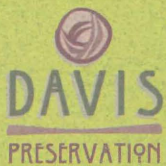


Koester House

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

Museum



TREANOR ARCHITECTS P.A.

DGM Consultants, P.A.

Structural Engineering and Masonry Consulting

OSE ORAZEM & SCALORA
ENGINEERING, P.A.
Manhattan, Kansas

Terracon



INTRODUCTION

The Koester House is an extraordinarily intact nineteenth-century residence. The home's architectural integrity owes to the fact that it was occupied by the same family for almost a century and since has been operated as a house museum. The home's exceptional integrity comes with a high degree of responsibility for maintaining it. The purpose of this report is to provide a history of the property and its development over time, a detailed description of its architectural elements, a recommended preservation treatment approach, and a list of recommendations and priorities for projects. Although the building's landscaped site is highly significant, the historic structures are the focus of this report. This report is intended not to replicate, but to build upon previous studies, outlined in Appendix A.



CHAPTER 1

✿ HISTORICAL EVALUATION ✿

A Brief History of Marysville

Marysville, Kansas is located in northeast Kansas in the traditional land of the Pawnee, Pottawatomie, Kansa (Kaw) and Otoe Indians. Like the generations of Indian peoples who preceded them, Euro-American settlers were drawn to the rich valley of the Big Blue River, the largest of the Kansas River's tributaries. In the two decades before Kansas was opened to white settlement, more than a hundred thousand miners, traders and emigrants converged at Independence Crossing, six miles south of present-day Marysville, in their march to California and Oregon.¹ From the beginning, Marysville has been a crossroads – for traders, merchants and industrialists.

By the late 1840s, the place had attracted the interest of white entrepreneurs like Missourian Frank J. Marshall, who opened shop at Independence Crossing in 1849. In 1852, Marshall established a second ferry at the crossing on the military road that connected Forts Leavenworth and Kearny. This second ferry was located at the present-day site of Marysville, the town Frank Marshall named after his wife Mary. According to Marshall's own accounts, 5,000-10,000 people crossed the Big Blue each day in the spring and summer months.² By 1852, his operation included a "private post-office, a dramshop, hotel, and ferry." By all accounts, Marshall was "doing a rushing business," charging \$4.00 per wagon for the ferry, \$1.00 per letter at the post office, \$.75 for "a dram of good whiskey" and \$1.50 for a meal.³

The Oregon Trail, which stretched west from the Missouri cities of St. Joseph, Weston and Independence, and the area's rich natural resources drew other Missourians into the valley. In 1855, the year after the Kansas Territory was opened to permanent white settlement, the census counted thirty-six residents in Marysville's census district. Thirty-five of them emigrated from Missouri, the other from Virginia.⁴ The polling place for the 1855 election was at the store of Frank Marshall. Marshall was elected to the territorial legislature, the body that established Marshall County (named for Frank Marshall) as one of the territory's first thirty-three counties, with Marysville as its county seat.⁵

By the 1855 election, Marshall had sold his ferry operation and was speculating in a new form of transportation: the railroad. As a member of the Board of Directors of the Palmetto & Roseport Railroad Company, later known as the St. Joseph and Western Railroad, he was influential in establishing a route that would connect Marysville to St. Joseph, Missouri, the region's commercial center.⁶

The Civil War and preceding events would delay the railroad's development. After it became clear that Kansas would enter the Union as a free state, many slavery advocates left the territory. Members of Marysville's Southern Methodist Church, which included some of the eighty-five South Carolinian colonists who established the adjacent community of Palmetto, "scattered."⁷ By 1860, only thirty-nine Missouri-born residents and nine South Carolina-born residents remained. Among those forced to flee was Frank Marshall, whose high-profile position as the pro-slavery candidate for Governor in 1857 limited his prospects in a free state.

Although he was unable to see the culmination of his efforts, Marshall's fortune and political connections set in motion Marysville's post-war evolution from frontier outpost to railroad

junction. The St. Joseph and Western, which was chartered in 1857, was the first to lay track in Kansas.⁸

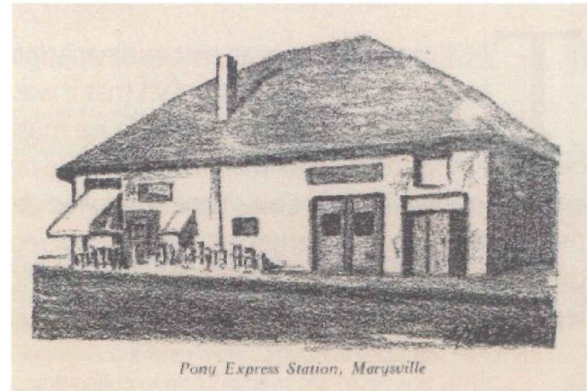


Figure 1. Sketch of the Pony Express Station in Marysville from Margaret Whittemore's Sketchbook of Kansas Landmarks. Kansas Historical Society.

But the line did not reach Marysville until 1871, a decade after Frank Marshall left Kansas. In the interim, Marysville was connected to the coasts via stage coach and, more famously, the Pony Express. A stage line that served Marysville until 1866 offered transportation from Marysville to the nearest Union Pacific rail head at Manhattan, Kansas.⁹ The nation's first mail service to the West Coast, the Pony Express, began operation in 1860. The Pony Express route stretched west from St. Joseph, Missouri to Marysville, where it cut north into Nebraska, cut across the corner of Colorado, then proceeded west through Wyoming, Utah and Nevada to California.¹⁰ Marysville's Home Station #1 represented the end of the route's first leg from St. Joseph. The Pony Express operated only eighteen months in 1860 and 1861 before transcontinental rail and telegraph service rendered it obsolete.

In the years following the Civil War, Marysville, like many Kansas towns, experienced an exponential growth, quadrupling in size from 481 to 1625 between 1860 and 1870.¹¹ Among the new Kansans were farmers seeking cheap land. The farmers grew Kansas staples – corn, wheat, oats and alfalfa. In the years following

the Civil War, as farmers turned from subsistence operations to cash crops, transportation was essential in carrying their grain to markets in the east. Two developments aided in this cause – the 1864 replacement of the ferry crossing with a new bridge and the 1871 arrival of the St. Joseph and Denver City Railroad, later the St. Joseph and Western Railroad.¹²

The 1860s and 1870s also brought a new wave of industrialists, who took advantage of the surrounding agricultural economy and access to power and transportation. Marysville pioneer Perry Hutchinson used the rushing waters from the Big Blue River to power his mill, first established in 1864. In 1886 alone, the mill shipped 1527 carloads of flour.¹³ Cigar magnate Charles F. Pusch established a cigar making business in 1872. By 1883, his company was the largest manufacturer in the state.¹⁴

By 1880, the city's population had grown to 3614.¹⁵ Among those who contributed to the community's growth were a good number of German emigrants, like Frank Schmidt and Charles F. Koester. In the 1870s and 1880s, German/Prussian emigrants made up 10% of the city's population.¹⁶ Other emigrants hailed from Ireland, Bohemia and places in between.

During the lean years of the late 1880s and 1890s, the population of Marysville declined, falling to 2707 by 1900. The decline owed both to the economic downturn and the city's failure to secure a division point on the Union Pacific line. Among those who lobbied for the division point were the city's manufacturers, including miller Perry Hutchinson. But the community was unwilling to meet the railroad's demands for \$20,000. Despite losing division point status to Hanover, Marysville industrialists thrived.¹⁷ By 1900, Pusch's Cigar Factory was employing 10% of Marysville's population; and by 1917, it was manufacturing three million cigars per year.¹⁸

Still, the town's boosters continued to agitate for additional rail access. Their work paid off in 1909, when the Union Pacific established a line known as the "Topeka Cutoff," which connected St. Joseph to Grand Island, Nebraska via Marysville.¹⁹ In 1917, Pusch, then mayor, successfully negotiated Marysville's designation as a division point for the Union Pacific Railroad.²⁰ The railroad employed hundreds at its new Marysville headquarters and the city's population had rebounded to 3693 by 1920 and to 4721 by 1930.²¹



Figure 2. This unique sign told of Marysville's founding. 1927. Kansas Historical Society

Since the beginning, the city's businessmen relied on access to reliable transportation. By the early twentieth century, this meant not only railroads but also highways. In 1914, Marysville boosters attended a meeting in St. Joseph, Missouri formally organizing the Pikes Peak Ocean to Ocean Highway. This route stretched from New York to San Francisco (later to Los Angeles). The alignment connected the Kansas cities of Hiawatha, Marysville, Belleville, Smith Center, Norton, Colby and Goodland. Other early highways included the White Way and Blue Valley. Eventually, U. S. Highway 77 became the principal north/south route through town. By 1917, when local farmers and, by extension, local merchants, reaped the benefits of record-high war-time grain prices, there were 2200 cars in the county. By the late 1920s, Marysville was marketing itself to auto tourists as the home of the black squirrels. According to local lore, the black squirrels escaped from a travelling circus.

Unfortunately, Marysville's place in the growing highway network could not protect it from the brewing economic crisis. Hard times in the late 1920s and 1930s forced the railroads to consolidate. In 1933, the Union Pacific Central Division moved its headquarters from Marysville to Kansas City.²² Even one of the city's oldest manufacturers and largest employers, Pusch Cigar Company, was not immune to economic woes. Pusch had suffered a series of blows, including the post-war domination of big tobacco and 1927 legislation legalizing the sale of cigarettes in Kansas.²³ The company limped along after Pusch's death in 1923.²⁴ But it was forced to close in 1933.

Even after the UP moved its division headquarters to Kansas City, the railroad continued to employ approximately 350 people

in Marysville, nearly 10% of the city's population in the 1930s and 1940s.²⁵ Like the railroads, however, rail-related industries were also consolidating. In 1930, milling conglomerate Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) assumed operation of the former Hutchinson Mill.²⁶ The animal products giant Armour and Company bought the Blue Valley Produce Company in 1924.²⁷

Marysville raised some corporations of its own. A local welding shop, opened in 1962, has evolved into Landoll Corporation, a large-scale metal equipment company with 500 employees.²⁸ And today, with a population of just over 3000, the community continues to serve as a regional business hub.

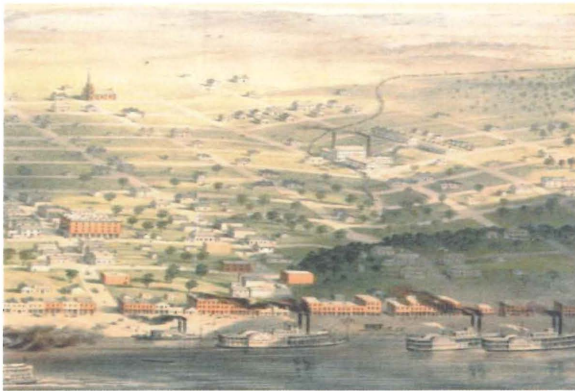


Figure 3. A promotional lithograph for the paper town of Sumner, Kansas, where Charles Koester purchased property. Kansas Historical Society

The Koester Family

The Koester Family was among those who settled Marysville in the years before the Civil War. Carl Daniel, his wife Ludowine and their children Charles F. and Johanna lived in Hesse-Castel Prussia, later part of unified Germany. On November 20, 1851, Ludowine and the children, then 10 (C. F.) and 17 (Johanna/Jane), set out from the German port city of Bremen to the United States.²⁹ The family arrived at New York on January 14, 1852 and “immediately” set out for Cincinnati, Ohio, where they stayed with Ludowine’s relatives the Muth Family.³⁰

After two years in Cincinnati, the family moved to Keokuk, Iowa. There, on May 1, 1856, Johanna (Jane) Koester married German immigrant Frank Schmidt. By 1860, the Koesters and Schmidts were living in St. Joseph, Missouri, whose rail and steamboat access made it a bustling jumping off point for all traveling west. There, Frank (28), whose name was Anglicized as “Smith” was employed as a “saloon keeper” and the head of a 22-member household, likely a boarding house. In addition to his in-laws, Carl, Ludowine and Charles, the household included a number of single professionals. According to the 1860 census, Charles Koester, then nineteen years old, was employed as a barkeeper in Frank’s saloon.³¹

Figure 4. In 1860, the Koesters and Schmidts were operating a saloon in St. Joseph, Missouri. 1860 Census

Charles Koester had dealings across the border in Kansas as early as 1859 when, according to his diary, Koester bought his first property in Sumner, near Atchison.³² Koester likely purchased property in the fledgling river town on speculation. Later biographical accounts state that Koester was employed in a candy shop in Atchison.

When the Koesters and Schmidts arrived in Marysville on August 7, 1860, they found a “lonely and small looking town, all prairie and a number of young looking men ...” At first, they were unsure as to whether or not to stay: “The country was all so new and some people so rough that it was many years a hard country to live in, but we trusted in the great future!”³³ Schmidt “[brought] with him a general stock of merchandise” to the tune of “7 teams loaded with household goods.”³⁴

The Koester’s and Schmidt’s were instrumental in the great future they envisioned for their community. By 1865, Carl, Charles and Frank were “eminently successful” “merchants,” with Frank having amassed a \$7000 fortune.³⁵ Frank and Jane had welcomed three more children, Jane (3), Ludowine (2) and Charles (1) to their growing family.

While Frank tended to his growing family, Charles pursued an endless array of both capitalist

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 SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in each and every ward, in the County of Buchanan, State of Missouri, enumerated by me, on the 1st day of July, 1860. William H. Hunt, Clerk of Court.

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Color	Profession, Occupation, or Trade	Place of Birth		Married	Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Estate	Males 20 and over	Females 20 and over
						Male	Female					
1	Frank Schmidt	M	28	W	Saloon-keeper	Germany	Germany					
2	Jane Schmidt	F	24	W		Germany	Germany					
3	Charles Koester	M	19	W	Bar-keeper	Germany	Germany					
4	Ludowine Koester	F	17	W		Germany	Germany					
5	Carl Koester	M	10	W		Germany	Germany					
6	Johanna Koester	F	17	W		Germany	Germany					
7	John Smith	M	25	W	Merchant	Germany	Germany					
8	Mary Smith	F	22	W		Germany	Germany					
9	John Smith	M	20	W	Merchant	Germany	Germany					
10	Mary Smith	F	18	W		Germany	Germany					
11	John Smith	M	15	W		Germany	Germany					
12	Mary Smith	F	12	W		Germany	Germany					
13	John Smith	M	10	W		Germany	Germany					
14	Mary Smith	F	8	W		Germany	Germany					
15	John Smith	M	5	W		Germany	Germany					
16	Mary Smith	F	3	W		Germany	Germany					
17	John Smith	M	2	W		Germany	Germany					
18	Mary Smith	F	1	W		Germany	Germany					
19	John Smith	M	1	W		Germany	Germany					
20	Mary Smith	F	1	W		Germany	Germany					
21	John Smith	M	1	W		Germany	Germany					
22	Mary Smith	F	1	W		Germany	Germany					

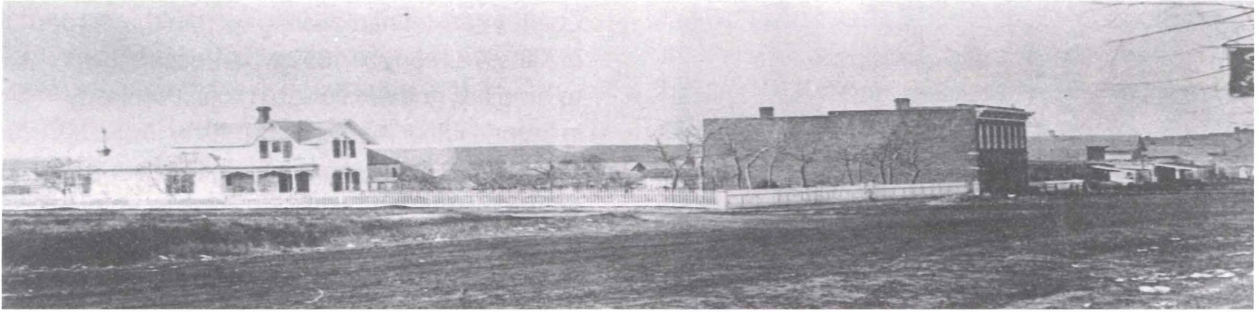


Figure 5. A view of the Koester House and Koester Block in 1876, before the home's westward expansion. Koester House archives.

and political pursuits. In 1861, soon after arriving in Marysville, Charles Koester was elected Register of Deeds, a position he held until 1870, when he began a two-term stint as County Treasurer. In 1872, he was appointed to a committee of three charged with revising the state's tax laws.³⁶

By the time Charles and Frank established the Exchange Bank of Schmidt and Koester in 1870, Charles had succeeded in the grocery business, amassing real estate valued at \$11,000.³⁷ Following his father's death in 1866, Charles' mother Ludowine lived in Charles' household, where she remained until her death on December 7, 1874.³⁸ By 1875, the Schmidts had eight children; but Charles Koester remained the city's most eligible bachelor. It was not until after his mother's death (between 1870 and 1875) that Charles began pursuing a family life of his own.

In the early 1870s, Charles Koester began constructing a new house, raising speculation among his neighbors that he might be thinking of settling down. An October 4, 1873 article in the News hinted subtly that "Charlie has only one more addition to make in the way of improving his home, and that is so self-evident that we could not particularize." On July 1876, Charles F. Koester finally silenced the speculators and married Sylvia Broughten.

Sylvia was born near Olney, Richland County, Illinois on February 14, 1848 to James E. Broughten and Eliza Webster. After the death of their parents in the late 1850s, Sylvia and her

siblings were divided among relatives. Sylvia lived with her aunt Mrs. Alta Elliott until the age of 18, when she moved to the home of her other aunt, Mrs. O. B. Morehouse, while she finished normal school. In 1871, Sylvia and her sister Lucy moved to Marysville, where their brother, attorney John Broughten, "provided [them] a home." Both sisters secured teaching assignments in Marysville in the fall of 1871. Sylvia continued to teach school until she married Charles F. Koester in 1876.³⁹ Her sister Lucy had married Marysville farmer John Williams by 1875.⁴⁰

Immediately following their marriage, Charles and Sylvia embarked on a two-month-long honeymoon to Cincinnati, Washington, D. C., and New York. Accompanying them were four of Frank Schmidt's children, who by then were teenagers. The trip combined business with pleasure as Charles attended the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition as one of the commissioners for the state's exhibits.⁴¹

In a September 20, 1879 article, *The News* announced that Charles F. Koester was "living a quiet, happy life as all the old settlers should." By 1880, the Koesters had welcomed two daughters to their household, Tinnie (3) and Jennie (1). To assist in managing the household, the Koesters relied on a live-in servant. In 1880, they employed Barbara Tehel, a 26-year-old Bohemian. Their third and final child, Charles J. D. Koester, was born in 1881. The dawning years of the 1880s were a highpoint in the Koesters' family and business life. The fruits of years of hard work

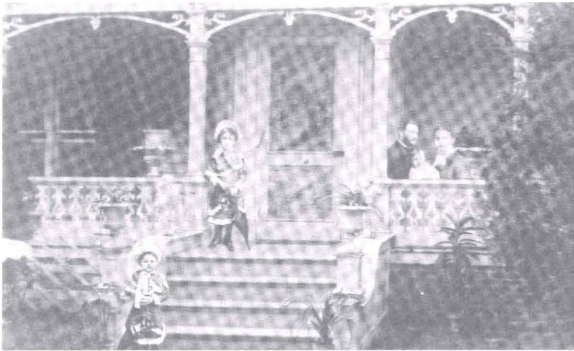


Figure 6. The Koester family on the porch of their home in 1882. Jennie and Tinnie are on the stairs. Charles and Sylvia are holding their son Charles. This photo was taken shortly before Sylvia's death. Koester House archives.

culminated in the construction of the Koester Building in 1880, the city's first three-story masonry commercial building.

In the early 1880s, the Koesters' lives seemed picture perfect. Charles was a successful businessman who had served multiple terms as mayor; he had settled into a marriage with the "estimable" Sylvia; he had constructed an idyllic house for a growing family that included three small children.⁴² Then, tragedy struck. Sylvia may have been diagnosed with Tuberculosis as early as 1878, just two years after their marriage.⁴³ Sylvia likely contracted the disease while nursing her sister Lucy, who died from the disease in 1879.⁴⁴

Tragically, Sylvia was doomed to the same fate. By the time of Sylvia's death on April 3, 1883, she had suffered the ravages of the unforgiving disease for months or years. In February 1883, Charles and Sylvia visited doctors in St. Joseph, Missouri. But even the best doctors money could buy had nothing more to offer as, in Charles' words "rank and wealth do not protect against the miseries of life."⁴⁵ In their condolences, friends and family referred to her death as "sad yet not unexpected." Mrs. O. B. Morehouse, the aunt who had taken her in at eighteen tended to her "in the last few months' sickness."⁴⁶

Charles Koester and the community he loved were heartbroken at Sylvia's loss. Charles was mayor at the time of Sylvia's death; and the city council adopted a proclamation calling for the city's business houses to remain closed until 3:00 p.m. on the day of her funeral so the citizens, who "felt impressively the affliction" could attend the 2:00 service. From a lifetime of friends nationwide, Charles received condolences, which he ultimately reproduced in a published tribute to his wife.⁴⁷



Figure 7. The Koester family in the parlor of the Koester House. Koester House archives.

After Sylvia's death, Charles focused his attention on his young family, his single aim "to see the children old enough for self government."⁴⁸ Banking business thrived during the mid-1880s real estate boom when institutions like the Exchange Bank satisfied the demand for easy credit to farmers who sought the larger tracts of land and industrialized equipment necessary to efficiently harvest cash crops. By 1889, the bank was "solidly entrenched in the confidence of the business and farming community, and [had] done much to enable them to reach the advanced position they enjoy"⁴⁹ On one day in January 1892, Koester traveled by buggy from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. to close loans.⁵⁰ He had so many requests for mortgages that he had to decline some simply because he did not have time to process them.⁵¹

When the region was ravaged by drought and the over-extended railroads hit bottom,

banks foreclosed on the mortgages of debt-saddled farmers in droves. The Panic of 1893 compounded the problem. In Koester's words, "The financial world is looking forward with doubt and uncertainty upon all investments." Although a good number of Koester's mortgage holders defaulted on loans, the Exchange Bank managed to avoid the fate of a number of its competitors, including Marshall County Mortgage, that failed.⁵² Populists blamed bankers for the crisis. And many bankers found themselves burdened with foreclosed-upon land. Involuntarily, Koester came to manage "several well-improved farms near his home town."⁵³ One of these was a 120-acre farm, abandoned by a farmer who, like many, left Kansas during the Oklahoma Land Rush.⁵⁴

Frank Schmidt and Charles Koester introduced their sons to the banking business early. By 1889, three of Frank's sons were employed as cashiers, clerks and bookkeepers. They continued to work in the bank after their father left for California in 1890 or 1891. After his father left, Charles Schmidt "took the helm of affairs" at the bank. When Charles Schmidt died in 1897 after months of rheumatoid paralysis, he left a power vacuum.

Owing to the fact that Charles was ten years Frank's Junior and did not marry until his mid thirties, Charles' children were much younger than Frank's. Unlike Frank's sons, who were employed in banking during the booming 1880s, Charles' son came of age as the industry collapsed. In the wake of Charles Schmidt's death, it was left to Alexander Schmidt to train Charles J. D. Koester in his first "real work" in 1898.⁵⁵ After Charles J. D. graduated from Marysville High School in 1899, he attended Gem City Business College in Quincy, Illinois. He returned to clerk at the Exchange Bank in 1900.

By the time of Charles J. D.'s return to Marysville, the nation's economy was showing signs of recovery. But his father's health was not. Just two

years after Charles J. D.'s return from school, on August 15, 1902, Charles F. Koester died.⁵⁶ Charles J. D. was named vice president of the bank.⁵⁷

Charles F. Koester did not live to see any of his children marry. In 1905, Charles (23), Tinnie (27) and Jennie (25) were all living in the family home.⁵⁸ Still, by 1912, all three of them were married. Charles John Daniel married Hyacinth Puelleine, daughter of Marysville Probate Judge William T. Puelleine.⁵⁹ Hyacinth, Charles J. D. and their children Charles William and Julia Constance lived in a brick home Charles built south of his father's home.

Tinnie married Marshall-County-raised Guy Tresillian Helvering on March 16, 1910.⁶⁰ After serving in the Spanish-American War, Helvering received a law degree from the University of Michigan. At the time of his marriage, Guy was serving a four-year (1907-1911) stint as Marshall County's prosecuting attorney. He went on to represent his life-long neighbors in Congress for three terms. After an unsuccessful bid for a fourth term, he and Tinnie moved to Salina, Kansas. Helvering served as the state Democratic chairman from 1930-1934, state highway director, IRS commissioner and, finally, federal district judge for Kansas.⁶¹ Guy Helvering died in 1946. Tinnie died in 1957. The Helverings had one child, Koester William, who died at the age of three months.⁶²

Jennie married Arthur Scott, also of Marysville, on August 12, 1910 and, like her brother Charles, remained close to home.⁶³ In 1920, the Scotts were listed as living in the Charles F. Koester home, with the Helverings apparently staying there when Congress was out of session. Arthur, who was working as a travelling salesman at the time of his marriage, worked for the Internal Revenue Service in 1920. By 1930, he was working at the bank.⁶⁴ Arthur died in 1938. Jennie lived in the Koester home until her death in 1964.

Charles J. D. Koester, the last of Charles F. Koester's children, died in 1965. Charles J. D. Koester's son Charles W. Koester received his Bachelor's degree at the University of Nebraska in 1931, an MBA from Harvard in 1933, and a law degree from George Washington University in 1937. Like his father and grandfather, Charles W. entered the banking business – but not in Marysville. He became the Senior Vice President of the United Bank of Kansas City and director of the Planters State Bank. He lived in Mission Hills, Kansas until his death in 2005.⁶⁵

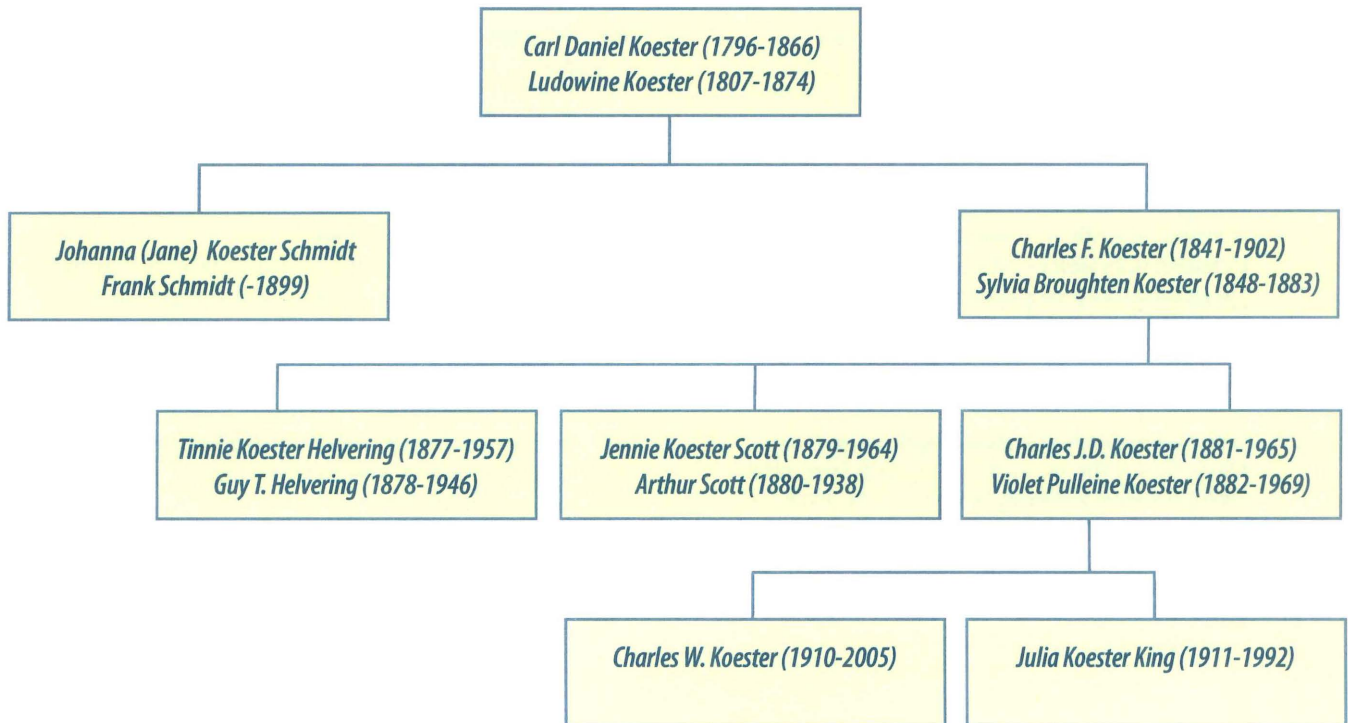


Figure 8. Centennial Float for the Exchange Bank of Schmidt and Koester. Koester House archives.

Charles J. D. Koester's daughter, Julia Koester King attended Stephens College and received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Nebraska in 1933. Julia lived in Washington, DC with her aunt Tinnie and Uncle Guy, where she worked for the Internal Revenue Service. Later, she and her husband Richard Weldon King of Lincoln, Nebraska made Salina their permanent home. After Richard's death in 1952, Julia took his position as a director of the Exchange Bank.

Although they lived elsewhere, Julia Koester King and Charles W. Koester brought their families to Marysville often – for meetings, holidays and vacations. Julia, Charles and Charles' wife Sarah donated the Charles F. Koester House to the City of Marysville in 1972. The family donated the remainder of the block, including the Charles J. D. Koester House, the Koester Commercial Block and a park to the city in 1977.

🌿 KOESTER FAMILY TREE 🌿



ENDNOTES

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- 8 *Axtell. Axtell Anchor*.
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- 12 Schlicter, 14.
- 13 Ibid., 15; "The Mining Industry in Kansas," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, 1911-1912, vol. XII (State Printing Office, 1912), 57.
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- 15 1880 Census U.S. Census.
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- 27 Ibid., 116.
- 28 Shortridge, 351.
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- 31 1860 Census.
- 32 Koester Diary, 1899, 1900, 1901.
- 33 Koester Diary, 1881.
- 34 Frank Schmidt, Chapman Bros, 1889; Koester Diary, 1880.
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- 37 1870 Census.
- 38 Koester Diary, 1876.
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- 42 Blackmar; *Tribute*.
- 43 Koester Diary, 20 October 1884.
- 44 *The News*, 6 April, 1883.
- 45 Koester CFK Diary, 3 Feb, 1884; 17 Feb., 1884; 17 Nov., 1886.
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- 56 Ibid.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 1905 Census.
- 59 1900 Census; Blackmar.
- 60 Koester Family Bible.
- 61 Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.
- 62 Cemetery Records; Koester Family Bible.
- 63 Koester Family Bible.
- 64 1920 Census; 1930 Census.
- 65 Social Security Death Index.

CHAPTER 2

❧ SIGNIFICANCE AND DEVELOPMENT ❧

Statement of Significance

The Koester House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its historic significance in the areas of commerce, landscape architecture, politics and western settlement. The home is historically associated with Charles F. Koester and his children. The property's period of significance stretches from 1871, the earliest documented date of construction, to 1964, when the home's last occupant, Charles F. Koester's daughter Jennie Koester Scott, died.

The Koester family began to develop the property soon after their arrival in Marysville in 1860, with the construction of the one-story wood-framed home, later called the "old house" on the south end of the block. Charles Koester began construction of his home, now the Koester House Museum, as early as 1871. He continued to expand the house and construct the various outbuildings through the 1880s. The house had major expansions in 1876, at the time of Koester's marriage, and 1879/1880, to accommodate the growing Koester family. The summer kitchen and ice house were constructed in 1878. In 1883, Koester commissioned the brick perimeter wall to protect the house and gardens from future flooding. The brick coal and wood shed was constructed in two phases in 1885 and 1886. Charles JD Koester built the house to the south in 1906.

Chronology of Development

- 1860**
- The Koesters and Schmidts arrive in Marysville.
 - The Koesters purchase property in Block 10 and build what comes to be known as "The Old House"
 - Carl begins to plant gardens before his death in 1866
- 1871** According to a diary entry on 12/6/1894, the "dining room part of the house was built first in 1871." (This is the one-story section on the southeast corner of the house.) Other sources (see below) indicate an original construction date of 1873.
- 1873** April 19, 1873 – "County Treasurer Chas. F. Koester is making arrangements to erect a dwelling house on his elegant block of lots on Broadway. It will be one of the neatest residences in the city." (*Marshall County News*, 19 April 1873)
- May 10, 1873 – "Work has commenced on Chas. F. Koester's new residence last Monday morning. The cellar is being excavated, and the stone delivered for the foundation." (*Marshall County News*, 10 May 1873)
- June 7, 1873 – "The new residence of Chas. F. Koester is being completed. Mr. C. S. Geer is the contractor. He is an excellent carpenter and is fitting up a good building." (*Marshall County News*, 7 June 1873)

October 4, 1873 – “Charlie Koester is superintending the erection of a unique and tasteful mound in front of the west portico of his new residence. Let others follow his example in ornamenting their grounds...” (*Marshall County News*, 4 October 1873)

(These refer to the first two-story section of the house, the front gable with north/south ridge that now runs along the east side of the house)

- 1876** September 21, 1876 – Charles F. and Sylvia moved into Sylvia’s “new home” – (The pair returned from their honeymoon in early September and apparently stayed with Sylvia’s brother John until they moved in. This implies that work was going on while he and Sylvia were on their honeymoon.)
- 1878** Koester commissions construction of the ice house and a concrete floor for the summer kitchen.
- 1879-1880** Constructs west-projecting bay with north portico – March 31, 1880 – “our new bedroom is being arranged today and we’ll sleep tonight for the first time...” April 1, 1880 – “rested comfortable all of us in our new house and bedroom”
- 1880 – Portico finished
- 1880 – Carpenter starts building east bay window; Stone mason lays foundation for and builds bay window, then removes former exterior wall to open to bay.
- 1881** Builds first greenhouse (no longer extant – located between house and “old house”; the greenhouse required a

great deal of coal to keep warm, thereby requiring an additional coal shed (see 1884 below))

- 1882** Remodels dining room with new south bay window, wallpaper, etc. (The south bay is similar to the east bay constructed in 1880)
- Constructs brick walks in garden
- A July flood destroys much of Koester’s gardens and Koester “reluctantly” decides to replace the picket fence with a brick wall to protect from rising water in the future. The wall is laid with a stone foundation.
- 1883** Completes brick wall with new stone caps set in position in March.
- 1884** Completes outdoor commode and trellis work
- Builds “another” coal shed for greenhouse coal
- 1885** Extends greenhouse
- Begins construction of additional coal and wood shed
- 1886** December 10, 1886 – receives 10,000 bricks to add a second floor to wood and coal house for children’s play area and laundry room
- 1887** August 6, 1887 – carpenter begins west portico “converting same in an addition to the west part of the kitchen and will build veranda connecting with the summer kitchen.”
- 1888** July 21, 1888 - Constructs 24-foot addition to Greenhouse

- October 6, 1888 - Finishes woodshed
- 1889** Builds elevator in the woodhouse
- Constructs addition to "The Old House" to create a home for the gardener
- 1891** Begins excavation for another greenhouse
- 1892** Has tile floor put in cellar
Renovates house with new wallpaper, paint and rugs
- 1894** Replaces linoleum in dining room and vestibules with parquet wood floors
- Enlarges wood and laundry shed
- 1896** Rebuilds west side of small greenhouse
- 1902** Charles F. Koester dies – all his children remain in the home
- 1906** Charles John Daniel Koester builds new masonry home south of family home. Prior to this, the "old house" and greenhouse, which occupied this end of the block, were removed
- 1964** Jennie Koester Scott, the last Koester child to live in the Koester House, dies
- 1965** Charles JD Koester dies
- 1972** Koester family donates the C. F. Koester House to the City of Marysville
- 1977** Koester family donates the remainder of the Koester Block, including the C. J. D. Koester House, commercial buildings and a park to the City of Marysville