

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name:

other names/site number: Union Earthwork

2. Location

street & number: State Highway 356 not for publication N/A
city or town: Rienzi vicinity X
state: Mississippi code MS county Alcorn code 3 zip code 38865

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally X statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

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 the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property:

Private

Number of Resources within Property:

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Category of Property:

Site

Contributing

Non-contributing

1

1

0

buildings
sites
structures
objects
Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

Defense/Fortification

Current Functions:

Not in Use/Forest

7. Description

Architectural Classification(s):

No Style

Materials:

foundation: earth
roof: N/A
walls: N/A
other: N/A

Narrative Description:

see continuation sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

Areas of Significance
Military

- X **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Period of Significance
1862

Significant Dates
1862

Criteria Considerations:

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Person(s)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation(s)
N/A

Architect/Builder
N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance:

see continuation sheets

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Name of repository:

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
	A	16/358320/3848130		C		
	B			D		

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

see continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification:

see continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title:	Jack D. Elliott, Jr./ Historical Archaeologist with assistance of S. W. Bondurant	date:	26 February 1997
organization:	Mississippi Department of Archives and History	street & number:	PO BOX 571
street & number:	PO BOX 571	city or town:	Jackson
city or town:	Jackson	state:	MS
		zip code:	39205-0571
		telephone:	(601) 359-6940

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner(s)

name:	L.D. "Bud" Cox	street & number:	709 Highway 356	telephone:	(601) 462-5361
street & number:	709 Highway 356	city or town:	Rienzi	state:	MS
city or town:	Rienzi	zip code:	38865		

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Union Earthwork
Alcorn County, Mississippi

Narrative Description

The Union Earthwork at Rienzi is located on the crest of a wooded knoll immediately to the north of a cultivated field. On the north side of the earthwork, the terrain drops precipitously compared to the more level topography to the south. Protected by the terrain, the site has remained outside the pale of cultivation.

This earthwork is believed to have been constructed by Federal troops during their occupation of Rienzi, Mississippi, in 1862. It is well-preserved in the shape of a crescent and is approximately 20 meters long from cusp to cusp. The parapet is approximately 0.8 meters high above the interior, and about 1.5 to 2.0 meters high above the surrounding ditch in front. There is a remnant of a glacis in front of the ditch. Facing southwards on the crest of a ridge, it was designed to protect the position from assaults across the relatively low slopes to the south.

Based upon the accounts of relic hunters and the recollections of older area residents, a total of three sites have been located in the Rienzi vicinity that have Civil War earthworks or remnants of earthworks. This structure is the only one of the three that remains substantially intact. The earthwork maintains its original form and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling, and association. It is one of the most intact surviving remnants of the fortifications surrounding Corinth.

Statement of Significance

The Union Earthwork at Rienzi is significant under Criterion A in the area of military history because of its association with the Federal occupation of the crucial rail junction of Corinth, Mississippi, and its surrounding area following withdrawal of Confederate forces from Corinth in May 1862. This fortification is one of the very few relatively intact earthworks of the type constructed by Federal forces in their efforts to fortify and defend Corinth. It specifically illustrates the construction of outlying defenses as far as eleven miles from Corinth along the major avenues of approach. It is also a well-preserved and representative example of the type of field fortifications built by the occupying Union forces. It is as well-preserved as any other earthworks of this period in the state, including such significant remains as those at Corinth, Grenada, and Grand Gulf.

The Union Earthwork at Rienzi must be understood in the context of the Federal occupation of Corinth, which is discussed in the National Historic Landmark documentation for the Siege and Battle of Corinth. (Several properties associated with the Siege and Battle of Corinth were designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1991.) Corinth was located at the intersection of two strategic railroads, the Mobile & Ohio and the Memphis & Charleston, which gave it considerable strategic importance. Following the Battle of Shiloh on April 6 and 7, 1862, and the subsequent Siege of Corinth, Confederate forces abandoned the town, withdrawing to the south by rail under cover of the night of May 29, 1862.

Following the Confederate withdrawal, Corinth was occupied by as many as 25,000 Union troops who remained through early 1864. From this fortified depot the Union forces conducted raids into Alabama, Tennessee, and the surrounding areas of Mississippi. To protect their Corinth base considerable numbers of Federal troops were stationed at such outlying sites as Rienzi, Jacinto, Burnsville, and Iuka. Up to 2,500 troops with the Fifth Division of Rosecrans's Army of the Mississippi were stationed for several months in 1862 at Rienzi (Kitchens 1987:13; Tunnard 1866:195; O.R. 1866:35-43). During this time considerable earthwork construction was carried out. Regimental records relate these activities in June of that year: "Within the last two weeks we have furnished two companies a day each for picket and entrenching duties and are now detailing from 150 to 200 men each day for duty," and "All men not being on picket guard were employed in throwing up entrenchments near Rienzi."

Sources pertaining to the occupation of Rienzi are spotty; it is not known how long the Federal troops remained there. Although there are no known sources that date the occupation to after 1862, it is quite possible that they remained until early 1864 when the Union forces abandoned Corinth.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Union Earthwork
Alcorn County, Mississippi

Major Bibliographical References

Brent, Joseph E. "Occupied Corinth: The contraband camp and the First Alabama Infantry of African Descent 1862-1864." A study prepared for Alcorn County, Mississippi, the City of Corinth, Mississippi, and the Siege and Battle of Corinth Commission, 1995.

Kitchens, Ben Earl. Rosecrans Meets Price. Alabama: Thornwood Book Publishers, 1987.

Siege and Battle of Corinth -- National Historic Landmark Nomination, Alcorn County, National Register File, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson.

The War of the Rebellion, A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Series I, vol. 17, part 1. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1886.

Tucker, Phillip Thomas. The South's Finest: The First Missouri Confederate Brigade from Pea Ridge to Vicksburg. Pennsylvania: White Mane Publishing Company, 1993.

Tunnard, Willie H. A Southern record: The story of the 3rd Louisiana Infantry. Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1866.

Geographical Data

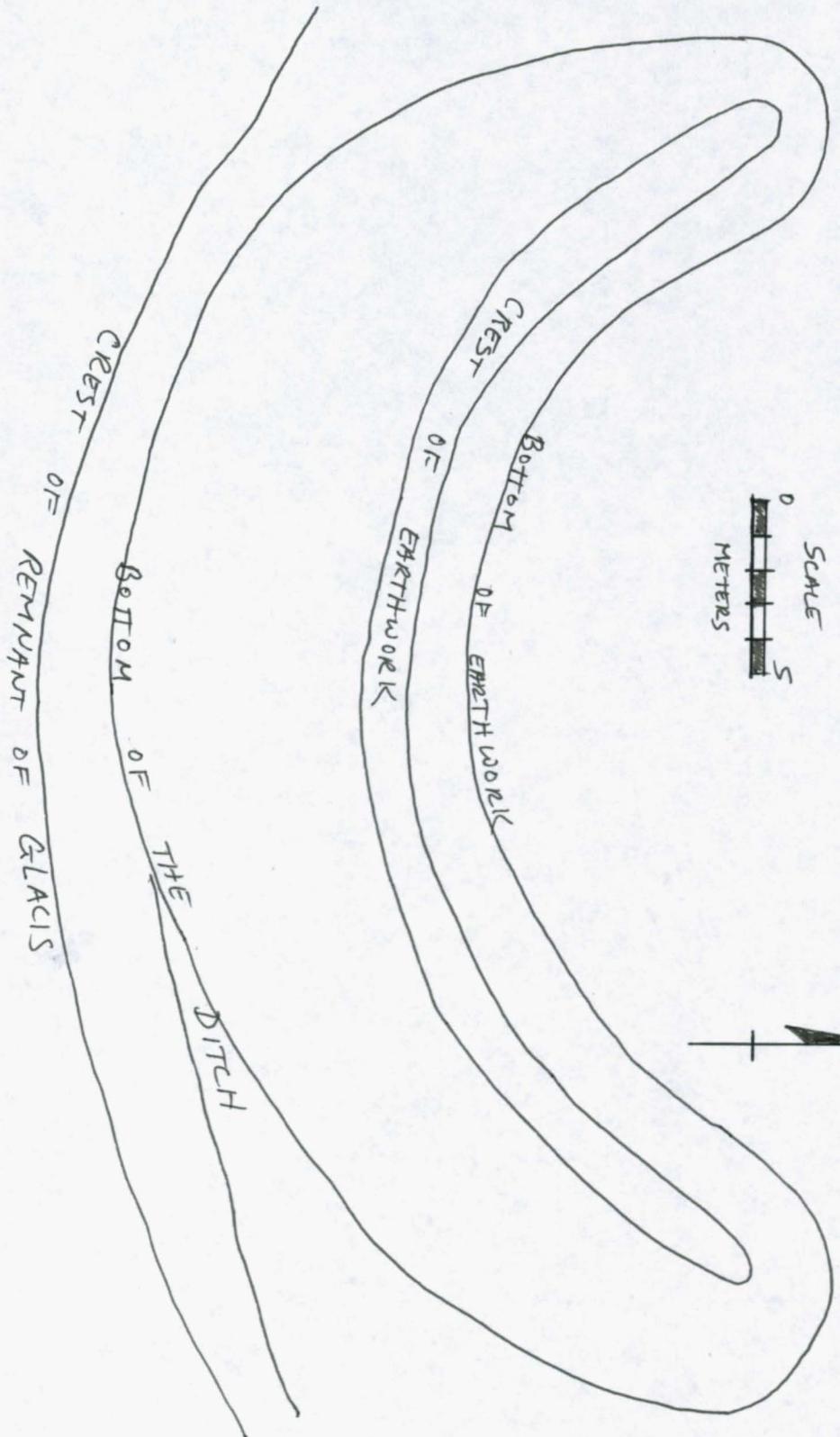
Verbal Boundary Description

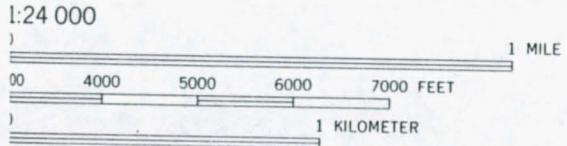
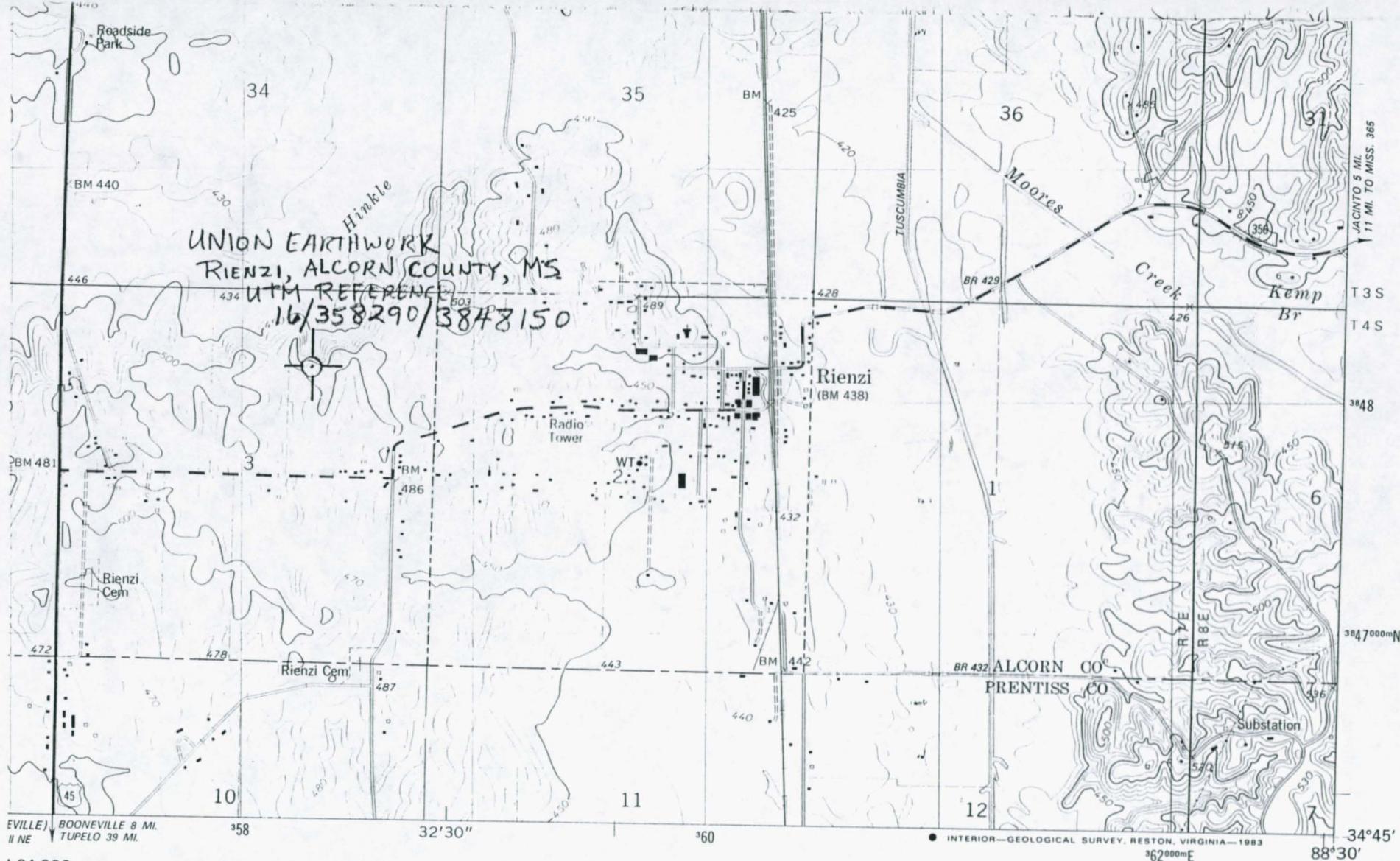
The property is a rectangle 50 meters east-west by 40 meters north-south, centered on the middle of the earthwork, which is located at UTM reference 16/358290/3848150, in the northeast quarter of Section 3, Township 4 South, Range 7 East, in Alcorn County, Mississippi.

Boundary Justification

This boundary contains all of the earthwork and only the minimal area that can be considered as "the site proper."

SKETCH MAP OF
UNION EARTHWORK
RIEUZI, ALCOON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI





RVAL 10 FEET
CONT 5-FOOT CONTOURS
VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road

 Interstate Route
 U. S. Route
 State Route

RIENZI, MISS.
SE/4 CORINTH 15' QUADRANGLE
N3445-W8830/7.5

1982

DMA 3251 SE SERIES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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SEP 02 1997
Department of Archives & History

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 97000770

Date Listed: 7/25/97

Union Earthwork
Property Name

Alcorn
County

MISSISSIPPI
State

N/A
Multiple Name

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

for [Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

8/11/97
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 3

This nomination is amended to show that the State recommends that it be considered significant at the local level.

Section No. 5

The category of property is changed from site to structure.

These changes have been confirmed with the Mississippi SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

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



Union Earthwork

Rienzi, Acorn Co., MS

Jack Elliott

Fall 1996

Mississippi Dept. of Archives + History

view to the west, earthwork in center

1 of 2



Union earthwork

Rienzi, Alcorn Co., MS

Jack Elliott

Fall 1996

Mississippi Dept. of Archives + History

View to the east, earthwork on the left

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