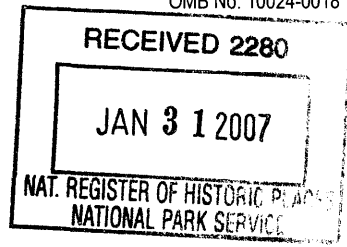


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Bowker House  
Other name/site number 177-5400-0053

2. Location

Street & number 1200 S E Quincy  not for publication  
City or town Topeka  vicinity  
Code 177  
State Kansas Code KS County Shawnee Zip code 66612

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patrick Zolner DSHPO 1/25/07  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official /Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain):

for  
Edson H. Brall Signature of the Keeper  
3-15-07 Date of Action

Bowker House  
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas  
County and State

**5. Classification**

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- 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**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter Categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/Education Related = Boarding House

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling = Residence

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling = Residence

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Folk, National Style, Pyramidal

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: STONE: Limestone  
Walls: STONE: Limestone

Roof: ASPHALT

Other: WOOD

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 4

Bowker House  
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

The Bowker House (c. 1866) is located at 12<sup>th</sup> and Quincy Streets in Topeka, near Monroe Elementary School (NRHP) and downtown Topeka. It is utilized as a single-family home and is believed to be one of the oldest continuously inhabited homes in the city of Topeka. The Bowker House is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the founding and development of Lincoln College (later Washburn University) and the city of Topeka.

#### Samuel D. Bowker

Samuel Drake Bowker was born in 1835 in Blanchard, Maine.<sup>1</sup> Raised in Maine, Bowker entered the Theological Seminary in 1857 and studied until 1860 when he took his first job as a pastor for a Congregational church in Maine. In 1862, he became ill with tuberculosis and was forced to resign to recover his health. After rest, another job with a church, and more illness, he moved to Topeka, Kansas in 1864 for his health. The warmer, dryer, climate appealed for health reasons, and his brother W.E. Bowker was currently living and established in Topeka. (W.E. Bowker came to Topeka in 1855 and was a Representative for Shawnee County in the Territorial and State legislatures of 1860. W.E. Bowker also served as County Commissioner and County Treasurer for Shawnee County in the 1860s).

Upon arriving in Topeka, Bowker turned down an appointment to the American Bible Society and began working with several others in Topeka towards the establishment of Lincoln College. When the school opened in 1865, Bowker became the College's financial agent and worked exhaustingly to raise funds and endowments for the new school. Bowker traveled all over the eastern United States meeting with the Kansas delegation to the U.S. Congress, President Abraham Lincoln (who gave his "cordial approval" to the school that was named for him) and to other would-be benefactors and religious institutions. Bowker's fund raising efforts provided the financial backing to erect a building for Lincoln College and to get the school running during its first term.

Bowker also served as a member of the faculty when the school opened. He was principal of the Preparatory and Scientific Departments as well as a Professor of English Literature and Grammar. In addition to teaching and administration, Bowker also maintained a boarding house for students from outside of Topeka (the nominated property). Bowker continued to teach and help develop the school until the end of the fall term in December 1867. At that time his illness grew worse and he requested to be relieved of teaching duties. Bowker died of tuberculosis on February 15, 1868. He left a wife and son.<sup>2</sup>

Bowker made the establishment of Lincoln College his life's work. Many of the other school founders and students agreed that without Bowker's efforts, Lincoln College would not have existed.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Kansas State Record*, Obituary of Rev. Samuel D. Bowker, "Death of Prof. Bowker," 19 February 1868.

<sup>2</sup> Little information about his wife and son has been found.

<sup>3</sup> *Kansas State Record*, Obituary of Rev. Samuel D. Bowker, "Death of Prof. Bowker," 19 February 1868.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section Number** 8 **Page** 5

Bowker House  
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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Lincoln College

Lincoln College was founded in 1865 by a group of men in Topeka who were committed to the development and growth of the young town, and also to creating educational opportunities within the new state. These men, including Samuel Bowker, put significant efforts into creating a respectable College and providing educational opportunities to men and women, regardless of race.

In 1857, the Association of Congregational Churches was organized in the developing area of northeast Kansas. One of the organization's first resolutions was to found a school. Congregational churches across the Midwest and the Eastern United States were dedicated to establishing and supporting credible learning institutions. After the resolution in 1857 to found a church in northeast Kansas, there was considerable debate about where to locate the school. The Association set up a committee of five men "to obtain information in regard to the location of a college...and to secure such a location."<sup>4</sup> Leavenworth, Lawrence and Topeka all wanted the school in their town. Topeka was eventually selected and Col. John Ritchie deeded land on which to erect a building. In 1865 a two-story limestone classroom building was constructed at the corner of present day 10<sup>th</sup> and Jackson Streets. The College opened for classes January 3, 1866 with 38 students (both men and women) from throughout northeast Kansas.

Lincoln College scraped by in the first years. Bowker's efforts to raise money both locally and across the county are largely what kept the school running. The demand for a school existed, but the financial backing was difficult to secure. Finally in 1868, Lincoln College took two large steps forward. In that year the school awarded its first diploma to Addison Davis. In the fall of 1868, Lincoln College received a donation of \$25,000 from Deacon Ichabod Washburn of Worcester, Massachusetts. In honor of this large donation, the school changed its name from Lincoln College to Washburn College.

In 1871 Rev. Peter MacVicar was named president of the College and he set the steps into motion to move the school to its permanent and current location. The Board of Trustees wanted the school to grow and expand and there was not enough space in Central Topeka. Ritchie again donated land for the school – 160 acres southwest of Topeka. In 1874, the first building on the new campus of Washburn College was named Rice Hall.<sup>5</sup> They continued to build and expand on the new campus and the student body and educational opportunities grew along with it. New boarding houses or 'cottages' were built closer to the new campus to accommodate the demand for university housing.

The school is now known as Washburn University and has a student population of over 7,000.

The Bowker House

The Bowker House was built in 1866 as a boarding house for students at the new school. After Bowker passed away in 1868, it is unclear who the owner of the house was. An 1868 Topeka City directory lists Mrs. Bowker as a resident. It is surmised that the house remained a student boarding house for several years. Bank owner John Mulvane took ownership of the house in 1880; records do not indicate that he lived in the home, but was the owner, perhaps through the bank.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *History of The State of Kansas*, Andreas, A. T., "Washburn College," pp. 535-540.

<sup>5</sup> *History of The State of Kansas*, Andreas, A. T., "Washburn College," pp 535-540.

<sup>6</sup> *Topeka Capital-Journal*, "Time and Again," 24 January, 1988.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 6

Bowker House  
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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Catherine Woods purchased the house was purchased in 1893 and it remained in her family until 1980. One of the most interesting residents during that time was Ralph Murphy. Murphy was a Harvard graduate and a veteran of World War I. Murphy traveled to Europe a great deal. But worked in Topeka for the Peabody School Furniture Company of Topeka. He also worked with W.C. Davis, the inventor of the automatic program clock, which programs the bells within a school to ring at the same time. Murphy worked as a salesmen promoting Davis's clock across the country.<sup>7</sup> After Murphy's death in 1980, the house was sold to Les Mardick who made several repairs to the house, including adding the garage on the northeast corner, adding central air and heating systems, and updating the electrical systems. Mardick sold the house to Mike and Patty Pendergast in 1987, who lived in the house until 1993 when they sold it to Lowell Wiley. In 2005, Wiley sold the house to the present owner Leigh Anne Sharrett. Throughout the past 140 years, the numerous owners have kept the house in good condition and maintained its historic integrity.<sup>8</sup>

The Bowker House represents an important part of the settlement and development of Topeka and is thus nominated under **Criterion A**. It reflects the early settlers efforts to establish a city and to provide education for those settling in the area and their children regardless of their race. The house is representative of the efforts of Samuel Bowker to establish the school and provide for the students attending the school, and it provides an insight into the early development of Lincoln College, now Washburn University.

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<sup>7</sup> *Topeka Daily Capital*, "Program Clock Invented by Topeka Man is Coming Into General School Use," 20 January 1930.

<sup>8</sup> *Topeka Capital-Journal*, "Time and Again," 24 January 1988.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Number 9 Page 7

Bowker House  
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section Number** 9 **Page** 8

Bowker House  
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section Number** 10 & Photos **Page** 9

Bowker House  
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

Quincy Street W 110 Ft of Lots 398 and 400 and W 100 Ft of N 20 Ft. Lot 402, Ritchies Addition, Section 6, Township 12, Range 16.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries encompass the land historically associated with the property.

**Photographic Information**

The following information is consistent for all photographs:

1. Property: Bowker House
2. Location: 1200 SE Quincy, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas
3. Photographer: Patrick Zollner
4. Date: October 27, 2006
5. Negatives on file at the Kansas State Historical Society

Photo #1: West (front) elevation  
Photo #2: North (side) elevation  
Photo #3: South (side) elevation showing the south side of rear addition  
Photo #4: Southwest corner showing the west (front) and south (side) elevations  
Photo #5: Close-up of exterior window, north (side) elevation  
Photo #6: Interior, front entrance  
Photo #7: Interior, staircase leading to second floor  
Photo #8: Interior, living room  
Photo #9: Interior, fireplace in the dining room  
Photo #10: Interior, wood pocket doors  
Photo #11: Interior, bedroom  
Photo #12: Interior, fireplace in a bedroom



Bowker House  
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- 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 likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Exploration/Settlement

#### Period of Significance

1866-1893

#### Significant Dates

1866-1893

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Unknown

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### 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

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Bowker House  
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** less than one

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	5	2	6	8	4	8	0	4	3	2	4	6	8	5
Zone		Easting						Northing						

2

Zone		Easting						Northing						

3

Zone		Easting						Northing						

4

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/title Leigh Anne Sharrett with KSHPO Staff Edits  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Date 1 October 2006  
Street & number 1200 S E Quincy Telephone 785/233-2744  
City or town Topeka State KS Zip code 66612

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**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.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

Name Leigh Anne Sharrett  
Street & number 1200 S E Quincy Telephone 785/233-2744  
City or town Topeka State Kansas Zip code 66612

**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section Number** 7 **Page** 1

Bowker House  
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:**

*Summary*

The Bowker House in Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas was constructed in 1866 by Rev. Samuel D. Bowker just 3 blocks southeast of the Kansas Statehouse. The house is located in what was originally known as the "Ritchie Addition" at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Quincy Streets, occupying lots 398, 400, and 402. It is being nominated under **Criterion A** for its association with Lincoln College (present day Washburn University) as a boarding house for students. The house is now a single-family residence composed of the original limestone block and two simple rear additions.

*Exterior:*

The Bowker house is a two-story limestone residence with a simple rectangular plan with a pyramidal roof. There are two small ventilation dormers that project from the roof on the north and south faces of the house. There have been two additions including two-story room additions onto the back of the house in 1904 and a garage addition added in the early 1980s. The front porch was rehabilitated in 2004 according to historic photographs to match the porch that historically appeared on the Bowker house. A brick chimney that extends just right of center of the roof. The roof is a pyramidal roof, in good condition and currently covered in asphalt shingles. The house has generally retained historical appearance and materials through the care and appreciation of its owners over the years.

The West (front) façade has a very simple design. Constructed of rough-cut limestone blocks, the elevation has four openings, three one-over-one wooden, double hung windows, and one door. Large limestone blocks are arranged in a quoining pattern along the corners of the house. Two windows are symmetrically spaced on the second floor, directly above the window and door on the first floor. All of the windows on the original limestone portions of the house have a limestone lintel and sill framing the window opening. A reconstructed wooden porch extends  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the length along the first story. The porch is a wooden structure with three, wooden, square columns, and a simple railing along the edges. A small triangular wooden trim pediment extends above the porch roof to add decoration.

The North elevation faces 12<sup>th</sup> street and is also constructed of rough-cut limestone blocks, also has a simple fenestration plan. There are six symmetrically placed windows, three on each story. The windows are one-over-one double-hung wooden windows. All are fitted with modern storm windows. The window located in the center on the first floor is slightly wider than the other windows on the elevation. A single-story, wood-frame garage addition faces 12<sup>th</sup> Street and extends from the 1904 addition located on the east (rear) elevation. The garage was added in the 1980s. The north façade of the 1904 addition has one double-hung window located on the second floor above the garage roof.

The East (rear) elevation is dominated by a two-story, wood-frame addition that was placed on the house in 1904. The addition is stepped back from the south façade and extends up to the height of the

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section Number** 7 **Page** 2

Bowker House  
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

house. It covers slightly less than half of the rear façade. This addition is not visible from the front. There are two one-over-one double-hung windows on the east façade of the addition. The first-floor window is on the left-hand side, and the second story window is centrally located.

The South elevation mirrors that of the north elevation. There are six symmetrically placed windows, three on each story, each with a limestone lintel and sill. The south side of the 1904 addition has one window on the second story, and a wood window and door. All have modern storm windows attached to the outside. There is a cellar door and entrance to the basement on the south side of the house.

The full-size basement is constructed of rough-cut limestone and features a cement floor. There is a capped cistern in the cement floor of the basement.

*Interior:*

The interior of the Bowker house has not been significantly altered since its construction in 1866. The house was built as a boarding house for students at Lincoln College, so there is a minimum of elaborate ornamentation throughout. There are wood floor throughout the house, except for the bathrooms and kitchen, which are covered in tile and linoleum respectively. All of the rooms have six-inch wooden baseboards and all the windows, windowsills, and doors are framed with wooden trim. The thick stone walls create deep window sills on the interior of the house.

The layout of the house follows a very simple plan. The main entrance to the house is through the front porch on the west elevation. The entry way opens into a large room, partially divided by shelves and storage just to the right of doorway. The left side of the room (on the north) has a lot of the original woodwork in excellent condition. There in the northeast corner of the room there are three steps that lead to a small landing. Turning right leads to the upstairs, and facing the entrance is a small door that provides access to the kitchen. To the right of the entry area, divided by the shelving, is the living room. This room currently has carpet over the wood floors and has decorative white molding around the top of the room. The east wall of the living room has two wooden pocket doors that open into the dining room. In the northwest corner of the dining room is a rough-cut stone fireplace and mantle that has been painted white. On the east wall of the living room is a doorway into a simple room in the wood-frame 1904 addition. On the south wall of the addition is a one-over-one wood window and a door to the outside.

From the dining room there is an entrance on the north wall into the kitchen. The kitchen has modern fixtures, cabinets and countertops. There is a door leading into the 1980s garage on the east, and a doorway into a pantry and to the basement on the west wall. In the northwest corner of the kitchen are three steps that lead up to a door to the landing and the room off the main entrance.

The wooden staircase leads up to the second floor, which were traditionally the rooms for students at the boarding house. Currently there are three bedrooms and two bathrooms in the upstairs. Coming up the stairs, the hallway makes an L-shape. There are two bedrooms to the west off the lengthwise section of the hallway. Each room has historic wood floors, wooden baseboards and trim.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section Number**   7   **Page**   3  

Bowker House  
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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They are very simple in their ornamentation. There is a small bathroom at the end of the long hallway. This bathroom has a simple square tile floor, and a claw-foot bathtub.

The bedroom running the width of the L-shaped hallway is currently the large master bedroom. The room has historic wood floors, wood trim, and a fireplace in the northwest corner of the room (near to the doorway). A brick fireplace sits flush with the wall and has a wooden mantle. It is currently inoperable. On the east wall of the bedroom is a door into the second story of the one-room 1904 addition. Off the North wall in the bedroom is a door leading to a modern master-bathroom, and stairs up to the attic.

The basement of the house has rough-cut stone walls, and a concrete floor. The basement is the same dimensions as the first and second floors, but is divided into three rooms. The large room spanning the entire south side of the basement has an exterior door and steps up to exterior cellar doors. There is a fireplace and cook-stove located in the center of the south room. The ceiling was once covered in lath and plaster, leading to the summation that this room may have been finished at one time.

Overall, the interior has simple design elements and has experienced few alterations since its use as a boarding house. The conversion in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to a single-family home did not significantly alter the house, and it maintains a high level of integrity both on the interior and the exterior.