NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name WALT MASON HOUSE

other names/site number 111-1660-0068

2. Location

street & number 606 WEST 12th AVENUE ☐ not for publication

city, town EMPORIA ☐ vicinity

state KANSAS code KS county LYON code 111 zip code 66801

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
[XX] private	[XX] building(s)	1	1	buildings
☐ public-local	☐ district			sites
☐ public-State	☐ site			structures
☐ public-Federal	☐ structure			objects
	☐ object			
		1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [XX] 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 [XX] meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official: STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER — Date: MARCH 20, 1992

State or Federal agency and bureau: KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC; single dwelling	DOMESTIC; single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)	
LATE 19th and EARLY 20th CENTURY	foundation	CONCRETE
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS; OTHER; AMERICAN	walls	WOOD; shingle
FOURSQUARE		STUCCO
	roof	ASPHALT
	other	BRICK

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Walt Mason House is located at 606 West 12th Avenue in Emporia, Lyon County, Kansas (pop. 25,287). The two-and-a-half story, shingle, stucco, and brick American Foursquare style house is surmounted by an asphalt shingled, ridge-hipped roof and stands on a concrete foundation. The building maintains a southern orientation, measuring thirty feet from east to west and twenty-five feet from north to south overall. The building's simple rectangular form is augmented by a porte cochere and sleeping porch on the east elevation and an ell projection on the north elevation.

The Walt Mason House has a simple rectangular plan, a low-pitched, hipped roof, and a symmetrical facade; horizontal lines are emphasized in the building's design. Wide eaves project beneath the low-pitched roof. Massive masonry piers support the one-story porch that spans the building's facade. In vernacular examples, such as the Walt Mason House, hipped dormers are common, as are full-width, single-story front porches and double-hung sash windows.

The building maintains a high degree of architectural integrity; the changes that have occurred include the replacement of the original wood roof shingles with asphalt shingles and the enclosure of the porch above the porte cochere. In addition, the facade's first level stucco wall, which appears as white in historic views of the building, has been painted brown. Historic photos of the building show its original color scheme to be brown with white detailing. The porte cochere never functioned as such. The building's original two-car garage has been replaced.

Brown stained shingling covers the main body of the building. Massive, square, dark red, brick pillars support the one-story, flat roofed porch that spans the building's facade. The brick pillars also support the porte cochere. The walls of the porch and of the sleeping porch above the porte cochere are shingled. Stucco covers the facade's first story wall.

Fenestration on the building is comprised primarily of 6/1 double hung sash; these windows are grouped variously in combinations of

XX See continuation sheet

one, two, and three. Ridge-hipped roof dormers project from the south, east, and west elevations; the dormers are fenestrated with groups of three 6/1 double hung sash. A tripartite bay window, fenestrated with 6/1 double hung sash, projects from the first level of the western elevation, providing light for the dining room. A multi-paned, tripartite, leaded glass window fenestrates the center bay of the northern elevation's second story.

A brick chimney rises from the center of the eastern wall, an additional chimney rises from the northern roof slope of the ell at the rear of the house.

Limestone steps, flanked by brick abutments lead up to the building's front porch, in line with the building's centrally located front door.

The building retains its original floorplan and detailing. The interior of the house is delineated by a center hall plan and Colonial Revival/ Craftsman style detailing. Much of the woodwork in the house has been painted white, the first story woodwork, the staircase and the second story hall are oak; pine is used on the second and third stories. A wide, Craftsman inspired staircase fills the center hall. A classically inspired mantle accentuates the fireplace on the east wall. Panelled pocket doors separate the two front rooms on the first floor from the hall. Functional crystal light fixtures decorate the first and second floor hall ceilings. A multi-paned, tripartite, leaded glass window fenestrates the northern wall of the staircase landing. The second story hall provides an axial floorplan, allowing all rooms to radiate from its center. The attic story contains a ball room that is lit by the dormer windows.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
ARCHITECTURE	1912	1912
LITERATURE	1912-1920	

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
Mason, Walt

Architect/Builder
BRINKMAN, HENRY W.- Architect
COX, TOM- Builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Walt Mason House (c. 1912) is being nominated to the National Register under criterion B for its historical association with Walt Mason and under criterion C for its architectural significance as an American Foursquare style house.

Walt Mason (1862-1939) was a humorist poet who made his name working as a writer and editor for William Allen White's Emporia, Kansas Daily Gazette. Mason was born in Ontario, Canada and immigrated to the United States in 1880. He held a number of writing and editorial positions with newspapers in Kansas and Nebraska before coming to work for White.

White hired Mason in 1907 as a telegraph and editorial writer, he soon began to publish Mason's poetry under the name "Uncle Walt." "These verses, printed in a single paragraph, appeared to be prose, but readers soon discovered a drumbeat rhythm and a regular pattern of rhyme. Dealing with topical news, public personages, historical events, literary characters, life's foibles, the seasons and holidays, Mason's "prose poems" quickly won popular acceptance far beyond Emporia, for they were widely copied in other newspapers. By 1910 "Uncle Walt" was appearing in more than two hundred newspapers with a combined daily circulation of five million copies." (Starr, 1958, p. 435-36)

Mason published his first collection of verse, Uncle Walt: The Poet Philosopher, in 1910. Five other collections followed: Business Prose-Poems (1911), Rippling Rhymes (1913), Horse-Sense (1915), Terse Verse (1917), and Walt Mason, His Book (1918). Mason had very little formal education, but became the most widely read poet in America.

☒ See continuation sheet

In 1912, Mason retained Emporia architect Henry W. Brinkman to design his dreamhouse. Brinkman specialized in ecclesiastical architecture, but he is credited with several residences in Emporia, including his own at 917 State Street (1912). Tom Cox built the Mason House. Cox was a longtime Emporia contractor who built many of Emporia's large homes and public buildings.

"Mr. Mason paid for it as it was built from his weekly checks for his writing. Week by week as they presented their bills, the plumbers, electricians, carpenters, and lumbermen received their checks. The house cost between $12,000 and $15,000." (Emporia Daily Gazette, 18 July 1935)

The Masons moved to La Jolla, California in 1920, in hopes a finding a more comfortable climate for Mason's rheumatism. Mason continued to write for daily syndication until his death in 1939. "Analyzing the success of the "homey and folksy' rhymer, the New York Times said editorially that it showed that Americans "still liked kindly, simple things and people." (Starr, 1958, p. 435-36)

Mason regretted leaving the Emporia house and wrote of its construction in the 5 September 1920 issue of the Kansas City Star.

> We have sold our Emporia house, at least the preliminary papers have been signed and sealed. It has caused me many a moment of anguish and remorse, for the old house on Twelfth avenue means a lot to me. When I built it, I expected to end my days under its roof; and the building thereof was my biggest achievement in this world. I am proud of that house, and I hope with reason. There has never been a mortgage on it. I never borrowed any money to finish it. Before it was half done, I realized it was going to cost a great deal more money than I figured on--and I hadn't the money. But I buckled down to my old typewriter and made it smoke day and night.
>
> During summer and fall when the house was under construction I wrote more stuff than the law allows. I wrote my syndicate rhymes and six prose stories a week for the Chicago News and a Sunday story for The Kansas City Star, and twenty rhymes a month for trade papers, and a rhyme a week for Judge, and Heaven only knows how many other masterpieces. Tommy Cox (the contractor) would notify me that he would need $800 in a few

> days and instead of borrowing it I chanked up the typewriter and earned it. All that summer and fall I had rheumatism. I used to go limping up from our State street house to the new mansion on Twelfth, often so discouraged and blue I wished I had never dreamed a dream of a brand new house on the avenue. And we moved in a few days before Christmas....

The Walt Mason House is an example of the American Foursquare style. The house has a simple rectangular plan, a low-pitched, hipped roof, and a symmetrical facade; horizontal lines are emphasized in the building's design. Wide eaves project beneath the low-pitched roof. Massive masonry piers support the one-story porch that spans the building's facade. The interior of the house is delineated by a center hall plan and Colonial Revival/ Craftsman style detailing.

The American Foursqaure was the earliest Prairie style form and developed into the most common vernacular version. In vernacular examples, such as the Walt Mason House, hipped dormers are common, as are full-width, single-story front porches and double-hung sash windows.

"The Prairie style originated in Chicago and landmark examples are concentrated in that city's early 20th-century suburbs, particularly Oak Park and River Forest, and in other large midwestern cities. Vernacular examples were spread widely by pattern books and popular magazines; they are common in early 20th-century suburbs throughout the country. Most were built between 1905 and 1915; the style quickly faded from fashion after World War I." (McAlester, 1984, pp. 439-440)

Henry W. Brinkman (1881-1949) was a prominent Emporia architect who had a statewide practice. He specialized in ecclesiastical architecture, designing the St. Joseph's Catholic Church (1910) in Olpe, the Methodist Episcopal Church (1911) in Americus, the Sacred Heart Catholic Church (1912) in Emporia, the Catholic Monastery (1912) in St. Paul, the St. Thomas Catholic Church (1917-1918) in Kansas City, the St. Joseph's Catholic Church (1920-1921) in Kansas City, the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church (1922-1923) in Kansas City, the St. Peter's Catholic Church (1924-1927) in Kansas City, the Church of the Holy Family (1925-1927) in Kansas City, and St. Agnes' Catholic Church (1942-1943) in Roeland Park. He also designed public and parochial schools, and a small number of commercial and residential buildings.

Brinkman was born in Westphalia, Germany, immigrating to the United States as a baby with his family in 1882. The Brinkman family settled in the German community of Olpe, Kansas in 1885. Brinkman graduated from the school of architecture at Kansas State College in 1907, and established an independent practice in Emporia. He married Elizabeth K. Kuhlmann of Olpe in June, 1908. The couple had three children: Joseph Jerome, James Warren, and Gloria.

Brinkman owned a number of downtown Emporia properties, many of which he subsequently remodeled. He was one of the most active lay members of the Sacred Heart parish, a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Rotary Club, and for sixteen years a director of the Citizens National Bank of Emporia.

The Walt Mason House was sold to Louis and Selma Bang, owners of Bang and Bang, Clothiers of Emporia, in 1920. In 1935 the Bags sold the property to Francis and Wilhelmenia Jensen, owners of a large poultry and egg business. The Mason House has remained a single family residence, and was purchased in 1989 by its present owners. The house retains a high degree of interior and exterior architectural integrity.

Emporia Daily Gazette, 18 July 1935

Hancks, Larry. "Henry W. Brinkman- Architect."

Hanschu, Steve. "Walt Mason House." (National Register nomination draft, 1991).

Kansas City Star, 5 September 1920.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. (New York: Knopf, 1984).

Starr, Harris E. Dictionary of American Biography. V. XI. (New York: Scribner's, 1958).

9. Major Bibliographical References

[XX] See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [ ] previously listed in the National Register
- [ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- [XX] State historic preservation office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Specify repository: KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property LESS THAN ONE ACRE

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	14	745450	4255140	B			
C				D			

[ ] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description The nominated property stands on a tract of land in the NW 1/4 of Section 10, Township 19, Range 11, described as follows: Commencing 231 1/2 feet east and 33 feet north of the southwest corner of the northwest quarter of Section 10, Township 19, Range 11 east of the sixth p.m. in Lyon County, Kansas, thence north 165 feet, east 100 feet, south 165 feet, and west 100 feet to the place of beginning. The property is bounded to the south by West 12th Avenue, and to the north, east and west by adjacent property lines.

[ ] See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary contains all property historically associated with the Walt Mason House.

[ ] See continuation sheet

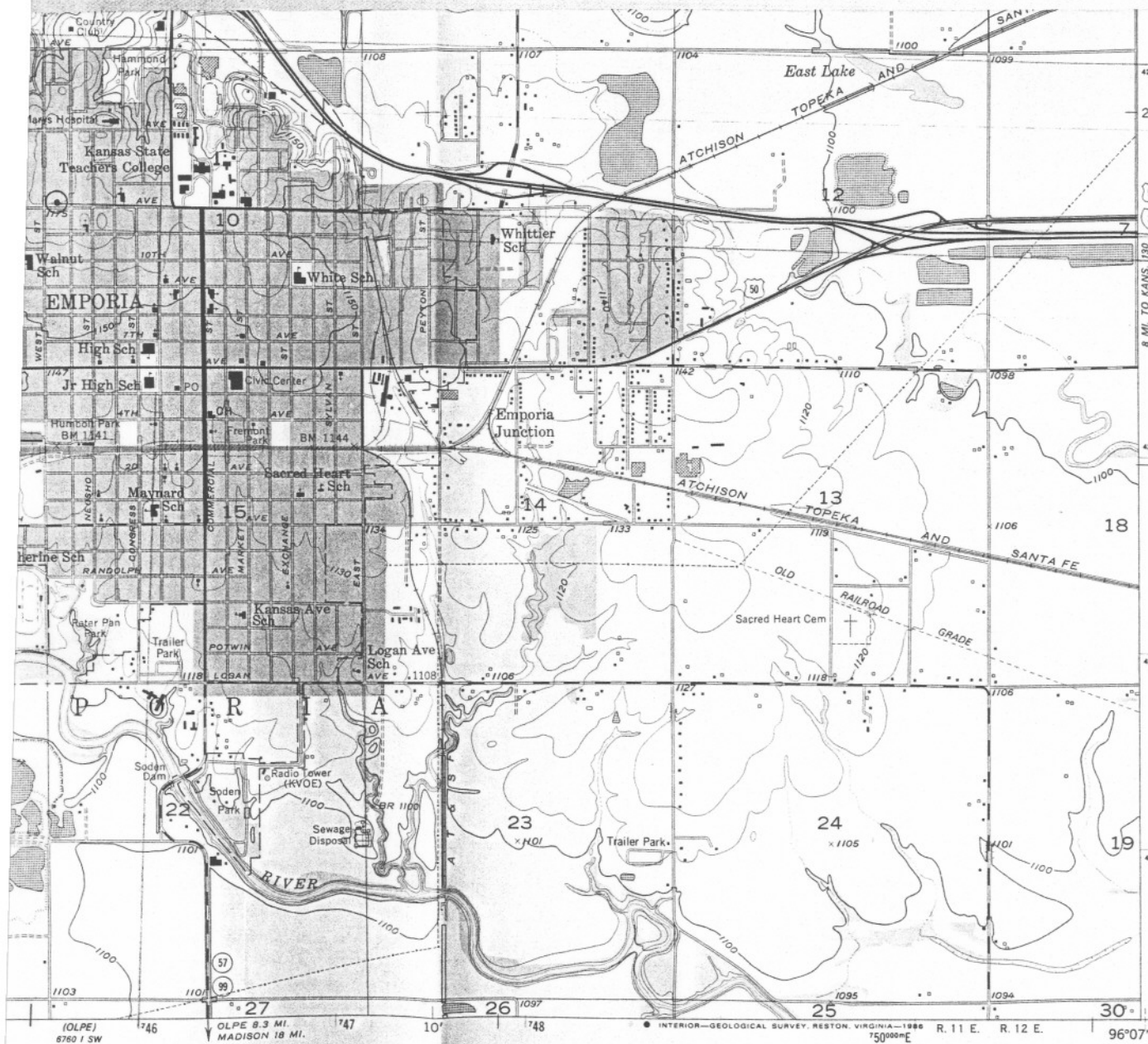
11. Form Prepared By

name/title MARTHA HAGEDORN-KRASS, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

organization KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY date MARCH 20, 1992

street & number 120 WEST 10th telephone 913-296-5264

city or town TOPEKA state KANSAS zip code 66612



(OLPE) 6760 I SW

OLPE 8.3 MI. MADISON 18 MI.

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1986

R. 11 E. R. 12 E.

38°22'30"
96°07'30"

(EMPORIA SE) 6760 I SE

SCALE 1:24 000

1 MILE

2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET

1 KILOMETER

TOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
EODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
VEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
OGICAL SURVEY, LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66044
GRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty — Light-duty
Medium-duty — Unimproved dirt

U. S. Route — State Route
Interstate Route

KANSAS

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

EMPORIA, KANS.

38096-D2-TF-024

1957
PHOTOREVISED 1979
DMA 6760 I NW—SERIES V878