dining areas, and other areas to help the soldiers live at the Fort. The entire second floor consisted of two equally large rooms that were the dormitory bays or squad rooms where the enlisted men lived. Each half of the building could house about 60 soldiers or one Company. The first floor below each squad room held the kitchen, messroom, wash room, armory room, and rooms for the non-commissioned officer assigned to each Company.<sup>19</sup> Currently, the barracks are divided, the south end of the barracks have been restored to the period of the Indian Wars of the 1870s and 1880s. Visitors can explore various rooms including the kitchen, squad bay, and messroom. The Park Service Rangers also used the barracks as part of the Ranger talks and for many events throughout the year. The north end of the barracks currently houses the curator quarters, Park Service offices, and storage areas for artifacts. The Cavalry Barracks along with Old Bedlam and the Post Trader's Store are some of the most popular buildings that visitors want to see when they come to Fort Laramie.

---

<sup>19</sup> Don Rickey Jr. and James W. Sheire, "The Cavalry Barracks: Fort Laramie Furnishing Study." (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1969), 14-18.

## **Ruins**

Throughout Fort Laramie, there are many standing ruins and visible foundations. In fact, what is seen now is only about one-third of what existed at Fort Laramie during its peak years. When Fort Laramie was abandoned in 1890, the buildings were put up for public auction. Many of these buildings that you can see now were purchased to be used as homesteads, businesses, and housing for livestock. Although these buildings received harsh treatment, because they were kept in some form of repair, they are still standing today for the public to view. The ruins and foundations that are around the Fort were sold for lumber and other supplies, as these were in short supply for the homesteaders in the area. Pieces of the Fort became parts of homestead shacks, barns, or ranch homes. Many of the ruins and foundations were deteriorated by nature and the lack of protective roofs and floors. Currently, there are no further restoration plans for the ruins, however, they are stabilized and maintained to prevent further damage. Visitors can view many of the ruins and foundations by walking around the Fort including the Hospital Ruins, the General Sink (Latrine) Ruins, and various barracks ruins and foundations. In order to preserve these ruins and foundations for the future and for safety concerns, we ask that you not walk or climb on the ruins. These historic ruins are fragile.

## **Chapter 5: Recommendations and Ethical Considerations**

Potential social or intellectual implications of this project include making sure that this booklet provides new information that is not covered by other resources. Currently, Fort Laramie's main resources include an introduction video that runs around twenty minutes, an hour long self-guided audio tour around the grounds, and tours and talks by Park Service Staff. Creating this project and giving new information will provide visitors with the ability to have more tangible experiences for learning contact points. If this project was to be implemented at the end of this program, providing an online component would be the most involved as it would take staffing and time requirements to maintain upkeep as well as making sure that the new information provided by the online component was illustrated during programming that was given at the site. The most popular time at the site is over the summer months which presuming that the booklet would be a useful tool for visitors. The need to have a significant number of physical booklets on hand would be important to make sure that staffing needs were met as well as maintaining the online portion during this period as well. Having physical copies of the Historic Buildings Guide would fit with the current demographics of the average visitors that visit Fort Laramie. When looking at the groups that come to Fort Laramie that are outside of the average visitor demographic, there can be recommendations that can be put in place to better serve everyone.

Creating the Historic Buildings Guide is important in adding to the overall historical narrative that is given at Fort Laramie is important to have continual educational aspects. Chief of Interpretation Eric Valencia, explained that "having multiple resources that can provide the people who visit Fort Laramie an opportunity to learn about the vast history of the area is

important, but we need to make sure that the way that the resource is used will not change the narrative we are portraying.”<sup>1</sup>

In addition to making sure that the final guide has information that explores the historic buildings, this project will need to make sure that this guide is in compliance with all Laws and Acts that impact the Park Service and determine if any will be detrimental for the creation of this booklet. Laws such as NPS-28: Cultural Resources Guidelines; The NPS Museum Handbook, Parts I and II; NPS-6: Interpretation and Visitor Services Guidelines; and the current NPS Conserv-o-Grams<sup>2</sup> would need to be examined.

The recommendation for this project is to make the final guide accessible for everyone and including having versions in multiple languages and formats. This could be helped by including the Historic Buildings Guide in languages such as French, German, and Spanish as these are countries where many of the foreign tourists come from. Along with this, it would be beneficial to have the ability to translate the Historic Buildings Guide into Chinese, Japanese, and Norwegian. The recommendation of having this guide in multiple languages will give all visitors the ability to understand the meaning of the historic buildings. Another recommendation is to provide ADA approved guides that could include Braille, large print, or audio version to give everyone who visits the site the same opportunity to learn about the history without being left out, as there are currently some aspects of the site where people cannot access due to a disability. Understanding that this project can be beneficial to the site, will help to create a

---

<sup>1</sup> Eric Valencia (Fort Laramie National Historic Site Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services), interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, September 1, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Wendy C. Jessup, “Collection Management Plan,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1992), 1-5.

helpful educational tool. Creating an educational tool like this guide will allow in the future for more groups to come to Fort Laramie and not be excluded from the ability to learn from the site or not have materials that will help their specific needs. Cary Carson explains the idea of always looking toward the future to better understand how to best create new environments to learn in. “Museum historians need to entertain the real possibility that rising generations since, say, the 1970s acquire and process information very differently than previous generations did, those old folks that our older museums were built to serve and served well.”<sup>3</sup> This is a growing concern at Fort Laramie and the continued insight into new resources and materials can help to bring a wider variety of people to Fort Laramie.

---

<sup>3</sup> Cary Carson, “The End of History Museums: What’s Plan B?,” *The Public Historian* 30, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 17, JSTOR.

## Chapter 6: Budget and Staffing

The main costs for this project will fall under the physical creation of the guide. There are many options in how this booklet that can be published including inhouse through the Park Service, through a printing company like FedEx Office, using a software program such as Adobe InDesign, or through a publishing house that prints books in the western history field.

The Park Service and the Fort Laramie staff have found that the Adobe InDesign program is the best way to create booklets and by using this program will create a professional booklet for visitors to use. InDesign is a desktop publishing software that is used to create works like magazines, posters, brochures, and books. Currently, a monthly subscription to Adobe including InDesign will cost \$19.99 per month to use the software.<sup>1</sup> If the decision is made to buy the InDesign software, it will need to be used as a multi-project source for other documentation to have the program purchase be cost effective. However, it is just as easy to use Microsoft Word to create a guide. As shown in the proposed budget, in Figure 4, the most cost-effective way to create the Historic Buildings Guide is to print copies inhouse through the Park Service resources. The costs in the proposed budget include initial purchases for all equipment and supplies. The potential to use existing equipment and supplies provided by the National Park Service can just as easily be used. In this case, proposed budget costs will fluctuate.

---

<sup>1</sup> Adobe, "Individuals: Single App," accessed January 25, 2018, [https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/plans.html?single\\_app=indesign&promoid=19SCDS37&mv=other](https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/plans.html?single_app=indesign&promoid=19SCDS37&mv=other).

**Proposed Budget Historic Buildings Guide**

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Needed Amount</u>	<u>Initial printing of 300 Booklets (30 Pages ea.)</u>	<u>Reprint Costs per Booklet</u>
<b>In House Printing</b>				
Supplies				
Paper (Case) 5,000 Sheets - Boise X-9 Multi-Use Copy Paper	\$57.99	1 case	\$57.99	\$0.19
Ink (Black) 3,200 Yield - HP High Yield	\$96.99	2 cartridges	\$193.98	\$0.65
Ink (3 Colors) 2,500 Yield (102.99/color) - HP High Yield	\$308.97	2 cartridges per color	\$617.94	\$2.06
Staples (1,000/box) - 3/4" Swingline Heavy Duty	\$9.79	1 Box	\$9.79	\$0.03
	<u>\$473.74</u>		<u>\$879.70</u>	<u>\$2.93</u>
Equipment				
Printer - Hp Laserjet M281fdw Color Laser	\$429.99	1 Printer	\$429.99	
Stapler - Swingline 390 Heavy Duty Stapler	\$50.99	1 Stapler	\$50.99	
Display - Deflect-O Green- Edge Leaflet Holder Counter Display	\$5.29	4 Holders	\$21.16	
	<u>\$486.27</u>		<u>\$502.14</u>	
Labor				
	Hours	\$/hr		
Set Up/Maintenance	15	15.75	\$236.25	
Print/Fold/Staple	8	15.75	\$126.00	\$0.42
			<u>\$362.25</u>	<u>\$0.42</u>
Total cost for initial 300 printing			<b>\$1,744.09</b>	<b>\$3.35</b>

#### **Figure 4: Proposed Budget**

In terms of staffing, the Interpretation department at Fort Laramie will create this guide with help from volunteers. This is one of the most fluid aspects of the budget, which allows for staff to work together to draw ideas and inspiration from the staff members. The members of the Interpretation department are federal government employees and their salaries will not be a factor in the overall budget. These staff members are paid independently, and this project will not affect any aspect of their budget. Along with salary funding costs, there is the potential that the National Park Service and Fort Laramie will add this to their yearly budget and print the guide inhouse.

If the guide were to be printed independently from the Park Service, there is the opportunity to receive public funding. Costs for the Historic Buildings Guide can also be sought through federal or private funding sources in the forms of grants. One such grant source is the Colorado and Wyoming Association of Museum (CWAM) grant. CWAM grants are awarded to CWAM institutional members. This grant allows for institutions to receive money to “make a good program a great program” as defined by grant funding application “the purpose of the CWAM Grant is to advance professionalism throughout the CWAM region.”<sup>2</sup> The CWAM grant would give \$500 towards the initial printing of the Historic Buildings Guide. Submitting a grant application for this project could be beneficial as it would allow for the project to get started and ultimately become a self-sufficient program.

---

<sup>2</sup> Colorado- Wyoming Association of Museums, “CWAM Grant Guidelines 2017,” accessed January 25, 2018, <http://www.cwam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/2017-CWAM-grant-guidelines.pdf>.

## Conclusion

The history of Fort Laramie is long and unique and presents a wide range of information that can be used to understand much of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century of Western history and its impact upon the how the West is viewed by local people, people from across the United States, and people from all over the world. Creating the Historic Buildings Guide allows for another aspect of the wide-ranging history of this area to be explored for the visitors to the Fort Laramie Site and understand the importance of Fort Laramie. This guide can be used to bring more educational understanding to the average visitor by giving an easily readable material when touring around Fort Laramie. The average visitor to Fort Laramie is a retired, white, English-Speaking group, however, the importance of foreign tourists to the site is imperative to the future of Fort Laramie. In 2017, there was an estimated 36.5% of foreign visitors making a trip to the National Parks and this number will continue to rise. Because of the rise in foreign visitors, the Historic Buildings Guide will be translated into multiple languages to benefit all those who come to visit Fort Laramie. Another important group to recognize when creating the guide is people that need ADA approved materials that Fort Laramie can easily provide. Along with these groups, there is the future possibility for outreach with Native American groups to add the significant pieces of their history to the Historic Buildings Guide to present an augmented history of what took place in the historic structures. Becoming inclusive to all members of the audience at Fort Laramie is critical to the present and future for visitor experience but also to bring more educational value of resources to all visitors. This guide will explore a facet of Fort Laramie history that the average visitor will not be able to fully grasp in the average visit. The history of the west focus on people and events and rarely touch upon the

histories of the structures that get left behind. With the little information that has been gathered on these buildings, presenting what is available to the general public is important to exploring fully the history of the west.

## Appendix A: Historic Buildings Guide

# FORT LARAMIE



# HISTORIC BUILDINGS GUIDE

## *About This Booklet*

Fort Laramie National Historic Site is in southeastern Wyoming recalls the days of the frontier period of the West (1760s to 1890s). From 1849 to 1890, the military fort at Fort Laramie was an important center of diplomacy, trade, and warfare on the Northern Plains. Many of the most important and vivid figures working to expand America passed through Fort Laramie. Trappers, fur traders, missionaries, overland emigrants, homesteaders, cowboys, soldiers, and Plains Indians all had an impact at Fort Laramie.

This Historic Buildings Guide can be used to better understand the restored historic buildings and ruins around the Fort Laramie National Historic Site. This booklet gives the background of some of these buildings in conjunction with the National Park Service to add to the historical narrative portrayed at Fort Laramie. This Historic Buildings Guide works well with the **Touring Fort Laramie Map** that can be found at the Visitor Center. This Guide can be used both at Fort Laramie and outside the grounds to understand one of the many historical aspects of Fort Laramie.

## Accessibility Information

Several of the Historical structures are accessible by ramps located on the rear of the buildings. Including the Commissary Storehouse/ Visitor Center, #1 on the map; Old Bedlam, #2 on the map; and the Cavalry Barracks, #19 on the map. Some assistance may be required for those who need it. Buildings without ramps are only accessible with assistance. Please check with the Visitor Center or Fort Laramie Park Staff for accessibility needs and assistance.

## Safety and Park Management Concerns

Be careful on footpaths and stairs and stay alert to hazards. Your own safety is your responsibility. Historic ruins are fragile. You can help us preserve them by not walking or climbing on them.

## For More Information

Fort Laramie National Historic Site  
956 Gray Rocks Road  
Fort Laramie, WY 82212  
307-837-2221

[www.nps.gov/foia](http://www.nps.gov/foia)

## Cover Photograph

Gilpin, John. *Aerial view of Fort Laramie National Historic Site, looking northwest.* Fort Laramie National Historic Site.  
<https://www.nps.gov/foia/planyourvisit/index.htm>.

All other photograph credit to the author.

## Contents

<a href="#">Commissary Storehouse/Visitor Center</a>	49
<a href="#">Old Bakery</a>	50
<a href="#">Old Guardhouse/ New Guardhouse</a>	51
<a href="#">Captain's Quarters</a>	52
<a href="#">Old Bedlam</a>	53
<a href="#">Post Surgeon's Quarters</a>	54
<a href="#">Lt. Colonel Quarter's (Burt House)</a>	55
<a href="#">Post Trader's Store and Complex</a>	56
<a href="#">Cavalry Barracks</a>	57
<a href="#">Ruins</a>	58
<a href="#">Bibliography</a>	60
<a href="#">Further Reading</a>	60

### **Commissary Storehouse/Visitor Center**

The Commissary Storehouse built in 1884, was a lime grout concrete building that served as a food warehouse for the army. The Commissary Building currently holds the Visitor Center, Park headquarters, and the Fort Laramie Historical Association gift shop.

The Park Service at Fort Laramie plans to restore the building to the period of 1884 as a Commissary Storehouse to show visitors the purpose of the Commissary. The building would have had two small offices, which were used by the commissary sergeant and commissary officer with large rooms to store supplies.<sup>1</sup>

Commissary positions at Fort Laramie were highly competitive as there only one sergeant allowed at each post. The sergeant was in-charge of the overall accountability of rations held in the warehouse. The warehouse was filled with canned and bottled goods, barrels and sacks of items that were

all hauled overland or on railroads from Cheyenne or further places East.

Goods were stored with preservation methods including salting, smoking, canning, pickling, and drying. Food items such as meat, potatoes, onions, bacon, and hardtack all needed to be inspected regularly. If the need arose, the commissary sergeant



*Commissary Store House/ Visitor Center  
January 2018*

supervised the work of the duty men assigned to him. Along with the rations that were distributed from the commissary, extra rations could be bought by enlisted men and officers.

<sup>1</sup> Sally A. Johnson, "General Furnishing Plan," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1960), 41-43.

Currently, the Commissary is one of the buildings at Fort Laramie that has the most foot traffic due to the gift shop and Visitor Center. The commissary is currently the permanent building for the Visitor Center, gift shop and Park Service buildings, although there is a hope to restore the commissary building permanently.

### Old Bakery

The Bakery, along with the Post Hospital, was one of the most important buildings to the general welfare of the enlisted soldiers at Fort Laramie. The Old Bakery, built in 1876, and the New Bakery Ruins, built in 1883, were used to bake the bread that was a primary element of the soldier's meal rations.



The bakery was of paramount importance to the maintenance of the Army. During the military period at Fort Laramie, there were a total of four bakeries that were in use until the ovens “burnt out.” The standing bakery was in use from 1876 to 1883 and held two ovens that each measured 6’5” by 8’ and had a combined capacity to hold 500 rations per baking. A bread ration consisted of one 20-ounce loaf. Along with the bread rations, soldiers only received a one-pound slab of salt pork and coffee. These rations were not considered sufficient for the well-being of the soldiers.

The bakery was on the duty list for soldiers that lasted for 10 days, with very long hours for the men who worked in the bakery. It was very rare to find an enlisted man who had experience with baking and most of the time the men assigned to the bakery were ill-suited and the quality of the bread suffered. Brigadier General Robert Macfeely, Commissary General at Fort Laramie, believed that “the best flour in the hands of a bad baker will produce bad bread.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jerome A. Greene, “Historic Furnishing Study: Restored 1876 Old Bakery,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1974), 7-8.

Currently, visitors can go inside the old bakery to see what tools the enlisted men used, the ovens are closed for safety concerns presently but in the past, were used by the Park Service to make bread during events.

### Old Guardhouse/ New Guardhouse



*Front of Old Guardhouse January 2018*

One of the highlights of each day at a frontier military post was the ceremonial changing of the guard. The ceremony was performed in the morning and the soldiers on guardhouse duty were attired in their dress uniforms and white gloves. The ceremony consisted of the soldiers being marched to the parade grounds by the company first sergeant and then were inspected by the Sergeant Major and the Officer of the Day. When the

password was then given, and the new guard replaced the old. Soldiers served as guards in a continuous 24-hour span and were stationed at strategic posts around the Fort. Usually, a soldier was on duty for two-hour intervals and then returned to a room in the guardhouse to wait for their next tour of duty. Guards waiting were not allowed to remove any part of their uniform except their hats and gloves while “resting”.

The lower level of the guardhouse was designed to hold forty prisoners without any furniture, stove for heating or



*Prisoner Lockup Area of Old Guardhouse January 2018*

lights. There were also two separate solitary confinement cells for those who needed them. Prisoners were assigned less than desirable work details and at night huddled together for

warmth with the few blankets they were able to bring during confinement.<sup>3</sup>

The Old Guardhouse, built in 1866, was Fort Laramie's second guardhouse and was used until the 1876 Guardhouse was built.



*New Guardhouse January 2018*

Currently, visitors can walk inside the lower level of the old guardhouse and view the solitary confinement areas.

The New Guardhouse was built in 1876 after many complaints from the post

surgeon. The new guardhouse replaced the overcrowded and unhealthy older guardhouse. Currently, the new guardhouse is used to hold original armaments from the period including Mountain Howitzer Cannons and a Gatling Gun.

### **Captain's Quarters**

Built from 1868-1870, these quarters were planned after the increase of officers and enlisted men to protect the western frontier and the emigrant trails in the post- Civil War period. This building was planned as the Commanding Officer's quarters. However, before the quarters were completed the post commander decided to continue his stay in the building that he already occupied. Because of this the Fort Laramie Quartermaster changed the building plans and made the structure into a duplex with a staircase that is so narrow it is difficult to ascend.

One aspect of living at Fort Laramie is that many Officers brought their families with them to live. The wives of



*Captain's Quarters January 2018*

the Officers would work to make their

<sup>3</sup>Sally A. Johnson, "Furnishing Plan for The Old Guardhouse," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961), 6-10

quarters more livable by bringing in furniture from elsewhere at the officer's expense or would purchase furniture from families who had been transferred to other posts. This work is reflected in the relatively comfortable living conditions seen. Another aspect of living at Fort Laramie was the "ranking out" system, in which officers and their families could be moved out of their quarters by a superior officer in rank or with a longer service record. This led to some of the lower ranking officers living in hallways and tents until new quarters were finished.

After the Army vacated Fort Laramie, the Captain's quarters were bought by Mrs. Sandercock who was the Fort Laramie Postmistress and operated the post office from the house from 1890 to 1902.<sup>4</sup> Currently, the Captain's Quarters is available to visitors to view and is used in some events throughout the year.

### **Old Bedlam**

Old Bedlam was built in 1849 and is the oldest surviving Army structure at Fort Laramie and is thought to be

<sup>4</sup>Sally A. Johnson, "Furnishing Plan for Officer's Quarters 'A'," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961), 5-8.

the oldest standing military structure in the state of Wyoming.<sup>5</sup> During the Fort Laramie military period, Old Bedlam served as quarters for bachelor officers, housing for married officers and their families, and post command headquarters from its construction to 1868. From 1868 to 1881, Old Bedlam served as a place where people had to live because no other housing was available. Because of the lack of privacy in the bedrooms along with common hallways and common kitchens, there were only a select few who could endure these accommodations. After 1881, Old Bedlam was turned into a duplex.

Old Bedlam was significant to the Western expansion story as many significant Western figures passed through



<sup>5</sup>Nan V. Carson, "Furnishing Plan for Old Bedlam," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1964), 1-4.

its halls along with thousands of unnamed men who helped to shape this period. Old Bedlam is known as the “Queen” of Fort Laramie as the most recognized building at Fort Laramie.

Currently, Old Bedlam is separated into two separate time periods that visitors can view, including what the bachelors quarters looked like in the 1850s and the 1863-1864 post headquarters, when Fort Commander Lt. Col. William O. Collins and his family lived upstairs, and the downstairs was used for official capacities.

Old Bedlam is also used in promotional materials for Fort Laramie and is used by the Park Service, visitors, and visiting groups to explore the history of Fort Laramie.

### **Post Surgeon’s Quarters**

This double set of Officer’s quarters was typical of the quarters built in the 1870s and was completed around 1875. During the period from 1875 to 1890, this building was used by the Post Surgeon and his family. The Post Surgeon was a

keystone of the Army medical care system. The Post Surgeon was charged with keeping up the health of all officers, their families, enlisted men and civilian employees of the U.S. Government who lived or came to the Fort. The Post Surgeon would also keep records of weather as well as collected and preserved scientific specimens, which provided crucial information to institutions further east.<sup>6</sup> The Post Surgeon was usually the most highly educated at an Army post and were



held in  
high  
esteem.

The Post Surgeon quarters have been restored to the 1880s period to show visitors the quarters of Post Surgeon Louis Brechemin and his family. Brechemin lived in these quarters from 1885 to 1889 where his study served as both an

<sup>6</sup> Nan V. Carson, “Furnishing Plan for The Post Surgeon’s Quarters,” (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1963), 31-33.

office and collection point for his many official and personal items of study and interest. Most patients were treated at the Post Surgeon's quarters before being sent to the hospital to recuperate.

Currently, the Post Surgeon's quarters are open to visitors to view some of the aspects of Frontier Army medicine and treatment practices.

#### Lt. Colonel Quarter's (Burt House)

Built in 1884, this lime grout concrete building was one of two single family officer's quarters built at the Fort. Other structures that families lived in were constructed as duplexes that were designed for more than one family. This house has been restored to the 1887-1888 period when it was occupied by Lt. Col. Andrew Burt and his family.

Lt. Col. Burt and his wife Elizabeth enjoyed relatively plain and traditional furnishings rather than the lavish décor that was used in most officer's houses during the Victorian period. This house reflects the high rank of Lt. Col. Burt and

the impact of the railroad on Fort Laramie. By the late 1880s, Fort Laramie was within 40 miles of the nearest railway link.

A unique aspect of this house is when the National Park Service curators were working to restore this building, they were able to work with Reynolds Burt, son of Lt. Col. Burt, to detail what the building was like when his family was living there.<sup>7</sup> Much of the building is enhanced by having several the original Burt family artifacts in the building, all donated by Reynolds Burt and are used in many of the rooms to show the Burt family's life in 1887-1888.



*Lt. Colonel Quarter's (Burt House) January  
2018*

<sup>7</sup> Sally A. Johnson, "Furnishing Plan for Officer's Quarters 'F'," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961), 24-25.

Currently, the Burt house is open to visitors to view aspects of Frontier Army family life through the eyes of the Burt family.

### Post Trader's Store and Complex

Built in 1849 and additions being added throughout the military period, the Post Trader's store was run by a civilian licensed by the army and was subject to Army supervision. Also called the Sutler's store in the early days of the building. The title of the building and title of the civilian in charge of the store was changed permanently to the Post Trader after the



American Civil War due to the corruption in the Sutler system.<sup>8</sup>

As the only Army certified civilian trader at Fort Laramie, the post trader was able to create a profitable business with soldiers, Indians, emigrants, gold seekers, and other Western figures. The Post Trader also provided to be an important adjunct to the Fort as he was able to supplement the basic rations that the Army provided to soldiers and was able to make life somewhat more bearable for those who were stationed far away from the comforts of the East.

The Post Trader complex was built in various years including the north section, built of stone in 1852, which served as the trader's headquarters and for a time the post office. In 1883, additions were added that housed the officer's club and an enlisted men and civilian's bar.

As the Post Trader was able to conduct business with a wide variety of people, he was able to make large profits from the wide-ranging endeavors that ranged from the goods in the store and dealt in beef, wood, and hay contracts. The Post Trader conducted business from the period that the building was open to the time that Fort Laramie was abandoned in 1890.

<sup>8</sup> Jerome A. Greene, "Historic Furnishing Report: Sutler's Store Sales Room," (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2003), 13-15.

Through the forty-one-year operation, the Post Trader was able to relieve some of the mundaneness of life at the frontier post of Fort Laramie.

Currently, the Post Trader store is open for visitors to see what the store looked like in the 1860s. The Post Trader store is also used for Park Ranger talks and events throughout the year.

### **Cavalry Barracks**

The only surviving enlisted men's barracks at Fort Laramie was designed and built from 1872-1874 to add housing during the Indian Wars period. The building was completed in 1874 and the porch was added in 1883. This building was built to provide housing and other needs that supported two companies of soldiers.

The two-story building held sleeping quarters, kitchens, dining areas, and other areas to help the soldiers live at the Fort. The entire second floor consisted of two equally large

rooms that were the dormitory bays or squad rooms where the enlisted men lived. Each half of the building could house about 60 soldiers or one Company. The first floor below each squad room held the kitchen, messroom, wash room, armory room, and rooms for the non-commissioned officer assigned to each Company.<sup>9</sup>

Currently, the barracks are divided, the south end of the barracks have been restored to the period of the Indian Wars of the 1870s and 1880s. Visitors can explore various rooms including the kitchen, squad bay, and messroom. The Park Service Rangers also used the barracks as part of the Ranger talks and for many events



*Cavalry Barracks January 2018*

<sup>9</sup> Don Rickey Jr. and James W. Sheire, "The Cavalry Barracks: Fort Laramie Furnishing Study." (Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1969), 14-18.

throughout the year. The north end of the barracks currently houses the curator quarters, Park Service offices, and storage areas for artifacts.

The Cavalry Barracks along with Old Bedlam and the Post Trader's Store are some of the most popular buildings that visitors want to see when they come to Fort Laramie.

### **Ruins**

Throughout Fort Laramie, there are many standing ruins and visible foundations. In fact, what is seen now is only about one-third of what existed at Fort Laramie during its peak years. When Fort Laramie was abandoned in 1890, the buildings were put up for public auction. Many of these buildings that you can see now were purchased to be used as homesteads, businesses, and housing for livestock. Although these buildings received harsh treatment, because they were



*Hospital Ruins January 2018*

kept in some form of repair,

they are still standing today for the public to view.

The ruins and foundations that are around the Fort were sold for lumber and other supplies, as these were in short supply for the homesteaders in the area. Pieces of the Fort became parts of homestead shacks, barns, or ranch homes. Many of the ruins and foundations were deteriorated by nature and the lack of protective roofs and floors.

Currently, there are no further restoration plans for the ruins, however, they are stabilized and maintained to prevent further damage. Visitors can view many of the ruins and foundations by walking around the Fort including the Hospital Ruins, the General Sink (Latrine) Ruins, and various barracks ruins and foundations.

In order to preserve these ruins and foundations for the future



*Officers' Quarters Ruins January 2018*

and for safety

concerns, we ask that you not walk or climb on the ruins. These historic ruins are fragile.

### Bibliography

- Carson, Nan V. "Furnishing Plan for Old Bedlam." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1964.
- Carson, Nan V. "Furnishing Plan for The Post Surgeon's Quarters." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1963.
- Fullmer, Steve. "Historic Buildings Guide." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1983.
- Greene, Jerome A. "Historic Furnishing Report: Sutler's Store Sales Room." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2003.
- Greene, Jerome A. "Historic Furnishing Study: Restored 1876 Old Bakery." Internal Document, Fort Laramie Historic Site, 1974.
- Johnson, Sally A. "Furnishing Plan for Officer's Quarter's 'F'." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961.
- Johnson, Sally A. "Furnishing Plan for the Old Guardhouse." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961.
- Johnson, Sally A. "Furnishing Plan for Officer's Quarters 'A'." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961.

Johnson, Sally A. "General Furnishing Plan." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1960.

Mattes, Merrill. "Fort Laramie Park History." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1978.

Rickey Jr., Don, and James W. Sheire. "The Cavalry Barracks: Fort Laramie Furnishing Study." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1969.

### Further Reading

Hafen, LeRoy and Francis Marion Young. *Fort Laramie: Pageant of the West*. Lincoln, N.E.: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.

Hedren, Paul. *Fort Laramie and the Great Sioux War*. Norman, O.K.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988.

Hedren, Paul. *Fort Laramie in 1876: Chronicle of a Frontier Post at War*. Lincoln, N.E.: University of Nebraska Press, 1988.

Hieb, David. *Fort Laramie National Monument*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1954.

Lavender, David. *Fort Laramie and the Changing Frontier*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1983.

McChristian, Douglas. *Fort Laramie: Military Bastion of the High Plains*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008.

National Park Service. "Fort Laramie Site Map." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2013.

Talbott, Starley. *Images of America: Fort Laramie*. Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2010.

## Appendix B: Interview Consent Forms



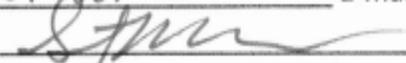
### Interview Consent Form

Southern New Hampshire University: College of Online and Continuing Education  
 33 South Commercial Street, Suite 203  
 Manchester, NH 03101  
 1-866-860-0449

I, (please print your name) STEVEN R. FULLMER, give Southern New Hampshire University the absolute right and permission to use my written or spoken material for educational purposes in the His 742: Public History Course. I understand that the written material may be used in a course presentation, discussion forums, or other educational setting.

**The results of the interview will be used in course assignments or discussion forums, but your name or identity will not be revealed.**

I release the University, the filmmaker/photographer, their offices, employees, agents, and designees from liability for any violation of any personal or proprietary right I may have in connection with such use. I am 18 years of age or older.

Name: STEVEN R. FULLMER Date: 12-16-17  
 Address: 965 GRAY ROCKS ROAD State: WY Zip: 82212  
 Phone: 307-837-2221 E-mail: meadowlark1876@gmail.com  
 Signature:  STEVE-FULLMER@NHS.GOV

Please return this form to the student(s) involved in the 742 course, and you may keep one copy for your records. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the 742 instructor or the SNHU College of Online and Continuing Education Office at 1-866-860-0449.

# Southern New Hampshire University

## Interview Consent Form

Southern New Hampshire University: College of Online and Continuing Education  
 33 South Commercial Street, Suite 203  
 Manchester, NH 03101  
 1-866-860-0449

I, (please print your name) Don Hodgson, give Southern New Hampshire University the absolute right and permission to use my written or spoken material for educational purposes in the HIS: 742 Public History <sup>Capstone</sup> I understand that the written material may be used in a course presentation, discussion forums, or other educational setting.

**The results of the interview will be used in course assignments or discussion forums, but your name or identity will not be revealed.**

I release the University, the filmmaker/photographer, their offices, employees, agents, and designees from liability for any violation of any personal or proprietary right I may have in connection with such use. I am 18 years of age or older.

Name: Don Hodgson Date: 12-17-2017  
 Address: 2959 West B St. Torrington State: WV Zip: 82240  
 Phone: 307-532-2009 E-mail: jchodgson@centurylink.net  
 Signature: Don Hodgson

Please return this form to the student(s) involved in the 742 course, and you may keep one copy for your records. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the 742 instructor or the SNHU College of Online and Continuing Education Office at 1-866-860-0449.

# Southern New Hampshire University

## Interview Consent Form

Southern New Hampshire University: College of Online and Continuing Education  
 33 South Commercial Street, Suite 203  
 Manchester, NH 03101  
 1-866-860-0449

I, (please print your name) Joseph Reasoner, give Southern New Hampshire University the absolute right and permission to use my written or spoken material for educational purposes in the 762: Public History Capstone. I understand that the written material may be used in a course presentation, discussion forums, or other educational setting.

**The results of the interview will be used in course assignments or discussion forums, but your name or identity will not be revealed.**

I release the University, the filmmaker/photographer, their offices, employees, agents, and designees from liability for any violation of any personal or proprietary right I may have in connection with such use. I am 18 years of age or older.

Name: Joseph Reasoner Date: 12/16/17  
 Address: 302 W. Otis St State: NH Zip: 82212-0472  
 Phone: 307-837-2221 E-mail: joe-reasoner@NPS.gov  
 Signature: Joseph Reasoner

Please return this form to the student(s) involved in the 762 course, and you may keep one copy for your records. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the 762 instructor or the SNHU College of Online and Continuing Education Office at 1-866-860-0449.

# Southern New Hampshire University

## Interview Consent Form

Southern New Hampshire University: College of Online and Continuing Education  
 33 South Commercial Street, Suite 203  
 Manchester, NH 03101  
 1-866-860-0449

I, (please print your name) Eric Valencia, give Southern New Hampshire University the absolute right and permission to use my written or spoken material for educational purposes in the HIS 742: Public History Limestone. I understand that the written material may be used in a course presentation, discussion forums, or other educational setting.

**The results of the interview will be used in course assignments or discussion forums, but your name or identity will not be revealed.**

I release the University, the filmmaker/photographer, their offices, employees, agents, and designees from liability for any violation of any personal or proprietary right I may have in connection with such use. I am 18 years of age or older.

Name: Eric Valencia Date: 12/16/17  
 Address: 965 Gray Rocks Rd. State: WY Zip: 82212  
 Phone: (307) 837-2221 E-mail: eric.valencia@nps.gov  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to the student(s) involved in the 742 course, and you may keep one copy for your records. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the 742 instructor or the SNHU College of Online and Continuing Education Office at 1-866-860-0449.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

- Carson, Nan V. "Furnishing Plan for Old Bedlam." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1964.
- Carson, Nan V. "Furnishing Plan for The Post Surgeon's Quarters." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1963.
- Fullmer, Steve. "Historic Buildings Guide." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1983.
- Greene, Jerome A. "Historic Furnishing Report: Sutler's Store Sales Room." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2003.
- Greene, Jerome A. "Historic Furnishing Study: Restored 1876 Old Bakery." Internal Document, Fort Laramie Historic Site, 1974.
- Johnson, Sally A. "Furnishing Plan for Officer's Quarters 'A'." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961.
- Johnson, Sally A. "Furnishing Plan for Officer's Quarter's 'F'." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961.
- Johnson, Sally A. "Furnishing Plan for the Old Guardhouse." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1961.
- Johnson, Sally A. "General Furnishing Plan." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1960.
- Mattes, Merrill. "Fort Laramie Park History." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1978.
- Rickey Jr., Don, and James W. Sheire. "The Cavalry Barracks: Fort Laramie Furnishing Study." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1969.

### U.S. Government Publications

- Hieb, David. *Fort Laramie National Monument*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1954.
- Jessup, Wendy C. "Collection Management Plan." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1992.
- National Park Service. "Fort Laramie Site Map." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2013.

National Park Service. "Foundation Document." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2017.

National Park Service. "NPS Mission and FOLA Purpose Statement." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 2016.

National Park Service. "Recreation Visitors by Month: Fort Laramie NHS." NPS Stats: Park Reports. Last modified 2018, Accessed January 23, 2018.  
[https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Recreation%20Visitors%20By%20Month%20\(1979%20-%20Last%20Calendar%20Year\)?Park=FOLA](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Recreation%20Visitors%20By%20Month%20(1979%20-%20Last%20Calendar%20Year)?Park=FOLA).

Samson, M. Louise. "Revised Scope of Collections Statement for Fort Laramie National Historic Site." Internal Document, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, 1993.

## Secondary Sources

Allen, Charles. *From Fort Laramie to Wounded Knee: In the West the Was*. Lincoln, N.E.: University of Nebraska Press, 1997.

American Association of Museums. "Everyone's Welcome: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Museums." Accessed January 24, 2018.  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED437754.pdf>.

Bloch, Marc. "from The Historian's Craft, Manchester University Press, 1954, pp 35-43." In *Historians on History*, edited by John Tosh. London: Routledge, 2013.

Branch, E. Douglas. Review of *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West, 1834-1890*, LeRoy R. Hafen, Francis Marion Young. *Pacific Historical Review* 7, no. 4 (December 1938): 382-383. Accessed January 22, 2018. JSTOR.

Buchholz, Jim, Brenda Lackey, Michael Gross, Ron Zimmerman. *The Interpreter's Guidebook: Techniques for Programs and Presentations*. Stevens Point, W.I.: UWSP Foundation Press, Inc, 2015.

Hafen, LeRoy and Francis Marion Young. *Fort Laramie: Pageant of the West*. Lincoln, N.E.: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.

Hedren, Paul. *Fort Laramie and the Great Sioux War*. Norman, O.K.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988.

Hedren, Paul. *Fort Laramie in 1876: Chronicle of a Frontier Post at War*. Lincoln, N.E.: University of Nebraska Press, 1988.

Larson, T.A. *History of Wyoming*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1978.

McChristian, Douglas. *Fort Laramie: Military Bastion of the High Plains*. Norman. OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008.

- Moulton, Candy. *Fort, Fights, and Frontier Sites: Wyoming Historic Locations*. Glendo, W.Y.: High Plains Press, 2010.
- Murray, Robert. *Fort Laramie: "Visions of a Grand Old Post"*. Fort Collins, C.O.: The Old Army Press, 1974.
- Nadeau, Remi. *Fort Laramie and the Sioux*. Santa Barbara, C.A.: Crest Publishers, 1997.
- National Parks Traveler, "America's National Parks a Magnet for International Visitors, November 2, 2016. Accessed January 23, 2018.  
<https://www.nationalparkstraveler.org/2016/11/americas-national-parks-magnet-international-visitors>.
- Talbott, Starley. *Images of America: Fort Laramie*. Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2010.
- Tosh, John. *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of History*. London: Routledge, 2015.
- Wesley, Edgar B. Review of *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West, 1834-1890*, LeRoy R. Hafen, Francis M. Young. *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 26, no. 1 (June 1939): 104-105. Accessed January 22, 2018. JSTOR.
- White, Thomas and Ray M. Littler. *Garrison Life Trail: An Illustrated Guide to Historic Fort Laramie*. Fort Laramie, W.Y.: Fort Laramie Historical Association, Inc, 1972.
- Zimmer, Vickie. *Images of America: Goshen County*. Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2012.

#### U.S. Government Publications

- Lavender, David. *Fort Laramie and the Changing Frontier*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1983.

#### **Articles**

- Hoagland, Alison K. "Architecture and Interpretation at Forts Laramie and Bridger." *The Public Historian*, 23, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 27-54. Accessed November 19, 2017. JSTOR.
- Hoagland, Alison K. "The Invariable Model: Standardization and Military Architecture in Wyoming, 1860-1900." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 57, no. 3 (September 1998): 298-315. JSTOR.

#### **Interviews**

- Fullmer, Steve. Fort Laramie National Historic Site Park Ranger. Interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, September 30, 2017.

Fullmer, Steve. Fort Laramie National Historic Site Park Ranger. Interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, October 1, 2017.

Fullmer, Steve. Fort Laramie National Historic Site Park Ranger. Interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, December 16, 2017.

Hodgson, Don. Goshen County Local Historian, Retired College Professor. Interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Torrington, Wyoming, December 9, 2017.

Reasoner, Joe. Fort Laramie National Historic Site Park Ranger. Interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Fort Laramie, Wyoming, September 29, 2017.

Valencia, Eric. Fort Laramie National Historic Site Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services. Interviewed by Andrew Wayland, Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, September 1, 2017.

### **Additional Materials**

Adobe. "Individuals: Single App." Accessed January 25, 2018.

[https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/plans.html?single\\_app=indesign&promoid=19SCDS37&mv=other](https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/plans.html?single_app=indesign&promoid=19SCDS37&mv=other).

Carson, Cary. "The End of History Museums: What's Plan B?" *The Public Historian* 30, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 9-27. JSTOR.

Colorado-Wyoming Association of Museums. "CWAM Grant Guidelines 2017." Accessed January 25, 2018. <http://www.cwam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/2017-CWAM-grant-guidelines.pdf>.

Hedren Paul L. "The West Loved Oysters Too! A look at that Time in America when those Briny Bivalves were all the Rage, Even Beyond the Missouri River." *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 61, no. 4 (Winter 2011): 3-15, 90-91. JSTOR.

Fifer, Barbara, Fred Pflughoft, David M. Morris. *Wyoming's Historic Forts*. Helena, MT: Farcountry Press, 2002.

Kelly, A.R. "Archaeology in the National Park Service." *American Antiquity* 5, no. 4 (April 1940): 274-282. JSTOR.

Rankin, Charles E. Robert M. Schullery, Robert M. Utley, Lee H. Whittlesey, Paul L. Hedren, Jerome A. Greene and Douglas C. McChristian. "Two Gifted Historians: Aubrey L. Haines and Don G. Rickey Jr." *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 50, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 66-73. JSTOR.

United States Census Bureau. "Quick Facts Wyoming." Accessed January 31, 2018.  
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/WY/RHI125216>.

Walker, Danny N. *Searching for Fort William: An 1834 Trading Post at Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Wyoming*. Laramie, WY: University of Wyoming, 2004.