

## OKLAHOMA LANDMARKS INVENTORY NOMINATION

Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey, Oklahoma State University, 502 Math-Science Bldg., Stillwater, OK 74078

SOURCE OF NOMINATION: Contract Survey

OKAY SCHOOL AND GYMNASIUM

LOCATION: Unmarked Streets, Okay, Oklahoma 040, Wagoner County 145

CLASSIFICATION: building; public; public acquisition--N/A; occupied; unrestricted; present use--educational

OWNER: Okay Board of Education, Box 188, Okay, OK 74446

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Wagoner County Courthouse, Wagoner, OK 74467

DESCRIPTION: good condition; altered; original site

Somewhat E-shaped in floorplan, the Okay School and Gymnasium extends 210' along the front, 107' on the sides, and 151' from the front to the rear of the gym. It is constructed of cut but unrusticated native stones. For decorative effect, blocks of larger size were placed vertically to smaller stones laid horizontally in courses. The roof is flat over classrooms but arched over the gym; over both are parapets. Modified, stepped pilasters are on the front corners of the building, while between the two front entryways and at the sides of the gym regular pilasters are located. Wall caps and window sills are pre-formed concrete. Metal sash windows predominate except to the rear of the gym where openings have been filled with wood inserts. These and brick additions to the rear of the wings (thus not visible from the road) only partially impaired the integrity of the building. Unfortunately, the structure burned in the spring of 1986 and stands in the summer of 1986 as a blackened shell.

SIGNIFICANCE: 1939; architect/builder: unknown

The Okay community, pre-dating Indian removal to Oklahoma, is one of the oldest in the state. Modern education, however, largely dates from the construction of the WPA school and gym. The dependence of the community upon the structure is apparent in that it constitutes the principal educational facility despite the passage of almost 50 years. Aside from being the harbinger of modern education, the building is unique as a WPA structure because of its masonry, especially the vertical placement of large stones to give relief to the coursing of smaller stones. It is also notable in the community for its type, style and workmanship. And construction of it was especially important in that it provided job opportunities to agricultural workers who were made destitute and stripped of their pride by the national depression of the 1930s.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Acreage: less than two

Quadrangle: Muskogee NE, Okla.  
1:24,000/7.5 min.

UTM: undetermined

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Lots 4-11, Block 10, Okay original plat

PICTURE REFERENCE: none