



Register of Historic Kansas Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts. The format is similar to the National Register of Historic Places form. 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. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name The J.H. Stevens / C.L. Thompson Block Historic District

Other names/site number Carter Bros. Building, J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall, J.C. Penny Building

Name of related Multiple Property Listing n/a

2. Location

street & number 401-409 North Main Street not for publication

city or town Garden City vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Finney code 055 zip code 67846

3-4. Certification

The above property has been determined eligible for both the Register of Historic Kansas Places and the National Register of Historic Places. The property has been documented and recorded on a National Register of Historic Places nomination form, which serves as the official register nomination for this property.

The Historic Sites Board of Review has determined that this property meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

I hereby certify that this property meets the criteria for and is listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Applicable State Register Criteria: A B C D

August 5, 2023

Signature of certifying official/Title Katrina Ringler, Deputy SHPO Date

Kansas State Historical Society
State agency

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name The J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block Historic District

Other names/site number Carter Bros. Building; J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall; J.C. Penney Building

Name of related Multiple Property Listing _____

2. Location

Street & number 401 - 409 N. Main

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 not for publication

Street City or town Garden City

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 vicinity

State Kansas Code KS County Finney Code 055 Zip code 67846

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D



August 5, 2023

Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO Date

Kansas State Historical Society
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 17, 2024

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
Historic District
Name of Property

Finney County, Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

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

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

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	0	buildings
		Sites
		structures
		Objects
3	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE: department store, specialty store, business
Health Care: medical business
Social: meeting hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store
VACANT
WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VICTORIAN: Italianate
MODERN MOVEMENT
OTHER: Vernacular Stone Building

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone and Concrete
walls: Stone, Brick
roof: Asphalt
other:

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
Historic District
Name of Property

Finney County, Kansas
County and State

Narrative Description

Summary

The J.H. Stevens/C. L. Thompson Block Historic District is comprised of three adjacent commercial buildings on the west side of the 400 block of N. Main Street south of the prominent four-story Windsor Hotel (NR listed 1972) in downtown Garden City, Finney County, Kansas. The three resources are:

1. The Carter Bros. Building at 401 (403) N. Main built in 1885 with 1911 rear addition;
2. The J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall 407 (405) N. Main built in 1886/expanded to rear alley in 1931; and
3. The J.C. Penney Building 409 (411) N. Main built in 1954 on the site of the former Stevens Opera House.

Set in a traditional historic commercial setting, the buildings share common setbacks with a public sidewalk along the front providing storefront access into ground floor retail spaces. The buildings span the entire depth of the lots to a rear alley with public parking beyond. The buildings at 401 and 407 N. Main have public entrances on the west providing customer access from the rear parking lot. The upper floors of the two-story buildings share a Main Street entrance to a stairway accessing the second floor. The buildings at 401 and 407 N. Main are both two-story limestone buildings designed and constructed by local architects/builders Stevens and Thompson. Built in 1885 and 1886, these buildings feature unique stone detailing conveying the work of skilled craftsmen and giving the buildings a Vernacular Stone Building stylistic classification. The center building at 407 also embodies Italianate stylistic details retaining its ornate metal cornice with brackets and dentils. A third-floor with steep mansard roof with gabled wall dormers that was added to 401 N. Main two years after construction, was removed in 1985 after decades of disuse. Although the Masons relocated in 1986, the meeting hall on the upper floor of 407 is extant retaining its historic configuration and finishes dating to a 1931 expansion and remodeling. The J.C. Penney Building at 409 N. Main was completed in 1954 and is an excellent intact example of the Modern Movement in architecture with brick veneer framing a recessed stone facade above the storefront. This one-story building features a front and rear mezzanine as well as basement sales floor all of which are intact.

Elaboration

Neighborhood Context and Site

The J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block Historic District at 401-409 N. Main Street (U.S. Hwy 83 Business) is centrally located in the heart of the downtown area in the southcentral part of Garden City. In this city of approximately 28,000 population, the central business district features buildings in varied sizes and styles representing one hundred and forty years of commercial development spanning from the 1880s to current day. Downtown Garden City is home to local government including the Finney County Courthouse and offices, City Hall, the U.S. Post Office. In addition to offering many basic goods and services, downtown businesses include professional and service businesses, specialty shops, and entertainment and recreational opportunities including restaurants and bars, a theater, and Stevens Park. Frederick Fennup Park located southeast of downtown is home to the city's zoo, museum, recreational facilities, and waterpark.

Positioned at the northwest corner of W. Laurel and N. Main Streets, the three district buildings face east on Main in a traditional historic commercial district with common building setbacks and public sidewalks in front of the buildings that feature brick pavers, trees, and bump-outs corner crosswalks. Diagonal parking runs along Main and Laurel Streets and a public parking lot lays west of the buildings. The three district resources are located on Lots 7-12 of Stevens Second Addition, each building having approximately fifty foot frontage on Main Street and spanning the full length of the lots to a rear alley. The buildings all have flat/taped roofs with asphalt gravel roofs obscured by parapets. The building at 401 N. Main has exposure along W. Laurel Street on the south. The west side of the four hundred block of N. Main is distinguished by the four-story Windsor Hotel (Listed in NRHP 1972) anchoring the north end of the block. The proposed district is comprised of the three buildings south of the Windsor Hotel.

District Resources

Today the three buildings in the proposed district are located on a single legal parcel with a single owner. Because they were three separate buildings historically, they are treated as three individual resources in this district nomination.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
Historic District
Name of Property

Finney County, Kansas
County and State

1) 401 (403) N. Main
Carter Bros. Building
J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson of Garden City, Architects/Builders **1885** **Contributing**

Historic Use and Configuration

Commissioned by brothers J.V. and N.M. Carter in 1885, the original two-story stone structure was designed and built by local architects/contractors Stevens and Thompson who also built the adjacent Masonic Hall, former Stevens Opera House and the Windsor Hotel on the west side of the 400 block of N. Main. The 401 building at the northwest corner of W. Laurel and N. Main originally housed a mercantile in the south/corner storefront and offices on the upper floor. The following year, the Grand Central Hotel opened on the upper floor. Carter Bros. remained in the south storefront. The hotel office was located in the north storefront with a dining room west of the office. The hotel kitchen was a separate bay at the rear of the lot, connected by a walkway. Originally capped by a metal cornice with brackets and a raised central parapet/signboard, a wood-frame third floor was added in 1887 in the form of a steep shingle mansard roof that featured narrow gabled dormer windows with returned eaves and central tower with flared hipped roof (*extant on 1887 Sanborn Map-Figure 5*). The third floor was built for additional hotel rooms however the enterprise was short lived. The hotel closed in 1908 although a few rooms continued to be rented for longer-term residents until 1912. With no electricity or plumbing, the third floor sat unused for the next seventy years. The tower was removed in the early twentieth century (gone in ca.1930s photo) and the mansard roof/third floor was removed in 1985 due to unsafe conditions resulting from lack of use and maintenance.

Replacing the former hotel kitchen at the rear of the site, a one-story brick addition was added on the west end of the building in 1910 and a second floor added one year later. A plumbing and tin shop was located on the ground floor and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) lodge was located on the second floor of the "brick annex" (*extant on 1911 Sanborn Map-Figure 5*). The second floor of the main building was again used for offices after the closing of the hotel in 1908, accessed from Main Street via a stairway shared with 407 adjacent on the north. The Masons who owned and occupied the second floor of 407 N. Main bought this building in 1970 and began a phased remodeling project. A new storefront was installed for the C.R. Anthony store and the two-story brick addition at the rear was demolished and reconstructed in concrete with an elevator and stair to the second floor. The newspaper article describing the project notes that the final phase was to be removal of the third floor and stucco was to be installed on the south and west sides of the building (over original stone) but this phase was not completed.¹ A metal deck over steel trusses was installed to form the new roof structure. The original metal cornice removed and a concrete block parapet was added extending the original perimeter walls as part of the new roof structure. The second floor housed offices until ca.1970 and has remained unused since that time; it is a large open space.

The ground floor and storefront have been remodeled on multiple occasions since the closing of the hotel in 1908, the most recent remodel being in 2008. The original paneled wood storefront had varied ornate cast-iron columns that had been replaced or covered in the 1920s except the large column at the southeast corner. By that time, the north storefront had a leaded glass transom as compared to the original paneled glass transom. The cast-iron column at the north end of the storefront was sheathed in brick matching a new brick bulkhead. The transom was infilled and the area used for signage when C.R. Anthony opened on the ground floor in 1941. A 1971 remodeling for the C.R. Anthony store involved installation of enameled/colored panels over the columns, transom and bulkhead and a flat metal canopy was installed between the display windows and transom, the canopy remains today. The balance of the existing storefront dates to a 2008 remodel. See *Figures 6-7 & 8*.

Exterior

The original two-story building was constructed of native limestone quarried near Kendall in Hamilton County and brought in on the railroad. The stone was dressed locally. The south and west facades are coursed rock-faced stone with tall rectangular one-over-one double-hung wood windows on the upper street facades. Six south windows with slight variations in spacing, have flat stone lintels with a hammered face and smooth margins and rock-faced sills. The front/west facade has six regularly-spaced upper windows with flat stone lintels with brackets. Sills and lintels on the west facade have hammered surfaces with smooth margins. Finely-detailed pilasters are located at the southeast corner and in the center of the upper facade. Matching pilasters are located on the upper facade of the adjacent Masonic Building at 407 N. Main which was completed in 1886, also designed and constructed by Stevens and Thompson. The arched street entrance at the south end of the Masonic Building at 407 N. Main that accessed the second-floor meeting halls, was

¹ "Face-Lifting on Main Street." *Garden City Telegram*. 13 Aug 1971.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block

Historic District

Name of Property

Finney County, Kansas

County and State

shared by the two buildings also accessing the second-floor of 401 N. Main – another example of the buildings being designed and built consecutively by the same architects/builders. At the time of construction, the arched street entrance featured cast-iron columns supporting a segmental stone arch. The columns were later sheathed in brick which remains in place today.

A shaped stone cornice divides the upper facade from the storefront with a stone frieze below that features geometric shapes and similar shapes were repeated at the frieze between cornice brackets at the top of the building. A simple metal cornice capped the second floor – the top of the original building. As noted above, a steep mansard roof enclosing a third floor was added two years after the building was built; the mansard roof and cornice were removed in 1985 and the existing concrete block parapet added with the new trussed roof system over the second floor.

The existing storefront is a modern replacement. It is aluminum-framed display windows with recessed central entrance dating to the 1971 C.R. Anthony remodeling. The concrete bulkhead and panels over the transom and columns date to the 2008 remodeling. Wood trim was installed to simulate original detailing but proportions of the storefront and columns formerly had been altered. The flat metal canopy that was installed in 1971 remains in place with canvas edging. The storefront extends around the corner to the south facade. The only first-floor openings on the south facade were a door and window at the west end of the original building, formerly infilled.

The 1971 addition at the west end of the original building (reconstruction of the 1910-1911 brick addition) is a concrete structure with a stacked concrete block facade (painted). A vertical band of contrasting red brick veneer defines the rear entrance toward the west end of the bay. The entrance is recessed with a pair of aluminum-framed glass doors and single-light transom. A fixed single-light window is located on the upper floor above the entrance. A block parapet corresponds to the parapet installed on the original building in 1985 after removal of the third floor. The west facade of the 1971 rear bay comprises the rear facade facing the alley. Like the south facade, a vertical band of red brick veneer defines a recessed central entrance on the rear, providing customer access from a public parking lot across the alley. A single door and pair of service doors are located south of the public entrance.

Interior

The first floor is comprised of a large open retail space with contemporary finishes including VCT flooring, sheetrock walls and suspended acoustical tile ceilings. Given the numerous former commercial tenants and storefront remodelings, there are no historic features or finishes visible on the ground floor. The interior of the second floor dates to the 1985 removal of the third floor. At that time, partition walls were removed on the second floor and a concrete floor slab installed to help stabilize the structure and facilitate installation of the new trussed roof system over the second floor. The only remaining historic finishes are plaster at perimeter walls.



Figure 1 – Rendering of the west side of the 400 block N. Main. From left: Carter Bros. Building; J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall; and the former J.A. Stevens Opera House. *Garden City Irrigator* 2 Jan 1886, 1.

Integrity

The existing building conveys its original design and construction as a two-story native limestone building including finely detailed stone features and original masonry openings with replacement double-hung upper windows. Although the building spent nearly one hundred years (1887-1985) as a three story structure, the third floor was never occupied after closure of the Grand Central Hotel (1886-1908). The steep mansard roof with narrow gabled wall dormers and central tower contributed to the building's Late Victorian-Italianate character along with the original wood storefront with cast-iron columns and bracketed metal cornice. The rear brick bay was originally constructed in 1910-1911 and demolished and reconstructed in concrete in 1971. The removal and covering of the cast-iron columns and later removal of the third floor/mansard roof and bracketed metal cornice altered the features that conveyed the building's Late Victorian character but returned the building to an appearance that more closely resembles its original design and construction (Figure 1). The two-story limestone building, with finely detailed stonework portrays the building's original design and conveys the skill of Stevens and Thompson, a local architectural/building firm that designed and built the two-story building in 1885.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
Historic District
Name of Property

Finney County, Kansas
County and State

2) 407 (405) N. Main

J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson of Garden City, Architects/Builders

1886

Contributing

Historic Use and Configuration

Designed and built by J.H. Stevens and C.L. Thompson for John A. Stevens, the building at 405-407 N. Main Street was constructed as a two-story limestone structure with two storefronts on the ground floor and two lodge halls on the second floor. The upper floor was owned by the Masons and IOOF who each had meeting halls, the Masons on the front/east end, the IOOF at the rear/west end. An arched entryway at the south end of the storefront provided street entry to a wide stair that accessed the lodge halls from the south and the offices adjacent at 401 N. Main, from the north. Featuring ten foot high ceilings, the two meeting halls were separated by folding doors that could be opened to create one large room. Lodge facilities included three anterooms and several closets and wardrobes. The Masons and IOOF lodges were soon plagued by financial troubles and by 1911, the IOOF had moved to the second floor of the brick annex behind 401 N. Main. The Masons were foreclosed upon but were able to re-purchase their hall by 1914 and in 1931 the Masonic Hall underwent a major expansion and remodeling done by local contractor C.E. Blood. This expansion occurred when the owner of the first floor planned a rear addition expanding the building to the alley and remodeling the ground-floor storefronts for a new tenant. The Masonic Hall served the three local Masonic orders and the Eastern Star lodge, all sharing the new facilities that included an enlarged meeting room removing the former partition between the original two separate lodge rooms. The rear addition housed a dining room and kitchen as well as a ladies' anteroom. Historic photos illustrate no changes to the front upper facade as part of this project except two infilled window openings detailed below. The Masons occupied the second-floor meeting hall until 1986 followed by the local railroad hobby club who vacated the building in 2022.

Aside from the replacement storefronts over the years, the only other exterior modification has been alterations to the upper windows. The upper facade featured six windows, three above each storefront. The original wood windows were one-over-one double-hung units with single-light transoms. The earliest view of infilled window openings is a ca.1930s photo of the west side of the 400 block post-dating the 1931 expansion and remodeling. The fourth and fifth windows (from the south) had been infilled with concrete, recessed within the original masonry opening; these windows are located above the stage on the east end of the lodge hall. By the mid-1940s, the second window opening from the south had also been infilled and new multi-light steel windows with central operable hopper panels had been installed in the three remaining openings on the upper facade. The new steel windows fill the upper portion of the original openings. A concrete sill was installed at the base of the new windows and the lower portion of the original openings was infilled with concrete panels similar to the adjacent infilled openings.

An early view of the west side of the 400 block illustrates that in addition to similarities in the stone facades, the ground floor of 405-407 N. Main built for J.A. Stevens closely matched the storefronts at 401-403 N. Main also designed and constructed local architects/contractors J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson. The original ground floor had two storefront spaces featuring paneled wood storefronts with cast-iron columns and recessed central entrances. Large square cast-iron columns from the Keystone Iron Works Co. in Kansas City, MO. framed the ground floor and the street entrance to the second floor. The two storefronts housed a variety of businesses in the early years, including Laughlin Drug Store, located in the south storefront in the 1910s. Norris Drug purchased Laughlin Drug, occupied the south storefront by the early 1920s when the storefronts were remodeled with smaller metal-framed display windows over brick (S) and tile (N) bulkheads and leaded glass transoms. Business signs covered the lower stone cornice separating the storefronts from the upper facades. Norris Drug Co. still occupied the south storefront in 1931 when the rear addition was constructed and the storefronts were again remodeled. J.C. Penney occupied the north storefront in 1929 having bought out J.B. Byars' dry goods store in that location. Byars purchased the building at 407 in 1930 and planned a major remodeling when the Penney's store moved to the ground floor of the Stevens Opera House adjacent at 409-411 N. Main in 1931 more than doubling their store size. Byars remodeled the 405-407 building expanding the north storefront by four feet for the F.W. Woolworth's store. Norris Drug remained in the south storefront but also received an enlarged retail space with the rear addition. A new metal ceiling, likely the extant ceiling, was installed as part of this remodeling.² In 1941 F.W. Woolworth expanded to occupy the entire first floor and a new storefront was installed resulting in removal or covering of the original cast-iron storefront columns except at the north end of the building. This remodeling involved installation of a modern aluminum-framed storefront over marble or granite bulkhead with twin recessed entrances. A modern 'company' sign with curved corners was installed over the transom area completely covering the lower stone cornice and a canvas awning

² *Garden City Daily News*. 24 Jul 1931.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block

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installed below the signboard. The ground floor has remained a single retail space since the 1941 remodeling, housing Woolworth into the 1960s and then a Ben Franklin store. J.C. Penney, who built a new store adjacent at 409 N. Main in 1954, expanded into the ground floor of this building in the mid-1970s. The existing storefront is an aluminum-framed replacement with a recessed entry on the north end with components dating to the ca. 1975 and 2011 projects. In the 1970s-80s, the corner piers were covered with opaque panels while the transom and lower cornice had a painted plywood covering. The storefront had a concrete bulkhead and a flat metal canopy was installed. The canopy was removed in 2011 and the existing tile surround installed at the storefront.

A distinguishing feature of the front facade is the arched entry on the south end of the storefront that served as the entrance to the Masonic and IOOF halls on the second floor of this building as well as the second floor of 401 N. Main on the south. This entrance, like the storefronts on the two buildings, originally shared common features with both buildings namely large square cast-iron columns with stone capitals although the north and south columns differed in style from the beginning, each supporting the segmental stone arched opening with 'Masonic' keystone. The original entry configuration included a pair of wood doors with arched glass lights, tall single-light transoms and wood panels above and wood infill in the arch. By 1931, the ornate columns framing the street entrance had been sheathed with brick and by 1960, the arch was infilled with brick (inside the stone arch). When the contemporary aluminum-framed glass storefront was installed on this building ca. 1975, a single door with full-height sidelights with three-panel transom above was installed in the arched entry to the second floor. A 2011 remodeling removed the coverings, re-exposing the brick piers and brick infill in the arched stone surround. See *Figures 6-7 & 9*.

Exterior

The two-story building features a limestone facade with ornate, carved pilasters and unique stone sills and lintels on the upper facade. An ornate pressed-metal cornice with brackets and dentils caps the parapet. The cornice is hand-signed by the manufacturer – I.C. Galligar of South Pueblo, Colorado. The six original masonry openings across the upper facade remain but three of the openings have been infilled (1930s) and the other three have downsized ca. 1940s steel windows with concrete infill below. A stone lower cornice with frieze featuring geometric designs matching 401 N. Main on the south is extant between the storefront and upper facade but has voids and significant damage from former attachments. A 2011 storefront remodel removed the plywood and paneled coverings on the transom area and storefront piers to expose the stone lower cornice and the brick and cast-iron piers. The aluminum-framed display windows and recessed north entrance were retained and new tile surround was installed bringing the lower level of the facade to its current appearance.

The rear facade is red brick. Facing an alley with public parking west of the alley, the rear of the building has a customer entry that serves this building and the adjacent J.C. Penney building at 409 N. Main. The rear entrance is recessed at the north end of the facade and has a tile surround matching the storefront. The south end of the lower level is painted brick and features three window openings, two of which have windows extant with security bars in place. The original windows are two-light sashes; the upper sash being a hopper unit. A single door provides private access into the building south of the customer entrance. A large square brick chimney extends ten feet above the roofline near the west wall of the building. The upper facade is distinguished by four regularly-spaced paired one-over-one double-hung wood windows. This building extends approximately four feet west of the adjacent J.C. Penney building on the north. A secondary exit with metal fire stair extends from a fire door at the west end of the north facade down to grade behind the J.C. Penney building.

Interior

The storefront retail space is a large open room with a row of round metal columns down the center of the space and boxed columns along the former shared wall with the J.C. Penney Building at 409 N. Main to the north; the storefront space in the two buildings has been occupied by a single business since the mid-1970s. An entry vestibule is enclosed at the north end of the west facade providing customer access from rear parking. A work/storage room and raised restroom are located along the rear/west wall. Exposed finishes include VCT and carpet flooring over the original wood floor and a suspended acoustical tile ceiling with applied florescent strip lighting. Above the suspended ceiling is the ornate metal ceiling dating to the 1931 addition and remodeling. A stair in the southwest corner provides access down to the basement. The basement was generally used for storage with exposed masonry walls, concrete floors, and exposed wood structure at the ceiling. However, a finished area at the west end historically included a cluster of offices with VAT tile flooring, plaster walls and ceiling, five horizontal-panel wood doors and wood trim. Concrete steps lead up to raised bathrooms with wood toilet partitions and plaster walls and ceilings.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block

Historic District

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The second-floor is accessed from the street entrance at the south end of the storefront and has a rear door to a fire stair at the northwest corner of the floor. The wide front stair has carpeting with wood wainscoting and handrail. The existing configuration dates to the 1931 remodeling when the building was extended to the rear alley. The original east meeting hall was expanded and a long anteroom created along the south stair. A dining room and kitchen were created at the west end of the floor. The lodge room includes platforms on three sides of the hall, a stage on the east end, and balcony on the west. The east/front stage is framed by a plaster proscenium arch with paired marble columns with Corinthian capitals on each side. The basic configuration of anterooms and the kitchen on the south remain as does the hallway with small rooms between the lodge hall and rear dining room, however, robe closets and other lodge accoutrements have formerly been removed. Finishes include wood floors, plaster walls, and applied acoustical tile ceilings with some historic light fixtures in place (supplemented by florescent pendants). Decorative metal ceiling cove is extant on the side walls of the lodge room, likely dating to an original metal ceiling, possibly replaced with applied Celotex tile in the 1931 remodel. The kitchen and dining room have vinyl tile flooring and wood cabinets extant with a serving window between the kitchen and dining room. Historic single-panel wood doors and wood trim including door casings and baseboards retain their stained and varnished finish throughout the second floor.

Integrity

Constructed in 1886, the two-story limestone building retains a moderate to high degree of historic integrity. The unique stone detailing is visible on the upper facade as is the original ornate metal cornice. The primary modification is the infill and replacement of upper windows but the pattern of the regularly-spaced window openings across the upper facade is maintained as the infill and downsized windows are recessed in the original openings. The building took its overall form and massing in 1931 when a rear addition expanded the upper-floor lodge space and the area for the ground-floor storefronts. The existing windows were in place by the mid-1940s. The storefront and retail space have experienced multiple remodelings and replacements over its one-hundred and thirty-plus year history. The existing storefront dates to a 2011 remodeling within the original storefront opening and included re-exposure of the lower cornice and the original cast-iron pier at the north end of the ground floor. The aluminum-framed storefront system dates to the 1970s remodeling but the tile storefront surround dates to the 2011 project. The street entrance on the south end of the ground floor is extant and continues to serve as access for the second floor of this building and the adjacent building at 401 N. Main. The existing brick columns date to a 1931 remodeling but the original segmental stone arch remains a defining feature. On the ground floor, the 1931 pressed tin ceiling is intact above the existing suspended ceiling. The general configuration of the second-floor lodge rooms date to the 1931 expansion of the lodge rooms. Extant historic features include the wood floor, raised platforms, balcony, stage with proscenium arch, built-in wood cabinets, plaster walls, wood doors and trim, and some historic light fixtures.

The building retains significant character-defining features on the interior despite numerous remodelings over the years. The exterior clearly reflects the building's 1886 design and construction by local architect and builders Stevens and Thompson who specialized in stone construction. Although the ornate cornice with brackets and dentils gives the building its Italianate stylistic classification, the unique stone detailing at pilasters and windows on the upper facade reflect outstanding craftsmanship of this vernacular stone building. *See Figure 1 on page 5.*

3) 409 (411) N. Main

J.C. Penney Building

Howard Blanchard, Architect; Boyd Stehwein, Builder

1954

Contributing

Historic Use and Configuration

The J.C. Penney Building was completed at 409 N. Main in 1954, built on the site of the 1886 Stevens Opera House where the J.C. Penney store had occupied the ground floor since 1930. The new modern J.C. Penney building was designed by Garden City architect Howard Blanchard and built by local contractor, Boyd Stehwein. Historically, the storefront was symmetrical with a recessed center bay featuring a pair of aluminum-framed glass doors with full-height glass sidelights. Framing the recessed entry bay were two-light glass display windows over a brick bulkhead matching the piers and parapet. With front and rear mezzanines and full basement, the one-story building featured sales areas totaling 9,000 square feet. An article in the Garden City newspaper in February 1954 noted that "...the store's grand opening at 409 N. Main will disclose a brand-new building incorporating the latest developments in store design, construction, fixtures and equipment. Illumination throughout the store is provided by the latest type of florescent lighting. All new fixtures and a mechanical refrigeration air-conditioning system add to shopping ease and comfort."³

³ "Penney's Plan Big Opening." *Garden City Telegram*. 17 Feb 1954, 1.

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Exterior

The new purpose-built J.C. Penney Building brought a modern mid-century verve to the 400 block of N. Main amidst classic late nineteenth-century buildings. Completed in 1954, the one-story concrete building features front and rear mezzanines denoted on the front facade by a band of horizontal windows and on the rear by double-hung steel windows with multi-light sashes. The building reflects the Modern Movement in architecture and is classified as an Enframed Window Wall commercial building type.⁴ Variegated orange brick veneer in the form of an integral parapet and piers frame the storefront. The upper facade is recessed within the brick frame with cut fieldstone panels inset in a simple stone surround. The band of hopper mezzanine windows reinforce the horizontality of this one-story facade.

The rear facade is red brick with windows in punched openings with rowlock brick sills. Asymmetrical in fenestration, the ground floor has a pair of metal doors in the center with a single window in each end bay. The upper facade (mezzanine) has two single windows in the north end bay, a single window in the center, and small single window in the south end bay. Rear windows are three-over-three and six-over-six double-hung steel windows with quarry tile interior sills while the front mezzanine windows are horizontal single-light steel hopper windows with pink marble interior sills.

Outgrowing their new building in twenty years, J.C. Penney expanded into the ground floor of 407 N. Main adjacent on the south by creating large openings between columns in the shared wall between the two buildings. C.R. Anthony, Stage, and Gordmans occupied the space after J.C. Penney moved in 1984, also occupying both storefronts. It was likely during the J.C. Penney expansion into the adjacent storefront on the south, that the storefront was remodeled removing the recessed central entrance (the doors are gone in 1984 photo). The storefront was comprised of display windows and a flat metal awning was installed across the full length of the facade. The display windows were framed by wide piers with opaque panels installed over the brick. Today the existing storefront maintains the ca.1975 configuration but new tile sheathing was installed on the bulkhead and around the display windows in 2011. The brick veneer piers were re-exposed and the flat metal canopy removed bringing the storefront to its current appearance. See *Figure 10*.

Interior

With the exception of opening of the shared interior wall with 407 N. Main, the plan configuration of the J.C. Penney building largely reflects its original 1954 configuration. The retail space occupied three levels in the original building including a majority of the ground floor, the rear mezzanine and the front/east portion of the basement. All three spaces continue to reflect their retail origins. Two rows of round steel columns divide the main sales floor into three bays. Two small non-historic dressing rooms are located in the northeast corner of the ground floor as is a door to the original stair leading to office space on the enclosed front/east mezzanine. The mezzanine offices have natural light from the horizontal windows along the front facade and five fixed-pane single-light windows overlooked the retail floor. An open stair on the north wall provides access to the rear mezzanine that features a half-wall with metal railing along the front edge overlooking the first floor. A dressing room is enclosed on the south wall of this mezzanine with restrooms, a small storage room and the rear stair located on the mezzanine behind the retail space. The first-floor retail space extends below the rear mezzanine and an opening on the north wall provided customer access to the basement. Behind the sales floor, a small work room with mechanical equipment, janitor closet, rear storage, back stair, and the rear service entrance are located along the west side of the first floor.

The east portion of the basement originally housed Penney's newly established home furnishings and hardware departments. The west end of the basement was mechanical space and merchandise storage open to the rear stair that was accessible above from service door to the alley. Throughout, finishes include VCT and carpet flooring, plaster and sheetrock walls, ceilings with mechanical soffits, and pendant florescent lighting. Concrete walls and ceilings are exposed in parts of the rear basement area.

Integrity

Constructed in 1954, Garden City's first purpose-built J.C. Penney's store retains a relatively high degree of historic and architectural integrity including original front and rear facades and original steel windows. The primary modification is a replacement storefront eliminating the storefront entrance when J.C. Penney expanded into the adjacent building to the south (1975). The shared wall was removed combining the storefront retail spaces of 409 and 407 N. Main but a column line remains. The interior retains its original volume of space and front and rear mezzanines as well as wall and ceiling finishes in most areas. The building continues to convey its mid-century Modern Movement design and retail origins.

⁴ Richard Longstreth. *The Buildings of Main Street – A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*. Washington DC: Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1987, 68-69.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- 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.
- 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 is 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

COMMERCE
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1885-1954

Significant Dates

1885, 1886, 1954

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson, architects and
Builders-401 and 407 N. Main
Howard Blanchard, architect and Boyd Stehwein,
contractor-J.C. Penney Building, 409 N. Main

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance spans a seventy-year period to incorporate the dates of construction of the three resources, including original the rear expansions of 401 and 407: 1885 – 1954.

Criteria Considerations (justification)

None

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Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

The J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block Historic District is being nominated under Criteria A and C in the areas of Commerce and Architecture. The district is comprised of three resources currently addressed at 401, 407, and 409 North Main Street, Garden City, Finney County, Kansas. The period of significance for the J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block Historic District is 1885 – 1954 spanning the dates of construction of the three buildings.

The three buildings have been prominent and integral resources in downtown Garden City since its earliest days. Located south of the historic Windsor Hotel, the district reflects the traditional commercial development of a historic business district, locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce. The varied buildings represent the resiliency of the commercial core through its highest highs to its lowest points, from the early permanent construction of downtown commercial buildings to modern life. The block also illuminates the influence of one of the town founders on this commercial development - John A. Stevens and other prominent local businessmen, including the Carter Brothers, H.M. and George Knox, G.B. Norris, and J.B. Byars, as well as C.R. Anthony, Woolworth, and J.C. Penney, all owned the buildings or businesses in this block that contributed to the ongoing local commercial development. In addition to commercial uses, the district also includes Garden City's first purpose-built IOOF and Mason Lodges on the upper floor of 407 N. Main, made possible through coordination with J.A. Stevens. *Note – there are two unrelated men named Stevens intertwined in the history of this district, town founder J.A. Stevens and the architect and builder J.H. Stevens.*⁵

The district is also locally significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture for its reflection of the works of local architects and builders J.H. Stevens and C.L. Thompson during the town's formative years, and Howard Blanchard's work in the mid-twentieth century. Although practicing in Garden City for only three years, Stevens and Thompson, architects and builders were responsible for design and construction of the Carter Bros. Building at 401 N. Main, the J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall at 407, the former Stevens Opera House at 409, as well as the Windsor Hotel at 413 (NR Listed 1972) comprising the west side of the 400 block of N. Main Street (two of the three extant resources). With no record of formal training, Stevens and Thompson excelled in the design and construction of native limestone buildings as Garden City saw its first permanent house of business dotting Main Street. Seventy years later, architect Howard Blanchard was responsible for the design of J.C. Penney's first purpose-built store in Garden City on the site of the former Stevens Opera House in 1954. This building remains today as one of a few outstanding Modern buildings in downtown Garden City, reflecting the physical evolution of the commercial district from ornate Victorian limestone buildings to simplified mid-century structures with clean lines and little ornamentation.

Both firms were each in their own way vital to the growth and resilience of Garden City as the "Trade Center of Western Kansas;" their influence on Garden City's built environment remains visible today. Together the buildings convey the physical and economic progression common in historic commercial districts. The J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block Historic District is locally significant under Criteria A and C in the areas of Commerce and Architecture

Elaboration

Local Context - Garden City's history spans from buffalo hunting to sugar beets and feeder cattle

Finney County was created by an act of Legislature in 1883, named in honor of Lieutenant Governor Finney of Woodson County. Three men who had roamed the area hunting buffalo and capturing wild horses, decided to settle down. Hailing from Pennsylvania, brothers William D. (1824-1908) and James R. Fulton (1828-1885) chose the location in February 1878. Along with John A. Stevens, they brought the county surveyor Charles Van Trump from Dodge City to plat their new town in

⁵ John A. Stevens, was one of the four founders of Garden City, owned the northwest quarter of the original plat of the town, and owned the Windsor Hotel (413 N. Main), the Opera House (409 N. Main), and the Stevens-Masonic Hall (407 N. Main). The second man was J.H. (John or James) Stevens, an architect, stone mason, and builder of all of the original buildings on the west side of 400 block. Several previous sources combine or confuse facts about the two Stevens – one a founder and farmer, the other an architect and builder. Legal notices in newspapers use J.H., James H., and John H. Stevens for the architect, making it nearly impossible to determine what happened to him after the bust in the 1890s. No architects, stone masons, or builders named J.H. Stevens were found in the 1900, 1910, or 1920 federal census records, supporting the idea that Stevens may have chosen another profession to survive, or simply reinvent himself. Any contrary evidence to previous accounts discovered has been carefully documented in this nomination.

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the south half of Section 18. Van Trump, Stevens, and the Fulton brothers each filed a claim on a quarter section, although through a clerical error at the land office, Van Trump lost his claim to C.J. Jones.⁶

The town was named Garden City, reportedly based on a suggestion from a passerby at viewing Mrs. William Fulton's garden. Main Street ran directly north and south, dividing the Fulton claims. The brothers built the first frame buildings in the town, one operating as the Occidental Hotel. James would be named the first sheriff of Finney County, followed by his brother. Both would hold multiple leadership positions in Finney County. Within a few months, others began to join them but the work was hard in the land of little rainfall.

The Fultons needed help to promote the town. Charles Jesse (C.J.) Jones (1844-1919), an Illinois native who had moved to Troy, Kansas, at the age of twenty-five, had married, planted fruit trees, and planned to settle down. After grasshoppers destroyed his trees, he became a mail route agent in Sterling, Kansas and made a name for himself hunting buffalo. When he heard of the Fulton brothers' efforts to promote the town, he chose to join them and secured an Atchison Topeka Santa Fe (ATSF) railroad depot for Garden City. The town was re-platted due to the railroad, and Jones then bought one of the quarter sections of the town, becoming one of Garden City's prominent leaders.

During the first year the lack of rainfall drove away many of the early settlers, but stalwart men devised a method for harnessing the nearby Arkansas River; they began to dig canals. Within the first few years G. W. Hollinger and Charles S. Landis, general store owners, organized, financed, and promoted, along with C.J. Jones, a canal company.⁷ The men wrote letters to Topeka newspapers to get funding for a four-mile long, two-foot deep canal that ran from the Arkansas River four miles west of town to the edge of Garden City at a cost of \$2,000, providing water for one hundred acres. The irrigation would be essential to western Kansas' greatest boom.⁸ During the 1880s more than four hundred miles of canals valued at \$3M were dug around Garden City.⁹

In January 1883, Garden City was incorporated as a city of the third class. The town's first bank was established in 1884, two others would soon follow. By 1885, the town had grown to a population of 6,000. A June 1885 notice in the *Garden City Sentinel* summed up the situation, declaring that the town had among many things: a rail depot, two banks, thirteen lawyers, three dry goods stores, three lumber yards, three hotels, at least one brick factory, hundreds of lots for sale, and no vacant homes.¹⁰ By September of that year, rail car loads of emigrants arrived in Finney County each day.¹¹ Land agents offered 100,000 acres of beautifully located ATSF Railroad land watered by the finest system of irrigation ditches that provided for "never-failing farms for less money."¹² City founders planted trees along city streets and invested heavily in development. C.J. Jones built the Jones Block and adjacent Buffalo Hotel in 1885-86. These buildings fronted Grant Avenue, a reported attempt to redirect business from Main Street where his competitor John A. Stevens owned land. Stevens surpassed Jones with construction of the Windsor Hotel and the Opera House on Main Street. Garden City was named the county seat in 1887 and the town's population neared 10,000 with fifty land additions in 1885-1887.¹³ Business lots in town were selling for \$500 to \$1,500 in 1885 and rose to \$2,500 two years later, causing former Governor St. John to predict that Garden City would have a 75,000 population within a decade.¹⁴

However, anticipation outsized reality. The blizzard of 1886 that killed as many as seventy-five percent of the cattle, was followed by other frigid winters along with repeated summers of scorching heat and wind ended Garden City's prosperity. Rainfall in the 1890s averaged under ten inches per annum in some areas of western Kansas. Crops failed, railroads withdrew, credit dried up, land agents, bankers, and other businesses failed. Large landowners including town fathers C.J. Jones and John A. Stevens were ruined. By 1891 Garden City's population fell to 2,951 as the city struggled to survive.¹⁵

⁶ Leota Howard Blanchard. *The Conquest of Southwest Kansas*. Wichita, KS: Wichita Eagle Press, 1931. 228-229.

⁷ Craig Miner. *West of Wichita: Settling the High Plains of Kansas*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1986, 179.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ James Tomayko. "The Ditch Irrigation Boom in Southwest Kansas: Changing an Environment." *Journal of the West* 22 (1983):20-25, as quoted in Miner, *West of Wichita*, 179.

¹⁰ *Garden City Sentinel*. 10 Jun 1885, 2.

¹¹ *Garden City Sentinel*. 23 Sep 1885, 6.

¹² *Bundle of Sticks*. 1 Feb 1885, 4.

¹³ Christy Davis. *Buffalo Hotel National Register Nomination*. Washington, DC: National Parks Service, 2008, 8-5.

¹⁴ *Garden City Daily Herald*. 5 Feb 1887, 2.

¹⁵ Miner, *West of Wichita*, 212.

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Renewal would not come until the first decade of the new century. In 1901 interest grew around Kansas to engage in sugar beet farming leading the legislature to pass a subsidy of \$1 a ton on all sugar beets containing minimum of twelve percent sugar.¹⁶ In 1905 Finney County harvested 500 acres of sugar beets. One year later the *United States Sugar and Land Company* built a factory in Garden City. Standing six stories high the factory employed over 350 people and contracted with local farmers for 7,000 acres of beets.¹⁷ In 1907 Kansas produced over 70,000 tons of sugar beets, much of which came from Finney County.

By 1910 the town's population grew to 3,171 and Garden City was the central hub of the Kansas sugar beet region and commercial center of the irrigating district.¹⁸ Sugar beets would remain the city's leading industry and a mainstay through the coming decades. The town had electric lighting and power, waterworks, a sewer system, fire and police departments, a county high school, public library, hospital, opera house, three banks, and three newspapers. The \$1M sugar beet factory processed 1,000 tons of beets, producing 200,000 pounds of refined sugar daily.¹⁹ One admirer noted that the expansive business district was solidly built with structures of brick and stone, while "the shady streets and fine lawns in the residential portion of Garden City indicate that it is well named."²⁰

In early October 1929 the *Garden City Telegram* was cautious with their optimistic view of the town's prospects, mentioning that it had taken them nearly forty years to overcome the boom and bust of the last century. The paper noted that Woolworth was considering opening a store in a rental property downtown, that the population continued to grow slightly, affordable housing was scarce, and that if there were a good harvest, the area would continue to prosper.²¹ Garden City built a municipal airport in 1928 and expanded it in 1929. Although the early 1930s saw a return of record heat and wind, which filled the air with soil and dust, Garden City held on and the population rose to over 6,000 in the next twenty years. The town experienced modest development throughout as businesses and buildings emerged to meet the needs of the growing population.

Sugar, the first commodity to be rationed during WWII, heightened the county's importance to the war effort. In 1942, Garden City's plant processed enough to supply every man, woman, and child in Kansas with more than ten pounds of sugar.²² Labor shortages meant farmers struggled to harvest the beets, which was done primarily by women and Mexican laborers.²³ As in the past Garden City rallied. When the town discovered it would not receive government aid to upgrade their small municipal airport, the community worked together and did it themselves, without bonds or federal aid.²⁴ An Army airbase was established and utilized the airfield 1942-1945. With an outdated plant, and water and production challenges, the sugar beet factory ultimately closed in 1955. Despite that loss, Garden City experienced a post-war boom in the 1950s. According to the Chamber of Commerce the population increased seventy-five percent from 1945-1950, the largest urban gain in Kansas.²⁵ By the middle of the decade there were twenty-five manufacturing concerns making everything from concrete to soft drinks. The city boasted twenty-five churches, transportation by two major highways, rail, and two airports.

In the 1960s an innovation in irrigation called "center-pivot irrigation" allowed farmers to increase feed grain production and develop a feeder cattle industry.²⁶ Meat packing companies began to see an advantage of locating plants near the source. In 1980, Iowa Beef Packers opened the world's largest packing plant in Holcomb, Kansas, ten miles from Garden City, which was followed by a second plant in Garden City in 1983.²⁷ By 1990, these two plants were employing approximately

¹⁶ Craig Miner. *Next Year Country: Dust to Dust in Western Kansas, 1890-1940*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2006. 94.

¹⁷ Ibid, 98.

¹⁸ Frank Blackmar. *Kansas: a cyclopedia of state history, embracing events, institutions, industries, counties, cities, towns, prominent persons, etc.* Chicago: Pub. Co. Chicago: 1912. vol. 3, 708-709. Transcribed May 2002 by Carolyn Ward. Accessed online on 11 Apr 2023 at https://www.ksgenweb.org/archives/1912/g/garden_city.html, and Population of Kansas Cities. Accessed 19 Apr 2023 at <http://www.iprsr.ku.edu/ksdata/ksah/population/2pop33.pdf>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ *Garden City Telegram*. 3 Oct 1929, 13.

²² *Wichita Beacon*. 22 Jan 1942, 13.

²³ *Hutchinson News*. 7 Jan 1945, 1.

²⁴ *Hutchinson News*. 3 Feb 1942, 11.

²⁵ Garden City, Kansas. [Chamber of Commerce brochure] Garden City: Garden Press, ca. 1955.

²⁶ Janet E. Benson. "Garden City: Meatpacking and Immigration to the High Plains." Paper given at the Immigration and the Changing Face of Rural America: Focus on the Midwestern States conference. Ames, IA, 11-13 Jul, 1996. Accessed online 11 Apr 2023 at <https://migration.ucdavis.edu/cf/more.php?id=157>.

²⁷ Ibid.

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4,000 workers.²⁸ Between 1980 and 1985, Garden City grew by one-third, making it the fastest-growing community in Kansas and firmly establishing it as a home to the beef packing industry, a prominent component of the town's economic base today. The ethnic makeup of Finney County had begun to change with the arrival of the sugar beet factory in the early twentieth century. Hispanics and Native Americans were drawn in, some for migrant labor, while others made Garden City and the surrounding areas their home.²⁹ In the late 1970s to early 1980s Vietnamese refugees came for the jobs. They were joined by emigrants from other countries for the meat-packing industry. Garden City's population today stands at roughly 28,000, approximately fifty-three percent claim Hispanic or Latino heritage.³⁰

Commercial Development - Building a Core Business Block in the Heart of Town

Comprised of three buildings, the J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block Historic District is significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce exemplifying the role of prominent town founders and businessmen in development of downtown Garden City. Following is a summary of the history of each building.

1) 401 (403) N. Main: The Carter Bros. Building

On January 1, 1885, the local newspaper announced that J.V. Carter had purchased two lots north of their existing concern on which to build a new store.³¹ Built of stone quarried near Kendall, KS, the new two-story limestone building on the corner of Main and Laurel Streets was a boon for the bustling town. A celebration was held for the laying of the stone foundation in June 1885. The Carter brothers moved into their new building with "magnificent show windows to attract the passerby and when drawn within can partake of the car load of goods of an endless variety including stoves for the office, parlor and kitchen, pumps, cutlery, builders' hardware, and much more."³² The brothers offered groceries from their storefront, with wagons, buggies and farm machinery surrounding the new store. Business was brisk. In October 1885, they sold more stoves than all the previous year.³³

The Carter Bros. Dry Goods and Hardware was one of the earliest concerns in Garden City, running a thriving dry goods store in a frame building on Main Street that offered a full stock of groceries and a wide variety of hardware and farm implements. Nereus M. Carter (1844-1926) moved to Kansas when he was twenty-two and opened a dry goods store in Plymouth in Lyon County, Kansas by 1869.³⁴ A decade later he is listed in some of the earliest accounts of Garden City including the May 1879 notice declaring that he was building an addition to his store.³⁵

Born to Quakers John and Achsah Carter, Jacob V. (1833-1916) and his brother Nereus M. Carter were born and raised in Guilford County, NC. In 1857, Jacob made his way to Emporia, where he was a farmer and a merchant. In 1882, he was appointed as an U.S. Indian Agent for the Sacs and Fox.³⁶ On June 12, 1884, he joined his brother in the mercantile business in Garden City. Through all the ups and downs Jacob Carter stuck with the town and his profession. When he died at the age of ninety, he was operating a hardware store on Main Street in Garden City. In 1889 Nereus sold his share to his brother and moved to Oklahoma, where he lived until his death.³⁷ Jacob Carter admitted W.O. Carter and E.N. Gause to the firm with the grocery and hardware concerns split between them.³⁸

Initially the rooms on the second floor of the Carter Building were used for professional offices including lawyers, land, loan and insurance agents.³⁹ In September 1886 the new Grand Central Hotel opened its doors to the public for a grand supper and open house. The dining room had a sixty-five-person capacity, described as "an east front row with the largest shade

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Craig Miner discusses the sugar beet industry's use of Mexican and Indian labor. The census, however, does not reflect those numbers as they were not counted. However, Miner notes that by the 1920s Garden City had a Mexican orchestra, opera house, and community celebration of Mexican Independence Day. Miner, *Next Year Country*. 100-101.

³⁰ United States Census Bureau. "Quick Facts: Garden City, Kansas." Accessed online 20 Apr 2023 at <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/gardencitycitykansas/PST045221>.

³¹ *Garden City Irrigator*. 1 Jan 1885, 5.

³² *Garden City Sentinel*. 4 Nov 1885, 2.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ *Weekly News-Democrat*. 14 May 1869, 3.

³⁵ *Garden City Paper*. 29 May 1879, 5.

³⁶ *Garden City Irrigator*. 16 Jan 1886, 3.

³⁷ *Oklahoma Weekly Leader*. 4 Feb 1926, 1.

³⁸ "The Grand Central Building." Remembrances of J.O. Carter, unpublished manuscript, n.d. [ca. 1970]. Accessed at Finney County Historical Society.

³⁹ *Garden City Sentinel*. 4 Nov 1885, 6, and *Garden City Sentinel*. 30 Dec 1885, 6.

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trees in the city on the south and east fronts.”⁴⁰ The hotel was advertised as the “commercial men’s headquarters” in Garden City. The management and ownership of the hotel changed numerous times in the first year. The earliest advertisement (Sep 1886) is signed “Hickman & Joseph,” followed by H.H. Leonard (Apr 1887), then the partnership of Nelson Carpenter, P.C. Aston, and George W. Painter took the helm. A third floor was added to the building in the summer of 1887 for additional rooms.⁴¹ In November 1887, Jacob Carter purchased the hotel from the men and hired established hotel manager, Jesse Craig to manage it.⁴² Carter renamed the hotel “Carteria,” but within a few months, went back to the original moniker.⁴³ Under the Carter family ownership and often direct management, the hotel served many guests during the twenty years the building served as a hotel, even with no running water or bathrooms upstairs. By 1905 Carters had expanded their hardware and implement business to occupy the entire ground floor and by 1908, the second floor was once again used as offices, as originally designed. The third floor was never used after the hotel closed. A rear addition was built in 1910-1911 housing a plumbing and tin shop and later serving as a storeroom for Knox Grocery. The upper floor was used for a time as the IOOF lodge hall.

2) 407 (405) N. Main - J.A. Stevens Buildings/Masonic Hall

J. A. Stevens

As noted above, John Andrew Stevens was one of the original four founders of Garden City. He served as one of the first city councilmen, on the school board, a city constable, and as city marshal. The first organized school was held in his home in 1879.⁴⁴ Stevens bought his father-in-law out of the livery business and continued to run the stable and farm in the first half of the 1880s. But his longest standing achievement remains the development of the west side of the 400 block of N. Main Street, located in Stevens’ Second Addition on his quarter section in the original townsite. Stevens’ building at 405-407 N. Main and the Stevens Opera House were both completed in 1886 followed by the Windsor Hotel in 1888. When his hotel was finished it was called the “Waldorf of the Prairies” and was the largest hotel between Denver and Kansas City, noted for fine dining. Stevens lost the hotel and opera house in 1893, but he continued to live and farm in Garden City until his death in 1902. Upon his death at age fifty-one, the local newspaper said of him, “Garden City never had a more enterprising and progressive citizen.”⁴⁵

J.A. Stevens was born December 22, 1850, in Warren County, Illinois. In the early 1870s, Stevens arrived in Sterling, Kansas, after making his way through Iowa, then Republic County, Kansas. Stevens earned a name for himself by hunting buffalo and rounding up wild horses that roamed the western prairies. When brothers William and James Fulton arrived in Sterling, they met Stevens, and the three went on to found Garden City. Stevens wed William Fulton's daughter, Sadie “Ciddie” Annette Fulton, on February 10, 1879, the first marriage ceremony performed in Finney County. Stevens and his father-in-law founded a livery business, the first in town. In 1882, he homesteaded 160 acres: the NE ¼ of Sec 18, T24S R32W.⁴⁶ He planted fruit and other hardwood trees brought in from Colorado along city streets and on his farm located just outside the city. He sold lots in his addition throughout the decade and donated land for the city park that still bears his name.

The Stevens’ Building was home to a variety of prominent Garden City businesses throughout. When the building was first completed, the first floor was occupied by grocer M.J. Sharpe and Co. and J.H. Stevens & C.L. Thompson architects. The builders maintained an office in the building until they moved to Eighth Street in 1887.⁴⁷ In 1891, T.C. Laughlin, having just bought the Opera House Drug Store moved to 405 Main. Upon Laughlin’s death in 1920, the drug store was purchased by G.B. Norris who operated here for the next twenty years. J.B. Byars, a regional dry goods retailer had stores in 118 locations across Kansas and Colorado that were ultimately bought by J.C. Penney who remained in this location only a short time (1929-1931), moving to the ground floor of Stevens Opera House next door in 1931 doubling their store size.

Following Penney’s departure, downtown stalwart, the C.R. Anthony store, moved from 401 N. Main next door to 407-409, occupying both buildings as Penney’s had done. C.R. Anthony was acquired by Stage in 1997 and was rebranded along

⁴⁰ *The Daily Sentinel*. 30 Sep 1886, 4; *Garden City Daily Herald*. 25 Apr 1887, 1.

⁴¹ *The Daily Sentinel*. 30 Jun 1887, 4.

⁴² *The Daily Sentinel*. 28 Oct 1887, 5, and “The Carteria Hotel.” *Garden City Daily Herald*. 4 Nov 1887, 1.

⁴³ “The Carteria Hotel.” *Garden City Daily Herald*. 4 Nov 1887, 1.

⁴⁴ “Pioneer School in Garden Held in Private Home.” *The Sugar Beet*. 11 Jan 1932, 1.

⁴⁵ *Garden City Herald*. 12 Apr 1902, 4.

⁴⁶ *Garden City Irrigator*. 31 Aug 1882, 2.

⁴⁷ *Garden City Irrigator*. 16 Jan 1886, 3, and the *Daily Sentinel*. 7 Jan 1886, 4.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block

Historic District

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with its 226 stores located in fourteen states.⁴⁸ Stage acquired another chain store, Gordmans, in 2017 and re-branded most of its existing stores with the name. Gordmans store did not survive the Covid pandemic and closed in 2019; the building has been vacant since that time. In addition to housing prominent local retailers, the Stevens' building is known as the long-term home of the Masonic Lodge. At the time of construction, the top floor was designed to serve the local IOOF and Masons.

The Masons and IOOF

The local Masonic and Odd Fellows lodges were established in 1884 and the two groups came together, with Stevens' assistance to build a hall to house both lodges. On September 26, 1885, the cornerstone of the new building was laid with great ceremony ending in a large banquet dinner. By November the stone work on the building was completed. The April 26, 1886 grand opening was an all-day event that one local source called, "the most important public entertainment of a social nature which has ever taken place in this city."⁴⁹ The celebration fell on the sixty-seventh anniversary of the founding of the Odd Fellows order in the United States. Festivities began at 10 AM, with speeches and music. In the evening the public was invited to a grand ball that opened with a quadrille dance, followed by a banquet dinner for 200 on the first floor.⁵⁰

When hard times came to Garden City in the 1890s, the IOOF was unable to pay their mortgage on the hall. The lodge was foreclosed on and moved temporarily to a room above Walls Grocery, then to the brick annex at the rear of the Carter Bros. Building. After several temporary quarters, the lodge met upstairs at 203 N. Main for at least three decades, 1920s-1950s.

The Masons also suffered a foreclosure; however, the group was able to rent the Hall until it was again purchased by the Garden City Chapter No. 83, Royal Arch Masons in 1914 for \$2,000.⁵¹ The Chapter paid off the mortgage by 1919 and in 1931, worked with J.B. Byars who owned the lower level of the building and was constructing a rear addition, to expand their lodge facilities including an enlarged meeting hall and adding a dining room and kitchen. At that time, the Masonic Hall was home to three local Masonic Lodges and the local chapter of Eastern Star. In 1970, the Masons purchased the building at 401 adjacent on the south and in 1982, voted to sell both buildings to Jim and George Wharton for \$10,000 with the agreement the Lodge could rent the hall for a period of up to five years.⁵² The Masons met in the Hall they had built on Main Street for one hundred years; then used the money from the sale of the two buildings to build a new hall.

3) 409 N. Main – J.C. Penney Building

John A. Stevens built his Opera House (former building) at this location in 1886. The ground floor was home to various retail businesses until 1931 when it became J.C. Penney's second home in Garden City. In 1953, the Garden City J.C. Penney store announced they would build a new modern store in their current location (on the site of the Opera House).

With their announcement of plans to build a new store, the notice emphasized that Penney's would stay open in a temporary location farther down Main Street. Construction, however, took much longer than expected. Demolition of the Opera House began in early January 1953 but was halted after only a few days when cracks appeared in the south wall of the four-story Windsor Hotel next door. When inspected, the site was deemed unsafe without reinforcement of the Windsor building prior to further demolition of the Opera House. This work delayed construction of the new Penney building until September 1953. When new building was finally completed and the grand-opening occurred on February 18, 1954, the Garden City store was one of the seventy-seven locations in Kansas. The modern store was designed by local architect Howard Blanchard and built by local contractor Boyd Stehwein; the building was owned by Max Kurtz of Denver. Subcontractors included D'Agosto Tile Co., Smith Sand Co., Sheet Metal Works, Ready Mix Concrete, Geier Electric, Johnson Plumbing, McAllister-Fitzgerald Lumber Co. and Douglas Roofing Co., all of Garden City.⁵³

The *Garden City Telegram* heralded the new store with almost double the size of earlier store. Men and women's clothing were the prominent first-floor displays, with two new departments – hardware and home furnishings, showcased in the basement. Thirty individuals were employed in the store with Paul Cole, who began working for the firm in 1922 in Abilene,

⁴⁸ Stage Stores in Deal to Acquire C.R. Anthony." *New York Times*. 6 Mar 1997. Accessed online 21 Apr 2023 at <https://www.nytimes.com/1997/03/06/business/stage-stores-in-deal-to-acquire-c-r-anthony.html>.

⁴⁹ *Garden City Herald*. 27 Apr 1886, 1.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Tyrian Lodge No. 246 A.F. & A.M: 100 Years of Masonry in Garden City, Kansas, 1885-1985. [Booklet] Garden City, KS: Tyrian Lodge No. 246, 1985. Finney County Historical Museum Clipping File.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ *Garden City Telegram*. 17 Feb 1954, 8.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block

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KS, the store's manager. The next two decades were very successful for the Garden City store and by the mid-1970s, Penney's expanded into the adjacent space at 407 N. Main. Like many other department stores, J.C. Penney's moved out of downtown to Garden City Plaza in 1984. C.R. Anthony replaced Penney's in the 407-409 storefront space.

The Windsor Hotel (NR listed 1972) was built in 1888 by the same team of J.A. Stevens and Stevens and Thompson architects and builders, completing the west side of the 400 block of N. Main. Anchored by the Windsor Hotel, the block remains a historically and architecturally significant cluster in downtown Garden City. The J.H. Stevens-C.L. Thompson Block Historic District, south of the hotel, manifests the role of J.A. Stevens in building Garden City's core commercial area, providing commercial and civic facilities to house some of the city's prominent businesses and organizations. It is an excellent reflection of the historic commercial development in Garden City, made possible by his partnership with architects and builders J.C. Stevens and C.L. Thompson.

The Influence of Local Designers and Builder's is Displayed in 400 block of N. Main

The J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block Historic District is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a manifestation of the work of Garden City architects and builders J.H. Stevens, C.L. Thompson and Howard Blanchard. Blanchard designed the modern J.C. Penney Building at 409 N. Main in 1954. Stevens and Thompson designed the Carter Bros. Building at 401 N. Main and the J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall at 407 N. Main in 1885-1886 in addition to the Windsor Hotel north of the district. The work of Stevens and Thompson convey the talent of early builders, creating the city's first permanent buildings using native limestone found in the area. Seventy years later, Blanchard exhibits the ingenuity of local designers with the city's first purpose-built department store. From early vernacular stone buildings to mid-century modern business houses, this district communicates the physical evolution of Garden City's historic downtown district.

Stevens and Thompson

Stevens and Thompson were in business in Garden City at least from the spring of 1885 through late 1887 and designed four buildings on the west side of the 400 block of N. Main during that time. They designed and built the Carter Bros. Building at 401 completed in 1885 and the J.A. Stevens Block and Masonic Hall at 405-407 in 1886.⁵⁴ They also designed the former Stevens Opera House at 409 in 1886 and the Windsor Hotel at 413 in 1888. Advertisements promoted them as "architects, contractors and builders" specializing in stone buildings. While there were multiple building contractors in Garden City during the 1880s boom years, the team of J.H. Stevens and C.L. Thompson was one of only a handful of architects in Garden City.⁵⁵ Some of the buildings they designed, they also constructed, but given the volume of activity, some construction was completed by others. For the Buffalo Hotel and the Carter Bros. Building, Stevens and Thompson used limestone quarried from Kendall, in Hamilton County, Kansas. This type of stone had less chalk, appearing whiter than Flint Hills limestone, and was often called marble.⁵⁶ The stone was quarried, cut into large pieces, and hauled to Garden City on flat rail cars for refinement.⁵⁷ They also used locally made bricks in their construction. A local newspaper reported the firm had purchased 112,000 bricks from the Garden City firm Kelsh and Wylie for spring projects in 1886 alone.⁵⁸



Figure 2 – Stevens & Thompson Advertisement
The Daily Sentinel (Garden City) 7 Jan 1886, 4.

⁵⁴ *Garden City Irrigator*. 2 July 1885, 5 and 2 Jan 1886, 3.

⁵⁵ Architect G.D. McDonnell was the first advertisement found in 1879 (*Garden City Paper*, 24 Jul 1879), followed by Lewis & Wood, builders and architects in 1885 (*Garden City Sentinel*. 8 Jul 1885) and Hillyor & Green (*Daily Sentinel*, 18 Jul 1886, 3).

⁵⁶ Christy Davis. *Buffalo Hotel*, 8-8.

⁵⁷ Carol Hagen. *Preservation and Planning Project: An Inventory of Historic Properties in Garden City, Finney County, Kansas*. Garden City, 1995. 7, as quoted in Christy Davis, *Buffalo Hotel*, 8-8.

⁵⁸ *The Daily Sentinel*. 4 Apr 1886, 4.

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J.H. Stevens was born in Centerville, IN, October 21, 1845.⁵⁹ He was educated at Earlham College in Richmond, IN and enlisted in the army in August 1861, serving three years.⁶⁰ An early newspaper biography reported that the pair had met in Topeka and together moved to Garden City.⁶¹ The first mention of the new firm in Garden City was in May 1885 when they were soliciting bids for the construction of the Carter Brothers store, a building they had developed plans and specifications for.⁶² Given the commonality of his name, Stevens' movements following the bust years of the 1890s is unclear. In October 1887, Stevens had a visit from his wife who had remained in Indiana, so it is possible that he returned to his home state.

Charles L. Thompson (1842-1927) was born in Middleboro, Massachusetts in 1842 and was educated there. He joined the Navy at age twenty, serving three years of the Civil War.⁶³ In 1871, he opened a furniture store in Cawker, Kansas where he may have learned stone masonry. In the 1880 federal census Thompson lists his occupation as stone mason.⁶⁴ In 1889 Stevens and Thompson were awarded a contract for a building in Salt Lake City. Thompson went to oversee the project and stayed.⁶⁵ Afterwards he moved to Seattle where he died in 1927.

A December 1886 article in the *Garden City Daily Herald* called Stevens and Thompson "principal contractors in this city"⁶⁶ The firm reportedly constructed twelve residences valued at \$50,000 in addition to their public and business commissions, in 1886 alone.⁶⁷ Known residences by Stevens and Thompson include: the Gibson Brothers, Dr. Cole and a large stone home for ATSF land agent I.R. Holmes.⁶⁸ Other known buildings by Stevens and Thompson include:⁶⁹

- 1885-Carter Bros. Building, J.P. Cloverdale Block, Jones Block and the Buffalo Hotel (\$55,000) [NR 2008], Southard Building, first stone school house,
- 1886- Stevens' Building/Masonic Hall, Stevens Opera Hotel, Christian Church, United Baptist Church, a stone building in Dighton;
- 1887-South-side School, Arthur H. Burtis Building, Voorhees Hotel in Stevens County; and
- 1888-Windsor Hotel [NR 1972]

Stevens and Thompson were land developers as well as architects, having platted two additions to the city. The preponderance of mentions of the pair through the final decade of the 1800s are real estate foreclosures. No evidence was discovered that either man trained as an architect, rather they learned stone masonry and design on their own accord. Records show both worked in other professions before moving to Garden City. The pair were prolific during their short three-year tenure in the early days of the city. Their design aesthetic and stone masonry are remarkable and their indelible mark on the town has remained through the ages.

Howard T. Blanchard

Howard Taft Blanchard (1909-1993) was born in Byron, OK to Miles and Leola Howard Blanchard. In 1930, Blanchard graduated from Kansas State Agricultural College with a degree in architecture. The same year his parents bought the Windsor Hotel in Garden City. The family moved into the hotel, and except for Howard's service in the Army Reserves, he lived in Garden City for the rest of his life. Blanchard joined the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps while in school and served in the Army Reserves for the next twenty-four years. He served on the planning commission for Garden City and Finney County for at least three decades. Blanchard was also active in architectural professional organizations. Howard T. Blanchard, FAIA, was first appointed to the Kansas State Board of Technical Professions in 1958 and went on to serve

⁵⁹ Most mentions of the architect and builder are to "J.H." There is conflicting evidence to whether his first name was John or James. No confirmed records were found in Indiana.

⁶⁰ *Garden City Irrigator*. 2 Jan 1886, 3.

⁶¹ *Ibid*.

⁶² *Garden City Sentinel*. 13 May 1885, 3.

⁶³ *Garden City Irrigator*. 2 Jan 1886, 3.

⁶⁴ "C.L. Thompson." U.S. Federal Census, 1880; Cawker, Mitchell, Kansas; ED 180, Roll: 389, 66B. Accessed at Ancestry.com. 1880 United States Federal Census. Lehi, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2010.

⁶⁵ "Charles L. Thompson." *Special Schedules of the Eleventh Census (1890) Enumerating Union Veterans and Widows of Union Veterans of the Civil War*. The National Archives. Washington, D.C. Series M123; Record Group 15. Accessed online at Ancestry.com. 1890 Veterans Schedules of the U.S. Federal Census. Lehi, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005.

⁶⁶ *Garden City Daily Herald*. 6 Dec 1886, 1.

⁶⁷ *Garden City Daily Sentinel*. 20 Feb 1887, 1.

⁶⁸ *Garden City Daily Sentinel*. 7 Oct 1885, 7.

⁶⁹ *Garden City Daily Sentinel*. 13 May 1885, 3; 16 Sep 1885, 6; 28 Oct 1885, 6; 27 Aug 1886, 4; 20 Feb 1887, 1; 22, 24, & 27 May 1887, 4; *Garden City Irrigator*. 2 Jan 1886, 3; and *Garden City Daily Herald*. 20 Jun 1887, 4.

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several terms as president before leaving the board in 1977. He was elected to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) Board of Directors in 1963 after volunteering for multiple committees and was inaugurated as NCARB president at the 1969 Annual Meeting. He was elevated to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) College of Fellows in 1974 in recognition of his service to the profession.⁷⁰

In addition to the J.C. Penney Building (1954), numerous buildings in Garden City and Western Kansas were designed by Blanchard and his firm including: Colby City Hall (1936-NR, 2003), Menno Community Hall (1937-NR 2002), Kinsley High School (1942), the Alta Brown Elementary School (1949), Sublette Elementary School (1953), the Masonic Temple in Lakin (1956), St. Catherine's Hospital (1974), the new city hall (1978), Walker Elementary, and the one local fire station.

Conclusion

The designs of Blanchard and Stevens and Thompson continue to provide a visual reference today interpreting the evolution of Garden City's historic commercial area. The nominated J.H. Stevens and C.L. Thompson Historic District helps to interpret the physical development of downtown Garden City and influence of local architects and builders by portraying 1880s native limestone commercial buildings and a mid-century 1950s Modern department store. The district retains integrity of location and setting, design, materials, workmanship as well as feeling and association. The buildings remain in commercial use in Garden's City's downtown and retain sufficient integrity to convey their original design and their evolution as home to a variety of businesses over seven decades.

⁷⁰ National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) website accessed 24 Apr 2023 online at <https://www.ncarb.org/about/history-ncarb/past-presidents/howard-t-blanchard>.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
Historic District
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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Tyrian Lodge No. 246 A.F. & A.M.: 100 Years of Masonry in Garden City, Kansas, 1885-1985. [Booklet] Garden City, KS: Tyrian Lodge No. 246, 1985.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Finney County Historical Museum

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
Historic District
Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.

See map in Figure 3 for boundary coordinate markers

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

The following coordinates represent a coordinate for each building in the district beginning with 401 N. Main and moving north. See Figure 3 - Photo Key for Lat/Long Key on Site Plan

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | <u>37.967903</u>
Latitude: | <u>-100.873857</u>
Longitude: | 2 | <u>37.968011</u>
Latitude: | <u>-100.873868</u>
Longitude: |
| 3 | <u>37.968157</u>
Latitude: | <u>-100.873809</u>
Longitude: | | | |

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Lots 7 – 12, Block 30; Stevens 2nd Addition, Garden City, Finney County, Kansas

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The site represented by the above legal description reflects the lots on which the three buildings were constructed and continue to be located.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brenda and Michelle Spencer

organization Spencer Preservation date 28 April 2023

street & number 10150 Onaga Road telephone 785-456-9857

city or town Wamego state KS zip code 66547 9584

e-mail brenda@spencerpreservation.com

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Wharton's Limited, LLC (George and Debbie Wharton)

street & number 906 N. 10th Street telephone 620-276-6000

city or town Garden City state KS zip code 67846

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block

Historic District

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs

Photograph Log

Name of Property: The J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block Historic District

City or Vicinity: Garden City

County: Finney

State: Kansas

Photographer: Brenda Spencer except where otherwise noted

Date

Photographed: 17 January 2023 except where otherwise note

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

#	Camera Direction	Description of Photo
1 of 25	NW	West side of 400 block N. Main from southeast
2 of 25	W	Front/east facade of 401 N. Main – Carter Bros Building
3 of 25	W	View of stone detailing on upper facade 401 N. Main
4 of 25	W	Front/east facade of 407 N. Main – J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall
5 of 25	W	View of stone detailing on upper facade of 407 N. Main
6 of 25	W	Front/east facade of 409 N. Main – J.C. Penney
7 of 25	SW	Detail of upper facade of 409 N. Main
8 of 25	SW	West side of 400 block N. Main from northeast
9 of 25	E	West/rear facade of 409 N. Main – J.C. Penney Building
10 of 25	SE	Rear/west facade of 407 N. Main – J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall
11 of 25	NE	Rear/west and south facades of 401 N. Main – Carter Bros. Building
12 of 25	W	Looking west inside storefront of 401 N. Main Photo taken 21 April 2023 by Debbie Wharton
13 of 25	E	Interior view of 401 N. Main looking E toward storefront Photo taken 21 April 2023 by Debbie Wharton
14 of 25	E	Interior view of 2 nd floor of 401 N. Main looking E toward front of building
15 of 25	E	Interior view of 407 N. Main looking E toward storefront
16 of 25	W	Looking W toward rear entrance in retail space of 407 N. Main, 1 st floor
17 of 25	N	Detail of pressed metal ceiling in place above suspended ceiling on 1 st floor 407 N. Main
18 of 25	W	Looking W up stairway to upper floors of 401 & 407, from front street entrance
19 of 25	N	Looking N in corridor between meeting room and dining room in Masonic Hall 2 nd floor of 407 N. Main
20 of 25	SW	Dining Room with kitchen on far left, 2 nd floor of 407 N. Main
21 of 25	E	Looking toward front of meeting room in Masonic Hall, east end of 407 N. Main
22 of 25	S	Detail of marble columns at S end of proscenium arch at east end of Masonic Hall 2 nd floor, 407 N. Main
23 of 25	E	Interior view of 409 N. Main looking E toward storefront w/ mezzanine above
24 of 25	W	Looking W toward rear of retail space w/ rear mezzanine, 1 st floor of J.C. Penney
25 of 25	S	View of basement sales floor on east end of basement, J.C. Penney building

See Figure 4 – Photo Key

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
Historic District
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Figures

Include GIS maps, figures, scanned images below.

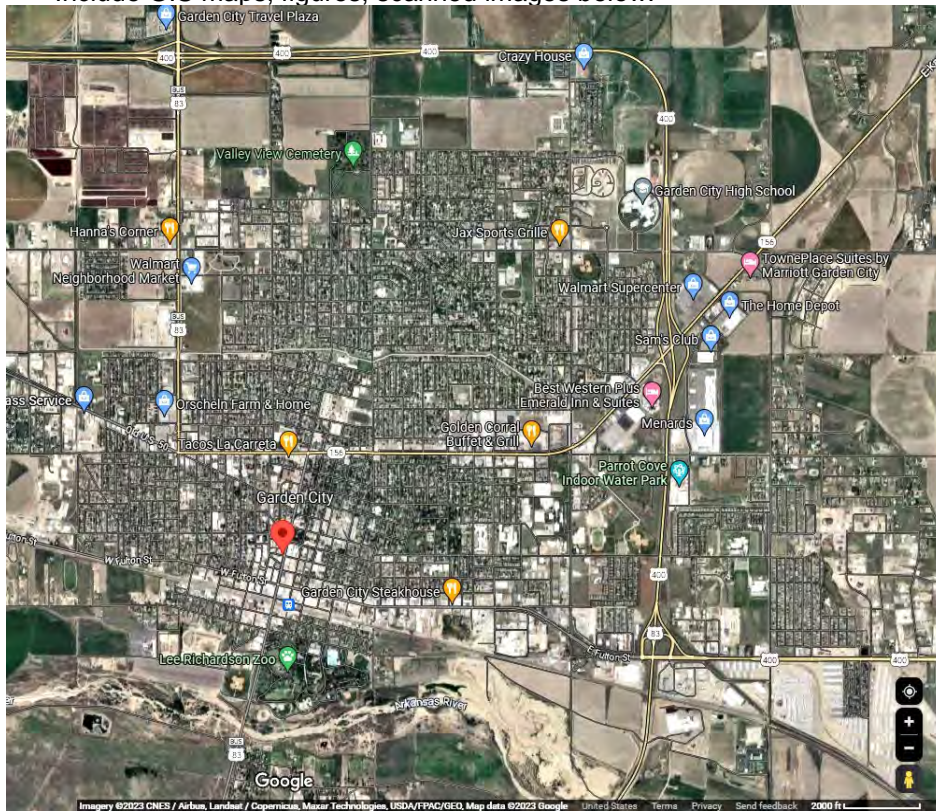


Figure 3 – Context Plans of City of Garden City and Central Business District with red dot marking district 401-409 North Main Street Garden City, Finney County, Kansas Aerial Photo Google Maps, 2023

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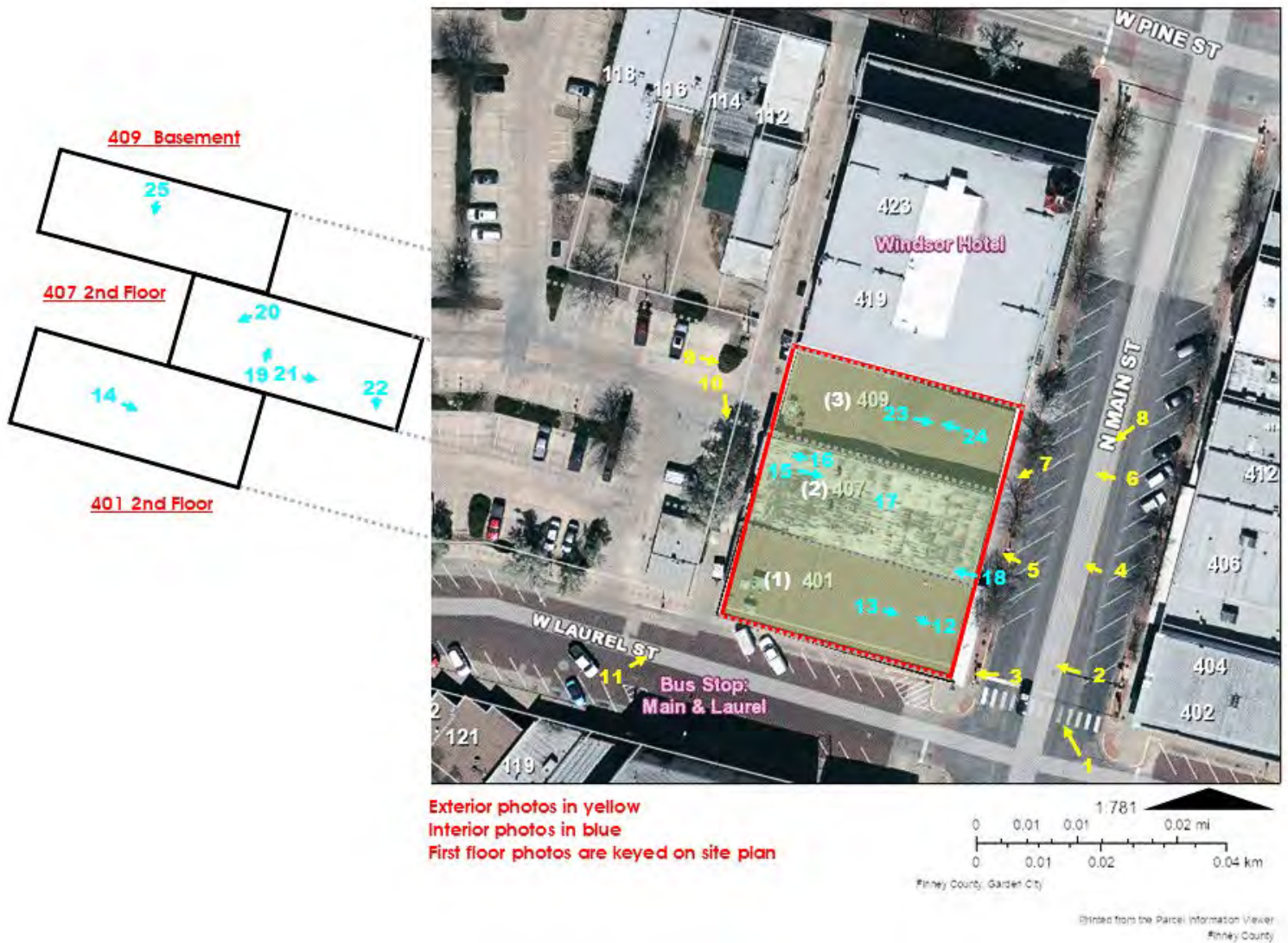


Figure 4 – Photo Key and District Boundary

401-409 N. Main Street
Lots 7-12 Stevens Second Addition
Garden City, Finney County, Kansas

Lat/Long: Datum WGS84

- 1) 37.967903, -100.873857; 401 N. Main, Lots 11-12 Stevens 2nd Addition
- 2) 37.968011, -100.873868; 407 N. Main, Lots 9-10 Stevens 2nd Addition
- 3) 37.968157, -100.873809; 409 N. Main, Lots 7-8 Stevens 2nd Addition

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
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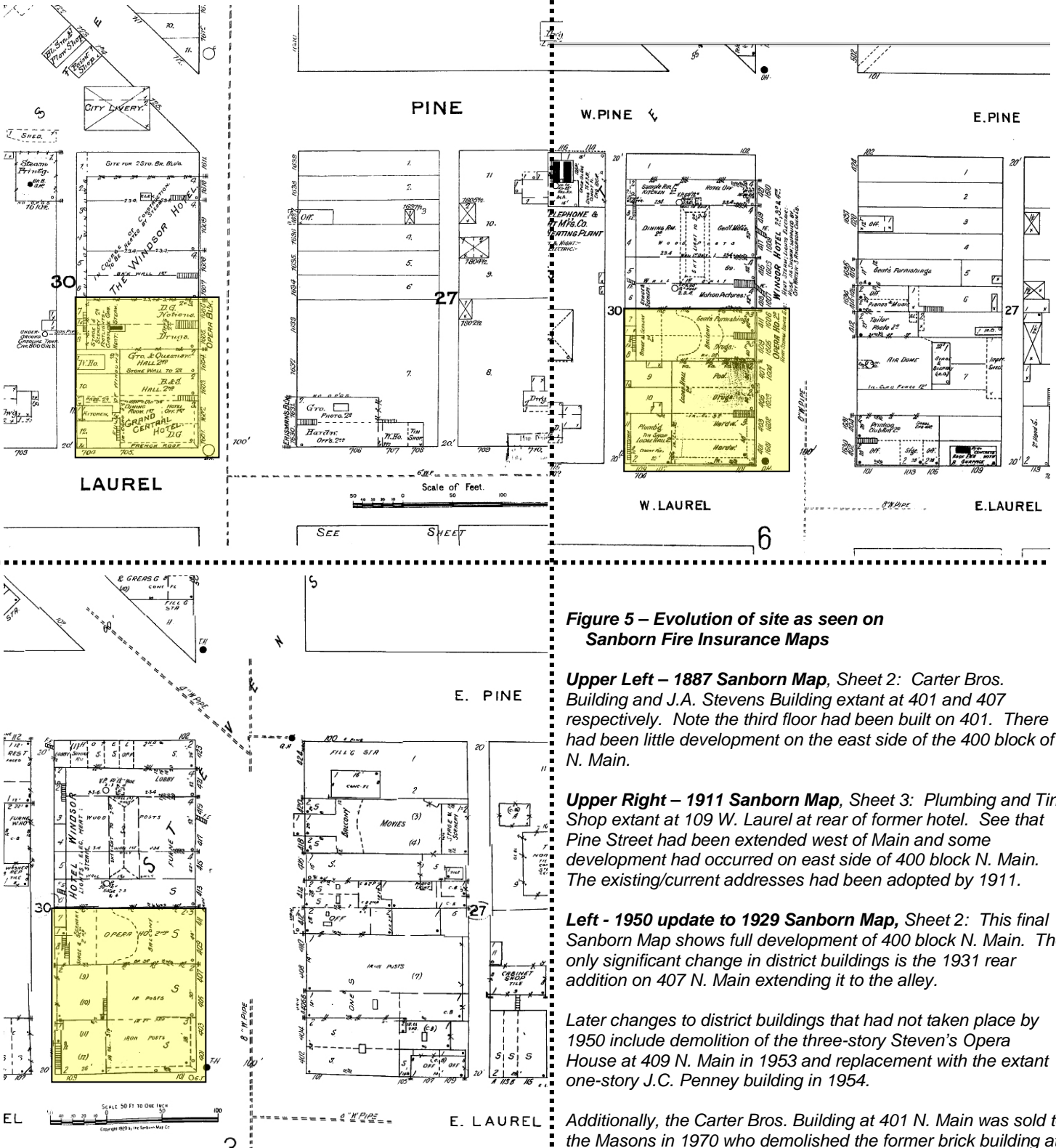


Figure 5 – Evolution of site as seen on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Upper Left – 1887 Sanborn Map, Sheet 2: Carter Bros. Building and J.A. Stevens Building extant at 401 and 407 respectively. Note the third floor had been built on 401. There had been little development on the east side of the 400 block of N. Main.

Upper Right – 1911 Sanborn Map, Sheet 3: Plumbing and Tin Shop extant at 109 W. Laurel at rear of former hotel. See that Pine Street had been extended west of Main and some development had occurred on east side of 400 block N. Main. The existing/current addresses had been adopted by 1911.

Left - 1950 update to 1929 Sanborn Map, Sheet 2: This final Sanborn Map shows full development of 400 block N. Main. The only significant change in district buildings is the 1931 rear addition on 407 N. Main extending it to the alley.

Later changes to district buildings that had not taken place by 1950 include demolition of the three-story Steven's Opera House at 409 N. Main in 1953 and replacement with the extant one-story J.C. Penney building in 1954.

Additionally, the Carter Bros. Building at 401 N. Main was sold to the Masons in 1970 who demolished the former brick building at the rear of the hotel and rebuilt the existing two-story concrete structure with elevator and stair tower.

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1887 view looking south in 400 block of N. Main Street. Bricks stacked along the west side (R) reflect construction of the Windsor Hotel underway just out of the photo to the north. NOTE – The building at 401 N. Main is extant as a two-story building.



ca. 1890 view of the west side of the 400 block of N. Main Street, from Laurel Street on the south. The Windsor Hotel, under construction above, has been completed in this view as has the third floor on 401 N. Main.

Figure 6 – Historic Views 400 block of N. Main

All historic photos courtesy of Finney County Historical Museum in Garden City.

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ca. mid-1930s view H.M. Knox Grocery and Nu Style Shoe Store at 401-403; Norris Drug and F.W. Woolworth at 405-407, and J.C. Penney on ground floor of Stevens Opera House at 409-411 N. Main (former building).

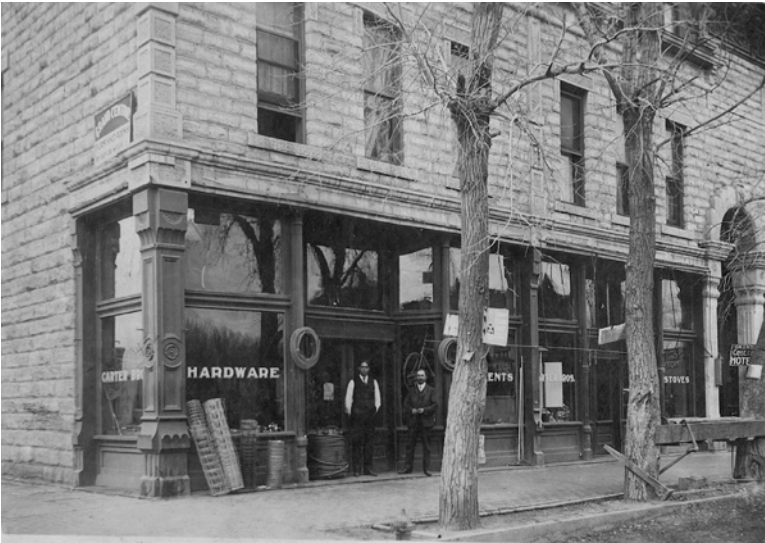


ca. late 1950s postcard with C.R. Anthony at 401-403; F.W. Woolworth at 405-407, and the new J.C. Penney in existing building at 409

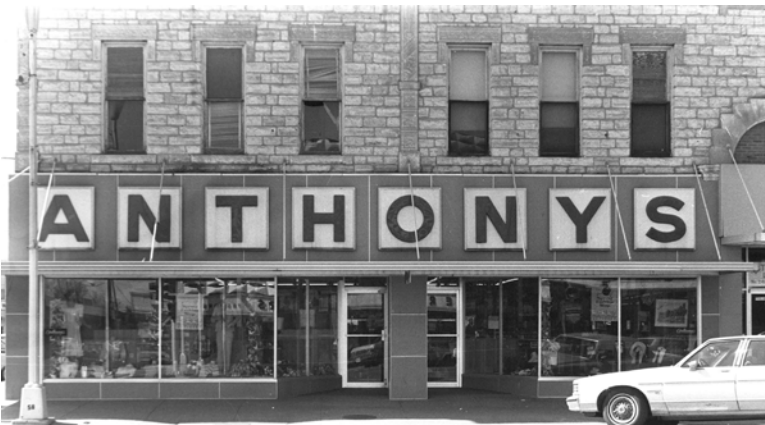
Figure 7 – Historic Views 400 block of N. Main
All historic photos courtesy of Finney County Historical Museum in Garden City.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
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ca.1910 view of Carter Bros. Hardware on the first floor of 401 N. Main. The hardware and implement store was an expansion of Carter Bros. Mercantile that occupied the corner storefront when the building was completed in 1885. Note cast-iron columns at arched entry framing street entry to second floors of 401 and 407 N. Main.



1984 Historic Resource Survey photo, Anthonys at 401 N. Main



1985 view prior to removal of third floor



1991 view after removal of third floor and installation of block parapet

Figure 8 – Historic Views of Carter Bros. Building at 401 N. Main
All historic photos courtesy of Finney County Historical Museum in Garden City.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block
Historic District
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ca. 1930 view of Stevens Building/Masonic Hall with Norris Drug (405) and J.C. Penney (407)
Note brick sheathing over south cast-iron column at arched entry to second floor.



ca. early 1940s view of Stevens Building/Masonic Hall after 1931 remodeling and 1941 expansion of Woolworth to occupy entire first floor
– Note brick sheathing on north pier of entry to second floor.



1946 parade photo illustrating F.W. Woolworth at 407 with new downsized steel windows on upper floor;
former Stevens Opera House on right with ground floor occupied by J.C. Penney
Figure 9 – Historic Views of J.A. Stevens Building/Masonic Hall at 407 N. Main
All historic photos courtesy of Finney County Historical Museum in Garden City.

J.H. Stevens/C.L. Thompson Block

Historic District

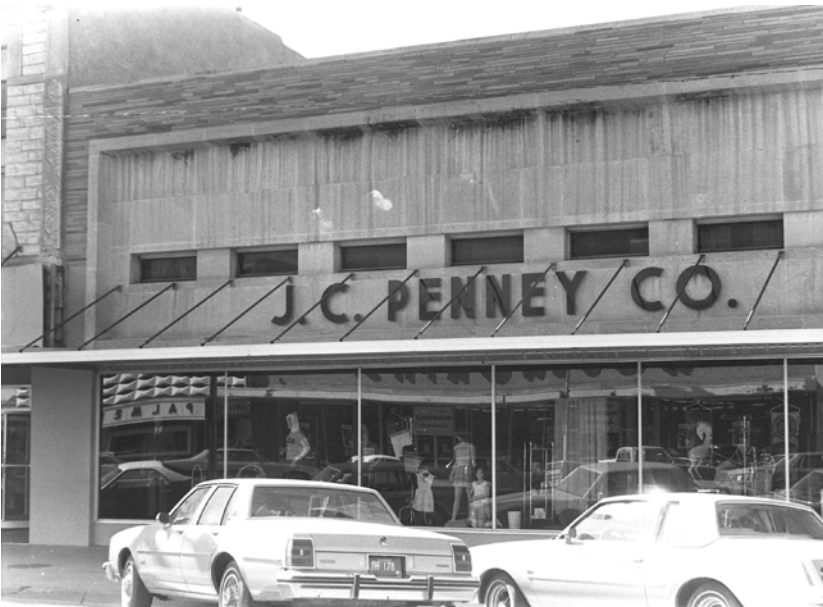
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Photo of the new J.C. Penney Building at 409 N. Main from newspaper advertisements at grand opening Garden City Telegram, 17 Feb 1954, p.8.



1984 Historic Resource Survey photo of J.C. Penney Building at 409 N. Main. Flat metal canopy was likely installed when the Penney store expanded into the 407 storefront adjacent on the south in 1974 (removed in 2011 storefront remodeling). See ca.1960 postcard in Figure 5 for view of canvas awning extant prior to metal canopy. Photo courtesy of Finney County Historical Museum in Garden City.

Figure 10 –Views of J.C. Penney Building at 409 N. Main

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BUILDING HISTORIES

Below is information on the history of the district's three buildings that is not integral to the historic context of this nomination.

1) 401 (403) N. Main: The Carter Bros. Building

In 1920, Howard M. Knox bought the Carter Bros. Building at 401 N. Main and opened a grocery store in the corner storefront. He had been in the grocery and bakery business on Grant Avenue in Garden City since April 1886. The advertisements noted freshly baked bread, wholesale and retail groceries, flour and feed.⁷¹ By 1892 his son George had joined him and the firm employed five or more men to help with the deliveries. As his business expanded, he rented three large rooms in the Buffalo block for storing surplus grain, feed and potatoes. Knox delivered his goods for free and traded widely across southwest Kansas. He kept the bakery on Grant Avenue, selling groceries and his baked goods from his store on Main. Upon his death in 1939, he was listed as the founder of a half-century old grocery business that still bore his name. His son George carried on the business and the ownership of 401 N. Main; the building was often referred to as the Knox Building. The second-floor rooms continued to house offices including that of George Knox, Helen Stowell, an abstracter, and a dentist office. One source noted that John Fisher maintained one-room apartment on 2nd floor until the late 1960s.⁷² In April 1970, the Garden City Masonic Temple bought the building from the George Knox estate.

By July 1930, Nu-Style Shoe Store opened in the north storefront of the building and remained there through the early 1940s. By 1946, the C.R. Anthony Store occupied the entire storefront. In 1982 the building was sold to current owners, Jim and George Wharton (now George and Debbie Wharton), who also purchased the Masonic Hall at 407 and J.C. Penney Building at 409. With Penney's move out of downtown in 1984, C.R. Anthony moved into their space at 407-409 N. Main. Since that time, there have been a variety of first-floor tenants at 401 N. Main including Bar K Fabrics, an antique shop, RT Sporting Goods, DaVita Medical, and currently, Klaus Wood Pellets/Outdoor Living.

2) 407 (405) N. Main - J.A. Stevens Buildings/Masonic Hall

J. A. Stevens

As noted above, John Andrew Stevens was one of the original four founders of Garden City. He was born December 22, 1850, in Warren County, Illinois. In the early 1870s, Stevens arrived in Sterling, Kansas, after making his way through Iowa, then Republic County, Kansas. Stevens earned a name for himself by hunting buffalo and rounding up wild horses that roamed the western prairies. When brothers William and James Fulton arrived in Sterling, they met Stevens, and the three went on to found Garden City. Stevens wed William Fulton's daughter, Sadie "Ciddie" Annette Fulton, on February 10, 1879, the first marriage ceremony performed in Finney County. Stevens and his father-in-law founded a livery business, the first in town. In 1882, he homesteaded 160 acres: the NE ¼ of Sec 18, T24S R32W.⁷³ He planted fruit and other hardwood trees brought in from Colorado along city streets and on his farm located just outside the city. He sold lots in his addition throughout the decade and donated land for the city park that still bears his name.

405: The South Storefront

When the Stevens' Building was first completed, the first floor was occupied by grocer M.J. Sharpe and Co. and J.H. Stevens & C.L. Thompson architects. The builders maintained an office in the building until they moved to Eighth Street in 1887.⁷⁴ They were replaced by a boot and shoe retail store, followed by a lunch room in 1899, then a dry goods store. In October 1891, the drug store operating at 409 N. Main called the Opera House Drug Store, was purchased by T.C. Laughlin. In ca. 1910, Laughlin moved his concern to 405 and changed the name to Laughlin Pharmacy. Upon the death of Mr. Laughlin in 1920, G.B. Norris bought the concern and changed the name to his own.⁷⁵ The Norris Drug Store occupied the location for twenty years with a popular ice cream parlor and selling everything from medications and cosmetics to children's books and insecticide. Norris Drug moved to 312 N. Main in 1941; G.B. Norris retired in 1957 at the age of ninety-two.

407: The North Storefront

By 1905 a millinery shop was located in the north storefront addressed at 407 N. Main. Through the years various retail stores used the space until J.B. Byars purchased the building for his dry goods concern. Byars had stores in 118 locations

⁷¹ *Garden City Herald*. 30 Jul 1892, 1.

⁷² "Face-Lifting on Main Street." *Garden City Telegram*. 13 Aug 1971, 3.

⁷³ *Garden City Irrigator*. 31 Aug 1882, 2.

⁷⁴ *Garden City Irrigator*. 16 Jan 1886, 3, and the *Daily Sentinel*. 7 Jan 1886, 4.

⁷⁵ *Garden City Telegram*. 26 Aug 1920, 1. The Laughlin Pharmacy is not to be confused with a second firm of that same name that was established in the city 1953 by Albert Laughlin from Dodge City. *Garden City Telegram*. 31 Jul 1975, 3.

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across Kansas and Colorado that were ultimately bought by J.C. Penney.⁷⁶ On August 1, 1929, a J.C. Penney sign replaced Byars on the storefront at 407 N. Main in Garden City. Byars retained ownership of the building and became a manager for the Penney's company with oversight of many of the stores he formerly owned.⁷⁷ Byars, like Penney had opened dry goods stores in the western United States. Buyers for the firms met periodically and had an agreement not to encroach on the other's territory. With the additional stores, Penney's had 1,400 locations by the end of 1929 with annual sales of \$215M.⁷⁸ The Penney's store moved to the ground floor of Stevens Opera House in 1931 doubling their store size.

Norris Drug remained in the south storefront and building owner J.B. Byars was trying to recruit F.W. Woolworth to fill Penney's vacated north storefront however, Woolworth needed more space. Byars spent more than \$10,000 to expand the building to the rear alley and remodel the two storefront spaces, adding an additional four feet to the north retail space; a newspaper article noted that the work would add much appeal to the block.⁷⁹ The new F.W. Woolworth store opened in Garden City at 407 N. Main in late 1931. In 1940 Woolworth expanded into the south retail space, remodeling the storefront to accommodate a single business.⁸⁰ The store remained at this location until November 1958 when they moved across the street to 406 N. Main. Fritz's Ben Franklin store opened at the 407 location July 1961 and remained until 1975, when J.C. Penney's located adjacent at 409 N. Main, expanded their store into the ground floor of 407 and remained until 1984.

The Masons and IOOF

In early May 1884, three men: Howell P. Myton, Joseph W. Weeks, and William Inge, Master Masons, met in Myton's office in Garden City to discuss establishing a local lodge. The Tyrian Lodge No. 246, of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons (A.F. & A.M.) was organized on June 25th, with William Cowgill, the Grand Masonic Lecturer for the State, in attendance.⁸¹ By October the lodge rented a room upstairs in N.C. Jones' building until their new hall (shared with IOOF) was completed two years later.⁸² Less than a year after first conceiving the idea, the hall was completed. The Masons and Odd Fellows jointly paid for the second floor of the building at 407 N. Main; John A. Stevens funded the first floor and the roof. The lodges, as well as J.A. Stevens, hired Stevens and Thompson to design and build the building. Each lodge had their own meeting hall on the second floor, accessed from an entrance on Main Street.

The Sequoyah Lodge No. 245, of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows was organized December 16, 1884. Special District Grand Master D.B. Long performed ceremonies for the admission of charter members Joe H. Borders, J.H. Pierce, J.B. Shaw, Joseph Huffman, C.P. Reeve, I.R. Holmes, R.A. Hopper, J.J. Munger, V.R. Hopkins, N.F. Weeks, J.W. Weeks, W.E. McLain, along with town founders W.D. Fulton and J.R. Fulton.⁸³ John A. Stevens, already an Odd Fellow, was admitted by card at the lodge's first meeting.

3) 409 N. Main – J.C. Penney Building

John A. Stevens built his Opera House (former building) at this location in 1886. The ground floor was home to various retail businesses until 1931 when it became J.C. Penney's second home in Garden City. In 1953, the Garden City J.C. Penney store announced they would build a new modern store in their current location (on the site of the Opera House).

James Cash Penney (1875-1971) opened his first store in 1902 in the mining town of Kemmerer, WY. Beginning with "the Golden Rule" dry goods store, he bought out his partners through scrimping and saving. By 1912 he had a chain of forty stores when he decided to change the name to his own. The man was known for remembering names of his employees, even when meeting years later. He started profit-sharing program in 1907 that he attributed to his firm's success because it "created incentive and made all employees truly 'associates.'"⁸⁴ Penney's employment was considered a good job with benefits that included Christmas bonus valued at approximately two weeks wages for full time employees and a

⁷⁶ *Dodge City Daily Globe*. 3 Dec 1914, 1.

⁷⁷ "J.C. Penney Co. Formally Takes Over J.B. Byars Store." *Garden City News*. 1 Aug 1929,1.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*.

⁷⁹ "Woolworth to open for business here in Byars' building." *Garden City News*. 3 Jul 1931.

⁸⁰ "New Store Opens Tomorrow." *Garden City Telegram*. 19 Nov 1958, 2.

⁸¹ *Garden City Irrigator*. 26 Jun 1884, 6.

⁸² *Garden City Sentinel*. 31 Dec 1884, 1.

⁸³ "IOOF History, Garden City, Kansas." unpublished document, no date [ca. 1935]. Finney County Historical Museum Clipping File.

⁸⁴ J.C. Penney, Founder of Chain Stores, Dies at 95." *New York Times*. 13 Feb 1971, 1, 31.

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commensurate amount for part timers.⁸⁵ Many employees began at the bottom and retired at the top. Upon his death in 1971, Penney had 1,660 stores, the fifth largest merchandise company in the U.S. with \$4.1B in annual sales.⁸⁶

Between 1920 and 1930, Penney's opened a new store, on average, every three days.⁸⁷ When Penney's opened in Garden City in 1929, the company promised higher quality for lower prices from its 1,400 stores across the United States, offering "no sales but low prices every day." By 1954, the company was still in a period of expansion and renewal, opening twenty-five new stores and renovating over one hundred existing concerns in the first half of the year.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ *Iola Register*. 17 Dec 1953, 2.

⁸⁶ *New York Times*. 13 Feb 1971, 31.

⁸⁷ Mary M. Stiritz. *J.C. Penney Company Warehouse Building (St. Louis) National Register Nomination*. Washington, DC: National Parks Service, 1999.

⁸⁸ *Salina Journal*. 18 Nov 1953, 4.