

D140369659

Form 10-306
(Oct. 1972)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Oklahoma
COUNTY:	Comanche
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	AUG 10 1977

1. NAME

COMMON: ~~Geronimo's Grave~~ Indian Cemeteries

AND/OR HISTORIC: ~~Apache Prisoner-of-War Cemeteries, and Otipoby Comanche Cemetery~~

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: ~~Apache Prisoner-of-War Cemeteries on the East Range, east and north of the junction of Dodge Hill Rd. and Elgin Rd. and south of junction; and Comanche Cemetery south of junction.~~

Fort Sill
Hon. Tom Steed, 4th District

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Oklahoma	40	Comanche	31

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. AGENCY

U. S. Army

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)
HQ, US Army Field Artillery Center

CITY OR TOWN: Fort Sill

STREET AND NUMBER:

STATE:	CODE
Oklahoma	40

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Director of Facilities Engineering

STREET AND NUMBER:
1950 Barbour Road, HQ US Army Field Artillery Center

CITY OR TOWN: Fort Sill

STATE:	CODE
Oklahoma	40

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:	CODE



STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER:

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DATE:

Incl 2

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent
 Good
 Fair
 Deteriorated
 Ruins
 Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered
 Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved
 Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If Known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located in the center of the main Apache Indian Cemetery on Beef Creek, near where Geronimo and the Apaches first camped when brought to Fort Sill in 1894. Geronimo's grave is marked by a large rock cairn surmounted by a concrete eagle, erected by Fort Sill troops in 1930. Nearby are buried other members of his family and fellow Apache warriors.

Terrain consists of grass areas and shade trees. Cemetery is fenced and contains walkway to Geronimo's grave. Approximately 320 Apache prisoners-of-war are buried here in permanently marked graves. Site is administered by the Fort Sill Museum and maintained by Post Engineers. Presently in use as a historic site and for additional Apache Indian burials.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Geronimo was one of the most noted Indian leaders, and the most famous prisoner-of-war in American history. On the warpath for 45 years, he spent the last 15 years of his life at his "St. Helena," Fort Sill. He died at the age of 80, on February 17, 1909. The Geronimo Guardhouse and Geronimo's grave are visited yearly by thousands of persons from all parts of the U.S. and from many foreign countries. His stature as one of the world's greatest guerrilla fighters and as a patriot leader of his people continues to grow with the passage of time.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Historical records and burial lists, Apache Cemeteries, on file at Fort Sill Museum
 Nye, W.S., Carbine and Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill, Centennial Edition, Norman University of Oklahoma Press 1969, p. 302
 Newspaper files, Lawton Constitution, Fort Sill Cannoneer, in Fort Sill Museum files
 Daily Oklahoman, New York Sun, and MSG Morris Swett collection
 Guide to Historic Sites on the Fort Sill Military Reservation, 1962.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NE	See map for UTM ref.		LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE SHOWN ON MAP MARGIN			
SE						
SW						
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 104.5						
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES						
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Mr. Gillett Griswold, Director** DATE: **23 Apr 1974**
 BUSINESS ADDRESS: **US Army Field Artillery and Fort Sill Museum**
 STREET AND NUMBER: **HQ, US Army Field Artillery Center** PHONE: **351-5123**
 CITY OR TOWN: **Fort Sill** STATE: **Oklahoma** CODE: **40**

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

State Liaison Officer recommendation:
 Yes
 No
 None
[Signature]
 State Liaison Officer Signature

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is National State Local
[Signature] **8/19/74**
 Federal Representative Signature Date
Director, Real Property & Natural Resources, OASD (I&L)

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.
[Signature]
 Director, Office of Land Acquisition and Planning
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 Date: **8/10/77**
 ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Date: **8/10/77**

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Indian Cemeteries, Fort Sill, OK

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Description.

The three Apache cemeteries located on the west bank of Beef Creek on the East Range of the Fort Sill Military Reservation were established by direction of the War Department when the Apache prisoners-of-war were brought to Fort Sill in October 1894. General Hugh L. Scott, then 1st Lieutenant, 7th U.S. Cavalry, later Army Chief of Staff, was in charge of the Apaches during their initial period here, and established the cemeteries not far from their first winter camp. The Apache prisoners-of-war then numbered approximately 340 and consisted of the remnants of the Chiricahua, Warm Spring, and Nedni tribes (bands) that had been taken captive or surrendered in Arizona Territory in 1886. They remained at Fort Sill for 19 years under the care and guardianship of the Army, with many of the men serving as Scouts, and became known as the Fort Sill Apaches. They continued to use the cemeteries from 1894 until they were given their freedom by Act of Congress in 1913 and left Fort Sill in 1913-14. During this period some 315 Apaches died and were buried here, including children born after arrival. The graves were marked by wooden headboards, which gradually disappeared through weathering and prairie fires. In 1958, by direction of the Commanding General of Fort Sill, the Fort Sill Museum undertook the project of identifying and permanently marking with inscribed Government headstones all graves in these cemeteries. At the same time installation policy was established to permit survivors and descendants of the Apache POWs to continue to be buried in these cemeteries, which are still in use for this purpose today. The project of identifying and marking the graves was accomplished over a three-year period with the full cooperation and assistance of the Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma and the Chiricahua Apache Tribe of Mescalero, New Mexico. The permanent markers were installed and the cemeteries formally dedicated by Fort Sill officials and the Apaches in 1961. From 1958 to the present approximately 17 Apache burials have taken place here. Because these are survivors and descendants, the historical integrity of these sites is not disturbed. The main Apache Cemetery has approximately 292 graves, with Geronimo's grave in the center. The Chief Chihuahua Apache Cemetery one-fourth mile north contains 25 graves, and the Baitso Apache Cemetery just south of the main Cemetery contains 13 graves. These cemeteries are presently used as historic sites and for additional Apache burials.

The Comanche Cemetery at Fort Sill is located northwest of the Apache cemeteries, on a rise overlooking the Cache Creek Valley to the west. It is known as the Otipoby Comanche Cemetery after the Comanche family that was allotted this section in 1901. Fort Sill acquired the area in 1940-41 in an expansion of the East Range of the military reservation. The first Comanche burial here was in 1888. The cemetery

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contains approximately 160 marked graves. Only 53 of these were originally marked with permanent type headstones. In 1965 the Fort Sill Museum, in cooperation with the Comanche Tribe, undertook the project of identifying and permanently marking the other graves. This was completed and the Cemetery dedicated by Fort Sill officials and the Comanches in 1968. Installation policy permits the continuing use of the cemetery for Comanche burials, and several additional burials have taken place in recent years. The Comanche Cemetery is presently used as an historic site and for additional Comanche burials.

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Statement of Significance.

The Apache prisoner-of-war cemeteries at Fort Sill were the first and only cemeteries established for the exclusive use of the Apache POWs during their 27 years of captivity. Dating from 1894, the historical integrity of the sites has been retained and enhanced. The main cemetery includes the graves of Geronimo, the most famous prisoner-of-war in American history; Nana, noted Warm Spring Apache leader and warrior during and after the Victorio War; Chief Loco of the Warm Spring Apaches, who succeeded Victorio; a number of warriors who fought with Geronimo, including La-zi-yah, Dah-ke-ya, Tsisnah, and Betzinez; several Apache Scouts who served the U.S. Army at Fort Sill and in campaigns; and brothers, sisters, wives and children of the most noted names in Apache history, such as Geronimo, Victorio, Cochise, Mangus Coloradas, Naiche (Natchez), Apache Loco, Chatto, and Juh. The Chihuahua Cemetery includes the graves of Chief Chihuahua of the Chiricahua Apaches, who surrendered his band to General Crook in the spring of 1886, and of Olsanny (Ulzanna), warrior with Geronimo who led one of the most daring raids of the Apache wars, from Mexico through General Crook's lines in the winter of 1885. In the Baitso Apache Cemetery are the graves of Baitso and his family. A brother-in-law of Chatto, Baitso served in Company "I", 12th Infantry and Troop "L", 7th Cavalry.

The wars or campaigns engaged in by the Apaches buried at Fort Sill included those under Mangas Coloradas, 1863, Cochise, 1870-71 and 1873, Victorio, 1877-1880, Nana, 1881-1883, and Geronimo, 1877, 1880-83 and 1885-86. Nana, born in 1800, participated in the Warm Spring Apache raids and wars from about 1820 on, and Geronimo campaign of 1885-86.

In 1886, during the Geronimo campaign under General Nelson A. Miles, the Chiricahua, Warm Spring, and Nedni Apaches, peacefuls and hostiles alike, were taken prisoner and sent to Florida. They numbered approximately 500. All were confined at Fort Marion except for Geronimo and the men of his last band, who were imprisoned at Fort Pickens. The damp climate induced a high death toll and in 1887 all were removed to Mount Vernon Barracks, Alabama. Many of the children were sent to Carlisle Indian School, Pennsylvania. The Alabama climate also proved too humid for the Apaches, and many succumbed to pulmonary diseases. An Act of Congress has prohibited these Apaches from ever being brought west of the Mississippi again. However, in 1894 Lt. Hugh L. Scott induced General Miles to

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recommend their removal to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where the climate was much drier and they could be taught to farm and raise livestock. This was accomplished, and the Apache prisoners-of-war were brought to Fort Sill in October 1894. This move proved to be their salvation, for by 1900 the death toll had been reduced to the point where it was equalled by the birth rate. They were established in 12 villages on the military reservation and during their 19 years here in the care of the Army they built houses, raised extensive crops, and developed a herd of 10,000 beef cattle. This was one of the most successful experiments with Indians ever conducted by the Government.

The Comanche Cemetery at Fort Sill was the first cemetery established by the Comanche Indian Tribe when they began to abandon their former practice of isolated burials in remote and unmarked locations. It is in the heartland of what was once Comanche country and the former Kiowa-Comanche Indian Reservation. Dating from 1888, the historical integrity of this site has been retained and enhanced. The noted Comanche chief and warrior Tabananika, "Sound of the Sun" or "Voice of the Sunrise", who once declared that he would rather stay out on the prairie and eat buffalo dung than come in and be a reservation Indian, is buried here, along with numerous other prominent Comanche tribesmen and their families.

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Geographical Data.

Latitude - *UTM ref. on map*

Longitude

A - Lat. 34°-42'-51" North
B - Lat. 34°-42'-51" North
C - Lat. 34°-42'-5" North
D - Lat. 34°-41'-38" North
E - Lat. 34°-41'-38" North
F - Lat. 34°-42'-6" North

A - Long. 98°-22'-8" West
B - Long. 98°-22'-5" West
C - Long. 98°-21'-58" West
D - Long. 98°-22'-11" West
E - Long. 98°-22'-18" West
F - Long. 98°-22'-8" West

Verbal Boundary Description: From the intersection of Dodge Hill Road and Elgin Road (point E), north on Elgin Road to the intersection of unimproved gravel road (point F), north on gravel road to the NW corner of cemetery fence (point A), east to NE corner of cemetery fence (point B), south from this point to the east bank of Beef Creek (point C), south following creek to a point below the southern cemetery (point D), and west to point E on map, the original starting point.