

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 30 1976
DATE ENTERED	APR 13 1977

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 **

Reynolds, James E., House

AND/OR COMMON
Reynolds Castle

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Cameron

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

No. 3

STATE

Oklahoma

CODE

40

COUNTY

LeFlore

CODE

079

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<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:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Howard O. Page

STREET & NUMBER

308 Country Club Terrace

CITY, TOWN

Midwest City

VICINITY OF

STATE

Oklahoma

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the County Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

LeFlore Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Poteau

STATE

Oklahoma

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Special Reynolds Castle Survey

DATE

1976

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Oklahoma Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Oklahoma City

STATE

Oklahoma

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Captain Reynolds was apparently his own architect when he set out in 1890 to realize a life-long ambition. As a youth he had poured over pictures of old castles in Scotland and, like any boy, dreamed of someday building one of his own. Reynolds Castle with its stone turrets and towers is the impressive and still handsome fulfillment of that dream.

Stone was quarried from a nearby hillside to provide the basic building material for the 10-room castle. Walls are two feet thick, for the most part. There are front, back and side entrances, all of stone. The front is of course the most impressive, a nine-foot-wide sweep of stone steps with one-piece curved stone railings leading up to a massively arched porch.

The main floor contains the bulk of the castle's living space. Ceilings are of tongue-and-groove wood and 12 feet high. Interior walls are of lath and plaster. The two largest rooms, living room and adjoining bedroom, are connected by unusual sliding doors, of wood and fully ten feet. The original varnish is yellowed and cracked with age. Hinges and handles throughout the house are ornately decorated. Other main-floor rooms include a kitchen and dining room, separated by butler's pantry, and bedrooms off a narrow hall through the center of the house.

A steep stairway with carved railing leads to the south tower room. Two octagonal towers guard the western corners of the castle. Each contains a single small room. Around their edges and that of the main roof are notched stone ramparts. Only access to the north tower is by way of the southern one and the roof. Legend has it the isolated room once accommodated a family member with tuberculosis.

A stone stairway leads down from the main floor to a low-ceilinged cellar, built to take of a cistern and to provide storage. The house had (and still has) no water system. (There is a well down the slope from the castle.) However, it does have electricity now. And the coal grates that once heated all the rooms have been converted to gas.

Originally there was a sloping grass lawn with gate entrance in front, leading to a stone fence that enclosed a flower garden. Some magnolias and shrubs still stand to hint at the extensive landscaping that once made the estate a Choctaw Nation showplace. And a few neglected peach trees can still be found to remind the visitor of the productive orchards Reynolds developed here on the slope of Cameron Mountain.

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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> _COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> _EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> _PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> _TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" 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 1890 - 1911

BUILDER/ARCHITECT James E. Reynolds

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

James E. Reynolds was born in Mississippi in 1837. He went into business there briefly before enlisting in the Confederate army, where he climbed to the rank of Captain. After the Civil War he returned to Mississippi and, in 1866, married Felicity Turnbull, whose grandmother was a LeFlore, one of the best known Choctaw families. They came first to the Fort Smith area, moved some 16 miles south to the settlement of Cameron, which was established in 1888 with arrival of the railroad. Homestead rights were obtained by Mrs. Reynolds, a Choctaw, for a home building site on the side of Cameron Mountain. Here Reynolds built the Old World castle of his boyhood dreams. He lived in it until 1911, when he moved back to the site of his original 1869 home. Here he spent the last nine years of his life, dying in 1920.

Throughout his long life Captain Reynolds was an active and successful entrepreneur. He helped promote development of the vast coal deposits underlying much of this east-central section of Oklahoma. He built several general stores in the area, including one at Cameron. And he established a tobacco factory near Fort Smith. He also accumulated several thousand acres of land, clearing much of it for farming ... and fruit growing. Peach orchards were developed on the hill back of the castle. Fancy Elberta peaches were produced, shipped in car load lots to city markets. A seasonal packing and shipping industry was soon developed and a 1903 ledger entry credits the Reynolds Fruit Company with a shipment of Elbertas to Liverpool, England. The company, through a succeeding firm operated by his son carried on until 1938. Reynolds cultivated flowers and shrubs only as a hobby, but his success in this area was also impressive. During the cape jasmine blooming season small boxes of the flowers, wrapped in wet cotton, were given all visitors to the castle and often presented to his favorite Frisco railroad men.

Captain and Mrs. Reynolds were both active members of the Presbyterian Church. This led to their starting a mission church school at Cameron which, in 1893, became Cameron Institute, funded principally by the Presbyterian Church of the United States. It operated in a one-story frame building until 1895 when, with strong support from the Reynolds, a two-story stone structure was completed. The school carried on until after statehood.

* * *

Reynolds was a self-confessed "unreconstructed Confederate." His motto was "Surrender if necessary, but never be conquered." He spent his life looking forward,

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Ellifritt, Duane S., Historic American Engineering Record, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, 1974
- Frey, Phil, "A Castle of Their Own," Orbit Magazine, Oklahoma City, July 7, 1974, p. 4
- Nance, Rosa Ayleene, "Captain James E. Reynolds," The Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXXII (1954), No. 1, pp. 2-17

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY c. 3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

620

A	1,5	36,0	6,15	3,8	8,8	8,0,0	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
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kent Ruth, Deputy
ORGANIZATION

DATE

March 1976

Oklahoma Historical Society
STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

405/884-5456

Historical Building
CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Oklahoma

Oklahoma City

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE 

TITLE

SHPD

DATE

JUL 27 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

CHIEF 

DATE

4/13/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: 

DATE

3-18-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

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Reynolds, James E., House

however. He was a believer in women's suffrage. And a strong prohibitionist. When World War I broke out -- and he was 80 -- he even contacted an old army comrade in Washington, discussed the possibility of forming a battalion of Confederate veterans who could help the war effort along somehow, somewhere ... under an old Confederate battle flag.