NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME
   COMMON:
   First Territorial Capitol
   AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER:
   On K-18 in Fort Riley Military Reservation
   CITY OR TOWN: near Junction City
   STATE: Kansas

3. CLASSIFICATION
   CATEGORY (Check One)
   [ ] District [X] Building
   [ ] Site [ ] Structure
   [ ] Object
   OWNERSHIP
   [X] Public [ ] Private [ ] Both
   Public Acquisition:
   [ ] In Process [ ] Being Considered
   [X] Occupied [ ] Unoccupied
   [ ] Preservation work in progress
   STATUS
   ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
   [ ] Yes: [ ] Restricted [ ] Unrestricted [ ] No
   PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
   [ ] Agricultural [ ] Government [ ] Park
   [ ] Commercial [ ] Industrial [ ] Private Residence
   [ ] Educational [ ] Military [ ] Religious
   [X] Entertainmen [ ] Museum [ ] Scientific
   [ ] Transportation [ ] Other (Specify)
   [ ] Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
   OWNER'S NAME:
   State of Kansas
   STREET AND NUMBER:
   State Capitol
   CITY OR TOWN:
   Topeka
   STATE: Kansas
   CODE: 66612

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
   COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
   Register of Deeds
   STREET AND NUMBER:
   Geary County Courthouse
   CITY OR TOWN:
   Junction City
   STATE: Kansas
   CODE: 66441

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
   TITLE OF SURVEY:
   Historic American Buildings Survey
   DATE OF SURVEY: 1965 [X] Federal [ ] State [ ] County [ ] Local
   DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
   Library of Congress
   STREET AND NUMBER:
   CITY OR TOWN:
   Washington
   STATE: D. C.
   CODE: 08
FIRST TERRITORIAL CAPITOL

6. cont.

A Survey of Historic Sites and Structures in Kansas
1957 State

Kansas State Historical Society
120 West 10th
Topeka, Ks. 20

Federal Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration
1939 Federal

Records destroyed. A guide book, Kansas, was published in 1939.
The first capitol of Kansas was a two-story native limestone building constructed as a warehouse in the spring of 1855. It is approximately 40 feet by 80 feet and covered by a simple gable roof with a chimney at either end. There are eight windows on each side of the building, four on each floor. The only access to the second floor is by an inside stairway. Two inch plank flooring was used when the building was renovated in 1927 and 1928. Likewise, three-foot long shingles, like the original handnorn ones, were used in the restoration project. As nearly as can be ascertained, the restored structure now looks much as it did in 1855.
The first territorial legislature of Kansas was called by Gov. Andrew H. Reeder to meet in Pawnee on July 2, 1855. The governor was a member of the Pawnee Town Association which had laid out the new town adjacent to the Fort Riley Military Reservation.

The legislature met in a large two-story native stone warehouse built by the Pawnee Town Association. The lower floor was used as the house chamber and the senate occupied the upper floor.

Most of the members of the legislature were Proslavery adherents from border towns and many of them had interests in Missouri. Consequently they felt Pawnee was too far west and too isolated to be the capital. So they passed a law on July 4 providing for the temporary establishment of the capital at Shawnee Mission in Johnson county. The governor vetoed this on July 6, but the legislature passed the law over his veto and promptly adjourned to meet at Shawnee Mission July 16.

The town of Pawnee went out of existence in the fall of 1855 when it was found to be within the boundaries of the Fort Riley reservation. For a time the former capitol was used as an army warehouse, but then it was allowed to deteriorate into ruins.

A major reconstruction project in 1927, financed mainly by the Union Pacific railroad on whose right of way the building partly stands, returned the building as nearly as possible to its condition in 1855. After the preservation work was completed, the Union Pacific railroad presented the building to the state of Kansas, and it is now operated as a museum by the State Historical Society.
Kansas State Historical Society, "The First Capitol of Kansas" (Topeka, State Printer, n.d.).
Union Pacific Magazine, v. 7, no. 9 (September, 1928), pp. 10-12.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2.8

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

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NAME AND TITLE:
Richard D. Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey

ORGANIZATION:
Kansas State Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:
120 West Tenth St.

CITY OR TOWN:
Topeka

STATE:
Kansas

12. STATE-LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [ ] State [X] Local [ ]

Name:
Nyle H. Miller

Title:

Date Sent to NR: 10/12/70

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date:

Date:

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1973-729-147/1442 3d