NPS Form 10-900
Oct. 1990

OMB No. 10024-0018

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Dillon House
Other name/site number 177-5400-0565

2. Location

Street & number 404 W. Ninth St. ☐ not for publication
City or town Topeka ☐ vicinity
State Kansas Code KS County Shawnee Code SN Zip code 66603

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patrick Zollner DSHPO 10/12/06

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of commenting official /Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I herby certify that the property is Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ 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:)

Dillon House
Name of property

Shawnee Co., Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☒ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter Categories from instructions)

Domestic - single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant - not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th C.Revivals - Italian Renaissance

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
walls brick
roof Terra Cotta barrel tiles
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property Dillon House County and State Shawnee Co., Kansas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for Natonal Register

☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

☒ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from it original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance

1913-1918

Significant Dates

1913

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Dillon, Hiram Price

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bennett, Henry

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
☐ preliminary determination of individual lising (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:
☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository:

Name of Property Dillon House County and State Shawnee Co., Kansas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	268120	4325400
2			
3			
4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title Janine E. Joslin, Executive Director

Organization Kansas Preservation Alliance, Inc. Date November 30, 2005

Street & number 700 SW Jackson, Suite 808 Telephone 913.449.3147

City or town Topeka State KS Zip code 66603

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name State of Kansas

street & number Statehouse telephone

city or town Topeka state KS zip code 66603

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16) U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

Description

Summary

The Dillon House was completed in 1913 in the Italian Renaissance revival style. The three-story brick home sits on a prominent corner of downtown Topeka, directly across the street from the State Capitol Building. The surrounding neighborhood is now mostly office buildings and the immediate neighbor to the north is a church.

The Italian Renaissance revival style was part of the Beaux Arts period of 1885-1920s. Typical of this style is the yellow brick in a narrow gauge found on the exterior and the sculptural ornamentation found on both the exterior and on the interior of the Dillon House. The symmetrical façade has a central entry. The front door has classical columns with a garland frieze and cartouche on the entablature.

There is a low-pitched hipped roof with red clay barrel tiles. The overhanging eaves are bracketed. Windows are grouped casement. Matched carved figurines flank the second story central windows. The original east and west sides of the home have been compromised by removal of significant features and enclosure of windows. The central portion of the home on the front façade is the least changed.

The Dillon House was notable in Topeka for its size, its ornamentation, its technology (the first private home with an electric elevator) as well as for the purported wealth of the owners. The Reception Hall on the first floor is impressive with a grand staircase, a marble fireplace adorned with figurines, cupids, garland and the motto "None come too early, none stay too late." Changes to this floor are significant but the large rooms and formal layout still reflect the original grandeur of the home that Hiram Price Dillon built in 1913. The second floor has had some minor modifications and the third floor remains much the same as it was originally.

Elaboration

A pair of stone lions flank the entry steps on the front of the Dillon House. These stone lions were brought from the family home in Far Hills, New Jersey. There is also a bronze lion doorknocker. A garland frieze and cartouche adorn the entablature above the front door. The windows are grouped casement - grouped as four windows with four lights in each casement. Matched carved figurines flank the second story central windows. The roof is a low-pitched hipped roof with red clay barrel tiles. The overhanging eaves are bracketed.

The east wing of the Dillon House was originally one of its most pleasing and memorable features. The east side of the home faces the State Capitol Building. This side of the home was originally a two level open porch or pergola. The ground level pergola (or piazza as cited in a 1913 newspaper article) was accessible through two sets of French doors from the main floor library. The pergola was surrounded by five decorative columns that supported the floor for the second story open porch. The columns were draped in ivy. The second story porch, accessible from the Dillon's master bedrooms, had four figurine columns (caryatids) that supported four scroll-sawn rafters. Flowers also trailed over the side of the second story porch.

The west wing, first floor, was originally the kitchen, butler's pantry and sunroom, with stairs leading to the second floor (from a drawing done in 1989 by KSHS preservation architect, Vance Kelley). The second floor of the west wing was probably a bedroom.

The north or rear of the home originally had two sets of French doors from the reception hall that exited to the drive and garage, which is no longer extant. The garage was notable for its "turntable" that allowed a car to be driven in then turned around to be driven out. The garage was brick to match the home and was a 3-bay garage with a 4th bay added at a later date. (Vance Kelley 1989) These two French doors were covered by an iron canopy that is extant.

All of the French doors and sidelights on the first floor were reported to have had stained-glass transoms (Vance Kelley, 1989).

Current exterior: The original pergola and second floor porch have been enclosed. French doors on the first floor have been removed and replaced by single doors or closed off. The original steps leading from the two rear French doors have been changed into a handicap ramp. The west wing has lost the sunroom and the windows have been covered or blocked. Deterioration is affecting the brick, roof, windows, and landscape.

Interior: First Floor
The reception hall of the Dillon Home is still largely intact. The reception hall (including the stairs) measures 37' x 21'. The elaborately carved marble fireplace in the reception hall is adorned with male figurines used as terminus columns, cupids and garland. The motto "None come too early, none stay too late" is carved into the mantle, and was purported to be representative of Hiram Price Dillon's hospitality and graciousness. (Eulogies from 1918 Topeka Journal and Topeka Capital papers)

The grand staircase is another striking feature of the reception hall. The central wide oak stairway leads to a landing with four stained glass windows. At the landing the stairs continue up to the

second level from both sides of the landing. The center hall of the stairway landing on the second level is embellished with a raised frieze with a metallic finish.

Left of the reception hall (west) were originally the music room and dining room. These two rooms were separated by a hallway which is where the electric elevator was located. Each of these rooms had ornate fireplaces, similar to the one in the reception hall. These fireplaces have been either dismantled or merely covered over (c. 1941). The two rooms are now one large room with a bay window at the north end of what was once the dining room and measures 46'-6" x 23'-8".

To the right of the reception hall (east) is the main floor library. The library is similar in size to the music room/dining room 23'-8" x 40'-8". The fireplace in the library is inscribed with a line from Shakespeare, "My library was dukedom large enough." The walls were said to have been upholstered in soft green leather. (Possibly Shagreen, a leather made from shark and stingray skins, and popular in the early 20h Century for covering luxury men's items. Shagreen is medium to pale gray-green in color, with tiny raised dots, or bumps, and ridges natural to the skins it is made from – communiqué from Carol McDowell 9/05). The ceiling has ornate plaster designs. Pocket doors to the library have been sealed off. French doors to the original pergola were removed and replaced by single doors or closed off. Glass doors have been installed on library bookshelves.

The kitchen on the west side of the home was converted into a vault in 1941.

Second floor: The second floor was originally laid out with five bedrooms, a dressing room with three bathrooms. Two of the bedrooms were 23'-8" x 18'-4" and two were 23'-8" x 17'-4". The fifth bedroom was 13' x 14'. Changes to this floor are mainly with the bathrooms, which were enlarged/converted into more public restrooms.

Third floor: This floor had three bedrooms and one bathroom, a private library, and what might have been a "linen room." This floor has not been altered but has suffered serious deterioration from a leaking roof.

Square footage of the Dillon House:

First floor (including stair)	3,714 sq. ft.
Second floor	3,444 sq. ft.
Third floor	1,740 sq. ft.
Basement	3,464 sq. ft.
Total	12,362 sq.ft.

Statement of Significance

Summary

The Dillon House , Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas, is significant under Criterion B as the home of a locally prominent attorney, businessman, and philanthropist, Hiram Price Dillon. It is also significant under Criterion C for its Italian Renaissance Revival design style, and for its association with the regionally important builder, Henry Bennett. The home is one of the last remaining important architectural structures from the pre-WWI time period of Topeka.

History

Criterion B

Hiram Price Dillon was born in 1855 in Davenport, Iowa. He was the son of John Forrest Dillon and Anna Price Dillon. Hiram's father became an M.D. in 1850 but only practiced for two years as a doctor. He ran a drugstore and pursued a law degree which he obtained in 1852. In 1858 John Forrest Dillon was elected to the supreme court of Iowa. He also served as a chief justice and a United States circuit judge. In 1870 John Forrest Dillon moved to New York and accepted a professorship of law at Columbia University where he also opened a law practice. John Forrest Dillon became quite wealthy as a counsel for the Union Pacific Railroad, the Missouri Pacific Railroad, the Texas Pacific Railroad, and the Western Union Telegraph Company. He was counsel for the Goulds in connection with their railroad interests and the estate of Jay Gould.

Hiram followed in his father's footsteps by obtaining a law degree from Iowa University. He came to Topeka in 1874 when Topeka was witnessing an unprecedented land boom. Topeka was growing, annexing land in all directions. Hiram's first law partnership was with A.L. Williams. After Williams' death he formed an office relationship with N.H. Loomis and then R.W. Blair. He served as counsel for the Union Pacific Railroad. Hiram inherited a great deal of wealth from his father and ceased the general practice of law. He served as director of the Merchants National Bank, a director of Central National Bank, and President of the Shawnee Fire Insurance Company.

In 1910 Hiram Price Dillon and his wife, Susie Finley Brown, traded their home located at 919 Harrison St. for the house and lot at 404 Ninth St., owned by George Crane. They razed the Crane house and broke ground for the construction of their grand home at 404 Ninth St. According to a "Topeka Journal" article dated December 12, 1910, in addition to trading for the Crane place, Mr. Dillon bought twenty feet of ground adjoining the Crane property on the north, giving the new owner 95 feet of frontage on Harrison Street directly across the street from the State House. This was a premier location as the elite of Topeka had moved away from the hustle and bustle of Kansas Avenue, to Harrison, Topeka, and Tyler Streets. (Bird, Topeka – An Illustrated History p. 47)

The Dillons were famous for their hospitality and the home was built for entertaining. A June 20, 1913, "Topeka Journal" article in the Society section stated, "A social event of first interest and importance was given Thursday afternoon by Mrs. Hiram Price Dillon and Mrs. John Forrest Dillon, [daughter-in-law] at their new home in Ninth Street. The social prominence of the hostesses and the fact that the tea was the first large affair for which the house had been opened, contributed to the interest taken in the party." Much attention was given to the decorations and flowers for the event.

World War I broke out shortly after the Dillons moved into their new home. Dillon was known to take great interest in the war and was a generous giver toward war relief enterprises, and a heavy investor in government bonds. (Topeka Journal, Sept. 1918) Hiram's son John Forrest Dillon joined the army as a man in the ranks, which was a source of pride to his father. Hiram Price Dillon was a quiet philanthropist – he gave anonymously most of the time but was known to play Santa Clause and delighted in seeing that children received Christmas gifts.

The Dillons traveled extensively and spent summers at the Dillon family home in Far Hills, New Jersey. Their home in Topeka was filled with treasures they collected from around the world. As a result of his early retirement from the practice of law, his anonymous philanthropy, and his frequent absences from Topeka, Hiram Price Dillon was not well known in the city he called home. Hiram was 56 when he began building his home at 404 Ninth Street. His health deteriorated over the next few years and he died unexpectedly in 1918, only five years after moving into his grand home. Tributes to Hiram Price Dillon appeared in the "Topeka Journal" and "Topeka Capital" September 3, 4, and the 15th of 1918.

Mrs. Dillon continued living in the home with her son and his family. Mrs. Dillon died in 1938, and the American Home Life Insurance Company purchased the house in 1941.

Criterion C

The Italian Renaissance revival style was one of the most popular of the Beaux Arts design modes, lasting from the late 1800's until the 1920's. The first major revival of interest in Italian Renaissance domestic models began with the landmark Villard Houses in New York (McKim, Mead & White, 1883). It was interpreted primarily in New York and the east coast and major metropolitan areas prior to World War I, and was a rarity in Topeka, Kansas. Typical of this design style were impressive residences featuring elegant buff-colored or yellow brick in a narrow gauge, accented with enormous cartouches and sculptural ornamentation. A hipped-roof, with red clay barrel tiles, hip-roof dormers, projecting eaves, brackets, trellises, French doors, and casement windows were typical features and all of these are found on the Dillon Home.

The December 12, 1910, "Topeka Journal" newspaper article announcing the purchase of the Crane lot by Hiram Price Dillon refers to a "New York architect" as the designer of the Italian Renaissance

revival home. Unfortunately, the New York architect's name is never mentioned. Research conducted by Sarah Martin of the Kansas Historic Preservation Office, KSHS, has uncovered some leads but nothing conclusive. Because Hiram Price Dillon's family had property in Far Hills, New Jersey, the architectural firm of Carrere & Hastings has been investigated. They were architects for a major property in Far Hills. (communication with Terry Karschner, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office 8/2005) Architect Bruce Price is also a possibility as he knew Jay Gould and Hiram's father. One other possibility is the firm of Boring & Tilton. (per email - Sarah Martin, KSHS 10/2005)

What is known about the Hiram Price Dillon home is that the builder was Henry Bennett. Henry Bennett was born in 1841 in Chicago and learned the building trade there. He served as a Union Soldier in the Civil War. In 1876 he moved to Kansas – outside of Topeka. He built buildings at Osawatomie, buildings at Kansas State Agricultural College (KSU) – Manhattan, and worked on the east wing of the State House. Through the years in Topeka he built: The Governor Crawford Block, the Columbia, the Masonic Block, the Independent Telephone building, the original Central National Bank Building, the National Hotel, and the Copeland Hotel. He built the governor's mansion (original), the Topeka Library Building, and the Edison office building. After his 70th birthday he built the Santa Fe office building, the Grace Cathedral, and the Sunday School building of the First Methodist Church. In 1891 he went to Mexico and constructed the depot and hotel for the Gulf & Monterey railroad. He also had contracts for construction work on the World's Fair grounds in Chicago, and put up the Territorial Building for the territories of Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico and Alaska. His firm also built depots for the Santa Fe Railway Company in Hutchinson, Santa Fe and Lamy, New Mexico, a Harvey eating house at Las Vegas, and a roundhouse at Albuquerque, NM. His company had a contract for building every station for the Rock Island Railroad in Oklahoma. Henry Bennett was a member of the Knight Templar Masons, the Rotary and the Topeka Commercial Club. (A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans 1850-1918, p. 1754-1755)

Major Bibliographical References

Newspaper Articles
"Topeka Journal" December 12, 1910.
"Topeka Journal," Thursday evening, April 10, 1913.
"The Topeka Capital," June 20, 1913.
"The Topeka Capital," September 3, 1918.
"Topeka Journal," September 3, 1918.
"The Topeka Capital," September 4, 1918.
"The Topeka Capital," September 7, 1918.
"Topeka Journal," September 7, 1918.
"The Topeka Capital," September 15, 1918.
"Topeka Journal," Oct. 15, 1918.
"Topeka Journal," July 9, 1941.
"Topeka Journal," July 12, 1941.
"The Topeka Capital," July 16, 1941.
"The Topeka Capital," October 14, 1941.
"The Topeka Capital-Journal," March 5, 1978.

Bird, Roy. Witness of the Times: A History of Shawnee County. Topeka: Shawnee County Historical Society, 1976.

Bird, Roy. Topeka – An Illustrated History of the Kansas Capital. Topeka: Baranski Publishing Co., 1952.

Carley, Rachel. The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture. New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 1994.

McAlester, Virginia & Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990.

A Standard History of Kansas and Kansas 1850-1918 Vol. II.

Unpublished:
Schnacke, Marjorie; McDowell, Carol Duffy; Wallace, Douglass; Snell, Michael. "None Come Too Early-None Stay Too Late – The Hiram Price Dillon House." 1999. Kansas State Historical Society, Cultural Resources Division.

Kelley, Vance. "Report for the Joint Committee on Arts and Cultural Resources." 9/28/1989. Kansas State Historical Society, Cultural Resources Division.

Email correspondence
Martin, Sarah J. Cultural Resources Division, Kansas State Historical Society. 8/11/2005-10/12/2005
Karschner, Terry. New Jersey Historic Preservation Office. 8/11/2005-10/12/2005

Verbal Boundary Description

Harrison Street Lot 277 less N 32 inches thereof & all Lots 279 thru 287 & E ½ VAC Alley to SD Lot.

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the nominated building.

Photographic Information

The following information is consistent for all photographs:

Dillon House
Shawnee County, Kansas
Digital Image archived at Kansas State Historical Society

The following information is specific to each photograph:

Photo # 1
Photograph by Bob Bettis
February 17, 2006
View of front elevation from the south.

Photos # 2
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of front elevation from the southwest.

Photo # 3
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of second floor window detail above front entry from the south.

Photo # 4
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of front elevation looking northeast.

Photo # 5
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View from the southeast.

Photo # 6
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of rear elevation from the northeast.

Photo # 7
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of rear elevation bay window from the northeast.

Photo # 8
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of southwest corner of house from the southwest.

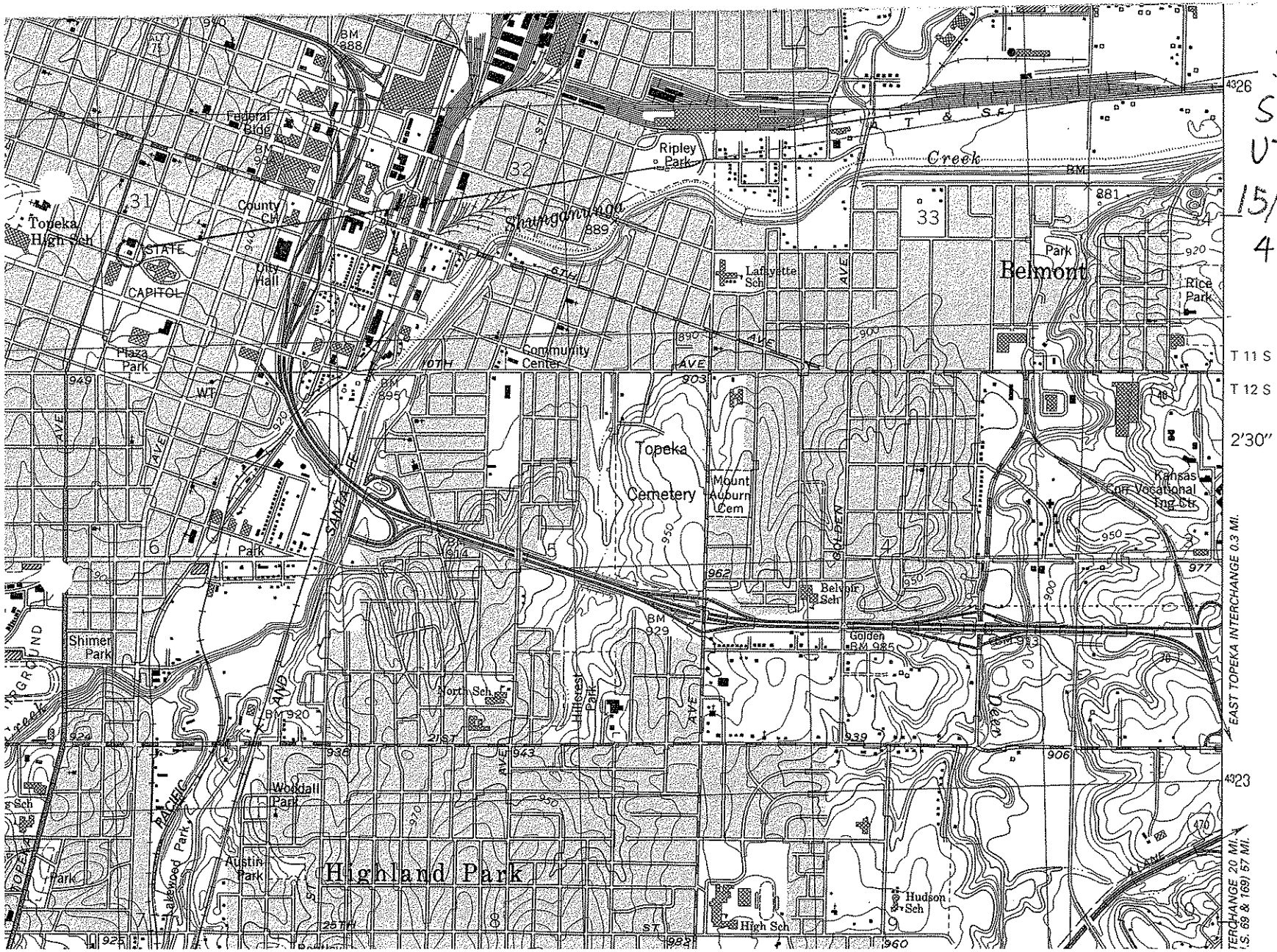
Photo # 9
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of entry hall fireplace.

Photo # 10
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of entry hall staircase from the south.

Photo # 11
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of window seat detail.

Photo # 12
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of window detail in library.

Photo # 13
Photograph by Christy Davis
August 1, 2005
View of second floor bedroom fireplace.



Dillon Hoose
Shawnee Co., Kansas
UTM Coordinates:
15/268120/
4325400