United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form  

For NPS use only  received  date entered

1. Name

Historic Stockbland and Kemmerer Department Store

and/or common Light Hardware Building

2. Location

street & number  100 E. Rutledge (SE corner of Rutledge & Main Sts)  N/A not for publication

city, town  Yates Center  N/A vicinity of

state  Kansas  code 20  county  Woodson  code 207

3. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Present Use</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| _district  
X building(s)  
structure  
site  
object  
N/A       | public  
X private  
both  
Public Acquisition  
in process  
being considered  
N/A       | occupied  
X unoccupied  
work in progress  
Accessible  
yes: restricted  
X yes: unrestricted  
no       | agriculture  
commercial  
educational  
entertainment  
government  
industrial  
military  
museum  
park  
private residence  
religious  
scientific  
transportation  
other: vacant       |

4. Owner of Property

name  John D. Atkin, M.D.

street & number  1004 E. Madison

city, town  Yates Center  N/A vicinity of  state  Kansas  66783

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.  Register of Deeds

street & number  Woodson County Courthouse

city, town  Yates Center  state  Kansas  66783

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title  Kansas Historic Sites Inventory  has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date  July 9, 1970  
depository for survey records  Kansas State Historical Society, 120 West 10th

city, town  Topeka  state  Kansas  66612
The Stockebrands and Kemmerer Store is a two story rectangular commercial building erected in 1904. It stands at the southeast corner of the intersection of Main and Rutledge streets, diagonally across from the Town Square, where the Woodson County Courthouse is located. A diagonal corner entrance faces the intersection. The dimensions of the building are approximately 75 feet east to west and 150 feet north to south.

The north and west facades constitute the architectural "front" of the building. They are faced with red brick and trimmed with stone. The principal facades of the first story contain plate glass display windows topped by transoms and placed within a cast iron structural frame. There are five bays of about equal width across the north. Four of these have display windows, but the easternmost contains two doorways, one opening into the store on the first floor and the other opening to a stairway to the second story. The northwest corner is set diagonally and contains the main entrance, flanked by display windows. On the west side are five bays containing display windows, then a fifty foot section of plain brick wall surface and, at the south end, a twenty-five foot section containing a doorway set between display windows.

At the second story level, the street facades have round-arched one-over-one windows, some of which are clustered and some of which are placed singly. The arches are capped with stone crowns which are tied to one another by a matching stone stringcourse which runs across the entire length of the two main facades. This treatment gives the windows an appearance similar to those of the upper story of the courthouse across the street. Above the second story windows the walls are trimmed with a corbeled brick cornice. Behind the parapet formed by this cornice is a flat roof.

The rear walls of the building, on the south and east sides, are faced with rough sandstone blocks.

The interior of the first story is one large, open room with a high ceiling of pressed metal. The second story contains a row of offices on the north, which open off a corridor. On the other side of the corridor is a large, open room with a sloping floor, which originally functioned as a public auditorium. At one time this room had a stage at the south end, but it was taken out in 1942 when a freight elevator was installed in the building. By that time the large upper room was used for storage. Aside from the installation of the elevator and removal of the stage, the interior has undergone very little change.
8. Significance

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</th>
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<tr>
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Specific dates: 1904

Builder/Architect: Grant Naylor, Builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Stockebrands and Kemmerer Store, or Light Hardware Building as it is often called now because of its most recent active use, is locally significant because of its architecture and its associations with the growth of commerce in Yates Center. Architecturally, it is the largest and most imposing turn-of-the-century commercial building in Yates Center, and one of the most intact. It is a representative and very intact example of the small-town commercial architecture of its era.

The Stockebrands and Kemmerer Store occupies a position of great visual prominence in the central business district of Yates Center, occupying one of the four corners facing the Woodson County Courthouse on the Town Square. It thus serves as a visual anchor for the commercial district. (This district is rich in well-preserved commercial buildings built between 1880 and 1925 and is to be proposed for nomination to the National Register as a historic district in the near future, but because of the special prominence of this building and local concerns about its proposed rehabilitation and reuse, it is being nominated individually at this time.)

Completed in March, 1904, the building was erected to house the Stockebrands and Kemmerer Department Store, a general merchandise establishment owned by Ernest and Henry Stockebrand and Robert Kemmerer. Before its construction, some of the leaders of the community had reportedly asked the Stockebrands and Kemmerer to add a public meeting room to the proposed building, for the city had no community meeting room at the time. Thus, the new building was built to include an auditorium which could seat 1,200. This auditorium was the site of many local social and cultural events, including town meetings, vaudeville shows, and Chautauqua programs. The local high school held plays and commencement exercises there until 1924. The northernmost portion of the second story contained rooms that were rented as business and professional offices.

Within a few years after the store opened, Robert Kemmerer left the partnership. The business was then called the Stockebrand and Stockebrand Department Store. It was operated by the Stockebrand brothers and their sons until 1929, when it was sold to Ed Light and Charles Opperman, who moved their business, the Light and Opperman Hardware Store, into the building from another location nearby.

The Light and Opperman Hardware Store was one of the largest hardware dealerships in the Woodson County area, and was very important to the local farm economy as a supplier of agricultural implements.
Opperman retired from the business in 1942, at which time it became the Light Hardware Company. It continued in operation under that name until it closed in December, 1971. Thereafter the building changed hands several times but was not put to any steady productive use. By 1984 it was empty and deteriorating. Following the condemnation of the building by the city in November, 1984, there was considerable public interest in saving it. It was subsequently purchased by the present owner, who plans to rehabilitate it for commercial use.

THIS STATEMENT IS BASED ON CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT.
9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Yates Center, KS

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 7, 8, and 9 of Block 41, original townsite of the City of Yates Center, KS.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>state</th>
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<th>code</th>
<th>county</th>
<th>code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard J. Cawthon, Architectural Historian

organization Kansas State Historical Society

date July 26, 1985

street & number 120 West 10th

telephone (913) 296-5264

city or town Topeka

state Kansas

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_X_ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been reviewed according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Executive Director

Kansas State Historical Society

date August 21, 1958

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
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Interviews by Brenda Manske, of the Woodson County Preservation Commission, with Elmer Stockebrand, Alice Stockebrand, and Enoch Light, all of Yates Center.


This nomination was prepared from a draft submitted by Brenda Manske, Chairman of the Woodson County Preservation Commission, P.O. Box 112, Yates Center, KS 66783.
Stockebrands and Kemmerer Store
Yates Center (Woodson County) Kansas
UTM Reference 15/259735/4195920

Red, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
operation with State of Kansas agencies

Compiled by USGS and USC&GS

Photography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
graphs taken 1967. Field checked 1969

Using projection. 1927 North American Datum

0-foot grid based on Kansas coordinate system, south zone

1-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,

Blue indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown

Red indicates lines on the predicted North American Datum 1983,

the projection lines 23 meters east as shown by
d red corner ticks

Purple shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1981 and
sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1984