

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 Gorden, David R., House

other names/site number 041-0020-00198

2. Location

street & number 400 N. Cedar Street

city or town Abilene

state Kansas code KS county Dickinson code 041 zip code 67410

not for publication

vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x 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 x 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 x local

Patrick E. Miller
Signature of certifying official/Title

5-16-12
Date

DSHPO
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:

x 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)

John H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

7-3-12
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian: Gothic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone

walls: Brick

roof: Asphalt

other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary

The David R. Gordon House (1877) is located at 400 North Cedar Street in Abilene (pop.6800), Dickinson County, Kansas. The east-facing house is located at the northwest edge of downtown Abilene on a large corner parcel at the northwest corner of North Cedar Street and North 4th Street. Generally, downtown commercial properties lie to the south and east and residential properties lie to the north and west.

Narrative Description

Exterior

The red brick Gothic Revival-style house is two-and-a-half stories and rests on a stone foundation with a water table. The overall plan is T-shaped. The cross of the T is on the north side of the house and is oriented east/west. The wing portion stretches to the south. The relatively steep roof is a cross-gable configuration and is sheathed in dark green asphalt shingles. There are four gables total, one on each elevation and each one features decorative wood cross bracing with a trefoil pattern and a finial. The barge boards are minimal. Gutters and downspouts are present. A single-story front porch spans the east elevation. A large, modern (2002) addition in the rear (west) includes living space and a three car garage.

The original wood window sashes have been replaced in the very recent past (late 2011/early 2012). The historic jambs and trim remain. The original sashes were generally double-hung with one-over-one light configuration. Several of the openings on the first floor stretch from floor to ceiling. They were double-hung with the bottom sash twice as tall as the top sash (the meeting rail is two-thirds of the distance from the floor to the top of the window). The new aluminum clad windows are all double-hung with a center meeting rail and they fit the original openings. Windows feature stone sills and decorative window hoods on the exterior. A few louvered shutters remain on the top story, but shutter hardware is present on the original windows indicating that every window once had them.

The east elevation is the front of the house. It features an asymmetrical gable-front and wing configuration with the wing stretching to the south. The entrance is on the north end of the wing. The gable front features five windows, two up and two down and a small paired, pointed arch window in the attic. It also features decorative cross bracing with a trefoil pattern and finial, indicative of Gothic Revival influence. The wing portion features two windows up and two down although they are not vertically aligned. The first floor windows on the front elevation correspond to the most formal rooms in the house and stretch from floor to ceiling. The front double doors feature arched glass lights over panels and a full-width transom window with etched glass and pointed door hood. There is a single-story flat-roof porch that spans the east elevation, paralleling the form of the facade. The light wood porch columns are composed of two small-diameter (3") chamfered posts with a jig-sawn frieze in between and paired brackets at the eave. The configuration of the frieze under the eave is similar to that of the columns and there is a minimal cornice. The horizontal balustrade features a rail and spindles that are rectangular in profile. The porch ceiling is composed of two inch wide tongue and groove boards.

The south elevation is the gable end of the south wing. It features cross bracing in the gable and a three-sided, flat-roof bay on the east end of the first floor. The bay features a decorative frieze, cornice with small brackets and small pointed window hoods. The second floor features a single window centered above the bay. The third story features two smaller windows spaced equidistant from the center. There is an internal chimney that is only visible above the roof line. There are also brick stairs to the side of the front porch on this elevation. Also visible from this viewpoint is a porch that was historically open, but has been filled in. The modern addition is attached on the west elevation and is visible on this elevation.

The north elevation is a single plane from the front to the back of the house (east to west). There are four equal sized windows on the first story, three on the second, and two on the third. The fenestration is irregular. There is a gable end more or less centered on this elevation and an interior chimney is visible above the roof line east of the gable. Also visible from this side of the house is a modern three car garage that abuts the rear of the house at a right angle, forming a large lot with building on two sides. The addition and garage are red brick.

The west (rear) elevation is only partially visible as it is dominated by a modern (2002) one-story addition. Historically this elevation closely resembled the configuration of the east elevation, gable front and wing, but reversed. Although the addition is large, it is well situated so that it does not negatively impact the integrity of the house.

Interior

Like the exterior, the interior retains a high degree of architectural integrity. Among the building's original features are smooth plaster walls, wood baseboards, wood window trim, wood panel doors and wood floors. There are transom windows above all of the doors leading into the halls on both the first and second levels. All of the floors are exposed wood (oak or pine, depending on the room). There is carpet on the front stairs. All of the wood trim is painted with the exception of the stair rail and banister and a set of pocket doors in the dining room. There are rather ornate gold cast iron radiators throughout the house. Lighting throughout the house is period appropriate, and there are three original fixtures (in the first-floor parlor, original kitchen, and second-floor master bedroom).

The wood double entry doors lead into a central stair hall. The stairs are situated on the south side of the hall. Looking west, to the immediate right is the dining room (historically the music room). To the immediate left is a formal parlor. The historic dining room is located west of the music room and large pocket doors separate them. Historically, at the opposite end of the hall from the front door, was a door leading to the rear porch. This porch has been enclosed and the door now enters into a bath.

The stair hall is relatively narrow, accommodating the stair on the south half and passageway on the north. Doors in the hall feature four panels, operable transoms, and substantial molding. There are baseboards, but no crown molding. The oak floors feature parquet detailing around the perimeter. The wood stairs feature turned balusters and decorative jig sawn bracket-like details on the stringers. The newel post is large in diameter and features decorative carving. The railing is substantial and is typical of the Victorian era. The stairs make a tight curve at the first landing which is visible overhead from the first floor.

The formal parlor is located south of the stairs. This room features the most formal decoration found in the house and high ceilings (approximately 10'). Crown molding in this room is substantial and is made of plaster. Substantial wood trim is present around the windows and at the base. There are two windows on the east wall that stretch from just below the ceiling to the floor. On the south wall there is a cased elliptical arch that frames the bay window. Also on the south wall is a red marble fireplace surround and mantel with a delicate wood over mantel with mirror. The fireplace has a cast iron stove insert that was used for burning coal. The hearth features dark green glazed tiles laid in a brick pattern. There is an original light fixture centered in the ceiling.

To the north of the stair hall is the music room (currently the dining room). This room is generous in size and features approximately 10' ceilings. On the north wall is a Carrera marble fireplace mantel and arched surround with a cast iron stove. Centered on the west wall are large faux wood grained pocket doors that lead into the dining room (currently an office). The east wall features two windows that stretch from just below the ceiling to the floor. There is small trim at the ceiling (approximately 2") and baseboards at the floor. Original trim around the windows and doors is consistent with other rooms on the first floor.

The original dining room, now used as an office, is located west of the music room on the north side of the stair hall. It is smaller than the front two, more formal rooms, but features similar wood trim around the door and windows and baseboards. The pocket doors on the east wall connect to the music room.

The historic kitchen area is located west of the dining room and is separated into a pantry/butler's pantry and a kitchen. The butler's pantry is entered first, from the stair hall. This is a fairly narrow room with one window on the north wall. There are cabinets built on the west wall and a lovely radiator with a warming oven with glass doors on the south wall, next to the door. Floors in this room are pine. There is an original light fixture in this room.

West of the pantry, at the historic rear of the house, is the kitchen. The west wall features an impressive cast iron wood burning cook stove inserted into a brick chimney surround. The stove is more than 6 feet tall. The stove bears the manufacturer's name, Magee Furnace Company, Chelsea, Massachusetts and was made in 1873.¹ In the northwest

¹ Chaim M. Rosenberg, *The Great Workshop: Boston's Victorian Age* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2004), 54. Accessed 23 February 2012 at <http://books.google.com>. Magee Furnace Company started in 1864 with headquarters in Boston. The foundry was located in Chelsea, MA.

corner of the kitchen is a small, slightly curved rear stair. The basement is accessed from a door underneath the servant's stair. On the south wall is a door that historically accessed the rear porch, but currently leads to a modern kitchen. There is also a window on the south wall that used to look out onto the rear porch.

There is a full basement with a concrete floor under the entire structure. It originally had four wood-burning fireplaces of which two remain functional today. The house is heated by a steam boiler manufactured by a local company called J.B. Ehrsam and Sons of Enterprise, KS.²

The second floor has a stair hall with similar configuration to the first floor. A railing runs down the center of the hall and the stairs are on the south side. The stairs to the attic continue up in the same vertical alignment; the entrance is through a door on the east end of the hall. There are six rooms on the second level.

On the south side of the hall is a large room that may have been used as a bedroom. Historically the south wall of this room had a fireplace that has since been enclosed. Windows and doors feature trim similar to that of the first floor. Baseboards are also present although they appear to have been removed on the west wall. The floors are wider (6") planks than those on the first floor, likely pine, and they are painted. There is a window centered on the west wall that is surrounded by modern built-in cabinetry. There is one window on the south wall and one on the east wall.

On the north side of the second level/story from east to west are four additional rooms. The easternmost room on the north side of the second floor is currently used as the master bedroom. Historically there was a fireplace centered on the north wall between the closet and the window that is no longer extant. The closet is one of three that feature curved plaster corners and baseboards. There are two windows on the east wall. This room has baseboards and window and door molding, but does not feature any molding at the ceiling. A door on the west wall leads into another bedroom.

Just west of the master bedroom is a smaller bedroom. This room has an original corner closet with a curved wall in the north east corner. There is a window on the wall west of the closet. A door on the west wall leads into another bedroom, and a door on the south wall leads into the hall.

West of the above described bedroom is another smaller bedroom. There are windows on the south and the north walls. This room has a door on the south wall leading to the hall, a door on the east wall leading into a bedroom and two doors on the west wall. Of the two doors on the west wall, the south door leads into what was an enclosed porch. It was later enclosed to create a bathroom. The north door on the west wall is a wide opening (no door attached) leads into a small hall with the back stairs to the north. Continuing west there is a door leading into the rear stair landing.

There is a small landing/hall between the previous bedroom and the westernmost room where the rear stairs arrive at the second floor. This room was a small bedroom, possibly a servant's quarters, but has been remodeled into a bathroom. There is a window centered on the west wall and a closet on the north wall.

The last room on the second floor is believed to have been the maid's quarters. It is now a bathroom. There is a window on the south wall with a door to the east of the window that leads out onto what originally was a balcony/porch. The current homeowners enclosed this space. The door leading from the west end of the upstairs hall into the balcony/porch has a transom above it.

In the attic there are two small rooms and one large room. It is a half story so the ceilings follow the lines of the rafters. It is a finished space with plaster walls and wood doors and trim although they are simply rectangular in profile; a common treatment for a tertiary space. There is a finished railing with turned balusters at the top of the stairs and painted wide plank pine floors.

² Edward Gene Nelson, *The Company and the Community*, (Lawrence: Bureau of Business Research, School of Business, University of Kansas, 1956). Accessed 27 February 2012 at [http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.\\$b393758](http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.$b393758). The J.B. Ehrsam and Sons Manufacturing Company was the second company established at Enterprise by Jakob Ehrsam. Ehrsam immigrated to the United States from Switzerland in 1867. His first company was the J.B. Ehrsam Machine Company and built machinery for different types of mills including grain, wool, and gypsum. The company went bankrupt in 1896 and within a few months Ehrsam started a family partnership, J.B. Ehrsam and Sons. The boiler was patented by J.B. Ehrsam and Sons, in 1899. The Ehrsam Economic Water Tube Boiler was advertised in *Iron and Machinery World's* serial publication "The Age of Steel" (No. 23, St Louis, 9 June 1900) as a "saver of fuel, of repairs, of time and space."

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1877

Significant Dates

1877

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Keagy, Frank - Architect

Builders: Mr. Brown, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Coombs,
John Jackson, Mr. Robb. Mr. Vanderbilt

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.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is 1877 – the year the house was constructed.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The David R. Gorden House in Abilene is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for its local significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The Victorian-era residence reflects elements of the Gothic Revival style and represents a period of social refinement in Abilene as the cattle-shipping activity gave way to financial-, real estate-, and agriculture-based businesses.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

A Brief History of Abilene

Abilene traces its roots to the 1860s era of Texas cattle drives when great herds of longhorns were driven overland along the Chisholm Trail from Texas to Abilene, which served as the western terminus of the first railroad through Kansas. Town histories credit Timothy and Elizabeth Hersey as the first white settlers. They built a home along Mud Creek in 1858, and Mrs. Hersey is credited with the naming of the city, which she chose from the Bible in Luke 3:1 - the name means "city of the plains."

The town was laid out in 1860 on land owned by C.H. Thompson, but remained small and undeveloped until the development of the railroad after the Civil War. With the arrival of cattleman and entrepreneur Joseph McCoy who promoted Abilene as an excellent place from which to ship Texas cattle by rail, Abilene was flooded with drovers, cowboys, railroad workers, and businessmen in the late 1860s.³ The Kansas Pacific Railroad (later named Union Pacific) developed through Abilene in 1866. With over three million head of cattle passing through Abilene between 1867 and 1871, the cattle industry played an important role in the early development of the community until 1872, when the railroad opened up more railheads in Newton, Wichita, and Ellsworth. It was at this point that the cultural makeup of the community shifted away from an active cattle-focused railhead to a more refined business- and agriculture-based city.

Abilene, the seat of Dickinson County government, boasted the opening of Belle Springs Creamery in 1892, and the Parker Amusement Company opened a shop in Abilene in 1905. Frank Blackmar's 1912 history of Kansas noted Abilene's population at 4,118 and highlighted its continued importance as a shipping point for grain and livestock.⁴

D.R. Gorden arrived in Abilene in 1869 at the height of cattle-shipping activity and worked for the railroad. As Abilene's economy diversified, so too did Gorden's business interests. Partnering with successful businessmen, he worked his way into locally elite entrepreneurial and social circles and would remain active in Abilene society well into the 20th century.

The city's population reached as high as 8,000 in the 20th century, but has remained at about 6,800 for many years. (The 2010 Federal Census recorded 6,844 residents in Abilene.)

David Ross Gorden

Davis Ross Gorden was born on December 15, 1844 in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. He served in the Army of the Potomac, was at the battle of Fredericksburg, and was in the reserves during the battle of Gettysburg. He served as a private in Company D of the 126th Infantry Regiment and as Corporal of Company D the 21st Regiment Cavalry for 16 months.⁵

After the war, Gorden learned telegraphy and went to work in a telegraph office in New Haven, Connecticut. In 1866, he traveled west to Kansas City and found work in railroad construction with the Union Pacific Railroad in Wyandotte, Kansas. He applied for a position as telegraph operator, was sent to Omaha and then Grand Island, Nebraska, before returning to

³ William Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: Andreas Publishing Co., 1883). Accessed February 20, 2012 at www.kancoll.org.

⁴ Frank Blackmar, *Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History, vol. 1* (Chicago: Standard Publishing co., 1912). 18-19. Accessed February 20, 2012 at <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/archives/1912/a/abilene.html>.

⁵ Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System (Washington, DC: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior). Accessed February 20, 2012 at <http://www.itd.nps.gov>.

Wyandotte. He served as a telegrapher and station agent at Soldier, Kansas and was later transferred to the Rock Springs station near Abilene.

Gorden's work for the railroad after the Civil War came during a time of expansion and growth in Kansas. At this time, Abilene was the northern terminus of the Chisholm Trail by which cattle were brought to railroad heads from Texas. Gorden arrived in Abilene on June 15, 1869, where he would live until his death in 1935, to serve as the Union Pacific Railroad's first station agent at Abilene. He served in that position from 1869 to 1876.⁶

Gorden married Mary Martha Nevin in 1870. They had two children – Ralph Nevin (who died at age 45) and Florence Kelly (who married W. H. Hunton). Mary died in 1894 and is buried in the Abilene Cemetery. In 1897, he remarried Elizabeth Evans, who lived in the house at 400 North Cedar until her death at age 94 on January 7, 1952. Her funeral services were held at her home with burial in the Abilene Cemetery. She had no children.

Noting the success of other area businessmen like T.C. Henry, Gorden became business partners with W. B. Giles in 1874 and began purchasing and shipping grain. Their business was successful, and they purchased two farms and built the first grain elevator in Abilene. Prior to 1877, Gorden owned and operated a furniture store, which was located at the southeast corner of Cedar and Railroad streets. His business also included manufacturing and repair departments.⁷ He later turned his stock of furniture over to W. H. Eicholtz in October 1877.

Gorden worked his way into Abilene's social and political circles. In partnership with A. W. Rice, John Johntz, and T. H. Malott, Gorden created the Citizens Bank in 1885.⁸ The following year, several of these same business partners formed the Abilene Mortgage Company, which operated on the second floor of the bank building.⁹ He participated in Republican politics and was a member of the local Young Men's Republican Club, for which he served as president in 1889.¹⁰

Tidbits from 1880s-era newspapers note Gorden's real estate interests. He advertised in several issues of the *Abilene Reflector* in 1887 "very desirable property in Pennsylvania that I would trade for a Kansas farm,"¹¹ which suggests that he maintained ties with his native state. Another newspaper reference in 1888 noted Gorden's arrival home from an extended trip to California where he had been "looking after real estate interests."¹²

Gorden served as Abilene's postmaster from 1889 until 1894 where the post office was located at the southeast corner of Third and Cedar streets, where it remained until 1914. Shortly after his appointment as postmaster, Gorden and Giles dissolved their business partnership. Giles continued the business, but Gorden's other interests demanded his time.¹³

Gorden was civic minded and was instrumental in the growth of the young city, which also is documented throughout local newspapers of the period. He held the position of Chief Grain Inspector of Kansas, with the offices being in Kansas City, Kansas. While in this position, though, he never gave up his home in Abilene. He was chairman of the Abilene Cemetery Association, was a Rotarian and, at the time of his death at age 90 years in 1935, was said to be the oldest member of Rotary International.

A History of the Gorden House

Gorden began construction of his home at 400 N. Cedar Street in October of 1876, according to an article published in the *Dickinson County Chronicle* that read, "Mr. Gorden has a notice elsewhere requesting 'stone-masons to bid' on certain work. He intends to build one of the largest and finest residences in our town". Just two weeks later, the same newspaper noted a request for proposals, "To Stone Masons. Proposals will be received until Saturday, Oct. 21st for the digging and walling of a cellar and laying foundation walls. For plans, specifications, etc. call at my office. D. R. Gorden."¹⁴

⁶ *Abilene Weekly Reflector*, 3 October 1889.

⁷ *Dickinson County Chronicle*, 16 March 1877.

⁸ This bank was purchased by First National Bank in 1995, and is now known as Pinnacle Bank.

⁹ *Abilene Daily Reflector*, 21 April 1887.

¹⁰ *Abilene Weekly Reflector*, 3 October 1889.

¹¹ *Abilene Daily Reflector*, 29 December 1887.

¹² *Abilene Daily Reflector*, 22 March 1888.

¹³ *Abilene Weekly Reflector*, 3 July 1890.

¹⁴ *Dickinson County Chronicle*, 27 October 1876.

By March of 1877 the stone had arrived at the building site from Chapman, and work had commenced on the brickwork by April.¹⁵ By May, the brickwork was nearly complete, with the newspaper reporting that, "It will be the best and handsomest residence in the county."¹⁶ The house was enclosed by June 1, and Gorden moved into the house the following September. The newspaper reported the house was "of brick, two stories high with basement and attic" with the main section measuring 25 feet by 55 feet and a wing measuring 25 feet by 27 feet. It went on to describe the house in detail:

It is pleasantly arranged, is supplied with all the modern improvements, and will make a home worthy of a prince. The workmanship is of the best kind. Frank Keagy, of Chambersburg, Pa., was the architect. The brick work was done by Mr. Brown, of this place, and is a credit to him. The carpenter work was done by Messer. Rankin & Coombs and is one of the best jobs ever done by these excellent mechanics. An excellent job of plastering was done by John Jackson. The painting was done by Mr. Robb and Mr. Vanderhoff. Mr. Robb has resided here but a short time but this work proves him a No. 1 workman. The house is conveniently located to the business part of the city, is pleasantly situated, and is nicely surrounded by young trees and shrubs. But above all Mr. G. has a wife to preside over it that is a most perfect lady, and one that brings sunshine and cheer wherever she is. Mr. Gordon [sic] should most certainly be a happy man, and we wish him a long life and much happiness in his new house.

The architect, Franklin Keagy (born 1837), is from Gorden's hometown of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. The extent of their relationship is not known, but they were of similar age and apparently came of age in the same community. Keagy had apprenticed as a millwright in his father's mill and was later employed at a local sash and blind factory. He began his own business as an architect and builder in 1875, just two years before plans were completed for the Gorden House.¹⁷

Gorden resided at 400 North Cedar until his death on April 9, 1935. The house remained in the Gorden family until Elizabeth Gorden's death, and it was sold to Curtis D. and Helen B. Chase in 1953. Under the Chase's ownership, the house was converted into several apartments, and, upon his death, Mrs. Chase sold the property at auction on September 15, 1984. Geneva and Kenneth Dawson purchased the property and are the current owners (2011). The Dawson's returned the home back to a single-family dwelling carefully restoring it as close to original as possible.

The house sits on a stone foundation, with the stone quarried near Chapman, Kansas. The exterior is of red brick, with a green asphalt shingle roof. The original building form is "T" shaped, and there is a single-story 964-square-foot addition built in 2002 on the west (rear) side consisting of kitchen, family room, bedroom and bathroom.

Late Victorian-era Gothic Revival Architecture

Most Gothic Revival-style residences in the United States were built between 1840 and 1870. Although the style was never as popular as the Greek Revival- or Italianate-style residences, examples can be found in most areas of the country settled before 1880. Surviving Gothic Revival houses are most abundant in the northeastern states, less common in the south.¹⁸ It is one of the earliest styles found in residential architecture in Kansas as it peaked in popularity as the state was being settled.

According to architectural historians Virginia and Lee McAlester, the Gothic Revival-style traces its roots to European Gothic Revival architecture, which gained favor in England in the mid-1700s after Sir Horace Walpole began remodeling his country house in the Medieval style. Over the next century, others followed his lead and such Picturesque country houses became common in England. Alexander Jackson Davis is credited with designing the first documented and fully developed residential example of Gothic Revival architecture in 1832. The style was generally associated with rural, natural settings and was seldom applied to urban houses. Additionally, the multi-gable Gothic residences with wide porches was not suited for narrow urban lots. The Gothic Revival style was in declining favor after 1865, although there was a small rebirth of interest during the 1870s.¹⁹

D. R. Gorden was planning for the construction of his house in Abilene in the mid-1870s as the Gothic Revival style was falling out of favor. Perhaps a product of changing attitudes toward architectural styles, the residence exhibits only some Gothic influences – namely the decorative gable trim with cross-bracing, the paired peak-head windows in the front-facing

¹⁵ *Dickinson County Chronicle*, 13 April 1877.

¹⁶ *Dickinson County Chronicle*, 11 May 1877.

¹⁷ Samuel P. Bates, *History of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Wakner, Beers & Company, 1887), 655-656.

¹⁸ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 200.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

gable, a single-story bay window, and a round-arch double-door entrance. The gables are not as steeply pitched as classic examples of Gothic Revival residential architecture, and the house form mimics that of the Folk Victorian gable-front-and wing.

Summary

The David R. Gordon House in Abilene is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for its local significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The Victorian-era residence reflects elements of the Gothic Revival style and represents a period of social refinement in Abilene as the cattle-shipping activity gave way to financial-, real estate-, and agriculture-based businesses.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Abilene City Directories. Dickinson County Historical Society.

Abilene Daily Reflector, 21 April 1887; 29 December 1887; 22 March 1888; April 8-1935.

Abilene Weekly Reflector, 3 October 1889; 3 October 1889; 3 July 1890.

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Blackmar, Frank. *Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History*, vol. 1. Chicago: Standard Publishing co., 1912. Accessed February 20, 2012 at <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/archives/1912/a/abilene.html>.

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Nelson, Edward Gene. *The Company and the Community*. Lawrence: Bureau of Business Research, School of Business, University of Kansas, 1956. Accessed February 27, 2012 at [http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.\\$b393758](http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.$b393758).

Rosenberg, Chaim M., *The Great Workshop: Boston's Victorian Age* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2004), 54. Accessed 23 February 2012 at <http://books.google.com>.

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: Dickinson County Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.) **Lat/Long:** 38.918682 / -97.216911 (See Figure 1)

1 14 654640 4309030
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property sits on Lots 31, 33, and 35 on Fourth Street and the south 3 feet of Lot 50 on Cedar Street.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The above is the legal description of the property whose address is 400 North Cedar Street, Abilene.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nanc Scholl (with assistance from KSHS Staff)
organization N/A date _____
street & number 813 N. Olive Street telephone (785) 263-7012
city or town Abilene state Kansas zip code 67410
e-mail abileneresearcher@yahoo.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Name of Property: D. R. Gorden House
City or Vicinity: Abilene
County, State: Dickinson County, KS
Photographer: Nanc Scholl (Photos 7, 8, 10, 15, 16) / Sarah Martin (Photos 1-6, 9, 11-14)
Date Photographed: March 1, 2011 / February 2, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 16 Front (east) and side (south) elevations, facing NW and taken from across the street
- 2 of 16 Front (east) and side (south) elevations, facing NW
- 3 of 16 Side (south) elevation, facing N
- 4 of 16 Side (south) and rear (west) elevations, facing NE
- 5 of 16 Side (north) elevation, facing S
- 6 of 16 Garage addition along rear (west) elevation, facing W
- 7 of 16 Sidewalk stone, facing W
- 8 of 16 Exterior, front door, facing W
- 9 of 16 Interior, front door, facing E
- 10 of 16 Main, formal staircase to second floor, facing W
- 11 of 16 Formal parlor at southeast corner of house, facing SE toward bay window
- 12 of 16 Formal parlor, facing NW toward rear of house
- 13 of 16 Close-up of door on first floor
- 14 of 16 Fireplace in formal parlor, facing S
- 15 of 16 Fireplace in music room at northeast corner of house, facing N
- 16 of 16 Heat register with warming compartment in original kitchen

Gorden, David R., House
Name of Property

Dickinson County, Kansas
County and State

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Geneva & Kenneth Dawson
street & number 400 N. Cedar Street telephone (785) 263-3234
city or town Abilene state Kansas zip code 67410

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.).

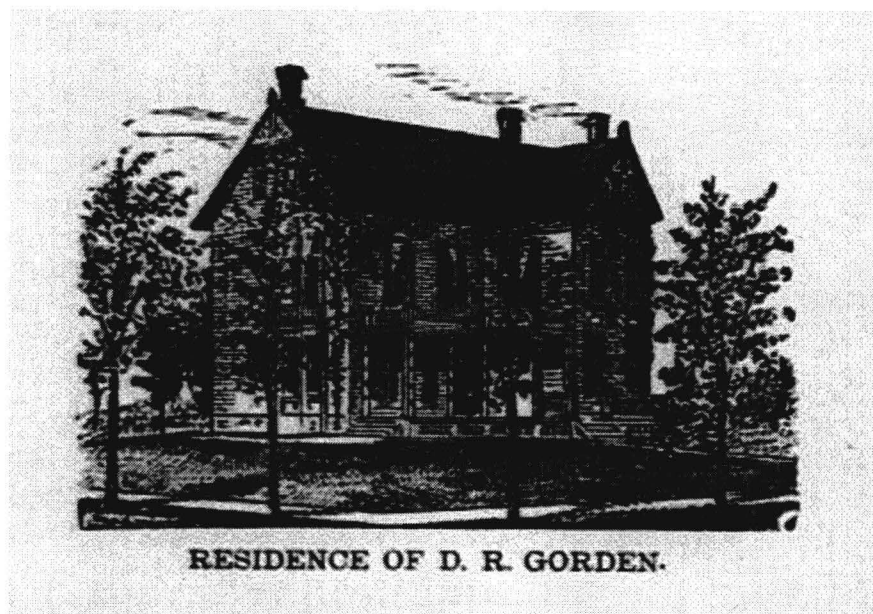
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Figure 1: David R. Gorden House - 400 N. Cedar, Abilene, KS

Lat./Lon.: 38.918682 / -97.216911 (Bing.com / 24 February 2012)



Figure 2: David R. Gorden House – *Abilene Daily Reflector*, April 21, 1887.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Gordon, David R., House

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: KANSAS, Dickinson

DATE RECEIVED: 5/18/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/13/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/28/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/04/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000384

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 7-3-12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places**

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.















400

HERITAGE HOME
1877
ASSOCIATION









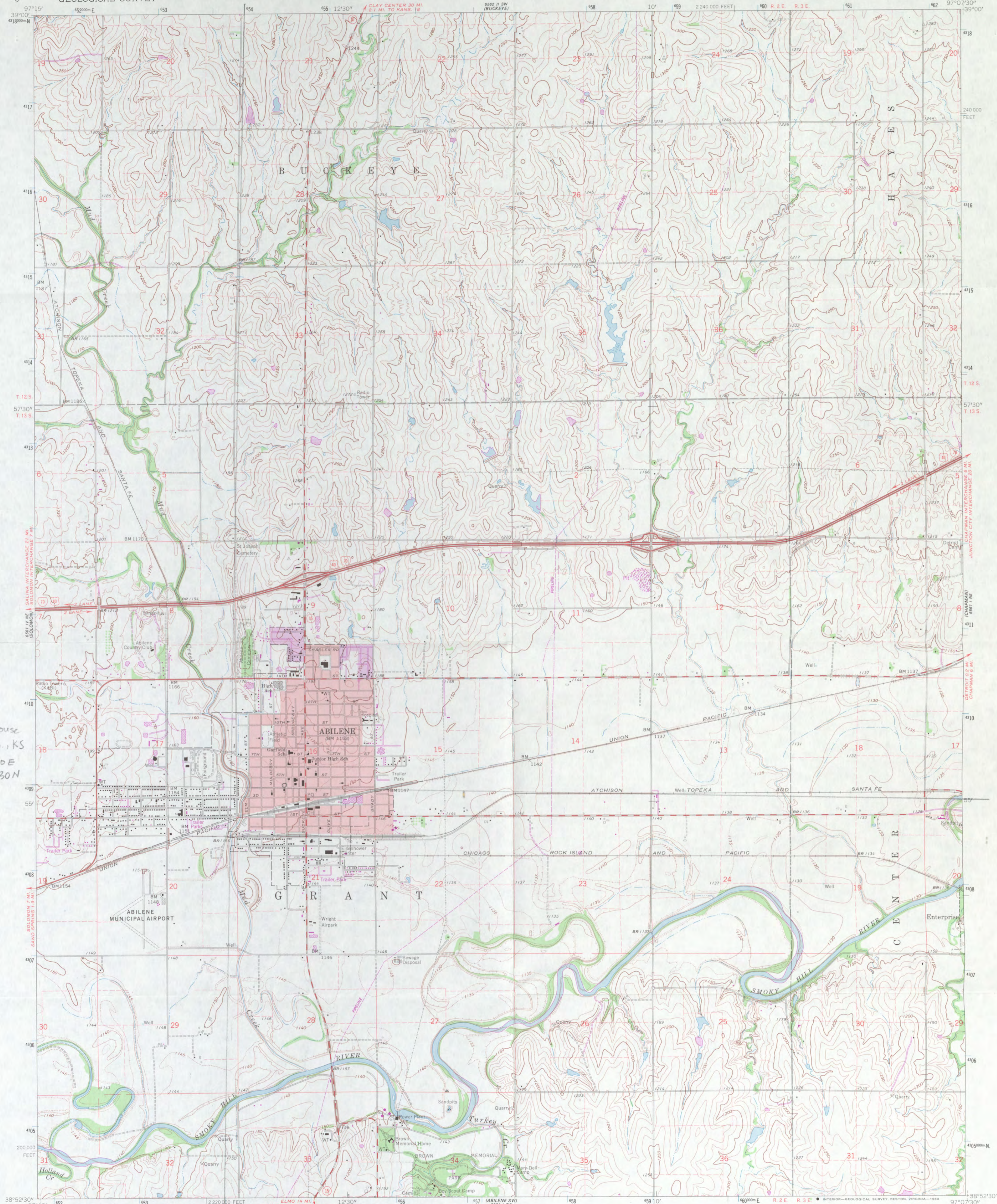






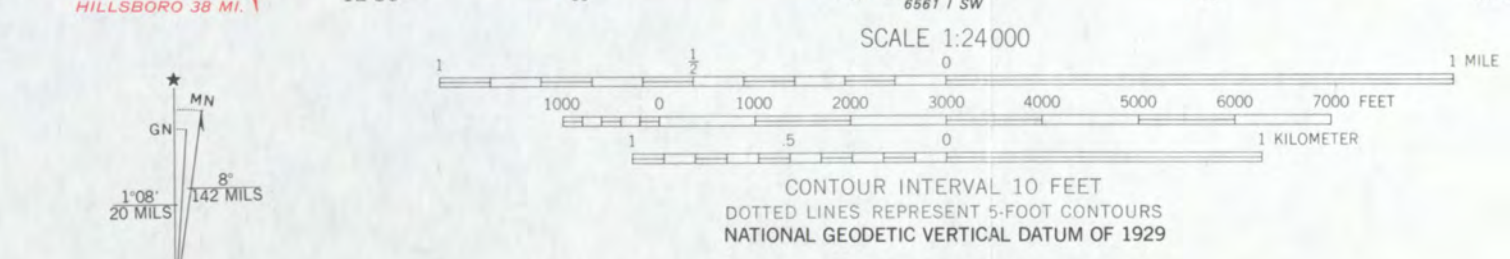






Gorden House
Dickinson Co., KS
14: 654640E
4309030N

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1959. Field checked 1964
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Kansas coordinate system, north zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 2 meters north and
27 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

ABILENE, KANS.
N3852.5-W9707.5/7.5
1964
PHOTOREVISED 1979
DMA 6561 I NW-SERIES V878

Kansas Historical Society

Sam Brownback, Governor
Lennie Chinn, Executive Director



May 17, 2012

Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, N. W.
8th Floor (MS 2280)
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Please find enclosed the following National Register documents:

- Battin Apartments Historic District - Wichita, KS (new nomination)
 - Preliminary DOE – FTC project #26964
- Cudahy Packing Plant – Wichita, Sedgwick County, KS (new nomination)
 - Preliminary DOE – FTC project #25446
- Arvon School – Arvon, Osage County, KS (new nomination)
- Calvinistic Methodist Church – Arvon, Osage County, KS (new nomination)
- Soldiers' Memorial – Osawatomie, Miami County, KS (new nomination)
- Congregational Church – Osawatomie, Miami County, KS (new nomination)
- Gish, Amos H., Building – El Dorado, Butler County, KS (new nomination)
- Gorden, David R., House – Abilene, Dickinson County, KS (new nomination)

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I may be reached at 785-272-8681 ext. 216 or smartin@kshs.org.

Sincerely yours,



Sarah J. Martin
National Register Coordinator

Enclosures