KETCH RANCH
(Fort Sill Military Reservation, Building 7775)
Medicine Park
Comanche County
Oklahoma

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001
KETCH RANCH HOUSE
(Fort Sill Military Reservation, Building 7775)

Location:

Medicine Park, Oklahoma, vicinity. The Ketch Ranch House is located on the U.S. Army’s Fort Sill Military Reservation. It is situated in the eastern half of the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 28, Township 3N, Range 13W on the Mount Scott 7.5-minute U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangle. The Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinates are Zone 14, 3839280N; 540080E. The Ketch Ranch House rests on the second stream bank terrace immediately east of Blue Beaver Creek at approximately 1470’ above mean sea level. Major landforms near the ranch house include Thompson Hill one and a quarter miles to the northeast, Mount Sherman two miles to the southwest, and Ketch Lake one mile to the west. Medicine Park is located approximately six miles to the northeast.

The Ketch Ranch House is designated Building 7775, Fort Sill Military Reservation. The building and the subject of this study and its site have been incorporated by update into the site record for archaeological site 34-Cm-358. The updated site record form is available at the Oklahoma Archaeological Survey and is not provided here because of site confidentiality concerns. As updated in 2008, site 34-Cm-358 comprises three activity loci in Sections 27, 28, and 29 of Township 3 North, Range 13 West. Locus 2 is the Ketch Ranch House that served as the main house for Frank and Ada May Ketch and is the subject of this documentation study. It is in the eastern half of the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 28, Township 3 North, Range 13 West, and was designated as Ketch Dwelling 2 by the U.S. Army in 1941. Locus 1 is in the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 27, Township 3 North, Range 13 West. It is the originally recorded archaeological site that had a barn, house, smokehouse, springhouse, cellar and other features. It was identified as Ketch Dwelling 1 by the U.S. Army in 1941. Stone foundations of some of these buildings are extant. Locus 3 is the dam constructed by Frank Ketch and the resulting Ketch Lake. As updated in 2008, locus 3 of archaeological site 34-Cm-358 is in Section 29, Township 3 North, Range 13 West. All three loci of site 34-Cm-358 are associated historically with Frank and Ada May Ketch.
Present Owner/Occupant: U.S. Army, Fort Sill Military Reservation.

Present Use: The Ketch Ranch House is designated as Building 7775 of the Fort Sill Military Reservation. It is currently unoccupied.

Significance: The Ketch Ranch House is significant as the main house and only standing structure associated with the Ketch Ranch, a locally prominent ranch during the 1920s–1941 in Comanche County, Oklahoma. It also is significant as an example of the Wichita Mountains building tradition applied to a rustic Craftsman bungalow working ranch residence/vacation home during the 1920s. The use of the Wichita Mountains cobblestone tradition for the working ranch and vacation home of Frank and Ada May Ketch is significant for the association that it lent its owners to the social elite who frequented the nearby popular resort community of Medicine Park and the Wichita Mountains and refuge, both popular vacation locations of the period.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1924. The year 1924 is based on U.S. War Department real property accountability records that list 1924 as the year of construction for the house.¹ May 1923 is the date of purchase of the ranch property by Ada May Ketch.²


3. Original and Subsequent Owners, Occupants, Uses: The Ketch Ranch was the working ranch and vacation home of Frank and Ada Ketch from 1923 to 1941. The Ketch Ranch House documented here was the main house where Mr. and Mrs. Ketch resided during their ranch visits.³ In 1941, the U.S. government acquired the acreage and buildings of the Ketch Ranch via court order and eminent domain for a western expansion of the Fort Sill Military Reservation. Upon acquisition by the U.S. government, the building became Building 765. The house was renumbered at some point to become Building 7775. Following acquisition, the house was used as a non-commissioned officer’s (NCO) club for several years. From approximately the 1960s to the late 1970s, the Ketch Ranch House was used by the Girl Scouts of America as part of a summer campsite. Since the Girl Scout tenure, the house has been vacant.

¹ “Ketch Ranch Building Cards,” Fort Sill Museum, various dates.
² “Land Record 181-301,” Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK, 1923.
³ Dr. Lawrence L. Ketch (grandson of Frank Ketch), in discussion with Marjorie Nowick, September 6, 2006.
4. **Builder, Contractor, Suppliers:** Not known.

5. **Original Plans and Construction:** No construction or design documents for any of the Ketch Ranch buildings exist. Historic photographs during the period of occupation by Frank Ketch show the house as it is today. There have been no substantial changes to the building or its landscaping. The historic photographs show the cobblestone house with wraparound porch, lawns, and cobblestone landscape features.

6. **Alterations and Additions:**

   There have been no substantial alterations or additions to the Ketch Ranch House. The U.S. Army accountability records document the building condition in 1941. The Army performed repairs and renovations in 1942, and the electrical generator was upgraded in 1943.

**B. Historical Context:**

**The Wichita Mountains**

Ketch Ranch is situated in the Wichita Mountain Range in southwestern Oklahoma. The range covers approximately 1,500 square miles and includes parts of Caddo, Comanche, Kiowa, Jackson, Greer, and Tillman counties. The mountains get their name from the Wichita tribe that inhabited the area until the late eighteenth century, but humans have inhabited the mountains for many millennia.

The Wichita Indians came to be closely associated with the Wichita Mountains. In their creation myths, the Wichita people believe their ancestors were born from the mountains, which were given to them as part of their heritage by the Great Spirit. Over time, the mountains have become sacred to the Wichitas and other Plains Indian tribes.\(^4\)

The U.S. government recognized the Wichita Mountains as a unique resource in the early twentieth century. In 1901, President McKinley established a forest reserve in the southeastern mountains by excluding 59,020 acres of land from settlement during the opening of the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache reservation for homesteading. In 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt redesignated the forest reserve, converting it to a national game preserve by executive order. The Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge supports a variety of native plant and animal species, including pronghorn, bison, wild turkeys, elk, and white-tailed deer. Currently, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers the refuge to showcase the natural habitat and fauna of the Wichita Mountains and southern Great Plains. The Ketch Ranch bordered the wildlife refuge, but subsequent agreements blurred that border for the benefit of wildlife. In 1928, one year after Frank Ketch received one-half interest in Ada Ketch’s 5,000-plus acre ranch, the Ketches leased all of the land in five sections and three partial sections to the Oklahoma Fish and Game Commission for use by the game refuge. The killing of animals was prohibited on Ketch land, and the Ketches were supposed to provide water and cultivate grain crops appropriate for wildlife.\(^5\)

---


As the U.S. became more urban and industrialized in the late nineteenth century, upper class Americans began to appreciate nature and recognized the need for outdoor recreation. As the century drew to a close, social movements focused on the benefits of physical well-being and the natural environment. An emerging middle class and an increase in travel for pleasure contributed to the construction of grand hotels and resort destinations across the country. Areas noted for their therapeutic climates or natural resources, such as mineral springs, grew from sleepy settlements to health resorts and attracted visitors from across the nation. By 1900, more than 600 resort spas, lodges, and hotels had opened in the United States, many in the arid southwestern United States.

It is in this context that southwestern Oklahoma became a regional destination for travelers seeking wilderness and therapeutic waters. The Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, with its abundance of wildlife and arid climate, became a popular destination for rustic leisure. The Medicine Park Resort Hotel opened in 1908 as a health resort and by the 1920s had evolved into a summer vacation resort drawing an elite clientele from nearby states. Medicine Park was particularly popular with residents of Texas and Oklahoma. The nearby Ketch Ranch served as a private getaway for Frank and Ada Ketch and their business associates, much the same way Medicine Park served its elite clientele. Ketch Ranch, then, was essentially an extension of the Wichita Mountain resorts, particularly Medicine Park, showcasing Ketch's collection of horses and outdoor leisure shared with other members of the social elite.

Ranching in Southwestern Oklahoma
The end of the Civil War marked an upsurge in industrial growth in the northeastern United States and an accompanying need for agricultural output to support the increasing number of urban dwellers. Texas cattlemen took advantage of the wild herds of cattle in Texas and the southern plains and drove cattle north through Oklahoma to railheads in Kansas. Both the Western Trail and the Chisholm Trail passed through western Oklahoma, not far from what became Comanche County, Oklahoma. The federal government established Fort Sill in 1869 to protect interests in the region. The open range lasted only a couple of decades, and by the 1880s, ranching required only short cattle drives to railheads. Settlement had been restricted in Indian Territory, but with the passage of the Dawes Act in 1887, the federal government converted tribal lands into private allotments, opening up Indian Territory to settlement. After the chaotic land runs of the late 1880s and early 1890s, the territorial governor attempted a new method of settling Kiowa-Comanche-Apache lands. The land was divided into two districts and in the summer of 1901 officials held a lottery drawing for lands. The El Reno and Fort Sill land offices each drew 6,500 names. Winners then claimed the land of their choice and filed the claim. The lottery spurred immediate development in southwestern Oklahoma and a dramatic growth of population in the Lawton area.

---


Lawton was established as the seat of Comanche County in 1901. Settlement in Comanche County remained sparse for years. By 1912, Oklahoma split Comanche County, naming the southern half “Cotton” County.

U.S. agricultural census records give only a limited view of Comanche County’s ranch history. During the 1920s, although the agricultural economy declined, the number of farms operated by managers increased. For the Ketch property, this trend manifested in acquiring a ranch and hiring a manager to run it. By 1940, the number of farms with managers was half the 1930 number—perhaps reflecting the economic decline of the 1930s. The number of owner-operated farms also drastically declined, perhaps reflecting a consolidation of landholdings. This situation is demonstrated by the Ketch acquisition of several parcels, thus creating a large landholding.9,10

Although originally grazed by cattle, Ketch Ranch served another purpose during the Ketch family tenure. The use by the wildlife refuge and personal preference may have limited the ranch’s use for cattle grazing. During the 1920s and 1930s, cattle prices declined, and the Ketch family chose to use the ranch for recreation and entertainment. Several earthen tanks, visible on historic quad maps (see figure 5), reflect the ranch’s use for cattle grazing; however, there are no records that show how extensively cattle grazed Ketch ranch during the 1920s and 1930s. Other wealthy businessmen of that era had ranches primarily for recreational purposes, including Frank Phillips of Bartlesville, Oklahoma.11 Charles Bassett of El Paso, similarly acquired a ranch in the Tularosa Basin for recreational purposes, but was similarly forced out by the U.S. military for an expansion of Fort Bliss.12 One southwestern Oklahoma ranch family, J.B. and C.G. Cronkhite of Watonga, similarly decided that their ranch offered much in the way of recreational opportunities and consequently turned their ranch into a resort, created a lake, and built cabins.13 Although not common, the purchase and development of recreational ranches reflected an interest in recreation and the natural environment.

Wichita Mountains Vernacular Style

The Wichita Mountains Vernacular Style, alternatively known as Cannonball or River Rock Style by Meredith and others, originated in the early twentieth century in the vicinity of the Wichita Mountains just northwest of Lawton, Oklahoma.14,15 The building tradition is characterized by the architectural use of naturally eroded cobblestones of pink or reddish granite from the nearby Wichita range that are arranged predominantly in stack or grid courses.16 The cobblestones are generally 6 to 9 inches in diameter and rounded by natural

---

12 Sally Victor et al., Re-Evaluation of Selected Ranching Sites, Fort Bliss. Prepared for U.S. Army, Fort Bliss, TX.
16 Meredith et al., Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge.
weathering. The cobblestone is used for load-bearing masonry exterior walls as well as for landscape features. Buildings in this style made use of resort-inspired cottage forms and functions and multi-story commercial functions, as well outbuildings. The style was limited geographically to the Wichita Mountains region, including Medicine Park, the wildlife refuge, Meer, and surrounding rural areas. This style is not found in Fort Sill or nearby Lawton despite their proximity, perhaps due to the problem of transporting the stones. The U.S. military architectural traditions of the U.S. Quartermaster Corps largely dictated Fort Sill’s architectural traditions. Limestone was used as a building material at Fort Sill, but generally not the granite cobblestone used in Wichita Mountains Vernacular architecture.

Meredith applied the terms “vernacular” and “vernacular style” to the Wichita Mountains cobblestone tradition. He noted that he was borrowing the term from cultural geographers and folklorists to designate the “adaptation, or innovation of styles and the use of proximate materials by cultural groups.” No connotations about social status of the users of the style were intended by Meredith’s use of the terms. Rather, the style sprang from the dictates of the local environment, where timber was expensive and scarce, and the stones distinctive and plentiful. No information could be found on the evolution of the cobblestone stack or grid course. Possible reasons for the grid arrangement are the striking aesthetic and possible reduction in the weathering of stones and mortar in a built wall. Transport of cobblestones over distances seems to have posed a key limitation in the geographical extent of the style.

The general architectural use of cobblestone during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries spread across the nation, but was limited to small areas where the weathered stones occur naturally, including near San Diego, California, parts of Wisconsin, New York, and Oklahoma. The first use of the cobblestones as a building material in southwestern Oklahoma occurred at more than one location in the Wichita Mountain region at roughly the same time. In 1911, a marker using the cobblestones was erected at Fort Sill, and the Boulder Cabin was constructed in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge with pink cobblestones. Buffalo Lodge was constructed in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in 1913 using structural cobblestone walls. The style remained popular at the refuge during the 1920s, specifically for the Ferguson House which was constructed in 1927 and the Ingram House which was constructed in 1928. During the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed nearly a dozen buildings in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge using the native stone and a standardized cottage form and style.

Local farmers and ranchers used cobblestones on a limited basis, constructing outbuildings and residences. In a few instances, builders used cobblestones for community structures, such

17 McCormick, “River Rock Resort.”
18 Meredith et al., *Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge*, p. 261.
19 Meredith et al., *Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge*.
21 McCormick, “River Rock Resort.”
22 Ibid.
24 McCormick, “River Rock Resort.”
as churches and schools. Early buildings in the style were small, simple and had flat roofs. Later structures of the style were larger forms with gabled roofs and porches. The style drew design cues from the cottage form popular at the end of the nineteenth century and the dawn of the twentieth century. The prevailing cottage form had a simple floor plan, was relatively small, and featured large wraparound porches on two or three sides that often rivaled the interiors in terms of square footage.

Prominent Oklahoma Senator Elmer Thomas and his partner Hal Lloyd, owners of the nearby resort town of Medicine Park, made use of the stacked cobblestone in their enlargement and renovation of the Medicine Park Resort Hotel in 1914, a year after the construction of Buffalo Lodge in the refuge. They also used the stacked cobblestone in resort buildings, private cabins, and extensive landscaping of Medicine Park’s Bath Lake and midway. With spas, casinos, and other tourist attractions, the town became known as a colorful magnet for celebrities such as Will Rogers, Wiley Post, Frank Phillips, Bob Wills, Al Capone, Bonnie and Clyde, Pretty Boy Floyd, Lil Hardin, Colonel Jack Abernathy, Les Brown, Roy Rogers, and Dale Evans, particularly during Prohibition.

Frank and Ada May Ketch and the Ketch Ranch

The Ketch Ranch served as the working ranch/vacation home of Frank and Ada May Ketch from 1924 to 1941, at which time the U.S. government acquired the property for an expansion of Fort Sill. The Ketch ranch location only six miles from the resort town of Medicine Park and the Ketches choice of the same Wichita Mountains cobblestone style as Medicine Park link the Ketch ranch to the social and historical context of the Wichita Mountains leisure resort frequented by the middle class and social elite. At a time when both business associates and social peers sought recreation at nearby Medicine Park, Frank and Ada Ketch entertained at their own ranch in similar style, but with more privacy. Dr. Lawrence L. Ketch, M.D., grandson of Frank and Ada Ketch, recalled that the ranch had cattle, but Ada Ketch’s collection of prized horses were more significant and memorable. Although Medicine Park offered proximity to the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, the Ketch Ranch itself served as a wildlife refuge. The resort and Ketch Ranch focused on the healthful benefits of a rustic outdoor experience.

When Ada May Ketch purchased the land that became Ketch Ranch, it had been owned by a number of different individuals or organizations for a variety of activities including grazing and land speculation. Different quarter sections of the land were bought and sold at different times, and the ranch as a whole did not exist until Frank and Ada Ketch consolidated the many sections. As a result, accounts of the buying and selling of Ketch Ranch may only indicate that parts of the larger ranch were bought and sold, not the entirety of the future Ketch Ranch. This leads to multiple concurrent owners of the Ketch Ranch property and an uneven progression of who may have owned, bought, and sold lands later held by Ketch.

---

25 Meredith et al., *Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge.*
26 McCormick, “River Rock Resort.”
28 McCormick, “River Rock Resort.”
29 Dr. Lawrence L. Ketch (grandson of Frank Ketch), in discussion with Marjorie Nowick, September 6, 2006.
The earliest private owner of land to become the Ketch Ranch was James W. Hadley, four-term congressman and owner of the Lawton Grocery (also known as the Hadley Mercantile). He owned the property beginning in 1901, according to homestead records of Comanche County. He built a two-story frame house on the land that burned in 1902 and apparently was not rebuilt. At that point, Hadley sold the land to his brother-in-law, J.W. Nelson, according to the recollection of Lura Hadley, daughter of James Hadley. It was at this time that James A. Adams leased some of the land for farming corn and raising cattle and hogs, according to the recollection of his daughter Juanita Adams.

At this time, Frank and Ada Ketch were living at her parents’ house in Kingfisher, Oklahoma, and Frank was working as a salesman. By 1902, Frank and Ada had moved to 422 Third Street in Lawton, Oklahoma, where he was listed as being in real estate. On January 19, 1904, daughter Virginia was born to Frank and Ada Ketch. Also in 1904, Frank became a councilman for the First Ward in Lawton.

By November 1904, part of the land that would be Ketch Ranch was sold to William D. and Hattie A. Wesson. However they did not retain ownership long, and by January 1905 the Wessons sold the land to James M. Powers. Powers was president of the National Park Cattle Company and associated with a real estate and farm brokerage owned in part by Frank Ketch, who was still a city councilman at the time. Fulbright, Kennedy, and Fisher leased the mineral rights of the parcels. This is the first association of Frank and Ada Ketch with the Ketch Ranch land and probably the method by which they first became familiar with the land they would later buy and build on. The full chain of title can be found at the end of this report, as figure 51 in the supplemental materials.

By 1909, Frank and Ada Ketch had moved with their daughter to 212 Gore Avenue in Lawton, where Frank worked as a cashier at the Lawton State Bank. That same year, the U.S. General Land Office granted William F. Wesson a patent of some parcels within Section 28, including the area where the Ketch Ranch home would be situated.

In 1910, tragedy struck the Ketch family. Virginia, the first child of Frank and Ada Ketch, contracted measles, and on May 9th she fell unconscious and died at the age of six. She was

32 Ibid.
33 “Pioneers of Comanche County, Juanita Adams Manuscript Collection.” Oklahoma State Historical Society, Manuscripts Division, Undated Box 1, Folder 1 (85.12).
36 Obituary of Virginia Ketch, Lawton Daily News Republican (Lawton, OK), May 10, 1910.
buried in Highland Cemetery in Lawton.\footnote{Obituary of Virginia Ketch, \textit{Lawton Daily News Republican} (Lawton, OK), May 10, 1910.} Until at least 1913, Frank and Ada continued to live in the same residence in Lawton while Frank worked as a cashier at the bank.\footnote{\textit{Lawton City Directory of 1911}, R.L. Polk and Company, 1911.}

In 1913, the National Park Cattle Company entered into a lease with Mr. Charles O. Farrington of Dallas, Texas, for oil, gas, artesian well water, and “other valuable mineral substances for 25 years…” in parts of Section 28 (Ketch Ranch) and Section 29.\footnote{“Lease 148-38,” Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK, 1916.}

Eventually, Frank Ketch left the Lawton State Bank and again became involved in real estate. By 1916, Frank had begun working as a sales manager selling town lots in Ringling, Oklahoma, for Jake Hamon, a well known oil tycoon. Frank must have impressed Hamon with his adept business acumen because by 1918 his occupation listed on his World War I draft registration card was as Hamon’s oil superintendent, a position critical to Hamon’s wealth and business success.\footnote{“Real Estate, Basis of All Values, Most Productive Where Boom Has Not Damaged By Inflation,” \textit{The Oklahoman} (Oklahoma City), May 20, 1916.} Ketch remained a close associate of Jake Hamon until Hamon’s untimely and notorious death in 1919.

In August of 1919, the National Park Cattle Company sold 3,200 acres to S.P. Thornhill for $39,360, including the quarter section where the Ketch Ranch House would be located.\footnote{Ancestry.com, “Frank L. Ketch WWI Draft Registration Card,” World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918 database, \url{www.ancestry.com}, accessed July 2006.} Because of events in Europe, agricultural land prices remained high in the U.S. until 1919, but many farmers and ranchers lost land during the 1920s. The land remained the property of S.P. Thornhill until 1923 when it was taken into receivership by the First National Bank of Lawton on April 18 and acquired by Ada Ketch less than three weeks later on May 8, 1923, for $2,000.\footnote{“Warranty Deed 178-291,” Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK, 1919.} This initial transaction brought what would become Ketch Ranch land into the hands of the Ketch family.

Frank Ketch’s close association to Jake Hamon made national headlines in 1920 and 1921 because of the death of Jake Hamon and trial of the mistress who shot him. Historian Laton McCartney has written that Jake Hamon, chair of the Oklahoma Republican Party and a Republican National Committeeman, purchased delegate votes for Warren Harding as president during the 1920 Republican Convention.\footnote{“Lease 148-38,” Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK, 1916.} In exchange, Jake Hamon was to be appointed Secretary of the Interior by Harding. Reportedly, the married Jake Hamon was breaking off his relationship with his young secretary and mistress Clara Smith Hamon (wife of Jake Hamon’s nephew) to acquire respectability for his new political career. Under disputed circumstances, Clara Smith Hamon shot Jake Hamon at his hotel suite in Ardmore, and he died six days later. As Jake Hamon’s spokesman and administrator of his estate,
Frank Ketch tried to provide respectable public explanations of the event to save Hamon's name, and assisted Clara Smith Hamon in her escape to Mexico. Ketch was charged as "accomplice after the fact" for his role and was called to testify against Clara Smith Hamon at the trial. Ketch's role was revealed. Ultimately the court acquitted Clara Smith Hamon.

The circumstances of the shooting of Jake Hamon, Clara Smith Hamon's escape to Mexico, and the trial of both Ketch and Clara Smith Hamon were chronicled daily in the headlines of national newspapers, with Ketch as the public spokesman for the Hamon family. The event was the 1920-21 equivalent of the O.J. Simpson trial. In an ironic twist, not long after the trial Frank Ketch and Clara Smith Hamon invested in a Hollywood film based on the incident. Clara Smith Hamon moved to Hollywood and played herself in the film.

In his recent book on the history of the influence of the oil industry, McCartney ties Hamon's dealings with Harding to both the wider influence on, if not purchase of, the Harding Presidency by the oil industry and the accompanying Teapot Dome scandal. Ketch's role as an associate of Jake Hamon can be seen as part of the overall national influence of the oil industry and Oklahoma's prominence in it. The oil boom began in northeastern Oklahoma in 1901, and in southern Oklahoma near Ardmore in 1905. By 1920, Oklahoma was producing a billion gallons per year.

Two years after the trial of Clara Smith Hamon, Ada Ketch, wife of Frank Ketch, acquired 3,200 acres of ranch land. Within a year in 1924, according to U.S. Army building records, Frank and Ada Ketch built a number of ranch buildings, including a cobblestone house, a cobblestone smokehouse, a springhouse, a cellar, a barn, and a two-car garage in Section 27, and a house and a two-car garage in Section 28. A few years later, in Section 27, Ketch constructed a water control feature (dam) that resulted in the Ketch Lake, which is still extant today.

By 1926, the Ketch Ranch encompassed 4,020 acres, all in Ada's name. This was also the year that Frank Ketch reportedly moved to Oklahoma City to continue fostering business in the developing oil industry. Despite the move, the Ketches retained the ranch and continued to use it. On April 1, 1927, Ada Ketch sold half of her interest in the ranch to Frank. The ranch encompassed 5,060 acres, more than 1,000 acres larger than its 1926 size. About this time, Frank Ketch built Ketch Lake. Although there were many earthen tanks on Ketch Ranch, built to contain water for livestock, the construction of the dam for the lake points to the recreational use of the land by the Ketch family.

During the 1920s—the booming years of the nearby Medicine Park resort area—the ranch was something of a social spot even though it wasn't the primary residence of the Ketch family. The Ketches spent leisure time there as a family and entertained other prominent

---

51 "Ketch Ranch Building Cards," Fort Sill Museum, various dates.
53 Dr. Lawrence L. Ketch (grandson of Frank Ketch), in discussion with Marjorie Nowick, September 6, 2006.
people from around Oklahoma and Texas. Their social gatherings were reported in local newspapers as well as *The Oklahoman*. Entertainment at the ranch included horseback riding, fishing (probably at Ketch Lake), boating, and other outdoor activities. In one 1929 news account, the ranch was named the “Circle K Ranch,” a name not seen elsewhere. During the years of the 1920s, Frank and Ada Ketch purchased additional acreage and expanded the ranch.

Other more prominent oil men in Oklahoma similarly built ranch getaways during the 1920s. Frank Phillips, founder of Phillips Petroleum, purchased land southwest of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and built a rustic lodge to entertain business associates, politicians, and other social elites. Phillips, one of the wealthiest men in Oklahoma, named his 4,000 acre recreational ranch “Woolaroc,” after the woods, lake, and rocks on the property. Still extant, Woolaroc now houses museum facilities as well as the lodge, and is open to the public.

In 1928, Frank and Ada Ketch leased for one dollar several thousand acres of the ranch to the Oklahoma Fish and Game Commission for use by the nearby game refuge. Under the terms of the lease, if the refuge became overpopulated, the game commission could place overpopulated animals on Ketch land. The agreement prohibited hunting on the ranch and required Ketch to provide water, cover, and appropriate crops for animals.

The social extravagances of the 1920s were soon dampened by the Great Depression. The depression economy of the early 1930s appears to have affected Frank Ketch’s fortunes. By 1932, the Ketches had organized another ranch company, called the Monte Vista Ranch, naming Frank as the president and son Lawrence as secretary. They sold Ketch Ranch to the Monte Vista Ranch enterprise, except for a $21,000 mortgage held by the Business Men’s Assurance Company of Kansas, a grazing lease, and a tax penalty of $1,250 dollars that was two years past due. At this time, the ranch included an additional 440 acres, bringing the ranch total to 5,145 acres. In 1934, financial problems persisted for the Ketches. The Monte Vista Ranch and Ketch family entered into an extension agreement and jointly agreed to pay $17,100 instead of the $21,000 mortgage by 1937 to keep the ranch.

Despite financial problems, the Ketches retained the Monte Vista Ranch until the military buildup just before American entrance into World War II. In early 1941, Fort Sill expanded and the federal government acquired the Monte Vista Ranch through a Declaration of Taking on January 10, 1941. The government purchased 7,481.63 acres, including all of the 5,145 acres of the Monte Vista Ranch. It is not known how much money the Ketches received for their land, however, $355,000 was eventually allotted to pay for expansion of the base. From this point forward, there is no further record of Frank or Ada Ketch owning a ranch in Comanche County. Although Frank Ketch purchased and sold parcels of land (including city

54 “Mr. and Mrs. Ketch Have Guests at Ranch,” *The Oklahoman* (Oklahoma City), May 18, 1929.
56 Ibid.
57 “7,481 Acres Sought Next to Fort Sill; Vaught Names Group to Appraise Land.” *The Oklahoman* (Oklahoma City), January 11, 1941.
lots) throughout his career, it appears that Ketch Ranch served as the most significant Ketch landholding—and certainly the longest in duration.

Frank Ketch continued to make Oklahoma City his permanent residence, where he pursued the independent oil business and land speculation. Five months after selling Monte Vista Ranch, Ada and Frank Ketch divorced. In 1951, when Frank Ketch died of a heart attack in Oklahoma City at age 70, his survivors included his son, Lawrence B. Ketch, and second wife, Quintina, an American Indian woman.\(^{58,59}\)

**PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION**

**A. General Statement**

The Ketch Ranch House is a rectangular, single-story residence constructed in an architectural form and style drawing on the Craftsman bungalow. It is constructed of structural masonry, specifically local red granite cobblestone using masonry techniques known as the Wichita Mountains Vernacular Style. Despite the relatively poor condition of the Ketch Ranch House, the historic integrity of its cobblestone exterior is intact and its building methods and materials remain readable.

The Ketch Ranch grew from approximately 3,200 acres when it was first acquired by the Ketches in 1923 to a 5,145-acre working ranch and second home for the Frank and Ada Ketch family during the years 1924 to 1941. The ranch included the main house and detached garage were located above Blue Beaver Creek in Section 28, and a second house, barn, root cellar, smokehouse, and springhouse located to the southeast in Section 27. Ketch Lake lies to the west in the northwest quarter of Section 29. A stone dam constructed by Frank Ketch restricts Blue Beaver Creek creating the Ketch Lake. The only standing structures remaining from the original Ketch Ranch are the Ketch Ranch House (described here) and the Ketch Lake dam (only discussed in general terms in the historical context); only the foundations of the other Ketch Ranch structures are extant and reported as archaeological features of site 34-Cm-368.

**B. Description of Exterior**

The Ketch Ranch House is a single-story structure that measures 38'-0" x 34'-0" of structural masonry in the Wichita Mountains cobblestone tradition of stacked course. The house has a side-gabled roof, and rests longitudinally on a terrace above the Blue Beaver Creek. It sits high overlooking the creek with a clear view of Mount Sherman and the rest of the Ketch Ranch property. A prominent feature of its exterior is its 10'-0"-wide screened porch wrapping around the eastern three-quarters of its south façade and the southern half of its east façade. The house rests on a poured concrete foundation with supporting piers through the middle of the house. The structural walls of the house are of load-bearing stone utilizing a local red granite cobblestone, roughly spherical in shape, and course in a stack bond. These

\(^{58}\) Dr. Lawrence L. Ketch (grandson of Frank Ketch), in discussion with Marjorie Nowick, September 6, 2006.

\(^{59}\) "Frank Ketch, State Oilman, Dies in Hospital." The Oklahoman (Oklahoma City), 29 April 1951.
Cobblestones are approximate 9" in diameter and are set in plain concrete. This cobblestone masonry technique is visible at other locations in the area, most notably at the resort community of Medicine Park, Oklahoma. The foundation and walls are in good condition, although the house is in generally poor condition.

The gable ends on the east and west façades are clad in vertical wood board where the cobblestones stop at the roof sill. The gable ends also have attic vents and exposed plate and beam ends.

A porch wraps around the eastern three-quarters of the south façade and the southern half of the east façade. A sunroom is at the northeast corner of the building and connected to the rear (north) bedroom. The sunroom is constructed of double-hung sash windows above a cobblestone half wall that continues the line of the wraparound porch on the east façade and vertical board, wood-framed half walls to the south and north. Along the east façade, the porch and sunroom are recessed under the gable end of the main structure. The south façade of the porch has a shed roof along its full length. At the corners of the porch and also at the corners of the gable end are stucco piers. A separate shed roof porch also sits at the northwest corner of the main structure and shelters the entry into the kitchen. The ceiling of the porch is plaster over lath; the majority has deteriorated due to water infiltration. The screen of the porch is no longer intact, but the upper wall wood framing remains.

The ranch house has two chimneys: one internal chimney on the ridge of the roof centered between the two gable ends and one external chimney on the west façade. Both chimneys are faced with the cobblestones and have metal flashing at the roofline. The exterior chimney is capped with concrete, while the interior one is not capped.

The primary entrance is on the south façade beneath the shed roof porch. The front door has a single light with dentil details below, drawing design cues from Craftsman style. It is flanked on either side by paired windows with a triple set of windows at the southwest corner outside of the screened porch. Windows and doors have plain concrete lintels throughout, and windows have similar plain concrete sills that contrast sharply with the red cobblestone exterior. The east façade is subsumed beneath the screened porch, and from the southeast corner moving north there is a set of paired windows and a single window. The porch is split at the midpoint along the east facade by a wall, which encloses the northern portion into a sunroom. The sunroom has double-hung sash windows along the porch half wall in a four-over-one-light configuration, oriented vertically as is common in the Craftsman style. Along the south wall of the sunroom is a pair of double-hung sash windows with a five-over-one-light configuration again with the upper lights oriented vertically. The north exterior wall of the sunroom has one double-hung sash five-over-one-light window on the west end and an opening for a door with a sidelight at the northeast corner. Along the north façade of the ranch house, from east to west, is a tripartite window with a fixed middle window and double-hung, one-over-one-light windows to either side, another design feature common to Craftsman style. A single, double-hung, one-over-one-light window is to the west of the tripartite window. The east wall of the rear shed porch (at the northwest corner of the building) begins just to the west of this single window. Beneath the porch is a single door entrance into the kitchen flanked on either side by single, double-hung, one-over-one-light
windows. Along the west façade, from north to south, are two paired windows, each double-hung with four-over-one lights with the upper lights exhibiting the Craftsman-style vertical orientation. Square single-light windows flank the chimney to either side at the southern end of the west façade. Some windows are missing panes and some are missing entire sashes. However, each façade has some intact windows.

The roof is a side gable with a relatively low pitch. As is common in Craftsman bungalows, plates and beams are exposed on the gable ends and rafter tails are exposed along the eaves. The roof is covered with composite shingles in a diamond or scale pattern over wood decking. The roof ridge is capped with barrel tiles. The roof has almost completely collapsed on the western half of the house, between the west façade and the center of the house, exposing the interior to the elements. The rear porch roof has also collapsed.

C. Description of Interior

The floor plan of the Ketch Ranch House comprises six rooms: a living room, kitchen, and dining room on the west half of the house, and two bedrooms (with a bathroom between them) and a small sunroom on the east half of the house. There are four doors from the outside into the house: the main, front entrance via the porch on the south façade; an entrance at the northwest corner of the house into the kitchen via the small shed-roofed porch; at the northeast corner of the house into the sunroom, which leads to the northern bedroom; and from the side of the wraparound porch on the east façade of the building.

The primary entrance on the south façade opens into the living room. Three doors lead from the living room: the first door leads into the small dining room, the second door leads into the northern bedroom, and the third door leads to the southern bedroom at the southeast corner of the house. The east half of the house is occupied by the two bedrooms, a bathroom between them, and a small sunroom at the northeast corner of the house off the northern bedroom.

The flooring throughout the house is pine board. Baseboards are smooth pine boards that are 12" tall. Due to exposure from the collapsed western half of the roof, several places of the floor structure in the western half of the house have rotted and collapsed. The interior treatment of the façade (exterior) walls is paint over thin layer of concrete, and the interior walls and ceilings are plaster over lath. In the bathroom, the interior walls are scored to simulate tile.

The living room is the most ornate in interior and decorative treatment. The primary entrance opens into the living room, which accesses the dining room, north bedroom, and south bedroom. The living room chimney fireplace along the west wall is a prominent feature. It is faced with dressed red granite blocks. Alternating blocks of rough and smooth face create patterns in the stonework: a diamond pattern above the firebox, a course of smooth capped by a course of rough on the mantel, and smooth center blocks in alternating courses along the two pilasters flanking the firebox. The fireplace is flanked by two built-in benches or wood boxes with a single pane window above each. Interior window and door moldings are simple, smooth-planed pine surrounds.
The kitchen opens to the dining room and to the porch on the northwest corner of the house. The kitchen has built-in cabinets and a double sink surrounding two paired windows on the west wall. There are no kitchen appliances. An open stove vent is on the south wall of the kitchen. The interior walls have been scored to simulate tile, just as in the bathroom.

The bathroom has only a sink remaining. Layers of linoleum flooring obscure any evidence of a bathtub or toilet.

D. Site

The Ketch Ranch House is sited to take advantage of the views of the Ketch Ranch and surrounding area. The house sits on a stream terrace midway up a hill north of Blue Beaver Creek. From this high point, the house has a commanding view of Blue Beaver Creek and Mount Sherman. The front lawn south of the house features mature oak trees. A walkway extends south from the primary entrance of the house across the driveway to a concrete stairway leading down the terraced yard, across the road, and to the low-water crossing of the creek. Blue Beaver Creek bisects the original Ketch Ranch property and the other ranch structures.

A second house, barn, smokehouse, springhouse, and root cellar were located south of the creek, approximately 0.75 mile southeast and approximately 80’ below the Ketch Ranch House. None of these other structures are extant, although their foundations are present. These are designated as loci.

The use of the regional cobblestone materials on the house extends out into the grounds and landscaping. Paired cobblestone piers that are 2’ square at base mark the entrances to the property from the main road to the east. There is a corresponding pair of cobblestone piers on the west edge of the hill.

The driveway, lined with cobblestone edging and curb, ran across the front of the house to the west end of the property where a cobblestone garage is documented to have stood. Leading off from the east side of the driveway, a cobblestone retaining wall frames the east and north (rear) lawns that surround the house. The retaining wall stands 32” high and 10” wide, and consists of four courses of cobblestones capped in concrete. Cobblestone edging also curved from the driveway west of the house to a concrete walkway leading from the back porch and kitchen door at the northwest corner of the house. Off the northeast corner of the house is a low, circular, concave feature that is 12’-0” in diameter and 18” tall, constructed of two courses of cobblestone, and capped in concrete. This feature may have served as a decorative planter.

The hill north (behind) of the house ascends beyond the cobblestone retaining wall to an approximate elevation of 1,520’ above mean sea level, or another 50’ above the house.
PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Interviews:

Dr. Lawrence L. Ketch, M.D. (grandson of Frank Ketch). September 6, 2006, 9563 S. Kingston Ct., Englewood, Co. 80112

B. Bibliography

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

   Ancestry.com

   Comanche County Records (Comanche County Clerk’s Office unless otherwise specified):
   1901 Kiowa-Comanche-Apache Land Opening: Homestead Entry Listing, Lawton District, Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK.
   1904 Land Record, 18-189. Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK.
   1909 Warranty Deed, 133-79. Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK.
   1916 Lease 148-38. Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK.
   1919 Warranty Deed, 178-291, Warranty Deed Correction 193-108. Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK.
   1923 Land Record, 181-301. Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK.
   1927 Warranty Deed, 192-492. Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK.
   1937 Extension Agreement, 238-53. Comanche County Land Records, Comanche County Clerk’s Office, County Courthouse, Lawton, OK.

   Fort Sill Museum
Ketch, Dr. Lawrence L. Collection.


Lawton Daily News Republican (Lawton, Oklahoma)

Lawton Public Library, Hugh Corwin Collection
n.d. James W. Hadley Family File by Mrs. George Crane.

Oklahoman, The (Oklahoma City)
1916 Real Estate, Basis of All Values, Most Productive Where Boom Has Not Damaged By Inflation. 20 March 1916.

1921 Clara Goes on Trial Today; Widow Fears Jury Leniency; Ketch May Reverse Version. 10 March 1921.

1921 Hamon to Speak Through His Former Business Manager on Facts Surrounding His Death, is Belief. 10 March 1921.

1923 Ketch to Quit as Manager of Hamon Estate. 4 February 1923.

1925 Woman Tried for Killing Parts From Man She Met in West. 24 June 1925.

1929 Mr. and Mrs. Ketch Have Guests at Ranch. 18 May 1929.

1940 Fort Sill to Get 20,000 Acres More; US Agents Purchase Land West of Camp. 28 September 1940.

1941 7,481 Acres Sought Next to Fort Sill; Vaught Names Group to Appraise Land. 11 January 1941.

1941 Jury to Decide on Value of Land for Fort Sill Expansion; Owners Demand Trial In Effort to Get Better Price from Government. 9 February 1941.

1943 US Departments Interchange Land in Fort Sill Area. 16 February 1943.

1943 Fort Sill Gets 2.300 Acre Tract. 14 April 1943.

1951 Frank Ketch, State Oilman, Dies in Hospital. 29 April 1951.
Oklahoma State Historical Society, Manuscripts Division
Undated Box 1, Folder 1 (85.12) in “Pioneers of Comanche County, Juanita Adams Manuscript Collection.” Accessed in July 2006.

Polk, R.L. and Company

US Census Bureau
1900 Twelfth Census of the United States.
1930 Fifteenth Census of the United States.
1940 Sixteenth Census of the United States.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Baird, W. David and Danney Goble

Crane, Mrs. George

Ellenbrook, Edward Charles

Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture
2008 Electronic database of the Oklahoma Historic Society.
s.v. “Ardmore” (by Maxine Bamberg)
s.v. “Cannonball (River Rock) Architecture” (by Peter J. McCormick)
s.v. “Healdton Field” (by James R. DeJarnett)
s.v. “Petroleum” (by Kenny A. Franks)
Friedrich, Barbara E.

Kane, Gale Morgan.

McCormick, Peter J.

Meredith, Howard L., Bill Peavler, Melvena Thruman, and Richard Drass.

Morgan, Anne Hodges and H. Wayne Morgan, eds.

National Park Service (NPS) National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nominations


Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory

Victor, Sally, Melissa Wiedenfeld, and Martha Doty Freeman
C. **Supplemental Material:**

Supplemental Materials include historical and descriptive data, historical photographs, and black and white photographs.

**PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION**

This project was conducted by engineering-environmental Management, Inc. (e²M) for the U.S. Army, Fort Sill Military Reservation at the request of Tegan Swain and Kevin Christopher, Cultural Resources Managers. Ken Shingleton, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District served as the contract officer’s technical representative. Historical research and architectural documentation were completed by Marjorie Nowick and Daniel Hart of e²M. Photography was completed by Timothy McGrath, principal of Image West, Colorado as subcontractor to e²M. Fieldwork was conducted on 26 June 2006, and on 8 April 2008. Large-format photography was completed by Mr. McGrath on 8 April 2008.
Supplemental Material

Historical and Descriptive Data
Historical Photographs
Table of Contents

Figure 1. Ketch Ranch House location map ................................................................. 23
Figure 2. Aerial photograph labeled with Ketch Ranch House location features .................. 24
Figure 3. Ketch Ranch property sketch map ................................................................. 25
Figure 4. Sketch floor plan of Ketch Ranch House ....................................................... 26
Figure 5. Ketch Ranch ownership map from the Lawrence L. Ketch, Collection ................ 27
Figure 6. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum ......................... 28
Figure 7. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum ............................ 29
Figure 8. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum ............................ 30
Figure 9. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum ............................ 31
Figure 10. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum .......................... 32
Figure 11. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum .......................... 33
Figure 12. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum ............................ 34
Figure 13. Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory (online version), Ketch Ranch entry, from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (page 1) ................................................................. 35
Figure 14. Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory (online version), Ketch Ranch entry, from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (page 2) ................................................................. 36
Figure 15. Obituary of Virginia Ketch ................................................................. 37
Figure 16. Advertisement for auction of lots in original town site of Ringling to be administered by Frank Ketch ................................................................. 38
Figure 17. Clara Smith Hamon trial article ................................................................. 39
Figure 18. Clara Smith Hamon trial article (second page) ........................................... 40
Figure 19. Clara Smith Hamon trial article ................................................................. 41
Figure 20. Clara Smith Hamon trial article ................................................................. 42
Figure 21. Clara Smith Hamon trial article ................................................................. 43
Figure 22. Interview notes with Lawrence L. Ketch, (grandson of Frank Ketch) ............ 44
Figure 23. Portrait of Frank Ketch, date unknown ..................................................... 45
Figure 24. Ada May Ketch horseback riding at ranch, date unknown ......................... 46
Figure 25. Ada May Ketch horseback riding in driveway at ranch, date unknown .......... 46
Figure 26. Ada May Ketch with horse, date unknown .................................................. 47
Figure 27. Ketch Ranch House, south and west façades, date unknown ....................... 48
Figure 28. Unknown house, date unknown ................................................................. 49
Figure 29. Lawrence B. Ketch, in backyard at ranch brushing his teeth, date unknown .... 50
Figure 30. Lawrence B. Ketch, in backyard at ranch, date unknown ......................... 51
Figure 31. Ketch Ranch Chain of Title ....................................................................... 52
Figure 32. Ketch Ranch Field Records ....................................................................... 53
Figure 1. Ketch Ranch House location map
Figure 2. Aerial photograph labeled with Ketch Ranch House location features
Figure 3. Ketch Ranch property sketch map
Figure 4. Sketch floor plan of Ketch Ranch House
Figure 5. Ketch Ranch ownership map from the Lawrence L. Ketch, Collection
Drawn by Frank Ketch, 1939
Figure 6. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum
Figure 7. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum
**Ketch Ranch House**

*Fort Sill Military Reservation, Building 7775*

**HABS No. OK-66 (Page 30)**

---

**Figure 8. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum**

---

**ADDITIONS AND INSTALLATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Swimming pool, 20 years old, 300 square feet, modern roof, cisterns under roof, plastered interior, modern, large, open floor area, 20x20, 20x10, 20x10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 9. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum
Figure 10. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum
Figure 11. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum

![Building Card Image]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES AND INSTALLATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/24/93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/22/93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See reverse side of form.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>name</th>
<th>cost</th>
<th>date</th>
<th>description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electric</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$100.00 per service, installed, plastic conduit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Concrete foundation 44 in. below, concrete floor, 3 3/4 x 4 ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$50.00 per service, installed, plastic conduit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$75.00 per service, installed, plastic conduit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12. Ketch Ranch building card, courtesy of Fort Sill Museum
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Property Name</td>
<td>KETCH RANCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Resource Name</td>
<td>SAME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Address</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. City</td>
<td>FORT SILL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Vicinity</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. County</td>
<td>Comanche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lot</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Block</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Plat Name</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Section</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Township</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Range</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13a. Latitude</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13b. Longitude</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14a. UTM Zone</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14b. Northings</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14c. Eastings</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Resource Type</td>
<td>Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Historic Function</td>
<td>AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Current Function</td>
<td>Defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Area of significance, Primary</td>
<td>ARCHITECTURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Area of significance, Secondary</td>
<td>Historic - Non-Aboriginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Description of Significance</td>
<td>THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL ORE SMELTER LOCATED IN THE WICHITA MOUNTAINS WAS MADE IN OCTOBER, 1905, ON LAND LATER KNOWN AS THE KETCH RANCH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Document Resource</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Name of the Preparer</td>
<td>PAUL FISCHER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Survey Project</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Date of Preparation</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Photographs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Architect/Builder</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13. Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory (online version), Ketch Ranch entry, from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (page 1)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>27. Year Built</strong></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th><strong>28. Original Site</strong></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th><strong>29. Accessible</strong></th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From Where</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>Date Moved:</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>31. Foundation Material</strong></td>
<td>UNCOLLECTED</td>
<td><strong>32. Roof Type</strong></td>
<td>99 UNCOLLECTED</td>
<td><strong>33. Roof Material</strong></td>
<td>STONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>34. Wall Material (Primary)</strong></td>
<td>NO DATA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>35. Wall Material (Secondary)</strong></td>
<td>UNCOLLECTED</td>
<td><strong>36. Window Type</strong></td>
<td>99 UNCOLLECTED</td>
<td><strong>37. Window Material</strong></td>
<td>UNCOLLECTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>38. Door Type</strong></td>
<td>99 UNCOLLECTED</td>
<td><strong>39. Door Material</strong></td>
<td>UNCOLLECTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>40. Exterior Features</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE BUILDINGS ARE MADE OF WICHITA MOUNTAINS COBBLESTONE.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>41. Interior Features</strong></td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td><strong>42. Decorative Details</strong></td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>43. Condition of Resource</strong></td>
<td>Good (very well maintained)</td>
<td><strong>44. Description of Resource</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>45. Comments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>46. Placement</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>47. Listed on National Register</strong></td>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Continuation:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>National Register Entry:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Date Updated (mm/dd/yyyy)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14. Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory (online version), Ketch Ranch entry, from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (page 2)
Figure 15. Obituary of Virginia Ketch
Real Estate, Basis of All Values, Most Productive Where Boom Has Not Damaged By Inflations

The wealth of all Nations is based upon their Realty values, and even MONEY itself is nothing more than a representative of Real Estate and is used as a circulating medium merely for convenience. Great fortunes have been made out of Real Estate.

Real Estate investments are today and always have been the safest and surest investment that can be made.

Town lots in a well located and growing town make a good investment and always will.

I consider lots in Ringling the best investment that a man can make. I own both business and residence property in Ringling, and the average NET return on my investment in rents the past year has been 35%. Where else can you go and equal this investment?

You are taking no chances whatever in buying lots in Ringling, as the town is established and values actually exist.

Ringling is not a boom town, and this is not an addition sale, but a sale of the original townsite, and you will be offered inside property with improved property adjoining at your own price.

I have lived in Ringling for the past two years, and have sold practically every lot that has been sold in the town to date, and every lot today is worth more money that it sold for, and the lots that will be offered at this sale are as good and as well located as any lots on the townsite. Personally, I regret very much that Mr. Hamon, the owner of the townsite, has seen it fit to sacrifice these beautiful lots at auction.

I have had charge of the lot sales at Ringling all of the time since the town has been established, and will have personal charge of this auction sale. No lots will be sold by mail and you must be on the ground personally if you bid.

The sale will positively take place, rain or shine, under the big tent at Ringling on May 4, 5 and 6, 1916, and every unsold lot on the original townsite will be sold without by-bid or reserve.

The Oklahoman, April 20, 1916

Figure 16. Advertisement for auction of lots in original town site of Ringling to be administered by Frank Ketch
Clara Goes on Trial Today; Widow Fears Jury Leniency; Ketch May Reverse Version

The Oklahoman, March 10, 1921

Figure 17. Clara Smith Hamon trial article
Figure 18. Clara Smith Hamon trial article (second page)
Hamon to Speak Through
His Former Business Manager on Facts Surrounding
His Death, It Is Belief

BY KAM BLAIR

(Athfa Correspondent)

COPYRIGHT, 1921, BY UNIVERSAL PRESS
COPYRIGHT, 1921, BY OKLAHOMA HERALD AND
EXCHANGER

AMIDMORE, Okla., March 9.—The murder trial of Clara Smith Hamon Thursday morning.

Wednesday night this little city regarded itself importantly. Through the crowd the sidewalks of the main streets and carriage in smart automobiles and up the nothing to talk, pompously about this matter which is to be the climax of the history of the life of this late John Hamon’s affliction.

There is a deal of head-squeezing, there is a superiority of whispers. About the lobby of the hotel’s water cooler, men and women, between incautious or this. The crowd that built themselves about the Salvation Army band, the patent medicine salesmen and the hotel and hotel lobbies had all mixed up in the identity of the occasion. And, in the hotel lobbies are various symposiums, the individuals of which talk in one more times and in each others lips or each a warning finger in his and glimmering with certain another group just an intent on its own important mystery.

And in the corner of the hotel, another—there is the essence of failure. Lawyers are conferring. Witnesses are being received. Reporters are suspicious each other of having “inside dope”. Cautions and disputes

(Continued on Page 2, Column 1)

The Oklahoman, March 10, 1921

Figure 19. Clara Smith Hamon trial article
The heart of the case is in the Ketch Ranch House, with what is known as the Hamon verdict in hand. The Hamon house, 27 years old, and the main man's united, 13 years ago—there has been told in substance in interviews given this correspondent.

Mrs. Hamon, the widow, with her son, John Jr., and her 11-year-old daughter, Olive Bessie, reached Ardmore Wednesday. In conclusion to Mrs. Hamon came J. C. O'Brien, Chicago attorney who owned the deeded to "Abe." when, as an accused and possessing attorney, he convicted and sent to the jumping a number of numbers. Mr. O'Brien has been re-named by Mrs. Hamon in a personal capacity.

Mr. O'Brien may not take an active part in the direct prosecution, although he arrived in town wearing a red cap. He always affected when appearing to a jury for a guilty verdict.

"Repeal" Not In Case.

He is expected to participate in the only unless all the interests of Mrs. Hamon are involved. The prosecution will be conducted by Attorney General S. P. Frazee of Oklahoma City, assisted by H. H. Brown of Ardmore. The defense attorneys are Claudio A. Canby, James M. Matheny and J. B. Chapman.

The defenseannounces that it knows nothing. Mr. Canby agrees with Attorney General Frazee in concluding that the trial will not continue beyond a week. But this opinion is conditioned on both sides upon the assurance that the "fairer side" will in turn set up its evidence details.

It is the possibility of these "extenuating details" that lends "clarity" to the trial proper. Some of the testimony will concern character and personal matters of the defendant, several of his associates and, possibly, that of men who were Jako Hamon's political and business allies. And for every reputation against there will be a defense.

"Steve O'Brien Sabotaged."

For instance, the attorney of the accused woman have understood and Steve O'Brien, mentioned by Clara in one of her interviews with me as her "first love," Clara revealed this sentence as the bright, clear period of her life—when she was a cleaning girl in Lovelace, and Fort before she yielded to the seductive charms of Jako Hamon. It appears that this mammoth of another time looked upon this affair with kindly interest. He will testify. It is understood, that Clara was a cleaning girl before the Aßamond Hamon hired her away.

Figure 20. Clara Smith Hamon trial article
KETCH MAY BE KEY
TO VITAL FACTS ON
DEATH OF OIL MAN

Figure 21. Clara Smith Hamon trial article
Interview Notes with Lawrence (Larry) L. Ketch
(grandson of Frank Ketch)

September 6, 2006
Englewood, Colorado

Introduction
Mr. Larry Ketch, grandson of Frank Ketch, is a surgeon at Children's Hospital of Denver. After being contacted by the cultural resources team, he agreed to meet for an interview at the e2M corporate offices in Englewood, CO. At the time of the interview he provided several historic photos of Ketch Ranch, his father and grandparents, and another unknown location. These photographs were scanned and are included in the report generated for this project as an appendix. Marjorie Nowick, Daniel Hart and Mr. Ketch participated in the interview.

Interview Notes
Larry's father (Lawrence B. Ketch, son of Frank and Ada Ketch) lived at the ranch from approximately 1927-1928 when he was about 8-9 years old.

Larry has other pictures of Frank building Ketch Lake but was not able to locate them. He recalls the lake was built sometime around 1927-1928. He also has a map of the lands encompassed by Ketch Ranch (which he later provided in January of 2008).

The cobble house was the main ranch house. A frame house was used by a range foreman that managed the ranch lands. Horses were kept at the ranch. A barn was provided for them.

Frank Ketch has a brother named Charlie that died in childhood from diphtheria or typhoid. For a time Frank was a night clerk in a hotel in Tuscon. Frank was later in the oil business with The Mulin Brothers (Harold, Sylvester, and another brother). Frank was also involved in the land rush as an entrepreneur and was friends with John Ringling (of the Ringling Bros. Circus and who was also in the oil business) during the land rush. As a result, Frank promoted land in a new town named "Ringling" for his friend. Frank alternately made a fortune, lost it, made it again, and eventually lost it all and died penniless from a heart attack while changing a tire.

Ada Ketch spent as much as 400,000 in one year when Frank was doing well. This may have led to tax trouble and formation of the Monte Vista Ranch. Frank and Ada Ketch were not faithful to each other and eventually divorced in their 60s. Frank remarried a Native American woman.

Figure 22. Interview notes with Lawrence L. Ketch, (grandson of Frank Ketch)
Figure 23. Portrait of Frank Ketch, date unknown
Figure 24. Ada May Ketch horseback riding at ranch, date unknown

Figure 25. Ada May Ketch horseback riding in driveway at ranch, date unknown
Figure 26. Ada May Ketch with horse, date unknown
Figure 27. Ketch Ranch House, south and west façades, date unknown
Figure 28. Unknown house, date unknown
Figure 29. Lawrence B. Ketch, in backyard at ranch brushing his teeth, date unknown
Figure 30. Lawrence B. Ketch, in backyard at ranch, date unknown
Ketch Ranch Chain of Title

*Note all records are from Clerk and Recorder, Comanche County, Oklahoma

1901. Homestead Entry. James Winthrop Hadley. SW ¼ SW ¼ Section 27 and E ½ Section 28, NE ¼ SE ¼ Section 28.

November 23, 1904. Warranty Deed. W. D. Wesson and Hattie A. Wesson to James M. Powers for $1000. SW ¼ NE ¼, E ½ NW ¼, NW ¼ NW ¼ of Section 28.

January 25, 1905. Warranty Deed. James M. Powers to National Park Cattle Company for $1000. SW ¼ NE ¼, E ½ NW ¼, NW ¼ NW ¼ of Section 28, subject to mineral lease by Fulbright, Kennedy, and Fisher. (Book 35 Page 154)


June 26, 1913. National Park Cattle Company Contract to Charles O. Farrington of Dallas. Lease for oil, gas, artesian water, and other valuable mineral substances for 25 years for parts of Sections 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, and N ¼ of Section 29. Includes NE ¼ and N ½ SE ¼ of Section 28.

August 15, 1919. Warranty Deed. National Park Cattle Company to S. P. Thornhill for $39,360. Several sections transferred, including sections 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, and 28 totaling 3,200 acres. This includes SE ¼ NW ¼ of Section 28. (Book 178 Page 291)

April 18, 1923. Deed Record. S.P. Thornhill to Irving Page, receiver for First National Bank of Lawton for $1.00. Sections 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, and 28 totaling 3,200 acres. This includes SE ¼ NW ¼ of Section 28. (Book 193 Page 108)


April 1, 1927. Warranty Deed. Ada M. Ketch to Frank L. Ketch for $1.00. A half interest in the following property totaling 5060 acres: N ¼, N ½ SE ¼, SE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 28. Also, land in T3N, R13W (parts of Sections 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 34, 35, and all of Section 33) and T2N, R13W (parts of Sections 3, 9, 10, 15, and 31). (Book 192 Page 492)

1928. State Game Refuge Lease. Frank L. Ketch leased all his land in Section 21, 22, 27, 28, 33 and partial land in Section 26, 34, 35 to the State of Oklahoma Fish and Game Commission for $1.00 for 5 years. (Book 199 Page 456)

July 27, 1932. Warranty Deed. Frank L. and Ada M. Ketch to Monte Vista Ranch for $1.00; except for mortgage held by Business Men's Assurance Co. of Kansas City for $21,000 and two years past due and 1931 taxes penalty of $1,250 and subject to grazing lease to Ed Rowe of Meers that expires on December 15, 1934. These lands include N ¼, N ½ SE ¼, SE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 28 totaling 440 acres. Also note that all lands total 5145 acres in T3N, R13W (parts of Sections 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 34, and all of Section 33) and T2N, R13W (parts of Sections 4, 9, 10, and 31). (Book 235 Page 18)

January 10, 1941. Court Judgment, Declaration of Taking. Monte Vista Ranch to U.S.A. Taking 7,481.63 acres in Comanche County including Section 28 for expansion of Fort Sill. (Book 264 Page 357)

Figure 31. Ketch Ranch Chain of Title
Ketch Ranch Field Records


James W. Hadley Family File by Mrs. George Crane. Lawton Public Library, Hugh Corwin Collection.

“Pioneers of Comanche County, Juanita Adams Manuscript Collection.” Oklahoma State Historical Society, Manuscripts Division. Undated Box 1, Folder 1 (85.12).

“Ketch to Quit as Manager of Hamon Estate.” *The Oklahoman*. 4 February 1923.


Partial article. *The Oklahoman*. 3 April 1926. Article discusses Ketch’s move to Oklahoma City.

“Mr. and Mrs. Ketch Have Guests at Ranch.” *The Oklahoman*. 18 May 1929.

“Fort Sill to Get 20,000 Acres More; US Agents Purchase Land West of Camp.” *The Oklahoman*. 28 September 1940.

“7,481 Acres Sought Next to Fort Sill; Vaught Names Group to Appraise Land.” *The Oklahoman*. 11 January 1941.

“Jury to Decide on Value of Land for Fort Sill Expansion; Owners Demand Trial In Effort to Get Better Price from Government.” *The Oklahoman*. 9 February 1941.

“US Departments Interchange Land in Fort Sill Area.” *The Oklahoman*. 16 February 1943.


“Frank Ketch, State Oilman, Dies in Hospital.” *The Oklahoman*. 29 April 1951.


Figure 32. Ketch Ranch Field Records