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OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

SEP 05 1980

NAVIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines* for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number __7 Page __7.1 ___

Byram's Ford site

The Byram's Ford site is a heavily wooded copse of about 12 acres bisected by the meandering course of the Big Blue River. The site contains Byram's Ford which in historic times afforded the traveler a good crossing point for mounted and wagon traffic and featured a traversable descending grade to the stream course and a firm rock-lined bottom through the Big Blue River.

From the vantage point of the stream bottom at the ford the site setting is well wooded and belies its heavily developed urban surroundings. The wooded copse surrounding the site's main focus, the river ford, stretches an appreciable distance in each direction and retains sufficient environmental integrity to reflect the period and associations for which the site was significant. The main feature of the site are the remnant roadway swales (exhibited in photographs 1-3) which twist for approximately 500 feet from Hardesty Avenue down to the river, terminate at its eastern bank and resume at the western bank. From this crossing point, marked by a wooden sign, the trace of the road rises up a small but steep rise and runs for 400 feet to the edge of the modern industrial park along Manchester Trafficway. The surrounding setting evidences a mature riparian environment with tall mature tree growth and natural native shrubs and grasses. The course of the river has not apparently shifted to any dramatic extent in modern time and is currently naturally entrenched.

There has been no systematic appraisal of the site's potential for historical archaeological remains, though it could conceivably retain a subsurface component dating to the 1864 Battle of Westport. No recorded retrieval of cultural remains located on the site surface has been documented. The integrity of the site—as bounded for this registration effort—is uncharacteristically high considering its urban location. Verifiable historic documentation leaves no doubt that this site is the location of the critical juncture in the movement of troops and material in the battle which enable Union troops to gain a victory over the Confederates; the possession of

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

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this ford was pivotal in that success. The site retains the ability to evoke a sense of the historic environment on those cold October days.

Byram's Ford road site

The Byram's Ford road site is approximately five acres in extent and contains a remnant road course bordered by a heavily wooded copse. The remnant roadbed can be clearly traced over its 500 foot extent, beginning high on a bluff northeast of Byram's Ford, and extending down slope until it terminates in an abrupt manner at modern Hardesty Avenue (see photographs 4-5). The roadway is dirt with much rock surfacing through the thin layer of soil which overlays the natural limestone outcroppings.

The integrity of location, setting, feeling and association are less clear-cut on this remnant road segment than on the Byram's Ford site. In proximity to the roadway a dense growth of trees and underbrush parallel the course of the road, from its beginning at the end of a small paved circle drive, to its abrupt end at a road-cut for Hardesty Avenue. Historic research verifies that this remnant of the original Byram's Ford Road was a portion of the descending grade funneling traffic down to the ford. In the immediate environs of the road a sense of time and place can be recaptured and a sense of the historic environment can be claimed. The site is tangibly linked to the same significant set of events as the ford and its boundaries are conservatively set to retain and reflect these important historic associations. The essential identity and character of the the road is preserved in this significant, albeit small, remnant of the largest Civil War engagement west of the Mississippi. Location, setting, feeling and association as elements of integrity are minimally retained for this contributing element of the district.

From a comparative context the two sites comprising this district stand alone as vestiges of a highly significant Civil War battle. The main battle area is now heavily urbanized and primarily lies within modern Jacob L. Loose Memorial Park (see enclosed U.S.G.S. Kansas City 7.5' Quadrangle map).

8. Statement of Significance		
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property nationally x s	y in relation to other properties: tatewide locally	
Applicable National Register Criteria 🔲 A 🔲 B 🔲 C	D	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)]D	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) Military	Period of Significance 1864	Significant Dates Oct. 23, 1864 Oct. 22, 1864
	Cultural Affiliation N/A	
Significant Person N/A	Architect/Builder N/A	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Byram's Ford Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A. The sites of the district are directly associated with an event making a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history, namely: it was upon these sites that an important juncture within the Civil War Battle of Westport (October 22-23,1864) took place. The area of significance is MILITARY history: as well as being the largest battle of this war west of the Mississippi the battle represented the last major Union victory in the trans-Mississippi West and signalled the end of organized Confederate military operations in the State of Missouri. The roadway and ford referred to as Byram's Ford featured a narrow and steep defile that allowed for tightly constricted troop movements down the eastern rock ridges overlooking the Big Blue River. The road allowed forces to pass over a firm rock-bottomed ford critical to the transport of military equipment and material. For two days the contending forces sought control of this conduit leading to the eastern end of the main battle scene. In the second day a fierce battle was fought with the ford being the locus from which the Union forces massed and attacked the entrenched Confederate forces on the ridge tops on the west side of the river. Displacing the Confederate forces allowed the Federal army to swiftly threaten the Confederate right flank, a situation that led to the eventual disintegration of the Confederate lines engaged in the main battle area along the heights above Brush Creek. The pall-mall retreat of the Confederates began and disaster was averted only by the the heroic rear guard action of Confederate General Joseph Shelby and his force. The Battle

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Byram's Ford Historic District

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INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH cont.

of the Big Blue, as the Byram's Ford engagement became to be known, was a critical juncture in the larger battle. The ford and roadway remnant were critical components in this battle and retain integrity in location, setting, feeling and association. In the heavily urbanized environment of Kansas City these small sites represent the last tangible vestiges of a major engagement of the Civil War.

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Byram's Ford Historic District in Historic Context

The Byram's Ford Historic District is significant because it is associated with a significant event in United States history, the Civil War. More specifically, the Byram's Ford Historic District is associated with the largest Civil War engagement of land forces west of the Mississippi River, the Battle of Westport, which occurred on October 22-23, 1864. The Battle of Westport was the last major Union victory in the Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi West and it signalled the end of organized Confederate military operations in the State of Missouri, hence its statewide significance. Approximately 29,000 troops (20,000 Union and 9,000 Confederate) troops were engaged at the Battle of Westport. On the local level, the defeat of General Sterling Price's Confederate Army of Missouri at the Battle of Westport precluded further movement of Confederate forces toward Kansas City and Ft. Leavenworth, targets that Price intended to take.

Byram's Ford Historical District derives its significance in the area of MILITARY history from the fact that this location was a critical juncture in the movement of troops and material during the Battle of Westport's easternmost component, the Battle of the Big Blue, which occurred on October 22-23, 1864. Units of the Union Army of the Border and all of the Confederate Army of Missouri traversed Byram's Ford Road and crossed the River at Byram's Ford. Furthermore, the Confederate Army's failure to prevent Union troops from crossing the Big Blue River at Byram's Ford in the battle that occurred there on October 23 had a significant impact on the outcome of the Battle of In winning the Battle of the Big Blue at Byram's Ford the Union troops were able to cross the river, drive back the Confederates that were opposing them, and continue on the attack until they had flanked the main Confederate line that was fighting south of Westport on October 23. This flanking movement was a major factor in the defeat of the Confederate Army at the Battle of Westport. A narrative of the events during October 22-23, 1864 is presented below in order to provide further details.

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Byram's Ford Historic District

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General Sterling Price's Confederate Army of Missouri entered Missouri near Doniphan on September 19, 1864 on a cavalry raid in what was to be the last Confederate effort to establish a presence in the state. After failing to take St. Louis and Jefferson City, Price turned toward Fort Leavenworth and Kansas. Union General Samuel Ryan Curtis and his Army of the Border prepared to meet Price on a fortified line prepared on the west bank of the Big Blue River.

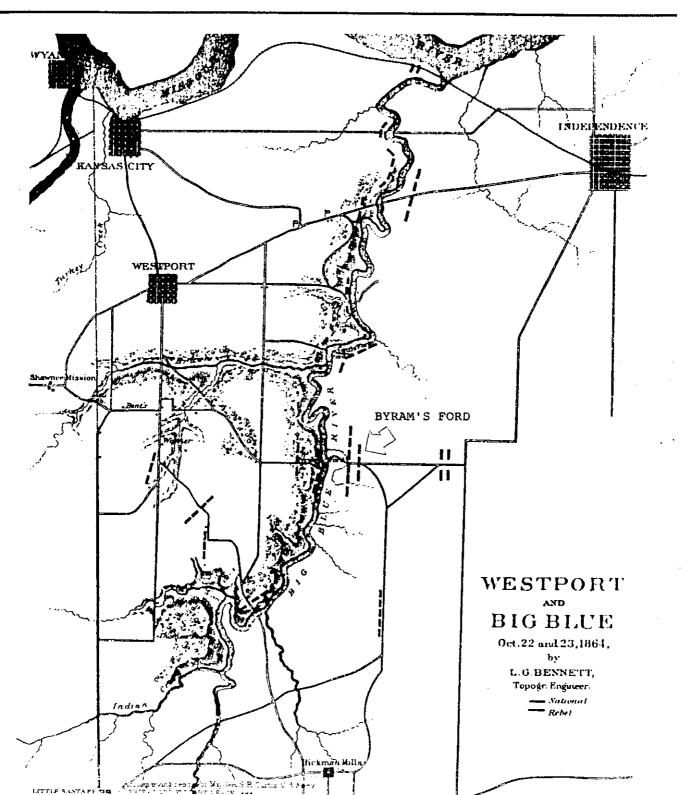
On the morning of October 22, 1864 Confederate General Joseph O. Shelby forced a hotly contested crossing at Byram's Ford by flanking the prepared Union defensive line of Colonel Charles R. Jennison. The control of the ford itself was important to the Confederates because the westward-moving Confederate Army was encumbered by a large wagon train and needed a suitable river crossing. On October 22, Union troops on the west bank of the river failed to hold Byram's Ford and fell back towards Kansas City and Westport. The defeat of Union troops at Byram's Ford on October 22 allowed the large Confederate wagon train of 500 wagons and 5,000 cattle accompanied by 1,500 men to cross the river and ultimately escape southward. On the evening of October 22 both armies made troop dispositions for a showdown battle south of Westport the next day. The map on page 8.4 shows the disposition of forces on October 22.

General Alfred E. Pleasonton, with a Division of Union Cavalry had been chasing Price across Missouri and now was approaching the rear of the Confederate Army of Missouri. Confederate General John S. Marmaduke and his division took position on the west bank of the Big Blue River at Byram's Ford to prevent Pleasanton and his cavalry from crossing the river and coming in on the rear or flank of Price's Army now in position south of Westport on the morning of October 23. After severe fighting at the ford, Pleasonton's troops finally forced Marmaduke to fall back toward Westport around 11:00 a.m. (see map 8.5). General Pleasonton estimated that his casualties were 200 at the Battle of the Big Blue. With Pleasonton's Union troopers approaching his flank, Price, who was being forced back by Curtis south of Westport, had no alternative but to retreat south.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

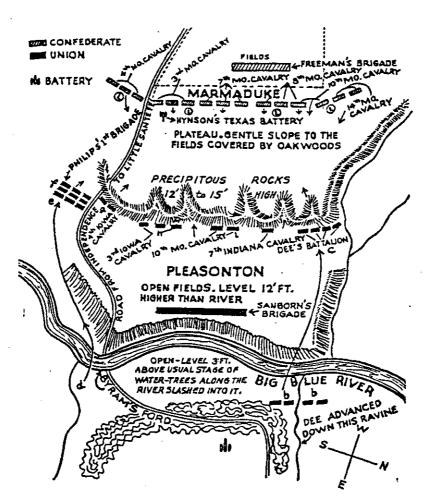
Section number 8 Page 8.4



National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number 8 Page 8.5



BYRAM'S FORD IIA.M. OCT. 231 1864

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Byram's Ford Historic District

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The map on page 8.7 shows the main battle scene at its height. As the main body of Price's forces retreated General Joseph Shelby and the Confederate Iron Brigade fought a heroic rear guard action that literally saved the Army of Missouri from total disaster. However, the defeat of General Sterling Price at the Battle of Westport eliminated any hope of a Confederate presence in the State of Missouri during the remainder of the war.

Byram's Ford Historic District-Evaluative Context

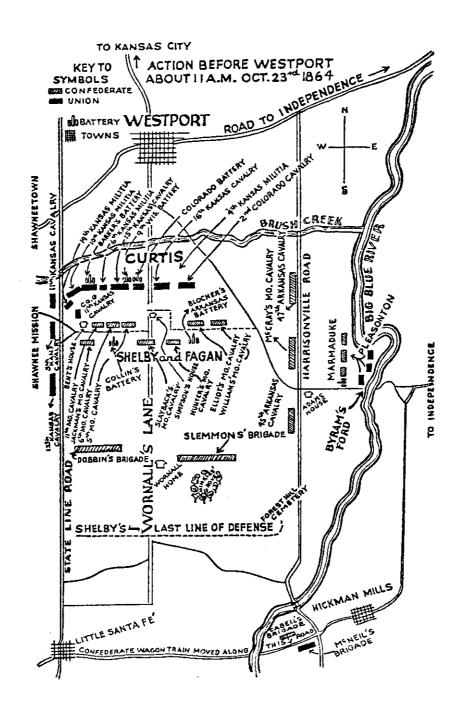
The two small sites making up this district provide the last opportunity to preserve elements of the original historic environment possessing an evocative quality and capable of interpretation by local historians. The significance of the Battle of Westport, and its smaller-scale component, the Battle of the Big Blue, has been intensively researched and documented by professional and a vocational historians (see Item 9 of this registration form). The locations of the battle have been marked and several guidebooks provide tour information for the Civil War devotee.

Most sites associated with the engagement have been subsumed within the growth of Kansas City and are now incorporated within and adjacent the city's Jacob L. Loose Memorial Park and at scattered locations within the city. These properties include the Wornall House (1858; NRHP listed 5/21/69) which served as a Confederate and Federal hospital during the course of the battle. The integrity of the majority of these sites as representative of the historic scene has been lost, however, and although they are well and appropriately interpreted by the signs and tour guides they fail to convey the physical historic character of the landscape at the time of the battle. Given the rapid pace of development in the city in the intervening 125 years it is not surprising that vestiges of the battle have not survived. The Wornell House is an exception to the rule as one surviving building having a direct and tangible link to the battle. The two sites along the Byram's Ford Road present the last chance to preserve currently identified components of the actual battle scene which retain aspects of visual and environmental integrity.

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Byram's Ford Historic District

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Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number 8 Page 8.8

The historic Byram's Ford road segment presented a somewhat precipitous defile down the ridge tops to the ford. The character of this historic road is reflected in this small segment. This individual site/road segment is cut off from the roadway swales and ford incorporated into the Byram's Ford site by Hardesty Avenue. For the purposes of the registration effort the remnant sites could be conceived as either a single site with an noncontributing roadway (Hardesty Avenue) or as a discontiguous linear district having two sites. The latter option was chosen since both sites can be defined as spatially discrete, the space between the sites (Hardesty Avenue) is not related to the significance of the district and each site separately possesses the ability to reflect the historic environment. The site is, therefore, treated as a discontiguous linear district of two portions split by an integrity-compromising modern road. Hardesty Avenue dramatically intrudes into the continuity of the two site/roadway segments and divides the two contributing elements of the district into two spatially discrete elements. The visual continuity of the road is adversely impacted by this modern road. Nonetheless, it is important to underscore that the two segments are directly tied to the same historic process of development and association with an important event. The historic connection between the two sites links them in a compelling fashion which calls for their treatment as contributing elements of the same district. Linked by association and function these two sites have the ability to evoke a sense of time and place, albeit in a narrowly confined space. Admittedly, the encroachment of modern road and building development sharply restricts the site's representation of the historic environment, however, in the immediate proximity of the road segment and, more definitively, at the location of the river ford the setting illustrates the location and physical and associative character of the battle scene.

Cultural Resources Management considerations

Only future survey and evaluation will establish whether other related battle sites or features exist with the metropolitan Kansas City area. The two sites nominated within this effort are defined as two separate sites of a discontiguous district in the hope that any

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number __8 Page __8.9

future sites identified and evaluated as similar in nature and in close proximity to these sites could be added as contributing elements to this district. No systematic survey of the upper reaches of the Battle of Big Blue battle site has been conducted. It is possible that both surface and subsurface components dating to the battle still remain in relative proximity to the Byram's Ford site and that these should be regarded as potentially eligible to the National Register OF Historic Places under criteria A and D.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number 9 Page 9.1

Bibliographical references.

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 <u>Illustrated</u>, Volume 5, No. 4, July 1966.
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- Fred L. Lee (ed.), "Diary of Col. John B. Philips, Commanding, 1st Brigade, of Maj.-Gen. Alfred S. Pleasonton's Provisional Calvary Division (Oct. 18-25, 1864)." In <u>The Battle of Westport</u>. Kansas City: Westport Historical Society, 1982. pp.40-44.
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- Howard N. Monnett, <u>Action Before Westport</u>, Kansas City: Lowell Press, 1964.
- William Forse Scott, "The Last Fight for Missouri." Reprint of, Personal Recollections of the War of the Rebellion, Third Series. Kansas City: Battle of Westport Fund, Inc. n.d.
- Robert Shalope, <u>Sterling Price</u>, <u>Portrait of a Southerner</u>. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971.
- Stephen Z. Starr, <u>Jennison's Jayhawkers</u>. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973.
- War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I, Volume XLI, Part I. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1883.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number ____10 Page ___10.1

UTM Coordinates for each site of district all coordinates are within Zone 15

Byram's Ford Site

a 368380mE/4319620mN b 368220mE/4319620mN c 368220mE/4319480mN d 368260mE/4319460mN e 368260mE/4319360mN f 368400mE/4319380mN g 368480mE/4319380mN Byram's Ford Road Site

368390mE/4319620mN 368320mE/4319780mN 368480mE/4319810mN 368480mE/4319620mN

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number 10 Page 10.2

Verbal Boundary Description

The Byram's Ford Historic District contains two sites, each of which possesses boundaries formed by topography, natural vegetation and features, cultural features and arbitrary points. The boundary for the Byram's Ford site begins at point A, 1100' northwest of the intersection of Hardesty Avenue and 63rd Street. This boundary point is located on the western side of Hardesty Avenue immediately south of the intersection of Hardesty and the remnant portion of the old Byram's Ford road comprising the second of these two sites. From this point the boundary of the Byram's Ford site travels 500' west down to the eastern bank of the Big Blue River drainage. Here, at Point B, the boundary travels southward 250' to the edge of the meandering Big Blue, crosses the river and travels for an additional 250' to Point C on the edge of a terrace slope lying above the Big Blue. The boundary then travels 125' southeast along a contour to the westernmost portion of the remnant Byram's Ford trace rising up from the western edge of the Big Blue River (Point D). From this point the boundary travels 400' south to again touch the course of the river (Point E) and then travels northeastward along the river bank for 500' to Point F. From here the boundary goes east, across the river, for 300' and intersects with the western edge of Hardesty Avenue and Point G. The boundary skirts the edge of the avenue and travels northwestward from this point for 800' to intersect with Point A. The total acreage encompassed within these boundaries is approximately 12 acres. The second component of this discontiguous linear district lies on the opposite side of Hardesty Avenue from the initial point of the Byram's Ford site. Point A of the Byram's Ford Road site lies approximately 1100' north of the intersection of Hardesty Avenue and 63rd Street on the east side of Hardesty. The initial boundary point is directly adjacent to the roadcut made in the eastern side of the hill slope rising above Hardesty Avenue; the remnant swale of the old Byram's Ford Road is discernible at this roadcut as a road-shaped depression. From this point the boundary travels northwestward for 500' to Point B and then 500' northeast to Point C. The boundary then travels southward for 300' to intersect with the easternmost extension of the remnant roadway swale and then an additional 400' to Point D. The boundary then travels westward to intersect with Point A 300' to the west. The total acreage is five acres.

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Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number 10 Page 10.3

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Byram's Ford site and Byram's Ford road site have been determined with reference to historical accounts of the battle and a concern to preserve the site's ability to convey the historic setting. The primary consideration was to provide boundaries focused on the roadway swales and enough adjoining acreage to preserve the remaining visual integrity of the site. Visual barriers intruding on the site have been minimized (i.e. modern construction, housing and Hardesty Avenue) and the use of natural vegetation and topography have been emphasized to preserve the integrity of location, setting, feeling and association. Historic factors have also played a role in the delineation of site boundaries. For instance, some latitude has been made for the irregular deployment by the combatants on the west side of the ford on the days of the battle. The deployment of the Union troops on the October 23rd ran in an irregular line from the ford crossing north to front the assembled Confederate forces on the west side of the Big Blue. Only that acreage retaining a sense of the historic environment and directly associated with the military actions of October 22-23,1864 are included in the site boundaries.

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Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number __11 Page __11.1_

2. Hugh Davidson
Preservation Planner
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
Date: August 29, 1989
Telephone: 314/751-5377

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number Photos Page 1

Photographs

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory
Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor
205 Jefferson Street
Jefferson City, Missouri

East view across Big Blue River to remnant swale on east bank
(swale at mid-point of picture)
#1

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor 205 Jefferson Street

Jefferson City, Missouri

Northeast view of remnant roadway swale adjacent Hardesty Avenue #2

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory
Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor
205 Jefferson Street
Jefferson City, Missouri

Southwest view of remnant roadway swale on west bank of Big Blue River $\,$

#3

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number Photos Page 2

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford road site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor 205 Jefferson Street Jefferson City, Missouri

North view of remnant roadway on east side of Hardesty Avenue #4

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford road site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory
Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor
205 Jefferson Street
Jefferson City, Missouri

North view of remnant roadway on east side of Hardesty Avenue showing where Hardesty Avenue road-cut abruptly impacts old Byram's Ford Road.
#5

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor 205 Jefferson Street Jefferson City, Missouri

East view immediately adjacent Hardesty Avenue (in middle background) showing roadway swale #6

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number Photos Page 3

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor 205 Jefferson Street

Jefferson City, Missouri Missouri Historic Preservation Program

Northeast view looking to east bank of Byram's Ford #7

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor 205 Jefferson Street Jefferson City, Missouri

South view from east bank of Big Blue River at Byram's Ford #8

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

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Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor
205 Jefferson Street
Jefferson City, Missouri

East view from west bank of Big Blue River at Byram's Ford #9

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number Photos Page 4

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory
Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor

205 Jefferson Street Jefferson City, Missouri

West view from west bank of Big Blue River at Byram's Ford #10

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor 205 Jefferson Street

Jefferson City, Missouri

North view from west bank of Big Blue River at Byram's Ford looking down towards the ford

#10

Byram's Ford Historic District Byram's Ford site Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri Hugh Davidson March 18, 1989

Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor 205 Jefferson Street

205 Jefferson Street Jefferson City, Missouri

East view of remnant road on west side of Big Blue River at Byram's Ford

#12

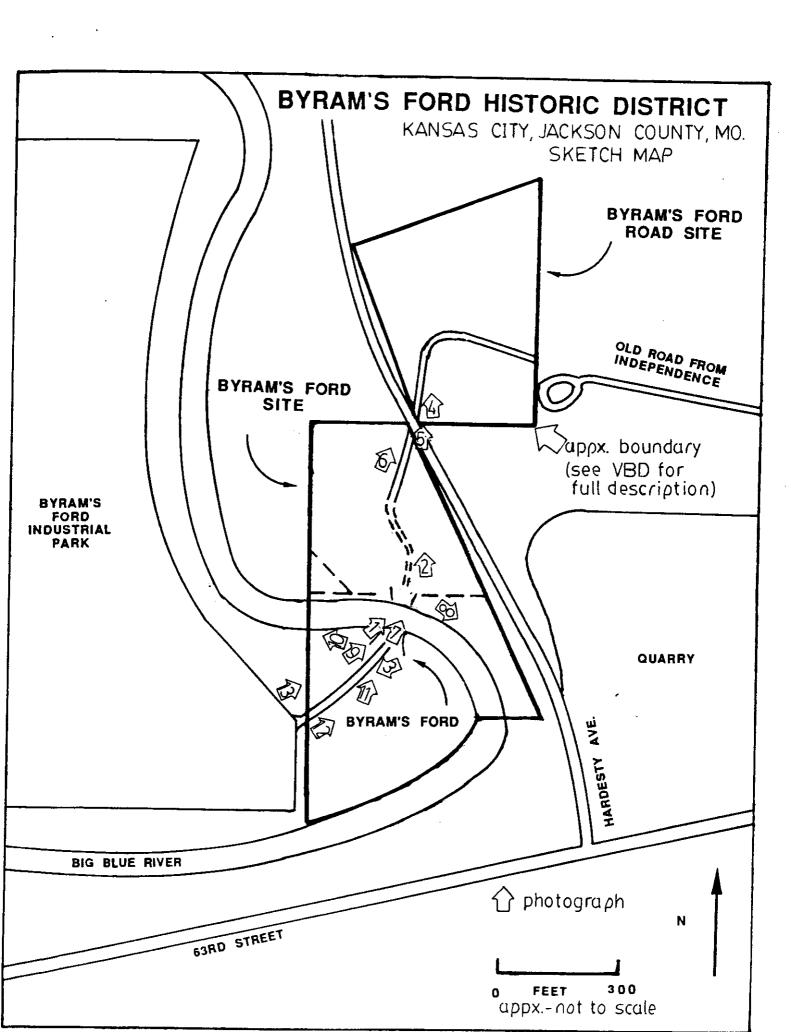
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

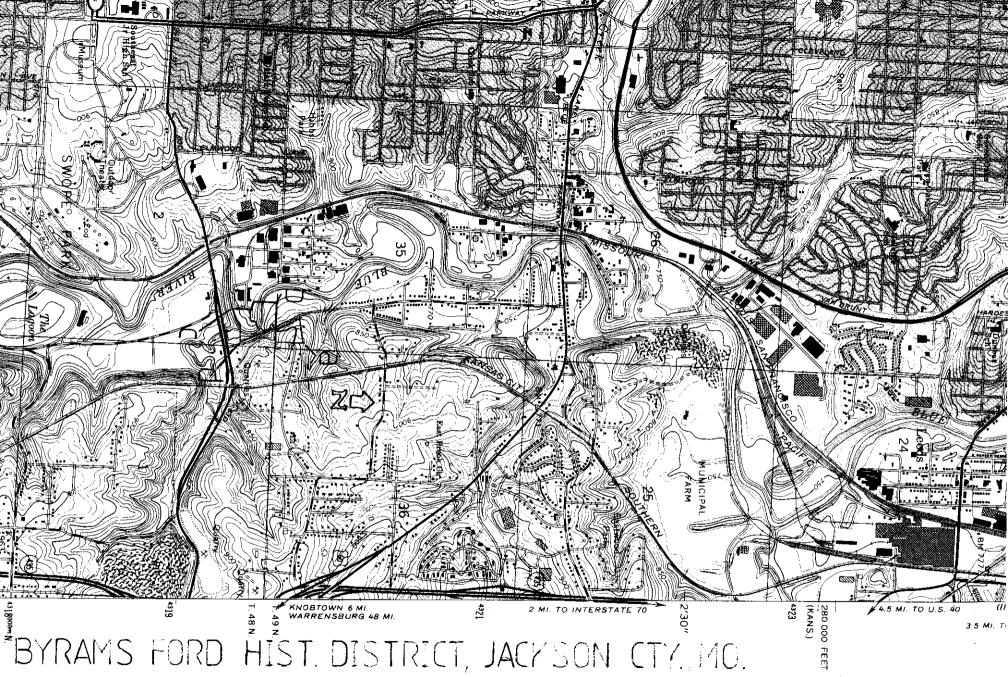
Byram's Ford Historic District

Section number Photos Page 5

Byram's Ford Historic District
Byram's Ford site
Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri
Hugh Davidson
March 18, 1989
Neg. Loc.: Missouri State Cultural Resource Inventory
Jefferson State Office Building, 9th Floor
205 Jefferson Street

Jefferson City, Missouri
East-southeast view of ford on west side of Big Blue River at
Byram's Ford
#13





-all UTMs zone15: a 368480mE 4319810mN b 368220mE 4319620mN c 368260mE 4319350mN d 368480mE 4319350mN

























