

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

LISTED IN VLR: 10/08/1991  
DOE BY NRHP: 02/06/1992

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: Hansborough Ridge Winter Encampment District

other name/site number: DHR File No. 23-68

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2. Location

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street & number:  
Immediately north of Virginia Route 3; approximately two miles east of Stevensburg

not for publication: x

city/town: \_\_\_\_\_  
vicinity: Stevensburg

state: VA county: Culpeper code: 047 zip code: 22741

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: district

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Army of the Potomac Winter Encampment, Culpeper and Fauquier Counties, 1863-1864

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification  
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this        nomination X request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets        does not meet the National Register Criteria.        See continuation sheet.

W. L. C. Miller Dec 16, 1991  
Signature of certifying official Date

Director, VA Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property        meets        does not meet the National Register criteria.        See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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5. National Park Service Certification  
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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
       See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the  
National Register  
       See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the  
National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date  
of Action

=====  
6. Function or Use  
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Historic: Defense Sub: military facility  
Defense fortification

Current : Agricultural Sub: agricultural field  
Landscape forest

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation \_\_\_\_\_ roof \_\_\_\_\_  
                  walls           \_\_\_\_\_ other       \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.   X   See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicable National Register Criteria:   A, D  

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Significance:   Military    
  Archaeology/Historic--Non-Aboriginal  

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance:   1863   -   1864  

Significant Dates:   Winter 1863-1864  

Significant Person(s):   N/A  

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation:   N/A  

Architect/Builder:   N/A  

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.  
  X   See continuation sheet.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: Library of Congress, USMHI

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreege of Property: ca. 110 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing    Zone Easting Northing

A	18	248940	4260200	B	18	248700	4258740
C	18	248000	4258880	D	18	248410	4260340

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:  See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification:  See continuation sheet.

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Jamie Dial

Organization: Brandy Station Foundation    Date: August 29, 1991

Street & Number: P.O. Box 165    Telephone: (202)-828-9600

City or Town: Brandy Station    State: VA    ZIP: 22714

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### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Hansborough Ridge, located approximately two miles east of the village of Stevensburg, served as the winter encampment home of elements of the Third Division, Second Corps, Army of the Potomac, from the beginning of December 1863 through May 4, 1864. Among the units which encamped there were the 39th, 111th, 125th, and the 126th Regiments, New York Infantry; 4th and 8th Ohio; 14th Indiana; and 7th West Virginia. Ranging in height from 400 to 450 feet and running approximately two and one-half miles in a north-south direction, the densely wooded ridge was almost completely deforested during the course of the encampment. Individual huts, defensive trenches and fortifications, camp roads, and other features covered the ridge.

Today, Hansborough Ridge is again thickly forested. Two distinct sites are evident on the ridge. Near the northern end of the ridge, more than fifty hut sites remain intact (some arranged in linear fashion), and there are approximately twenty-five other surface features such as trash pits, fire pits, and stone piles. On the southeastern side of the ridge, near the base, twelve hut sites and fire pits have been disturbed by relic hunters. There are also trenches along the ridge. Overall, the camp site retains remarkable integrity, as most of the sites apparently have gone undisturbed.

### DESCRIPTION

Returning from the exhausting but inconclusive Mine Run Campaign on December 2, 1863, the Army of the Potomac quickly turned its attentions to the construction of winter quarters. The Second Corps occupied the area around Stevensburg, with the First and

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Third Brigades of the Third Division on Hansborough Ridge and the Second Division north on Coles Hill.<sup>1</sup> (The Second Brigade, Third Division, was detached on picket duty south at Stony Mountain). According to a member of the 8th Ohio, the First Brigade occupied "the extreme north of the [Third] division" (the northern part of Hansborough Ridge) while the 8th Ohio was encamped at the northernmost point on the ridge. There is no record of any encampments on Hansborough Ridge either before or after the encampment of 1863-1864, so all remains must date back to that period.

Hansborough Ridge and Coles Hill were attractive locations for a number of reasons. First and foremost, this high ground constituted a strong position from which to defend against an attack from the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, encamped just a few miles to the south. This elevated position also facilitated the transmission and receipt of signals between the army's scattered signal stations. Furthermore, this high ground drained better in the rainy winter and spring months, and "lumber was found in abundance in the vicinity."<sup>2</sup> The close proximity of Mountain Run provided a ready source of water.

The evergreens and other forestation that covered Hansborough Ridge prior to the winter encampment soon fell victim to the needs of the Army of the Potomac. "When we first came here," wrote a captain in the 126th New York, "it was a wilderness; now it is a large city of log huts; hardly a tree to be seen. The huts are built of logs a foot thick, split, and laid up face side in. They are about twelve by seven feet, and seven feet high, with a door at the end,

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Francis Galwey, The Valiant Hours, W. S. Nye, ed. (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Stackpole Company, 1961), p. 181. Galwey wrote, "Our division [the Third] occupied a line of heights extending from Stevensburg two miles north to a deep ravine [separating Hansborough Ridge from Coles Hill]. . . . Our brigade [the Third] was on the left or extreme north of the division . . . across the road and the ravine [were] Gen. Webb's Second Division."

<sup>2</sup> George T. Fleming, Life and Letters of Alexander Hays, Brevet Colonel (Pittsburgh, 1919), p. 525.

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hung on a wooden hinge. They have a cloth roof, which serves also as a window. . . . [Each hut housed] from six to ten men."<sup>3</sup> The enlisted men's huts were aligned in rows, along company streets, while the noncommissioned officers and company commanders camped at the end of the rows. Many regiments and brigades built log chapels; the 125th New York, for example, dedicated its chapel on Hansborough Ridge in January 1864, and held nightly religious services there for the remainder of the encampment. Corduroy roads and walkways linked the camps to each other and to division hospitals, supply depots, headquarters, and other important locations.<sup>4</sup>

The camps almost certainly were crisscrossed by drainage ditches that directed rainwater and sewage down the slope of the ridge.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, trenches and fortifications dotted the ridge. A soldier in the 39th New York wrote that "the whole Corps. [was] out

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<sup>3</sup> Arabella M. Willson, Disaster, Struggle, Triumph. The Adventures of 1000 "Boys in Blue," from August, 1862, to June, 1865 (Albany, New York: The Argus Company, 1870), pp. 228-229; Galwey, The Valiant Hours, p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> Galwey, The Valiant Hours, p. 183. The author writes in December 1863, "Fatigue parties are daily at work building roads to connect the different camps. . . . I was assigned to the work of building . . . a corduroy road from Stevensburg to our camp."

<sup>5</sup> J. W. Muffly, ed., The Story of Our Regiment: A History of the 148th Pennsylvania Volunteers (Des Moines, Iowa: The Kenyon Printing & Mfg. Co., 1904), p. 107. Although there is no mention of drainage ditches in Third Division accounts, this was a standard army-wide practice. A member of the 148th Pennsylvania, camped with the First Division, Second Corps, just to the west of Hansborough Ridge, wrote, "all the company streets were deeply ditched, in order to drain the adjoining ground perfectly and these ditches led into larger ones along the streets upon which the line and field and staff officers' quarters were faced."

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throwing up breast works," and a surgeon from the neighboring 20th Massachusetts [Third Brigade, Second Division] wrote of "the fort on the hill."<sup>6</sup>

When the Third Division broke camp on the evening of May 3, 1864, it left behind campsites littered with equipment and debris. Captain Thomas F. Galwey of the 8th Ohio wrote, "The comfortable huts in which we had passed so much of the early winter were unroofed; old shoes, old pantaloons, ragged blankets, pots, kettles, and what not, lay about in disorder."<sup>7</sup> General Alexander Webb, commander of the Second Division, noted that all houses in his camps were torn down on May 2.<sup>8</sup> The troops spent the last days of camp in shelter tents. Apparently, the Hansborough Ridge campsite has not been greatly disturbed by relic hunters in the intervening 127 years (with the exception of twelve hut sites and fire pits on the southeastern end of the ridge), for scattered among the hut sites and other surface remains are barrel staves, glass shards, bits of brick, and other metal fragments.

From a distance, Hansborough Ridge looks much the same today as it did prior to the winter encampment of 1863-1864. The crest of the ridge is heavily forested, with the exception of a hundred-foot-wide cleared swath bisecting the ridge where a power line runs in an east-west direction. There is no record of any part of this site being cultivated since the war.

On the northern end of the ridge, approximately fifty hut sites remain visible, along with approximately twenty-five other surface features such as fire pits, trash pits, stone piles, and unknown

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<sup>6</sup> John C. Scott, John Scott's War: A Diary of a Union Soldier with the Army of the Potomac (Lecompton, Kansas: LeCompton Historical Society, 1985), p. 9; Martha D. Perry, ed., Letters from a Surgeon of the Civil War (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1906), p. 162.

<sup>7</sup> Galwey, The Valiant Hours, p. 194.

<sup>8</sup> Alexander S. Webb, "The Papers of Alexander Stewart Webb," New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Library, MS No. 684.



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surface depressions. There appears to be a linear order to some of these hut sites to suggest their alignment along company streets, but the density of the foliage has thus far hindered a more detailed study. There is also a trench line in the woods just north of the power line right-of-way; it roughly parallels the power line up the eastern slope of the ridge.

Although only two contributing sites have been identified in this nomination, the bulk of information from first-hand accounts suggests there may be more contributing features and deposits of artifacts on the ridge.

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Army of the Potomac's Culpeper County winter encampment of 1863-1864 is explained in the Multiple Property Documentation Form for the Army of the Potomac Winter Encampment, Culpeper and Fauquier Counties, 1863-1864, Section E, Statement of Historic Contexts. The justification of criteria and dates and periods of significance are enumerated in the Multiple Property Documentation Form for the Army of the Potomac Winter Encampment, Culpeper and Fauquier Counties, 1863-1864, Section F, Section IV.

The Culpeper County winter encampment, as the largest winter encampment of the war, covered a large amount of territory in Culpeper County and a small area in Fauquier County. The individual corps were positioned like the spokes of a wheel some sixty miles in circumference. The Second Corps took up position around Stevensburg, almost directly to the south of Meade's headquarters at Brandy Station. Most of the Third Division occupied Hansborough Ridge, a two and one-half mile-long hill which dominates the southern approach to Brandy Station, while elements of the Second Division occupied Coles Hill, immediately to the north of Hansborough Ridge. The First Division encampment, located just west of these ridges, stretched from Stevensburg northward, paralleling these two other divisions. Corps headquarters initially were established at Glen Ella (the Pembroke Thom House), just to the west of Coles Hill and north of Mountain Run, but they were transferred to the Hansborough House, on Coles Hill, before January 1, 1864. The Second Division's commander, Brigadier General Alexander Webb, made his headquarters in a "cabin at Stevensburg"<sup>1</sup> while Brigadier General Alexander Hays, commanding the Third Division, chose the Stout House on the eastern base of Hansborough Ridge.

The Hansborough Ridge Winter Encampment District is significant under Criterion A as part of the Army of the Potomac's Culpeper County winter encampment of 1863-1864--a critical and highly influential event in the history of the army. This encampment was

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander S. Webb, "The Papers of Alexander Stewart Webb," New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University.

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perhaps the Army of the Potomac's most important winter encampment of the war, for the army had to grapple with the reenlistment issue, nagging leadership questions, sagging morale, and a number of other obstacles. In addition, the arrival of Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant in March 1864 dramatically altered the army's strategic role in the upcoming campaign.

While the entire winter encampment is significant, the Hansborough Ridge encampment contains a significant concentration of extant surface features and artifacts. Combined with the wealth of first-hand accounts from those who camped on or visited Hansborough Ridge, this site represents a unique opportunity for insight into the life and activities of this important winter encampment.

The Hansborough Ridge Winter Encampment District is also significant under Criterion D for its remarkably well-preserved remains and their potential to yield important information about the little-studied winter encampment. There are more than fifty hut site depressions along the ridge, as well as trash pits, fire pits, trenches, mounds of stone, and unidentified depressions (some of which may be burial sites). Additionally, bricks and other artifacts, such as barrel staves, glass fragments, and iron tools, dot the landscape. Unlike the vast majority of other Civil War sites, the camp site on Hansborough Ridge has remained relatively untouched.

The high integrity of this camp site offers an invaluable opportunity to gain insight into the historic winter encampment in Culpeper County. The encampment was documented extensively in both word (regimental histories, personal narratives, diaries, and letters) and picture (Matthew Brady, Alexander Gardner, T. H. O'Sullivan, and Andrew J. Russell all spent a great deal of time photographing the Culpeper County encampment, and it became the most extensively photographed encampment of the war). Detailed archaeological surveys of the Hansborough Ridge encampment district may yield valuable additional information on such topics as camp organization and construction and the social interaction of the soldiers and civilians in camp.

Although it is possible to place the general locations of some Third Division regiments based on primary accounts, a detailed archaeological study could provide the precise locations of

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regiments and even companies on Hansborough Ridge. This may also provide insight into the patterns of camp relocation, as some regiments temporarily left camp on furlough and others occupied their campsites. Similarly, the information on camp structure and organization already known through primary accounts and sketches could be greatly augmented through archaeological study, especially in the areas of camp sanitation and defensive fortifications. Physical reconstruction of the camp may be possible due to the large number of well-defined above-ground features.

The Hansborough Ridge encampment also has great potential to yield information on the social interaction of the various groups in camp. While the social cohesion of the Army of the Potomac during the 1863-1864 Culpeper County encampment is thought to have contributed greatly to the army's later successes, there is little definite information on the nature of the social relations between the disparate elements in camp. For example, archaeological study could produce cultural artifacts which would shed light on the integration of the German-speaking recruits who arrived in April 1864. The discovery of personal items could also identify the areas of camp where civilians (i.e., servants, officers' wives, Christian and Sanitary Commission officials, and sutlers and other camp followers) were located and the relative numbers of such individuals on Hansborough Ridge. Furthermore, archaeological study could uncover the sites of the various chapels and theaters (perhaps even the site of the Second Corps' Washington's Birthday Ball) which played such a large role in the spiritual and recreational lives of the soldiers during the winter of 1863-1864.

Study of the Hansborough Ridge encampment would also be useful in terms of the differences between Union and Confederate winter encampments. While both sides had access to the same basic timber supplies, Union encampments by the winter of 1863-1864 may have been organized in a more sanitary fashion due to the influence of the Sanitary Commission. The logistics involved in supplying the various armies was also a major difference between the armies, as the Army of the Potomac invariably was better supplied than the Army of Northern Virginia. Consequently, archaeological study of the Hansborough Ridge encampment could yield evidence of weaponry, machinery, and materials not found in Confederate winter encampments. Also, the much greater size of Union encampments may have resulted in a difference in camp organization (i.e., troop density, hut siting, etc.)

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In relation to other winter encampments, the Culpeper County winter encampment merits national significance. It was the largest winter encampment of the war up to that point, and while all Union armies had to grapple with the reenlistment issue, the Army of the Potomac had the most at stake. It commanded more attention, received more men and supplies, had experienced less success, and generally was considered more important than any other Union army. The arrival of Ulysses S. Grant in March 1864 confirmed the importance of the army and contributed to the significance of the encampment.

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundary of the nominated property is delineated by the following UTM reference points and contour lines:

Beginning at point A' 18/248715/4260250 and following the 350' contour line east and south to point B' 18/248715/4259540, thence south to point C' 18/248750/4259310, thence south to point D' 18/248690/4259170, thence south to point E' 18/248690/4259085 and following the 400' contour line south, west, and north to point F' 18/248515/4260190, thence to point G' 18/248630/4260255 and thence to the point of beginning.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries of the district are established by the extent and concentration of surface features and artifacts. Most of the features are aligned in a linear manner suggestive of company streets, and this is consistent with the historic map indications of the camp of the Second Corps' Third Division.

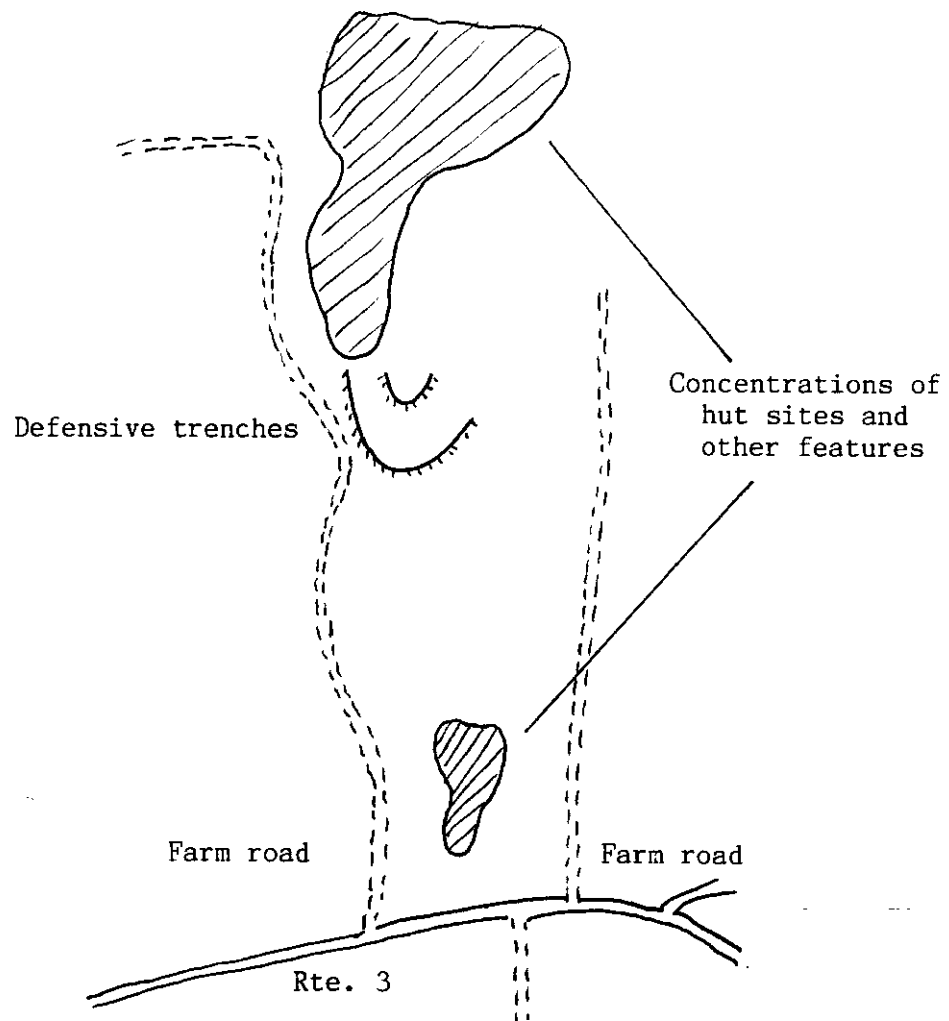
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HANSBOROUGH RIDGE WINTER ENCAMPMENT DISTRICT

SITE MAP--not to scale



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PHOTOGRAPHS

All photographs are of:

HANSBOROUGH RIDGE  
Stevensburg, Culpeper County, VA

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Credit: Jamie Dial<br>Date: 1989<br>View of: south elevation,<br>facing west<br>Photo: 1 of 6 | 4. Credit: Jamie Dial<br>Date: 1989<br>View of: north elevation,<br>facing west<br>Photo: 4 of 6 |
| 2. Credit: Jamie Dial<br>Date: 1989<br>View of: south elevation,<br>facing west<br>Photo: 2 of 6 | 5. Credit: Jamie Dial<br>Date: 1989<br>View of: hut site,<br>north site<br>Photo: 5 of 6         |
| 3. Credit: Jamie Dial<br>Date: 1989<br>View of: north elevation,<br>facing west<br>Photo: 3 of 6 | 6. Credit: Jamie Dial<br>Date: 1989<br>View of: hut site,<br>north site<br>Photo: 6 of 6         |



4263  
4262  
4261  
27'30"  
4260  
LIGNUM 3.2 MI.  
(GERMANNA BRIDGE)  
5400 IV NE  
4257

HANSBOROUGH RIDGE  
WINTER ENCAMPMENT  
DISTRICT, CULPEPER CO.,  
A 18/248940/426000  
B 18/248700/425875  
C 18/248000/425885  
D 18/248410/426030  
CULPEPER EAST QUADRAULE

Mountain

Gates Hill

Stevensburg

St Stephens Ch

661

663

BM 290

BM

BM 351

BM 315

BR 274

Landdg Strip

327

347

316

323

329

304

300

300

350

300

300

300

320

320

320

305

310

288

296

382

300

351

350

350

320

360

300

350

350

319

300

350

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY DETERMINATION RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91002042

Date Determined Eligible: 2/6/92

Hansborough Ridge Winter Encampment District Culpeper VA  
Property Name: County: State:

Army of the Potomac Winter Encampment, Culpeper and Fauquier  
Counties MPS  
Multiple Name

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This property is determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached determination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the determination documentation.

*Patrick W. Andrews*  
*for* \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

4/10/92  
Date of Action

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Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8 of the nomination form did not indicate the level at which the significance of this property was evaluated. The VA SHPO confirmed that it was evaluated at the National level. The form is officially amended to include this information.

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**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)