

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Oklahoma</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Oklahoma</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER <b>71.1.40.0001</b>	DATE <b>1/25/71</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**"Ringing the Wild Horse" Site**

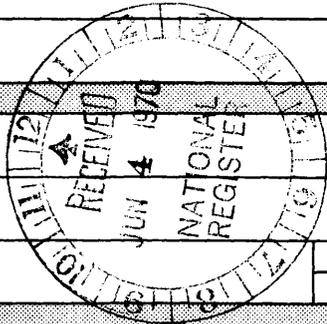
AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**W/2 Sec. 17 and E/2 Sec. 18, T 13 N, R 1 W**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Jones (c. 4 m. NW)**

STATE <b>Oklahoma</b>	CODE <b>35</b>	COUNTY: <b>Oklahoma</b>	CODE <b>109</b>
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <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 type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____			

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Thomas G. Kendall, Jr. (Sec. 17)      C. Oldham (Sec. 18)**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**610 N. W. 27th Street      401 S. Fifth Street**

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Oklahoma City</b>	STATE: <b>Oklahoma</b>	CODE <b>35</b>
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

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

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Oklahoma County Courthouse**

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Oklahoma City</b>	STATE: <b>Oklahoma</b>	CODE <b>35</b>
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**"Washington Irving Trail in Oklahoma"**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1967**     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Oklahoma Historical Society**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Historical Building**

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Oklahoma City</b>	STATE: <b>Oklahoma</b>	CODE <b>35</b>
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

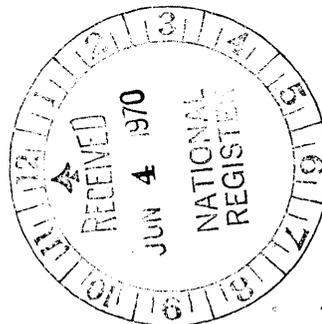
Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Obviously, no physical evidence of a stampede -- even one involving both wild horses, wild buffaloes and "wild" troopers - could survive after nearly a century and a half. Yet it is a curious fact that here in the shadow of a major city (indeed, within its corporate limits) the scene as Irving saw it could easily be recreated.\* The visitor able to ignore momentarily the dirt road at his feet, and the two fences enclosing it, can stand here with his back to Irving's "line of rugged hills" and see before him a pleasantly pastoral setting virtually unmarred by works of man. The North Canadian to the south is still "fringed with cottonwood trees" and the fields on either side of the dusty road are, especially in spring, like "a green lawn." A "beautiful meadow" to Washington Irving in 1832, it remains that today, a beautiful meadow guarded by tree-covered red hills on the north and the meandering Canadian on the south.



\*No one today, of course, can pinpoint the exact spot from which the Irving party first saw the wild horses and buffaloes, nor outline that section of Nine Mile Flat covered by the aborted ringing operation. For that reason the "site" mentioned here is a small one - chosen primarily to serve as an observation point and located largely for the convenience of both visitors and landowners. Embracing five acres, it lies astride the section-line road on the half-mile line between Sections 17 and 18.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

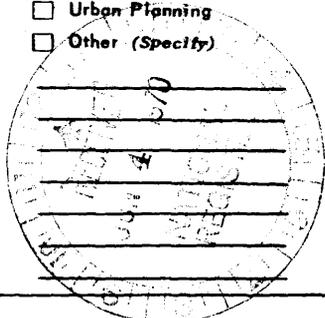
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **Oct. 25, 1832**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input 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 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 type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input checked="" 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

Many a site - or event - is significant, not in itself, but through the fortuity of having a notable chronicler. This is particularly true of that section of Nine Mile Flat beside the North Canadian River (northeast of present Oklahoma City) that witnessed, on Oct. 25, 1832, one of history's best known roundups of wild horses. Official chronicler was Washington Irving. And thanks to his spirited account of the frontier gala - and an assist from McGuffey - "Ringling the Wild Horse" has been a part of the cultural background of countless thousands of readers of literature for almost a century and a half. (The account, of course, is a chapter of his travel book, A Tour on the Prairies, a best seller of its day and still both entertaining and enlightening, especially for the perceptive view it gives of what is now Oklahoma when it was still a virtual wilderness.)

Washington Irving, with the Englishman Charles J. Latrobe, Count Albert de Pourtales of Switzerland, and Henry L. Ellworth, a government emissary, left Fort Gibson on the Arkansas River October 10, soon caught up with a detachment of Rangers on a scouting expedition into the central part of present Oklahoma. They completed the trip with the mounted soldiers. Both Irving and Latrobe subsequently wrote accounts of their experiences. While the junket had its hardships and dangers, it was not without its moments of fun, too. And October 25 provided one such pleasantry.

"About ten in the morning," Irving writes, "we came to where this line of rugged hills swept down into a valley, through which flowed the north fork of the Red River [Canadian]. A beautiful meadow about half a mile wide, enamelled with yellow autumnal flowers, stretched for two or three miles along the foot of the hills, bordered on the opposite side by the river, whose banks were fringed with cottonwood trees, the bright foliage of which refreshed and delighted the eye, after being wearied by the contemplation of monotonous wastes of brown forest."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Irving, Washington, A Tour on the Prairies, annotated by Joseph B. Thoburn and George C. Wells (Harlow, 1955)  
 Latrobe, Charles Joseph, The Rambler in Oklahoma, annotated by Muriel H. Wright and George H. Shirk (Harlow, 1955)  
 Shirk, George H., "A Tour On The Prairies Along the Washington Irving Trail in Oklahoma," The Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XLV (Autumn 1967)

*MS  
UTM  
HF*

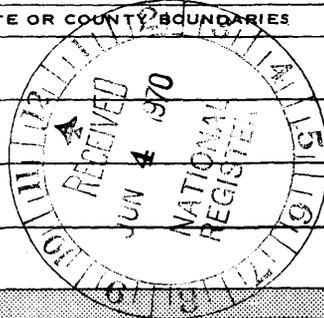
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	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	° ' "	° ' "		35° 36' 07"	97° 20' 01"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **5 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Kent Ruth**

ORGANIZATION: **Oklahoma Historical Society** DATE: **May 1970**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Historical Building**

CITY OR TOWN: **Oklahoma City** STATE: **Oklahoma** CODE: **35**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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:

National  State  Local

Name George H. Shirk

Title Liaison officer for Oklahoma

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Ernest A. Cannally  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

**JAN 25 1971**

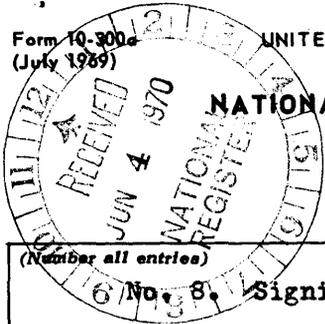
Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:  
William H. Huntley  
 Keeper of The National Register

**DEC 22 1970**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

STATE Oklahoma	
COUNTY Oklahoma	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71.40.0001	DATE 1/25/71



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(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

No. 8. Significance

The scene was set, the actors awaiting for their cues. To the right [west] "we beheld a troop of wild horses, quietly grazing on a green lawn . . ." And to the left [east] - "some buffaloes, some feeding, others reposing and ruminating among the high rich herbage."

The plan was a sound one. Pack animals were to be secured in the woods out of sight. Then separate groups of the men were to deploy themselves through the trees, spreading out until they had surrounded the grazing horses. This accomplished, they would start showing themselves, spooking the horses first one way, then the other, gradually tiring them while keeping the circle intact. Finally, the men could mount their own fresh animals and capture the wild horses with relative ease. What happened, alas, was something else again.

Unluckily, Irving notes, "we had our wild-fire Jack-o'-lantern little Frenchman [Tonish] to deal with." Unable to contain himself until the ring was complete, "he broke out of the covert of woods, and dashed furiously across the plain in pursuit . . . This put an end to all system. The half-breeds and half a score of rangers joined in the chase. Away they all went over the green bank; in a moment or two the wild horses . . . came thundering down the valley, with Frenchman, half-breeds, and rangers galloping and yelling like devils behind them. It was in vain that the line drawn across the valley attempted to check and turn back the fugitives. They were too hotly pressed by their pursuers; in their panic they dashed through the line, and clattered down the plain. The whole troop joined in the headlong chase, some of the rangers without hats or caps, their hair flying about their ears, others with handkerchiefs tied around their heads." The buffaloes were stampeded in turn and the whole flat became a rolling mass of men and animals . . . "a promiscuous throng" that surged along "pell-mell, hurry-scurry, wild buffalo, wild horse, wild huntsman, with clang and clatter, and whoop and halloo, that made the forests ring."

Such is Irving's account of a notable, if not outstandingly successful try at "Ringing the Wild Horse." The color and excitement was enough to merit space in McGuffey's Reader - and a niche in the lively imagination of several generations of American youth. It would also seem sufficient to deserve suitable recognition even today.