UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM  
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES  

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

NAME  
HISTORIC Arrastra Site  
AND/OR COMMON  

LOCATION  
STREET & NUMBER  
Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge  
NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CITY, TOWN Cache  
STATE Oklahoma  

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 PARK  
EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT RELIGIOUS  
GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION  
INDUSTRIAL MILITARY OTHER  

AGENCY  
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS (if applicable)  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Bob Karges, Manager)  
STREET & NUMBER Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge  
CITY, TOWN Cache  
STATE Oklahoma  

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION  
COURTHOUSE Comanche County Court House  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
CITY, TOWN Lawton  
STATE Oklahoma  

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS  
TITLE Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge Survey  
DATE May 1978  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS State Historic Preservation Office  
CITY, TOWN Oklahoma City  
STATE Oklahoma  

PHO 674702  
FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED MAY 10 1979  
DATE ENTERED MAY 11 1981
**DESCRIPTION**

<table>
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<th>CONDITION</th>
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<tr>
<td>_EXCELLENT _</td>
<td>X_DETERIORATED</td>
<td>_ORIGINAL SITE</td>
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<tr>
<td>_GOOD _</td>
<td>X_UNALTERED</td>
<td>_MOVED _</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_FAIR _</td>
<td><em>ALTERED</em></td>
<td>DATE________</td>
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Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Building materials of the Arrastra were natural boulders of native granite and mortar to fill the joints. The pieces of granite were large enough that once the final location of a piece was made, its mass and weight were enough that it was not going to move around.

The Arrastra appears to be completely undisturbed since its construction about the turn of the twentieth century. Moss and lichens cover the exposed surfaces of the stone and mortar but the wooden members have disappeared long ago.

This Arrastra consists of a trough about two feet wide and one foot deep. The outer circle is fifteen feet in diameter with the inner diameter measuring close to eleven feet. Evidence that the Arrastra was used is found in the horizontal marks scored into the sides of the trough.

The slab "drag stones" used to pulverize the ore thrown into the trough have disappeared and all soil surrounding the Arrastra supports a good growth of grass and other native plants.

The location of this Arrastra is roughly 100 yards northeast of the cedar grove which is east of Mount Sheridan.
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Various descriptions of the Arrastas built during the gold rush days in the American West indicate that they were almost exact duplicates of the ones observed by Humbolt in Mexico in 1802. Americans who were familiar with the old fashioned bark mill found in small tanneries inevitably recognized its similarity to the Mexican ore mill. The arm of the arrastra to which the horse was hitched was much longer, however, to allow the animal to move in a larger circle and thus obtain more pulling power. A good American arrastra could pulverize from one to three tons of ore in twenty four hours provided the horse could make six to ten revolutions per minute.

At least two arrastras are known in the Wichita Mountains area, both close to creeks so that water was always available. In the fall of 1903 the Frisco Railroad offered free transportation on a car of ore going to Denver for processing as an inducement in developing the mines. Eventually the ore was smelted and refined at a reported $11.87 per ton in value, hardly enough to pay the cost of any single operation in the business of mining. Six smelters were actually built in the Wichitas between 1901 to 1904 with only one able to make successful runs.

During the mining activities immediately preceding and following the opening of the twentieth century, numerous geologists visited the Wichitas. H. Foster Bain, a young geologist at the University of Oklahoma in 1903, collected and examined rock specimens from all mines in the area. In an article published in 1904, Bain reported, "... In no case do the prospects offer any encouragement whatever for additional prospecting."

Even though archival records reveal that Father Juan de Salas, was in the Wichitas, via an expedition from Santa Fe in 1629, for two decades, no evidence of mining activity is evidenced. But regardless of its builders, or the date of its construction, the present arrastas in the Wichitas possess significant historical meaning: Originating in Mexico four centuries ago, it is a singular reminder of the fact that Spanish "culture" barely touched the fringe of what is now the state of Oklahoma.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY c. 1 acre

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Arrastra is located about 100 yards northeast of the cedar grove and directly east of the Cache-Meers road, on the west bank of Cedar Creek.

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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
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<th>COUNTY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
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FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Bill E. Peavler, AIA, Senior Preservation Architect

ORGANIZATION
Oklahoma Historical Society

DATE
January 10, 1979

STREET & NUMBER
Historical Building

TELEPHONE
(405) 521-9286 Ext. 67

CITY OR TOWN
Oklahoma City

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Arrastra Site

Additional significance must be attached to the Arrastra in that it represents one of the few remaining tangible pieces of evidence of the gold mining fever which swept southwest Oklahoma around the turn of the century.
Verbal Boundary Description:

To locate the Arrastra, start at the Meers entrance to the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Proceed 3000 feet to a point on the center line of the Cache-Meers Road and then turn east and proceed 1500 feet to the Arrastra. A square area, the sides oriented north-south-east-west, measuring 50 feet each, are equidistant from the center of the Arrastra, and designate the boundary.
Major Bibliographical References


Hollon, W. Eugene
1956 A Spanish "Arrastra" in the Wichita Mountains. The Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. 34, No. 4:443-455