



KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CENTER FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH

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KANSAS MUSEUM OF HISTORY

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Certification of State Register Listing

The Register of Historic Kansas Places includes all Kansas properties nominated to the National Register as well as lower threshold properties which are listed on the state register only.

Property Name: Gilmore-Kent Farm

Address: SW4, NE4, SW4, NW4, S. 5, T. 3S, R. 20E, Highland vicinity, Wolf River Township

County: **DONIPHAN COUNTY**

Legal: A 2 acre tract located on the SW4, NE4, SW4, NW4, S. 5, T. 3S, R. 20E, Highland vicinity, Wolf River Township, Doniphan County, Kansas.

Owner: Thomas and Julie Dorrell
Box 2
Highland, Kansas 66035

National Register eligible _____

State Register eligible XX

This property was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review for the Register of Historic Kansas Places on February 26, 1994.

I hereby certify that this property is listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places.



State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 3-2-94

The Gilmore-Kent Farmstead (c. 1866-1895) is located east of Highland in the Wolf River Valley. It is visible from new Highway 36. The farmstead is being nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places under criteria B and C for its historical association with the Samuel Dixon Gilmore and for its architectural significance as a composite grouping of relatively intact nineteenth century agricultural buildings and structures.

The farmstead is located on a 2 acre tract located in the SW4, NE4, SW4, NW4, S.5, T.3S, R.20E in Wolf River Township, Highland vicinity, Doniphan County. The nominated tract is part of a larger 10.46 acre tract that was divided from and sold from the original 160 acre farm in 1993.

The nomination includes the limestone house with a frame addition (c. 1866-1868, 1890) and the limestone cellar house (c. 1866- 1868). There are other resources standing on the remaining acreage and these include: 1 granary (c. 1890), 1 barn (c. 1890), 1 well (c. 1866), 1 wellhouse (c. 1890), 1 railroad box car unit (c. 1930), 1 shed (c. 1930), corrals (c. 1960). The acreage includes some flat and sloping pasture land which provides context for the rural setting.

In general terms, the architectural integrity of the buildings and structures that comprise the farmstead is high for their age and attention. The most deteriorated structures include a shed and the railroad box cars, which both date from the 1930s. The circa 1866-1868 stone structures are in excellent condition. The granary and the large barn have suffered from lack of maintenance, these effects are particularly evident in the barn. The gable roofed granary retains its storage bins and metal rods to maintain the pressure for each bin. The gambrel roofed barn is beginning to rot through the floor in certain places, and has lost vertical planking on its exterior.

The Federal style, limestone I-eye house relies on a centerhall plan, it is one room deep. Massive limestone flues rises within the gable end walls of the house, providing fireplaces for all of the rooms. The centerhall contains a "U" shaped staircase of plain design. Graining, dating from an undetermined time between the 1890s and the 1930s decorates the hallway. The double hung fenestration in this part of the house maintains its 6/9 appearance. Narrow board, newer floors cover the wide board original floors. A door pierces the centerhall on each floor, originally opening out onto a porch, nonextant. On the southern facade, flat arched lintels surmount each door. Chiseled stone sills and lintels frame each window. It appears that much original or historical mortar connect the stones, very little portland cement has been applied to house. The facade walls are laid with carefully selected and chiseled stone blocks, the two corners are defined by interlocking quoins. Random stones are employed for the gable and rear elevation walls.

Similar intent was employed in the construction of the cellar house, which is built into the hillside. The small building employs what appear to be left-over stones from the larger project. The well is stone lined and quite deep. A windmill has been employed to pump the water up from the aquifer, it is nonextant.

Samuel Dixon Gilmore (1828- 1909) purchased the 160 acres in Section 5 in the Wolf River Valley in 1861. Gilmore was born in Clay County, Missouri and came to Doniphan County in 1855 at the age of 27. He married Elizabeth B. Whitson in 1849, the couple produced twelve children but few survived infancy.

Doniphan County tax records indicate that the Federal style, limestone I-house was constructed

in between 1866 and 1868. Between this time the property value rose from \$800 to \$1500. The limestone cellar house and the well was also constructed at this time. The buildings were constructed from stone quarried on the section. The frame ell-addition to the house, the rear porch, the granary, the barn, and the wellhouse date from circa 1890. The approximate date of construction for these improvements is based on the rapid rise of the farm's value between 1885 and 1895.

The Gilmores raised their family at the farm and resided there until the family's move to Sheridan County, Kansas in 1895. The 1885 Kansas State Agricultural Census lists the residents at the Wolf River Township farm as Samuel Gilmore (56)- farmer, Elizabeth Gilmore (52)- housekeeper, John Gilmore (19)- farmer, William Gilmore (12)- student, Ida Gilmore (14)- student, Wornes Noble (21)- farmer, Dennis Rush (19)- farmer, Ellen Hardsock (36)- housekeeper, Daisy Hardsock (3). In 1895, Samuel (66)- farmer, Elizabeth (64), William (23)- laborer, and Ida (19?), Samuel McDaniel (30)- laborer, Sarah McDaniel (25), John Gilmore (29)- farmer, and his wife Margaret (28).

Samuel with the help of hired hands first, and later with his son John as well, farmed the 160 acres in Section 5 and also owned acreage in Section 6. The Gilmores appeared to have a large corn and apple farming operation for Doniphan County. Samuel Gilmore is described as a farmer and stock-raiser in the 1882 Doniphan County Atlas. In the year that the family moved to Sheridan County, the Kansas State Agricultural Census lists the value of the Samuel's farm and improvements at \$14,000, and the value of John's farm at \$5000. During a ten year period the value of Samuel's farm had grown significantly from the 1885 value of \$1760.

The 1895 Kansas State Agricultural Census listings show Samuel owning 50 farm implements and pieces of machinery, John owned 25. Samuel planted 23 acres of wheat, 12 acres of rye, 66 acres of grass and 110 acres of corn, and harvested 4000 bushels of corn. John raised 40 acres of wheat and 40 acres of corn, and harvested 1000 bushels of corn. Samuel owned 11 horses, 8 mules, 3 cows, 58 cattle, and 73 swine, he garnered \$4000 from the livestock he sold that year. John owned 2 horses, 1 mule, 2 cows and 7 swine. The family orchard stood on Samuel's land and included 200 apple trees, 32 plum trees, 16 cherry trees and 1 pear tree.

Despite his prosperity, the Samuel Gilmore was forced to sell the farm in 1896 after moving to Sheridan County. At his death in 1909 Gilmore was remembered as "generous, kind and courteous to every one, and probably had as many friends as any man that ever lived in Doniphan County. Many persons took advantage of his generosity and kindly disposition and got him to sign their notes and he paid thousands of dollars for other people which caused him to have to sell his fine farm here and move to Sheridan county." (Troy Chief, January 7, 1909)

In June 1896 Gilmore sold the property to John P. Johnson for \$17,000. Johnson established the first bank in Highland in 1862, and likely was a longtime friend and acquaintance of Gilmore's. Johnson never lived at the farm, and may have purchased it to help a friend in need, or foreclosed on it. In 1900, two years after Johnson's death, Absalom Kent purchased the property for \$9800.

Edmund Kent, Absalom's son inherited the farm and owned it until 1929. Kent was a breeder of Poland China Hogs. Byron Sly Hunter bought the property from Kent in 1929 for \$35,000. Hunter was the president of the Missouri Livestock Commission, and owned farms and ranches throughout Kansas. He never lived at the farm, but operated it as a working farm. The built-in china cabinet and buffet in the house were made by the farm foreman during the winter months.

During Hunter's ownership the railroad box cars were pulled out to the farm. Hunter's wife sold the farm to Harold Rush in 1981, they farmed the land and rented the house. When the current owners, Tom and Julie Dorrell, purchased the 10.46 acre tract that contained the buildings and structures in 1993, the house had been vacant since 1988.

14DP 1C4
NE sec 36 T2 R19E

Spark's
Quarry

411
T. 2 S.
T. 3 S.

6963 IV SE
(HIGHLAND)

408

