

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

received AUG 26 1983  
date entered SEP 22 1983

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic CRONKHITE RANCH HOUSE

and/or common Same

**2. Location**

street & number N of Watonga off OK 51a N/A not for publication

city, town Watonga vicinity of

state Oklahoma code 40 county Blaine code 011

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
district	public	X occupied	agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	X private	unoccupied	commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
structure	both	work in progress	educational	X private residence
site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>		entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
object	N/A in process	yes: restricted	government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A being considered	X yes: unrestricted	industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		no	military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Patricia Woolbright

street & number Rural Route

city, town Watonga vicinity of state Oklahoma 73772

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Clerk's Office

street & number County Courthouse

city, town Watonga state Oklahoma

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Okla. Preservation Office has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date federal X state county local

depository for survey records Preservation Office, Oklahoma Hist. Soc.

city, town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma

## **7. Description**

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	<input type="checkbox"/> original site <input type="checkbox"/> moved date N/A

### **Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Built in 1906, the two story Cronkhite Ranch House was constructed of 9 inch by 14 inch solid cement blocks. Of rusticated ashlar design, the blocks were formed at the site and manufactured from local materials. The single walls of the house were placed on massive foundations of cement poured into deep V-shaped trenches. Four single, double sash windows--two upper and two lower--were symmetrically placed around the north side entryway. On the east end there were two single, double sash windows and an asymmetrically placed entryway on both lower and upper levels. The north side contained two sets of double paired windows on the bottom floor and one set of double paired and a single window on the second floor. The west end had two upper and two lower windows with an symmetrically placed lower level entryway. On the east, north, and west ends were full porches, with the roof, enclosed by rails, serving as a second story balcony. The west end porch was screened. Two interior chimneys protruded from the deck of the hipped roof, which was itself covered with tin sheets. Upon completion, therefore, the house was faintly Italinate in design and with the exception of its cement, block walls not unlike other two story houses of prosperous farmers and townspeople in the county.

In 1936 four additions were made to the house. To the east end was added an upper level sleeping porch; on the north side a small portico over the entryway replaced the veranda; on the west end and to the rear a kitchen and dining area was added; and the hipped roof was replaced by a single ridge, gabled one. Because the additions were constructed of materials identical to those used originally, the Cronkhite Ranch retained its basic architectural integrity.

## **8. Significance**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>							
<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/ X	<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 type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X 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** 1906

**Builder/Architect** Will Cronkhite

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Initially a part of the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation, what is now Blaine County, Oklahoma, was opened to white settlement in a famous land run in 1892. Because the canyon country in the western portion of the county was unsuitable for farming, that region was utilized principally for cattle ranching. Allotments reserved for the Indians were frequently located in that area as well. White ranchers generally entered one 160 acre tract according to the Homestead Laws, built a home on that tract, and then put an extensive cattle range together by leasing surrounding Indian allotments. This was the pattern followed by Will Cronkhite. Thus his Ranch House is suggestive of the settlement and agriculture patterns typical at the turn of the century in western Oklahoma. Moreover, it is the only remaining imposing structure associated with the ranching industry dating from that era in Blaine County.

The Cronkhite Ranch House is significant architecturally not because of its design as much as its method of and materials used in its construction. To the north of the house lies one of the purest deposits of gypsum in the United States. Will Cronkhite and his brothers pioneered in the exploitation of the mineral in 1904 by establishing a mill and quarry some two miles northeast of the house site. Material from the mill formed the cement blocks from which the house was fashioned. Only one other house is known to be constructed from similar materials, and it is located several miles south in the community of Watonga. The Cronkhite House, therefore, is a prime example of early inhabitants of a region using uniquely local materials for construction purposes.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Heritage Book Committee, Their Story: A Pioneer Days Album of the Blaine County Area (Oklahoma City, 1977) pp. 119-121.  
Interview with Patricia Woolbright, Watonga, OK, July 13, 1981  
Interview with Lillian Cronkhite, Watonga, OK, July 27, 1982

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property One Acrea

Quadrangle name Watonga Lake

Quadrangle scale 7.5 min

### UTM References

A	1 14	5 4 19	3 1 4 10	3 1 9 7 1 6 8 1 4 1 0	Northing
	Zone	Easting			
C					
E					
G					

B					
	Zone	Easting			
D					
F					
H					

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beginning at a point 1500 feet east and some 3400 feet north of the Southeast corner of Sec, 23, T17N, R12W go 200 ft. east, 200 ft north, and 200 feet west to the point of beginning.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title W. David Baird Director Mary Ann Anders

organization Oklahoma Preservation Survey date

street & number 502 Math Sciences telephone 624-5678

city or town Stillwater, OK State Univ. state Oklahoma

## 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 C. E. M. Baird

8/8/83

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date

9/22/83

J. W. Adcox-Baird  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration