

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Senator George W. Norris House

AND/OR COMMON

George W. Norris Home

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 706 Norris Avenue

CITY, TOWN

McCook

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
003 (Third)

STATE

Nebraska

CODE

31

COUNTY

Red Willow

CODE

145

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

\_\_\_ DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
\_\_\_ STRUCTURE  
\_\_\_ SITE  
\_\_\_ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

PUBLIC  
\_\_\_ PRIVATE  
\_\_\_ BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
\_\_\_ IN PROCESS  
\_\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED  
\_\_\_ UNOCCUPIED  
\_\_\_ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES RESTRICTED  
\_\_\_ YES UNRESTRICTED  
\_\_\_ NO

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_\_ AGRICULTURE  MUSEUM  
\_\_\_ COMMERCIAL  
\_\_\_ EDUCATIONAL  
\_\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT  
\_\_\_ GOVERNMENT  
\_\_\_ INDUSTRIAL  
\_\_\_ MILITARY  
\_\_\_ PARK  
\_\_\_ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
\_\_\_ RELIGIOUS  
\_\_\_ SCIENTIFIC  
\_\_\_ TRANSPORTATION  
\_\_\_ OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Nebraska State Historical Society (Mr. Marvin F. Kivett)

STREET & NUMBER 1500 R. Street

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Nebraska

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Red Willow County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

McCook

STATE

Nebraska

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1961

FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE  
D.C.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

George W. Norris purchased his two-story, cross-gabled house in 1899. In 1930-31 he remodelled it, adding stucco to the exterior walls. The house contained eight rooms, a full basement and an unfinished attic. The first floor had a small entrance hall with a stairway, a living room, a study, and an enclosed sun room. A dining room came into use as a bedroom after Norris' death and the kitchen was modernized. Otherwise it remains unchanged. On the second floor there is a large hall and three bedrooms, each with a full bath and closet. Most of the original furnishings, which date from various eras, remain. The house sits on a small lot facing the appropriately modest Norris Park. There is a garage in the northeast corner of the grounds.

In 1968 The Nebraska State Historical Society took possession of the house and has sought to maintain its almost perfect historic integrity. The exterior has been painted twice, an exhibit area installed in the basement, and minor upkeep has been continued. The house is open to the public as an historic museum.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD                                    | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC      | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE         | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499        | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC     | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                            | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599        | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS              | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE                     | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699        | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE            | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION              | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY                       | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799        | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING            | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                          | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899        | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY                     | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES 1899-1944

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

George William Norris, U.S. Senator from Nebraska, was a progressive force in Washington for forty years. He was one of the most powerful New Dealers in the Senate, helping pass innumerable reforms.

Norris was born in 1861 and became the chief support of his Ohio farm and family at an early age. Largely self-educated, he taught school before joining the bar in 1883 and began practice in Nebraska two years later. He was soon elected prosecuting attorney for Furnas County and in 1895 became district judge. In 1902 he entered Congress as a conservative Republican but grew increasingly reform-minded in Washington. In 1910 he led a successful fight to reduce the autocratic power of the House Speaker.

In 1912 Norris was elected to the Senate, where he served until 1943. As a senator he became an independent, who, in his own words, "would rather be right than regular." He voted against United States entry into World War I, and denounced the Versailles Treaty that followed it. He fought for many reforms, including presidential primaries and the direct election of U.S. senators. Norris was the author of the 20th Amendment which abolished "lame-duck" sessions of Congress. He introduced bills for the retention of Muscle Shoals as a government power-development project and for establishing the Tennessee Valley Authority. The first TVA dam, completed in 1936, was named after him. He was also a leader in the demand for farm relief legislation and co-author of the Norris-LaGuardia Act, which restricted the use of injunctions in labor disputes, permitted workers to join non-company unions, and opened the way for a changed legal concept of labor-management relations. His last fight was an unsuccessful attempt to pass legislation outlawing the poll tax. He was defeated for reelection in 1942. Franklin Roosevelt, whose programs Norris did so much to further, described the Senator as "a gentle knight of progressive ideals," whose life was an "able and heroic fight on behalf of the average citizen." Norris died in his McCook home in November, 1944.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Encyclopeda Britannica, vol. 16, "Norris, George William," article, 1964.  
 Lowitt, Richard, George W. Norris: The Making of a Progressive, 1861-1912, 1963.  
 Norris, George W., Fighting Liberal: An Autobiography of George W. Norris, 1945.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre  
 UTM REFERENCES

|   |      |                  |                     |   |      |         |          |
|---|------|------------------|---------------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1, 4 | 3, 6, 1, 6, 5, 0 | 4, 4, 5, 1, 4, 7, 0 | B |      |         |          |
|   | ZONE | EASTING          | NORTHING            |   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C |      |                  |                     | D |      |         |          |

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Senator George William Norris House is bounded by the property lines of 706 Norris Avenue, McCook, Nebraska. The small rectangular plot contains the house, a garage, two small yards and a white picket fence.

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

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

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Stephen Lissandrello, Historian, Landmarks Review Project

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| ORGANIZATION  | DATE                |
| <u>Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service</u> | <u>7/29/75</u>      |
| STREET & NUMBER                                     | TELEPHONE           |
| <u>1100 L. Street, NW</u>                           | <u>202-523-5464</u> |
| CITY OR TOWN  | STATE               |
| <u>Washington</u>                                   | <u>D.C. 20240</u>   |

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Landmark Designated: MAY 25, 1967  
 date

Boundary Certified: George K. ... Sept 1, 1977

### FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST:

DATE 9/13/77  
 DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER