United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received MAY 2 4 1984 date entered JUN 22 1984

state Oklahoma code 04.0 county McIntosh code 09 3. Classification Category Ownership Status Present Use agriculture commercial park work in progress educational site Public Acquisition N/A in process N/A being considered no military other: 4. Owner of Property Category Ownership Status Present Use agriculture commercial park work in progress educational entertainment religious work in progress entertainment religious object N/A being considered yes: restricted yes: unrestricted industrial industrial industrial military other: 4. Owner of Property Street & number P.O. Box 895 City, town Vernon N/A vicinity of state Oklahoma 7487 5. Location of Legal Description Courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of County Clerk Street & number McIntosh County Courthouse City, town Eufaula state Oklahoma 744 6. Representation in Existing Surveys Category McIntosh County Courthouse determined eligible? yes addressed and the property been determined eligible?	<u> 1. Nam</u>	ie			
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Condition		Check one	Check one
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Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

7. Description

The Vernon Post Office is a single story, detached, commercial building in Vernon, Oklahoma. Constructed of random ashlar, the rectangular building has a gabled roof with horizontal wooden boards on the west and east gables and attenuated rafters on the north and south.

The front or west side of the building has a central wooden framed entrance door. The door has wooden panels and a single window light. Either side of the door is a fixed wooden framed window with three lights. Both the door and windows have plain stone block lintels.

The north and south sides of the building have no windows or doors. The east or rear side of the building has two small 1/1 fixed windows with iron window grilles. The east gable boards continue down in the center to just above the wooden door frame. The door has wooden panels, but is no longer in use.

Although the wood gable ends, door frames, and door need paint, the basic structure retains its integrity. The U.S. Post Office flagpole stands approximately 6' from southwest corner of the building. A large deciduous tree provides shade for the northeast corner. There is a gravel parking lot located in front of building for post office patrons.

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1799 1800–1899 X 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture architecture artX commerce communications	community planning	g landscape architectur law literature military music	science sculpture social/ humanitarian
Specific dates	1920-21 1934	Builder/Architect B	ill Young and C.F. Do:	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Rock Front is historically significant because it is the only remaining commercial building in the all-black town of Vernon, Oklahoma.

The all-black town of Vernon was founded in 1895 in Indian Territory as a result of the all-black town movement promoted by Edwin P. McCabe, former attorney general of Kansas and black separatist leader. Located in McIntosh County about ten miles southeast of Dustin, an all-white town, Vernon contained several black businesses shortly after statehood in 1907. Vernon served as a rural market center for the surrounding agricultural community and its population became one of the largest of the twenty-nine all-black towns founded between 1850 and 1907. The 1950 United States Census listed Vernon with 600 inhabitants.

Built in 1920, The Rock Front is the only original commercial structure still intact in Vernon. It has served the all-black community for the past 63 years with a variety of commercial enterprises including its original use as a grocery and dry goods store, later as a pool hall and tavern, and its present use as the United States Post Office for Vernon.

By 1960 Vernon's population had decreased to 150 and the 1970 United States Census records indicate that Vernon had ceased to exist. Contrary to government records, Vernon remains on the Oklahoma Highway map and retains its post office.

The Rock Front has been a significant focal point for Vernon and stands as an historic monument to the once-thriving business district in this historic all-black town founded almost 90 years ago.

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1. Form Prepared	Ву	
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For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Beth Grown

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:
Chief of Registration