

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Kansas
COUNTY: Chase
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

679/80

17-0000-004

1. NAME

COMMON:
AND/OR HISTORIC:
Lower Fox Creek School

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
NE 1/4, NE 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 31, T 18 S, R 8 E

CITY OR TOWN:
3 mi. north of Strong City on K-177.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
no. 5, Joe Skubitz

STATE: Kansas CODE: 20 COUNTY: Chase CODE: 017

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Club meeting house</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Davis-Noland-Merrill Grain Company, O. B. Burtis, Jr., President

STREET AND NUMBER:
127 West Tenth Street, Suite 1220

CITY OR TOWN: Kansas City STATE: Missouri CODE: 29

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Register of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:
Chase County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Cottonwood Falls STATE: Kansas CODE: 017

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
None

DATE OF SURVEY:
 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Lower Fox Creek School sits on a hill alongside K-177 about three miles north of Strong City. From that location it commands a view of some of the lush pasture and winding streams of the famed grazing lands of the Flint Hills. The school is one-half mile north of the Spring Hill Ranch House, a National Register property, and is on the same ranch.

The rectangular one-room limestone building measures 24 feet wide and 30 feet long. Limestone blocks on the front are of a uniform height while those of the other sides are varied. The stones have a rough face except for those used as quoins at the building corners and at the door and window openings. The quoins have a pecked finish.

Both the north and south sides have three rectangular window openings. Sills and shaped lintels of smooth cut stone are placed at each opening. The east front has three semicircular arched openings, a window in the center and a door on either side. Three-piece smooth stone lintels with a protruding keystone are placed over each. There are no openings in the west end.

A dominant feature of the east facade is the circular date stone, measuring more than three feet across and bearing the date "May, 1882," which is placed in the gable. A four-piece smooth cut stone bank surrounds the circular stone.

The simple gable roof has recently been covered with red cedar shingles. A belfrey, said to be like the original one, was placed near the east end of the roof in 1972. The exterior is now said to look much like it did originally.

The interior walls are plastered and painted. The woodwork is cypress with pine flooring. Furnishings have been placed in the building, some which were used at one time in that school and others which are of the same vintage. The building is used for occasional meetings by the individual garden clubs which have assisted in its restoration.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1882

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The Lower Fox Creek School, according to the circular date stone in the east gable, was completed in May, 1882. The people who lived along Lower Fox creek decided in 1878-1879 to form their own school district. It was one of the earlier districts in the county, district number 14 of an eventual 66. The site for the school house was given to the district in 1878 by rancher Steve F. Jones with the stipulation that the deed would revert when the place was no longer used as a school. The deed was not recorded until June 14, 1882, after the building had been completed.

Stone for the school came from the Barney Lantry quarries near Strong City. The stones were cut and the building erected by David Rettiger, a well-known early stonemason of the area. (Rettiger worked on the Chase County Courthouse in nearby Cottonwood Falls and built the Spring Hill Ranch House one-half mile south of the school. Both of these structures were previously listed on the National Register.)

The first school term in the new building began on September 1, 1884, with Dora Peer as the teacher. County records list the teachers from 1884 to 1930 and their salaries, which ranged from \$35 to \$90 a month. In the early years the average enrollment was about 19. In the years prior to the school's closing in 1930 the figure had dropped to three or four. After 1930 students who lived in the district were sent to other districts and tuition paid. In 1946-1947 the district was disbanded and the school house and grounds reverted to the adjoining ranch. Later a tornado or windstorm destroyed the original roof, a tin replacement was installed, and the building was used to store hay.

In 1968 the 14 Garden Clubs in the Mid-East district of Kansas selected this school as their special project. After the Davis-Noland-Merrill Grain Co., owner of the ranch, gave its permission, money was raised and donations secured of both labor and materials to renovate the building. Their goal is to preserve the building and to restore its setting as it was in 1882 as much as possible.

Lower Fox Creek School is a typical nineteenth century Kansas rural stone school, set apart perhaps by the obvious quality of the stonemason who built it and by the fact of its restoration. The school is significant to the people of the area for its role in their educational heritage. And to the members of the sponsoring Garden Clubs and many other people it has become a symbol of the past with which they can identify.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Garden Clubs Are Restoring Old School in Chase County," Emporia Gazette, April 4, 1972.
 "Gardeners Saving School," Wichita Eagle, May 25, 1972.
 "History of Schools of Chase County," Chase County Historical Sketches, Vol. III (Cottonwood Falls, Kan., Chase County Historical Society, 1966), pp. 358-364.
The Official State Atlas of Kansas (Philadelphia, L. H. Everts and Co., 1887), p. 47

(See continuation sheet)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE			
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "	°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "	38	26	27
SE	° ' "	° ' "	°	'	"
SW	° ' "	° ' "	96	33	27

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Richard Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey

ORGANIZATION: Kansas State Historical Society DATE: May 29, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: 120 West Tenth Street

CITY OR TOWN: Topeka STATE: Kansas 66612 CODE: 20

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Nyle H. Miller
 Title: Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society
 Date: June 5, 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date: _____

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Kansas	
COUNTY Chase	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

9.

Plat Book of Chase County, Kansas (Minneapolis, Northwest Publishing Co., 1901), p. 5.

Records in the Chase County Register of Deeds Office, Cottonwood Falls, Kansas.

"Restoration Project at Lower Fox Creek School Is Nearing Completion," Chase County Leader-News, October 19, 1972.

"Will Hold Open House to Commemorate Restoration of Lower Fox Creek School," Chase County Leader-News, June 14, 1973.

(Some of the information and a preliminary nomination form was prepared by the Flint Hills Resource Conservation and Development Council, which requested the nomination of this property.)