United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Arkansas City Commercial Center Historic District

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number Summit Street and Fifth Avenue

city, town Arkansas City

state Kansas

code 20

3. Classification

Category X district

Ownership public

X occupied.

Status unoccupied

X work in progress

Present Use agriculture

X commercial

educational

X entertainment

government

industrial

military

X private residence

recreational

scientific

transportation

other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Owners

street & number

city, town

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Cowley County Court House

city, town Winfield

state Kansas 67156

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A

has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date N/A

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A
7. Description

Condition

- excellent
- deteriorated
- unaltered
- good
- ruins
- altered
- fair
- unexposed

Check one
- original site
- moved
date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Arkansas City, the largest town in Cowley County, Kansas, is located just north of the Oklahoma border on the Arkansas River. The Arkansas City Commercial Center Historic District consists of five blocks along the main route through the town, Summit Street, which runs north to south, and two small extensions on the main east-west street, Fifth Avenue. The district is made up predominantly of two and three story commercial structures of stone or brick dating from the 1880's, the time of Ark City's greatest development, and buildings from the early 1900's, the time of a secondary boost to the City's growth. The district is anchored north an south by two outstanding buildings. At the north end of the area is the Gladstone (Elmo) Hotel, important historically as the oldest standing hotel in the town, built in 1886. At the south end of the district is the Syndicate Building, also dating from 1886 with important architectural detailing including molded brick and cast iron trim. Both structures were built by prominent south Kansas architect W. A. Ritchie.

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Arkansas City is situated on a hill above the Arkansas and Walnut Rivers which flow to its west and east respectively. The town is laid out on a north-south axis.

Arkansas City was established in 1870 and grew rapidly in its first five years. However the one and two story early frame buildings were replaced predominantly in the 1880's by more substantial stone and brick buildings, many with elaborate cast iron trim. The town is characterized by wide streets, often part of the appearance of western communities. There is also a preponderence of stone construction, either of entire stone buildings or buildings with stone side and rear walls with brick or cast iron street facades. Most of these stone structures date from 1880's or early 1890's. Those that are entirely of stone construction have facades with regularly cut rock faced blocks with rhythmically repeated rectangular or arched windows. The brick structures of the late 19th century are generally decorated with either molded or standard brick corbeling, cast iron trim and arched openings.

Like most town centers in the late 20th century, the historic district of Arkansas City has new elements out of keeping with the character of the town as established in the 19th century. These "intrusive" structures are fairly scattered through the district but are somewhat more concentrated at its extremities. Also scattered through the district are several outstanding buildings which appear to be eligible individually for National Register listing. Among them are the two anchor buildings already mentioned: the Gladstone Hotel and the Syndicate Building. Other key buildings are the Union State Bank, built in 1883, the Summit Block, a stone structure with an elaborate cast iron front built in 1886, and the Ranney Davis Building dating from 1888 on West Fifth Avenue.

In 1914 there was an oil boom in Arkansas City and a resultant group of early 20th century commercial structures. These buildings include the structure at 205 West Fifth Street, built in 1915, Newman's Department Store, 1917, the rebuilding of the Home National Bank in 1918 and the Osage Hotel built in 1920.
ARKANSAS CITY COMMERCIAL CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

#7 Additional Descriptive Information, Page 3

Inventory of Buildings

1. Gladstone Hotel--201 N, Summit. Key Building. O35-0210-001 (c) (Demolished)
   Stone construction, three and one half stories, five bays by 13 bays. Built in 1886 by W.A. Ritchie, architect.
   Owner: Mayne L. Calder
          c/o Home National Bank
          Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

   Owner: Frank G. Turner
          126 N. Summit
          Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

3. 122 N, Summit. Contributing Building. O35-0210-015 (c) (Demolished)
   Two story brick commercial vernacular building, ca. 1915. Stepped parapet at top with corbeled brick trim.
   Owner: Keith W. Hearne c/o Osage Cleaners
          122 N, Summit
          Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

4. 118-120 N, Summit. Contributing Building. O35-0210-016 (c)
   Two story brick garage type structure; commercial vernacular style of the early 20th century; stepped parapet at top. Built ca. 1915.
   Owner: Ben Wineinger
          Rte 3, Box 266G
          Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

5. 114-116 N, Summit. Contributing Building. O35-0210-017 (c)
   Two story five bay buff brick structure with corbeled trim. Decorative elements include cast eagles set on the top front corners of the building. Built C, 1915.
   Owner: Lyle W. Keefe
          112 N. Summit
          Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

6. 112 N, Summit. Contributing Building. O35-0210-018 (c)
   One story early 20th century commercial vernacular structure with modern face.
   Owner: Jerry Knox
          1525 First
          Barnhart, Mo. 63012
7. 108-110 N. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-019 (c)
   Two story, three bay brick early 20th century garage type structure with corbeled trim and plain parapet top. Built ca. 1915.
   Owner: A. Vance Day
   PO Box 734
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

8. 106 N. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-020 (c)
   One story brick early 20th century commercial vernacular structure.
   Owner: Roy H. Adcock
   PO Box 54377
   Tulsa, Oklahoma 74155

9. Osage Hotel. 100 N. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-021 (c)
   Five story eight bay by six bay brick hotel; first story finished with cast stone; brick and stone corbeling. Built in 1920 with Art Deco and neoclassical stylistic elements.
   Owner: Osage Plaza, Inc.
   c/o E.B. Culbeck, Jr.
   PO Box 302
   Wichita, Kansas 67005

10. 100 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-022 (c)
    Four bay by seven bay brick two story building with cast stone trim. Built ca. 1920 with neoclassical stylistic elements.
    Owner: Hester May Bryant
    c/o Bryant Hardware Co.
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

11. 104 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-023 (c)
    Two story brick commercial vernacular building dating from the early 20th century. Stepped parapet top.
    Owner: V.L. Bryant
    102-104 S. Summit Ave.
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

12. 106 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. 035-0210-0002 (NC)
    Modern one story concrete block structure with stone facade.
    Owner: Charles W. Thoma Associates
    PO Box 50
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
ARKANSAS CITY COMMERCIAL CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

#7 Additional Descriptive Information, Page 5

Inventory of Buildings

13. 108 S. Summit. Non-contributing. (NC)
   Vacant lot.
   Owner: City of Arkansas City
   c/o City Clerk
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

14. 112-114 S. Summit. Contributing. 035-0210-024 (c)
   Buff brick two story, nine bay structure with pedimented parapet
   roof. Built ca. 1925.
   Owner: Commonwealth Theatres, Inc.
   c/o David Krause
   215 W. 18th
   Kansas City, Mo. 64108

15. 116-118 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-025 (c)
   Two story, three bay buff brick building with cast stone trim.
   Neoclassical decorative elements. Tablet identifying the building as the
   Owner: Commonwealth Theatres, Inc.
   c/o David Krause
   215 W. 18th
   Kansas City, Mo. 64108

16. 120 South Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-026 (c)
   Two story, three bay brick structure with stuccoed facade and terra
   cotta trim. First story store front and roof canopy date from the late 20th
   century. Building appears to date from the 1920's.
   Owner: Joseph K. Ranney
   PO Box 877
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

17. 122 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. 035-0210-0068 (NC)
   One story modern addition to the Home National Bank.
   Owner: Home National Bank
   126 South Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

18. Home National Bank--126 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-027 (c)
   Neoclassical revival structure of carthage stone. Accented by
   Greek doric columns along principal facades. Rebuilt 1918. Original con-
   struction, 1888.
   Owner: Home National Bank
   126 S. Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
Arkansas City Commercial Center Historic District

Additional Descriptive Information, Page 6

Inventory of Buildings

19. Howard Block--200 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-028 (c)
   Two story brick commercial vernacular structure with corbeled trim and projecting brick pilasters at regular intervals along the principal facades. Dated 1931.
   Owner: Howard Investment Co.
   c/o William Howard
   Box 49
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
   202-20

20. Beekman Building--204 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-029 (c)
   Two story cast stone commercial structure with mansard roof.
   Built ca. 1930.
   Owner: Leila Beekman (trust)
   1201 NW 19th
   Oklahoma City, Ok. 73106
   202-20

21. Zadie Building--208 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-030 (c)
   Two story brick commercial structure with cast stone trim; modern store fronts added. Neoclassical trim elements such as quoins and keystones. ca. 1920.
   Owner: Litwins, Inc.
   PO Box 830
   Ft. Scott, Kansas 66701

22. 214 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-031 (c)
   Early 20th century commercial vernacular structure of buff brick, nine bays wide with stepped parapet top. Arched windows at second floor.
   Ca. 1920.
   Owner: Arkansas City American Legion Housing Corp.
   214 S. Summit, Box 641
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

23. 220 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-032 (c)
   Three story buff brick early 20th century commercial vernacular building.
   Owner: William E. Burton
   220 S. Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
   222-22

24. 224 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-033 (c)
   Owner: Geralee Howard
   300 Highland
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
ARKANSAS CITY COMMERCIAL CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

#7 Additional Descriptive Information, Page 7

Inventory of Buildings

25. 226 South Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-034 (c)

Three story stone building with altered first story store front; rock-faced cut stone with arched window heads. Ca. 1890.
Owner: Geralee Howard
300 Highland Ave.
Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

26. 300 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-035 (c)
Two story brick building with segmentally arched window heads and corbeled trim. Ca. 1900.
Owner: James F. Munson
Munson Austin Agency
113 East Washington
Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

27. 304 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. 035-0210-0069 (MC)

Modern one story office building.
Owner: Kansas Gas and Electric Co.
K.G.&E. Building
Wichita, Kansas

28. 310 S. Summit. Contributing Building 035-0210-036 (c)
Three story, seven bay stone building with rock-faced cut stone facade. Segmentally and round arched window heads; Original cast iron trim at first story. Ca. 1880's. Pediment above cornice removed.
Owner: Robert K. Niles
310 S. Summit
Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

29. Summit Block—312-322 S. Summit. Key Building. 035-0210-004 (c)
Stone two story building with elaborate cast iron facade and pair of decorated cast iron pediments. Built 1886.
Owner: James E. Fisher, Jr. 312-314 - Eagle Block
8242 Limerick 316-318 - Summit Block - 035-323
Wichita, Kansas 67206 320-322 - Summit Block - 035-324

30. 324 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. 035-0210-0070 (MC)
One story brick commercial building. 20th century.
Owner: Elliott and Leon Davis, c/o Davis Bros.
Suite 500, Mc Farlin Bldg.
Tulsa, Ok 74103
ARMAKANS CITY COMMERCIAL CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

#7 Additional Descriptive Information, page 8

Inventory of Buildings

31. 326 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. 035-0210-0071 (NC)
    20th century one story brick commercial building.
    Owner: Elliott and Leon Davis, C/O Davis Bros.
    Suite 500, Mc Farlin Building
    Tulsa, Ok 74103

32. Newmans Department Store--400-406 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-0 (C)
    Owner: Newman Investment Co.
    400-406 S. Summit
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

33. 408 S. Summit. Contributes. 035-0210-03 (C)
    One story brick commercial vernacular building dating from the early 20th century. Corbeled brick trim.
    Owner: B.D. Fieldes
    Box 1163
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

34. 410 S. Summit. Contributes. 035-0210-039 (C)
    Small one story commercial vernacular structure with corbeled trim and a pedimented parapet.
    Owner: Bill Hess
    412 S. Summit
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

35. 412 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-040 (C)
    Owner: Bill Fieldes Motor Co. Inc.
    3021 N. Summit
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

36. Syndicate Block--421-427 S. Summit. Key Building. 035-0210-011 (C)
    Two story brick building highly decorated with corbeling, black brick trim and combinations of round, segmental and horse shoe arches. Cast iron ornamentation. Designed by W.A. Ritchie and built in 1886. Demolished
    Owners: Lou Shanks
    Rte 3, Box 266zz
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
    Michael J. Bellis
    PO Box 1073
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
ARKANSAS CITY COMMERCIAL CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

#7 Additional Descriptive Information, Page 9

Inventory of Buildings

37. 329 S. Summit. Contributes. 035-0210-042
   Three story brick building with neoclassical architectural features
   and art deco influences. Elements include accented window heads, brick pil-
   Owner: City of Arkansas City
   c/o City Clerk
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

38. 325 S. Summit. Contributes. 035-0210-043
   Two story four bay brick building with neoclassically inspired ele-
   ments including corbeled quoins and keystones over the windows. Ca. 1920.
   Owner: Roger Sparks
   Rte 4
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

39. 317 S. Summit. Non-Contributing Building. 035-0210-0072 (NC)
   Two story modern facade, possibly covering older building.
   Owner: Dollie Shields
   317 W. Central Ave.
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

40. 313 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-044
   Two story three bay building with stuccoed facade and terra cotta
   Owner: Roger Sparks
   Rte 4
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

41. 311 S. Summit. Non-contributing building. 035-0210-0073 (NC)
   One story modern store.
   Owner: C. Douglas Wright
   311 S, Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

42. 307-309 S. Summit. Contributes. 035-0210-045 (c)
   Two story brick building with corbeled trim and modillioned cornice.
   Dated 1910.
   Owners: Harold R. Whittle
   1917 E. 12th
   Winfield, Kansas 67156
   Beulah Xidis
   8220 Maple
   Wichita, Kansas 67209
Inventory of Buildings

43. 305 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. O35-0210-0074 (nc)
    Modern screen front, possibly over older structure.
    Owner: Oral F. Cover
    1422 N. A
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

44. 301-303 S. Summit. Contributing Building. O35-0210-005 (c)
    Crescent Building. Two story brick building with elaborate molded
    and corbeled brick ornamentation. Arched first story windows. Pediment
    and corner tower. Dated 1905.
    Owner: Milford C. Vining
    c/o Union State Bank
    Arkansas City, Kansas, 67005

45. 227 S. Summit. Contributing Building. O35-0210-012 (c)
    Three story building of local stone with rock-faced finish at
    main elevations. Alternating narrow and wide courses. Arched openings at
    first and third stories which are reminiscent of Louis Sullivan. Round
    Owner: Betty J. Sturman
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

46. 223-225 S. Summit. Contributing Building. O35-0210-046 (c)
    Two story building of local stone with rock-faced finish at main
    Owner: John Baldwin
    1925 La. Honton
    Boise, Idaho 83709

47. 219-221 S. Summit. Contributing Building. O35-0210-047 (c)
    Owner: Beatrice Wright
    Greenwood
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

    Modern one story store.
    Owner: Warren Realty Co.
    31 Stonewall
    Ennis City, Oklahoma 74401
Inventory of Buildings

49. 209 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-048
   Two story brick early 20th century commercial vernacular building
   with corbeled trim and modern store front.
   Owner: Vernon & Larson
   Box 1045
   Arkansas City, KS 67005

50. 207 S. Summit. Non-Contributing Building. 035-0210-0076
   Modern store front, possibly over older structure.
   Owner: Robert L. Morford
   400 N. Stevens
   Ponca City, Oklahoma 74601

51. 205 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-049
   One story brick early 20th century commercial vernacular building.
   Owner: Solene L. Larson
   400 No. 13
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

52. 203 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-050
   Two story brick early 20th century commercial vernacular building
   with corbeled trim and stepped parapet top.
   Owner: Kelly-Gray, Inc.
   203 S. Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

53. 201 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-051
   Two story commercial vernacular building dating from the early
   20th century. Brick construction with corbeled trim and a stepped parapet
   top.
   Owner: Danigl D. Walker
   Janet M. Bremer co-owner
   PO Box 324
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

54. 127 S. Summit. Key Building. 035-0210-052
   Union State Bank, formerly First National Bank. Two story brick
   building, three bays by seven bays with round arched windows at the first
   floor and segmentally arched windows at the second floor. Round corner tower
   with bell shaped roof. Elaborate cornice. Italianate stylistic elements.
   Dated 1883.
   Owner: Union State Bank
   119 S. Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
ARKANSAS CITY COMMERCIAL CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

#7 Additional Descriptive Information, Page 12
Inventory of Buildings

55. 125 S. Summit. Key Building. 035-0210-053
   Two story brick building; triple arched palladian type window
   at the second story. Elaborate cornice. Italianate stylistic elements.
   Built ca. 1883.
   Owner: Union State Bank
   119 South Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

56. 121-123 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-054
   Two story brick commercial vernacular building with a corbeled
   Owner: Union State Bank
   119 S. Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

57. 119 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-055
   Two story building of reinforced concrete. Arched windows at
   Owner: Union State Bank
   119 S. Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

58. 117 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-056
   One story building of cut local stone with a rock-faced finish.
   multiple small arches trim the cornice.
   Owner: Jesse A. Kindred
   117 S. Summit
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

59. 115 S. Summit. Contributing Building. 035-0210-057
   One story building with stuccoed facade; yellow brick and terra
   cotta trim. Ca. 1920's.
   Owner: James W. Hutchens
   1804 N. A
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

60. 113 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. 035-0210-0077
   One story with modern facade.
   Owner: Loren W. Grimes
   RR 3
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
Inventory of Buildings

61. 111 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. Modern one story commercial building. Owner: Luther H. Parman 422 N. Summit Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

62. 103 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. Modern one story commercial building. Owner: Anna H. Parman c/o Home National Bank Trust Dept. PO Box 1047 Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

63. 101 S. Summit. Non-contributing Building. One story brick commercial vernacular building. Owner: Joseph K. Ranney PO Box 877 Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

64. 109 W. Fifth Ave. Contributing Building. Two story brick Italianate building with arched windows and elaborate cornice. Dated 1887, Matlack Building Addition. Owner: James D. Walker, PO Box 324, Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

65. 113-115 W. Fifth Ave. Non-contributing. Vacant lot. Owner: City of Arkansas City Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

66. 117-119 W. Fifth Ave. Contributing Building. Two story brick commercial vernacular, ca 1900. Owner: City of Arkansas City Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

66. 121 W. Fifth Ave. Contributing Building. One story stuccoed building with terra cotta trim. Ca. 1920's. Owner: City of Arkansas City Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

Arkansas City Commercial Center Historic District
Additional Descriptive Information, Page 13
ARKANSAS CITY COMMERCIAL CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

#7 Additional Descriptive Information, Page 19

Inventory of Buildings

67. 201 West Fifth. Contributing Building. 035-0210-060 (c)
   Two story brick early 20th century commercial building with
   elaborate cornice. Ca. 1900.
   Owner: Odd Fellows Lodge
   c/o Aubrey Foster
   408 N. B
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

68. 205 W. Fifth, Contributing Building. 035-0210-061 (c)
   Three story commercial vernacular with parapet top. Brick
   Owner: Aubrey C. Foster
   210 West Fifth
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

69. 217 W. Fifth, Contributing Building. 035-0210-062 (c)
   Carnegie public library. Built 1907
   Owner: Cowley County Community College
   Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

70. 207 W. Fifth, Contributing Building. 035-0210-063 (c)
    Two story early 20th century stone building.
    Owner: Aubrey Foster
    Foster Furniture
    210 West Fifth
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

71. 200 W. Fifth, Key Building. 035-0210-064 (c)
    Three story stone warehouse built of local stone with rock-faced
    finish. West section of the building dates from 1888. East section an
    addition from ca. 1900.
    Owner: Aubrey C. Foster
    c/o Foster Furniture
    210 West Fifth
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

72. 120 W. Fifth, Non-Contributing Building. 035-0210-068 (c)
    Two story commercial vernacular building dating from the early
    20th century. First and second stories altered.
    Owner: James C. Bates
    P.O. Box 68
    Arkansas City, Kansas 67005
ARKANSAS CITY COMMERCIAL CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

#7 Additional Descriptive Information, page 15

Inventory of Buildings

73. 112-114 W. Fifth Ave. Contributing Building 036-0210-065 (c)
Arkansas City Office Building; built 1929. Five story buff brick structure built in the Art Deco style.
Owner: James C. Bates
Rte 4, Box 88
Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

73. 120 East Fifth Ave. 036-0210-066 (c)
Public Library. Built as Post Office in 1914. Two story brick, neoclassical building with columns across the front.
Owner: City of Arkansas City
Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

74. 113 East Fifth. Non-contributing. (No)
Vacant lot.
Owner: James W. & Lawson Miller
201 S. A.
Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

75. 117 East Fifth Contributing. 036-0210-067 (c)
Two story stone building with arched second story windows.
Former Windsor Hotel. Built 1889.
Owner: James W. & Lawson Miller
201 S. A.
Arkansas City, Kansas 67005

{Reviewed as not contributing}
# 8. Significance

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**Specific dates** 1880's-90's, 1910's **Builder/Architect** N/A

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Arkansas City Commercial Center Historic District is significant as representing two important periods of the town's history in the 1880's and early 1890's and the early 20th century. The district is worthy of recognition beyond the local realm for its association with an event of national significance, the Cherokee Strip Run of September 16, 1893. As one of the few gateways for the start of this run, Arkansas City played an integral role in the settlement of the Cherokee Strip which is seen by many historians as marking the close of the American frontier. For years before the federal government opened the Cherokee strip, there had been speculation about its availability for settlement. Anticipating the Run, would-be settlers moved to Arkansas City, swelling its population and adding to the boom atmosphere which had begun a few years earlier when depots were established by five railroad companies. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe came to Arkansas City in 1879, followed by the Kansas Southwestern, the Missouri Pacific, the Midland Valley and the St. Louis and San Francisco. Arkansas City's architecture reflects its perception of itself as a growing, prosperous city. A second boom precipitated by the discovery of oil in the area in 1914 brought about another surge of development in the town so that today Arkansas City's appearance illustrates the two main historical growth periods. The district as a whole is significant because it includes the historic commercial and civic center and represents important developments in the growth of Arkansas City. Individual buildings, however, may be characterized as mostly versions of the Italianate and Queen Anne commercial styles, early 20th century commercial vernacular and neoclassical styles. In general the buildings have an air of exuberance in their architectural expression. In particular, the 1880's structures are stylishly built with local stone as the favored building material. Many of the grander buildings of the 1880's were the work of W.A. Ritchie and Company, prominent architects of the time in southern Kansas.

## Additional Information

Arkansas City was laid out in 1870 and was first called Adelphi, then Walnut City, then Creswell and finally Arkansas City under which name it was incorporated in 1872. During these early years the town consisted of a cluster of wooden shops and houses. The 1939 Kansas Guide to the Sunflower State mentioned that "The community in these years was a rendezvous for horse thieves who stole stock from settlers in Kansas and drove the animals into Oklahoma. 'Buffalo Bill', the US Marshal made the vicinity his headquarters during the early 1870's."

The character that Arkansas City imparts today is essentially that which it took on in the 1880's after the railroads came, combined with the influence of the early 20th century oil boom. The town in the 1880's began to grow very rapidly. By 1882 the population was 1,300; in 1884 it was 2,800 and by 1886, 5,000. In 1893 the population was 9,264. The city lost almost 2,000 people in 1894 due to the land rush. During the decade of the 1880's, four hotels were built, a canal was established between the two rivers to give water power and a large elaborate opera house was built. Clearly the town saw itself as a growing metropolis.

When the federal government opened the Oklahoma territory for settlement in 1889, and the narrow stretch of land along the Kansas border known as the Cherokee Strip in 1893, a great
rush of humanity burst forth to take up the land. Settlers in the West had experienced hard times in the late 1880's from drought, crop failures and economic depression. Many had lost their farms through mortgage foreclosures and saw the land in Oklahoma and the Cherokee Strip as an opportunity for a fresh start. Hoping for the official opening of these lands, they crowded along the border awaiting the chance to stake a claim. Taken in the context of the economic and political climate of the 1890's, the Cherokee Strip Run and the role that Arkansas City played in the event take on national significance. Conversely, the Cherokee Strip Run played an integral part in shaping the character and appearance of Arkansas City.

The architectural expression of the buildings in the commercial area reflects the mood of the community at the time they were built. Three of the most prominent buildings in the district, the Gladstone Hotel (individually nominated to the National Register of Historic Places), the Syndicate Block and the First National Bank (now the Union State Bank) were designed along with some other buildings in the town by W.A. Ritchie and Co., a prominent architectural firm in southern Kansas. Brothers W.A. and W.J. Ritchie were the principals of this firm which for a time was headquartered in Winfield, Arkansas City and Wichita. The Ritchie buildings stand out as not only stylish but the most flamboyant in Arkansas City. The Gladstone had galleries of delicate cast iron work at each of its four stories; the First National Bank building has an unusual round corner tower with a bell shaped roof; the Syndicate Block has creative repeated arches of round, elliptical and horseshoe forms in walls embellished with corbels and red and black bricks.

The population figures for Arkansas City corroborate the development of the city as outlined above with primary and secondary growth periods occurring respectively in the late 1880's and early 1900's. Since 1893 when the population was almost 9,300, the growth of Arkansas City slackened and became stable. By 1950 the population was 13,616. In the 1980 census the population was 13,201. The rapid growth between 1884 and 1893 is evidenced in Arkansas City architecture, the main indicator of a community's view of itself.


Corinse's Photographic Studio. Arkansas City Illustrated. n.d. (c. 1893).


Reynolds, Robert. Local Historian, 721 A Street, Arkansas City. Interviewed by Paula Reed, March 9, 1983.
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

The district consists of five main commercial blocks along Summit Street and two and a half blocks of Fifth Avenue in the vicinity of Summit Street. The boundaries were chosen to include the main commercial core of Arkansas City with their limits defined by the location of key or particularly significant buildings. Generally, the boundaries follow the property lines of the buildings facing onto Summit Street and Fifth Avenue with the exception of the west side of the 100 block of North Summit which has been eliminated from the district since most of the structures there do not contribute to the district. At the south end of the district, the west side of the 400 block of South Summit, except for the Syndicate Block, a key building, has been eliminated from the district.

The district's boundaries are described as follows: beginning at a point at the north-west corner of the Gladstone (Elmo) Hotel property, 201-203 North Summit, and following its north property line to its northeast corner; then continuing in a straight line across North Summit Street to a point on the east curb line; then south along the east curb line across East Chestnut Avenue to a point on the south curb line of East Chestnut Avenue; then east along the south curb line to a point opposite the rear (east) property line of the property located at 124 North Summit Street; then turning south and following the rear property lines of the lots facing onto Summit Street across East Central Avenue and continuing south to a point opposite the rear property line of the Public Library located at 110 East Fifth Avenue then turning east along said rear property line to the east property line of the Library; then turning south and following the east property line to its end; then across East Fifth Avenue to the east property line of the former Windsor Hotel at 115-117 East Fifth Avenue; then following that line to the south property line of the same lot; then turning west and following the south property line and continuing to and across the alley way to the north end of the rear property line of 210 South Summit Street; then turning south and following the rear property lines of the lots facing onto South Summit Street to the South property line of 414 South Summit Street; then turning west and following said property line to its west end; then continuing west to the east curb line of South Summit Street; then turning south along the east curb line to the north curb line of East Jefferson Street; then turning west across South Summit Street to the north curb line of West Jefferson Street and continuing west to a point opposite the rear property line of 427 South Summit; then turning north along said rear (west) property line to its intersection with the north property line of 421 South Summit; then turning east along said north property line and following it to its east end; then continuing east to a point on the west curb line of South Summit Street; then turning north along the west curb line and continuing to and across West Adams Avenue to its north curb line; then turning to the west and following the north curb line to a point opposite the rear property line of 329 South Summit Street; then turning to the north and following the rear property lines of the lots facing onto South Summit Street to and across West Washington Avenue and continuing to the south property line of 209 South Summit; then turning west across the alley way to the northeast corner of the property located at 210 South First Street; then following its north property line to its west end and continuing in a north-westerly direction across South First Street to the southeast corner of 201-203 West Fifth Avenue; then continuing west along the south property line of it and adjoining properties to an alley; then continuing across the alley in a southwesterly direction to the southeast corner of the former Carnegie Public Library property; then following the south property.
line of the said Carnegie Library to its southwest corner; then turning north and following
the west property line to its northwest corner; then turning east and following the prop-
erty to its northeast corner; then turning north across West Fifth Avenue along the west
property line of 208 West Fifth Avenue to the southwest corner of the property located
at 117 South First Street; then turning east along said property line to its end and con-
tinuing across South First Street and along the north property line of 114 South First
Street to an alley; and continuing across the alley to the rear property lines of the buildin;
along the west side of Summit Street; then turning north and following said rear property
lines to West Central Avenue; then continuing north across West Central to its north curb
line; then turning to the east along the north curb line to the west curb line of North
Summit Street; then turning north and following the west curb line to and across West Chest-
nut Avenue to the north curb line of West Chestnut Avenue; then turning west and following
the north curb line to a point opposite the rear property line of the Gladstone (Elmo)
Hotel; then turning north and following the said rear property line to the place of beginnin;
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property: approximately 21
Quadrangle name: Arkansas City
Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Paula Stoner Reed, Vice President
organization: Preservation Associates, Inc.
date: June 20, 1983
street & number: P.O. Box 100
telephone: (301) 791-7880
city or town: Sharpsburg
state: Maryland

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature: [Signature]

title: Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society
date: September 7, 1983

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register
Attest:
Chief of Registration
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