

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Miller, R. G., "The Smoking Room," The Oklahoma City Times, Nov. 29, 1967

Davison, Mr. & Mrs. Francis - interviews

Miscellaneous materials from Oklahoma Publishing Company library files

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY c. one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,4	44,68,5,5	3,9 8,3 4,6,5
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

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

Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN

Oklahoma City

DATE

December 1977

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     

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

*Harry L. Kempree M.D.*

DATE

2-10-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

*William LeBouch*

DATE

11/14/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

Nov 6, 1978

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

# 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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 c. 1915

BUILDER/ARCHITECT George E. Davison

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significance of the Davison Silo is three-fold. Of unusual design, it was constructed (and apparently designed) by a remarkable man on what was for a time one of the largest ranching operations in Oklahoma. Unused now for many years, the silo stands - a bit battered by the weather but still structurally sound - a rather striking memorial to both man and ranch.

\* \* \*

George E. Davison came to this rolling section of northwestern Oklahoma around the turn of the century, only a decade after the Cheyenne and Arapaho lands were thrown open to non-Indian settlement. He erected a square, two-story log house (still standing and itself a rather unusual structure), gradually began putting together a substantial farming/ranching operation. In time it embraced upwards of 100,000 acres of pasture and feed-grain land, owned and under lease. From the beginning it was not just another ranch.

Around 1915 Davison built (or had built, although it is quite likely that he contributed to both design and construction) his 14-sided wooden silo, as unusual in its way as his log ranch house. In 1921 he introduced buffalo to the ranch - or, more properly, re-introduced them, as this rugged Canadian River area of present Oklahoma had been awash with American bison barely a half-century earlier. He brought the shaggy beasts up from the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge under a formal agreement to take care of a certain number of them. (This pioneering wildlife refuge, one of the first in the country, had been established in 1905 to protect the bison from threatened extinction. Base stock, curiously enough, was a herd of 15 of the animals taken west from the Bronx Zoo.)

Davison's interest in wildlife conservation was no fleeting fancy. As time went on his ranch sheltered countless quail, prairie chickens, and wild turkeys. And while guests were welcomed - the buffalo roundups were always popular with visitors - none was ever allowed to take aim on game, in season or out. They were, however, allowed to fish in the ranch's 18 well-stocked lakes. Understandably enough, the Davison ranch was for many years a much visited northwestern Oklahoma showplace. Davison himself played a leading role in the early history of Ellis County and served it for a time in the Oklahoma legislature.

The ranch fell on hard times during the depression years. But Francis Davison, the founder's son, managed to hold on to the original log cabin home and at least some of the land (although not the silo). With a partner he operated much of the old ranch after his father died and carried on his father's preservation and conservation practices. It remains today a working ranch. Over the years the Francis Davisons have continued to play strong roles in the life of this predominantly agricultural area. Mrs. Davison has been widely recognized for life-long efforts in extension service and 4-H work.

# 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		

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

Davison Silo was when built some 60 years ago - and remains today, so far as is known - a remarkable structure unique to Oklahoma. But for its concrete pit it is constructed entirely of wood. It has fourteen sides, each six feet wide, constructed of 2x4's laid flat. These side panels are covered on the exterior with a type of ornamental tongue-and-groove siding. The fourteen obtuse-angled "joints" where the panels came together were originally protected from weathering by top-to-bottom strips of rounded metal molding. (Much of this is now gone, allowing moisture to penetrate the juncture points. Some rotting has understandably resulted.)

The basic silo structure is approximately 36 feet tall. A shingled roof of relatively shallow pitch covers the storage bin and the remarkable design and workmanship of the builders is continued here. The roof itself also consists of fourteen wedge sections. They come together at the pinnacle of the roof and are crowned by a 14-sided cupola. Again, each cupola panel contains a precisely boxed-in window for ventilation and the cupola itself is, in turn, covered by a fourteen section shingled cone. This roof section, like the main one below it, has each section protected from the weather by metal stripping similar to that used to protect the side panels. At the peak of the cupola cone, finally, a five-foot rod or pole "tops out" the unique structure at approximately 55 feet!

The feed chute on the silo's south side was crafted with similar care and ingenuity. A shingled hip roof covers it just above the loading opening. A progression of unusual self-sealing door panels on the silo side of the chute close as the ensilage is blown in, open as it is being thrown down to the wagon or truck pulled up at its base. Old-timers in the area tell how Davison used goats to pack down the feed as it was blown into the silo ... and how, after they had responded to the self-preservation instinct by tromping themselves to the top of the structure, a rope was tied around their horns and they were lowered to the ground!

The silo has not been used for years. Nor has it apparently received any maintenance. Its exterior is weathered. Much of the protective metal stripping of its side and roof panels has rusted away. And holes are beginning to appear in its shingled roof. As of now, however, the structure is still basically sound.

PH0662941

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED FEB 15 1978

DATE ENTERED NOV 14 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

Davison Silo

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

c. 20 miles southeast of (32 km)

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Arnett

— VICINITY OF

No. 6

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Oklahoma

40

Ellis

045 ✓

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: <u>Unused</u>

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

R. V. Shrewver ✓

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Ashland

— VICINITY OF

Kansas 67831

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the County Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

Ellis County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Arnett

Oklahoma

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Special Davison Silo Survey

DATE

1977

— FEDERAL  STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Oklahoma Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Oklahoma City

Oklahoma