



Register of Historic Kansas Places Registration Form

DRAFT
11/2/2017

This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts. The format is similar to the National Register of Historic Places form. 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. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Marion County Poor Farm
Other names/site number Marion County Asylum for the Poor, Cedar Villa, Cedar Rest, KHRI #115-0000-00826
Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

2. Location

street & number 1625 Old Mill Rd not for publication
city or town Marion vicinity
state Kansas code KS county Marion code 115 zip code 66861

3-4. Certification

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

Applicable State Register Criteria: A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO

Date _____

Kansas State Historical Society
State agency

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
		district
1		site
		structure
		object
3	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the State Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Institutional Housing

DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Stone: Limestone

walls: Stone: Limestone

roof: Wood and asphalt shingles

other: Wood

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Marion County Poor Farm is a 2.72-acre site located five miles southwest of the town of Marion in Marion County, in the SE/4 of Section 16, Township 20 South, Range 3 East (*Figure 1*). The nominated site includes the main house (1890), the ruins of a stone house (ca. 1883), a wooden structure of unknown date, and the remaining land associated with the poor farm that functioned from 1890 to 1964. The main stone structure is two stories plus a full basement and includes 40 rooms, 80 windows, and five bathrooms. Two original wooden porches remain: a covered porch on the south and a large west porch.

Elaboration



Setting

The large building sits on almost three acres of grassy land with two other historic buildings: one of the same limestone and one of all wood. The main house is surrounded by large elm trees on the south side and newer cedar and evergreen trees on the north. The front (east side) of the house is also densely vegetated with fully grown shrubs. A sidewalk encircles the house. The south sidewalk is completely lined with bushes. A large garden is on the east side of the house. The building is set in the countryside of Marion County and is accessed via gravel roads. The view is clear from all sides of the property, as flat farm lands are all that surrounds it. A cemetery lies next to the property to the north; it is owned by the county and is not included within this nomination.

Figure 1: Contextual map, showing poor farm (X).

Main House

The residence was built by one of the county's well known stone masons, Fred Schaeffler of Hillsboro, "cutting and shaping the stone with his artisan's hammer and chisel." The walls are 18 inches thick. The building is two stories plus a full attic and full basement and containing 12 bedrooms, two historic dining halls, a banquet room, two large kitchens, two wards, a recreation room, and an elevator (non-functional).

Basement

The basement has concrete walls and floors. On the east side was and still is a large kitchen, a boiler room (15'-6" x 10'-6") (currently used as a wash/utility room), and an adjoining carpeted dining room, 26'-6"x 19'-6" (currently a living room). The kitchen also has a 16' x 4' storage closet. A wide hallway leads us out of this living area into the rest of the basement. The hallway divides immediately upon exiting the dining area and a short hallway leads to the south cement porch (12'-6" x 11'-0") that contains a drain. This outdoor area has cement steps that leads one up to the ground level and garden. Back inside the basement, the large hallway continues down towards the west side of the building where there are two large rooms. One is on the north side, and historically served as a recreation room (21'-6"x18'-6"), and later a ward. The other large room (13'-6") served as the laundry room and has a drain. Two small rooms join the laundry room. One housed the elevator power unit and the other was a storage room. The recreation room and laundry room have doors that lead outside to the west "cement porch" that has a drain, is below ground level, and also has cement steps that lead up to ground level.

In the center of the basement area is the elevator shaft and right beside it the enclosed wooden stair rail that leads up to the main floor.

Main Floor

The main floor is approximately four feet above ground and was historically accessed through three porches via stairs. The floor contains a large open area with green carpet and paneled walls. Originally, this area was closed off and served as the superintendent's private apartment. The historic apartment had its own kitchen, bedroom and dining room. In 1967 Art Miles removed the walls to open this area up to serve as a dining area. On the southeast side of this floor is the large "red



Figure 2: Locational map, showing boundary of poor farm in relation to cemetery.

room". This sun lit room and has red carpet and white walls which are papered with bollard design. Historically, this room was divided into 3 guest rooms, each room measuring 8'-3"x13'-0". Later, Miles removed the walls and designed the room as a banquet room.

A hallway leads us to the west side of the home and divides at the end into a smaller hallway guiding us to the south-facing wooden sun porch. Along this small hallway is a guest room, two bathrooms, and a furnace room. It is speculated that the guest room was used as a birthing place for the unwed mothers, and later as an infirmary. Finally, this floor has one more large room (15'-6"x18'-6") on the northwest corner which served as the women's dormitory (Ward) and later as the kitchen for the restaurant. The hallway leads us to the original west wood porch.

Second Floor

An open wooden stair rail leads up to the second floor. This floor has 12 bedrooms and two bathrooms. One of the bathrooms still has the original bars on the windows. These bathrooms were also used as holding rooms for the purpose of restraint. Only the bathroom at the west end of the hallway currently contains a sink and toilet. The hallway once again divides on the west side of this floor and leads to the south end where there are three small bedrooms. At the end of this hallway is a wooden balcony. Just like the main floor there is a large room (15'-6"x11'-6") on the northwest corner of this floor which was used historically as the men's dormitory.

The attic is accessed through a closet by using a ladder. The huge open attic has no floors so one has to walk on the wood planks that make up the ceiling below. The attic has a roof with three small gables and three windows.

The elevator shaft goes up through the center of the building starting in the basement and ending at the second floor. The cabin rests on the main floor.

Changes / Remodeling:

The county poor form was built in 1889 and completed in 1890. The exterior is limestone 18 inches thick. The interior walls of the basement were and still are concrete. The basement floors were and still are concrete. The upper floor interior walls

were originally plaster and reed. When this material started deteriorating, horsehair was used to repair them. The floors of the upper floors were and still are the original oak. The original heating method was the use of coal and water, and the heat was distributed through radiators. In addition, there were four chimneys from which fire burning stoves heated the basement kitchen, the dining hall, basement recreation room, and the laundry room. The house was built state of the art with plumbing at the time. There was a windmill and generator on the property that possibly provided electrical to some of the house.

In 1950, due to the state's pressure for renovation to be done, 120 acres were sold off to fund the massive renovation by the county. At this time, the basement floor was replaced with new concrete and the original plaster and reed walls of the rest of the home were replaced with sheet rock. The oak floors in all the hallways were tiled with asbestos. The rest of the rooms retained their original oak. The recreation room in the basement was converted to a ward. Three of the four chimneys were removed. Only one in the basement kitchen still remains. The heating system was changed from coal to using propane. An additional cistern was dug next to the original one to handle overflows. The original cedar trees on the south side of the house were replaced with elm trees. Finally, the Poor Farm was renamed to Marion County Rest Home and then to Cedar Rest. Ten years later Cedar Rest closed and had to be condemned. There was a large auction to sell all the furniture and farm implements. The elderly residents that resided there were moved to a new county home in Peabody. The building was up for auction in 1964.

In 1967, Art and Virginia Miles purchased the building and did some major remodeling on the main floor for the purpose of opening a restaurant. At the same time the Marion Reservoir, three miles away, came into existence. It was at this time the walls which contained the superintendent's apartment were torn away to create a lovely open area with wall to wall green carpeting and the plain walls were covered with brown paneling. The three bedrooms across the hall were opened up to make the banquet room. This room was papered with red velvet bollard wallpaper. The northwest ward was converted from a ward into a commercial kitchen with a new fuse box and additional outlets. The original copper piping was replaced with plastic piping on this floor. A central propane furnace and ducts were installed to warm this floor. The old radiators were stolen or junked. The restaurant was called Cedar Villa and operated for one year before closing.

In 1971, Rev Bill Cowel, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Marion, Kansas, purchased the home with the intent of opening a youth center for girls. Asphalt shingles were placed over the original wood shingles and he had started plumbing for a multiple use bathroom on the upper floor. That was as far as the remodeling went. The youth center never materialized in this building, however he was successful in opening one in Burton, Kansas, and did well.

In 1973, Nancy and Wendell Hendricks purchased the home and did the final major remodeling job. Remodeling included sandblasting the stone walls, installing new wiring and plumbing on the first floor and in the basement. The doors, windows and ceilings on the main floor were replaced and the beds were moved into the upper floor bedrooms.

In 1989 Ed Chilson from Topeka installed guttering and a downspout on the northwest wall. He also installed metal facial panels on the south sun porch roof to better seal the roof against the stone wall of the main house. Two water lines were installed by Wendell Hendricks which included a water tank from the cistern.

In 1992 a new sewer line had to be installed to the 1952 septic system due to county pressure. In 2006 a lagoon was landscaped into the SW corner of the property and new septic lines were installed from a new cement storage pit.

Deterioration has mostly affected the wooden parts of the home which are the three porches. The front porch as seen in the older photos no longer exists. A poorly built wooden deck is used to access the east end of the home where the front porch used to be. The south sun porch still exists but is in a very poor and weakened condition and the wood stairs leading to the porch have fallen away. A separate cement structure is currently used to access this porch. The back porch is still very much in existence, but shows its age and overall is in fair condition. The original stairs for this porch no longer exist and have been replaced with an unattached concrete stair step for the purpose of being able to enter the home.

The basement carpet is 40 years old and severely damaged from the dampness and smoke damage.

The windows of the home are all framed with wood. Half of them on the upper floor are now stuck closed due to amateur painting jobs. Windows being broken has been a constant theme through time either due to vandalism when vacant or high winds and storms.

In April 2009, half the southwest part of roof blew off. A temporary protection was placed over the rafters to keep the rain out. Five months later, a corrugated sheet roof was installed by Jazz construction company.

The wooden stair rail that runs through the home is still in its original and excellent condition.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for State Register listing)

- 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 is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Period of Significance

1890-1964

Significant Dates

1890

1964

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Schaeffler, Fred

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 its 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance covers the year the main house was erected, 1890, and continues to 1964 when the poor farm closed.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that notes under what criteria the property is nominated.)

Marion County purchased 160 acres of land for its poor farm in 1887 from settler William Glover. Between 1889 and 1890, a large two-story stone building was erected to house the county's indigent. During its peak years at the turn of the century, the poor farm was self-sustaining through the work done on the property by its inmates. The poor farm continued to house the county's most vulnerable citizens until 1952 when it was converted into a rest home. The 2.72 acres remaining of the original farm are nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places under Criterion A for its association with the social history of Marion County between 1890 and 1964.

Elaboration (Provide a brief history of the property and justify why this property is locally significant.)

Starting in the 1800's poor houses and farms were opened around the nation in the large cities and rural areas to care for the destitute, the feeble minded, orphans, and unwed mothers. In the early days of Kansas statehood, individual counties were typically responsible for caring for the poor. A 1904 U.S. Bureau of Census special report, *Paupers in Almshouses*, describes the situation in Kansas:

The county asylums for paupers are under the management of the county commissioners, who have power to make such orders regarding the poor of their counties as they may deem proper. They appoint the superintendent of the poorhouse, and the attending physician, and may annually select a board of visitors, who shall inspect the asylum at each once a year and report upon its condition. In all counties having more than 28,000 inhabitants the county board may point a commissioner of the poor, whose duty it is to visit weekly the county asylums and to render to the commissioners a monthly report of its condition, the number of inmates, the health of each pauper, the expenses incurred, etc. Admissions to the asylum are made on the written order of the commissioner of the poor.

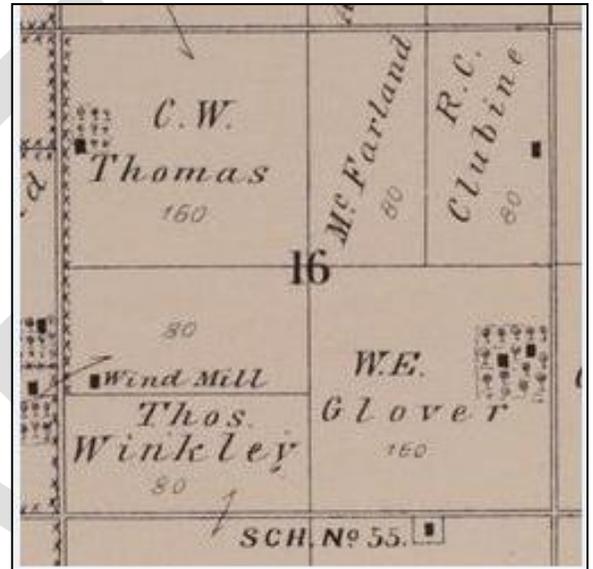


Figure 3: Snippet of the 1885 Marion County atlas (*Kansas Memory*)

Provision is made for the education of children kept at the asylum. It is a misdemeanor to send persons who have become or are likely to become public charges out of the county to which they belong.¹

In 1888 Marion County voted to build its poor house on land it had purchased in 1887. The property selected was 160 acres in the SE¼ of Section 16, Township 20 South, Range 3 East. According to records in the Marion County Register of Deeds, this land had changed hands often throughout the years between 1870 and 1887, but the longest owner appears to have been William and Christina Glover (*Figure 3*). The county "chose the site because it's in the middle of three towns—Hillsboro, Marion and Peabody—and it's on high ground."² The county appropriated \$10,000 to buy the ground and erect a building; although, not all of it was used.³ The building was "put up" in 1889 by the board of county commissioners, of which Thomas Osborne was chairman. The building was built by the county's well-known stone mason, Fred Scheaffler of Hillsboro, who cut and shaped the stone with his artisan's hammer. He was also the main architect.

The original name was the Marion County Poor Asylum, which included a cemetery within its boundaries, a unique feature at this site, as not all poor farms included a cemetery. Typically, the Christian counties had a pauper cemetery to bury the dead. Marion County Poor Farm showed unique respect for the deceased inmates by building the pauper cemetery on its property. Each burial has a grave stone with the person's name on it. One grave draw special attention; it is marked "deaf negro boy." During this time Marion County was predominately Christian Caucasian and had a large Mennonite population. The local understanding is that this young man never resided at the Poor Farm but was found dead in a freight train car in Hillsboro, seven miles northwest from the site. No one knew his name or cause of death; however, the county showed respect by allowing him to be buried in the Poor Farm's cemetery and was given a marked grave.

¹ Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of Census, *Paupers in Almshouses*, 1904 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1906), 43.

² "County Poor Farm," *Peabody [Kansas] Gazette* (attr.), 1901. Source is a copy of several clippings from a local paper.

³ *Ibid.*

Poor Farms in Kansas evolved and changed with the times and economic fluctuations. Superintendents were charged with the task of managing folk of all types and nationalities as immigration spanned west falling short of making the American Dream. Marion County Poor Farm, possessing 160 acres of land, relied on various talents and abilities that contributed to the cultivation of crops and cleanliness of overall surroundings. Care of sick by house inmates, language barriers that left others tending to field. Everyone possessed a dutiful job on the property.

The farm's first operator was V.P. Duvall, who came to Marion from Lincolnville where he managed the Grand View Hotel. "It was a full time job to farm the land, raise the hogs and cattle, do their own slaughtering and grow the gardens in order to feed the inmates."⁴ Operators that followed Duvall were Mr. and Mrs. Adam Beltz and W.K. Palmer.



Figure 4: Marion County Poor Farm 1901 (1902 county atlas)

Palmer led the farm during its most prosperous years. A 1900 *Marion Record* article cites the farm as self-supporting:

The proceeds of the Marion county poor farm more than pay the expenses of the institution for the present year. There are ten inmates. About \$250 worth of butter and eggs are sold off the farm each year, besides a large amount of live stock. State Labor Commissioner Johnson in his report says: 'Taken as a whole, inmates of the Marion county poor farm enjoy a better home there than they ever knew, with no expense to the taxpayer, as the farm will pay nearly \$200 per year above expenses.'⁵

A similar article in a 1901 Peabody, Kansas, paper notes that Superintendent Palmer housed 12 inmates evenly divided among men and women. Job duties of inmates are defined as "women do the cooking, sewing, mending and housework and the men help on the garden and field as they are able." Palmer's management is defined as "shrewd" and careful planning to accomplish much on the poor farm with inmates governed by strict rules laid down by the county.⁶

A unique feature of this place was the great care in the construction and upkeep of the farm, as well as the care of its residents. "Their bedrooms, dining room and sitting room are furnished better than half the private families of the United States and they are treated like American citizens rather than like paupers. Every improvement and modern machinery is furnished the place to make labor easy and advantageous. Life in the Marion county poor house is not what it is in many of the poor houses in the east," Superintendent W.K. Palmer, 1901.⁷ Most big city poor houses of its time were rambling, wooden, run-down buildings in horrible conditions.

Among the many daily chores needed to operate the farm smoothly was the daily task of heating the stone house. Interviewed by current owner Nancy Marr in 1995, Everett Burkhart was a blind inmate residing at the Marion County Poor Farm, who reports his daily activities as such:

My job was to go downstairs before anyone rose and get the boilers going to start warming up the place on cold days. I shoveled in coal. Then I would put on my coat and wraps to check on the livestock at the dawn of morning. After that I would assist the hired farm hand with chores while the inmates were being attended to and the cooks prepared breakfast.

Among items found on the property after the 1964 liquidation auction, indicate day-to-day work life on the property: various hand tools, small farm implements, hand plow, saws, tool boxes, square nails, harnesses, horseshoes, medicine and miscellaneous glass bottles, 3/4-size iron bed with bars, two fold-up steel roll aways, an iron railing bed that lifts up to become a settee, several cotton mattresses, one single iron bed, a single steel headboard with bars, and several steel railings to support mattresses on wood slates. One hitching horse post is still standing on the property between the smaller stone building to the north and the main house, and a manual pump exists over the north cistern.

⁴ REFERENCE

⁵ "More Than Self-Sustaining," *Marion [Kansas] Record* (10/19/1900): 7.

⁶ "County Poor Farm."

⁷ Ibid.

Marion County hired a cook and a farm hand full time. There was a lot of canning to do to prepare for the winter months. Pies and bread were needed daily as were eggs and milk; there was much toil inside the kitchen and after meals clean-up was routine. Time to hire extra employees was during harvest, threshing, and hauling in hay or grain. One example of this was accessing Germans from the German Prison camp in Peabody (nine miles south) during WWII. The poor farm utilized prison or paroled helpers with various projects such as road and maintenance on the grounds. Several German language books and bibles were found on the property and still remain there today. A 1930s/40s icebox was donated to the poor farm. Superintendent Hock describes in his interview with Nancy Marr, the winter work at the poor farm:

[It] involved helping the women clean house and doing repair work and painting interior rooms....we would fill the icehouse with blocks of ice cut out of the pond and hauled up to the ice locker. We put one layer down, then put a layer of saw dust on top of it and repeated that process until the ice blocks were layered higher and higher. Some ice would last until almost mid-July.

Superintendent Hock also discusses the property not having electricity and utilizing the windmill as a generator for power source. Using the wood-burning stoves provided additional heat throughout during winter months. Hock speaks about the use of "carbine" lights, such as coal miners used, throughout the house prior to electricity. There were copper tubing lines running around through the house which were lit.

Later, under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Beisel, the state gave the county notice that major renovations and repair would need to be made or the home closed. For about two years the residents were moved out into various homes and other nursing facilities. The county took drastic action to preserve the stone building, and in 1951 a public auction was held and 120 acres of the original 160 were sold. The money from this sale, and some extra, for a total of \$34,000 was used entirely to renovate the building, to install an elevator, and to buy needed machinery. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Loewen were the new operators, and the place's name was changed to Cedar Rest. It was named after the beautiful cedar trees that originally resided there. Marr interviewed Loewen who commented that his time working at the Poor Farm was the happiest of his life.

The major 1952 renovation by the county was the last attempt to preserve the building and its function. Independent living and rest homes eventually took the place of institutionalized housing. In 1964 the poor farm officially closed and the last of the residents were moved to a new rest home in Peabody. The property went up for auction once again and now private individuals would henceforth own the once poor farm.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

Atlas of Marion County, Kansas. Chicago: The Davy Map and Atlas Co., 1885.

"County Poor Farm," *Peabody [Kansas] Gazette* (attr.), 1901.

Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of Census. *Paupers in Almshouses, 1904.* Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1906.

Marr, Nancy. Archived files, interviews, and newspaper clippings.

"More Than Self-Sustaining," *Marion [Kansas] Record* (10/19/1900): 7.

Standard Atlas of Marion County, Kansas. Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle & Co., 1902.

10. Geographical Data

Acree of Property 2.72

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.

(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>38.308070</u>	<u>-97.095961</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The nominated boundary is a rectangular parcel bounded on the south, west, and north by property lines separating the property from agricultural fields and on the east by Old Mill Road. The parcel in S16, T20, R3 is described as follows: PRT E/2 SE/4 BEG 1065' N SE/C SE/4 N 436' W 300' S 436' E 300' TO POB LESS ROW.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary includes the remaining 2.72 acres of the original 160 acres that housed the Marion County Poor Farm.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jane Hendricks, Christina Khan, and Nancy Marr
organization _____ date Summer 2017
street & number On file with SHPO telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____
e-mail _____

Property Owner:

name Nancy Marr
street & number 1510 Victory Ln telephone _____
city or town Marion state KS zip code 66861

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photograph Log

Name of Property: Marion County Poor Farm
City or Vicinity: Marion vicinity
County: Marion State: Kansas
Photographer: Amanda K. Loughlin
Date Photographed: October 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 01 of 10:** West elevation, looking NE
- 02 of 10:** East elevation, looking W
- 03 of 10:** South elevation, looking N
- 04 of 10:** South elevation, looking NE
- 05 of 10:** Partial north elevation
- 06 of 10:** Main level, open area, looking SW from NE corner of building
- 07 of 10:** Main level, SE room, looking W
- 08 of 10:** Main level, open area, looking SE from NW corner of room
- 09 of 10:** Upper level, hallway, looking E from top of stair
- 10 of 10:** Basement, kitchen area at E end of building, looking SE

Boundary Map.



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