

PH0502316

# DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED **AUG 9 1977**  
DATE ENTERED **FEB 17 1978**

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

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

### 1 NAME

HISTORIC  
"Irving's Castle"  
AND/OR COMMON  
Washington Irving Point of Interest

### 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
2.5 m. SSW of (4 Km)  
CITY, TOWN  
Ingalls  
STATE VICINITY OF No. 6  
Oklahoma 40 Payne 119

### 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE <i>Legavus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECT <i>2/3/78</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

### 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
Jett Sherrell  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN VICINITY OF STATE  
Cushing Oklahoma 24023

### 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Office of the County Clerk  
STREET & NUMBER  
Payne County Courthouse  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
Stillwater Oklahoma

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
Oklahoma Statewide Survey  
DATE  
1976  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
Oklahoma Historical Society  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
Oklahoma City Oklahoma

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED Just  
 ALTERED weathered

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

As a dramatic rock formation "Irving's Castle" is no serious rival of Utah's Mexican Hat or Arizona's Agathla. But it had a notable chronicler. And, with a modicum of imagination, it does have the striking appearance of an ancient ruin. In Washington Irving's day, before cedars had grown up around it and a century and a half of weathering had exacted its toll, the formation was undoubtedly even more evocative.

The out-cropping of reddish sandstone is broken and veined with lichen. Although not over twenty feet in height, the generally east/west arc of rock crowns a gently swelling hill that emphasizes its size. Approaching from the north or northeast, as it almost surely must have done, the Irving party would have seen the formation silhouetted against the sky, thereby accounting easily for the glowing description it received in the official journal. The view from the south and west would have been equally striking. Today, however, the growth of cedars on the north side of the "castle" - probably planted by early settlers in the area, possibly seeded by birds - diminished the impact of the formation when seen from that direction.

The site has long been a popular one in the area. Trees and a modest rock overhang on the north and west provide a natural picnic spot. To the north, west and south the unbroken prairie falls away gently, giving today's visitor a pleasant pastoral panorama that can not be too much different from that enjoyed by the Irving party almost 150 years ago.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input 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 1832

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Often a place is significant, not so much in itself, but through the fortuity of having a notable chronicler. This is particularly true of several areas in the eastern half of present Oklahoma first described by one of America's best known literary figures, Washington Irving. His account of his ramblings, A Tour on the Prairies, was a best seller in its day. It is still both entertaining and enlightening, especially for the perceptive view it offers of Oklahoma when it was still a virtual wilderness.

Irving, with the Englishman Charles J. Latrobe, Count Albert de Pourtales of Switzerland, and Henry L. Ellsworth, a government emissary, left Fort Gibson on the Arkansas River October 10, 1832, soon caught up with a detachment of Rangers on a scouting expedition into the central part of present Oklahoma. They completed the trip with the mounted soldiers. Both Irving and Latrobe subsequently wrote accounts of their experiences. While the junket had its hardships and dangers, it was not without its moments of fun, too. On October 25, for example, it indulged in a hilarious melee that emerged finally, distilled by the writer's creative genius, as the "Ringing the Wild Horse" chapter of his book and -- with an assist from McGuffey -- a bit of the cultural background of countless thousands of readers of literature for almost a century and a half. (This site, near present-day Oklahoma City, is already included in the National Register.)

Another site visited by the expedition a few days earlier (Oct. 20) is the one being nominated here. On a generally flat landscape it is a hilltop formation of reddish, lichen-traced rocks that reminded Irving of "the ruins of some Moorish Castle, crowning a height in the midst of a lonely Spanish landscape." Poetic license or not, it is a striking description. And the "Castle" remains today, essentially unchanged from that day in 1832. Because of its initial description by Irving, the wide-spread recognition it has received over the years because of his writings, and because the formation stands today much as it did then, it is being nominated for the protection of the National Register.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Irving, W., A Tour on the Prairies, annotated by Thoburn & Wells, Harlow, 1955  
 Latrobe, C. J., The Rambler in Oklahoma, annotated by Wright & Shirk, Harlow, 1955  
 Shirk, George H., "A Tour . . ." - The Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XLV (Autumn, 1967), p. 102ff.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	14	618,910,800	3,919,210,850	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kent Ruth, Deputy

ORGANIZATION

Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN

Oklahoma City

DATE

November 1976

TELEPHONE

405/884-5456

STATE

Oklahoma

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL   Y  

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

*Harry J. Weisrae M.A.*

TITLE

DATE 8.5.77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Robert B. Rettig

DATE 2/17/78

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*Charles D. ...*

DATE 2.14.78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER