

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register Amendment  
Approved 9/19/2013

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name White, William Allen, House (Additional Information)  
other names/site number Red Rocks; KHRI #111-1660-00001

## 2. Location

street & number 923 & 927 Exchange Street  not for publication  
city or town Emporia  vicinity  
state Kansas code KS county Lyon code 111 zip code 66801

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this x nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

x national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

SEE FILE  
Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

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

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_ removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

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

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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
		district
1		site
		structure
		object
3	1	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

2

**6. Function or Use**

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

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

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Recreation & Culture: Museum

**7. Description**

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

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals: Tudor Revival

foundation: Stone; Concrete

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American

walls: Brick; Stone; Wood

Movements: Craftsman

roof: Slate; Asphalt Shingle

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals: Classical

Revival

other:

## **Background**

*The William Allen White House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 14, 1971 and designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) on May 11, 1976. In 2002, the property was the subject of a Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) investigation. This amendment to the 1971 National Register nomination seeks to address key omissions, streamline it with the later NHL and HABS documentation, and note the property's recent history.*

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## **Narrative Description**

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### **Summary**

The William Allen White House is four blocks east of downtown Emporia, and nine blocks northeast of White's office at the *Emporia Gazette*. It is a large, three-story residence situated prominently on the southwest corner of Exchange and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets. Across Exchange Street to the east is a sprawling, one-story mid-20<sup>th</sup> century elementary school named after William Allen White, and the remainder of the surrounding neighborhood is comprised mostly of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century single-family residences. The White property includes the main residence, an adjacent garden, White's mother's house at 923 Exchange Street, and a 2003 visitor's center. These resources occupy four lots totaling approximately 0.6 acres. (Figure 1) An alley passes behind the houses to the west.

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### **Elaboration**

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#### *Site (Contributing)*

The four lots which comprise the property are rectangular in form, with the William Allen White (WAW) house along the north edge and the Mother's House and visitor's center along the south edge. Between the houses is an open landscaped lawn with a rectangular sunken pool and a brick colonnade extending off the east-facing porch of White's house. The rear and side yards of the two houses are enclosed by fences: a non-historic black metal fence is visible from Exchange Street and the rear yard along the alley is enclosed by a non-historic wood fence.

A sidewalk crosses the property along its east edge in a north-south orientation. There is a sidewalk along the north edge of the property with an east-west orientation. Most sections of the sidewalks are made of large slabs of stone, while some sections have been replaced with concrete. A stone slab sidewalk leads from the north sidewalk to the entrance on the north elevation. In the rear yard, a gravel path leads from a side porch on the west elevation to the visitor's center at the southwest corner of the property.

There is a paved concrete driveway at the northwest corner of the property, with access off 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The driveway extends adjacent to the west side of house and is covered by a wood-frame porte cochere that extends over the driveway from a side porch entrance. The concrete base and curb-cut of a second driveway, with access off Exchange Street, can be found adjacent to the Mother's House.

*William Allen White House (KHRI # 111-1660-00001; Contributing)*

*927 Exchange St. (Built 1887, Original Architect Unknown;<sup>1</sup> Renovations 1920-21, Architect Wight & Wight)<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Local history suggests architect Charles W. Squires, who practiced in Emporia from 1880 to 1930, could have designed the house. He designed many residential and commercial buildings during this period in Emporia. The 600 block of Exchange Street includes four houses designed by Squires, all reflective of the Queen Anne style. Source: Steven B. Utz and others, "William Allen White House," Historic American Buildings Survey No. KS-81-A (Washington, DC, 2002), 2.

Judge Almerin Gillette began construction on this house in 1887, but it was never completed because of financial difficulties. William and Sallie purchased the unfinished house in 1899 and installed wiring and plumbing. After a fire in 1920, the house was substantially renovated altering its Queen Anne character to a more contemporary Tudor Revival style.<sup>3</sup> During this renovation, “The house was enlarged from ten rooms to eleven with four full baths and a [sic] two half baths. Dormers were added on the north and south sides of the third floor, allowing for more expansive living quarters for family and servants. Sleeping porches were enclosed, creating White’s workroom and an additional bedroom. An extensive terraced garden featuring a pergola on the southeast side and a lily pool to the south were also built at this time. The main entrance to the house – marked by a new, one-story gabled porch – was changed from Exchange Street to its current location facing Tenth Avenue, yet the street address remained 927 Exchange Street.”<sup>4</sup>

The house stands atop a low rock-faced limestone foundation, and rough-hewn red sandstone ashlar from the Garden of the Gods in Colorado makes up its first floor-walls. Matching red brick stretchers cover most of the second-story exterior, and stucco criss-crossed with wood strips to resemble half timbers covers the western section of the second floor and the attic level. Two interior red brick chimneys with corbeled caps pierce the gray slate roof, and four gable dormers – one on the north (front) side and three on the south (rear) – top it. The roof mimics a cross-gable design but slopes lopsidedly below the second story to the west of the north gable end. It has projecting verges with wide board trim, and each dormer roof has similar trim.

The house has casement and sash windows in rectangular openings. Stone voissiors and sills frame them at first-floor level, and the wood wall trim doubles as lintels for the second-story openings and frames for the gable-end and dormer lights. In its northeast corner, the house has a two-story hexagonal bay, and east of the bay, where the front entrance stood until 1920, a one-story, railed porch stands. In a rear (south side) is a terrace and garden containing a brick colonnade and a sunken pool.

On 10<sup>th</sup> Street, a slab sidewalk leads to the one-bay, one-story, gabled, present-day entrance porch, which prior to 1921, was apparently a long porte cochere. Now shortened and supported by red sandstone columns, it shelters the multi-paned glass and paneled front door. Sidelights flank, and stone voussoirs top, the doorway.

The tile-floored vestibule contains a two-flight front stairway and leads, through a four-centered arch, into a living room that encompasses the entire eastern end of the first floor. The open archway, and another like it, between the living and dining rooms, may derive from the discarded Frank Lloyd Wright plan. Prior to 1921, the present living room consisted of four rooms. Today’s living room has a walnut floor, wainscot, built-in bookcases, and beamed ceiling. On the west wall is a fireplace with walnut mantel and granite surround. The dining room lies southwest of the living room and has a high wainscot, beamed ceiling, and tile floor. The house’s west end, which was expanded in 1920-21, is a service wing consisting of two pantries and a kitchen.

The second-story hallway, which has an oak floor, leads to the bedrooms, including White’s bedroom, opposite the stairs on the south side of the house. About 1960 the doorway of his room was altered. White’s library takes in the east side of the second floor above the living room, and it has a beamed ceiling, walnut floor, built-in bookcases, and a fireplace. A second-story porch completed the east end until 1921, when the porch became part of the expanded study.

Only the enclosed, dogleg rear stairway continues to the top floor. Servants’ quarters, a guest room on the east side, and Mary White’s bedroom with its own gable ceiling beneath the south gable end complete the attic floor.

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<sup>2</sup> With some updated information, this description comes from the National Historic Landmark nomination approved May 11, 1976. Cathy A. Alexander, “William Allen White House,” National Historic Landmark nomination (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1976).

<sup>3</sup> The architectural firm Wight and Wight of Kansas City oversaw the 1920-21 renovation.

<sup>4</sup> Steven B. Utz and others, “William Allen White House,” Historic American Buildings Survey No. KS-81-A (Washington, DC, 2002), 3.

*Mother's House – (KHRI # 111-473; Contributing)  
923 Exchange Street (Built 1903 or 1904; Architect/Builder Unknown)<sup>5</sup>*

This house is an elegant and refined example of the foursquare house type, more typically constructed with common, affordable materials such as wood clapboard siding, but here finished in polychrome brick with limestone details and Classical Revival features such as dentil moldings and decorative recessed panels on the soffits - a decidedly dressy, urban appearance for a typically suburban or rural house type. The house is in poor condition. Although nearly all of the original fixtures, hardware, and finishes remain, the overall condition suffers due to tremendous shifting and settlement about the foundation as well as general neglect. The building has been vacant since 1964, and is currently owned by the State of Kansas.

The building has a square footprint, but the front porch gives it a more rectangular footprint. The east elevation faces Exchange Street and is two bays wide. The north elevation faces the rear yard of the William Allen White House and is also two bays wide, excluding the porch. The front porch to the east extends 11'-9" from the house; a rear porch has been removed. The house has a simple wood frame structure with a common rafter roof. There is one internal chimney rising through the flat top at the center of the roof. It is of brick laid in a running bond and is without ornamentation.

The building's foundation has a base of red brick laid in a common bond and continues above in limestone. Only the limestone foundation walls are visible above-grade on all four sides of the house. The exterior walls are faced with an orange-red pressed brick, laid in a running bond, with a darker red, rusticated brick, also laid in a running bond, used at the building corners in quoins. Window lintels and sills are of limestone.

The roof is a double-pitched hipped roof, with a flat top ornamented with a simple, thin wood cornice. The porch roof is also hipped, and all are currently covered with asphalt shingles. The roofs have wide overhanging eaves boxed with a band of trim below, including dentils and a thin wood cornice. The soffits are also ornamented with wood strips running parallel to the brick walls and boards laid on top them as frames or panels, sized equally, on all four sides of the house. These decorative roof details give a refined appearance to the Mother's House. Box gutters are cut into the eaves on all four sides of the roof. These wood gutters are lined with galvanized sheet metal and connect to metal downspouts. There is one gabled dormer on the west side of the house. It is sheathed in wood and has two awning windows on its face. The roof and sides of the dormer are covered in asphalt shingles.

Almost all of the windows are one-over-one double-hung wood windows, sometimes grouped in twos or threes. On the second story they have limestone sills and label molds, the horizontal stops of which run in a continuous band, connecting all the windows on all four sides, stopped only by the quoins. On the first story the limestone frames the windows individually on all four sides. There is a fixed, single light window at the stair landing on the north side of the house, and it is surrounded with limestone trim on all four sides to match the other windows. On the west side of the house, there is a gabled dormer in the attic with two single light wood windows. All of the basement windows are three-light wood awnings like those at White's house next door.

The one-story front porch extends nearly the full width of the house across the east elevation, and is 11'-9" deep. Four piers support the wood framing for the porch floor and roof. The outer two piers are made of two materials: they have tall limestone bases for the lower portion while the upper part is of the same rusticated brick as the quoins on the house, and they span the full height of the porch, supporting its roof. The inner two piers are of limestone and are less than half the height of the brick-and-stone piers. They are capped with a flat stone top, providing a squat, compact appearance. A wood porch railing of flat wood slats between simply detailed top and bottom rails runs between each inner and outer pier as well as between the outer piers and the building. There is no handrail at the central concrete steps. The space under the porch is covered with wood lattice panels. The porch roof is hipped.

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<sup>5</sup> Much of this information is taken from Steven B. Utz and others, "William Allen White House, Mother's House" Historic American Buildings Survey No. KS-81-B (Washington, DC, 2002), 7-16.

The home's main door is located on the east elevation, centered between two pair of windows. It is made of wood and has a double recessed horizontal panel above a square window with four lights in its top half; the bottom half has three equally spaced double recessed horizontal panels. There is a decorative ledge or stool below the window. The door sill is limestone, and the wood door frame is ornamented with a limestone label mold, the label stops of which return outward and are aligned with the limestone sills of the flanking windows.

### *Interior*

The Mother's House has two stories, an attic, and a basement on a brick and limestone foundation. Walls and ceilings are typically finished in lathe and plaster, although some areas are missing these finishes. The one exception is the living room where a wood ceiling with boxed beams, stained a dark brown, has been installed. It is not known when this ceiling finish was added to this room, but it may have been added around the time of the Red Rocks renovation in 1920-21. The flooring throughout the house is wood, except the kitchen and bathroom floors, which are covered with torn sheet linoleum that is in poor condition.

The basement at the Mother's House contains mechanical and storage spaces and is entered from an unadorned wood stairway on the east wall of the kitchen, which is in the northwest corner of the house. This stairway has seven steps that lead to a landing; the stairs leading from either side of the landing to the basement floor are missing. The basement floor is of concrete that is severely cracked and, buckled due to tremendous settlement and shifting. The basement walls are constructed of brick and limestone. The base of the chimney is in the center of the basement. A wood door at the northwest corner leads to a stairway that exits through a side hatch door and out to grade at the northwest corner of the house.

The first floor of the house contains areas for entertaining and service and is divided into three rooms: a large living room (26'-6" x 15'), a square dining room (13'-1" x 13'-1") and a slightly larger kitchen (13'-1" x 13'-4"). The house is entered through the main door at the center of the east wall. Upon entry, the first room is the living room, with a fireplace on the west wall opposite the main door. The fireplace is the focal point of the room. It is of red rusticated brick with a large arched hearth opening of rusticated red sandstone, giving it a massive, heavy appearance; some of the brick is loose in an area just above the arch keystone. There is a cast-iron hood attached to the arch, in the center of which is a raised five-pointed star. To the left of the fireplace is a cased door opening leading to the dining room, which has a corner fireplace in the northeast corner and a built-in china cabinet in the southeast corner. On the west wall opposite the doorway is a six-panel door that once lead to a small sunroom, which is no longer extant. On the north wall, to the left of the corner fireplace, there is a pass-through opening to the kitchen. To the left of the pass-through on the north wall of the dining room, a door leads to the kitchen. The kitchen has built-in cabinets on the south and west walls. In the northeast corner of the kitchen is a door leading to the basement.

The home's main staircase is T-shaped and leads from the living room and kitchen to the second floor. It has details typical of the Arts and Crafts period: its newel post and balusters are flat, squared pieces extending from the stair treads to the ceiling, creating a screen to which a simple wood handrail has been attached. The landing is shared with the kitchen stairway, forming a T-shaped stair. The stairway in the living room is more decorative than that in the kitchen. There is a knee wall extending from the upper section of the stairway into the hall; this wall is topped with a flat wood cornice and cap and has a small wood column, with classically-inspired base and capital details, extending to the ceiling. This stairway leans significantly to the south.

The second floor contains three bedrooms and a bathroom. Clockwise from the stairs and central circulation hall, the first bedroom has its door set at an angle in the southwest corner of the room and a large closet on the west side with two stepped storage shelves made sheathed in beadboard. The second bedroom does not have a closet, but does have a built-in storage cabinet with drawers. The third bedroom, also with a storage cabinet in place of a closet, has a corner fireplace in the northeast corner. The bathroom has a small cabinet in the northeast corner. Continuing clockwise from the bathroom is a doorway leading to the attic above, which is one large, unfinished space.

*Visitor Center – (KHRI # 111-474; Non-contributing)  
923 Exchange Street (Built 2003; Dan Prosser, architect)<sup>6</sup>*

This one-story visitor center is situated behind the Mother's House next to the alley where a garage once was. The building is L-shaped and features a hipped roof with wide overhanging and flared eaves. The primary and public entrance into the building is on the north elevation and is accessed from the enclosed garden between the two residences. The building has horizontal wood siding painted brown and rests on a poured concrete foundation.

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<sup>6</sup> Much of this information is taken from Steven B. Utz and others, "William Allen White House, Mother's House" Historic American Buildings Survey No. KS-81-B (Washington, DC, 2002), 7-16.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Politics

Literature/Journalism

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1899-1944

**Significant Dates**

1899, 1903-1904, 1944

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

White, William Allen

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

Wight and Wight, architects (1920-21 renovation)

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance represents the 45 years the property was associated with William Allen White. He purchased the home in 1899 and lived there until his death in 1944. (This period of significance is consistent with that of the National Historic Landmark nomination.)

**Criteria Considerations (justification)**

N/A

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## Narrative Statement of Significance

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### Summary

William Allen White purchased the house at 927 Exchange Street in Emporia in 1899, and he resided there until his death in 1944. He was a journalist and author writing about American politics and social changes from Reconstruction to World War II. During his long and well-known career he operated the *Emporia Gazette*, wrote fiction and non-fiction for popular publications, such as *McClure's*, *Harper's Weekly*, and *Saturday Evening Post*. White became a leader in the Progressive Party and was an influential political advisor to several United States presidents, including Theodore Roosevelt. According to his biographer Sally Foreman Griffith, "By the time of his death in 1944, he was nationally known, and widely beloved, as an author, political leader, and social commentator."<sup>7</sup>

Today, the house is open to the public as part of the William Allen White House State Historic Site, which also includes his mother's house and a visitor's center on four adjoining town lots unified by a terraced garden. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1971 under Criterion B for its long association with journalist and writer William Allen White and Criterion C in the area of architecture.

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### Elaboration

*(The original National Register nomination and subsequent National Historic Landmark documentation did not include important information about William Allen White's mother, Mary Ann Hatten White, who lived in the adjacent house for nearly a quarter century. The following information seeks to fill in those gaps. The criteria, areas of significance, period of significance, and level of significance remain the same.)*

Mary Ann Hatten White, the mother of William Allen White, lived at 923 Exchange Street from ca. 1904 until her death in 1924. Mary was born in Canada in 1830 and moved with her family to Oswego, New York a few years later. As a young adult, she moved to Galesburg, Illinois where she occasionally attended classes at Knox College for several years. She supported herself as a housekeeper and cook, milliner, and seamstress.<sup>8</sup> While attending Knox College, Mary witnessed Abraham Lincoln debate Stephen Douglas, which influenced her personal political identity for the rest of her life. She supported Lincoln and was a staunch Republican.<sup>9</sup>

She arrived in Emporia after the Civil War in 1865 to attend classes at the new Kansas State Normal School. Unable to find a room in the small and young town, she headed northwest to Council Grove where she had friends from Galesburg. Mary taught school while living in Council Grove and drew criticism from some for welcoming children of all races into her classroom. It was on a trip to Emporia with friends that Mary met her future husband Allen White in his Emporia general store. Soon after, Mary returned to Galesburg, and then moved on to Michigan, but this did not stop their courtship by letter. They were married in April of 1867 in Michigan.<sup>10</sup>

The couple's only child – William Allen White – "came into this world nine months and twenty-five days after the ceremony was finished."<sup>11</sup> Shortly after William's birth, the White family moved to El Dorado, Kansas, where his father opened a store and organized the county Democratic Party.<sup>12</sup> White's father was a Democrat in a heavily Republican area, "yet his good humor, his civic spirit, and his generosity won him acceptance and respect."<sup>13</sup> The elder White had a medical degree, but he could "barely make a living practicing medicine,

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<sup>7</sup> Sally Foreman Griffith, *Home Town News: William Allen White and the Emporia Gazette* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 3.

<sup>8</sup> William Allen White, *The Autobiography of William Allen White* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1946), 6.

<sup>9</sup> Griffith, *Home Town News*, 17.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

because he rarely collected fees."<sup>14</sup> His primary income came from his store and real estate speculation. He died in 1882 while serving as the mayor of El Dorado.

Mary took in boarders to support herself and a young teenage William after her husband's death. Within a year, William was working at the *Butler County Democrat* where he worked for seven months learning the business of producing newspapers. After graduation, he made his way to the College of Emporia and later the University of Kansas in Lawrence, leaving home and his mother behind for the first time. Unable to be apart, Mary moved to Lawrence while William attended classes. Author David Hinshaw described William and his mother's relationship in this way:

Until he went to the College of Emporia, Will White never had been separated from his mother for more than a few days. Even at Emporia he was only seventy miles away from El Dorado, so they could still see each other frequently. But Lawrence was more than eighty miles still farther away from El Dorado. So they both went to Lawrence. His mother sublet her house in El Dorado, rented a cottage, and made a home there for her son and his friends. In a sense he was tied to his mother's apron strings -then and all his life. She followed him to Kansas City, where she made a home for him and continued to live with him after he was married. After his success with the *Gazette* he established her in a house of her own next door to his, and when he was in town he went to see her every day until her death at the age of ninety-four.<sup>15</sup>

William Allen White purchased the *Emporia Gazette* in 1895 and moved his wife Sallie and mother into a rental house at 602 Cottonwood Avenue. He purchased his house at 927 Exchange Street in 1899. White described the momentous purchase in his autobiography:

It was in July, 1899, that Sallie and I moved into the house where we now live...It was a ten-room house made of red sandstone from Colorado and pressed bricks. It was covered with towers and turrets and fibroid tumors and minarets and the useless ornaments than an architect in 1885 could think of...Through some prejudice of the builder, it did not have a wire or a pipe in it – nothing modern – no furnace, no water, no gas, no electricity. But Sallie and I were tremendously proud of it – towers, turrets, tumors and all. We used to walk up and down the sidewalk in the summer twilight admiring it with 'wonder, awe and praise.' Here we have lived ever since. Here the children were born. Here we have seen the major pageant of our lives pass. Here we have lived, indeed, happily ever after.<sup>16</sup>

Shortly after their purchase, the Whites expanded their property to include two adjoining lots to the south. According to the HABS report,

On July 8, 1901, William Allen and Sallie Lindsay White purchased Lots 135 and 137 on Exchange Street from the widow Emma Peck of Boston, Massachusetts, for \$1,000; they promptly sold the same lots to Mary Ann Hatten White for the same price on July 22, 1901. In January 1902, Mrs. White sold Lot 135 back to her son, who mortgaged it to Calvin Hood; the house on this lot was the frame cottage built by Almerin Gillett, the builder of Red Rocks, when he first came to Emporia. It is not known if White was describing the Gillett house as "an old run down place" in his letter to Peck or if he was referring to another house on Lot 137 which had since been demolished or relocated to allow room for a grass lawn. White kept the first Gillett house, ostensibly for the incoming rent, until his death; Sallie White sold the property at 913 Exchange Street to Bertha Colglazier, the family's longtime housekeeper, in 1947.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> David Hinshaw, *A Man from Kansas: The Story of William Allen White* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1945), 31, as quoted in Steven B. Utz and others, "William Allen White House, Mother's House" Historic American Buildings Survey No. KS-81-B (Washington, DC, 2002), 4.

<sup>16</sup> William Allen White, *The Autobiography of William Allen White*, 323-324.

<sup>17</sup> Steven B. Utz and others, "William Allen White House, Mother's House" Historic American Buildings Survey No. KS-81-B (Washington, DC, 2002), 5.

A house was built for Mary White at 923 Exchange Street (Lot 137) in 1903 or 1904.<sup>18</sup> The two-story house is of the foursquare type, which was common throughout Kansas and the Midwest in the early 20th century. The home's exterior is made more elaborate by the use of polychrome brick and limestone window lintels and sills – a rather expensive treatment for an otherwise ordinary folk house type in a mid-size Kansas town.

Mary lived in this house until her death in 1924. In his tribute to her published in the *Emporia Gazette* after her death, William recalled, "She was one of the women who helped to found the [El Dorado] city library...[and] before I was twelve she had read most of Dickens to me..." He continued: "For nearly 30 years she had lived in this town, most of the time in her own house, and always in her own way...[she] made a great show of having her own way, but she surrendered to her maternal love...I am sure, and so I am most happy that whatever survives of my mother today is young and free and happy beyond human words. For the iron that bound her heart chafes her no longer. She is the captain of her soul."<sup>19</sup>

After Mary's death, the property transferred to William and Sallie White. They then sold the house to their son William Lindsay White in 1930. He transferred the house to his wife Katherine Klinkenberg White in 1938, and she owned the house until her death in 1988. The White Corporation then donated the entire property to the Kansas State Historical Society in 2001 to function as a historic site.

An Economic Development Initiative Grant from the Veterans Administration and the Department of Housing and Urban Development funded the restoration of the larger William Allen White House. Senate Bill 309 authorized the Society's involvement in the restoration work, which included provisions for a visitor center and accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Extensive work included restoring the interior; repairing, cleaning, and repointing the masonry; as well as work on the roof of White's mother's house at 923 Exchange Street. The adjacent visitor center was completed in 2003.<sup>20</sup> Except for a new roof, the Mother's House has not been renovated and is in poor condition.

#### *Additional Information: 1920-21 Renovation of William A. White House (927 Exchange St.)<sup>21</sup>*

The home was dramatically renovated after a fire destroyed the top story in January 1920, although plans for this work predate the fire. White hired Frank Lloyd Wright to design the renovation project in 1915, and the two corresponded regarding the plans for more than two years; in the end, White rejected Wright's design and hired the Kansas City firm of Wight & Wight, two brothers known for their large civic projects in the Beaux Arts tradition and their ecclesiastical designs. The renovation of Red Rocks was completed in 1921.

Drawings for the renovation as executed by Wight & Wight have not been found, although much of White's correspondence with the firm is archived in the Library of Congress Manuscript Division. Photographs of the home and garden in the years immediately following the renovation have been located in the Lyon County Archive and the William Allen White Collection at the William Allen White Library, Emporia State University, as well as in the private collection of Barbara White Walker and David Walker.

#### *Conclusion*

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<sup>18</sup> The HABS report notes these conflicting dates of construction on page 6. Family history suggests the house was built in 1903, according to the authors' interview with Barbara White Walker and David Walker, June 5, 2002. Local historian Laura M. French provides 1904 as the date of construction in "A Biography by L.M.F." *Emporia Gazette*, May 7, 1924.

<sup>19</sup> William Allen White, "Mary A. White," *Emporia Gazette*, May 7, 1924.

<sup>20</sup> No Author, "William Allen White House Opens," *Kansas Preservation* 27, 3 (May-June 2005): 3-4.

<sup>21</sup> The following information is taken from Steven B. Utz and others, "William Allen White House" Historic American Buildings Survey No. KS-81-A (Washington, DC, 2002), 2-3.

Allen White no doubt played a role in his son's interest in politics, but it was Mary who influenced William's love of literature. Mary Ann Hatten White was a major influence in her only child's life, which came out in his writings and in the way he lived his life. The William Allen White House State Historic Site includes his mother's house and is a reflection of how close they were. The property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1971, and this amendment seeks to document the relationship between William Allen White and his mother.

*Appendix A: Timeline*

- 1868 - February 10 – William Allen White (WAW) is born in Emporia
- 1893 - April 27 – WAW marries Sallie Lindsay
- 1895 - WAW assumes ownership of *Emporia Gazette*
- 1896 - August 15 – WAW publishes “What’s the Matter with Kansas?”; befriends Theodore Roosevelt
- 1899 - William and Sallie move into the home at 927 Exchange Street
- 1900 - Son William Lindsay White (WLW) born
- 1904 - Daughter Mary Katherine White born
- 1904 - William’s mother, Mary Ann Hatten White, moves into the adjacent house
- 1920 - White family temporarily moves out of 927 Exchange Street house while it is being renovated after a fire; home’s appearance changes from Queen Anne to Tudor Revival
- 1921 - Daughter Mary dies in horse-riding accident
- 1923 - WAW awarded Pulitzer Prize in Editorial Writing for “To An Anxious Friend”
- 1924 - May 6 - Mary Ann Hatten White dies
- 1924 - WAW runs unsuccessfully for Kansas Governor
- 1939 - WLW marries Katherine Klinkenberg
- 1940 - WAW chairs Committee to Defend American by Aiding the Allies
- 1940s - WLW serves as a war correspondent in Europe
- 1944 - January 29 - WAW dies in Emporia  
    WLW returns to Emporia to lead *Gazette*; resides part-time in Kansas
- 1950 - Sallie dies
- 1971 - WAW property is added to National Register of Historic Places
- 1973 - WLW dies
- 1976 - WAW property is designated a National Historic Landmark
- 1988 - WLW’s wife Katherine dies; last person to reside in home.
- 2001 - WAW house designated a State Historic Site
- 2005 - May 14 - The WAW House first opens to the public

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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This updated bibliography of primary and secondary sources further illustrates White's national significance.

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White, William Allen, House  
Name of Property

Lyon County, Kansas  
County and State

White, William Allen, House  
Name of Property

Lyon County, Kansas  
County and State

**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 #\_KS-81\_\_\_\_\_  
 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 Historical Society**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 0.6 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (See Figure 4)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>38.409485</u>	<u>-96.175417</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

EMPORIA (O.T.), ACRES 0.6 , ODD LTS 137-143 EXCHANGE ST SECTION 10 TOWNSHIP 19 RANGE 11E.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated property includes the William Allen White house, the Mother’s House and the lots historically associated with both buildings.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Sarah Martin (contributing authors: Cathy Alexander (NHL); Steven B. Utz, Courtney Gunderson, Frederick A. Klein, Marton Lenard, and Rachel Leibowitz (HABS))

organization Kansas Historical Society date March 2013

street & number 6425 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Topeka state KS zip code 66615

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Historic images, maps, etc.)

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: William Allen White House  
 City or Vicinity: Emporia  
 County/State: Lyon County, KS  
 Photographer: Sarah Martin  
 Date of Photos: 12 February 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 16 WAW House, showing north (right) and east (left) elevations, camera facing SW
- 2 of 16 WAW House, showing north elevation, camera facing S
- 3 of 16 WAW House, showing south elevation, camera facing N
- 4 of 16 WAW House, showing colonnade and porch on east elevation, camera facing NW
- 5 of 16 WAW House, living room (with front door at right)
- 6 of 16 WAW House, dining room, showing door into kitchen
- 7 of 16 WAW House, pantry
- 8 of 16 WAW House, second floor, showing main staircase and central hallway
- 9 of 16 WAW House, second floor office
- 10 of 16 Mother's House, east (front) elevation and WAW house in background at right, camera facing NW
- 11 of 16 Mother's House, north (side) elevation, camera facing S
- 12 of 16 Mother's House, south (side) elevation, camera facing E
- 13 of 16 Mother's House, living room interior (with front door at right)
- 14 of 16 Mother's House, living room interior (with fireplace at right)
- 15 of 16 Mother's House, second floor bedroom with fireplace
- 16 of 16 Visitor Center, north (primary) elevation, camera facing S

**Property Owner:**

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name State of Kansas – Kansas Historical Society

street & number 6425 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Topeka state KS zip code 66615

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

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

Figure 1: HABS Site Plan (2002). Note: A visitor's center replaced the garage in 2003.

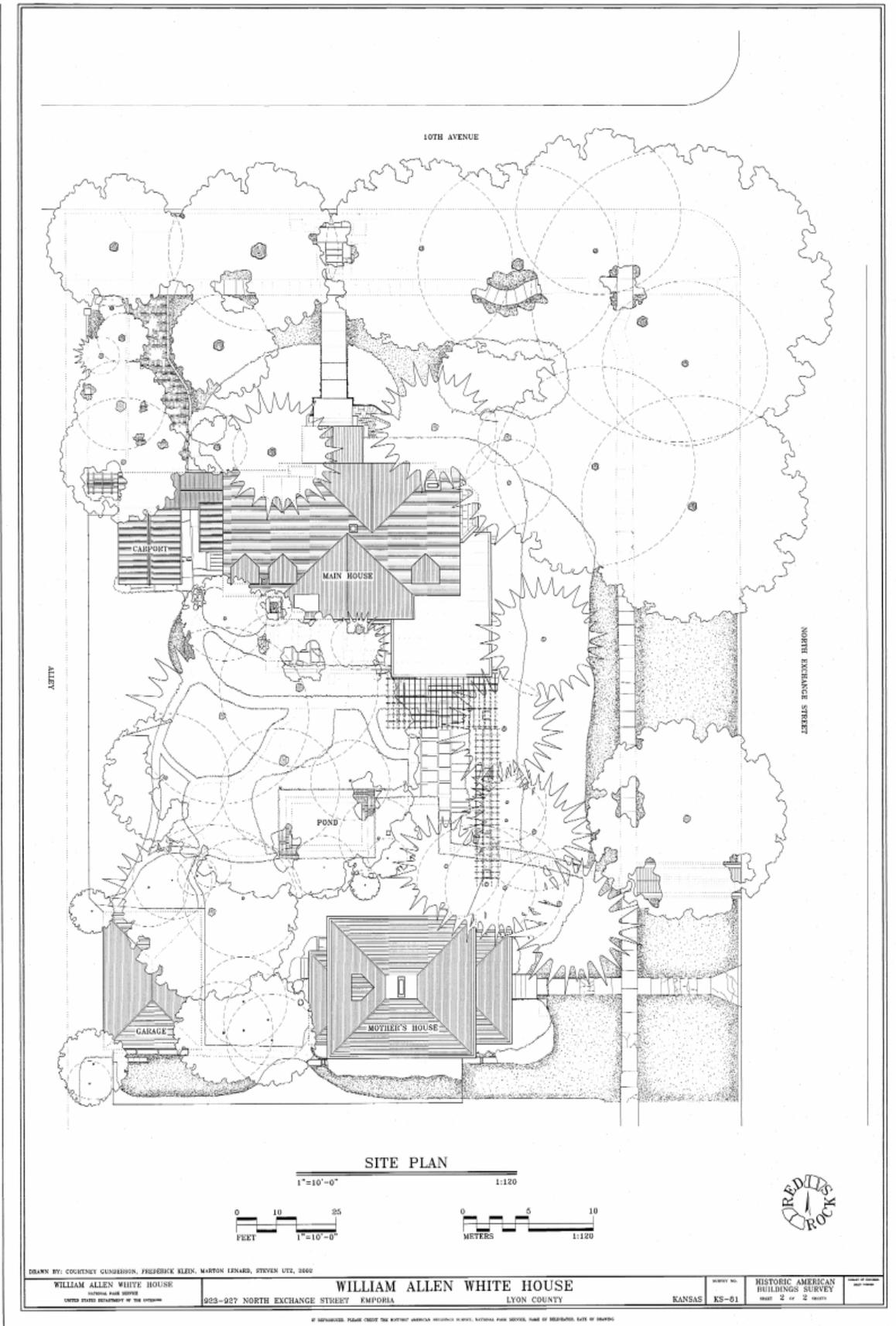


Figure 2: 1911 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map – Emporia, Kansas (page 5)  
This issue of the Sanborn Maps is the first to cover this neighborhood.

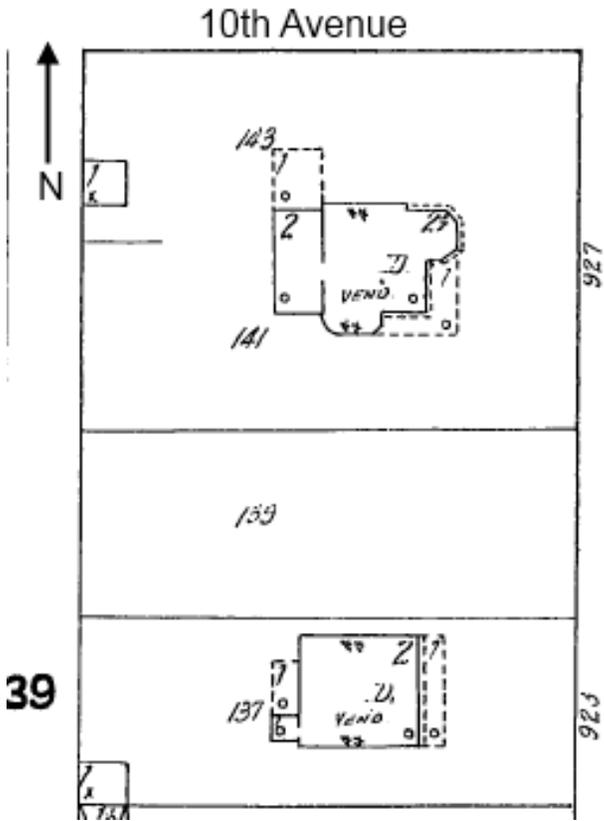
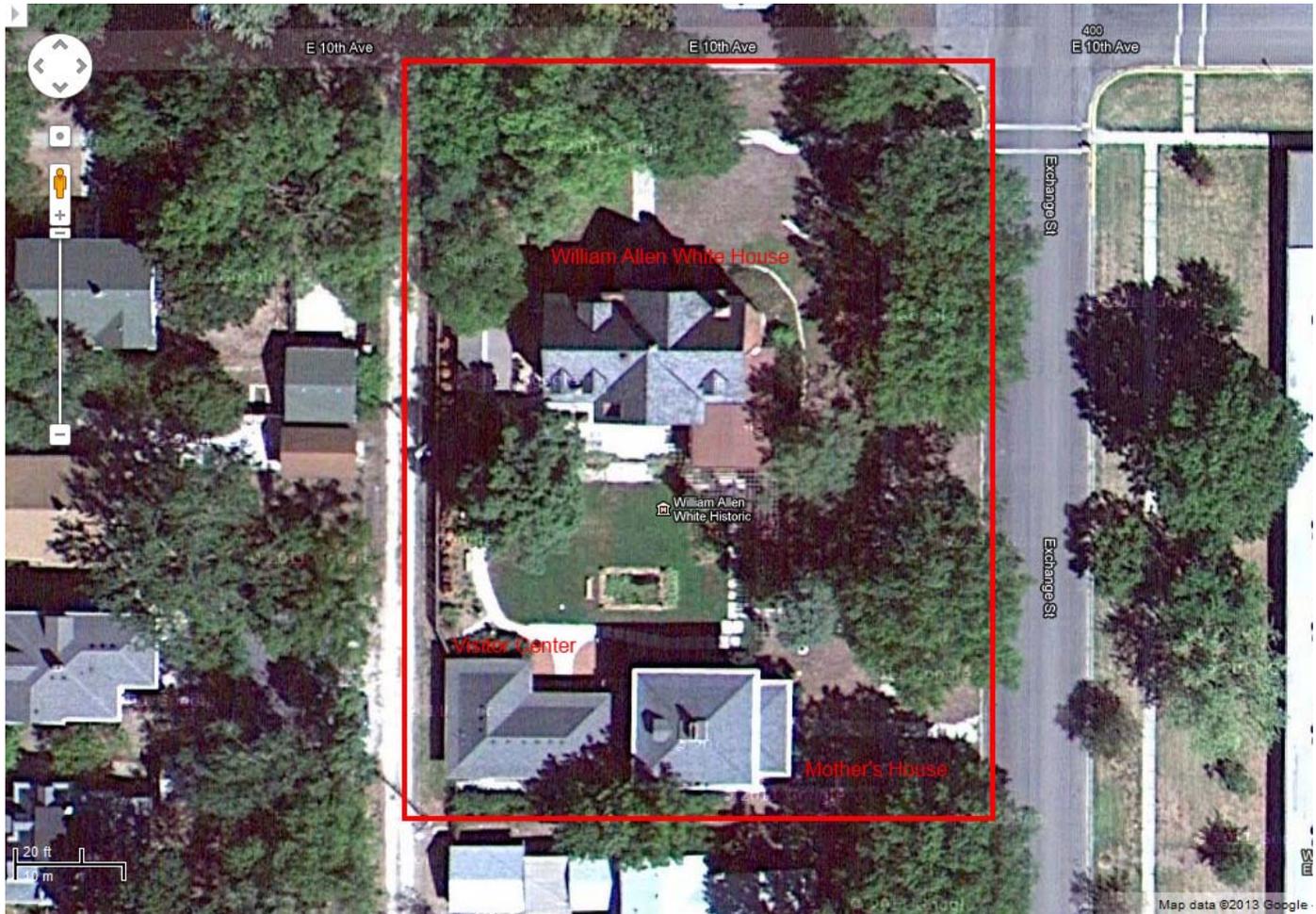


Figure 3: Contextual Map. Google.com (2013).



The William Allen White property, at right, is located three blocks east of downtown Emporia.

Figure 4



William Allen White House  
923 & 927 Exchange Street  
Emporia, Lyon County, KS  
Datum: WGS84  
Latitude/Longitude: 38.409485 / -96.175417  
Google.com (2013).