

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Oklahoma	
COUNTY: Bryan	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
APR 13 1972	

1. NAME

COMMON:
Armstrong Academy Site

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
c. 3 m. NE of

CITY OR TOWN:
Bokchito (NE/4 NW/4 Sec. 12, T 6 S, R 11 E)

STATE: Oklahoma CODE: 40 COUNTY: Bryan CODE: 013

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 type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Eldon Rose

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Bokchito STATE: Oklahoma CODE: 40

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Office of the County Clerk

STREET AND NUMBER:
Bryan County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Durant STATE: Oklahoma CODE: 40

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

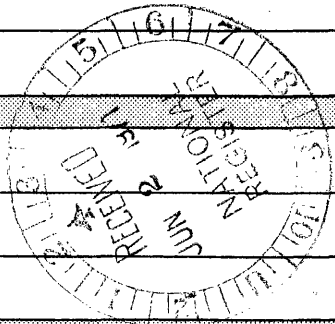
TITLE OF SURVEY:
Oklahoma Historic Sites Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1958 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:
Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN: Oklahoma City STATE: Oklahoma CODE: 40



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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Armstrong Academy, though a bit more pretentious than most, followed the usual Indian boarding school pattern. As it gradually developed it had a large central structure of red brick -- T-shaped and two-storied, with many chimneys and balconies -- that served as the main school building. It was surrounded by several smaller buildings used as residences and workshops. Up to 100 acres in the vicinity were farmed, most of the work being performed by the boys. Armstrong, according to one historian, had as its objectives "the Christianizing and civilizing of the Choctaws on the manual labor plan." There was plenty of wood available and a good spring of water. A small stream flowed through the grounds immediately to the south of the school buildings, carrying enough water, most of the year, to run a small grist mill.

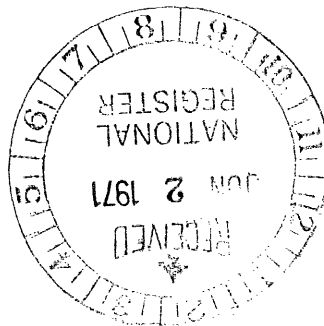
Armstrong was nearly self-sufficient. An 1855 report by Supt. A. G. Moffat reads:

During a part of each day all the pupils labored on the farm. We raised about three hundred bushels of wheat, all of which was out and threshed by the pupils. We planted about sixty-five acres of corn, which we think will yield, at the lowest calculation, fourteen hundred bushels. The oat crop was almost an entire failure.

Armstrong was originally planned for 35 pupils. It was expanded and usually accommodated half again that many. An 1849 report of "the literary department of the Institution" by P. P. Brown, Jr. shows an average attendance of about 55. Of this number, Brown said:

5 studied Algebra;
 11 studied Emerson's arithmetic, 3d Part;
 24 studied Emerson's arithmetic, 2d Part;
 18 studied Emerson's arithmetic, 1st Part;
 22 studied Fowle's Geography;
 5 read in McGuffey's Fourth Reader;
 30 read in McGuffey's Third Reader;
 7 read in McGuffey's First Reader;
 4 read in Webster's Spelling Book;
 54 attended to writing; all to spelling;
 7 were day scholars;
 6 were beneficiaries;
 2 were boarded by their parents.

Today a large mound -- sprinkled with bricks and chunks of concrete, and dotted with young trees -- is all that remains of the once impressive Armstrong buildings. Some distance away is the head of the school's cistern. Still farther away, in the trees near the stream, is the old cemetery, its handful of large stones maintaining a kind of aloof dignity behind their iron fence, despite an unkempt jumble of weeds, brush, and twisting grapevines.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1845-1919

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" 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 Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Indians of the Five Civilized Tribes had, generally, a real interest in schools. It is quite probable that their children had better educational facilities during the decade or two preceding the Civil War than did those of whites on the western frontier. In 1842 the Choctaw National Council provided for creation of a comprehensive system of education. By 1848 nine boarding schools supported by tribal funds were in operation. Most of these were operated, under contract, by a mission board that furnished teachers and paid part of their salaries. (It might be well to keep in mind that it is somewhat difficult at times to distinguish -- exception in the case of the Cherokee Nation schools -- between mission schools subsidized by tribal funds and tribal schools largely controlled by the missionaries.) By 1860 the Choctaws reported over 500 children enrolled in their day schools, an additional 400 in boarding schools.

Armstrong Academy (located nearly midway between Fort Towson and Fort Washita, about 3 miles northeast of present Bokchito) was one of the most important of these schools. (Indeed, it ranks as one of the most important educational efforts of all Indian Territory.) Because its main building served as Choctaw National Capitol, from 1863 until 1883, its political influence on the tribe is also noteworthy.

The school opened December 2, 1845. It was named for the popular Choctaw agent, William Armstrong. The Rev. Ramsey D. Potts, a Baptist missionary, was put in charge. The school was closed by the Civil War and the site, renamed Chata Tamaha (Choctaw Town), served as the tribe's capital. Sometimes referred to as the Confederate capital of Indian Territory, it was the meeting place of the Grand Council of the "United Nations of the Indian Territory" of which the Choctaw Nation was one of the six member tribes. Armstrong reopened in 1882, under the Presbyterians, and continued as a school for orphan boys until it burned in 1919.

One interesting feature of the education scene at Armstrong (and elsewhere in the Choctaw Nation) deserves mention. It was the "neighborhood" or "Saturday and Sunday" schools. Pupils, many of

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dale, Edward Everett, and Wardell, Morris L., History of Oklahoma, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1948, pp. 153-154.
 Foreman, Grant, The Five Civilized Tribes, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934, pp. 70, 77, 83.
 Moffitt, James W., "Early History of Armstrong Academy," The Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. 21 (1943), pp. 88-91.
 Ruth, Kent, et al., Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956, pp. 377-378.
 Wright, Muriel H., A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951, pp. 106, 108.

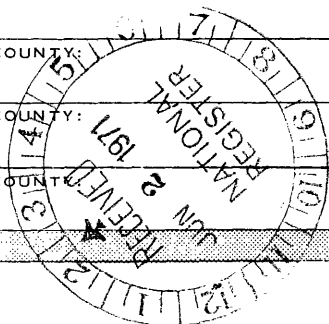
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: c. 20 acres

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



170771
HL

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Kent Ruth, Deputy

ORGANIZATION: Oklahoma Historical Society DATE: April 1971

STREET AND NUMBER: Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN: Oklahoma City STATE: Oklahoma CODE: 40

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>[Signature]</u></p> <p>Title <u>Liaison Officer for Okla</u></p> <p>Date <u>MAY 5 1971</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>[Signature]</u> Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date <u>4/13/72</u></p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>[Signature]</u> Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date <u>APR 13 1972</u></p>
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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No. 8. Significance

Armstrong Academy

them adults of both sexes, lived at home, came to the academy for weekend classes in reading, writing and arithmetic in the Choctaw language, along with religious instructions. On Friday evening wagons bearing whole families could often be seen converging on the campground in a clearing at the school. Teachers, often young ladies, were usually Choctaws who had gone through the mission schools, were giving of their ability to benefit their people. The Rev. Alfred Wright, who worked for many years at Wheelock Academy, reported that the desire for education was so great that within the sphere of his ministerial work alone there were seven of these Saturday/Sabbath school, some attended by from 25 to 50 students.

