

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Whiteford (Price) Site

14SA1

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

secondary roads south of old U.S. 40 (Pacific St.)

—NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Salina

east of  
 VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Kansas

CODE

20

First

COUNTY

Saline

CODE

169

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Price Brothers - c/o Mr. John Price

STREET &amp; NUMBER

631 East Ash

CITY, TOWN

Salina

VICINITY OF

STATE

Kansas

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Saline County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Salina,

STATE

Kansas

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Kansas Archeological Survey

DATE

—FEDERAL  STATE —COUNTY —LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Archeological Dept., Kansas State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Topeka, Kansas 66612

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

---

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

Whiteford (Price) Site -

The Whiteford (Price) site is located about four miles east of Salina, Kansas, on the north bank of the Smoky Hill River about a mile and a half west of the Smoky Hill's confluence with the Saline River. The site is actually situated on the broad alluvial floodplain between the two rivers which meander freely in this area. The relationship between the site and the rivers may have been different when the site was occupied; for the rivers' positions are certain to have changed over the past several hundred years. Hardwoods bordering both of the river channels along with the fertile alluvial bottomland, about 4 miles wide in the vicinity of the site, provide an environment well-suited to support a considerable population of semi-sedentary horticulturalists.

The site basically consists of a village area and an associated cemetery of the culture known as the Smoky Hill Aspect dating from about 1000 to 1350 A.D. In 1936, twelve or fifteen low inconspicuous elevations representing house mounds were visible at the site (Wedel, 1959), but by 1959 only eleven were evident. Because of continuous cultivation in this area, most of these house mounds are no longer apparent from a surface examination today. It is probable that when the site was occupied, there were many more than the 12 or 15 mounds evident in 1936, for cultivation which occurred between the date of occupation and the 1930's surely must have destroyed some. Today, these house sites, which can no longer be identified by the presence of mounds, are located instead by concentrations of wattle clay, broken mussel shells, flint chips, bones, and occasional potsherds brought to the surface by plowing. Unfortunately, this plowing of course tends to disturb the upper levels of the site.

The site was excavated from 1936 to 1940 by G. L. Whiteford and his family. Although Mr. Whiteford was an amateur, he was aware of the need for careful excavation and, for its time, his work was well-done, approximating that of many professionals of the 1930's. The Whiteford family excavated one house site and cleared a portion of another in the village area, but much of their effort involved the investigation of a large portion of the burial area. These excavations will be described in the following paragraphs.

The excavated house, rectangular in outline with rounded corners, measured 30 by 32 feet. The floor of the house lay 18 inches below the ground surface. A central fireplace, four post molds which held the main roof supports around the fireplace, numerous other post molds which may have held poles to serve as secondary supports for the roof, four deeply worn mealing slabs, and five cache pits were among the features present within this house. The second house, which was only about half excavated, appeared to have similar dimensions and also contained a central hearth, three cache pits, and post molds.

The excavations of these houses have yielded numerous artifacts. The potsherds unearthed were gray with gravel inclusions and cord-roughened exteriors; they represented mainly large, full-bodied jars. Other ceramic objects found include two rudely modeled items and a fragment of a human effigy pipe. The latter probably was imported and may have come from near Spiro in the Arkansas River Valley of eastern

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input 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 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    Approx. 1000-1350 A.D.    BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### Whiteford (Price) Site - Significance

The Whiteford (Price) Site, located just west of Salina, Kansas, is a prehistoric village and cemetery representative of the Smoky Hill Culture which probably dates to about 1000 to 1350 A.D. The site offers archeologists an opportunity to study cultural development within the Central Plains Tradition as well as contacts between the Plains inhabitants and those of adjacent areas. The village contains 12 to 15 known house sites, only a few of which have been excavated. The burial area contains the remains of over 140 individuals which have been left in situ with their accompanying grave goods. Protected by a building, the burial area is operated as a commercial enterprise by the owners of the site, who charge a small admission fee.

#### DISCUSSION

The Whiteford (Price) Site is representative of the Smoky Hill Aspect of the Central Plains Tradition. Smoky Hill settlements, as illustrated by Whiteford, are small, unfortified villages situated near small creeks. Smoky Hill houses are generally square to rectangular with four main roof supports around a central hearth and are built either directly on the sod-stripped surface or only slightly into it; they are not true pit houses. The grit-tempered, cord-marked pottery jars and other artifacts of stone and bone from the site, as described in the preceding section (#7) of this report, likewise illustrate the Smoky Hill cultural assemblage.

The presence of the Whiteford burial area adds another important aspect to the trait list, for the Smoky Hill burial complex is not well known from other locations. The large number of burials may include inhabitants from various neighboring communities. Wedel (1959, p. 564) points out that the burials at Whiteford may or may not be entirely representative of other manifestations of Smoky Hill culture. In any event, if the Whiteford burial area is considered representative, then primary flexed burials accompanied by occasional grave goods may be added to the culture's trait inventory.

Many questions remain unanswered about the Smoky Hill Aspect and indeed about the Central Plains Tradition in general. The Central Plains Tradition consists of three cultures of semi-sedentary, semi-horticultural, pottery-making people: the Nebraska Aspect of northeast Nebraska and eastern Kansas, the Upper Republican Aspect of western Nebraska and Kansas, and the Smoky Hill Aspect of central Kansas. Although these three subdivisions have similar traits, Wedel (1959) believes that Smoky Hill represents a more generalized culture and may be ancestral to the other two.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Wedel, Waldo, An Introduction to Kansas Archeology, BAE Bulletin 174, 1959.

Whiteford, G. L., Prehistoric Indian Excavations in Saline County, Kansas, Consolidated-Salina, 1937.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 135 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION  
Lat./Long. (UTM not available)

A 38° 51' 57" / 97° 31' 34"  
 B 38° 51' 36" / 97° 31' 12"  
 C 38° 51' 12 1/2" / 97° 31' 28-1/2"  
 D 38° 51' 46" / 97° 32' 3-1/2"

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Francine Weiss, Archeologist, Landmark Review Project

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, NPS

DATE

Visited: Nov. 1975

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street, N.W.

TELEPHONE

202-523-5465

CITY OR TOWN

Washington, D.C.

STATE

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Designated: July 19, 1964  
 Boundary Certified: March 7, 1979  
 DATE: March 7, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

4/24/79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE (1)

Whiteford (Price) Site - Description

Oklahoma or from the Red River Valley in southwestern Arkansas. Stone objects unearthed include: projectile points, scrapers, knives, sandstone mealing slabs, several mullers, sandstone shaft-smoothers, celts and hammerstones. Objects of bone were also recovered including several fragments of bison scapula digging tools, a bison ulna punch, a gouge or scraper, awls, and tubes or cylindrical beads. Although shell artifacts were not very plentiful, many unworked freshwater mussel shells were found; a few perforated shells and some shell disk beads and possible shell pendants were excavated.

Surrounded by the alluvial bottoms on which the houses are located, the burial ground was situated on a low sandy knoll about 600 or 700 yards from the Smoky Hill River. The remains of about 140 individuals ranging in depth from 3 to 34 inches were uncovered by Whiteford. Most of the burials were primary. The skeletons were generally flexed with their heads pointing south. Grave goods often accompanied the burials. Although most of these artifacts echoed the types found at the house sites, there were several noteworthy differences. Most of the pottery was the gray, grit-tempered, cord-marked ware common to the village area, but one large sherd was of a dark gray fine paste with a polished exterior decorated by incising and wedge-shaped punctation. Some of the incised lines contained the remains of a red pigment. This sherd is not native to the Salina area and most probably represents an import; it is similar in type to wares of the Spiro Focus in eastern Oklahoma and of the Haley Focus in southwestern Arkansas about 250 to 300 miles south and east of the site. Stone artifacts from the burial area include: points, knives, a celt, a mealing slab, and a piece of turquoise. Some of the knives were larger and more finely made than the utilitarian types from the village area and probably represented artifacts which had been prepared especially for burial. Shell artifacts, more common than stone in the graves, included numerous disk beads, pendants, and other ornaments. Bone objects were rarely included in the burials; a bone needle and turtle carapaces were among the items noted. Charred corn was also found in the burial area.

*The site was reexamined in the summer of 1970 when the Kansas State Historical Society trenched through an area near the burial ground. The Society had hoped to uncover the remains of an earth lodge but was unsuccessful in its attempt.*

The site is currently in good condition. Although, as previously mentioned, much of the village area is under cultivation and has been for many years, sub-surface remains of house sites, pits, etc. may still be intact enough for worthwhile future excavation. The 140 or so burials have been left in situ along with the accompanying grave goods. Bill Bass at Kansas State University has recently reexamined the skeletal material. In the 1930's, a preservative had been put on the

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE (2)

Whiteford (Price) Site - Description

bones, darkening them. Although better preservatives are available now, the Whitefords used what was available to them at the time, and the bones are still in good condition today despite their dark, shiny color. A building has been constructed over this cemetery to insure the preservation of the burials, and the Price brothers, the current owners of the property, operate this exhibit as a commercial enterprise. They charge admission for entry into the exhibit area and sell items related to Indian history or prehistory in the lobby area. A residence and several other small buildings are included within landmark boundaries but do not contribute to the national significance of the property.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE (1)

Whiteford (Price) Site - Significance

The origins of the Central Plains Tradition and, more specifically, if Wedel's theory proves correct, of the Smoky Hill Aspect, are not yet well understood. A general analysis of the traits indicates affinities with eastern and south-eastern cultures. In this light, the recovery of the sherd reminiscent of pottery of the Spiro focus of eastern Oklahoma and the Haley focus of southwestern Arkansas become important, for this sherd provides direct evidence for contacts between the Smoky Hill culture and other cultures to the south. Wedel (1959) suggests that the distribution of Smoky Hill sites may actually extend from central Kansas toward the southeast.

It thus becomes clear that many questions remain unanswered about the Smoky Hill Aspect. Its geographical distribution, its origins and descendents, its relationship to adjacent cultures--especially those to the east and southeast, and its relationship to the other cultures of the Central Plains Tradition are among the problems requiring additional research. The Whiteford (Price) Site stands as one site which has contributed some information to these various aspects. Further excavation at Whiteford and other Smoky Hill Sites will hopefully shed additional light on these problems.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE (1)

Whiteford (Price) Site -

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Refer to the accompanying USGS map (Salina, Kansas, Quad - 7.5') for a clarification of the boundary description. Beginning at a point about 1650 feet south of the north section line of Sec. 3, T.14S., R.2W., and about 1800 feet west of the east section line of said Sec. 3, the boundary proceeds generally southwest (S67°W) for about 2100 feet to its intersection with the northeast bank of the Smoky Hill River, then generally southeast along the northeast bank of the Smoky Hill River to its intersection with the south section line of said Sec. 3, then east along the south section line of Sec. 3 for about 250 feet to its intersection with the northwest bank of the Smoky Hill River, then generally northeast along the northwest bank of the Smoky Hill River to its intersection with the east section line of Sec. 3, and then generally northwest (N38°W) for about 2750 feet to the beginning point.

This boundary has been drawn to enclose the burial and village areas. (Refer to aerial photo.) It has been extended to include nearby scatterings of cultural material which may represent house sites. Basically, the Smoky Hill River forms the southeastern and southwestern boundaries of the landmark, for the river delineates the southeastern and southwestern limits of the village area. The northern limit of the landmark has been based on the known extent of the cemetery, and the eastern and northeastern boundaries have been based on the known extent of the village area. The scatterings of cultural debris possibly representing house sites of the Smoky Hill Aspect often seem to be found adjacent to the river and in a number of cases are known to occur at an elevation of about 1200 feet. Surface examinations have indicated a possibility for recovering the remains of at least one such house site along the river south and west of the burial area, and the northwestern landmark boundary has been drawn to reflect this possibility.

There are a number of these small scatterings of cultural material throughout this area of the Smoky Hill River, within several miles of the landmark but only those immediately adjacent to the Whiteford (Price) village and burial areas have been included within the landmark designation. It is possible that at some time a survey of the Smoky Hill River Valley might reveal a large amount of these small scatterings along with several somewhat larger concentrations of debris similar to the Whiteford (Price) Site. At such a time, a National Register nomination stressing the settlement patterns of the Smoky Hill Aspect might be appropriate. However, the original landmark designation applied only to the Whiteford Site as one village and burial area of the Smoky Hill Aspect, and this view of the landmark has resulted in the accompanying boundary.