

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED **JAN 8 1980**

DATE ENTERED **MAR 13 1980**

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Dragon Commandant's Quarters

AND/OR COMMON

Kneeland House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

409 Creek Street

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Fort Gibson

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

No. 2

STATE

Oklahoma

CODE

40

COUNTY

Muskogee

CODE

101

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

___ COMMERCIAL

___ EDUCATIONAL

___ ENTERTAINMENT

___ GOVERNMENT

___ INDUSTRIAL

___ MILITARY

___ MUSEUM

___ PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___ RELIGIOUS

___ SCIENTIFIC

___ TRANSPORTATION

___ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Ross Kneeland

STREET & NUMBER

409 Creek Street

CITY, TOWN

Fort Gibson

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Oklahoma

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Office of the County Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

Muskogee County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Muskogee

STATE

Oklahoma

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Oklahoma Comprehensive Survey

DATE

1979

___ FEDERAL STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Oklahoma Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Oklahoma City

STATE

Oklahoma

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

Paint and a modern composition roof tend to disguise the age of the Dragoon Commandant's Quarters. Only the chimneys give it away. The house was built in the mid-1830s as a 34 x 48-foot rectangle with a simple hip roof extending over an open, full-width front porch. From this 8 x 48-foot porch a door opens into the central hall, flanked on either side by an 18 x 18-foot room. A door at the opposite end of the hallway leads onto a back porch which is itself flanked by two smaller rooms. Massive rough-cut stone chimneys top the roof crown on either side of the house. . . .A 12 x 16-foot separated kitchen was added some time later (exact date unknown) - beyond the back porch on the right. It was connected to the house by a breezeway which has now been enclosed.

Unusual construction features of the house are pretty well hidden. Supporting the floor joists are 8 x 12-inch pine beams that outline the exterior walls and each side of the central hallway. Walls are 3 x 4-inch pine studs on a 3-foot center with mortared brick and rock laid up between them. Rough pine siding covers the exterior walls. Interior walls are plastered. Floors and ceilings are of 1 x 6-inch pine. Under the composition roof, it is believed, are split pine clapboards. All the doors in the main section of the house are original, as are most of the windows - multi-paned, double-sash affairs four across the front, one beside each chimney. The two back rooms and once-separate kitchen have newer windows. The house is in generally good condition.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1834 to 1837 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Not known

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significance of the Dragoon Commandant's Quarters rests primarily in its relationship with the famed 1834 Dragoon Expedition. First under the command of Brigadier General Henry Leavenworth and later Colonel Henry Dodge, it traversed much of the width of present Oklahoma to make the first formal contact of the United States government with the Indian tribes of the Great Plains. Perhaps the most important peace conference held in the state, it was immortalized in the paintings of famed artist George Catlin, who accompanied the expedition from its base at Fort Gibson.

Oklahoma's first military post, Fort Gibson was established in 1824. It was ten years later that the separate Dragoon Cantonment was established to accommodate the 1834 Expedition's Dragoons. The Commandant's Quarters were probably built sometime during 1834. A contemporary "Map of the Dragoon Cantonment at Fort Gibson C. N." shows, in addition to the Commandant's Quarters, six houses for officers, three soldiers barracks, and six stables. All of them may not have been built. The Cantonment itself lasted^{ed} only a few years. So far as is known the Commandant's Quarters is the only Cantonment structure to remain, making it one of the state's oldest structures. Also contributing to its significance is the importance of the military men associated with it.

The first Commander of the Dragoons at Fort Gibson was General Leavenworth, who died of injuries sustained while hunting buffalo en route to the historic peace conference with the plains Indians. He was succeeded by Col. Dodge. Among other well known figures associated with the short-lived post are Major Stephen Watts Kearney, Lt. Jefferson Davis, and Captain Nathan Boone, son of the more famous Daniel.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Materials collected by the Fort Gibson Commission of the Oklahoma Historical Society

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY c. one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Muskogee NE

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5 minute

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,5 | 2,9,6,0,1,6 | 3,9,6,3,6,9,1
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | |

D | |

E | |

F | |

G | |

H | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 3, Block 65, original plat of Town of Fort Gibson, Cherokee Nation

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

Kent Ruth, Deputy

ORGANIZATION

Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN

Oklahoma City

DATE

August 1979

TELEPHONE

405/884-5456

STATE

Oklahoma

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

H. Glenn Jordan

TITLE

DATE

12/11/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. Ray Luce

DATE

3/13/80

ATTEST:

5th Governor

DATE

3/10/80

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Dragoon Commandant's Quarters

After Contonment Gibson was abandoned the Commandant's Quarters came into the possession of the Ross family. The present owner's mother, Fannie Ross Kneeland, with two sisters, Allie and Belle Ross, lived in the house after the Civil War. The three sisters are descendants of Chief John Ross, who led the Cherokees to Indian Territory from Georgia on "The Trail of Tears."

For its close association, then, with the 1834 Dragoon Expedition on behalf of peace with the Plains Indians, as well as for its unusual architectural features (cf. No. 7), National Register status is requested for the Commandant's Quarters. There are older structures in the state, but few can lay claim to such an intimate relationship with such important figures and events.