

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**

historic George and Annie Bell House

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 1008 Ohio Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Lawrence

N/A vicinity of

state Kansas

code 20

county Douglas

code 045

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
☐ district	☐ public	☐ occupied	☐ agriculture	☐ museum
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☒ unoccupied	☐ commercial	☐ park
☐ structure	☐ both	☒ work in progress	☐ educational	☒ private residence
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment	☐ religious
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government	☐ scientific
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial	☐ transportation
	N/A	☐ no	☐ military	☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Dr. & Mrs. David Francisco

street & number 8121 Fontana

city, town Shawnee Mission

N/A vicinity of

state Kansas 66208

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Douglas County Courthouse

city, town Lawrence

state Kansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveystitle State Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate 1973 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Kansas State Historical Society

city, town Topeka

state Kansas

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Bell House in Lawrence is a one-and-a-half story rectangular stone building with a gable roof. The main facade is oriented toward Ohio Street on the west. Because the house is built into a steeply sloping hillside, the cellar door opens at ground level so from the east the facade appears to be two-and-a-half stories tall. Although the house has three functional levels, it is relatively small -- approximately 17.5 feet wide and 29 feet long. In spite of the unsympathetic addition of a room to the north and a large redwood deck to the east the house has retained its historic feeling and appearance. Current renovation plans call for the removal of the room and modification of the deck.

The Bell House is constructed of locally quarried limestone. It is tan in color with occasional dark brown concentrations of iron in some stones. The uncoursed rubble walls are approximately eighteen inches thick. Larger interlocking stones at the building corners have been squared to resemble quoins.

The most distinctive exterior features of the house are the cut keystone arches over all the door and window openings in the west and east facades. Original openings in the side walls have large cut and tooled stone lintels and sills.

Other than the fine stonework, there is little exterior ornamentation. There is a flat wooden fascia board and a crown molding on the gable eaves.

In plan the house basically has two rooms on the first floor and two on the second with a central brick chimney in the main partition wall. There were originally four exterior doors on the first floor. In addition to the entrances on the south side of the east and west walls, there are full-length openings in the west side of the south wall and the east side of the north wall.

Beside each of the entrances including that of the cellar, there are two six-over-nine wooden double-hung windows. Each gable end has a pair of windows with semielliptical arched heads. Those in the west gable have wooden shutters hung on pins set in the frames. The louvered shutters are painted black. Full single windows are regularly arranged in the side walls and the east half of the cellar. Two smaller casement windows light the west half of the cellar where most of the walls are below grade. A shed dormer window has been added at the southwest corner of the second floor.

The wooden exterior doors and most of the windows appear to be original or at least very early. There are three four-panel solid wood exterior doors on the first floor of the Bell House. Two interior doors, one into the modern addition and one leading to the cellar stair, are similar. There is a paneled exterior door at the cellar entrance.

On the first floor the original frame and plaster partition wall is intact. Both rooms are approximately the same size. The area of the east room is diminished by a stair against the north wall which curves as it rises into a hall between the two main rooms on the second floor. This stair is enclosed by a curving frame plaster wall. Exterior walls on the first floor are also plastered.

Original wood floors on six-inch-wide pine boards have been refinished in the west room and covered in the east. The wood casing and base on the first floor do not appear to be original. Some of the casing is oak; the rest of the trim is pine.

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On the second floor the main partition walls and openings appear to be original. The casing on the west bedroom windows is early and may be original. The outline of the chimney projects into the west bedroom.

Alterations

Despite its age, the architectural integrity of the Bell House has not been significantly diminished by physical alterations. A frame porch was added to the front in 1961. Apparently, the posts were salvaged from another nineteenth century house. The porch was built over earlier concrete slabs shown in front of the house in a 1955 photograph.

Some time between 1963 and 1968, a room was added at the northeast corner of the building. It is raised above the ground on steel posts at a level with the first floor. An original exterior door now opens into this room. The addition is framed in wood with plywood sheathing. It has a shed roof.

A large redwood deck also supported on steel posts has been added to the east side of the house. This was built soon after the property changed hands in 1978.

An earlier alteration is the dormer window at the southwest corner of the second floor. The lower part of the opening has been cut into the stone wall; it does not have a stone sill. This window may have been added after the Allisons bought the house in 1914. The brick chimney top has been rebuilt since the building was photographed in 1929. A projecting top course has been removed and a metal cap installed. There are modern asphalt shingles on the roof.

Other exterior alterations include the installation of tension rods between the first and second floors. These collars are located in the south and east walls near the southeast corner of the house.

Interior

On the first floor the ceilings have been covered with gypsum board. The doorway in the south wall has been filled with shelves. On the second floor ceilings and walls have been covered with gypsum board. A bathroom and closets in each bedroom have been framed against the south wall. Base trim has been removed and the east window casing has been altered.

In the cellar it appears that the original partition wall has been removed. The space is now divided by a furnace enclosure and a central closet against the south wall. The basement stair has been rebuilt. A full-length window in the north wall has been covered. The cellar has a concrete floor.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400-1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500-1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600-1699	☒ architecture	☐ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800-1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900-	☐ communications	☐ industry	☒ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention	Bleeding Kansas	☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1862-1863

Builder/Architect George W. Bell

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

One of the oldest surviving residential buildings in Lawrence is the George and Annie Bell House at 1008 Ohio Street. The builder, George Bell, was killed during Quantrill's infamous raid in 1863, and since that time the house has been considered significant by the community. Its architectural significance has also been recognized by inclusion in three of the most important twentieth century studies of historic buildings in Lawrence.

Chronology

The Bell House occupies Lot 142 on Ohio Street. George Bell bought the unimproved site for sixty dollars in late October 1862. According to Cordley's history, the family was living in the house when Quantrill's raiders attacked the city of Lawrence on August 21, 1863. Cordley said that Captain George W. Bell "lived on the hill overlooking the town."

Cordley did not explain whether Bell's rank was related to service in the Union army, the local militia, or simply a mark of respect. Bell had an important position as the clerk of Douglas County in 1863. He apparently acted bravely in the attempt to defend Lawrence from Quantrill's surprise attack. Cordley reported that Bell, when notified of the raid, told his wife, "They may kill me, but they cannot kill the principles I fight for. If they take Lawrence, they must do it over my dead body."

The citizens of Lawrence were unable to organize any effective resistance that day and Bell was killed. In fact, according to Cordley, after the raiders shot Bell, they came up the hill to threaten his wife saying, "We have killed your husband and we have come to burn his house." The house was set on fire, but the family saved it.

Although the Bell family was not left homeless like many others in Lawrence, Bell's death "left a wife and six children to miss and mourn him." The youngest, Carrie Bell, was only two years old.

According to local tradition, Annie Bell and her children lived in the cellar after George's death and rented the upstairs rooms of the house to boarders. In the 1871 city directory Mrs. G. W. Bell was listed as residing on Ohio Street between what are now Tenth and Eleventh Streets. The basic outline of the house was also shown in the 1873 atlas; Mrs. A. Bell was listed as the owner of lot 142 at that time.

After 1873 Annie Bell was not listed in the city directories for almost thirty years. One of her children, Mrs. A.M. Hamill (Nettie), was listed as the resident at 1008 Ohio Street in 1891 and 1893. Annie Bell may have been living with her daughter during these years because she was again recorded as the resident in 1902. Sometime after 1902, Annie moved to Topeka to live with her daughter, Carrie. Annie Bell died in Topeka on Oct. 3, 1910.

After 1902 the house was rented to a number of different families. Probably because of its proximity to the university, most of these included students. Asa and Emma Adair, residents in 1911, had one son who was a student. Emma Cunnick, who rented the house in 1913, had two sons attending college.

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In 1914 the heirs of George and Annie Bell sold the house to John and Mary Allison. The Allison family owned the house for the next forty-eight years. John Allison, Sr., was listed as a real estate agent in 1915 and 1917. The house was rented, however, in 1919. When the Allisons returned to the house only Mary and her son John, a student, were listed as residents.

Mary Allison and another son Lawrence were listed as residents in 1925. Lawrence Allison gave his occupation as aeroplane builder. This must have been an unusual occupation for this time. Mary Allison died on July 24, 1926 and the house at 1008 Ohio was vacant in 1928. The brothers had formed the Allison Aeroplane Company by 1930, but they no longer lived on Ohio Street. Eventually, they left Lawrence, apparently to pursue careers involved with aviation.

Since then the house has changed hands three times. The present owners plan to rehabilitate the building according to the Secretary of the Interior's standards beginning in June 1983.

Architectural Significance

The Bell House is also important for its architectural integrity and character. The integrity is apparent from a physical examination and is remarkably well-documented in a series of twentieth century photographs. As it stands, the building is a visual reminder of the early settlement period in Kansas.

Several important features contribute to the distinctive sense of time and place evoked by the Bell House. Although the building has the simple temple form derived from the Greek Revival style, the design used a steeply sloping hill site to maximum advantage both for convenience and visual effect. While the walls of native stone are impressive to the modern observer, this choice probably followed from the scarcity of lumber at the time and a concern for fire protection and durability.

Even though Lawrence was a frontier city with limited resources when the Bell house was built, the elaborate stone detailing suggests not only that skilled craftsmen were available, but also that George Bell had a sophisticated appreciation of such stylistic features. The size and uniform quality of the keystone arches indicate the work of a professional mason. The tooled door and window sills and lintels also show a practiced control. Even the building corners have been shaped with care.

It is this combination of practical and ornamental features which make the Bell House a particularly important example of historic architecture. There are other stone houses in Lawrence with similar form, but the Bell House is one of the finest, if not the finest, example of this building form.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Lawrence East

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property occupies city lot 142 on the east side of Ohio street in the city of Lawrence, and is approximately 50 feet by 113 feet in size. The Bell house has occupied the lot since its construction in 1863.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nora Pat Small, Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Department

organization Kansas State Historical Society

date June 24, 1983

street & number 120 West Tenth

telephone (913) 296-5294

city or town Topeka

state Kansas

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

date June 29, 1983

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Abstract of title: Lot 142, Ohio Street, City of Lawrence. Prepared by Douglas County Abstract Company.

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Boughton and McAllister. Lawrence City Directory and Business Guide for 1886. (Lawrence, KS.: Boughton and McAllister, 1866).

City Directories: Lawrence, KS. 1871, 1888, 1891, 1903, 1909, 1911, 1914, 1915, 1917, 1923, 1925, 1928, 1930

Cordley, Richard. A History of Lawrence, Kansas. (Lawrence, KS.: E.F. Caldwell, 1895).

Death notice: Mrs. George Park Bell. Lawrence Daily Journal (October 4, 1910), pg.6, col. 4.

Nineteenth Century Houses in Lawrence, Kansas. (Lawrence, KS.: University of Kansas Museum of Art, 1968).

Sanborn Insurance Maps: Lawrence, Kansas. (February, 1905), (April, 1912), (Jan., 1927).

Wearing, Ben. "History of Buildings in Lawrence, Kansas," M.A. thesis, University of Kanas, 1955.

This nomination was prepared from materials submitted by Dale Nimz of Lawrence.

INDIANA 13 C. Lima 17 8 10 9 14 E. Adams 15 11 16 12 17 13 18 14 19 15	LOUISIANA 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147	OHIO 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119	TENNESSEE 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103	KENTUCKY 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121	VERMONT 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139	NEW HAMPSHIRE 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157
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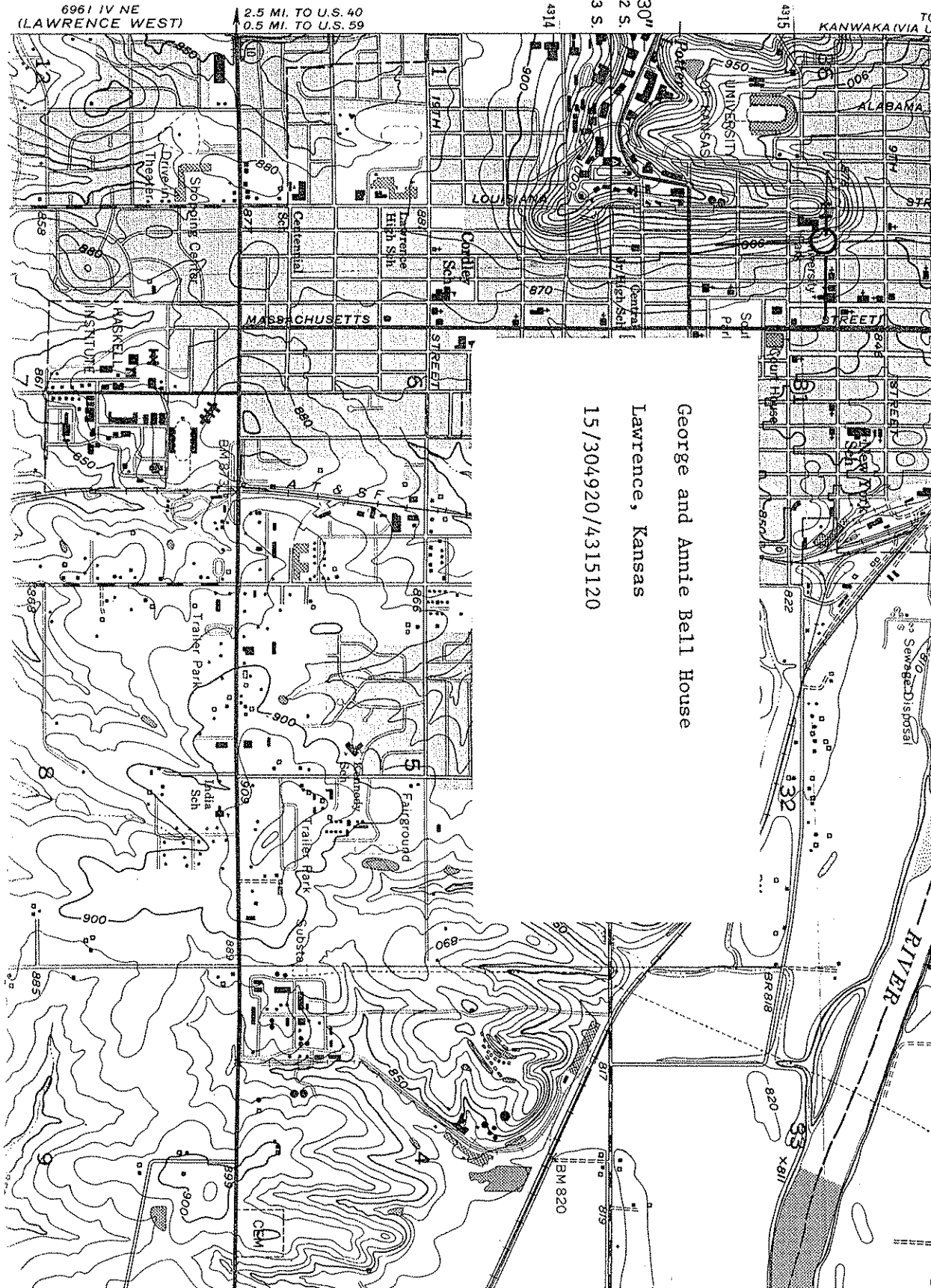
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6961 IV NE
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0.5 MI. TO U.S. 59

5730'
T. 12 S.
T. 13 S.

TO
KANWAKA (VIA U.S. 40)



George and Annie Bell House
Lawrence, Kansas
15/304920/4315120