



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1353

### 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 Hopkins House  
Other name/site number 177-2108

#### 2. Location

Street & number 6033 SE US Highway 40  not for publication  
City or town Tecumseh  vicinity  
State Kansas Code KS County Shawnee Code 177 Zip code 66542

#### 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.)

Patricia Golner DSHPO 12-8-08  
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. Sandra McClintock Signature of the Keeper 1-16-09 Date of Action  
 determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  
 removed from the National Register  
 other, (explain:)

Hopkins 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	
3	3	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
3	3	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)

DOMESTIC: Single-family dwelling  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: Agricultural Outbuilding

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

DOMESTIC: Single-family dwelling  
DOMESTIC: Hotel  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: Agricultural Outbuilding

**7. Description**

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

MID 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY: Greek Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Limestone  
Walls: Limestone  
Wood  
Roof: Wood  
Other:

**Narrative Description**

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

Hopkins House  
Name of Property

Shawnee, 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)

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

ARCHITECTURE

#### Period of Significance

1859-1954

#### Significant Dates

1859

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Eli Hopkins

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Eli Hopkins

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 Record # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Kansas State Historical Society

Hopkins House  
Name of Property

Shawnee, Kansas  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of Property 5.9 acres

UTM References  
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	5	2	7	9	3	6	0	4	3	2	4	5	2	0
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 Christy Davis  
Organization Davis Preservation Date 5/14/2008  
Street & number 909 1/2 Kansas Ave, Suite 7 Telephone 785-234-5053  
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 Alan and Sabra Shirrell  
Street & number 6033 SE US Highway 40 Telephone 785-379-5568  
City or town Tecumseh State Kansas Zip code 66542

**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

*Hopkins House  
Shawnee County, Kansas*

### Narrative Description

#### Setting

The Hopkins House is located east of Tecumseh, Kansas, an unincorporated community east of Topeka, in the northeast corner of Shawnee County. Tecumseh is situated south of a bend in the Kansas River, between Topeka to the west and Lecompton and Lawrence to the east. The town is located on Highway 40 (also known as the Victory Highway), constructed in 1921. The highway follows the route of the Oregon Trail, which passed through Tecumseh. The Hopkins House is located within the vicinity of the home of Thomas Stinson (still extant), Tecumseh's founder who settled there in 1852.

The nominated property includes six buildings: the house (Contributing, 1859), bank barn (Contributing, ca. 1859) to its west, coal shed (Contributing, ca. 1920) to its southwest, granary (Non-contributing, historic building moved to site) to its southwest, cabin (Non-contributing, historic building moved to site) to its northeast, and cottage (Non-contributing, ca. 2000) to its south.

#### House – Exterior

##### *Overall*

The home's exterior is divided into four principal masses: the two-story side-gabled stone main mass, which measures 20' X 51' ("A"); a two-story wood-frame porch that measures 8' X 30' on the north (front) elevation ("D"); a one-story front-gabled stone historic addition that measures 16' X 28' ("C") with a bay projecting from its east side ("B"); and a 9' X 28' wood-frame shed addition that extends west from the south-projecting one-story historic stone addition ("E"). Brick chimneys pierce the east and west ends of the shallow-gabled roof. The home's principal material is limestone, which, according to oral tradition was quarried from the site of the barn. The stone perimeter walls are 18" thick. The stones are square-cut hand-dressed, laid in regular courses. The shallow side-gabled roof is covered with wood shingles. A cornice line with wide bands of trim encircles the principal 2-story mass.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

### *North (Front) Elevation*

The front elevation is divided into five bays – a central entrance bay flanked by two window bays on each side. The main entrance, which opens to the first-floor hall, has a multi-paned centered screen door flanked by sidelights and a multi-pane transom. A second entrance opens from the second-floor hall to the terrace. There are 8 windows on the front elevation. New 6/6 windows, which replicate the home's original windows replaced severely deteriorated 1/1 windows from the 1920s.

The most distinguishing feature on the home's front elevation is its two-story porch, which spans its central three bays. The porch is wood-framed with a shed roof topped with wood shingles to match the shingles on the roof of the main mass. The porch has been replaced at least three times since the home was constructed. There is no photographic documentation of the home's original porch. A 1925 photograph shows a porch (ca. 1890) with Victorian details, replete with spindlework and jigsaw-cut trim. In the 1920s, the Victorian porch was replaced with a new porch, which followed the same footprint. The spindlework columns were replaced with piers that are more compatible with the Greek Revival home. The railing remained relatively unchanged. The current porch was built in the 1990s to replicate the severely deteriorated 1920s porch.

### *South (Rear) Elevation*

On the south side, the rear elevations of the principal two-story side-gabled mass and the one-story gabled projecting bay are visible. Like the front elevation, the rear elevation of the side-gabled mass is symmetrical, with five window bays. The rear elevation of the one-story south-projecting bay has a window opening and door opening. This wall has been modified. At some point, the rubble limestone appears to have been covered with plaster, now failing. The west half is covered in part with siding. The door and window openings are covered with board and batten.

### *West (Side) Elevation*

There are only two window openings on the west elevation, square 4-pane windows in the gable. On this elevation, the cornice features gable returns, which are indicative of Greek Revival architecture. The west elevation of the lean-to addition to the south-projecting bay

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

is visible from this view. This addition has a central entrance that provides access to the kitchen, flanked by three large windows on each side.

### *East (Side) Elevation*

The east elevation of the main two-story mass matches that of the west elevation.

### **House – Interior**

The home was designed to accommodate a hall and two rooms on each of its three floor. Until the one-story south-extending stone addition was built, the home's kitchen was located in its dark basement. Once the addition was built, the basement may have been utilized for much-needed living space for the Hopkins' growing family. Today, the floor houses two bedrooms. By the 1950s, the large bedrooms on the second floor, originally 18' X 18' had been subdivided. Today, the second floor reflects the home's original floorplan. The one-story addition now houses a dining room. The wood-frame lean-to addition now houses a small kitchen.

The interior finishes include plaster walls, wood baseboards, picture rails, wood stairs, and wood floors. On both the first and second floors, the voids created by the chimneys, which are centered inside the east and west perimeter walls, feature original wood cabinets. Following the pattern of other woodwork, these cabinets are stained wood on the first floor and painted wood on the second floor. According to historic sources, the home was finished with polished walnut imported from Fort Leavenworth.

### **Barn (Contributing, ca. 1859)**

The barn is a 2 ½ - story bank barn with a shallow gabled roof. The upper level is accessible via wide sliding doors on its east-facing broad side. Broadside openings facilitated wagon access to hay storage on a barn's upper level. Farmers could drive a wagon into broadside openings and fork loose hay directly into haylofts from barn interiors. The barn's lower level is accessible from the north, west and south elevations. The first floor of the north elevation has two man door openings and a window opening. There is also a small hopper window in the peak of the gable on the north elevation. The west elevation has four small window openings and a man door on its first floor and five window openings and a man door on the upper levels. A cast-iron stair provides access to the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

*Hopkins House  
Shawnee County, Kansas*

second floor of the west elevation. The window openings on this elevation appear to have been cut since the building's original construction. The first floor of the south elevation has a sliding door opening and small window opening. There is a multi-pane window at the peak of the gable. The building features a rubble limestone foundation and first floor with quoining on the corners. The structure is timber-framed with mortise-and-tenon joints. The exterior is clad with vertical boards and battens.

The barn's first floor has been converted to an apartment. The second floor has one large open space, open from the floor to the roof trusses. The historic wood floor has been covered with plywood to create a smooth surface for special events and dances.

According to historical accounts, the stone for the house was quarried from the site of the barn. This excavation would have helped create the recess that provided for the barn's bank. Timber-framed bank barns, which are among the state's earliest barns, are described in detail in the Multiple Property Submission entitled "Historic Agriculture-Related Resources of Kansas."

### **Coal Shed (Contributing, ca. 1920)**

The coal shed, which is located southwest of the house is a one-story front-gabled stuccoed masonry structure believed to have been constructed ca. 1920. The building, which measures 8' X 12', has a wood-shingled roof and three openings including a non-original multi-pane door on the north elevation and window openings on the east and west elevations. It is used as a shed.

### **Granary (Non-Contributing)**

A granary, located southwest of the house and west of the coal shed, has recently been moved to the property. Because it has not historical association with the property, it is classified as a non-contributing building. It is one story in height with a shallow-gabled metal-clad roof and boxcar siding. The building has door openings on its north and south elevations and a small window opening on its south elevation. Among its few architectural details are exposed rafter tails at the eaves. Today, the building is used as a blacksmiths shop.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   5  

*Hopkins House  
Shawnee County, Kansas*

---

### **Cabin (Non-Contributing)**

A small dogtrot cabin has recently been moved from a nearby property to the open ground northeast of the house. The cabin has openings on its north and south elevations. Its shallow-gabled roof is covered with a standing seam metal roof.

### **Cottage (Non-Contributing, ca. 2000)**

A small rectangular one-story guest cottage sits southeast of the house. It is a temporary portable building installed as part of the federal housing program for the elderly. The building is wood framed and clad in vinyl siding. The ridgeline of the shallow-gabled roof runs east to west. The south elevation has one small window opening with a vinyl window. The north elevation has two vinyl windows with shutters. The west elevation has a door; and the east elevation has a door opening and a window in a small shed addition.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hopkins House is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for statewide significance under Criteria A and B in the area of Exploration/Settlement for its association with Territorial Kansas and Eli Hopkins, a founder of Tecumseh; and Criterion C as a rare Kansas example of Greek Revival residential architecture.

#### **A Brief History of Tecumseh**

A 1912 history of Kansas observed that "Of the towns which were founded in [the Territorial] period and later became defunct none had as great prospects as Tecumseh."<sup>1</sup> First established in 1852, two years before the Kansas Territory was opened to white settlement, Tecumseh was one of the territory's first communities. The land on which Tecumseh was platted was carved out of the property of Thomas Stinson, a slaveholder who obtained Indian Trust land after his marriage to Julia Bushman, a mission-educated Shawnee and purported cousin of Shawnee leader Tecumseh. Among other pursuits, Stinson operated a ferry and steamboat landing at Tecumseh.

Tecumseh was platted by September 1, 1854, just three months after Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act opening the new territory to white settlement. Thomas Stinson and other land speculators, including Territorial Supreme Court Justice Rush Elmore, U.S. Attorney A.J. Isacks, and Territorial Governor Andrew Reeder, formed the Tecumseh Town Association. The town's future seemed promising to the investors especially since Governor Reeder, who had also speculated in other town sites along the Kansas River, gave them some assurances that Tecumseh would be the seat of the proslavery Territorial Legislature.<sup>2</sup>

By March, 1855, at the time of the election of the First Territorial Legislature, Missourians and other persons from the "Upper South" outnumbered other settlers by nearly three to

---

<sup>1</sup> Frank Blackmar, *Kansas: a cyclopedia of state history, embracing events, institutions, industries, counties, cities, towns, prominent persons, etc...with a supplementary volume devoted to selected personal history and reminiscence* (Chicago: Standards Publishing Company, 1912).

<sup>2</sup> Roy Bird and Douglass W. Wallace, *Witness of the Times—A History of Shawnee County* (Topeka, KS: Shawnee County Historical Society, 1876).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

one. These early pioneers claimed the territory's best townsites near scarce riverfronts and firmly planted military installations, establishing pro-southern towns at Atchison, Leavenworth, Tecumseh, Lecompton, and Fort Scott. Among these settlers, few actually owned slaves, who accounted for only 2% of the Kansas population in March 1855. There were 63 slaveholders in Kansas, 46 of whom, like many Tecumseh residents, hailed from Missouri.<sup>3</sup>

The meeting of the First Territorial Legislature ended badly for Tecumseh Town Association investor Andrew Reeder, who was ousted by the proslavery legislature in July 1855 for not being pro-slavery enough. When Reeder fled Kansas in early 1856, he sought refuge at the Tecumseh home of Thomas Stinson and his wife Julia, who, according to legend, disguised the escapee as either a woman or woodchopper. That he retreated to Tecumseh is ironic given that President Pierce formally dismissed him on the grounds of illegal land speculation.

Notwithstanding its poor treatment of Governor Reeder, the First Territorial Legislature shined a light on Tecumseh, naming it Shawnee County Seat. At its first formal meeting on September 17, 1855, the Shawnee County Commission voted to provide for the construction of a courthouse on land donated by the Tecumseh Town Association using funds from territorial and county taxes.<sup>4</sup> The elaborate Greek Revival courthouse, which resembled the Lafayette County Courthouse in Lexington, Missouri, was built at a cost of \$8500. In 1857, Tecumseh residents organized the first Odd Fellows' Lodge in Kansas.<sup>5</sup> The town was incorporated on February 9, 1858. The same year, stockholders made great efforts to lure further development, offering 100 town lots to the Kansas River Bridge Company to build a bridge across the Kansas River. On March 27, 1858, the *Freedom's Champion* newspaper announced that the contract for the \$70,000 iron and stone bridge had been awarded.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Gunja Sengupta, *For God and Mammon: evangelicals and entrepreneurs, masters and slaves in territorial Kansas, 1854-1860*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 122.

<sup>4</sup> William G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883).

<sup>5</sup> Blackmar, "Oddfellows."

<sup>6</sup> "Bridge Over the Kansas at Tecumseh," *Freedom's Champion*, 27 March 1858.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   8  

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

---

But the town's success was fleeting. Despite early proslavery victories, the state's political tides began to shift with the arrival of free-state emigrants, many of whom came with support from the New England Emigrant Aid Association (NEEAA), which sponsored 1000 free-staters to Kansas in 1855 alone.<sup>7</sup> As subsequent territorial elections overturned the laws of the so-called "Bogus Legislature," the proslavery legislature that designated Tecumseh county seat, Tecumseh lost favor to Topeka, a free-state community colonized by members of the NEEAA. In May, 1858 Topeka succeeded in completing a bridge over the Kansas River, trumping the Tecumseh effort. Free-state Topekans added insult to injury when a group of them, led by John Ritchie, raided neighboring pro-slavery town, plundering Tecumseh's homes and businesses.<sup>8</sup>

When Tecumseh's town fathers refused to accept the results of an October 1858 popular vote in favor of Topeka as the new county seat, the free-state Territorial Legislature was forced to settle the issue. On January 25, 1859, the body passed a special act naming Topeka as Shawnee County seat. The new county organization provided for a county commission that consisted of the chairs of each township. (As chairman of the Tecumseh Township, Eli Hopkins represented Tecumseh on the Shawnee County Commission.<sup>9</sup>)

Whereas many slaveholders had left the Kansas Territory by the late 1850s, the founders of Tecumseh remained. Thomas Stinson famously affirmed his loyalty to the Union by flying the Union flag over his home. Judge Rush Elmore, who had owned as many as 19 slaves, was one of the last Kansans to abandon slaveholding, selling his human property in Alabama.<sup>10</sup> In 1861, there were no slaveholders in Tecumseh Township.<sup>11</sup> By then, most slaveholders had either left the state or adapted their farming practices to the Kansas soil, which was not conducive to Southern cash crops like hemp, for which Southerners relied on slaves. Although no longer tied to the institution of slavery, many in Tecumseh remained

---

<sup>7</sup> Nicole Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas: contested liberty in the Civil War era* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 35-40.

<sup>8</sup> Bird and Wallace, 19.

<sup>9</sup> Cutler; Blackmar.

<sup>10</sup> Goodrich, Thomas. *War to the Knife: Bleeding Kansas, 1854-1861*, (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1998).

<sup>11</sup> Bird and Wallace, 17.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

loyal to the Democratic Party, hosting the state Democratic convention in 1859. (The platform adopted at this convention, which supported the line of President Pierce, was much besmirched in the free-state press.)<sup>12</sup>

Topeka further overshadowed Tecumseh in 1861 when Kansas entered the Union as a free state and Topeka was named the state capital. Once Topeka had gained both county seat and state capital status, the prospects for Tecumseh were dim. An incomplete pier was all that remained of the community's efforts to build the much-hyped Kansas River bridge. The Episcopal Church abandoned plans for a denominational college in the town, building Bethany College in Topeka instead.<sup>13</sup> According to one source, the once-opulent county courthouse was used to "store corn and cattle" by the mid-1860s. The courthouse was later dismantled, its materials salvaged for the construction of other buildings.<sup>14</sup>

The population of Tecumseh Township saw steady growth throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Still, the town's population was stagnant, remaining steady at 125-150 residents through the waning years of the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup> The 1921 completion of Highway 40, known as the Victory Highway, was mixed blessing. The new road improved travel between Lawrence and Topeka, making it easier for local residents to go elsewhere to shop. This resulted in the decline of Tecumseh businesses. At the same time, however, the highway attracted new businesses. In 1924, Kansas Power and Light (KPL) constructed a generating station in the town. After DuPont constructed a \$25 million plant in 1958, the population grew rapidly. Many of the homes in Tecumseh today date from the 1950s and 1960s.

Today, suburban development tied to Tecumseh's adjacency to major highways threatens to destroy what is left of its historic character.

---

<sup>12</sup> *Freedom's Champion* 4 June 1859.

<sup>13</sup> Bird and Wallace, 59.

<sup>14</sup> Bird and Wallace, 8.

<sup>15</sup> Bird and Wallace, 31.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

### **Eli Hopkins (1816-1894) and Susan Dodd Hopkins (1818-1897)**

Eli Hopkins was born in North Carolina on February 18, 1816. His wife, Susan Dodd Hopkins was born in Tennessee on October 21, 1818 to Josiah and Mary (Polly) Finney Dodd. On August 9, 1838, Susan married her first husband Robert Duncan. Although Robert Duncan died within three months of their marriage, historical evidence indicates that the brief union produced a child, Robert, who was born in 1839. Eli and Susan likely met in Missouri, where they married at some point between Robert Duncan's death in 1838 and the birth of their first son, Lisle, who was born in Missouri ca. 1842. The Hopkins had five more children while in Missouri, including their son George who was born ca. 1855. Soon after George's birth, they moved to Kansas, where their daughter Ann Elisa was born ca. 1858.<sup>16</sup>

When it arrived in Kansas Territory in 1855, the young family was among many settlers arriving from the Upper South. Although Mr. Hopkins was not himself a member of the Tecumseh Town Association, he quickly gained a place of prominence in the community. The Hopkins family was among the founding members of the Tecumseh Methodist Church.

After Shawnee County was re-organized in 1859, Hopkins served as chairman of the Tecumseh Township, which gave him a place on the Shawnee County Commission.

Unlike many Southern Sympathizers, who chose to leave Kansas in the late 1850s, Eli Hopkins and his Tecumseh neighbors stayed in Kansas and pledged their loyalty to the Union. In 1860, Hopkins had accumulated \$3000 in real property and \$1500 in personal property.<sup>17</sup> By 1870, Hopkins' real property had grown to \$20,000.<sup>18</sup>

The Hopkins raised their family in Tecumseh. According to the Territorial Census, the Hopkins Household had 10 members in 1859.<sup>19</sup> In 1860, the Hopkins household included Eli (35), Susan (40), and eight other members, including Robert (21), Josiah (15), Mary

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Census, 1860; "The Eli Hopkins Family," *Midwest Genealogical Register*, v. XIV, no. 4 (March 1980).

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Census, 1860.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Census, 1870.

<sup>19</sup> Kansas Territorial Census, 1859.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

(13), Elisha (10), George (5), Susan (7), Lisle (18) and Ann Eliza (2). By 1870, the Hopkins had only three children living at home, Susan (17), George (14), and Anna (12). The household also included two Missouri-born farm laborers.<sup>20</sup> At least two of the Hopkins' children died at young ages and were buried at the family plot two miles east of Tecumseh. George Hopkins, who was born September 1, 1855, died at the age of 23 on August 12, 1879. Elisha Hopkins, likely the first son of Eli and Susan and, therefore named after his father, was born on March 16, 1850 and died on November 6, 1866. He was only 16 years old. According to an account of Susan Hopkins Elmore, one of these sons died in a hunting accident.

With the exception of a few facts and figures related to his family and the value of his property, few details of Eli Hopkins' life remain. The dearth of information justifies the mention of a few obscure facts. In 1873, the *Topeka Commonwealth* reported that at a majority of those attending lyceum had "decided unanimously in favor of" women's suffrage. The article listed Eli Hopkins as one of "an able corps of disputants." In 1891, Eli Hopkins served on a jury that convicted Joseph Spendlove of murdering Gustav Werner. Spendlove had been convicted of murder in the second degree in a first trial in 1890 but his defense attorney, Charles Curtis, future U.S. Vice President under Herbert Hoover, appealed. The second jury, on which Eli Hopkins served, found the defendant guilty of first-degree manslaughter. The trials were the subject of much gossip – and rumors flew that the trials cost the county \$30,000.

Eli Hopkins died on July 3, 1894. In 1895, following her husband's death, Susan was living in the home with four other household members from the Mix family.<sup>21</sup> Susan Hopkins died 1897.

### **Nesbitt Elmore (1847-1919) and Susan Hopkins Elmore (1852-1946)**

In 1896, Hopkins' daughter Susan and her husband Nesbitt, son of proslavery Tecumseh Town Association member Rush Elmore, moved into the home. Nesbitt Elmore was born in Alabama in 1847 and move to Kansas with his family in 1854, after his father was

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Census, 1860.

<sup>21</sup> Kansas Census, 1895.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

appointed by President Pierce to the Territorial Supreme Court. Nesbitt Elmore remained in Tecumseh after his father moved to Topeka. It is likely that Nesbitt, a farmer, farmed the property improved by both his father and his father-in-law in the 1850s. The Elmores had nine children. In 1900, they were living in the home with five of their children: Rush (21), Mildred (18), Grace (13), Eli (8), and Mable (6).<sup>22</sup> Nesbitt Elmore died in 1919.<sup>23</sup> Susan Hopkins Elmore died in 1946.<sup>24</sup>

### **Ben Pressgrove (1898-1992) and Irma L. Englke Pressgrove (ca. 1903-1956)**

Ben Lewis Pressgrove was born in Silver Lake, Kansas on February 23, 1898. Pressgrove was a farmer who was active in the Tecumseh Grange, Rural Water District No. 8, the Methodist Church, and First Rural Electrical Association. He was also president of the Shawnee County Farm Bureau. On May 25, 1924, Pressgrove married Irma L Englke in Santa Monica, California.<sup>25</sup> In 1930, the couple was living in Tecumseh Township with their two young children Betty (4) and Louis (2). Ben was a farmer. The Pressgroves purchased the Hopkins property in 1946 following the death of Susan Hopkins Elmore. Irma Pressgrove died in 1956. Ben Pressgrove continued to live in the home until his own death in 1992. Although a 1957 article stated that the home was in a good state of preservation, it has significantly deteriorated by the time of Ben Pressgrove's death.<sup>26</sup>

### **Alan and Sabra Shirrell**

Alan and Sabra Shirrell purchased the property from Ben Pressgrove's estate in October 1994. Since then, they have worked diligently to reverse the damage of decades of neglect and to restore the property. The Shirrells own 5.9 acres surrounding the house, barn and outbuildings.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Census, 1900.

<sup>23</sup> Obituary of Nesbitt Elmore, *Topeka State Capital Journal*, 8 March 1919.

<sup>24</sup> Social Security Death Index.

<sup>25</sup> Obituary of Ben Lewis Pressgrove, *Topeka Capital Journal*, 30 October 1992.

<sup>26</sup> "Tecumseh, Past and Present," *Bulletin of the Shawnee County Historical Society*, December 1957.

<sup>27</sup> Shawnee County Appraiser's Records.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

**Hopkins House**  
**Shawnee County, Kansas**

### **Greek Revival Homes**

The Greek Revival Style dominated American residential architecture in the Antebellum Period, peaking between 1830 and 1850. Because Kansas was not open to white settlement until 1854, and most early homes were not permanent dwellings, there are few examples of Greek Revival homes in the state. The Hopkins House is a rare example of the style in Kansas.

Greek Revival homes generally feature symmetrical massing; shallow gabled or hipped roofs, often delineated by pronounced cornices with gable returns; multi-pane double-hung windows; prominent porches with prominent columns; pronounced entrances with sidelights and transoms; and heavy lintels. Character-defining features vary depending upon geographic location. For example, whereas full-height entry porches are common in Southern states, they are rare in the North. Likewise, whereas front-gabled roofs are common in the North, they are rare in the South. Greek Revival homes in river valleys are constructed of brick. However, some of the few Kansas examples feature native limestone as their principal exterior material.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1840s and 1850s, in the Little Dixie region of the Missouri River Valley, cash-cropping Missouri slaveholders chose Greek Revival for their plantation houses. The style proliferated among the plantations along the Dover Road, between Lexington and Dove. These homes, and other Missouri Antebellum resources are the subject of a Multiple Property Submission (MPS) entitled "Antebellum Resources of Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis and Saline Counties, Missouri." According to the MPS, Missouri's pioneer homes evolved from log cabins to Federal and Greek Revival I-Houses.<sup>29</sup>

These Missouri River Valley plantation homes were models for the Southern emigrants to Kansas. Among the rare examples are Grinter Place (1857), a brick home in Wyandotte County built by Kentucky native and Territorial Kansas trader Moses Grinter and the Kaw Indian Mission (1851) built by the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church. The Isaac

<sup>28</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998).

<sup>29</sup> Roger Maserang, *Antebellum Resources of Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis and Saline Counties, Missouri*, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, 1997.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   14  

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

---

Goodnow House (1861) in Manhattan is an example of a Gree-Revival home commissioned by a northern freestater. Like the Eli Hopkins House, the Goodnow House was made of native limestone. However, unlike Southern examples, the Goodnow House lacked a full-height porch.

The Hopkins House's Greek Revival features are as follows: 2-story I-House form; shallow side-gabled roof, pronounced cornice with gable returns; multi-pane windows; heavy lintels and sills; symmetrical form; prominent entrance with sidelights and transom; gabled extension; and stacked hall-and-parlor floorplan with single room flanking a large centered hall on each side.

The Eli Hopkins House is significant for its association with Eli Hopkins, Kansas Territorial history and as a rare example of Gothic Revival architecture in the state.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   15  

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

---

### Bibliography

- Bird, Roy D. and Douglass W. Wallace. *Witness of the Times—A History of Shawnee County*. Topeka, KS: Shawnee County Historical Society, 1976.
- Blackmar, Frank. *Kansas: a cyclopedia of state history, embracing events, institutions, industries, counties, cities, towns, prominent persons, etc...with a supplementary volume devoted to selected personal history and reminiscence*. Chicago: Standard Publishing Company, 1912.
- Cutler, William G. *History of the State of Kansas*. Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883.
- Etcheson, Nicole. *Bleeding Kansas: contested liberty in the Civil War era*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.
- "The Eli Hopkins Family." *Midwest Genealogical Register*. V.XIV, No. 4 (March 1980).
- Freedom's Champion*. Newspaper, Atchison, Kansas.
- Goodrich, Thomas. *War to the knife: bleeding Kansas, 1854-1861*. Merchandising, PA: Stackpole Books, 1998.
- Kansas Census, 1856, 1857, 1859, 1861, 1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915*.
- Maserang, Roger. *Antebellum Resources of Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis and Saline Counties, Missouri*. Missouri Department of Natural Resources, 1997.
- McAlester, Lee and Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998.
- Midwest Genealogical Society. *The Midwest Genealogical Register*. Volume 14, no. 4 (March 1980), 175-179.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   16  

**Hopkins House**  
**Shawnee County, Kansas**

---

Poppeliers, John C. and S. Allen Chambers, Jr. *What Style is It: A Guide to American Architecture*, revised edition. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2003.

Richmond, Robert W. and Joseph W. Snell. *Witness of the Times: A History of Shawnee County*. Topeka, Kansas: Shawnee County Historical Society.

Sengupta, Gunja. *For God and Mammon: evangelicals and entrepreneurs, masters and slaves in territorial Kansas, 1854-1860*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996.

Shawnee County Historical Society, *Bulletin*.

Spencer, Brenda and Christy Davis. *Historic Agriculture-Related Resources of Kansas*. MPS. Kansas State Historical Society.

"Tecumseh, Past and Present." *Bulletin of the Shawnee County Historical Society*, 1957.

*Topeka Capital Journal*.

*Topeak Daily State Journal*.

*Topeka State Journal*.

*Topeka Weekly Capital*.

*US Census*, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 17

*Hopkins House*  
*Shawnee County, Kansas*

### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated Property is located at 6033 SE US Highway 40 in the unincorporated village of Tecumseh, Kansas. The legal description is as follows: A TR BEG 40' S OF NW COR OF SEC TH E 599.15' S 436.21' W 599.15' N 436.21 TO POB.

### Boundary Justification

The nominated property's boundaries are the boundaries of the tract on which the house, barn and outbuildings sit.

### Photo Log

1. Exterior, North Elevation of house looking south.
2. Exterior, Overall View of house and outbuildings looking southwest.
3. Exterior, South Elevation of house looking north, showing non-contributing cottage.
4. Exterior, South and East Elevations of house, looking northwest, showing east elevation of cottage.
5. Exterior, South Elevation of house, looking northeast, showing south elevation of coal shed.
6. Exterior, West Elevation of house and non-contributing granary.
7. Exterior, North and East Elevations of Coal Shed.
8. Exterior, Looking East toward house and outbuildings.
9. Exterior, East and South Elevations of Barn, Looking northwest.
10. Exterior, North Elevation of Barn, Looking south.
11. Exterior, West Elevation of Barn, Looking southeast.
12. Exterior, North Elevation of Barn, Looking south.
13. Interior, House, First Floor, West Parlor looking west.
14. Interior, House, First Floor, East Parlor looking southeast.
15. Interior, House, First Floor, South-projecting bay, looking south.
16. Interior, House, First Floor, Kitchen in west-extending lean-to, looking south.
17. Interior, House, Second Floor, Hall, looking north.
18. Interior, House, Second Floor, East Bedroom.
19. Interior, House, Second Floor, West Bedroom.
20. Interior, Barn.
21. Exterior, House, Porch, Looking South.

Hopkins House  
Shawnee Co, KS  
UTM - NAD 1927  
Zone 15  
E: 279 360  
N: 432 452.0

T 12 S  
2' 30"  
424

423

ENCE INTERCHANGE 13 MI.  
(UNCL. U.S. 69 & 169) 50 MI.

