

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

HISTORIC WHEELOCK ACADEMY

AND/OR COMMON
Wheelock Academy**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

East of Millerton and 1.5 miles north of U.S. 70

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Millerton

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Oklahoma

— VICINITY OF

CODE

40

COUNTY

McCurtain

CODE

089

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

— DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

— STRUCTURE

— SITE

— OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

— PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

— BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

— IN PROCESS

— BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED

— UNOCCUPIED

— WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

— YES: RESTRICTED

— YES: UNRESTRICTED

☒ NO

PRESENT USE

— AGRICULTURE

— MUSEUM

— COMMERCIAL

— PARK

— EDUCATIONAL

— PRIVATE RESIDENCE

— ENTERTAINMENT

— RELIGIOUS

— GOVERNMENT

— SCIENTIFIC

— INDUSTRIAL

— TRANSPORTATION

— MILITARY

— OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY (See continuation sheet)

NAME

Chief, Choctaw Tribal Council (Claude David Gardner)

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 33

CITY, TOWN

Muskogee

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Oklahoma 74401

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

Drawer C

CITY, TOWN

Idabee

STATE

Oklahoma 74745

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Wheelock Academy is located in a wooded area of McCurtain county approximately three miles east of Millerton, Oklahoma and a distance of 1.5 miles north of U.S. Route 70 on a secondary road. The academy is owned by the Choctaw Nation and is administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Since the school closed in 1955, the buildings have suffered gross neglect. Though the grounds are very well kept, i.e., the grass was neatly trimmed and there were no signs of abandonment, considerable deterioration of historic structures has occurred and vegetation has excessively overgrown some of the buildings.

As indicated on the USGS 7.5' series map, for Garvin, Oklahoma, dated 1951, four years before the close of Wheelock Academy, there were a number of structures located on the premises. This condition has changed. There are three residences on the east side of the access road but they appear to be 20th century structures and are not a part of the original campus. Nor do they contribute to the national significance of the landmark. There are presently six of the original institutional buildings still standing at Wheelock Academy. These include:

The Old Seminary (photograph no. 1 and no. 2) constructed as the first of the buildings built after the destruction of the campus by fire. It is a two story structure with three wings. There is a tower which rises above the south facade. Built of wood, the seminary seems in good structural condition though the porch on the south side, added to the seminary during the 1940's, is collapsing. Correspondingly, on the north side of the building is a modern addition dating from this same period. This section, like the porch, was constructed poorly and the roof has a severe leakage problem causing damage to the interior.

The Dining Hall (photograph no. 3) sits just west of the Old Seminary facing east. It is a one story frame structure on a raised brick foundation. There are windows which completely encircle the building. There are double doors which enter into a small foyer. This building appears in very sound condition and the roof appears to be a relatively recent improvement.

The Old Barn (photograph no. 4) is in very bad repair. Located to the northeast of the Old Seminary, the barn is a two story frame building. It appears to have had a gable roof, though the uppermost section is completely gone. On the exterior, boards are falling from the walls of the building and the windows have been knocked out. The building is on the verge of being completely lost to the ravages of the elements.

The Chapel (Church) (photograph no. 5) is a one story building fashioned of rubble stone. The Church sits some distance from the main campus just north, across the street, of the cemetery. The Church is very well kept and appears to be the only building that is still in use at the academy.

(continued)

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

4

PAGE

2

Mr. Abe Lincoln
Facilities Management
Muskogee Area Office
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Muskogee, Oklahoma 74401

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The Domestic Science Building (photograph no. 3) is located to the northeast (behind) the Old Seminary. The structure is a one and one half story building with gabled roof. On the west side of the building there is an elongated dormer. The building is constructed of logs and has a stone foundation. There is a stone chimney on the south side of the building with stones laid in an irregular ashlar fashion. On the west side of the building is a porch with stone columns which match the stone work of the chimney. These columns support the extended roofline. The building appears sound though access is hampered by the growth of trees and foliage.

The Arts and Crafts Building (photograph no. 7) sits also behind the Old Seminary. Close examination of the property was impossible as it had been completely overgrown. It is known, however, that the building was constructed of logs and stone and was of similar design as the Domestic Science Building.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES

1832

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Alfred Wright

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Wheelock Academy is the archetype for the tribal school system established by the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory. As the first national academy founded under the Choctaw Nation's Act of 1842, Wheelock set precedent for some 35 academies and seminaries maintained by the Five Tribes. Even the Cherokee National Male and Female Seminaries, though administered in a different manner, were modelled after Wheelock in terms of educational purpose. This purpose was to speed the Indians' adaptation to the dominant white culture--a conscious policy decision of the Five Tribes, based on the conviction that survival depended upon emulation. It must be emphasized that these academies were not mission schools, nor Government schools. They were national schools, paid for and controlled by the Councils of the Five Tribes. They satisfied Indian needs, and being liberally endowed, they attracted qualified teachers and acquired high academic excellence. Considered as prime vehicles of acculturation, they are unique in American Indian history, for the Indians themselves sponsored the schools and they were not imposed. Considered solely as educational institutions they are, again, unique, for at a time when the typical mission or Government Indian school hoped, at best, to inculcate rudimentary literacy and simple vocational skills, the academies of the Five Tribes carried out a sophisticated academic program that produced educated citizens and skilled leaders for societies distinguished by the presence of libraries, newspapers and constitutional self-government. Teachers from leading Eastern colleges and universities--Princeton, Dartmouth, Harvard, Vassar--gave instruction in natural philosophy, algebra, astronomy, history and Greek and Latin. The councils financed college educations in the East for promising academy graduates. The success of the Five Tribes in achieving first class citizenship in Oklahoma can be traced to this commitment to education. The national academies, first of which was Wheelock were the instruments of this success.

Wheelock Academy is still owned by the Choctaw and is administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Though the school is no longer open, several residences are located nearby and the grounds are maintained by local Indians. The academy is located three miles east of Millerton, Oklahoma.

HISTORY

Wheelock began as a mission school, established in 1832 by Reverend Alfred Wright. A graduate of Williams College and Andover Theological Seminary, Wright was missionary to the Choctaws from 1853 until his death in 1889. He named the

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"About Some of Our First Schools in Choctaw Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma, VOL. VI.
 "Choctaw-Wheelock Academy," file in Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical
 Society.
 Foreman, Grant. The Five Civilized Tribes, (Norman, 1934).
 ----- Advancing the Frontier, (Norman, 1933).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 35
 UTM REFERENCES

*A 5 5 3 1 6 6 2 0 3 7 6 3 0 1 0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 C 5 5 3 1 6 0 6 0 3 7 6 3 6 4 0

* As indicated on the USGS 7.5' series map, Garvin, Oklahoma Quadrangle, there is no numerical zone listed, only reference to zone is stated in South Zone.

B 5 5 3 1 6 3 7 0 3 7 6 2 6 3 0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 D 5 5 3 1 6 4 1 0 3 7 6 3 1 7 0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Joseph Scott Mendinghall, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey

DATE

(202) 523-5464

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street, N.W.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Washington, D.C. 20240

Landmark

Designated:

date

Boundary Certified:

date

LOCAL

date

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

((NATIONAL HISTORIC
 LANDMARKS))

NATIONAL HISTORIC
 LANDMARKS)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

school after Eleazar Wheelock, founder of Moor's Indian School, later to become known as Dartmouth College. It was Wright who reduced the Choctaw language to writing and published some 60 books in that tongue.

When the Choctaws passed the National Education Act of 1842,¹ which provided for a system of national academies and seminaries, Wheelock was chosen as the prototype institution. Wright was hired to run the school and recruit the teachers. This contract system between tribe and missionary was also adopted by the Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles--the Cherokees, however, administered their schools directly.

In 1832, shortly after the Choctaws of the Six Towns had traversed the Trail of Tears from Mississippi to Indian Territory, their missionary and friend, Alfred Wright, founded Wheelock Mission on its present site. Though the strange land and decimating epidemics caused great hardship, the mission and school soon prospered. By 1839 Wright was forced to expand the school plant, building a large two story frame dormitory to accomodate the influx of boarding students. Because the Wheelock school was already established, it was selected to become the first Choctaw national academy in 1842. Within a year of the academy's founding, Capt. William Armstrong, Superintendent of the Choctaw Agency, could report that Wheelock was a model for Indian education, its curriculum providing a judicious blend of cultural uplift and practical skills. He lauded Reverend and Mrs. Wright for their excellent management of the school.

Aware that they were participating in an historical advance of the frontier, the Choctaws in 1845 decided to build a permanent church to memorialize the bringing of civilization to the West. One year later they dedicated the stone church that still stands 200 yards from the academy. They honored Reverend Wright by engraving on a tablet embedded in the east wall his still legible motto: "Jehovah Jireh"--The Lord Will Provide.

Wright died in 1853 and was buried in the church cemetery. Many noted teachers followed him at Wheelock, including John Edwards, John Libby, and Miss Mary J. Semple--for 40 years teacher and counselor of Choctaws.

Civil War disrupted Indian Territory and Wheelock Academy suffered temporary eclipse. Reinstitutioned after the war, it was all but destroyed by fire in 1869.

(continued)

1. This was the first such law among the Five Tribes. It was the outgrowth of a concern for education among the Choctaws that dated back to 1803. In 1820 the Choctaw Council voted to use all Government annuities for schools.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

For some years instruction was carried on in the gutted church and the few damaged buildings that remained.

With the help of the Southern Presbyterian Church, the Choctaws rebuilt Wheelock Academy in the years 1880-84. The main structure of the new plant was the Seminary. Ensuing years saw a number of changes in the formal arrangements for administration of the Academy, changes involving both the Presbyterian Home Mission Board and the U.S. Government. But until 1932, Wheelock remained a tribal school, supported and ultimately controlled by the Choctaws. With the centennial celebration that year, Wheelock became a regular United States Indian School. After 123 years of service to the Choctaw people, the Wheelock school merged with Jones Academy near Hartshorne in 1955 and the school was closed.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Verbal boundary
CONTINUATION SHEET description ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

Beginning at the intersection of the Academy's access road and a dirt road, proceed along the east side of the access road until it comes to an end; thence northeast 350', more or less, to the 460' contour line; thence follow said contour line indicated on the USGS map around Wheelock Academy to a point of intersection with a dirt secondary road located just below the academy; thence east along the north side of said road to the point of origin.

The boundary encompasses the six extant buildings and the foundations of once standing buildings.

Property

Wheelock Academy

458

SECONDARY DEFINITION
RECEIVED 4/12/76

State

Oklahoma

Working Number

NKH

TECHNICAL

Photos _____

Maps _____

UTM can't be checked -
need UTM map

CONTROL

LE

8/31/76

HISTORIAN

why wasn't the cemetery included? otherwise, the boundaries seem reasonable.

S. Garwood
1/6/77

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

Is the cemetery related? Are foundations of other
related structures included within boundary --
Though not listed for archeology, should set boundary
to pick up historic archeological resources

OTHER

clarify/revise
boundary

C. Hamm
6-14-78

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

WJ
11/7/78

National Register Write-up _____

Send-back _____

Entered _____

Federal Register Entry _____

Re-submit _____

INT:2106-74

Property

Wheelock Academy

458

BOUNDARY DEFINITION

RECEIVED 4/12/76

State

Oklahoma

Working Number

NKH

TECHNICAL

Photos _____

Maps _____

UTM can't be checked -
need UTM map

CONTROL

LE

8/31/76

HISTORIAN

why wasn't the cemetery included? otherwise, the boundaries seem reasonable.

S. Garwood

1/6/77

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

Wheelock Academy

No map available for this site.

There is no relationship between the cemetery indicated on the USGS map and the Academy. There is, however, a small church cemetery with in the proposed boundary.

The foundations of related structures are included in the boundary.

According to a feasibility Study conducted in 1976, there was no evidence for archeological resources outside of the proposed boundary. Therefore the boundary should remain as proposed.

indications of other
in boundary --
should set boundary
resources

OTHER

clarify/revise
boundaryC. Hamm
6-14-78

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

LH
11/7/78

National Register Write-up _____

Send-back _____

Entered _____

Federal Register Entry _____

Re-submit _____

INT-2106-74



Pushmataha Hall - Wheelock Academy
Millerton, Okla. August 1983



WITTE & ASSOCIATES
ARCHITECTS, INC.

Tulsa, Ok. 918-665-1925

6600949

SOUTH FRONT

SB

37%

OK

Missing Core Documentation

Property Name

Wheelock Academy

County, State

McCurtain, OK

Reference Number

66000949

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

☐ Nomination Form

☐ Photographs

☒ USGS Map

WASO-9
(March 1960)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON OFFICE

Date June 30, 1965

FOLLOW-UP SLIP

To: Acting Assistant Director, Resources Studies

The Federal demolition law does not require Federal agencies to check with the Secretary the historical significance of structures which they plan to demolish themselves; this requirement becomes operative only when an agency declares property excess to its needs, reports it to GSA, and demolition is subsequently planned by GSA. Solicitor advises, however, that, inasmuch as the Secretary of the Interior is charged with evaluating the significance of such structures thus reported by GSA, it behooves Interior agencies to act in accord with the spirit of the law. In a similar case last year, BIA agreed with this point of view and acted to preserve a building planned for demolition that we brought to their attention. This memo is designed to do the same thing for another BIA historic structure threatened with demolition.

(Signature)

Not to be filed

Robert M. Utley

46191

JUL 6-1965

H30-RH

Mr. Littleton
Survey

X Wheelock Acad.
B. I. A.

Memorandum

To: Commissioner of Indian Affairs

From: Director

Subject: Preservation of the Old Seminary, Wheelock Academy, Oklahoma *file*

The National Park Service has completed a preliminary study of the Old Seminary Buildings, on the campus of the Wheelock Academy, in McCurtain County, near Millerton, Oklahoma, as part of the theme study entitled "Education" of the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings. This nationwide study, authorized by the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666), has as its purpose the identification of those historic sites and structures which possess national historical significance. Enclosed for your information are copies of the Historic Sites Act and our brochure relating to the program of the National Survey.

Our preliminary findings indicate the strong possibility that the Old Seminary Building possesses national historical significance, and would therefore be eligible for recognition under the Historic Sites Act as a Registered National Historic Landmark. It is our understanding that the Bureau of Indian Affairs now exercises an option, which has approximately two years to run, by which it administers the property through an agreement with its owner, the Choctaw Tribe. Our purpose in writing to you at this time is to suggest that the Bureau of Indian Affairs undertake all feasible measures to preserve the property while it has custody.

The National Survey will present its final conclusions and recommendations on the national significance of this structure to the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments, which was created by the Historic Sites Act to advise the Secretary of the Interior on questions of national historical significance and other park matters.

After the Advisory Board has taken action and its recommendations have received the approval of the Secretary, we shall be able to advise you whether the Old Seminary has been classified as possessing national significance under the Historic Sites Act. We plan to ask the Board's consideration of the Old Seminary at its fall 1965 meeting.

We hope the Bureau of Indian Affairs will be able to prevent further deterioration of the Old Seminary, and we shall be happy to discuss this matter with you, if you so desire.

(SGD) GEORGE B. HARTZOG, JR.

Director

Enclosures

cc:

Branch of History

Mr. Young

RWYoung:tn 6/30/65

Littleton
- encls sent
you
separately

JUL 8 - 1965

H30-RH

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Southwest Region

From: Assistant Director, Resource Studies

Subject: Preservation of the Old Seminary, Wheelock Academy, Oklahoma

Enclosed is the copy of the memorandum of July 6 from Director Hartzog to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs with regard to the above subject. We shall keep you informed of the views of the Commissioner and other developments.

HOWARD R. STAGNER

Enclosure

cc:

Branch of History

RWYoung:tn 7/6/65

July 19, 1965

A-11
L58

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Southwest Region
From: Chief, National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings
Subject: National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings:
Receipt of Inventory forms

This will acknowledge and thank you for the inventory forms (three each) for Wheelock Academy, Cherokee National Female Seminary, and Sequoyah's Cabin.



John C. Littleton

cc:
Mr. Littleton
JOLittleton:go



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

1951 CONSTITUTION AVE., N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242

AUG 13 1965

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Engineering Adviser
Administration

AUG 20 1965

Mr. J. R. [Signature]

Memorandum

To: Director, National Park Service

From: *Acting* Commissioner of Indian Affairs

Subject: Preservation of the Old Seminary Building, Wheelock Academy,
Oklahoma

Your memorandum of July 6, 1965, advised us of the possibility that the Old Seminary Building at Wheelock Academy possesses national historical significance, and suggested that we take all feasible measures to prevent further deterioration of the old building.

Under the Choctaw Termination Act, this property belongs to the Choctaw Tribe. The Bureau has kept a caretaker on the premises to prevent vandalism, but we do not exercise an option on the property, as stated in the second paragraph of your memorandum. The agreement to keep a caretaker on the premises has approximately two years to run. This was probably the reason for the misunderstanding concerning an option.

Our Muskogee Area Office reported to us that the Seminary Building is in extremely poor condition, and is deteriorating rapidly. A large section of the roof has collapsed, and the porch has rotted and fallen away from the main structure. Temporary repairs are now being made to the roof to prevent further damage to the interior. However, the porch must be completely rebuilt, and it is not considered feasible for the Bureau to expend a large amount of money for this work since we have a limited amount of funds available for repair work.

We hope the Advisory Board will take favorable action, and if there is additional information desired, we will be pleased to hear from you.

Geocham [Signature]
Acting Commissioner

DEC 16 1965

Wheelock Academy, Oklahoma

Dear Senator Monroney:

It is a pleasure to inform you that the historic sites described in the enclosures have been found to possess exceptional value in commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States.

These sites have been evaluated by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments through studies prepared by the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, pursuant to the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935. I have approved the recommendations of the Board.

As explained in the enclosed folder, these sites are eligible to receive certificates and bronze plaques designating them as Registered National Historic Landmarks. The Director of the National Park Service will notify the owners and provide them with the proper application forms.

In recognizing the historical importance of these sites in your State, we wish to commend the owners for the care and preservation of these properties.

Sincerely yours,

(sgd) Stewart L. Udall

Secretary of the Interior

Hon. A. S. Mike Monroney
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Enclosures

cc:
Regional Director, SW
Mr. Littleton

DEC 16 1966

Wheelock Academy, Oklahoma

Dear Senator Harris:

It is a pleasure to inform you that the historic sites described in the enclosures have been found to possess exceptional value in commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States.

These sites have been evaluated by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments through studies prepared by the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, pursuant to the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935. I have approved the recommendations of the Board.

As explained in the enclosed folder, these sites are eligible to receive certificates and bronze plaques designating them as Registered National Historic Landmarks. The Director of the National Park Service will notify the owners and provide them with the proper application forms.

In recognizing the historical importance of these sites in your State, we wish to commend the owners for the care and preservation of these properties.

Sincerely yours,

(sgd) Stewart L. Udall

Secretary of the Interior

Hon. Fred R. Harris
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Enclosures

cc:
Regional Director, SW
Mr. Littleton

DEC 16 1965

Wheelock Academy, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Albert:

It is a pleasure to inform you that the historic site described in the enclosures has been found to possess exceptional value in commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States.

This site has been evaluated by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments through studies prepared by the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, pursuant to the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935. I have approved the recommendation of the Board.

As explained in the enclosed folder, the site is eligible to receive a certificate and a bronze plaque designating it a Registered National Historic Landmark. The Director of the National Park Service will notify the owner and provide him with the proper application forms.

In recognizing the historical importance of this site in your Congressional District, we wish to commend the owner for the care and preservation of this property.

Sincerely yours,

(sgd) Stewart L. Udall

Secretary of the Interior

**Hon. Carl Albert
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.**

Enclosures

**cc:
Regional Director, SW
Mr. Littleton**

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ news release

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Ryan - 343-4895

For Release DECEMBER 21, 1965

SIXTY-FIVE ADDITIONAL SITES THROUGHOUT THE NATION DECLARED ELIGIBLE FOR REGISTERED NATIONAL LANDMARK STATUS

Sixty-five nationally significant sites and structures and historic districts, including museums, libraries, scientific laboratories, colleges, and the homes of eminent educators, artists, and sculptors, have just been declared eligible for designation as Registered National Historic Landmarks by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall.

These sites and structures--selected for Landmark status by the Secretary on the basis of recommendations made by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments--bring to 673 the number declared eligible since initiation of the Registry by the Department of the Interior's National Park Service in 1960. The Service does not administer these Landmarks, but recognizes them by presenting their owners with a certificate and bronze plaque.

Among the sites of educational significance in the group just declared eligible by Secretary Udall are Chapel Hall at Gallaudet College in the Nation's Capital, the first and only institution founded specifically for the higher education of the deaf; the log cabin in Oklahoma built by Sequoyah, the Cherokee scholar, who compiled an alphabet for his people; the Nation's first law school and the home of its founder, Tapping Reeve, in Litchfield, Connecticut; the birthplace in Hartford, Connecticut, of Henry Barnard, pioneer educator whose distinguished career stimulated the growth of the Nation's public school system and who served as the first United States Commissioner of Education; and the home in Oxford, Ohio, of William Holmes McGuffey, where he wrote the first four of his famous Eclectic Readers.

Studios and homes of nearly a score of well-known American sculptors and artists are in the newly declared Landmarks group, among them those of Lorado Taft in Chicago, Illinois; Daniel Chester French in Berkshire County, Massachusetts; Thomas Moran, in East Hampton, Long Island, New York; Thomas Eakins, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Gilbert Stuart, in Saunderstown, Rhode Island.

Sites of scientific significance declared eligible for Landmark status include the small laboratory at the University of California where scientists for the first time identified the man-made element plutonium; the Trinity Site at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico where the world's first nuclear device was exploded; the Cyclotron at Columbia University in New York City where the uranium atom was split for the first time in the Western Hemisphere; and the Lowell Observatory, near Flagstaff, Arizona, noted primarily for the discovery of the first observable evidence of the expanding universe, as well as the discovery of Pluto.

Also declared eligible is the Vieux Carre Historic District--the old French Quarter of New Orleans. "The scores of historic buildings bounded by the Mississippi River, Esplanade Avenue, and Rampart and Canal Streets," Secretary Udall said, "represent a unique blending of architectural styles portraying the colorful way of life that evolved here in the 18th and 19th centuries. Today the Vieux Carre is a living part of the historical heritage of the Nation as well as of the city of New Orleans."

Brief descriptions of the newly designated Landmarks, arranged by State, are attached.

X X X

The sites selected for Landmark eligibility are briefly described below. Thirty of them were chosen from the study of "Education," and 19 from the study of "Painting and Sculpture." The remaining 16 sites were selected from special studies and investigations:

1. J. L. M. Curry Home, near Talladega, Talladega County, Alabama. As general agent for the George Peabody Education Fund (1881-1903), and the John F. Slater Fund for the education of Negroes (1890-1903), Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry was a key figure in the development of public education in the Southern states during the latter part of the 19th century. Curry's home, purchased in 1847, is located about 3 miles northeast of Talladega. It is privately owned.
2. Anvil Creek Gold Discovery Site, near Nome, Alaska. The first large gold placer strike in Alaska was made at the Anvil Creek site on September 20, 1898. This discovery resulted in Alaska's greatest gold rush, both in terms of yield and of increase in the territory's population. The site, which is located on Anvil Creek about 4½ miles north of Nome, has long been abandoned and has regained much of the appearance it had in 1898.
3. Desert Laboratory, near Tucson, Pima County, Arizona. The Desert Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, opened in 1903, is recognized as having established the foundations for the scientific study of the ecology of arid regions. Until its operations were terminated in the late 1930's, the Laboratory was the center for the study of North American desert ecology. Now owned by the University of Arizona, the Laboratory's buildings are used in the University's geochronology program. Located on Tumamoc Hill just west of Tucson, the 800-acre grounds of the Laboratory are fenced to protect the many type-specimens of plants first identified there.
4. Lowell Observatory, near Flagstaff, Coconino County, Arizona. This observatory, founded in 1894 by Dr. Percival Lowell, is noted for intensive studies of Mars, the discovery of Pluto, researches in zodiacal light and sunspot phenomena, and the development of dendrochronology, which grew out of the sunspot studies. It is, however, best known for Dr. V. M. Slipher's discovery in 1912 of the first observational evidence of the expanding universe. Located on Mars Hill one mile west of Flagstaff, Lowell Observatory continues to pursue a broad program of astronomical research.
5. C. Hart Merriam Base Camp Site, Coconino County, Arizona. In 1889, operating from this camp, Dr. Merriam made the investigations that led to his formulation of the Life Zone concept, a concept basic to the development of the science of ecology. The site, known as Little Spring, is a privately owned enclave within Coconino National Forest. It is located 20 miles northwest of Flagstaff.

6. Room 307, Gilman Hall, University of California, Berkeley, Alameda County, California. In this small laboratory on the night of February 23-24, 1941, J. W. Kennedy, Glenn T. Seaborg, and A. C. Wahl identified for the first time the man-made element plutonium. Other transuranium elements were recognized at about the same time; but plutonium, element 94 in the period table, was the most important, as it is used both in nuclear reactors and as an atomic explosive. Room 307, Gilman Hall is still used as a research laboratory.

7. Henry Barnard House, 118 Main Street, Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut. Barnard, a pioneer educator whose distinguished career stimulated the growth of the public school system, was born in this house in 1811 and died there 89 years later. He served the State of Connecticut as first secretary of the State Education Commission and superintendent of public schools and became first U. S. Commissioner for Education in 1867. The house is owned by the Daughters of the Holy Ghost of Hartford, Inc.

8. Connecticut Hall, Yale University, New Haven, New Haven County, Connecticut. Yale University, the third oldest institution of higher learning in the United States, was founded in 1701. Connecticut Hall, erected in 1750-52, is the University's oldest extant building. Although the building was much changed through the years, the exterior was restored in 1953-54 to its original appearance.

9. Tapping Reeve House and Law School, South Street, Litchfield, Litchfield County, Connecticut. The first law school in the United States (1784-1833) sits beside the home of the school's founder, Tapping Reeve. As many of the approximately 1,000 men who attended the school became prominent lawyers, judges, and politicians, the school significantly influenced the development of American law. Both the house and school building are open to the public.

10. Frederick Remington House, Ridgefield, Fairfield County, Connecticut. Through his drawings, paintings, and sculpture, Frederick Remington (1861-1909) documented the people, the animals, and the land of the post-Civil War West. A great artist, his works were quite realistic and filled with action. His home, which he designed and construction of which he supervised, has changed little since his death. Privately owned, it is not open to the public.

11. John Rogers Studio, 10 Cherry Street, New Canaan, Fairfield County, Connecticut. Rogers (1829-1904) was one of America's most popular sculptors, the public purchasing over 100,000 copies of his some 87 works. Although he violated many esthetic principles, his figures were both spontaneous and realistic and accurately reflected the life of his era. His studio contains copies of a number of his works. It is open to the public.

12. John Trumbull Birthplace (Governor Jonathan Trumbull Home), Lebanon, New London County, Connecticut. Portraitist and painter of historical subjects, John Trumbull (1756-1843) is best known for his paintings of leaders and dramatic scenes of the Revolutionary War. His birthplace is open to the public as a historic house museum.

13. Chapel Hall, Gallaudet College, Florida Avenue at 7th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. Founded in 1864 as the National Deaf Mute College, Gallaudet College has been from the first the only institution for higher education of the deaf. Renamed for Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, it now offers educational services ranging from pre-school classes to training for teachers of the deaf. Chapel Hall, completed in 1870 as the "Main Central Building," contains an auditorium and classrooms.

14. Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. The Library of Congress, established in 1800, now contains over 43,000,000 items and ranks as one of the largest and finest libraries in the world. Although founded primarily to serve the Congress, its field of service gradually expanded to serve all governmental establishments, serious scholars, other libraries, and the general public. The Library was housed in the Capitol until 1897, when the main building of the present complex was completed. The main building is located on First Street, S. E., between East Capitol Street and Independence Avenue. It is open to the public.

15. Zalmon Richards House, 1301 Corcoran Street, N. W., Washington, District of Columbia. Beginning teaching at 17, Zalmon Richards (1811-1899) devoted most of the remainder of his life to education. His most notable contribution to the field was his leadership in the founding of the National Teachers' Association (today's National Education Association) in 1857, and his service as its first president. He is also recognized as having been largely responsible for the passage in 1867 of the bill establishing a Federal Office of Education to study educational problems throughout the Nation. Richards purchased the house in 1882 and lived there for the remainder of his life, supporting himself by teaching private classes in one of its rooms. The house is privately owned.

16. Experimental Breeder Reactor No. 1, National Reactor Testing Station, Arco, Butte County, Idaho. A history-making facility, the Experimental Breeder Reactor No. I demonstrated that non-fissionable uranium could be transmuted into fissionable uranium in a process producing more fissionable material than it consumes. It also produced the first usable amounts of electricity created by nuclear means, and achieved a self-sustaining chain reaction using plutonium instead of uranium as the fuel. The Reactor, construction of which was begun in 1949, was decommissioned in 1964.

17. Lorado Taft Midway Studio, 6016 South Ingleside Avenue, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois. A noted American sculptor, Taft (1860-1936) is equally renowned as a teacher and author. His books included The History of American Sculpture (1903) and Modern Techniques in Sculpture (1921). The studio complex, consisting of two large buildings, is still used by art students. It is little changed from its appearance in Taft's time.
18. First Site of American Printing House for the Blind, 1867 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky. Established in 1858, the printing house is the oldest national agency for the blind, either public or private, in the United States. It has received annual appropriations from Congress since 1879. The Greek Revival Costigan Building housed the printing establishment until 1883, when it moved to larger quarters nearby. The five-story Costigan Building is a part of the Kentucky School for the Blind.
19. Jacobs Hall, Kentucky School for the Deaf, South Third Street, Danville, Boyle County, Kentucky. The Kentucky School for the Deaf, established in 1823, was the first publicly supported institution for the deaf in the United States. The school has occupied its present site since 1826. Jacobs Hall, the oldest building extant, was erected in 1857 and served as the main building for 25 years. It is now a girl's dormitory.
20. Morrison Building, Transylvania College, West Third Street, Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky. One of the first institutions of higher learning west of the Appalachians, Transylvania at the height of its influence rivalled Harvard and Yale. Henry Clay taught law there, 1805-07. Under Horace Holley's presidency, 1818-27, Transylvania achieved its greatest eminence, with nationally known law and medical schools and the second largest student body in the country. The building known as "Morrison College," a graceful Greek Revival structure designed by Gideon Shryock in 1829 is still in use.
21. Vieux Carre (Historic District), New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana. Also called the "French Quarter," this 85-block area was the nucleus of French New Orleans. It contains scores of historic sites and buildings, variously owned by public and private agencies and individuals. Some of them already have been classified separately as Registered National Historic Landmarks.
22. Winslow Homer Home, Prouts Neck, Scarborough, Cumberland County, Maine. Homer (1836-1910), who was noted for his powerful paintings of the sea, lived in this house beside the stormy Atlantic from 1884 until his death. Despite a lack of central heating in the house, Homer's fascination with the sea led him to spend several winters there. The house, little changed from Homer's time, is privately owned.

23. Daniel Coit Gilman Summer Home, "Over Edge," Northeast Harbor, Hancock County, Maine. First president of Johns Hopkins University, Gilman, by emphasizing post-graduate study at the new institution, made graduate education a recognized university responsibility in America. He later served for three years as president of the Carnegie Institution. Gilman built his summer home on a high bluff overlooking Northeast Harbor and spent his summers there for the last 22 years of his life, 1886-1908.

24. The Municipal Museum of the City of Baltimore, 225 North Holliday Street, Baltimore, Maryland. The Municipal Museum of the City of Baltimore occupies the first building erected as a museum in the United States. Rembrandt Peale, the painter-son of the noted artist, Charles Willson Peale, erected the three-story brick building in 1814 to house science and art exhibits. After the Peale family ownership was terminated in 1829, the building had a variety of uses until the Municipal Museum was installed there in 1931.

25. Boston Athenaeum, 10½ Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts. Established in 1807, the Boston Athenaeum is the largest and most influential of the Nation's early proprietary libraries still in existence. The library has occupied its present building, a Palladian structure of brown freestone, since 1849. It contains nearly 425,000 volumes.

26. Daniel Chester French Home and Studio, "Chesterwood," Berkshire County, Massachusetts. French (1850-1931), the sculptor best known for the Minute Man statue at Concord, Massachusetts, and the gigantic seated Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, built this house in 1900-01 and lived here until his death. The house is maintained as an historic house museum by the Daniel Chester French Foundation.

27. Chester Harding House, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts. Harding (1792-1866), though self-taught, was one of America's most popular portrait painters in the four decades before his death. The house, a four-story brick structure, built in 1808, was his home from 1827 to 1829. It is now the headquarters of the Boston Bar Association and is not open to the public.

28. The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1154 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts. The Massachusetts Historical Society, founded through the efforts of the Reverend Jeremy Belknap in 1791, is the oldest historical society in the United States. Its present building, occupied since 1899, contains a notable collection of historical manuscripts.

29. Peabody Museum of Salem, 161 Essex Street, Salem, Essex County, Massachusetts. Established as the Peabody Academy of Science in 1868, the museum acquired the notable maritime collection of the Salem East Indian Marine Society, founded in 1799, and the Marine Hall, built in 1825. Supported by the philanthropist George Peabody, the new academy carried on the educational activities of its predecessor, concentrating on New England maritime history, Pacific ethnology, and the natural history of surrounding Essex County. The hall, altered in 1867-69, was restored to its original design in 1943.

30. Norton Mound Group, near Grand Rapids, Kent County, Michigan. Located on the east side of the Grand River, two miles south of Grand Rapids, this is the outstanding Hopewell mound group in the western Great Lakes region. The site is now being developed as a city park.

31. George Caleb Bingham Home, Arrow Rock, Saline County, Missouri. Bingham (1811-1879), the noted genre painter of Western political and river scenes, built this two-room brick cottage in 1837 and owned it for eight years. While here he began sketching for many of the paintings which made him famous. The house is a part of Arrow Rock State Park.

32. Charles M. Russell Home and Studio, 1217-19 Fourth Avenue, North, Great Falls, Cascade County, Montana. When he built this house in 1900, Russell already was a recognized artist of the western scene. He built the log studio three years later and continued to live and paint here until his death in 1926. The house and studio are owned by the City. The Studio is open to the public.

33. Blumenschein House, Taos, Taos County, New Mexico. Ernest L. Blumenschein was a co-founder, in 1898, of the Taos Art Colony, which became the most important art center west of the Mississippi River. The house, an 11-room adobe dating from the Spanish period, is owned by the Kit Carson Memorial Foundation and is used as an apartment building.

34. Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, Los Alamos, Los Alamos County, New Mexico. The laboratory was established on January 1, 1943, for the purpose of developing the nuclear fission bomb. After that task was successfully accomplished, scientists at Los Alamos undertook the creation of a "super" weapon deriving energy from the thermonuclear fusion of hydrogen. Besides its military contribution, the laboratory also has carried out work on peaceful application of atomic energy. The first enriched-uranium reactor was built there in 1944, and the first plutonium-fueled reactor in 1946.

35. Seton Village, Santa Fe County, New Mexico. Ernest Thompson Seton (1860-1946), artist, author, and world-renowned scientist, built a 45-room "castle" and founded an artistic community here in 1930. The "castle" is overflowing with his collections of paintings, books, mammal and bird specimens, and Indian artifacts. The "castle" and other buildings are owned by Seton's widow and are open to visitors each summer.

36. Trinity Site, White Sands Missile Range, Socorro County, New Mexico. The world's first nuclear device was exploded here on July 16, 1945. Several physical evidences remain, including the bomb crater, several instrument bunkers, and parts of the concrete piers which supported the bomb tower. The site is closed to visitors.

37. Lewis Miller Cottage, Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, Chautauqua County, New York. Inaugurated as a Methodist Sunday School Teachers' Assembly in 1874, the Chautauqua Institution rapidly became a secular, year-round activity. Its amazing success by 1900 had inspired some 200 imitators, mostly traveling tent shows. Lewis Miller, a wealthy Akron (Ohio) businessman who was a co-founder of Chautauqua, erected his prefabricated cottage here in 1875. Remodelled in 1922, the cottage is still owned by Miller's descendants.

28. Thomas Moran House, Main Street, East Hampton, Suffolk County, Long Island, New York. Moran (1837-1926) was the first painter to bring Americans to a consciousness of the natural splendors of the West. His notable paintings included "The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone" and "The Chasm of the Colorado." Moran built the house in 1884 and maintained his studio there. It is not open to the public.

39. Morrill Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, Tompkins County, New York. The opening of Cornell University in 1868 marked a revolution in American higher education. The "Cornell Idea," aimed at preparing students for useful careers in the complex post-Civil War society, offered training on the basis of equality among the various subjects and the undergraduate's right to elect a certain proportion of his courses. Morrill Hall, the original University building completed in 1868, remains essentially unaltered.

40. William Sydney Mount House, Gould Road, Stony Brook, Suffolk County, Long Island, New York. Mount (1807-1868) was the first American painter of the social scene, and his realistic paintings of rural life brought him an enduring reputation. He lived in Stony Brook from 1836 until his death and there produced most of his outstanding works. The house is privately owned.

41. The New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street, New York, New York. The New York Public Library, with 7 million volumes and vast manuscript and rare book collections, is an almost unrivalled center of research and study in this country. The library's reference department was formed in 1895 by consolidation of the Astor, Lennox, and Tilden trusts, and six years later it combined with 10 independent circulation libraries to form the circulation department. The huge \$9 million library building was constructed between 1899 and 1911.

42. Cyclotron, Pupin Physics Laboratory, Columbia University, New York, New York. The uranium atom was split for the first time in the Western Hemisphere here on January 25, 1939 - ten days after the world's first atom-splitting in Copenhagen, Denmark. The cyclotron is still used for experiments.

43. Old East, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Orange County, North Carolina. North Carolina was the first State university to open its doors to students, in 1795. Old East, completed in 1793, was the first building constructed. Enlarged and remodeled in 1824 and 1848, Old East is used today as a men's dormitory.

44. Manassah Cutler Hall, Ohio University, Athens, Athens County, Ohio. Main administration building for Ohio University, Manassah Cutler Hall, completed in 1819, is the oldest college building in the Old Northwest Territory. William Holmes McGuffey occupied an office there while president of the school, 1839-43. The building was modernized several years ago but retains its original exterior appearance.

45. William Holmes McGuffey House, 401 East Spring Street, Oxford, Butler County, Ohio. While living here between 1833 and 1836, McGuffey wrote the first four of his famous Eclectic Readers, of which an estimated 122 million copies were sold through the years. The house, a two-story brick structure, has undergone some alteration since McGuffey's residence. It is maintained as a McGuffey museum by Miami University, which owns the building.

46. Oberlin College, Tappan Square, Oberlin, Lorain County, Ohio. Collegiate coeducation was inaugurated at Oberlin in 1837. The first three female students were graduated in 1841, and the precedent thus set soon spread through the United States. None of the early college buildings has survived.

47. Benjamin F. Wade Home, 22 West Jefferson Street, Jefferson, Ashtabula County, Ohio. Wade (1800-78) a Radical United States Senator who fought President Lincoln and tried to remove President Andrew Johnson from office, lived here after his stormy Congressional career. The two-story clapboard house is privately owned.

48. Sequoyah's Cabin, Sequoyah's Cabin State Park, Sequoyah County, Oklahoma. This one-room log cabin was built in 1829 by the Cherokee scholar, Sequoyah, noted for his compilation of the Cherokee syllabary, a simple phonetic rendition of his tribe's spoken language. His efforts made the Cherokees a literate people. The restored cabin is preserved in the 10-acre State Park, enclosed by a stone structure built in 1936.

49. Wheelock Academy, McCurtain County, Oklahoma, Wheelock Academy, established in 1832, was the archetype for the tribal school systems established by the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory. These systems represented a conscious policy decision of the Five Tribes, based on the conviction that the Indians must adapt to the White man's culture in order to survive. The Old Seminary, erected in 1839, is the earliest surviving building. Since the school closed in 1955, the buildings have been unused. They are owned by the Choctaw Tribe and administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

50. Thomas Eakins House, 1729 Mount Vernon Place, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Eakins (1844-1916), a major artist noted for his advanced thinking, specialized in realistic portraits which exposed the basic character of his subjects. His "Walt Whitman" is recognized as a significant work of art. The house, in which he lived from the age of two until his death, is privately owned.

51. Charles Willson Peale House, "Belfield," 2100 Clarkson Avenue, Germantown, Pennsylvania. Peale (1741-1827), one of the major American artists of his time, is best known for his miniatures and portraits of Washington and his contemporaries. He lived in this house for a decade after 1810. The house is privately owned.

52. Thomas Sully Residence, 530 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Sully (1783-1872) was one of the best known and most prolific portrait painters of his time, being credited with 2,600 paintings. This house was his residence for a brief period, though he lived in Philadelphia from 1808 until his death 64 years later.

53. Benjamin West Birthplace, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Delaware County, Pennsylvania. West (1738-1820) was a notable expatriate American painter who, patronized by the King of England, taught and encouraged many of his younger countrymen. His birthplace, a two-story stone house built in 1724, is used as a faculty residence by Swarthmore College.

54. Gilbert Stuart Birthplace, Gilbert Stuart Road, Saunderstown, Washington County, Rhode Island. Best known for his Washington portraits, Stuart (1755-1828) was probably the best American painter of the late 18th century. He lived in the 2½-story frame birthplace for six years. The house, restored in the early 1930's, is open to the public as an historic house museum.

55. Clark Mills Studio, 51 Broad Street, Charleston, Charleston County, South Carolina. Mills (1810-1884) was a sculptor who pioneered the casting of bronze statues in America. His most famous work was the equestrian statue of Andrew Jackson in Jackson Square, New Orleans. The building housing Mills' studio has been adapted to business use.

56. Wounded Knee Battlefield, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, Shannon County, South Dakota. Wounded Knee, fought on December 29, 1890, was the last significant clash between Indians and white men in North America. Costing some 75 army and 250 to 300 Indian casualties, it forced the Indians to accept the white man's ways, thus ending centuries of conflict. The battlefield, partially private and partially church-owned, is interpreted by historical markers.

57. George Peabody College for Teachers, 21st Avenue South and Edgehill Avenue, Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee. George Peabody College memorializes the philanthropist who contributed so much to rebuilding the South's shattered educational system after the Civil War. Founded in 1875 as the University of Nashville, it became Peabody Normal College in 1879 and acquired its present name in 1909, after \$1 million of the principal sum of the Peabody Fund had been given to the school as an endowment. It has occupied its present site since 1914.

58. X-10 Reactor, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, Anderson County, Tennessee. First operated on November 4, 1943, the X-10 facility was the world's first full-scale nuclear reactor and the first to produce significant amounts of heat energy and measurable amounts of plutonium. X-10 served for many years as the principal atomic research facility in the United States. In 1946 it was the first reactor to produce radioactive isotopes for medical therapy.

59. Emma Willard House, Middlebury College, Middlebury, Addison County, Vermont. Emma Willard (1787-1870) was an influential pioneer in the fight for female education in the United States. She made a presentation to the New York legislature in 1819 which has been called the "Magna Carta of female education." Her basic ideas on female education arose from her experience with the Middlebury Female Seminary, which she opened in her home in 1814. The house, little altered, is used as the Middlebury College admissions office.

60. Barracks, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Rockbridge County, Virginia. Known as the "West Point of the South," VMI was formally organized in 1839, the earliest and best-known of state-supported military institutions. "Stonewall" Jackson taught there before the Civil War, and many VMI graduates served the Confederacy. The present barracks building contains a part of the original barracks, burned by Union troops in 1864. A small building erected in 1848, formerly used as a hospital and a tailor shop, also survives.

61. Gari Melchers' Home, "Belmont," Falmouth, Stafford County, Virginia. Melchers (1860-1932) was a landscape and portrait painter who painted "The Arts of War" and "The Arts of Peace" for the Library of Congress. The two-story white frame house, on a high ridge overlooking the Rappahannock River, was Melchers' home from 1916 until his death. It is owned by the State of Virginia and is operated by Mary Washington College as a memorial and art center.

62. Rotunda, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Albemarle County, Virginia. Thomas Jefferson founded the University of Virginia in 1819 and considered it one of his three greatest achievements. Architecturally and spiritually, it is a fitting monument to his genius. The Rotunda dominates Jefferson's "academical village," consisting of two rows of academic buildings, East and West Lawn, and two rows of one-story student cottages, East and West Range.

63. Patrick Henry Home, "Scotchtown," Hanover County, Virginia. This huge, architecturally interesting frame mansion was Henry's home from 1771 to 1777 - tumultuous years during which the fiery orator secured his niche in American history. He left here to become wartime Governor of Virginia. The house, owned by the Hanover County Branch, Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, is being restored as an historic house museum.

64. Alexander Wade House, 256 Prairie Street, Morgantown, Monongalia County, West Virginia. Wade, while superintendent of schools in Monongalia County in 1874, introduced a system of graduation and promotional examinations in the county's rural schools which was adopted nationally. In 1879, Wade explained his system at a meeting of the National Education Association in Philadelphia. The house, in which Wade lived from 1872 until his death in 1904, is privately owned.

65. North Hall, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin. The University of Wisconsin has a record of serving the people of the State since the erection of its first building, North Hall, in 1851. The so-called "Wisconsin Idea," based on the concept that an enlightened public best insures a progressive nation, became widely influential in the first decade of the 20th century. North Hall, a four-story sandstone structure built as a dormitory, now houses the Department of Political Science.

DEC 29 1965

Wheelock Academy

H34-RH

Mr. Harry J. W. Belvin
Principal Chief, Choctaw Nation
Durant, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Belvin:

We are pleased to inform you that Wheelock Academy, described briefly in the enclosure, has been found to possess exceptional value in commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States, and is thus eligible for registration as a National Historic Landmark.

The Registry of National Historic Landmarks is a permanent register of nationally significant historic and archeological sites of the United States. Its purpose is to identify and recognize these sites and to encourage their owners to preserve them. Eligible landmark sites are chosen through studies prepared by the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings; evaluated by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments; and approved by the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935.

As explained in the enclosed folder, recognition and registration is afforded by certificates and bronze plaques provided free of charge to the owners or administrators upon application and agreement to adhere to simple preservation practices. Registration of an eligible site is voluntary on the part of the owner. If you wish to apply for the certificate and plaque, copies of the application form are enclosed. These should be completed in triplicate, and two copies returned to the National Park Service. You may retain the third copy for your records.

We will be happy to have Wheelock Academy included in the Registry.

Sincerely yours,

(Sd) JACKSON E. PRICE

Director

Acting

Enclosures

cc: Regional Director, SW

Mr. Littleton

cc: Dr. Muriel N. Wright
Oklahoma Historical Society
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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RECEIVED
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON OFFICE

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FEB 3 1966

M. Little

Durant, Oklahoma
January 27, 1966
(Date)

Mr. George B. Hartzog, Jr., Director
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Hartzog:

As the (owner, owners) of Wheelock Academy located in mg
(Name of site)

Millerton McCurtain Oklahoma
(City) (County) (State)

(I, we) hereby make formal application for a certificate (x) and bronze plaque, 17" x 18" (x), designating this historic property as a Registered National Historic Landmark. (Check one or both as desired.)

1. Fully conscious of the high responsibility to the Nation that goes with the ownership and care of a property classified as having exceptional value and worthy of Registered National Historic Landmark status (I, we) agree to preserve, so far as practicable and to the best of (my, our) ability, the historical integrity of this important part of the national cultural heritage.

2. Toward this end, (I, we) agree to continue to use the property only for purposes consistent with its historical character.

3. (I, We) also agree to permit an annual visit to the property by a representative of the National Park Service as a basis for continuing landmark status.

4. If, for any reason, the three conditions mentioned above cannot continue to be met, it is agreed that the Registered National Historic Landmark status shall cease and that until such status is restored by the Secretary of the Interior, neither the Registered National Historic Landmark certificate nor the plaque will be displayed.

Sincerely yours,

Harry J. W. Belvin

Harry J. W. Belvin
Principal Chief,
Choctaw Tribe

Harry J. W. Belvin

PRINCIPAL CHIEF
CHOCTAW NATION
Durant, Oklahoma

Copy sent to Reg
3-28-66

MAR 4 1966

RH

Hon. Carl Albert
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Albert:

Thank you for your letter in behalf of Mrs. Frances Inon who has requested information on the Wheelock Academy near Millerton, Oklahoma, as a Registered National Historic Landmark.

We are enclosing a folder on the Registry which explains how the selection of landmarks is accomplished, a brief statement on the Academy, and a booklet entitled "National Park Service Criteria for Parklands." The Landmarks Program is described on page 22.

We believe this material will answer any questions Mrs. Inon may have in mind. If there is other information you desire, however, we shall be happy to provide it.

Sincerely yours,

(sgd) Howard W. Baker

Assistant Director

Enclosures

cc:
Regional Director, Southwest, w/c of inc.
Mr. Littleton (2) w/c of inc.

SLR

JOLittleton:jc:3/3/66

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Office of the Majority Leader
Washington, D.C.
February 18, 1966

Mr. Victor Gauzza
Congressional Liaison
Department of Interior
Interior Building, Room 5145
Washington, D.C.

Dear Victor:

Enclosed is copy of a letter I have received from Frances Imon, P. O. Box 55, Hugo, Oklahoma, requesting information regarding designation of Wheelock Academy near Millerton "as a registered national historic landmark."

I will appreciate your providing any available information about this designation so that I may reply to Miss Imon's inquiry.

Sincerely,


CARL ALBERT, M.C.
Third District, Oklahoma

Encl.
CA/j

Frances Imon

NEWS © FEATURES © PICTURES

Post Office Box 55

HUGO, OKLAHOMA 74743

Area Code 405 FAirview 6-2321

February 16, 1966

Congressman Carl Albert
Washington, D. C.

Dear Carl:

What does designation of Wheelock Academy near Millerton "as a registered national historic landmark" involve?

This subject ought to be good for a feature story but thus far no one seems to know what it means and I need to know the scope of it before I go too far in a story.

Any help will be appreciated.

I got tickled when you advised of the designation. I had a whole raft of background material in my file, so I "shotgunned" me a story to take care of the situation for the nonce, thinking no doubt some of the area newspaper people would come out with a dilly and then I would be better informed.

Instead, they all picked up my story and later I found out they are as dumb as I am.....so, will you relieve my ignorance?

Thanks a lot. I have ample background, just need an interpretation on the designating part and what it involves.

Sincerely yours,

Frances Imon

March 15, 1966

H34-RH

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Southwest Region
From: Chief, Division of History Studies
**Subject: Registered National Historic Landmark Certificates
for Sites in the Southwest Region**

**We are enclosing the following Registered National Historic
Landmark Certificates for sites in your Region:**

Seton Village, New Mexico

Sequoyah's Cabin, Oklahoma

Wheelock Academy, Oklahoma

**Please notify us well in advance of presentation of the
certificates to the respective owners, whether formally or
informally.**



Rogers W. Young

Enclosures

**cc:
Mr. Littleton**

JOLittleton:mg

H34-RH

March 28, 1966

Mr. Harry J. W. Belvin
Principal Chief, Choctaw Nation
Durant, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Belvin:

We were pleased to receive your application for the certificate and plaque designating Wheelock Academy near Millerton, Oklahoma, a Registered National Historic Landmark. We will proceed immediately with the preparation of the certificate and plaque.

Since Oklahoma is included in our Southwest Region, the certificate and plaque will be presented to you by Regional Director Daniel B. Beard or by a member of his staff. Should you wish the Service's help in arranging ceremonies for the presentation, Mr. Beard will be glad to assist you. His address is: Regional Director Daniel B. Beard, Southwest Regional Office, National Park Service, P. O. Box 728, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501.

The certificate will be ready in a relatively short time, but it usually takes a few months to prepare the plaque due to circumstances of manufacture (see enclosure).

We are happy to have Wheelock Academy included in the Registry of National Historic Landmarks.

Sincerely yours,

SIGNED

Robert M. Utley
Chief, Division of
History Studies

Enclosure

cc:

WV 58 10 52 VW .PP
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Attention: Engineering Advisor,
Administration

Regional Director, Southwest w/c application

/Mr. Littleton

JWWalker:gb

11M07KEL:80

MR. INFORMATION

RECEIVED DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION, BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

TO:

MAR 28 10 25 AM '66

FROM:

RE: [Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

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[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

148

Southwest Region
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

RECEIVED

H34

JUL 19 1966
3:51 PM

Mr. Harry J. W. Belvin
Principal Chief, Choctaw Nation
Durant, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Belvin:

As you requested on January 27 in your letter to Director Hartzog of the National Park Service, the plaque and certificate designating Wheelock Academy a Registered National Historic Landmark have been prepared and are now on hand in this Office.

Please be assured that we should be very happy to assist you in a ceremony presenting the plaque and certificate, and formally designating Wheelock Academy as a Landmark. Our practice in the past has been to make a representative of the Park Service available for the ceremony to act as agent for the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the Service in making the presentation. The date and time, and the form of the ceremony--the extent of its formality or informality--are prerogatives of the recipient. A typical ceremony might involve a principal speaker who would range over the broad field of the site's historical significance, to be followed by a short talk from the Park Service representative who would specify the reasons why the site was selected for Landmark status. The Park Service representative then presents the plaque and certificate to the designated recipient, thus concluding the main features of the ceremony.

These Landmark designations are normally viewed as important community functions, and thus, if you wish, you might want to consider selected or general participation in the program by the people of Southeastern Oklahoma and members of the Oklahoma historical community. These matters, of course, are entirely up to you. Be assured that we will accommodate to any plan that fits your needs. Pending further word from you, we will hold the plaque and certificate here.

We are happy to enter Wheelock Academy on the Registry of National Historic Landmarks.

Sincerely yours,

(SIGNED)

Daniel B. Beard
Regional Director

cc:
Littleton, WSC ✓
Supt., Platt

RECEIVED

JUL 18 2 30 PM '66

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON SERVICE
CENTER

TO: DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
FROM: SAC, NEW YORK (100-100000)
SUBJECT: [Illegible]

Re New York letter to Washington dated 7/12/66.
Enclosed for the Bureau are two copies of a letterhead memorandum (LHM) dated and captioned as above.
The LHM contains information regarding the activities of the [Illegible] in the New York area.
It is requested that you advise the Bureau of any further information received regarding this matter.

Very truly yours,
[Illegible Signature]
Special Agent in Charge

Enclosure

100-100000
[Illegible]
[Illegible]

cc: [Illegible]
[Illegible]
[Illegible]

Southwest Region
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

H34

SEP 22 1966

Hon. Harry J. W. Belvin
Principal Chief, Choctaw Nation
Durant, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Belvin:

Many thanks for your letter of September 15, requesting that we mail the Wheelock Academy Landmark plaque and certificate to you. They will soon be forwarded under separate cover.

Typically, the plaque is affixed to the prime historic structure (in this case the Old Seminary) or mounted on a pedestal of some sort in an appropriate place near the structure. Probably you would wish to have the certificate on view in the Executive Office of the Choctaw Nation. Should you wish to have a ceremony dedicating Wheelock Academy as a Registered National Historic Landmark, the unveiling of the plaque would offer an appropriate occasion. As we have indicated in past correspondence, the National Park Service will do its best to have a representative present, if and when you have a dedication ceremony. You may, however, prefer to have a quiet local ceremony. In any event, I would urge that you contact Dr. James D. Morrison at Southeastern State College in Durant. A little more than a year ago Dr. Morrison presided at the Fort Washita Landmark dedication, and he might offer helpful advice to you. Also, he is the local representative of the Oklahoma Historical Society, which is naturally interested in Landmark designations in Oklahoma.

If, indeed, you do have a formal dedication ceremony, I would very much appreciate your informing me when it is scheduled so that I may enter the date of designation in our Landmark Registry.

Again, let us say how happy we are that the Choctaw Nation has chosen to participate in the Landmark Program.

Sincerely yours,

(SIGNED)

William E. Brown
Regional Historian

Enclosures-2

(1) Survey and Landmark folders (2) under separate cover Plaque & Certificate)

cc: Utley, WSC
Dr. James D. Morrison, Southeastern State College, Durant, Oklahoma
Mr. Elmer Fraker, Oklahoma Historical Society Bldg., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
W.E. Brown (2)

McCURTIN CO.
OKLAHOMA

November 30, 1978

Mr. Louis Coleman
President
McCurtin County Historical Society
P. O. Box 922
Idabel, Oklahoma 74745

Dear Mr. Coleman:

The Council is concerned with the status of building No. 9 at the Wheelock Academy National Historic Landmark which has been scheduled for demolition. In a conversation with the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation office, Ms. Patricia Lester suggested that we contact you to determine the current feeling of the McCurtin County Historical Society with regard to funding restoration of the building or other steps to preserve this historic building.

The Council will appreciate hearing from you as to the present situation at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Signed

Louis S. Wall
Assistant Director, Office of
Review and Compliance, Denver

cc: Chairman
SHPO:OK
HCRS:NR
FLO:DOI
BIA:Talihina
ORC:JKing:jkl 11/30/78
FILE:OK/Wheelock Academy NHL/BIA/106/Demolition

McCURTAIN Co. OKLAHOMA

December 11, 1978

Mr. David Hales
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Fish and Wildlife and Parks
National Register of Historic Places
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Hales:

By letter of November 4, 1977, to Robert L. Herbst, Federal Liaison Officer for the Department of the Interior, the Council requested that the Department of the Interior investigate the applicability of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f, as amended, 90 Stat. 1320) to the proposed demolition of selected buildings, an undertaking by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Choctaw Tribe that may have an effect on Wheelock Academy, McCurtain County, Oklahoma, a registered National Historic Landmark. A copy of that letter is enclosed. To date we have not had a reply.

The McCurtain County Historical Society is prepared to provide some funding to assist with the rehabilitation of Pushmataha Hall, one of the buildings currently threatened with demolition, and has expressed active interest in assisting the Choctaw Tribe in preserving the National Register property. A copy of a recent letter from Louis Coleman, President of the McCurtain County Historical Society, reflecting their interest in the Academy is also enclosed.

Conversations with Donald Moon, BIA Superintendent in Tahihina, Oklahoma, indicate that the BIA is encouraging the Tribe to do as it wishes without regard for the historic value of this National Historic Landmark and without apparent understanding of the requirements of Section 106 or his agency's responsibilities pursuant to Executive Order 11593.

Page 2
Mr. David Hales
Wheelock Academy
December 11, 1978

The Council will appreciate it if you will look into this matter and let us have a reply at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions, please call Michael C. Quinn at (303) 234-4946. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

~~Strand~~

Louis S. Wall
Assistant Director, Office of
Review and Compliance, Denver

Enclosures

cc: Chairman
SHPO:OK
Louis Coleman, McCurtain County Hist. Society
HCRS:NR
HCRS:Albuquerque
HCRS:WASO: Laurie Hammel
ORC:JKing:jk 12/11/78
FILE:OK/Wheelock Academy NHL/106/BIA/Demolition

TELEPHONE REPORT

OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PROJECT: Wheelock Academy, (Choctaw Tribe) Oklahoma

TO/FROM: David Sherman, Ed Siegel

DATE: 1/24/79

ADDRESS:

PHONE: X-2700 and X-38248 res

STAFF MEMBER: Pochter

DIVISION: Planning - NR

REPORT:

I discussed the Wheelock Academy situation with David Sherman of the Assistant Secretary's office. He informed me that he had spoken to Ed Siegel of the BIA in Washington recently and that he (Sherman) was told that the NHP property in question is now private property since BIA decided it over to the Tribe. In any case, he suggested that I call Ed Siegel for details. Mr. Siegel told me that Donald Moon, BIA Superintendent in Tahlequah, Oklahoma contracted to have a "feasibility study" done on the subject property which is now completed. The Tribe concurred with contract; BIA paid for it. Mr. Siegel told me that the study is being forwarded to Lou Wall in Denver in response to his letter of December 11, 1978 to the Department of Interior. I requested that a copy of the study be forwarded to Laurie Hammel and suggested to him that after review of the document, a meeting may be arranged.

Advisory
Council On
Historic
Preservation



1522 K Street NW.
Washington D.C.
20005

NOTICE OF THREAT TO N.H.L.

December 11, 1978

Mr. David Hales
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Fish and Wildlife and Parks
National Register of Historic Places
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Washington, D. C. 20240

COPY

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Page 2

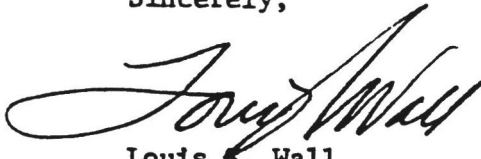
Mr. David Hales

Wheelock Academy

December 11, 1978

The Council will appreciate it if you will look into this matter and let us have a reply at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions, please call Michael C. Quinn at (303) 234-4946. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Louis S. Wall".

Louis S. Wall

Assistant Director, Office of
Review and Compliance, Denver

Enclosures

Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK STATUS REPORT: 1978

I. General Background

1. Official Landmark name: Wheelock Mission
Address: 1.5 miles east of Millerton, Oklahoma
McCurtain County
2. Name, address, phone number of the Landmark owner:
Choctaw Nation, Durant, Oklahoma 74701 FTS: 736-4011 924-8280
3. Name, title, address, and phone number of person responsible for the management of the Landmark: (If same as person in number 2, write 'same').
Same
4. Name, title, address and phone number of additional person(s) contacted about this Landmark:
Assistant Chief Bob Gardner Dr. Howard Meredith, SHPO Staff
Choctaw Nation, Durant, Oklahoma Historical Building
Oklahoma City, OK 73105 (405) 521-2491
5. Name, region and phone number of HCRS official preparing report:
Gaylan Coffman, SCRO, Albuquerque, NM FTS: 474-3512
6. Date of this report: July 17, 1978

II. Condition and Maintenance of Buildings, Sites and Historic Districts
(If Landmark is visited, provide photographs (or slides) of serious problems or possible threats)

1. Architectural or Engineering Features

- a. What is the general physical condition? excellent good
x needs repairs (explain) Buildings in a very deteriorated state.
Only building in livable condition is caretakers residence.
- b. Are there any obvious structural problems or water related problems?
no x yes (describe) Collapsing roofs, porches, walls, floors.
- c. Are there planned future building alterations or new construction?
x no yes (explain)
- d. Are there historic interior furnishings present? yes x no
Are they well cared for? yes no (explain)
Will they be retained? yes no (explain)
- e. Is there historic machinery or equipment present? yes x no
Is it well cared for? yes no (explain)
Will it be retained? yes no (explain)

2. Environmental, Battlefield, Natural and Archeological Features N/A

- a. What is the general condition of the site? ☐ excellent ☐ good
☐ needs repairs (explain)
- b. Are there visible archeological ruins, remains or artifacts? ☐ yes ☐ no
Are they well cared for? ☐ yes ☐ no (explain)
- c. Has there been recent site disturbance, digging, or construction?
☐ no ☐ yes (explain)
- d. Are there plans for future site work or construction?
☐ no ☐ yes (explain)

3. Historic District Features

- a. What is the general physical condition of the buildings, roadways, and other historic features of the district? ☐ excellent ☐ good
☒ needs repair (explain) The entire area is deteriorating very fast, except for the caretakers residence which has been remodeled. Besides the poor condition of the buildings-weeds, brush and grass has grown up around them. Also, trash and other debris litters the area except for the main lawn.
- b. In general, what is the level of construction activity in the district?
☐ high construction activity ☐ moderate ☒ low
- c. Is there a local design review board, historic district commission, or other governmental body which reviews construction activity in the district? ☐ yes ☐ no

III. Building, Site, or Historic District Integrity

1. Are there any conditions on the lands adjacent to the Landmark that might result in serious impairment, diminishment, or destruction of Landmark resources, character, and/or significance? ☒ no ☐ yes (explain)
2. Has there been an introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with the property and its setting?
☐ no ☒ yes (explain) Visual-trash and litter around many of the buildings and around pond recreation area. TV antenna mounted on roof of building #820.
3. Are there any potential threats (i.e., highways, adjacent construction, zoning changes, etc.) likely to occur in the future? ☒ no ☐ yes (explain)
4. Is there any urgency regarding any of the threats? ☒ no ☐ yes (explain)

5. Does the owner show interest in the long term preservation of the Landmark?
no xyes (explain) Choctaw Nation would like to preserve the
buildings and the land area of the mission.

IV. Supplementary Information

1. Does the Landmark have a plaque? yes xno
Is it displayed? yes no
2. Has an agreement form been submitted? xyes no
If no, does the owner wish to sign an agreement with HCRS? yes no
Agreement was signed 1/27/66 by Mr. Harry J. W. Belvin, Principal Chief,
Choctaw Tribe.

V. Comments

The only full time resident at the mission is the caretaker Joshua John and his family. He is a member of the Choctaw Nation. His duties are to lock/unlock the main gate to the mission and cut the grass around the sides and front of the large dormitory building (#802) which is the "main" lawn of the area. The vegetation around the other buildings is not cut and has grown up around them limiting visitation by the public. Area is very unsafe because of this condition. Hidden structural hazards may be present as well as poisonous snakes and insects. Due to rapid growth of vegetation and limited staff, areas around all buildings cannot be maintained. These conditions make the area very unattractive for visitation by the public.

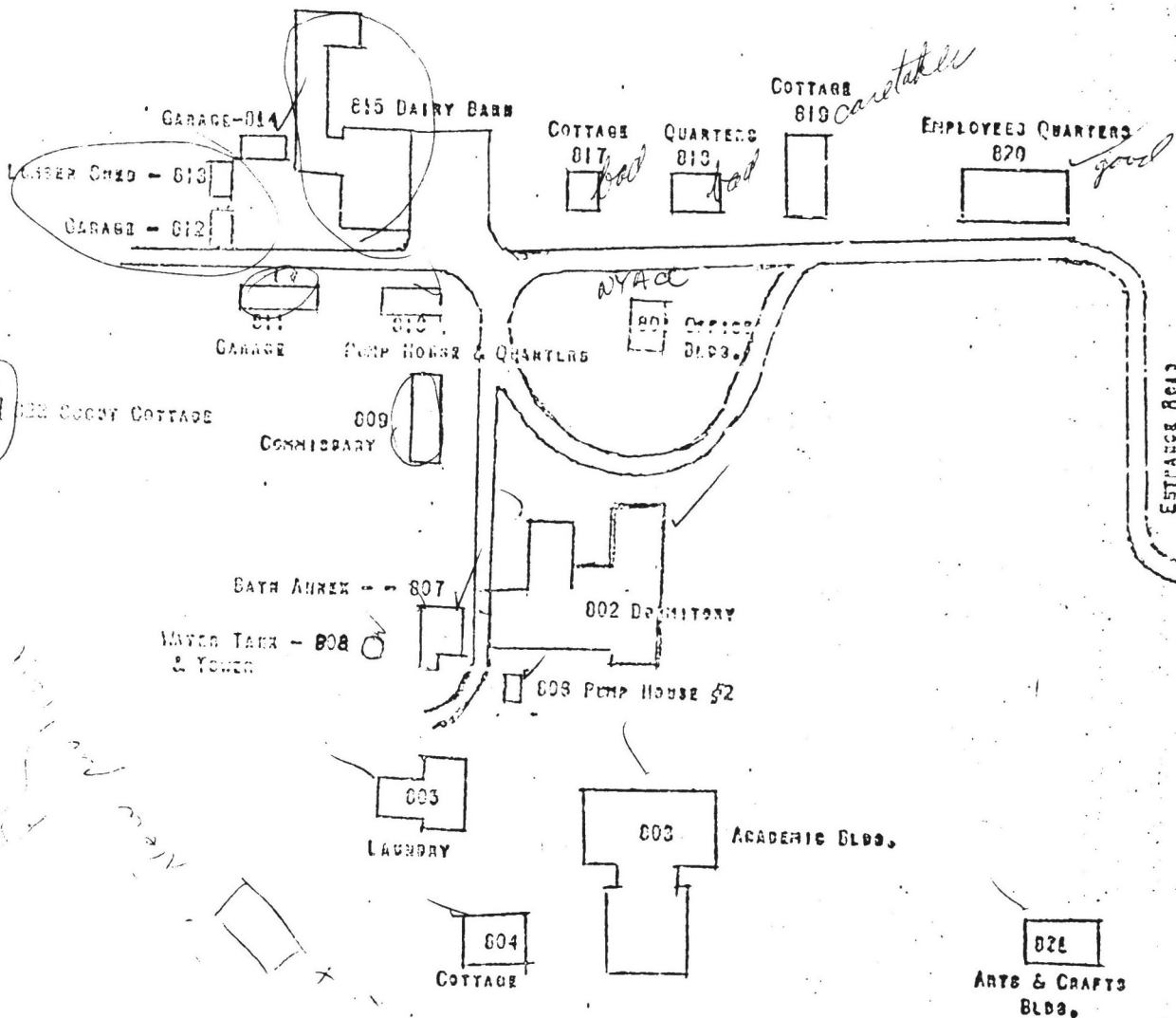
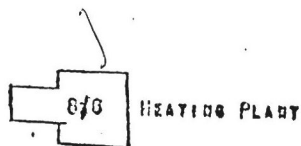
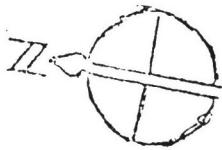
Presently a Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) Project Site is located in Building #80. Approximately 32-35 young adults are at this site. They are currently working in the outer areas of the compound, clearing and burning brush. This YACC program is administered by the Choctaw Nation. Once the brush has been cleared they are replacing the fencing around the entire area (40 acres). Because of the extremely heavy undergrowth, the clearing work is taking a long time. According to David Bacon, YAAC Project Site manager, this clearing work will be the only project for this group. No restoration work or clearing work around the buildings is planned.
(See attached sheet for condition of buildings).

Gaylan Coffman
July 24, 1978

WHEATLOCK ACADEMY, ~~Visit of Feb. 28, 1977~~ ~~Part I. Speed~~

<u>Bldg. #</u>	<u>Condition</u>
801	General condition generally bad, roof bad.
802	Very bad condition. South porch partially collapsed. Roof and columns missing, floor collapsing. Floor of porch on west side of north wing collapsing. Soffit all around building rotted very badly. Doors broken and missing, windows broken.
803	<i>Fair. Basement floor collapsing</i>
804	Very bad. Log walls rotten, roof sags, and foundation sags in one place.
805	West wall of north wing missing. Roof of north wing collapsed. Roof bad on south part of building.
806	Fairly good condition.
807	Bad condition, bad roof, rotten.
808	Needs scaling and paint.
809	Building missing.
810	Bad condition, roof very bad.
811	Building missing.
812	Building missing.
813	Building missing.
814	Extremely bad condition, roof gone.
815	Building recently torn down.
816	Brick building, walls and roof good. Windows broken.
817	Back porch roof collapsed, roof bad, front porch broken through and rotten.
818	Bad state of repair, verandah collapsed, roof rotten.
819	<i>Good Condition. Building has been redone and is now</i> Fairly good condition, with some work could be brought to top condition. Carpenters Quarters.
820	<i>Same condition as 819. Basically good. Interior walls, floors, etc in good condition. Probably best condition of all buildings.</i>
821	<i>Condition very bad, log walls rotten. except # 819</i>
822	Building missing.

The grounds are in fairly good condition. Some recent work has been done. A concrete block comfort station has been built north of the water tower. A picnic pavilion is located north of #804, near the pond. Picnic tables are along the edge of the pond and below the dam. *Tables around pond in bad condition. Pavilion needs maintenance. Pond area is littered w/ trash & junk. Entire area needs cleaning and clearing of weeds & undergrowth.*



PLOT PLAN OF WHEELOCK ACADEMY,
MILLERTON, OKLAHOMA

4 B
Lilly 24 9



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Property and Supply
1906-61

L58
[Handwritten signature]

Dear Senator Hiramson:

Okla
The church, mentioned in your letter of February 17 relating to Wheelock Academy in McCurtain County, is not a part of the property of the Choctaw Tribe which was offered for sale. The church has for many years owned this property which is adjacent to the tribal land and buildings of Wheelock Academy.

Bids received on February 15 did not approach the estimated value of the property and accordingly were rejected. The Area Director for the Bureau of Indian Affairs at Muskogee, Oklahoma, is conferring with the principal Chief of the Choctaws concerning further efforts to dispose of this tribal property or alternative arrangements. This will give interested organizations an opportunity to consider means by which the property could be preserved for historic purposes.

We are sending Congressman Albert, the Principal Chief of the Choctaws and the Area Director copies of this letter for their information.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary of the Interior

Hon. A. S. Mike Hiramson
United States Senate
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure

Copy to: Area Director, Muskogee

Congressman Albert

Principal Chief of the Choctaws
Secretary's Reading File

PRS No. 5812

DCCO

LNP

DL

AA

LM(2)

BIA(3)

APR

EWSmith:aft 3/1 /61
R/w aft 3/7/61

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

1. STATE Oklahoma	2. THEME(S). IF ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE, WRITE "ARCH" BEFORE THEME NO. Military and Theme XV, Westward Expansion, subtheme: Indian Affairs	
3. NAME(S) OF SITE Wheelock Mission		4. APPROX. ACREAGE -
5. EXACT LOCATION (County, township, roads, etc. If difficult to find, sketch on Supplementary Sheet) McCurtain County, near Millerton		
6. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PRESENT OWNER (Also administrator if different from owner) Private		
7. IMPORTANCE AND DESCRIPTION (Describe briefly what makes site important and what remains are extant)		

Wheelock Mission was established among the Choctaws of eastern Oklahoma in 1832 by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Named for Eleazer Wheelock, founder and first president of Dartmouth College, it was built under the supervision of Rev. Alfred Wright, a Presbyterian Missionary who had been with the Choctaws in Mississippi and who came with them, over the "Trail of Tears," to Indian Territory. During his 33-year ministry to the Choctaws, he translated the New Testament into their language. Early in 1833 a school was built as part of the mission. First maintained as a day school by the American Board, it later became a boarding school for Indian girls. The Choctaw Government in 1875 began helping to support the school and, though still controlled by the American Board, it became a sort of Choctaw national institution for orphan girls. The Wheelock Mission Church, a stone building erected in 1842 by Presbyterian missionaries, is still in use at the site and is said to be the oldest church in Oklahoma. Wheelock Academy, until 1955 an orphan school for girls, is still standing but, other than the church, there are no remains of the first mission buildings.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Give best sources; give location of manuscripts and rare works)

Allen Wright, "Wheelock Seminary," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. I (1921).
Lona E. Miller, "Wheelock Mission," Ibid., Vol. XXIX (1951).

9. REPORTS AND STUDIES (Mention best reports and studies, as, NPS study, HABS, etc.)

None

10. PHOTOGRAPHS* ATTACHED: YES ☐ NO ☒	11. CONDITION -	12. PRESENT USE (Museum, farm, etc.) -	13. DATE OF VISIT Not visited
14. NAME OF RECORDER (Signature) <i>Robert M. Zetley</i>		15. TITLE Historian	16. DATE Feb. 26, 1959

* DRY MOUNT ON AN 8 X 10 1/2 SHEET OF FAIRLY HEAVY PAPER. IDENTIFY BY VIEW AND NAME OF THE SITE, DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH, AND NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER. GIVE LOCATION OF NEGATIVE. IF ATTACHED, ENCLOSE IN PROPER NEGATIVE ENVELOPES.

(IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED USE SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET, 10-317a, AND REFER TO ITEM NUMBER)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

1. STATE Oklahoma	2. THEME(S). IF ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE, WRITE "ARCH" BEFORE THEME NO. Subtheme, "Education"	4. APPROX. ACREAGE 30
3. NAME(S) OF SITE Wheelock Academy		
5. EXACT LOCATION (County, township, roads, etc. If difficult to find, sketch on Supplementary Sheet) McCurtain County, east of Millerton and 1.5 miles north of U.S. 70		
6. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PRESENT OWNER (Also administrator if different from owner) Owner: Choctaw Tribe. Administrator: Bureau of Indian Affairs		
7. IMPORTANCE AND DESCRIPTION (Describe briefly what makes site important and what remains are extant)		

Wheelock Academy is the archetype for the tribal school systems established by the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory. As the first national academy founded under the Choctaw Nation's Education Act of 1842, Wheelock set precedent for some 35 academies and seminaries maintained by the Five Tribes. Even the Cherokee National Male and Female Seminaries (discussed above), though administered in a different manner, were modelled after Wheelock in terms of educational purpose. This purpose was to speed the Indians' adaptation to the dominant white culture--a conscious policy decision of the Five Tribes, based on the conviction that survival depended upon emulation. It must be emphasized that these academies were not mission schools, not Government schools. They were national schools, paid for and controlled by the Councils of the Five Tribes. They satisfied Indian needs, and being liberally endowed, they attracted qualified teachers and attained academic excellence. Considered as prime vehicles of acculturation, they are unique in American Indian history; for the Indians themselves sponsored the schools--they were not imposed. Considered solely as educational institutions, they are, again, unique; for at a time when the typical mission or Government Indian school hoped at best to inculcate rudimentary literacy and simple vocational skills, the academies of the Five Tribes carried out a sophisticated academic program that produced educated citizens and skilled leaders for societies distinguished by the presence of libraries, newspapers, and constitutional self-government. Teachers from leading Eastern colleges and universities--Princeton, Dartmouth, Harvard, Vassar--gave instruction in natural philosophy, algebra, astronomy, history, and Greek and Latin. The Councils financed college educations in the East for promising academy graduates. The success of the Five Civilized Tribes in achieving first-class citizenship in Oklahoma can be traced to this commitment to education. The national academies, first of which was Wheelock, were the instruments of this success.

Wheelock began as a mission school, established in 1832 by Rev. Alfred ^{Wright} ~~White~~. Graduate of Williams College and Andover Theological Seminary, White was missionary to the Choctaws from 1820 until his death in 1853. He named his school (continued next page)

8. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Give best sources; give location of manuscripts and rare works)

"About Some of Our First Schools in Choctaw Nation," by the editors, Chronicles of Oklahoma, VI; "Choctaw--Wheelock Academy," file in Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical Society; Grant Foreman, The Five Civilized Tribes (Norman, 1934); idem, Advancing the Frontier (Norman, 1933); Lona Eaton Miller, "Wheelock Mission," Chronicles of Oklahoma XXIX; John W. Morris and Edwin C. McReynolds. (continued)

9. REPORTS AND STUDIES (Mention best reports and studies, as, NPS study, IABS, etc.)

10. PHOTOGRAPHS * ATTACHED: YES ☒ NO ☐	11. CONDITION Fair	12. PRESENT USE (Museum, farm, etc.) Choctaw Park	13. DATE OF VISIT 6/14/65
14. NAME OF RECORDER (Signature) 	15. TITLE Regional Historian	16. DATE 7/7/65	

* DRY MOUNT ON AN 8 X 10 1/2 SHEET OF FAIRLY HEAVY PAPER. IDENTIFY BY VIEW AND NAME OF THE SITE, DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH, AND NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER. GIVE LOCATION OF NEGATIVE. IF ATTACHED, ENCLOSE IN PROPER NEGATIVE ENVELOPES.

(IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED USE SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET, 10-317a, AND REFER TO ITEM NUMBER)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS
SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

This sheet is to be used for giving additional information or comments, for more space for any item on the regular form, and for recording pertinent data from future studies, visitations, etc. Be brief, but use as many Supplement Sheets as necessary. When items are continued they should be listed, if possible, in numerical order of the items. All information given should be headed by the item number, its name, and the word (cont'd), as, 6. Description and Importance (cont'd) . . .

STATE	NAME(S) OF SITE
Oklahoma	Wheelock Academy

7. Importance and Description (Continued)

This is a very complicated question, probably one loaded with subtle legal technicalities. The writer has not consulted with BIA officials in Muskogee, and his information may be erroneous. But given the present state of deterioration of the Old Seminary and the rumored imminence of its destruction by the Government, it would seem that official channels of communication should be opened immediately between the Service and the BIA to prevent irreparable deterioration or destruction of a structure certainly of great regional importance and probably of national significance.

A score of other buildings on the Wheelock Academy campus are historically interesting, and many of them could be easily repaired and maintained. The Choctaw Tribe has considered utilizing the school plant as an orphanage or other public institution for the Choctaw people. In terms of an historic shrine, however, their interest focuses exclusively upon the historic front wing of the Old Seminary.

A custodian in the employ of the BIA maintains the grounds. Except for the accelerating deterioration of the buildings themselves, the Wheelock Academy campus retains a most pleasant appearance and excellent integrity. Behind the campus proper is a small lake whose shores have been developed as a public park, used mainly by Choctaws in the immediate vicinity.

The nearby stone church and cemetery--resting place for many students and teachers of the academy, including Rev. Alfred White--are well maintained and still in use. While accessory to the Old Seminary in terms of historical significance in this theme, these sites are strongly complementary to the Wheelock story.

8. Bibliographical References (Continued)

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STATE	NAME(S) OF SITE
Oklahoma	Wheelock Academy

7. Importance and Description (Continued)

With the help of the Southern Presbyterian Church, the Choctaws rebuilt Wheelock Academy in the years 1880-84. Main structure of the new school plant was the Seminary. Oklahoma Historical Society photos of the 1880s and 1890s show this structure dominating the campus. It still does, its appearance essentially unchanged except for evidences of deterioration.

Ensuing years saw a number of changes in the formal arrangements for administration of Wheelock Academy, changes involving both the Presbyterian Home Mission Board and the U.S. Government. But until 1932, Wheelock remained a tribal school, supported and ultimately controlled by the Choctaws. With the centennial celebration that year, Wheelock Academy became a regular U.S. Indian School. After 123 years of service to the Choctaw people, the Wheelock school merged with Jones Academy near Hartshorne in 1955.

Though owned by the Choctaw Tribe, the grounds and buildings of Wheelock Academy are administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs under terms of an option that, according to local sources, still has about 2 years to run. Since the school closed in 1955, the buildings have suffered neglect. The prime historic structure, the Old Seminary, still is basically sound and can be repaired. But a poorly-constructed porch and sun-deck dating from the 1940s is collapsing, as shown in the accompanying photos. Modern additions to the rear of the historic front wing of the building are also suffering severely from leakage through the damaged roof. The Choctaw Tribe¹ is seriously concerned about the Old Seminary. Rumors from the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office in Muskogee hint that all damaged buildings at Wheelock may shortly be razed to make room for a Youth Corps camp on the campus. The Choctaws want the historic front wing of the Old Seminary preserved, something they are willing to do themselves once they gain control of the building--that is, when the option lapses. Should the present program of neglect continue, restoration of this historic structure may prove extremely difficult or impossible.

Given the desires of the Choctaw Tribe to save the Old Seminary as a Choctaw national shrine, and given the conviction of the writer that this building, historic focal point of Wheelock Academy, possesses exceptional value in illustrating a significant chapter in the history of American education, it would seem that representations should be made to the Bureau of Indian Affairs on this matter. This recommendation is elicited not only by the intrinsic values involved, but also by possible application (in spirit if not in letter) of the statutory obligation deriving from the Surplus Property Act of August 27, 1935 (49 Stat. 885) as amended. Possibly this act does not apply, because actual ownership of the Wheelock buildings appears to be vested in the Choctaw Tribe. If so, the rights granted by the Government's option would be ill-used if they result in disintegration or destruction of the building against the wishes of the Choctaw people, who, again according to local report, are forbidden to make even temporary repairs while the option is in force.

(continued next page)

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STATE	NAME(S) OF SITE
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7. Importance and Description (Continued)

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When the Choctaws passed the National Education Act of 1842,¹ which provided for a system of national academies and seminaries, Wheelock was chosen as the prototype institution. Wright was hired to run the school and recruit the teachers. This contract system between tribe and missionary was also adopted by the Chickasaws, Greeks, and Seminoles--the Cherokees, however, administered their schools directly.

In 1832, shortly after the Choctaws of the Six Towns had traversed the Trail of Tears from Mississippi to Indian Territory, their missionary and friend, Alfred Wright, founded Wheelock Mission on its present site. Though the strange land and decimating epidemics caused great hardship, the mission and its school soon prospered. By 1839 Wright was forced to expand the school plant, building a large 2-story frame dormitory to accommodate the influx of boarding students. Because the Wheelock school was already established, it was selected to become the first Choctaw national academy in 1842. Within a year of the academy's founding, Capt. William Armstrong, Superintendent of the Choctaw Agency, could report that Wheelock was a model for Indian education, its curriculum providing a judicious blend of cultural uplift and practical skills. He lauded Reverend and Mrs. Wright for their excellent management of the school.

Aware that they were participating in an historical advance of the frontier, the Choctaws in 1845 decided to build a permanent church to memorialize the bringing of civilization to the West. One year later they dedicated the stone church that still stands 200 yards from the academy. They honored Reverend Wright by engraving on a tablet embedded in the east wall his still legible motto: "Jehovah Jireh"--The Lord will Provide.

Wright died in 1853 and was buried in the church cemetery. Many noted teachers followed him at Wheelock, including John Edwards, John Libby, and Miss Mary J. Semple--for 40 years teacher and counselor of Choctaws.

Civil War disrupted Indian Territory and Wheelock Academy suffered temporary eclipse. Reinstated after the war, it was all but destroyed by fire in 1869. For some years instruction was carried on in the gutted church and the few damaged buildings that remained.

1. This was the first such law among the Five Tribes. It was the outgrowth of a concern for education among the Choctaws that dated back to 1803. In 1820 the Choctaw Council voted to use all Government annuities for schools.

(continued next page)

REGISTRY OF NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

BIENNIAL INSPECTION REPORT

1. Name and Location: Wheelock Academy,
McCurtain Co., Oklahoma Date: February 17, 1970
Inspected by: _____
2. Type of Landmark: Historic Michael J. Becker
Theme: XX - Arts & Science
Subtheme: "Education"

3. Owner: Choctaw Indian Nation.
a. When designated: 12/16/65 Person Contacted: _____
b. Present: (X) Same Harry J.W. Belvin , Principal Chief
() New (through C. Steen & Warren
Henderson)
4. Use:
a. When designated: _____
b. Present: (X) Same
() Changed as follows: _____

5. Plaque and Certificate: Location and condition -

- a. Plaque Durant, Oklahoma in possession of Principal Chief
- b. Certificate - In the possession of the Principal Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Durant, Oklahoma.

6. Physical condition:

- a. When designated: Much the same as presented in the National Survey of Historical Sites and Buildings by Mr. Brown in 1965.

- b. Present: ☐ Excellent; ☐ Good; ☒ Fair;
 ☐ Poor

Comments: The only comment that the inspector had of the building would logically lead to former comment made by William Brown. The porch and sun deck of the building should be removed. The flooring and sundeck are in very unsafe condition. State marker in reference to Wheelock Mission on Route 70 just east of Millerton. Academy 1.5 miles north at that spot.

7. Special Problems: This particular site is a natural for a Boys or Girls camp, which the Nation is interested in.

Vandalism may or may not show up. None evident at this time.

8. Suggestions offered to the owner: No contact.

Michael J. Becker

Michael J. Becker

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
BIENNIAL VISIT REPORT

ENDANGERED LANDMARK

SITE Wheelock Academy

LOCATION Near Millerton, McCurtain County, Oklahoma

DAY(S) VISITED Feb. 28, 1977

Month

Day(s)

Year

VISITED BY Bert L. Speed

(Name)

Chief Park Interpreter

(Title)

Chickasaw National Recreation Area

(Address)

Sulphur, Oklahoma 73086

(Phone Number)

PERSON(S) CONTACTED, WITH TITLE(S) _____

Emery D. Spears, Research Asst., Choctaw Nation

REPORT SUBMITTED BY:

Name Bert L. Speed

Title Chief Park Interpreter

Signature *Bert L. Speed*

Date April 5, 1977

REPORT

- I. Did you have any difficulty making contact with the owner or administrator in advance of your visit? Yes X No If yes, please describe:
Mr. Spears did not keep his appointment to meet me at the academy at 1:00 pm, Feb. 28, 1977. Inspection of the grounds and exteriors of the buildings were made. No other person was on the site. Signs prohibited entrance into any of the buildings.
- II. Did you feel that your visit was welcome? not welcome?
If not, please describe circumstances:
Unknown.
- III. Was the material provided by SWRO ample and helpful? Yes X No
If not, please explain:
- IV. Approximately how long did you spend at the site? 3½ hours
- V. Please describe the condition of the site (structure(s), grounds, furnishings, etc.)
See attached.
- VI. Based on the reasons for the original designation, is it your opinion that the integrity of the site is being adequately maintained? Yes ✓ No
If no, please explain:
- VII. Please describe in detail the management of the site (owner-managed, employee-managed, government-managed, etc.):
Owner managed.
- VIII. In your opinion, is the site management adequate? Yes X No If you have any reservations, please describe:
- 

IX. Is the site used for commercial purposes? Yes _____ No ☒ If yes, does this present any problems related to maintaining the integrity of the site? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please describe:

X. Please describe any financial problems related to the site:

Unknown

XI. What other problems did you encounter, if any? Many of the buildings need stabilizing.

XII. What specific suggestions, if any, did you make to the owner or administrator? None

XIII. What follow-up action do you suggest for the SWRO and/or others? None

XIV. Is there any urgency regarding the suggested action? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, please clarify:
N/A

XV. If this site is being managed under the terms of a signed agreement, has the plaque been mounted? Yes _____ No ☒ If yes, describe exact location. If no, please explain why it has not been accepted or not been mounted. Also, describe location of the Certificate.
Unknown

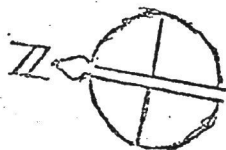
Questions?

(PLEASE ENCLOSE PHOTOS, CLIPPINGS, COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE, OR ANY OTHER MATERIALS WHICH WILL SUPPLEMENT THE INFORMATION GIVEN IN THE REPORT)

WHEELOCK ACADAMY, Visit of Feb. 28, 1977 Bert L. Speed

Bldg. #	Condition
801	General condition generally bad, roof bad.
802	Very bad condition. South porch partially collapsed. Roof and columns missing, floor collapsing. Floor of porch on west side of north wing collapsing. Soffit all around building rotted very badly. Doors broken and missing, windows broken.
803	Fiar
804	Very bad. Log walls rotten, roof sags, and foundation sags in one place.
805	West wall of north wing missing. Roof of north wing collapsed. Roof bad on south part of building.
806	Fairly good condition.
807	Bad condition, bad roof, rotten.
808	Needs scaling and paint.
809	Building missing.
810	Bad condition, roof very bad.
811	Building missing.
812	Building missing.
813	Building missing.
814	Extremely bad condition, roof gone.
815	Building recently torn down.
816	Brick building, walls and roof good. Windows broken.
817	Back porch roof collapsed, roof bad, front porch broken through and rotten.
818	Bad state of repair, varandah collapsed, roof rotten.
819	Fairly good condition, with some work could be brought to top condition.
820	Same condition as 819.
821	Condition very bad, log walls rotten.
822	Building missing.

The grounds are in fairly good condition. Some recent work has been done. A concrete block comfort station has been built north of the water tower. A picnic pavilion is located north of #804, near the pond. Picnic tables are along the edge of the pond and below the dam.



818 HEATING PLANT

GARAGE-814
LUMBER SHED - 813
GARAGE - 812
815 DAIRY BARN
COTTAGE 817
QUARTERS 818
COTTAGE 819
EMPLOYEES QUARTERS 820

811 GARAGE
810 PUMP HOUSE & QUARTERS
809 COMMISARY
022 SCOUT COTTAGE

808 OFFICE BLDG.

ESTRANCE ROAD

BATH ANNEX -- 807
WATER TOWER - 808 & TOWER
802 DORMITORY
803 PUMP HOUSE 52

805 LAUNDRY

803 ACADEMIC BLDG.

804 COTTAGE

821 ARTS & CRAFTS BLDG.

48
PLOT PLAN OF WHEELLOCK ACADEMY,
HILLERTON, OKLAHOMA

McCurtain Co.
See NHL file.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings:

Wheelock Academy, Oklahoma

Wheelock Academy, located in McCurtain County east of Millerton, is the archetype for the tribal school systems established by the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory. As the first national academy founded under the Choctaw Nation's Education Act of 1842, Wheelock set the precedent for some 35 academies and seminaries maintained by the Five Tribes. The educational purpose of these academies was to speed the Indians' adaptation to the dominant white culture--a conscious policy decision of the Five Tribes, based on the conviction that survival depended upon emulation.

Wheelock was established as a mission school by the Rev. Alfred White in 1832. When the Choctaws passed the 1842 education act, Wheelock was chosen as the prototype institution because it already was a flourishing school. So successful had it been that Wright had built a large two-story frame dormitory in 1839 to accommodate the influx of boarding students. Despite changes in the fortunes of the Academy and occasional new construction, the Old Seminary (as the 1839 structure was called) continued as the main building until the school was closed in 1955.

Though owned by the Choctaw Tribe, Wheelock Academy is presently administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Old Seminary and several other historically interesting buildings remain. They are unused at present.

NSHSB:FBS
11-16-65

WHEELOCK ACADEMY, OKLAHOMA

Location: McCurtain County, east of Willerton and 1.5 miles north of U.S. 70.

Ownership and Administration: Wheelock Church and Cemetery are owned by the Southern Presbyterian Church; the Wheelock Academy grounds and buildings are owned by the Choctaw Tribe, but administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Significance: Wheelock Academy is the archetype for the tribal school systems established by the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory. As the first national academy founded under the Choctaw Nation's Education Act of 1842, Wheelock set precedent for some 35 academies and seminaries maintained by the Five Tribes. Even the Cherokee National Male and Female Seminaries (discussed above), though administered in a different manner, were modelled after Wheelock in terms of educational purpose. This purpose was to speed the Indians' adaptation to the dominant white culture--a conscious policy decision of the Five Tribes, based on the conviction that survival depended upon emulation. It must be emphasized that these academies were not mission schools, not Government schools. They were national schools, paid for and controlled by the Councils of the Five Tribes. They satisfied Indian needs, and being liberally endowed, they attracted qualified teachers and attained academic excellence. Considered as prime

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200
next page
changed
by
c.m.
9-12-78

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When the Choctaws passed the National Education Act of 1842,¹ which provided for a system of national academies and seminaries, Wheelock was chosen as the prototype institution. Wright was hired to run the school and recruit the teachers. This contract system between tribe and missionary was also adopted by the Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles--the Cherokees, however, administered their schools directly.

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Present Status: Though owned by the Choctaw Tribe, the grounds and buildings of Wheelock Academy are administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs under terms of an option that, according to local sources, still has about 2 years to run. Since the school closed in 1955, the buildings have suffered neglect. The prime historic structure, the Old Seminary, still is basically sound and can be repaired. But a poorly-constructed porch and sun-deck dating from the 1940s is collapsing, as shown in the accompanying photos. Modern additions to the rear of the historic front wing of the building are also suffering severely from leakage through the damaged roof. The Choctaw Tribe¹ is seriously concerned about the Old Seminary. Rumors from the Bureau of

1. And also key officials of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Indian Affairs Office in Muskogee hint that all damaged buildings at Wheelock may shortly be razed to make room for a Youth Corps camp on the campus. The Choctaws want the historic front wing of the Old Seminary preserved, something they are willing to do themselves once they gain control of the building--that is, when the option lapses. Should the present program of neglect continue, restoration of this historic structure may prove extremely difficult or impossible.

Given the desires of the Choctaw Tribe to save the Old Seminary as a Choctaw national shrine, and given the conviction of the writer that this building, historic focal point of Wheelock Academy, possesses exceptional value in illustrating a significant chapter in the history of American education, it would seem that representations should be made to the Bureau of Indian Affairs on this matter. This recommendation is elicited not only by the intrinsic values involved, but also by possible application (in spirit if not in letter) of the statutory obligation deriving from the Surplus Property Act of August 27, 1935 (49 Stat. 885) as amended. Possibly this act does not apply, because actual ownership of the Wheelock buildings appears to be vested in the Choctaw Tribe. If so, the rights granted by the Government's option would be ill-used if they result in disintegration or destruction of the building against the wishes of the Choctaw people, who, again according to local report, are forbidden to make even temporary repairs while the option is in force.

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Wheelock Academy Being Renovated



Pushmataha Hall is still a focus point when looking across the campus grounds at Wheelock. The building is becoming badly deteriorated, with roof leaks contributing to the rotting floors inside. Pictured in front of the building are Councilman Billy Paul Baker, Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Council persons Charley Jones, Randle Durant, James Frazier, Leslie James, E. J. Johnson, and Charlotte Jackson. The Chief met with the Council Committee to talk about the on-going renovations at Wheelock.

"Defend the Poor and Fatherless" reads the imprint on the huge, 115 year old bell that hangs at Wheelock Academy in the belfry of Pushmataha Hall. The old bell has rung through days of progress for the school, rung through years when young girls grew into young women, taught by the missionaries in every subject from english to knitting. The old bell is quiet now, the rope rotted and disintegrated, the belfry itself decaying into an unsafe haven for the brass bell.

The mission was founded at Wheelock in 1832, beginning as

school many years ago asked that English be the only language allowed at the mission, never the Choctaw language, thinking it would better prepare the students to live in what was fast becoming a predominantly non-Indian world. Today's Council is fighting to restore the ability to speak our native language by funding classes and promoting the importance of learning our heritage.

"My mother went to Wheelock," said Chief Greg Pyle, telling of how she was punished for speaking Choctaw

Councilman Baker said that he was optimistic about the prospective involvement and support of area businesses.

Chief Pyle gave special recognition to Councilman Charley Jones for his work in sharing and helping preserve the history of the Choctaw Nation, including Wheelock.

Charley Jones said he helped build the lake that was located west of Pushmataha Hall. There have been reported sightings of a six foot alligator in the lake over the past few years. Councilman Jones also said he could remember a song the girls

a day school for neighborhood children and growing into a boarding school for students, many of them orphans. In 1842 enrolled students were 27 females and 12 boys, later becoming a school for girls only. The doors to the school closed in August of 1955 leaving Wheelock mostly unused ever since. The Choctaw Nation performed some renovation of the Academy buildings in the early 1980's under the guidance of Gay Self, Director of Maintenance. A residential Recovery Center treated many clients from 1984 until 1991 at the Wheelock site, using LeFlore Hall as a home. The Recovery Center moved to Talihina so the clients would be closer to the Choctaw Nation Hospital.

Chief Gregory E. Pyle and the Tribal Council have approved further renovations of Wheelock. Over the past few years, damaging weather has played a huge part in the disintegration of the wooden structures such as Pushmataha Hall, LeFlore Hall, the classroom building, the office and the caretaker's home.

The Choctaw Nation is investing time, effort and money into the restoration project at Wheelock. Workers from the Housing Authority in Hugo and the Tribal Complex in Durant have combined efforts with volunteers to clean up and improve the appearance of the grounds, to renovate and paint the buildings, fix leaks, re-wire electricity, replace sheetrock and flooring, etc. Clients from the Choctaw Nation Recovery Center have also volunteered to help with the clean-up effort.

Wheelock is an important link in many family histories, with many former students learning skills that helped them raise successful families.

The Choctaw Council who served at the formation of the

while in school. Chief Pyle said he was enthusiastic about the restoration of the buildings at the former Academy. "We are going to utilize resources already available to the tribe," said the Chief. Examples he gave of existing resources included workers and equipment such as bulldozers for clearing underbrush and tractors and mowers for keeping the grounds neat. Chief Pyle stated that grants are currently being sought to fund the more extensive renovations. He and the Councilmembers pointed out that while the heritage of the tribe is extremely important, there are also tremendous needs of tribal members, such as housing, education and health care, that the revenues from economic development ventures are prioritized to be spent on.

The first buildings being renovated are the caretaker's house, the Administration building and LeFlore Hall. Further deterioration of Pushmataha Hall and the Academic/Classroom Building will be stabilized and the water leaks will be stopped while grants are sought to renovate the two structures. Letters of support for the renovation of Wheelock have been received from the AOklahoma Historical Society, McCurtain County Historical Society, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, Preservation Oklahoma, Wheelock Alumni Association members and tribal members from throughout the country.

Donations of materials have been provided by Pan Pacific from Broken Bow and other companies have also indicated their desire to help with the project. Councilman Billy Paul Baker mentioned other industries in the area that had been approached for assistance in the historic preservation project at Wheelock.

going to school at Wheelock used to sing for fun. "It went something like this," said Councilman Jones with a laugh. "Millerton, Millerton, Wheelock is my school, Millerton is my station. I wish the boys would leave me alone, so I could get my education!"

Speaker of the Tribal Council Randle Durant said, "Wheelock has a lot of meaning to people, just as my former school of Goodland has meaning to me and Jones Academy does to alumni from there." Durant said that even though the Wheelock buildings are an important part of tribal history, the Choctaw Nation should not be the only ones putting effort and money into the restoration project, since it was also important to the history of the non-Indian community. "We have many needs for our senior citizens and other tribal members. We want to spend money in ways that will best serve our Choctaw people," said Durant.

Tribal Councilman James Frazier said his grandfather used to live in the caretaker's house on the grounds and that his family loved to visit the beautiful area. Councilperson Charlotte Jackson voiced her thanks to the Chief and everone who had helped over the past few weeks to improve the appearance of the former Girl's Academy and surrounding grounds. Leslie James, Councilman from Talihina area, and E. J. Johnson from Atoka County both said they were glad to know the renovations had begun at Wheelock.

Although Wheelock may never be restored to the exact perfection off appearance many remember from the school days of many years ago, perhaps the bell will still ring over brighter days and fresher coats of paint.

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