

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

|                           |
|---------------------------|
| STATE:<br>Kansas          |
| COUNTY:<br>Marshall       |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY          |
| ENTRY DATE<br>MAY 12 1975 |

1. NAME

|  |
|--|
| COMMON:<br>Koester House Museum                              |
| AND/OR HISTORIC:<br>Koester, Charles, House (preferred name) |

2. LOCATION

|                                    |               |   |             |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---|-------------|
| STREET AND NUMBER:<br>919 Broadway |               |   |             |
| CITY OR TOWN:<br>Marysville        |               | CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:<br>No. 2, Martha Keys |             |
| STATE<br>Kansas                    | CODE<br>66508 | COUNTY:<br>Marshall                           | CODE<br>117 |

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY<br>(Check One)  | OWNERSHIP   | STATUS   | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC   |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District<br><input type="checkbox"/> Site<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building<br><input type="checkbox"/> Structure<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public<br><input type="checkbox"/> Private<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress            | Yes:<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)   |   |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural<br><input type="checkbox"/> Commercial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Educational<br><input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment   | <input type="checkbox"/> Government<br><input type="checkbox"/> Industrial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Military<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Park<br><input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence<br><input type="checkbox"/> Religious<br><input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)<br>_____<br>_____                          |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

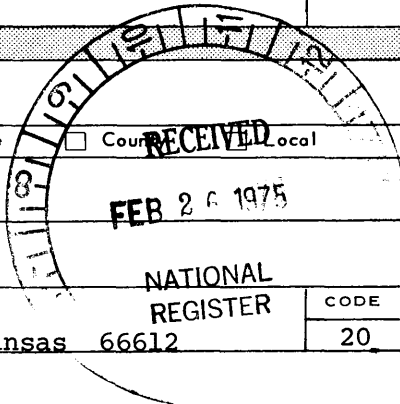
|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| OWNER'S NAME:<br>City of Marysville | STATE:<br>Kansas |
| STREET AND NUMBER:<br>City Hall     |                  |
| CITY OR TOWN:<br>Marysville         |                  |
| STATE:<br>Kansas                    | CODE:<br>66508   |
| STATE:<br>Kansas                    | CODE:<br>20      |

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:<br>Register of Deeds | STATE:<br>Kansas |
| STREET AND NUMBER:<br>Marshall County Courthouse          |                  |
| CITY OR TOWN:<br>Marysville                               |                  |
| STATE:<br>Kansas  | CODE:<br>66508   |
| STATE:<br>Kansas  | CODE:<br>20      |

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

|   |                      |  |
|---|----------------------|--|
| TITLE OF SURVEY:<br>Historic Sites Survey                         | DATE OF SURVEY: 1969 | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State<br><input type="checkbox"/> County<br><input type="checkbox"/> Local |
| DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:<br>Kansas State Historical Society |                      |  |
| STREET AND NUMBER:<br>120 West 10th                               | STATE:<br>Kansas     |  |
| CITY OR TOWN:<br>Topeka   |                      |  |
| STATE:<br>Kansas  | CODE:<br>66612       |  |
| STATE:<br>Kansas  | CODE:<br>20          |  |



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| STATE:<br>Kansas            |
| COUNTY:<br>Marshall         |
| ENTRY NUMBER<br>MAY 12 1975 |
| DATE                        |

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

|           |   |                                    |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|-----------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                                   |                                    |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good      | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair  | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                                   |                                    |                                | (Check One)                                       |                                |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered   | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site |                                |                                    |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Koester house is a square-shaped, two story frame structure with white lap siding. Facing north, it is located just east of the town's main commercial district. It has a spacious yard with many plantings, fountains and urns. The entire property is surrounded by a five-foot high brick wall on three sides and a redwood fence on the south. The house sits on a simple stone base approximately two feet high.

The roof, which basically consists of two intersecting gable roofs, is of wood shingles painted green. There are three intersecting gables on the north and one on the east. Three red brick chimneys break the roof line. The roof is separated from the walls by a plain simple cornice.

Originally the north side was only one bay, or one gable, wide. It ended just east of the present entrance. About two years after the original construction the addition was made. Window headers were matched on the second floor, but the later windows were not the same type, being wide rectangular windows. The two west gables are considerably steeper in pitch than the original one. The front now has a rather asymmetrical appearance since the new main entrance was not centered under the gable or the second floor window. The porch was originally only on the east side but it was extended around the new north front and some of the trim was changed. The porch is now supported by large square columns and has a railing around it. A decorative treatment similar to some of the original ornamentation is located between the columns below the plain porch cornice.

The windows are all slender rectangles trimmed in wood. Those in the second floor gables have deep wooden heads which are flat with pediments in the center matching the gable roof line. The pediments are topped with decorative finials. First floor windows of the original part of the house have the same treatment. A large bay window is located on the first floor, just west of the main entry. Windows on the original part of the house are narrow, round-arched and paired under a decorative lintel. Shutters have been placed on all second floor windows. The only major change to the exterior after the 1870's was the second floor sleeping porch added to the east side in the early 1920's. The brick wall surrounding the property was not original but was constructed some time between 1881 and 1890. Two entrances to the grounds are guarded by cast iron statues of animals, two lions at the north or main entrance and two hunting dogs at the east, the former carriage entrance.

Since being donated to the city of Marysville for museum use, the house has been returned to the Victorian era in the interior. All furniture in the house was used by the Koester family. The exterior of the house looks much like it did in the late 1870's.

Located to the southwest of the house and connected to it by a long covered walkway or portico is an irregularly shaped rectangular white frame structure which has a summer kitchen at the east end, a storage room or tool house in the middle and on the west an ice house with walls five inches thick. North of the ice house and at the western limits of the grounds is a brick carriage house with an arched entry on the south and another entry from the alley on the west.

The gardens no longer have the plantings and appearance which elicited such admiration at the turn of the century but are still quite impressive.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

original  
5-2-26

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |  |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian; | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century   | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal          | <input type="checkbox"/> Education                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric         | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic            | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | <u>Western Settlement</u>                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture         | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications      | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                             |   | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation        |  |   | _____   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Charles F. Koester house was built for the Marysville banker in 1873. At that time Koester was also serving as the Marshall county treasurer, and the Marshall County News (Marysville) announced on April 19, 1873, "County Treasurer Charles 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." On May 10 the same paper reported construction had begun, the cellar was being excavated, and the stone for the foundation was being delivered. A month later notice was taken that the house was being finished and that the contractor was C. S. Geer, a highly regarded local carpenter.

In October the house and landscaping were well along toward completion and the following appeared in the News of 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, and surrounding their homes with all that is beautiful and ornamental. 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." Since Koester was one of the community's most eligible bachelors, the "one more addition" is presumed to be an editorial ribbing of Koester's marital status.

Born in Hesse-Cassel, Germany, in 1841, Charles Koester came with his family to the United States in 1850. The family is variously reported to have first settled in Chicago or Cincinnati. By the mid-1850's the Koesters were in Keokuk, Iowa, and by 1859 in St. Joseph, Missouri. Charles Koester is known to have been in Marysville by 1860, and some reports date his arrival in late 1859.

From the very beginning of his business career in Marysville Charles Koester was associated with his brother-in-law Frank Schmidt. Schmidt, who was ten years older than Koester, was the organizer of their business ventures. At first they engaged in an extensive mercantile business, but in 1870 they established the Exchange Bank of Schmidt and Koester, which became the town's leading financial institution. Koester was cashier and later the president of the bank.

Koester was also very active in local political affairs; he served four two-year terms as county register of deeds and then two terms as county treasurer. In 1872 he was appointed to a three-member state commission to revise the tax laws of Kansas. In 1876, the same year that he was married to Sylvia Broughton, a Marysville school teacher, he was a member of the Kansas Commission to the Centennial Exposition at

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

"Behind the Gate of Lions," Midway Magazine, Topeka Capital-Journal, Oct. 21, 1973.  
 Blackmar, Frank, editor, Kansas, A Cyclopedia of State History (Chicago, Standard Pub. Co., 1912), v. 3, pp. 508, 509.  
 "A Handsome Home," Illustrated Edition of Marysville and Marshall County, issued as a supplement to the Marysville True Republican in July, 1890.  
History of Kansas (Chicago, A. T. Andreas, 1883), pp. 916-920.  
 "Hon. Chas. F. Koester," Marysville Republican, Aug. 21, 1902.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | O<br>R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY<br>OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |                         |  |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER   | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               |        | LATITUDE  | LONGITUDE               |  |
|  | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds |        | Degrees Minutes Seconds   | Degrees Minutes Seconds |  |
| NW   | 0 . "                   | 0 . "                   |        | 39 50 29  | 96 38 44                |  |
| NE   | 0 . "                   | 0 . "                   |        |   |                         |  |
| SE   | 0 . "                   | 0 . "                   |        |   |                         |  |
| SW   | 0 . "                   | 0 . "                   |        |   |                         |  |

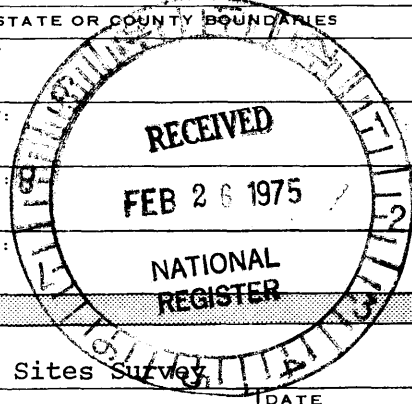
UTM Reference: 14 / 701 455 / 4412595

UTM  
CK  
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **one**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY  | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Richard Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey**

ORGANIZATION: **Kansas State Historical Society** DATE: **Feb. 17, 1975**

STREET AND NUMBER: **120 West 10th**

CITY OR TOWN: **Topeka** STATE: **Kansas 66612** CODE: **20**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

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

National  State  Local

Name Nyle H. Miller  
 Title Executive Director  
 Date Feb. 18, 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

Inest A. Cunnally  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 5/12/75

ATTEST  
Ronald M. Greenberg  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Date 5/19/75

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM  
MAY 12 1975

(Continuation Sheet) NATIONAL REGISTER

|                  |             |  |
|------------------|-------------|--|
| STATE            | Kansas      |  |
| COUNTY           | Marshall    |  |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |             |  |
| ENTRY NUMBER     | DATE        |  |
|                  | MAY 12 1975 |  |

(Number all entries)

8.

Philadelphia. The Koesters traveled to the exposition on their honeymoon. He was a town councilman in 1877 and served as mayor in 1878 and again as mayor for several terms in the 1880's.

A major addition was built on to the north side of the house, in effect making it the front of the house; this was probably done in 1876 after his marriage. The landscaping of the large grounds continued to be developed and expanded. A Topeka newspaper, the Mail and Breeze, in 1899 ran a feature on the Koester house, entitling it "The Most Beautiful House in Kansas." The article admitted that there were finer residences in the state but claimed that no private individual had spent as much money improving the grounds as had Charles Koester. It was estimated that he had expended as much as \$75,000 on the house and grounds. The lots on which the house sat were carefully laid out with walks, flowers, trees, shrubbery and fountains. In charge of the grounds was H. Schmalzl, a native of Germany and a local botanist and florist. Schmalzl had reportedly studied at the Royal Provincial school in Weikenstephan (spelling unverified), Germany, and had worked in the Royal Provincial gardens at Munich and Berlin.

Charles Koester lived in the house until his death in 1902. (His wife had died in 1883, leaving him with three young children to raise.) His younger daughter Jennie Lee had married Arthur J. Scott, and her family then made the Koester house their home. Mrs. Scott resided there until her death in 1968, having lived her entire life in the house her father built. The house was then unoccupied until the heirs donated it to the city of Marysville in November, 1972, exclusively for museum usage. After completion of the restoration and renovation work, the house was opened to the public in 1973.

Charles Koester was one of the most influential men in Marysville in commerce and politics for more than 30 years. His house with its magnificently landscaped grounds was a landmark in north central Kansas.

10.

"Koester House Museum" (Marysville, n. p., 1973), 8 pp.

Marshall County News (Marysville), April 19, May 10, June 7, Oct. 4, 1873; Sept. 20, 1879.

Marysville Advocate, Nov. 16, 1972; Feb. 1, Oct. 4, Nov. 29, 1973; Sept. 26, 1974.

"The Most Beautiful Home in Kansas," Topeka Mail and Breeze, Sept. 15, 1899. Portrait and Biographical Album of Marshall County (Chicago, Chapman Bros., 1889), p. 429.

Root, Frank, and William E. Connelley, The Overland Stage to California (Topeka, pub. by authors, 1901), pp. 532-536.

"A Roster of Kansas for Fifty Years," Kansas Historical Collections, v. 8 (1904), pp. 522, 531.

Preliminary nomination form prepared by Mrs. Sylvester Schmidt, Box 126, Marysville, Kansas