

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name Francis and Harriet Baker House  
Other name/site number Frank Harwi House; Jerome Pillow House

### 2. Location

Street & number 823 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  not for publication  
City or town Atchison  vicinity  
State Kansas Code KS County Atchison Code 005 Zip code 66002

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Richard D. Landkatz, DSHPO July 10, 2003  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official /Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

Francis and Harriet Baker House  
Name of property

Atchison County, KS  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2		total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**  
0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter Categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals: Mission

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: Limestone  
walls Stone: Limestone  
~~Walls Brick with limestone trim~~  
  
roof Ceramic tile  
  
other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property Francis and Harriet Baker House

County and State Atchison County, KS

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
[X] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1902

Significant Dates

1902

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Root, Walter C.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): Primary location of additional data:

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
Previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering

- [X] State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Record #

Name of Property Francis and Harriet Baker House

County and State Atchison County, KS

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	3 1 8 0 0 0	4 3 8 2 0 0 0	3																
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing													
2					4															

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title Susan Jezak Ford

Organization Citysearch Preservation Date 1/10/03

Street & number 3628 Holmes Street Telephone 816-531-2489

City or town Kansas City State MO Zip code 64109

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name Hugh Aiken

street & number 823 N. 5th Street telephone 913-367-0177

city or town Atchison state KS zip code 66002

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16) U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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Section 7 Page 1

Francis and Harriet Baker House  
Atchison County, Kansas

### Architectural Description

#### Overview

The Francis and Harriet Baker house is a large stone residence located on a hill in northwest Atchison, Kansas. The three-story house and two-story carriage house were completed in 1902 for the reputed cost of between \$70,000 and \$90,000. The house faces east from a site that encompasses five city lots on the southwest corner of Fifth and Mound Streets.

The Baker house is an asymmetrical cube designed in the Mission style. The exterior stone walls are irregular rusticated limestone with a footprint that measures 38 feet wide by 46 feet deep. A one-story front porch dominates the house's main façade. The porch covers the main entrance, but the flooring and balustrade extend across the front of the house to the port cochere on the south side. Massive wall dormers interrupt the wide eaves on the east, north and south sides of the house. These dormers are topped by triangular parapets and capped with stone coping. Smaller dormers are located on the west side of the house. Red clay tile covers the roof of the house, as well as the sides of the dormers. The ridge of the hipped roof runs east-west and the wide eaves contain box gutters. New metal soffits have been added to the house. A stone chimney extends from the central rear of the roof. All windows, unless noted, are doublehung and contain stone sills and massive, triangular stone pediments.

The interior of the house is just as grand as its exterior, containing original woodwork, hardwood floors, several fireplaces and original light fixtures. The collection of rooms within the 10,000-square-foot house includes a grand dining room, library, six bedrooms and a ballroom.

The carriage house is an impressive structure in its own right, containing two stories and a basement. The building originally contained horse stalls on the first story, living quarters on the second story and the house's heating plant in the basement.

The Baker house's large lot slopes dramatically from the northeast to the southwest. The topography is very noticeable on the back sides of the house and carriage house, where the basement levels of each building are exposed as full stories. An alley runs along the southern edge of the property, supported by a stone retaining wall. This wall is two feet tall at street level and increases to approximately five feet tall as it connects with the south wall of the carriage house. The yard slopes most dramatically on the west edge of the property, where steps are cut into the hillside to reach the rear of the carriage house.

#### East Façade

The Baker house's main façade faces east, toward Fifth Street. The façade is five bays wide, with a Palladian motif in the wall dormer and five windows in the second story. The first story contains irregular fenestration, due to a northern bay that contains the house's library.

The central wall dormer steps at the outer edges of the triangular parapet. The dormer contains four windows placed in a Palladian motif, consisting of a central square window topped by a half-round window and surrounded on either side by small doublehung windows.

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The second story of this façade contains five regularly spaced window openings—one small, central arrangement surrounded on each side by two larger windows. The central window arrangement is located directly above the peak of the roof for the front porch. This opening consists of a central square window surrounded by small columns and two narrow windows.

A one-story central porch roof protects the house's main entrance. This triangular red tile roof is supported at the outer corners by square stone piers that run from the roof to the ground. Matching engaged piers are placed at the inner corners, where the roof meets the wall of the house. Octagonal limestone columns are placed at the front of the entrance atop short piers that begin the balustrade of the front porch. The house's entrance consists of double oak doors that contain large central panes of glass. A large window is located to the left of the house's main entrance between bays one and two. A one-story chamfered bay extension containing three windows is located to the right of the entrance. This bay extends to the northeast corner of the house and is topped by a crenellated parapet.

The house is approached by a wide set of concrete steps surrounded on either side by a low stone wall. A wrought iron railing is located on the left side of the steps. The front porch begins at the south edge of the one-story bay. It curves around the south side of the house, connecting with a port cochere. The base of the porch is irregular rusticated limestone that matches the house. The rustic stone balustrade is topped with stone slabs. Just before the balustrade curves, a stone pier rises from the ground to just slightly above the balustrade.

**South Façade**

The south façade of the Baker house contains a variety of architectural features, including a screened porch, wall dormer, chimney and port cochere. This side of the house is divided into seven irregular bays, addressed from left to right (west to east.)

The first bay contains enclosed porches in the first and second stories. The second story porch is enclosed with a glass window and the slightly taller first story porch is screened. Rounded brackets support the lintel of each porch opening. The lower portion of each opening contains a short balustrade. A window is located in the basement level. Bay two consists of a section of plain stone wall. Bays three and four contain a wall dormer on the third story. This dormer contains two small, doublehung windows that are closely spaced. These windows are five-over-one configuration with vertical upper panes. The second story of bays three and four contains two widely spaced windows. The first story of bays three and four contains a short bay window supported by four small stone brackets. The three windows in the bay are segmented like those in the dormer, with narrow, vertical upper panes. The two side windows are 3/1 and the center window is 5/1. Bay three contains a small, square basement window and bay four contains a slightly larger basement window.

The port cochere extends from the right portion of bay four to the left portion of bay six. The structure extends approximately 20 feet from the house. The port cochere is covered by a low-sloped pyramidal and hipped roof supported by four stone piers that run from the ground to the entablature. Two of these

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Atchison County, Kansas**

columns are located at the outer edges of the port cochere and two are placed in the center of the structure. Two engaged piers are located where the structure meets the house. The outer portion of the port cochere contains a stone balustrade between the two outer piers. The outer piers are buttressed by two shorter piers capped with limestone. A driveway runs under the structure. Steps rise from the driveway to the porch level; these steps are surrounded at the porch level by short stretches of the stone balustrade. This balustrade continues on the west side of the port cochere. The second story of bay five, directly above the port cochere, contains a set of three windows set under a segmental arch and supported with four very small brackets.

Bays six and seven contain two widely spaced windows on the second story. On the first story, a full chamfered bay window extends from the right portion of bay six into bay seven. The three windows sit on a limestone ledge that projects from the wall of the house. A segmental stone arch is located above the windows. Carved brackets on either side of the set of windows support the flat copper roof of the bay. Bay six contains a wall dormer in the third story. This dormer is roughly half the size of the other south dormer, containing just one window and half of the triangular parapet. A tall, stone chimney rises from the right side of the dormer.

**North Façade**

The north façade of the Baker house faces Mound Street. This façade is flat and contains eight irregular bays.

Moving from left to right (east to west), bay one contains no windows, only the wall of the one-story library, topped with a crenellated parapet. Bay two contains a single window in the far right portion of the second story and a small window at the basement level. Bay three contains a chimney flue that projects from the wall of the house. A small pair of casement windows is placed in the chimney at the first story. The chimney tapers in width just above the first story to extend from the roofline. Bay four contains a wall dormer and the stained glass windows for the house's grand staircase. The dormer contains one large window surrounded by two smaller square windows in a Palladian motif. The stained glass windows are located slightly below the second story level. This arrangement consists of one large central window surrounded on either side by two narrow windows, topped by a segmental lintel. Below this window, the first story contains one pair of casement windows and one single casement window. In bay five, the second story contains a single window at the same level as the stairway's stained glass, topped by a two-paned transom and a segmental lintel. The first story contains two very narrow vertical windows and the basement level contains one small doublehung window. Bays six and seven each contain a window on the second story. Bay seven contains a window in the first story and a small hipped dormer on the third story, faced and sided in red tile. The basement of bay seven contains a full-sized doublehung window. Bay eight of this façade is pulled slightly forward from the wall of the house. The second story contains a narrow arched window surrounded by a segmental arch and the first story contains a wider arched window opening, also surrounded by a segmental arch. The right side of this bay is the northwest corner of the house, which flares slightly outward at the first story.

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**West Façade**

The flat rear of the Baker house faces west and is five bays wide. Due to the western slope of the house's lot, the basement level appears as a full story. The northwest corner of the house contains a flared wall anchoring a staircase that ascends to the first story from bay two to bay one. Bay one contains the rear entrance to the house through a mud porch area. This entrance is located at the top of the staircase. The upper landing of the staircase curves slightly outward and is supported by a central stone bracket. The exterior stairway contains a wrought iron railing. Bay two contains a small window in the second story, a full window in the first story and two narrow vertical windows in the basement. A small hipped dormer with a single doublehung window is placed in the third story between bays two and three. Bay three contains a window in the second story. The first story window of the third bay is placed slightly to the right of the second story window and a full basement window is placed directly below it. A wide hipped dormer is located between bays three and four. This dormer contains two pairs of casement windows. Bay four contains windows on the second, first and basement levels. Bay five contains porch openings on the first and second stories identical to bay one on the south façade, plus a full window in the basement level.

**Interior**

Entering the Baker house, one is struck by the grandeur of the home. The interior of the house has been meticulously restored to its original lavish condition. Natural woodwork and floors abound, rooms remain in their original configuration and original light fixtures are still present. The interior of the house contains approximately 10,000 square feet of floor space on the primary three stories.

The small entry vestibule to the house contains oak wainscoting, a built-in oak bench and a mosaic tile floor. One of the house's outer double doors serves as the primary entrance door; unlatching floor and frame locks can open the second door. The inner door and surrounding panels consist of oak with leaded glass windows.

The **first story** of the house contains a library, living room, foyer, dining room, former sunporch, kitchen and two bathrooms. Engaged oak columns or pilasters mark entrances to each space off of the foyer and oak beams criss-cross the ceiling. The focal point of the large central foyer area is the grand sweeping staircase and a large stone fireplace that fills the north wall under the staircase. Two pairs of leaded glass casement windows are placed on either side of the chimney. A built-in oak bench is located to the right of the fireplace. The oak staircase rises left of the fireplace, curving to the right at the landing that contains stained glass windows. Oak wainscoting lines the walls of the stairway and the spindles of the balustrade are painted white.

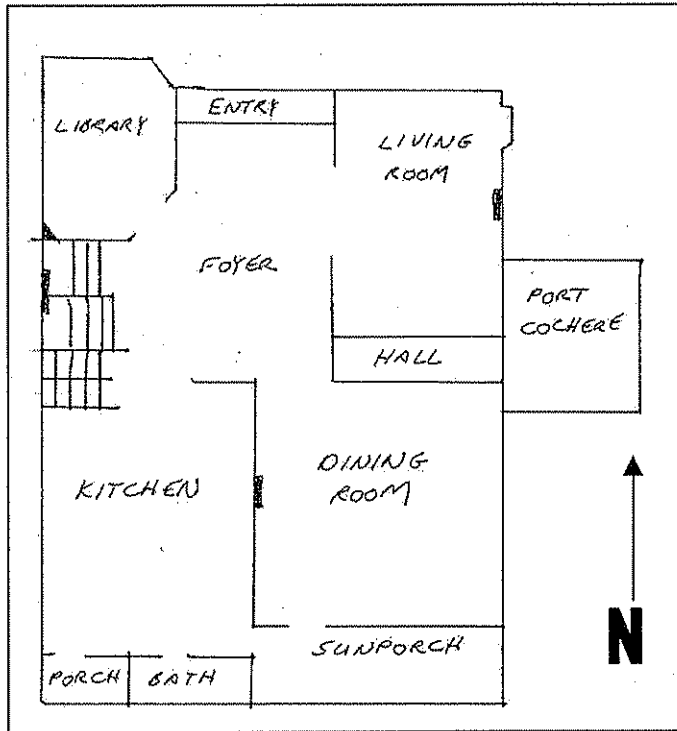
The living room is located directly across from the foyer fireplace, entered between two ionic columns painted white. The woodwork in this room—the low wainscoting, molding, ceiling beams and fireplace surround—is all mahogany. The fireplace surround rises to the ceiling with ionic columns, large dentilled molding at the ceiling, acanthus brackets supporting the mantle and green marble surrounding the firebox.

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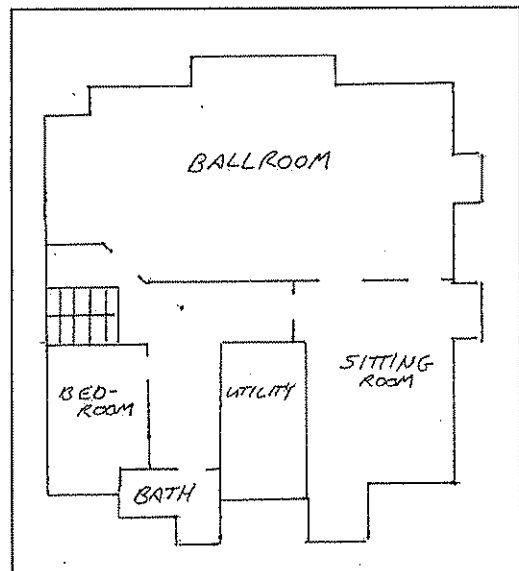
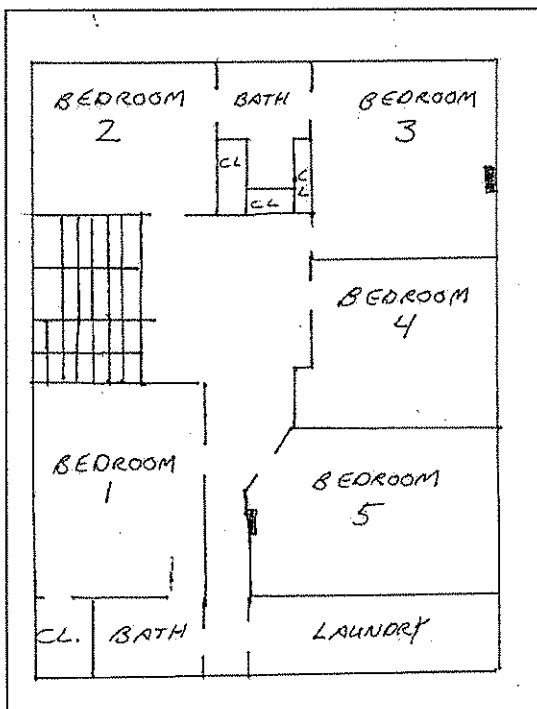
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Schematic floor plans for the first story of the Baker house (left,) second story (lower left) and third story (below.) Not drawn to scale.



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The dining room of the house contains tall golden oak wainscoting topped with original tapestry fabric. The north wall of the dining room contains a fireplace with marble and granite surrounds and an oak mantel. Built-in china cabinets with leaded glass doors surround either side of this fireplace. A set of three windows is located opposite the fireplace on the south wall. The upper portions of these doublehung windows contain vertical panes separated by Gothic-arched tracery. A hallway separates the living room and dining room with passage that leads from the port cochere to the foyer. This hallway is accessed via an oak foyer door containing a leaded glass window.

The northeast corner of the first story contains the library, accessed through a chamfered doorway. The library contains an angled brick fireplace with a golden oak mantle in the northwest corner of the room. Oak bookcases with leaded glass doors line the north and west walls. A small desk is built into the center of the north wall. A three-window bay on the front of the house is located on the east side of the room.

Two first-story spaces on the rear of the house have been updated. The former sunporch on the southwest corner of the house has been converted to an office. One window on the west wall has been replaced with a modern window, although the size of the opening is original. French doors lead to the screened porch on the southwest corner of the house. The kitchen has also been updated with new cabinets and a central island. A half-bath has been built on the west side of the kitchen, next to the original mud porch space. A secondary set of stairs is located on the east side of the kitchen, placed between the kitchen and the grand staircase.

The **second story** of the Baker house contains a large central hall that accesses five bedrooms. A transom is placed above each bedroom door. The floorboards of the second story are narrow oak and ceilings are approximately ten feet tall. Baseboards are twelve inches wide and crown moldings are approximately six inches. Bedroom one, in the northwest portion of the house, has a modern walk-in closet and modern bath on the west wall. Bedroom two, in the northeast corner and bedroom three, in the southeast corner, are connected by a central bath. The windows in the bath are leaded doublehung, with upper vertical panes in Gothic arches. Bedroom three contains a fireplace of cream glazed tile and a painted wood mantel with ionic columns on the south wall. Bedroom four, located in the center of the south side of the house, contains a set of three doublehung windows. These windows contain vertically leaded glass in the upper panes, consisting of narrow arches. Bedroom five, located in the southwest portion of the house, is accessed through a chamfered doorway in the hall. This room contains a glazed-tile fireplace on the north wall with a painted wood mantel. A set of French doors leads to a former sunporch on the southwest corner of the house that has been converted to a laundry room. A short hallway runs east-west between through the central west side of the house's second story.

The **third story** of the Baker house is accessed by the secondary stairway. The third story also contains very high ceilings of approximately 10 feet. A hallway with various doorways is located at the top the stairway. An angled doorway to the left leads to the immense ballroom. This ballroom, located on the east half of the third floor, measures approximately 21 by 20 feet. The woodwork is stained very dark

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and window seats are located on the east and north walls. The irregular walls and ceilings accommodate the exterior shape of the roof and dormers.

French doors placed in the southwest corner of the ballroom access an irregularly shaped study/library area. Two 5/1 windows are located in the dormer on the south wall and two casement windows are located in the small west dormer. A very small bedroom with a sloped ceiling is located on the northwest corner of the third floor. A casement window in a north dormer provides light to this room. A full bathroom is located just south of the bedroom. A large utility room is located in the center of the house's west side. The bedroom, bathroom and utility room are accessed by a short east-west hallway.

**Carriage House**

The carriage house is accessed via a driveway on the south side of the lot. It is all stone construction, measuring approximately 36 feet wide by 42 feet deep. It is two full stories tall and also contains a basement. It is topped with a red tile roof with a central cupola. All windows, unless noted, are doublehung and have wooden frames with stone lintels and sills.

The east, or front, of the carriage house is defined by two large bays. It contains a gable front, topped with a triangular parapet with stone coping. The first story contains a pair of six-over-six doublehung windows in the left bay with a common stone lintel and sill. The right bay contains a garage door opening with a sliding door that could be original to the building. This opening has a massive stone lintel. The second story of this façade contains a pair of arched windows separated by a very narrow central window opening. These three windows have segmental stone headers and a common stone sill. The north and south edges of the east façade flare slightly outward at ground level and project slightly at the base of the gable.

The north side of the carriage house is irregularly fenestrated. The left portion of this façade contains a single window in the first story and a dormer with two windows in the second story. A small doorway is located to the right of this bay. An ell extends from the right side of the north façade. A three-story stone chimney is located at the juncture of the ell. The extension of the ell contains a single door in the left portion and a single window in the right section.

The south side of the carriage house is located along an alley. The ground level slopes dramatically, revealing three stories of fenestration. This side of the carriage house contains seven bays. From left to right, the first bay contains a sealed window in the basement and another window at the first story level. Bay two contains a wall dormer in the second story. This dormer contains a pair of doors topped with a segmental brick arch. The first story and basement level of bay two each contain a window; the window in the basement level is sealed. Bay three, placed at the right edge of the first dormer, contains a short, narrow window in the first story and a sealed doorway at the basement level. Bays four and five are plain walls in the first story. The basement level of bay four contains a short sealed doorway and bay five contains a short sealed window. A wide wall dormer is located in the second story of bays six and seven, with a window in each bay of the dormer. A window is placed in the center of these two bays on

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the first story. The basement level of bay six contains a coal chute and the basement level of bay seven contains a small, square sealed window.

The west side of the carriage house contains a flat roof over the left ell attached to the central gable. This gable is fronted by a parapet topped with stone coping and contains a central single window in the second story. Four small, square windows are placed in the left half of the first story. The left portion of the basement level contains a sealed doorway and two windows.

The interior of the carriage house is quite spacious, with an open first story. A stairway is located on the west wall that leads to the basement and second story. The area once housed horse stalls, now removed. The second story contains a central open area on the west half of the building. The east half contains a former living area that houses the remnants of two bedrooms, closet space, a narrow kitchen space and bathroom area. The basement of the carriage house contains three storage areas, as well as a forge area and former boiler area that once supplied heat to the house. The interior dividing walls of the basement are brick.

**Summary**

The Baker house and carriage house are in excellent condition today. The current owner has worked extensively to restore the original glory of the property. Nearly all interior woodwork that was painted in the 1960s and 1970s has been stripped and restored. Wood floors, found under layers of linoleum and wall-to-wall carpeting, have been refinished. Interior doors that were shortened to accommodate the carpeting have been spliced with matching wood to achieve their original size. Non-invasive new heating, cooling, electrical and plumbing systems have also been added. Modern bathrooms are simple and do not intrude into living place.

The exterior of the house has also received meticulous restorative work. The original roof tiles were replaced with matching historic Ludowici tiles, placed atop new roofing felt and finished with new lead sheeting on the gables. Chimneys were rebuilt and capped. The front porch was rebuilt and stabilized. The carriage house received substantial structural work from former owners in the 1970s, when additional support was added to all stories of the building. This massive amount of refurbishment has helped the property regain much of its integrity and original splendor.

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Atchison County, Kansas

Statement of Significance

**Overview**

The Francis and Harriet Baker house, located at 823 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street in Atchison, Kansas, is significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The house is an excellent example of a regional interpretation of the Mission Style of architecture. It is a representation of this style done on a very grand scale for very wealthy homeowners.

Walter C. Root, a well-known Kansas City architect, designed the house. Even during its construction, it drew much public attention. Upon its completion in 1902, it was the most prominent and most expensive residence in Atchison. The stone home and carriage house, placed on five city lots, were built at a time when the wealthy of Atchison were moving to the hills north of downtown. The house joined a neighborhood of mansions built to impress the town folk, as well as the rest of the Midwest.

The Baker residence left onlookers in awe of its magnificence. Its architecture and interior details were intended to reflect the prosperity and social standing of the Baker family in the very affluent town of Atchison. Every detail of the house, from the massive wall dormers and leaded glass to the interior mahogany and tapestries, suggested success. The house retains nearly every element that originally defined its original presence.

**History and Design of the Baker House**

Francis and Harriet Baker began purchasing city lots near the corner of Atchison's 5<sup>th</sup> and Mound Streets in 1894. Lots one, two and three were purchased by Francis M. Baker for a total of \$3050. Lots four and five were purchased in 1897 for \$1400. A warranty deed on the entire property was signed from Francis and Harriet Baker to Frank Crowell, Mrs. Baker's brother, on September 11, 1899. A warranty deed was signed from Frank Crowell to Harriet Baker on the same day. This effectively placed the property in Mrs. Baker's name.<sup>1</sup>

Construction began in the summer of 1901 with reports regularly appearing in *The Atchison Daily Globe*. The close-knit community speculated on many aspects of the house, from the suitability of the stone to the expense involved. The limestone, quarried near Atchison, was praised as "very hard, and the color is good, and permanent."<sup>2</sup> The architect's estimate for erection of the house was \$27,000, which the newspaper claimed would run up to \$40,000.<sup>3</sup>

By December 1901, something was amiss in the house's design. The architect, a number of townspeople and F.M. Baker himself noticed that the house appeared too short. Because the house was built on a sloping lot, the foundation was dug too low, giving the Baker mansion a squat appearance. A decision was made to raise the house by two feet. In December 1901 a contract was made with William A.

<sup>1</sup> Abstract of Title for the property, held by the homeowner.

<sup>2</sup> *The Atchison Daily Globe*, 6 June 1901, 2.

<sup>3</sup> *The Atchison Daily Globe*, 19 June 1901, 3. The total cost of construction of the house and carriage house eventually reached approximately \$70,000.

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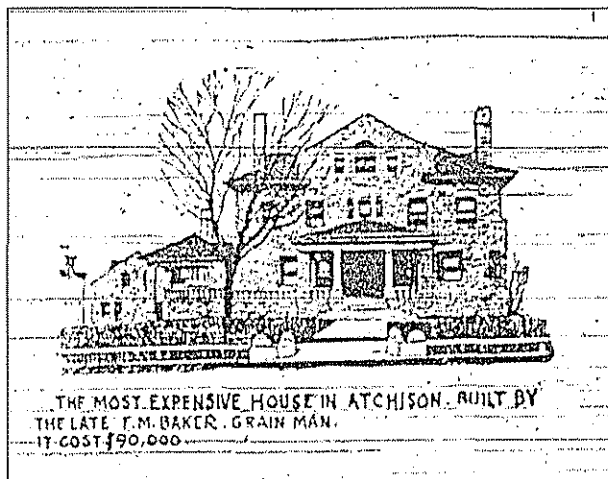
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Bovard, a successful Kansas City house-raiser and mover, to add two feet to the foundation level of the house.

Raising the foundation of the house was a four-week process involving 300 jackscrews. *The Atchison Daily Globe* reported that the architect, Walter Root, had always contended that the house was too low and, after visiting a number of "modern houses" in New York, F.M. Baker agreed. The article further mentioned that since work first began on the house, it had attracted hundreds of spectators every Sunday and that nearly all agreed that the house was too low.<sup>4</sup> The 300 jackscrews were turned a quarter of an inch at a time, adding 24 inches to the foundation walls. The only damage to the interior was the development of two cracks in the walls of the octagonal library.<sup>5</sup>

In total, the construction of the house took approximately one year. Baker's obituary from June 1904 states, "Less than two years ago Mr. Baker completed the finest residence in Atchison. It is of native white stone, and is said to have cost \$70,000." This statement places the completion date at 1902.



*The Kansas City Star* April 5, 1914

The Baker house is an eclectic design that refuses to fall into a strict style category. The house is predominantly Mission, but also contains elements of the Colonial Revival style. Walter C. Root, architect, described the house as "modern," an appropriate depiction for the time.

Root was the founder of Root & Siemens, a leading Kansas City architectural firm of the day. Educated in New York, Walter Root worked and studied with his brother, John Wellborn Root, for six years at the Chicago firm of Burnham & Root. He arrived in Kansas City in 1886 to represent the firm in the construction of the Board of Trade building, but soon established his own office in partnership with George M. Siemens. Root & Siemens was responsible for many prominent buildings throughout the

<sup>4</sup> *The Atchison Daily Globe*, 6 December 1901, 4.

<sup>5</sup> *The Atchison Daily Globe*, 3 January 1902.

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Kansas City area, including the Scarritt Building in downtown Kansas City and the Museum of Natural History at the University of Kansas.

The Mission style was a turn-of-the-century evolution of California design. As the west was flooded with immigrants from eastern states, California architects turned to the state's Spanish and Indian history for inspiration in designing new houses. As the style spread eastward, its elements were freely used to ornament traditional house shapes. Root's interpretation of the style for the Baker house closely resembles the concurrent design for the University of Kansas's Museum of History, identifying a period of Root's career.

The simplicity of the Mission style made it very adaptable and it was frequently combined with details from other styles. Elements that define the Mission style—a low-pitched roof, ornamented dormers, red roof tile, brackets and prominent front porch—can all be seen on the Baker house. The parapetted wall dormers are particularly significant components of the style. Brick and stucco were the most common materials used to construct Mission residences, so the stone of the Baker house makes it exceptional. Atchison's strong ties to the railroads probably influenced the design of this house, as the style was used for stations and resort hotels throughout the west. The additions of very traditional details, such as Palladian windows, Ionic columns and chamfered bay windows, give a nod to the house's location in a fairly conservative midwestern town.

The grand scale of the Baker house and carriage house makes it outstanding within the town of Atchison and the state of Kansas. The house was designed as a departure from its Victorian neighbors, prominent in its exterior and interior. The well-preserved attention to detail—the stained glass, impressive woodwork, multiple fireplaces and grand staircase—denoted it as the house of an important and wealthy family. It demonstrated the status of its owners through its stylishness, bulk and impressive site.

Francis Baker died shortly after the completion of his house on June 10, 1904 of a lengthy bout with Bright's disease. When Harriet Baker died on July 1, 1913, the couple's children inherited the property. The house was still considered the jewel of Atchison eleven years later when it was featured in an article in *The Kansas City Star*, "Seeing Atchison."

The biggest house in Atchison is the \$90,000 home of the late F.M. Baker, occupied by his children, Frank and Jeanette, when they are not attending school in the East.<sup>6</sup>

The house was sold to Frank Harwi in 1918. Harwi, heir to a well-established hardware store, was also mentioned in the "Seeing Atchison" article as "probably the richest young man in Atchison, and president of the Commercial Club. He is less than 30 years old, is a leader in civic affairs and is a young man who is sensible of his responsibilities and is imbued with the Atchison steadiness."

Frank Harwi was president of the A.J. Harwi Hardware Company, a company founded by his father, by 1916. Harwi was born in Atchison in 1884, attended Yale University for one year, but was called home

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<sup>6</sup> "Seeing Atchison." *The Kansas City Star*, 5 April 1914, 2A.

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by his father's illness. He studied one year at the University of Kansas before taking over his father's establishment in 1906. In 1908 he married Florence Cain and the couple had four children, Alfred, Lucy, Frank and Robert. He remarried as a widower in 1926 to a widow, Grace Blair, who had two children, William and Mary Blair.<sup>7</sup> Harwi helped organize the Atchison Commercial Club and served on the board of trustees of Midland Hospital, the Atchison City Board of Education and the Atchison City Hospital.<sup>8</sup> Under his guidance, the A.J. Harwi Company grew to include 25 traveling salesmen.

According to the house's Abstract of Title, the house was deeded by Grace and Frank Harwi to Frank, Jr. in 1933. For the next few years, the title of the house passed from Frank, Jr. to the A.J. Harwi Company and back again. It is likely that The Depression seriously affected Harwi's hardware business. The house was eventually sold at a sheriff's sale to Jerome and Mary Pillow in April 1938.

Colonel Jerome Pillow came to Atchison upon retiring from 42 years of distinguished service in the armed forces. Born in 1875, he attended the United States Military Academy at West Point, graduating in 1901. In 1903, he married Mary Louise Hetherington. Miss Hetherington was the granddaughter of William Hetherington, an early civic leader and president of the Exchange Bank in Atchison.<sup>9</sup> Pillow served in the Philippines, Hawaii and, during World War I, in Europe. After seven months in Germany following World War I, he was stationed in Washington, D.C. and Fort Leavenworth. After retirement from the army, Pillow served as the vice president and director of the Exchange National Bank and took an active role in Atchison civil life. Colonel Pillow died in April 1956 and Mrs. Pillow died in December 1961; the couple had no children.<sup>10</sup>

The Baker House had three owners in the 1960s and early 1970s. The property was eventually purchased in 1974 by Hugh John and Barbara Ann Bromley, who sold it to Hugh Aiken in 1990. Mr. Aiken has completed the full stabilization and restoration of the property.

### Francis and Harriet Baker

Francis and Harriet Baker were firmly entrenched in the upper crust of Atchison by the time they began building their final home in 1899. Francis Baker came to the town from Jacksonville, Illinois in 1883 via Downs, Nebraska. Baker, born in 1846, was a self-made man. He graduated from Illinois College in Jacksonville and studied law in Ann Arbor, Michigan, although he never practiced. He returned to Jacksonville to manufacture bricks for a short time before going into the grain business, forming the partnership of Greenleaf-Baker with E.S. Greenleaf. The company accumulated 72 grain elevators across the Midwest, primarily in Kansas and Nebraska. The firm's Atchison elevator had a capacity of 200,000 bushels and often handled 100 cars of grain a day during the fall harvest. Baker's partner remained in Jacksonville and left the day-to-day operations to him.<sup>11</sup> The partnership was successful. A Topeka newspaper listed Baker in 1899 as one of the wealthiest men in Atchison.<sup>12</sup> Baker was one of the

<sup>7</sup> William E. Connelley. *History of Kansas State and People*. Chicago: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1928, p. 1949.

<sup>8</sup> Sheffield Ingalls. *History of Atchison County, Kansas*. Lawrence, KS: Standard Publishing Co., 1916, 419.

<sup>9</sup> The Kansas Historic Resources Inventory Reconnaissance Form for the Baker, Harwi, Pillow home notes that William Hetherington built the home immediately south of the home.

<sup>10</sup> "Pillow Rites To Be Held Tomorrow." *The Atchison Daily Globe*, 9 April 1956, 1.

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few men in the west who was a member of the Chicago Board of Trade. He was also a member of the Merchants' Exchange in St. Louis and a member of the Kansas City Board of Trade. The Greenleaf-Baker company eventually dissolved and was taken over by the newly formed Hall-Baker and Baker-Crowell companies. Baker's brother-in-law, Frank Crowell, took over Baker's role in the grain business around 1901.

Harriet Crowell Baker, an Atchison native, was born in 1867. Her father was an early settler to Atchison and served as mayor for three terms. She had the distinction of being the youngest graduate of the Atchison High School and completed her studies at Vassar College. Francis Baker married Harriet Crowell in 1893. The couple began purchasing city lots at Atchison's 5<sup>th</sup> and Mound Street in 1894. In September 1899, the property was put into Mrs. Baker's name. Mr. Baker's health may have been declining at this point, and placing the house in Mrs. Baker's name would have protected her from potential legal problems that may have arisen from the business.

Francis Baker died of Bright's disease in 1904. His wife was left with an estate estimated at \$400,000-500,000. Mrs. Baker was known as a generous philanthropist, contributing to Atchison's YMCA, hospital and many charities.<sup>13</sup> She died in 1913 of a lengthy pelvic inflammation. The couple's children, Frank Crowell Baker and Jeanette Baker, remained owners of the house, although they attended school in the eastern United States. They sold it to Frank Harwi in 1918.

#### Wealthy Atchison<sup>14</sup>

Atchison is positioned at a western bend of the Missouri River, a location that made it convenient to those traveling west when Kansas was still a territory. Incorporated in 1855, its history includes the rivalry between abolitionists and Missouri pro-slavery advocates, a two-year settlement in 1855 by the Mormons and visits by John Brown and Abraham Lincoln.

Atchison had the advantage of a good steamboat landing and the best wagon road leading west, so the town flourished in the early days as a transportation center. Early freight shipments bound westward were brought from St. Louis to Atchison by steamboat and then hauled by ox or mule team across the prairie. The Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe Railway, founded in 1859, was a successful venture that established the city as the eastern terminus for a railroad system that stretched west and south. Even very early mail delivery from the town to points west developed into a million-dollar business.

Atchison became a first class city in 1881. Industry flourished, including grain and milling, the trade that earned Francis Baker his fortune. Many of the city's wealthier residents built new houses in the hilly area north of downtown. High-style homes emerged in the Italianate and Queen Anne styles, displaying the wealth of local entrepreneurs. The town's reputation as a home to the affluent was reported in an

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<sup>11</sup> "Death of F.M. Baker." *The Atchison Daily Globe*, 10 June 1904, 4.

<sup>12</sup> "Atchison's Rich Folks." *The Topeka Mail and Breeze*, 1 April 1899, 1.

<sup>13</sup> "Mrs. Harriet M. Baker Died Last Evening." *The Atchison Daily Globe*, 2 July 1913, 1.

<sup>14</sup> Deon Wolfenbarger/Three Gables Preservation. *Atchison Historic Resources Survey Analysis: Summary Report*, 25 September 1998. This document contains a complete description of Atchison's history.

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1898 article in the *Topeka Mail and Breeze* entitled "Atchison's Rich Folks," which described Atchison as possessing more rich men and rich widows than any other city in Kansas. In "Seeing Atchison," *The Kansas City Star* in 1914 discussed the large number of wealthy residents, the money raised for public buildings and the impressive Baker house in particular.

The 1939 Federal Writers Project described the architecture of Atchison's mansions as "traditional styles from another era."<sup>15</sup> The Baker house, located on the northern edge of the city's turn-of-the-century development, is an excellent later representative of this era. Its location, slightly later construction date and style exemplify it as a bridge between Victorian and modern residential architecture.

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<sup>15</sup> Harold C. Evans, ed. *The WPA Guide to 1930s Kansas*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1984 reprint, 166.

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Untitled article, 6 December 1901, p. 4.

Untitled article, 9 December 1901, p. 3.

Untitled article, 20 December 1901, p. 4

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Untitled article, 3 January 1902, p. 4.

Untitled article, 8 June 1904, p. 4.

"Death of F.M. Baker," 10 June 1904, p. 4.

"Mrs. Harriet M. Baker Died Last Evening," 2 July 1913, p. 1.

"Pillow Rites To Be Held Tomorrow," 9 April 1956, p. 1.

*The Kansas City Star:*

"Seeing Atchison," 5 April 1914, p. 2A.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

All of Lots 1-4 and Lot 5, except 250' W 26', Block 85 in Old Atchison, Kansas. The property is bounded to the east by Fifth Street, to the north by Mound Street, to the west by an adjacent property line, and to the south by an alley.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries include the land historically associated with the residence and carriage house of Francis and Harriet Baker.

**Photographic Information**

The following information is consistent for all photographs:

1. Francis and Harriet Baker House
2. Atchison, Kansas
3. Susan Jezak Ford, photographer
4. Photographs taken September 12, 2002
5. Negatives located at Kansas State Historical Society

The following information is applicable to specific photographs:

The following information is applicable to specific photographs:

6. Southeast corner of the house; camera facing northwest
7. #1
6. Southwest corner of the house; camera facing northwest
7. #2
6. Northwest corner of the house; camera facing southeast
7. #3
6. Foyer; camera facing north
7. #4
6. Living room; camera facing southeast
7. #5
6. Stairway stained glass; camera facing north
7. #6
6. Third-floor ballroom; camera facing northeast
7. #7
6. Northeast corner of the carriage house; camera facing southwest
7. #8

