Famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright designed and supervised the construction of this L-shaped, two-story Prairie style house for Elsie and Henry J. Allen, Wichita editor and politician. Completed in 1919, the year Governor and Mrs. Allen took up temporary residence in Topeka, their Wichita home is the only Wright designed residence in Kansas. The house, which Wright considered one of his best, was also his last “Prairie House.” It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.

Born on September 11, 1868, in Warren County, Pennsylvania, Henry Justin Allen moved with his family to a homestead in Clay County, Kansas, when he was two years old. Allen attended Baker University and then commenced a long career in journalism when he accepted a position with the Salina Republican—he subsequently edited newspapers in Ottawa (Herald) and Wichita (Beacon). Politically, Allen began life as a conservative Republican but, like his friend and fellow Kansas newspaperman, William Allen White of Emporia, fell under the spell of the charismatic Theodore Roosevelt and converted to progressivism early in the twentieth century. Allen walked out of the Republican National Convention in 1912 when it rejected Roosevelt and followed the former president into the Progressive (or Bull Moose) Party. As a two-term Republican governor of Kansas (1919–1923), Allen is remembered for his attack on the Ku Klux Klan and his Court of Industrial Relations; and in the years to follow, he remained active in Kansas and national affairs, while engaging his journalism career and enjoying his lovely home in Wichita until a couple years before his death on January 17, 1950.

For more information on the Frank Lloyd Wright’s Allen-Lambe House, see http://home.onemain.com/~allennam/index.html.
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