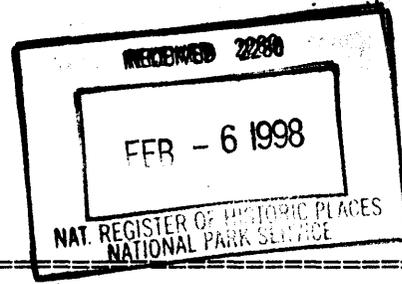


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Hotel Cherokee

other names/site number Alfalpa County Museum

2. Location

street & number 117 W. Main not for publication N/A  
city or town Cherokee vicinity N/A  
state Oklahoma code OK county Alfalpa code 03  
zip code 73728

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this XX nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property XX meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide XXX locally. (N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official

23 January 1998  
Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is

- entered in the National Register \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

[Signature] 3-5-98

other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====

5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u> buildings
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u> sites
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u> structures
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u> objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   N/A  

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)           N/A

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: hotel  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: museum  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
roof ASBESTOS  
walls BRICK  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

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

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE  
ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance 1929-1947  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates 1929  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



=====  
10. Geographical Data  
=====

Acreage of Property less than 1 (one) acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>14</u>	<u>557330</u>	<u>4068010</u>	3	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
2	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	4	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>

N/A See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

name/title Dianna Everett, Consultant  
organization Everett Research Services date 15 September 1997  
street & number 2510 Countrywood Lane telephone (405)348-4272  
city or town Edmond state OK zip code 73003-6433

=====  
Additional Documentation  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage  
or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

=====  
Property Owner  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Alfalfa County Historical Society  
street & number 117 W. Main telephone (none)  
city or town Cherokee state OK zip code 73728  
=====

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SUMMARY:

The Hotel Cherokee, located in Cherokee, Oklahoma, at 117 West Main, is a detached, four-story, brick Commercial Style building located in the west end of the town's commercial district. The building measures 39 feet east-to-west and 84 feet north-to-south. The hotel's main visual elements are its vertical massing, its load-bearing masonry walls with broad bands of decorative red and black brick corbelling and detailing on the main elevation, and its fenestration pattern, which provides large sets of windows to illuminate both public areas and more than four dozen sleeping rooms. The floor plan provides for public areas on the first floor and for sleeping rooms on the upper three floors. Original windows, doors, interior woodwork, and signage remain in place. The historic setting remains, with both commercial and transportation-related properties surrounding the hotel. The Hotel Cherokee, still in its original state, retains a high degree of integrity and is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A and Criterion C.

DESCRIPTION:

The Hotel Cherokee is located in Cherokee, Oklahoma, at 117 West Main, 1.5 blocks west of Grand, which is Cherokee's main street. The hotel is a detached, four-story, brick Commercial Style building that faces south on Main. In the surrounding area, historically and presently, are transportation-related properties (primarily grain elevators and trackage) to the west, and smaller commercial buildings to the north, south, and east. A railroad siding that once cut across the northwest corner of the property was removed in the 1940s, and a Butler-type building was built directly east in the 1990s.

The building is a hotel-type commercial block with a strong vertical massing. The building measures 39 feet east-to-west and 84 feet north-to-south. The plan is rectangular, with the main facade, or narrow side, facing Main. The wide sides face downtown on the east, and the former site of the Orient Railroad on the west. Entrances are located on the south (on Main Street), on the north (fire escapes accessing a concrete-floored sitting area and the rear yard), and on the east (accessing a concrete-floored sitting area).

The hotel's load-bearing masonry walls are made of red and black brick, laid up in running bond and unpointed. The roofline is horizontal. The flat roof has a high parapet on east, west, and south. On the north the parapet is lower, with inset drains at the roof-wall junction. On the east side, slightly to the north of the center of the building, a tall brick external chimney breaks the line of the roof and rises several feet above the parapet.

An important character-defining feature is the building's fenestration. Because the building is a hotel, interior light was paramount. Each room has

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at least one large double-hung window; corner rooms have more windows. Most of the 142 windows retain their original, wood-frame units, with 3x1 glazing. Glazing and/or muntins in 6 windows in the south elevation, 7 in the east, 5 in the north, and 5 in the west, have been replaced or boarded (the other glazing is historic). About a third of the windows retain their original wooden screens; the other windows are unscreened. All doors and windows retain their original hardware. There have been no alterations to the fenestration pattern or materials.

On the SOUTH (main) elevation are five bays, divided by shallow pilasters. The windows are ranked upward in the bays. The first floor has a centrally placed entryway accessing the lobby; the door is an original wood-framed, full-length-light unit, under a three-light transom. Flanking this entrance are two bays on each side. On the west, each bay has a single 3x1 window; to the immediate east is a second entryway (accessing the dining room) with an original wood-framed, full-length-light door and three-light transom; and the easternmost bay has a single 3x1 window. This five-bay arrangement sets the pattern for the upper floors. Ranked above each of the first-floor openings are three single 3x1 windows, one on each of the floors. The center window on each floor illuminates a long, north-south hallway.

On the WEST elevation are eight bays, with windows ranked upward in the bays. Beginning on the south (moving right to left), the first bay has a contiguous set or pair of two 3x1 windows that illuminates the lobby (a window-type air conditioning unit is installed in one window), and above this are ranked three identical sets of windows. The second bay has no first-floor opening, but above the space where a window could have been, are ranked three sets of two 3x1 windows. The third, fourth, and fifth bays are identical to the first bay. The sixth bay and seventh bays are identical to each other, with smaller, single, 3x1 windows, each of which illuminates a bathroom. The eighth bay, identical to the first, third, fourth, and fifth bays, has a set of two 3x1 windows.

On the NORTH elevation are three bays. Ranked on the west side are four sets of two 3x1 windows. Ranked in the central bay are fire escape doors, one on each floor, with a metal fire escape stairs. Each of these original, wood-panel doors has a half-length light and is topped by a three-light transom. These doors have no screen doors. The first-floor doorway is sheltered by a curved piece of sheet-metal serving as an awning; this was added at an unknown date. Ranked on the east side are four sets of two 3x1 windows.

On the EAST elevation are seven bays, similar in pattern to those on the west side. Beginning on the north (moving right to left), the first bay has a set of two 3x1 windows on the first floor, and the upper floors are identical. The second bay also has sets of two 3x1 windows. On the first floor, between these two bays, is an entryway with an original, wood-panel door with a half-

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length light, topped by a three-light transom. The door has no screen door. To the south of these two bays, the external chimney projects outward two feet from the wall, rising from the ground to above the roofline. This makes a visual division of the east elevation. To the south of this are five bays. The third, fourth, and fifth bays are identical to the first bay, with sets of two 3x1 windows on each floor (a window-type air conditioning unit is installed in a lower window of the third bay). The sixth and seventh bays, however, have no windows on the first floor; above that solid space, in each bay are ranked sets of two 3x1 windows.

Decorative detailing is another visual characteristic of the Hotel Cherokee. The masonry walls are primarily of red brick, with black brick stretchers scattered liberally throughout. Projecting sets and corbelled rows of black brick are used for detailing in many places. The cap of the parapet is created by black brick laid in rowlock, with the row projecting slightly, forming a lip. In the south elevation the window headers are made of black brick set in a soldier row, and the sills are made of black brick in rowlock. In the other elevations the headers are steel, and the sills in all windows are of rowlock brick, in red and black combination.

The primary decoration takes place in the south elevation, between the top of the parapet and the window headers. Several bands of brick are placed here, in corbelled fashion. The parapet cap, set in black brick in rowlock, is interrupted six times by sets of three black soldier bricks. Below the parapet cap is a broad band of red brick, interrupted ten times by regularly placed sets of two black stretcher bricks that project slightly. Below this is are three corbelled bands: the most outwardly projecting is a rowlock band, projecting over a shallower soldier band, which projects over a very slightly projecting red band. Below is a deeper band of red bricks, actually the flush wall, with five regularly placed projecting sets of three black bricks in soldier rows. Below this is a third corbelled band, with two projecting stretcher rows of black bricks over a slightly projecting stretcher row of red. Below this is a flush wall of mixed brick that is the same depth as the pilasters that divide the bays. The window headers and windows (previously described) are set back into the bays created by the pilasters. The pilasters wrap around the building's corners, so that the east and west walls appear to be slightly recessed. The entire appearance of the south elevation is one of varied color and texture and adds greatly to the building's visual interest. In the other elevations brickwork detailing is limited to the projecting cap of the pediment and the brick window sills.

The floor plan of the Hotel Cherokee is essentially unaltered from the original. On the first floor there is a lobby and 4 sleeping rooms on the west side; a long off-center hallway leads from the lobby, past four west-side sleeping rooms, to the rear entrance. On the east side of the first floor is a large, long, narrow dining room, a kitchen, a rear lobby (with exterior entry),

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and one sleeping room (which may have been an office). The three upper floors have sleeping rooms and bathrooms. A stairway with original risers, solid balustrade, and wooden cap leads upward from the west side of the lobby. Each of the three upper floors has 14 sleeping rooms (7 on either side of the hallway, with a total of 42 on the three upper floors) laid out along a central hallway. On each floor, the two sleeping rooms in the far northwest side have private bathrooms. Also on each floor, on the west side of the hall near the stairs, are three bathrooms--a men's toilet, a women's toilet, and a bath (two have the original fixtures).

Interior decoration is minimal. All interior walls and ceilings are the original plaster on lath, with no alterations. Fourth-floor walls and ceilings in the northwest corner are in poor condition due to roof leaks. On the first floor, the original concrete floor remains, but the original floor covering, which may have been linoleum, is gone. New carpet covers the floors in the lobby and in the "dining room." Upper levels retain the original oak flooring, and in the hallways some areas are covered with very old linoleum, in poor condition. Original wiring and light fixtures remain in most rooms; one lobby light has been replaced with a new ceiling fan. Original woodwork -- two-panel wooden doors, door facings and trim, transoms, and baseboards -- remains in all areas. Sleeping rooms retain original metal room numbers and transom lights. Also remaining are two original 12-light wooden doors leading from the lobby into the dining room. In the second-, third-, and fourth-floor hallways, original wooden cornice molding remains. On the upper floors, most original plumbing fixtures remain (none in working order), but there are no remaining kitchen fixtures on the first floor. During the 1960s the east side of the first floor was "remodeled" by adding two walls across the dining room to create an additional sleeping room. These walls were removed in the 1980s. A concrete-walled and floored basement originally had a water softener and a steam boiler; these units are now gone. Most steam registers remain in the rooms, but the building is presently unheated.

Original exterior elements remain as well. Two original coach lights remain on the exterior at either side of the main entrance. The north wall still retains its steel fire escape stairway, with five landings. A large concrete pad, made of four-foot by four-foot squares, was poured in place along the entire length of all four sides of the building; these areas were used for sitting out, like a "patio." The pads are ranked 3 deep on the south (12 feet deep, stretching from door to curb), 2 deep on the east (making a pad 8 feet wide), 3 deep on the north (12 feet deep). On the west side, the pads are lined up single file along the side of the building, making a 4-foot-wide walkway. The concrete-walled basement entrance attached to the northwest corner of building had a wooden cover but the cover is presently a metal sheet. Metal downspouts are attached to the wall in the north elevation. Historic signage remains: above the main entrance, a large black arrow points downward to the entry, and on this sign the vertically arranged word HOTEL has been obscured by

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a wooden sign with the word MUSEUM. On the roof above southeast corner, an original sign bears the words HOTEL CHEROKEE; this sign is pictured in the 26 July 1929 edition of the Cherokee Republican in an article announcing the hotel's opening.

Alterations

The Hotel Cherokee has seen very few interior or exterior alterations. On the first floor, the east wall of the hallway was removed at an unknown date during 1970s or 1980s. In the 1980s the stairway entrance into the second-floor hallway was boxed in with plywood, and two wood-panel doors were installed (this was done to retard upward migration of heat from the public areas). At the same time, a wall was removed between two rooms in the southwest corner of the second floor, to make an exhibit area. First-floor toilet fixtures were replaced in 1997. Although essentially unaltered, the interior is not in good repair.

Historically, the building had an awning over the first-floor openings in the south elevation, across the entire width. From a 1929 photograph, the original awning material appears to have been cloth, but at an unknown date a flat awning, made of masonite and aluminum, replaced the original. The awning, which stretches across the entire width of the building, is not permanently attached to the wall but is suspended by eye bolts and wire, as was the original awning. The north elevation was painted white on either side of the fire escape doors at an unknown date. Metal machinery placed outside and near the west and north walls are museum artifacts. Other than changes in glazing to 23 of 142 windows, and loss of some screens, there have been no exterior alterations to the building. The resource still includes the historically associated patio area and surrounding grounds (Lots 15-18), and only the railroad siding that once cut across the northwest corner of the grounds has been removed.

Retaining virtually all of its original elements, the Hotel Cherokee retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It is amply able to convey information about its historic past and is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its local commercial significance, and under Criterion C, for its local architectural significance.

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SUMMARY:

The Hotel Cherokee, located at 117 West Main, in Cherokee, Oklahoma, is a four-story Commercial Style hotel located on the west side of Cherokee's historic and present-day commercial district. From the time of its 1901 founding, Cherokee, Oklahoma, was the regional trading center for Alfalfa County. Built in 1929 to replace an original hotel that burned in 1927, the Hotel Cherokee provided a haven for travelers, out-of-town business persons, and area residents who traded in or did business in Cherokee. The hotel represents a period of struggle, growth, and development in Cherokee's commercial history, 1929-1947, a time during which much local business promotion was being conducted in order to overcome the effects of a national economic depression and war. The hotel is the largest brick Commercial Style building in Cherokee and Alfalfa County. Virtually still in its original condition, the Hotel Cherokee retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It is amply able to convey information about Cherokee's commercial development from 1929 to 1947 and is the only extant hotel in Cherokee dating from that time period. As such, it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its local commercial significance, and under Criterion C, for its local architectural significance.

COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE:

In the mid- to late-nineteenth century, north central Oklahoma and present Alfalfa County were part of the Cherokee Outlet, also known as the "Cherokee Strip," a large reserve of land established in 1867 by treaty as a western outlet for the Cherokee Nation, whose national lands lay in the northeast corner of Oklahoma. The Cherokee Outlet was used primarily for cattle pasturage until September 1893 when an area 200 miles long and 37 miles wide was opened for settlement by land run. This huge tract of six million acres became the target of claims by approximately 100,000 would-be settlers competing for land. Forty thousand claims were taken up in the Run of 1893.<sup>1</sup>

The area now encompassed by Alfalfa County was originally designated as a portion of County "M", later designated as Woods County. In 1907 Woods County was divided into several counties, including Alfalfa County, named for Constitutional Convention President (and later state governor) "Alfalfa Bill" Murray.<sup>2</sup> The town of Cherokee, laid out in 1901 by townsite developers A. J. Titus and T. J. Brockway, grew to a population of 300 by the middle of its first year.<sup>3</sup>

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Due to the 1903-1904 arrival of the Kansas City, Missouri, and Orient Railroad, known as the "Orient," Cherokee rapidly grew. By 1905 the population had risen to 750, by 1915 to 2,500, and by 1930 to 2,700. The community became a commercial center for agricultural service businesses, banking, retail and wholesale outlets, and transportation services.<sup>4</sup> Smaller surrounding communities, such as Ingersoll, Carmen, Helena, Jet, Goltry, Amerita, Burlington, Byron, Driftwood, Lambert, and Aline relied on the commercial ventures in Cherokee for access to larger markets. As agriculture provided the county's economic base (primary crops being wheat, corn, and hay), businesses such as creameries, grain elevators, flour mills, agricultural implement dealers, and so forth, formed the nucleus of the commercial community in Cherokee.<sup>5</sup>

Like most early-twentieth-century-Oklahoma small towns, Cherokee "fanned out" around a railroad depot. In this case, there were two depots, one providing access to a trunk line of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe (whose main line lay in the western part of the county), and a second providing access to the Orient. The Santa Fe Depot stood at the east end of Main Street, and the Orient Depot stood at the west end. Halfway between the two depots lay the town's main street, a north-south artery named Grand, along which most of the commercial property developed.<sup>6</sup>

With the increase of commercial traffic into and out of town by road and by railroad during the town's first three decades of existence, a burgeoning travelers-service industry grew. As in most towns, near the railroad depot (in this case, depots), hotels, rooming houses, and restaurants were built. Near the Orient Depot, on West Main, entrepreneurs built the Orient Hotel (c. 1909); near the Santa Fe Depot, others built the Hotel Henderson (c. 1905) and the Stilts Hotel (built c. 1905 and later called the Cherokee Hotel, not to be confused with the Hotel Cherokee that is the subject of this nomination). Over the period, other hotels were built near the commercial district as well, those being the Ideal (c. 1929) on S. Grand and Jobe's Hotel (c. 1929) on S. Kansas. Although the Orient Railroad merged with the Santa Fe in 1928, the hotels on the "Orient" side of town persisted, probably because of a sudden burst of oil-field activity in the county during 1928-1929 and because of the promotional fervor of the Cherokee Commercial Club.<sup>7</sup> The Cherokee Commercial Club, which had been organized and then had foundered during the town's early years, was resurrected in June 1928. The members proceeded to plan several community development projects, among them street improvements, free mail delivery, improved water supply, business promotions/events, and additional hotel space. Much of this was accomplished in 1928 and 1929. In the midst of the progress, in late 1928 the Cherokee Republican pronounced its hometown to be ". . . one of the most up to date, wide awake little cities in the state," and the urban and trading center of a large area.<sup>8</sup>

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In October 1927 the Orient Hotel, a two-story, wood-frame building, was destroyed in an early-morning fire. Its owner, Thomas Thompson, vowed to rebuild, and in September 1928 construction began on the approximately \$50,000 project. Original plans called for a three-story, thirty-eight-foot by eighty-foot building with brick exterior. That concept quickly changed, as the Commercial Club pressed for a larger facility with an elevator. Thompson decided to provide "a real hotel," larger and more elaborate than originally envisioned. New plans included more rooms and more private baths (thus adding a fourth floor), and a larger dining room, but no elevator. Construction was completed in May 1929, and a grand opening was slated for 31 July. Apparently, the opening of the dining room and coffee shop was delayed because the operators had not completed their equipment purchases, but by the end of August the entire hotel was in full operation.<sup>9</sup>

After October 1929, the onset of the Great Depression brought a commercial slowdown in Cherokee and in Alfalfa County. The Cherokee Commercial Club took immediate steps to stem the downward economic spiral, however, and in so doing secured the hotel's role in the town's commercial history by providing incoming crowds of traders and travelers a good quality place to rest and eat, in exchange for their financial support of the hotel and the town.

The Cherokee Commercial Club's promotional activities were numerous in the 1930s. They began with a "Build Now and Pay for it When Times are Better" campaign, which encouraged businessmen to expand or build and which also recruited new businesses to open. The committee also developed a "Trades Day," on Wednesdays (for more than a decade), which drew a large crowd from the surrounding region. Another promotion was the "Cherokee Community Festival," offering seminars for businessmen from Cherokee and surrounding towns, in which they would "Learn How to Make the Most of the Depression." The committee's ingenuity was really astounding. They organized a "Town Auction," held on a regular basis, where agricultural products and implements were sold and entertainments such as boxing matches, circuses, and football games were offered as inducements to come to town. The year 1933 brought a "Spend Sunday in Cherokee" program in April, and a "Wheat Day" in May. In the 1930s the town fathers also recruited many regional and statewide conventions of organizations such as the Oklahoma State Holiness Association (1933), the Women's Christian Temperance Union (1933), the 4-H Clubs (1933), the Baptist Association (1935), the Tri-County Masonic Association (1935), the Oklahoma Press Association Regional Meeting (1936), and the Northwestern Oklahoma Baptist Association Annual Dinner (1936), among numerous others through the end of the decade and into the 1940s. These and other economic activities, such as a spate of oil drilling in the 1930s, and sporting activities (primarily the annual bird-hunting expeditions in the Salt Plains area) brought hundreds of people to stay at the Hotel Cherokee and spend their money in Cherokee, Oklahoma.<sup>10</sup> While the

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years before and after World War II did not bring overwhelming prosperity to Cherokee, the town survived the depression in better commercial shape than many other communities.

The Hotel Cherokee exemplifies the commercial success of Cherokee during that time period. It remained the largest and most elaborate building of its kind in town, hosting travelers, salesmen, harvest hands, hay buyers, hunters, and so forth. The hotel was never substantially altered and is the only extant hotel from that period. Under the ownership of one family from the mid-1940s, it served the community of Cherokee, Oklahoma, until 1973. In that year the facility closed, and in 1980 the building was purchased by the Alfalfa County Historical Society.<sup>11</sup> It now houses the Alfalfa County Museum.

The building retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and it is still the largest building in town, as well as in the county. It well represents the physical legacy of commercial development and the nexus of transportation and commerce of Cherokee, Oklahoma, during the 1929-1947 period.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

As in most Oklahoma towns of the era, the first commercial buildings in Cherokee, Oklahoma, were wood-frame, generally of one or two stories. In the period between 1910 and 1930, many of these were replaced with one-, two-, or three-story masonry buildings. The Hotel Cherokee, a four-story, detached, masonry brick building built in 1929, is the largest brick Commercial Style building in Cherokee, Oklahoma, and is also the largest such building in Alfalfa County.

The Hotel Cherokee exemplifies a minimal variety of commercial architecture. It is a multi-story building that is of uniform design on each elevation. As with most commercial buildings, the street-level lower zone has public spaces--a lobby and dining room. The upper zone, while not overtly distinct on the exterior, was used for hotel rooms. The building's load-bearing brick walls have modest ornamentation, that being on the south/primary elevation. The decorative brickwork on this elevation includes wide, deep bands of interspersed red and black brick, corbelled rows of red brick and of black brick, and decorative and contrasting window headers and sills of black brick.<sup>12</sup> It is the only building in Cherokee that carries this style of ornamentation.

Other commercial buildings in Cherokee, Oklahoma, pre-date and post-date the Hotel Cherokee. Laid out along Grand and Main, these buildings, built in the town's early years of 1903-1930, are uniformly one- and two-story brick

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buildings. No three-story buildings are extant. During a windshield survey, it was observed that most, if not all, of the historic buildings built in this era have been seriously altered by the replacement of historic windows and doors with modern, metal-framed units, or by covering historic storefronts with metal panels. Other hotels that once served Cherokee and Alfalfa County, including the Henderson, the Jobe, the Stilts, and the Ideal, are no longer extant.

Other than the Hotel Cherokee, the most intact buildings in Cherokee appear to be the Alfalfa County Courthouse [NR 1984, 84002937], the Cherokee (National Guard) Armory [NR 1988, 88001371], and the Cherokee I. O. O. F. Lodge [NR 1984, 84002953]. Each of these appears to have been altered (perhaps since listing) by the replacement of historic windows. In terms of ornamentation, the Hotel Cherokee's only architectural rival is the I. O. O. F. Lodge building, a much smaller and less imposing building (important for its social, rather than commercial, significance), with glass-block windows and terra cotta designs inset into its brick walls.

Still in its original condition, the Hotel Cherokee retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A towering four-story building, it is the most visible and most elaborate Commercial Style building in Cherokee, Oklahoma. It is the town's only essentially unaltered historic commercial building and it is the only remaining hotel building from the period of significance. It is an excellent representation of Cherokee's commercial development from 1929 to 1947. As such, it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its local commercial significance, and under Criterion C, for its local architectural significance.

ENDNOTES

1. Michael M. Smith, "Patterns of White Settlement in Oklahoma, 1889-1907," Resource Protection Planning Project, State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society (1986), 8-17; Don Green, "Beginnings of Wheat Culture in Oklahoma," Rural Oklahoma, ed. Don Green (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1977), 56-64.

2. Our Alfalfa County Heritage (N. p.: Alfalfa County Historical Society, 1976, 9.

3 F. E. Cheadle, "A Bit of Ancient History," Cherokee Republican (Free Fair Edition), 19 October 1928, n.p.; "Necrology: A. J. Titus, 1865-1931," The Chronicles of Oklahoma 9 (1931), 486.

4. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Cherokee, Oklahoma, 1902, 1905, 1909, 1920, 1929 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress Microfilm, n.d.), Oklahoma, Reel 4.

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5. Our Alfalfa County Heritage, p. 9; Green, "Wheat Culture," 56-64.
  6. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Cherokee, Oklahoma, 1902, 1905, 1909, 1915, 1920, 1929.
  7. Ibid.; Cherokee Messenger, 17 August 1926, 11 Jan. 1927, 5 April 1928, 2 February 1929, 16 July 1929; Cherokee Republican, 17 May 1929; "Cherokee" (typescript, 1936), Vertical File, Library, Oklahoma Historical Society.
  8. Cherokee Republican, 19 October 1928.
  9. Cherokee Messenger, 25 October 1927, 17 January 1928, 18 September 1928, 7 May 1929, 16 July 1929, 30 July 1929; Cherokee Republican, 26 July 1929, 23 August 1929.
  10. Cherokee Messenger, August 1926-July 1929; Cherokee Republican, September 1928-1945.
  11. "Alfalfa County Museum: History of the Building" (on file, Alfalfa County Historical Society, Cherokee, Oklahoma); "Hotel Cherokee" (typescript, anonymous author, on file, Alfalfa County Historical Society, Cherokee, Oklahoma).
  12. Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture (Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, 1987, pp. 1-24.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the property encompass all of Lots 15, 16, 17, and 18 of Block 15, Original Town, Cherokee, Alfalfa County, Oklahoma.

Boundary Justification:

These are the historic and current boundaries of the property as legally recorded in the Register of Deeds of the County Clerk's office of Alfalfa County, Oklahoma, and include all property historically associated with the Hotel Cherokee.