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  Sawyer City Jail

Other names/site number  KHRI # 151-157

Name of related Multiple Property Listing  n/a

2. Location

Street & number  Southwest side of downtown Sawyer; located in the alley west of Main  n/a  not for publication

City or town  Sawyer  n/a  vicinity

State  Kansas  Code  KS  County  Pratt  Code  PR 151  Zip code  67134

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local  Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Signature of certifying official/Title  Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO  Date

Kansas State Historical Society  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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Check as many boxes as apply.)</td>
<td>(Check only one box.)</td>
<td>(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X private</td>
<td>X building(s)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>district</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>public - State</td>
<td>site</td>
<td>sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public - Federal</td>
<td>structure</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Functions</th>
<th>Current Functions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOVERNMENT: jail</td>
<td>VACANT/NOT IN USE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Architectural Classification</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OTHER: utilitarian</td>
<td>foundation: CONCRETE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>walls: BRICK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>roof: BRICK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

Sawyer City Jail is a one-room correctional facility made of all brick with an arched masonry roof located on the southwest side of downtown Sawyer in the alley west of Main Street. The jail measures 8’x12’ and has no utilities or connections; the only door opens directly into the jail, and there are no interior divisions or bars. The building does have an original steel door and hinges as well as two original barred windows. The Jail retains its historic integrity and is still in its original location. The building is vacant and used for storage only. The design and materials are unique in Kansas as well as this area.

Elaboration

Setting

Sawyer City Jail is located in the alley west of Main Street on the southwest side of Sawyer, Pratt County, Kansas. Sawyer is about 10 miles away from the county seat, Pratt, and is located on the Mulvane Extension of the Santa Fe railroad. The town was chartered by Sawyer Town Company, a railroad company, in 1887. As of 2019 Sawyer only had a population of 157 according to the United States Census Bureau. The Sawyer City Jail is one of the last remaining buildings in Sawyer that is reminiscent of when the town was bustling.

Exterior

The jail was constructed in 1917 and is a one-story brick building in a running bond with a unique arched masonry brick roof. The building is only 8’ wide and 12’ deep. The front/east side of the building features an original solid steel door that contains bullet holes (Photo 1). The building also has two windows; both have vertical steel bars set into the frame of the building. The windows are placed in the center of both north and south elevations (Photo 2). There have been no modifications or additions to the building. Some bricks are missing under the windows, and there is a hole in the back/west side of the building created by two missing bricks (Photos 3 and 4). Other than the unique arched roof style, there is no embellishment to the jailhouse; even the wall anchors are extremely minimalist (Photo 2).

Interior

The interior of Sawyer City Jail features a solid concrete floor, and the back wall has a skim-coat of stucco or mortar that is starting to crack and fall off. Whereas, the other three walls are solid brick (Photo 5). There are no utilities in the jail because it was only meant to temporarily hold inebriated persons or until the Marshall could find time to transport the criminal to the county seat in Pratt, approximately 10 miles away from Sawyer. The photos from the jail's interior show its deterioration around the windows and the missing bricks at the back of the building. There appear to be three horizontal metal bars inserted at the base of the arched roof, running north/south, that are being used for support. There is also another support bar running east/west between all the north/south supports. These supports are probably not original but have been added to keep the structure upright (Photo 5). The inside of the jail is currently being used as storage.

Integrity

The Sawyer City Jail maintains its original historic integrity as an all-brick temporary holding cell. There have been little to no modifications since its original foundation in 1917. Some of the original materials have deteriorated, but the structure itself is intact and maintains its original features, location, design, and association. The Sawyer city jail is an exemplary example of a small-town jail and is one of few remaining in Kansas.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c1917

Significant Dates

November 14, 1919

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

W. W. Sample and S. Wysong

Criteria Considerations

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 is based on the time the jail was constructed in c 1917. The jail was only used for a short time for holding inebriated persons or criminals.

Criteria Considerations (justification)

NA
Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Summary

Sawyer City Jail is a small one-room brick jail and is significant for its architecture, specifically its arched masonry roof. The historic function of small jails in rural Kansas were typically to temporarily house inebriated persons or other criminals until they could be transported to the county jail. Sawyer is about 10 miles away from Pratt, the county seat of Pratt County, where any lawbreakers would have been transported once the Marshall found the time. The Sawyer jail is one of few remaining one-room jails in Kansas, and its unique arched masonry roof makes it significant. Only one other of the remaining one-room jails has a rounded roof, the Hoyt City Jail, but it is constructed using poured/formed concrete. Other one-room jails are usually constructed of solid concrete, wood clapboards, or stone, making the Sawyer City Jail stand out amongst other jails of its type. Therefore, the building is eligible under Criterion C ARCHITECTURE for its unique method of construction.

Elaboration

Pratt County History

Pratt county was officially founded in 1879 on July 25. Although technically founded in 1879, some inhabitants tried to organize the territory as early as 1873, although it was a “fraudulent organization.” 2 The fraudulent settlers were from Hutchinson and traveled through the state with a tent, trying to organize counties as they traveled. Therefore, none of the settlers were recognized, and the land remained unorganized but white settlers until 1879. Although once recognized, Sawyer was listed as one of the seven founding cities of Pratt County.3 The county was named after Caleb Pratt, who was active in politics and served in the Civil War, where he was killed. William Cutler described the majority of the county as being a “beautiful rolling prairie.” 4 The actual settlement of the county was fairly slow because the land was not seen as desirable by settlers due to the way land was sectioned off. Another reason the county did not attract settlers was because Pratt County was not close to any railroad; the nearest station was 40 miles away.5 Cutler states that actual emigration did not truly happen until 1877 when almost 2000 immigrants settled in Pratt County.

Sawyer History

Per A History of Sawyer: 75th Anniversary and Kansas Centennial Edition, a celebration of the 75th anniversary of the official foundation of Sawyer, “The town of Sawyer, Kansas, is located on the Mulvane Extension of the Santa Fe railroad in Pratt County, ten miles south and three west of the city Pratt, which is the county seat. It was chartered by the Sawyer Town Company, a railroad corporation, on March 31, 1887.” 6 Although according to the Pratt Daily Tribune, the city wasn’t incorporated until January 22, 1914.7 Even though the town was unincorporated for twenty-seven years after its original plotting, an article from the Pratt Daily Tribune in 1916 boasts that “Sawyer is one of the most progressive little towns in the state… Sawyer is probably more closely linked with county seat town in sentiment and practical interest than any of the other towns of the county.” 8 The Pratt Daily tribune even went on to publish that Sawyer was the “Southeast

3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
7 Pratt Daily Tribune, (Pratt, KS), January 22, 1914.
8 Pratt Daily Tribune, (Pratt, KS), August 17, 1916.
Jail History

It does not seem as though the jail was ever used long-term as a jail; pictured below are two newspaper clippings that mention the colorful history of the building (Figures 1 and 2). Although the jail may not have been used frequently, there was reason to believe that the town would need one. In 1904, there were several criminal cases regarding alcohol, one of which included W.W. Sample – the architect for the jail. Furthermore, *A History of Sawyer* states that the town had multiple saloons and pool halls and therefore qualified itself for a “small holding room”. The same pamphlet states, “The city jail was built by W.W. Sample who, with the help of “Deafy” Hall, built the sidewalks”. The Sawyer News reported that “Sealed bids will be received by the undersigned until 2:30 p. m. Wednesday, February 14, 1917, for the construction of a City Jail in Sawyer, Kansas, the contractor furnishing the materials. Specifications to be seen at my office. Claud Keller, City Clerk.” Although a newspaper clipping from 1917 states that the jail contract was given to S. Wysong and W.W. Sample for $188 (approximately $4,095 in 2022).

Figure 1: Sawyer News, July 5, 1918. Figure 2: Sawyer News, November 14, 1919.

Architect History – W. W. Sample

9 *Pratt Daily Tribune*, (Pratt, KS), March 1, 1919.
10 Pratt Daily Tribune, March 1, 1919.
12 A History of Sawyer, Page 7
W.W Sample, one of the architects of the jail is credited with most of the building in Sawyer from about 1907-1918. Sample was also probably the reason Sawyer wanted a holding cell in the first place. The first mention of W.W. Sample in the newspapers was in 1904 when he was arrested for breaking “prohibitory law,” and he was then taken to Pratt Jail and released on a $500 bond ($15,663.03 in 2022). Sample also broke “prohibitory law” in 1911. Even though the Volstead Act, which nationally prohibited the consumption, sale, and manufacture of alcohol, was not nationally passed in the United States until 1919, Kansas started to advocate the criminalization of alcohol as early as the 1850s with the organization of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. Kansas was the first state to write temperance into its constitution in 1917 when Governor Capper signed the “bone dry” bill into law. However, Kansas had theoretically been a “dry” state since February 19, 1881.

Although Sample may have participated in some illegal activities, he is credited with doing lots of business in Sawyer. In 1907, just a few years after his first run-in with the law, Sample purchased a stone-making machine that he used to build houses. In 1907 Sample also plastered housed and the grain elevator. Just a year later, in 1908, Sample purchased a gas engine that would allow him to operate a cement mixer so that he could manufacture his stones faster. Then in 1909, Sample boasted that his engine and block machine could produce around 4000 blocks in a day. With faster production, Sample started to build houses and store buildings. After Sample’s 1911 run-in with the law enforcement, he continued to build buildings and started to work on making sidewalks for the downtown area. In 1915 Sample seems to leave his life of crime behind and is mentioned in newspapers as “Marshall Sample” where he is upset with miscreants vandalizing sidewalks that he most likely built; this is the first mention in newspapers where there is a call for a jail. Just a year after the building of the jail, Sample decides to move to Pratt, and after his divorce in 1921, he sells his block and brick-making machines “cheap for cash”. There seems to be little known about S. Wysong other than the fact that he was given the contract for jail.

Other One-Room Kansas Jails:

Most of this section is from the Cimarron City Jail nomination, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2019.

The brick Sawyer City Jail was constructed ten miles from the county courthouse in Pratt. The community of Sawyer consists of about eight blocks with structures or buildings. There are several other community jails built as one-room holding cells and built at a similar time. More information on the following jails is accessible by their accompanying Kansas Historic Resources Inventory [KHRI] links in footnotes or by searching the KHRI database online.

Wetmore Calaboose (Figure 3): The stone Wetmore Calaboose was constructed on the block west of Wetmore’s business district. It is a square 13’ by 12.5’ building of 15” thick native limestone construction started in ca. 1882 with construction completing July 7, 1883. The ceiling and wooden door are covered with metal. The original earthen floor was covered with concrete after an attempted jailbreak by tunneling. The first prisoner was arrested on August 31, 1883, for disturbing the peace and quiet…by public drunkenness.
Hoyt City Jail (Figure 4): In circa 1900, the concrete Hoyt City Jail was formed and poured with concrete one block north of Hoyt’s business district. The Jackson County seat is Holton, approximately fifteen miles north of Hoyt. According to *The Holton Recorder*, the jail had “…One of the two windows are visible to view, and the only door faces south…rusty bars…cover the window and a creaky iron gate…bars the door. The jail was built around 1920 [sic] and was rarely used save for one-night visits by drunkards. A bunk along one wall attached to iron bars served as a ceiling. An old wooden stove was in the back, a hole in the roof remains as proof of its existence. A drain is located in the northeast corner of the jail…” Further research has determined the jail to have existed as early as 1900.

The Hoyt City Jail building is unique like the Sawyer City Jail in that is features a rounded arched roof. However, the Hoyt City Jail is a poured and formed concrete structure, which creates a differentiated appearance and method of construction. The Sawyer City Jail remains the only example of a jail with an arched brick roof construction recorded in Kansas.

Old Jefferson Town – Winchester Jail (Figure 6): The building is wood-framed. However, the original siding material is unknown for this ca. 1909 building. Currently, the small rectangular building is clad in pressed metal sheets that appear to be historic. According to an interpretive sign, this building was relocated from Winchester in 1977. “The Winchester town police were more likely to use the jail as a sleep-over for drunks then [sic] to contain a criminal. It also served as a meeting place for city council, police court and voting site.”

First Sedgwick County Jail (Relocated) (Figure 7): This small rectangular building was Sedgwick County’s first jail. It is wood frame construction in ca. 1871 with rough-cut wood boards. “…The structure contained four holding cells and no

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offices; it was most likely built to hold short term prisoners...”22 The building measures 16’ by 18’ with horizontal siding, 6” thick walls, and five window openings for ventilation. This building was relocated in 1952 to the Old Cowtown Museum – its current location.

Figure 8: Tobias Water Town & Old Jail - 2011

Tobias Water Tower and Old Jail (Figure 8): The native stone Tobias Water Towner and Old Jail in Wilson was constructed one-half block west of the business district, most likely this would have been in the alley at the back of the main street businesses. The Wilson County seat is located in Ellsworth, sixteen miles southeast of Wilson. The building is of stone construction in ca. 1907. “…The water tower has an area on the ground floor that was used by the City Constable to house his prisoners until the train or wagon came to take them to the county seat...”23 Different from the other jails at this time, the Tobias jail is a round structure, 18’ in diameter, and 25’ tall.

Pottawatomie County Courthouse and Jail (Figure 9): The building is of native limestone construction in ca. 1910. “…The jail in Louisville had been a small 12x16 stone building unable to fill the county’s needs necessitating the use of neighboring Douglas County jail at a cost of $226 per year. No mention was made to an early or temporary jail when the courthouse used temporary quarters after Westmoreland became the county seat in 1882. It is possible that the county continued to contract with Douglas County until a permanent jail could be built in Westmoreland...” The jail is an L-shape with cross-gable roof design. 24

This simple square or rectangle jail design was prominent in Kansas at the turn-of-the-century. The early twentieth-century construction used local materials that were accessible and in some cases “inescapable.” The buildings had minimal or small openings as a practical measure to ensure the incapacitation of the jailed person. Most of these small jails were constructed as a measure to detain persons until the county sheriff could be located. Some of the structures have been relocated to other parts of the community after the cities no longer found them useful and were turned into museums.

Closing Points

Sawyer City Jail is a small one-room brick jail and is significant for its architecture, specifically its arched masonry roof. The building was constructed as a response to community needs and at the request of Mayor Sample. The historic

function of small jails in rural Kansas were typically to temporarily house inebriated persons or other criminals until they could be transported to the county jail. The jail operated practically and functionally for a small amount of time and then was used for storage. The Sawyer jail is one of the few remaining one-room jails in Kansas, and its unique arched brick-masonry roof makes it a significant and exceptional design. Only one other of the remaining one-room jails have a rounded roof, the Hoyt City Jail, but it is constructed using poured/formed concrete. Other one-room jails are usually constructed of solid concrete, wood clapboards, or stone, making the Sawyer City Jail stand out amongst other jails of its type. Therefore, the building is eligible under Criterion C ARCHITECTURE.
9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)


National Register of Historic Places, Cimarron City Jail, Cimarron, Gray County, Kansas. NRIS # 10004201.


National Register of Historic Places, Pottawatomie County Courthouse, Westmoreland, Pottawatomie County, Kansas, National Register #10001950, form prepared by Brenda and Michelle Spencer with Dorothy Campbell.

*Pratt Daily Tribune* (Pratt, KS).

*The Holton Recorder.* (Holton, KS).


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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  
Less than one

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates. 
(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:__________
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 37.498140  
Lat: ____________  
1 98.684570  
Long: ____________
Sawyer City Jail
Pratt, Kansas
Name of Property
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)
The Sawyer City Jail is located at latitude 37.498140 and longitude -98.684570 and within a larger parcel in the original town site of Sawyer, Kansas.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)
The legal description defines the parcel on which the City Jail is located. The entire parcel is not included in this nomination as there have been alterations and new development that do not pertain to the significance of the jail. Therefore, the boundary includes the footprint of the building, where it is located on the parcel.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Haylee Rose, KSHS Intern, KSHS National Register Staff
organization Kansas Historical Society
date January 2022
street & number 6425 SW 6th Ave
telephone 785-272-8681
city or town Topeka
state KS
zip code 66615
e-mail Jamee.fiore@ks.gov

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

name Marc Gilpin
street & number 80215 NE 120th St
telephone __________________________
city or town Preston
state KS
zip code 67583

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 100 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.

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Figure 1: Sawyer News, July 5, 1918.
Figure 2: Sawyer News, November 14, 1919.
Figure 3: Wetmore Calaboose. 20 July 2010
Figure 4: Hoyt City Jail. 31 March 2019
Figure 5: Hoyt City Jail. 1900
Figure 6: Old Jefferson Town Jail 09 Mar 2013
Figure 7: Old Sedgwick County Jail. 15 April 2008
Figure 8: Tobias Water Town & Old Jail – 2011
Figure 9: Pottawatomie Co. Courthouse and old jail – 2017
Figure 10: Map of property
Figure 11: Overview Map
Figure 12: Topographic Map
The city calaboose, built a few years ago was used for the first time Tuesday night. It was used on that occasion to imprison about thirty turkeys Jim McReynolds had bought. They seemed displeased with the accommodations afforded by the regular Poultry pen and showed a disposition to strike for better conditions and longer hours of life. Jim refused to consider their demands and threw them into jail without even an order from court. The next morning they were huddled into other prison cages and rushed away to their doom. Thus another strike was put down by the ‘brutal power of the brail-classes.’

It seems that Isabel was so pestered with a bunch of newcomers of the ‘Never Sweat’ breed during this harvest that they had to get out ‘work or move on’ notices. A few days ago a group of fellows were holding a little sidewalk meeting telling each other what a fool a man was to work so hard for such small pay, etc. Marshal Pete asked if they wanted work, the leader replying with an oath that they wanted no jobs to work 24 hrs. a day. Pete didn’t argue the point but took the fellow gently by the neck, led him to the little concrete calaboose and locked him up. The other fellows in the group had skipped. The man in the little bake oven of a calaboose soon decided to go to work and it is reported that he has made a good hand ever since.

Figure 1: Sawyer News, July 5, 1918.
Figure 2: Sawyer News, November 14, 1919.

Figure 3: Wetmore Calaboose. 20 July 2010     Figure 4: Hoyt City Jail. 31 March 2019     Figure 5: Hoyt City Jail. 1900

Figure 6: Old Jefferson Town Jail 09 Mar 2013     Figure 7: Old Sedgwick County Jail. 15 April 2008
Sawyer City Jail
Name of Property

Figure 8: Tobias Water Town & Old Jail - 2011

Figure 9: Pottawatomie Co. Courthouse and old jail - 2017

Figure 10: Property map
Figure 11: Overview map

Sawyer City Jail
Lat. 37.498140
Long. -96.684570
Sawyer, Pratt County, Kansas
Sawyer City Jail

Lat. 37.498140
Long. -96.634570
Sawyer, Pratt County, Kansas

Figure 12: Topographic Map