

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Simcock House/Marks Apartments

AND/OR COMMON

N/A

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

206-208 Columbia Street

N/A

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Council Grove

N/A

VICINITY OF

No. 5, Bob Whittaker

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Kansas

CODE

20

COUNTY

Morris

CODE

127

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

☐ DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

☐ STRUCTURE

☐ SITE

☐ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

☐ PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

☐ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

☐ IN PROCESS

☐ BEING CONSIDERED

N/A

**STATUS**

☒ OCCUPIED

☐ UNOCCUPIED

☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

☒ YES: RESTRICTED

☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED

☐ NO

**PRESENT USE**

☐ AGRICULTURE

☐ COMMERCIAL

☐ EDUCATIONAL

☐ ENTERTAINMENT

☐ GOVERNMENT

☐ INDUSTRIAL

☐ MILITARY

☐ MUSEUM

☐ PARK

☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

☐ RELIGIOUS

☐ SCIENTIFIC

☐ TRANSPORTATION

☐ OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Multiple Ownership

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Morris County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Council Grove

STATE

Kansas 66846

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Kansas Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1975

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Kansas State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Topeka

STATE Kansas 66612

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Mr. & Mrs. Duane S. Adams  
17 South Neosho Street  
Council Grove, Kansas 66846

Mr. & Mrs. Floyd L. Adams  
c/o Adams Lumber Company  
Council Grove, Kansas 66846



## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

A result of three successive building campaigns, the G. M. Simcock house is a large, rambling stone and frame structure. It is approximately 54 feet wide and 60 feet long. On the west a stone two-and-a-half story block with a gable front facade is the original dwelling built between 1857 and 1860. It faces south on Columbia Street. The house is located near the Neosho River which runs through Council Grove.

In 1884 a one-story stone wing was extended from the center of the east side of the original block. From 1860 to 1902, the Simcock house was a family residence. Then the structure was considerably enlarged by adding a frame second story to the wing and two-story frame additions to the north side of the wing and also to the north gable end of the original block. A two-story porch was built on the front of the east wing beside the original block. Later in the twentieth century, a one-story screened side porch was built along the east side at the rear.

The original Simcock house has a three-bay front with the entrance to the east. A transom and sidelights frame the door. A pair of windows light the attic. In the west wall there are two rows of four double-hung windows. These openings have smooth cut stone sills and lintels. The front steps are also stone.

The house is constructed of light brown dressed limestone on a rubble stone foundation. There is a projecting water table in the front wall and the blocks of the front facade have been hammered to produce a more uniform texture. The house has a stone central chimney. White asphalt shingles cover the roof of this block and the other sections of the building.

Originally, the Simcock house had seven rooms. There was a large front room, dining room, and kitchen downstairs. Bedrooms and a nursery were upstairs. All the main rooms had fireplaces. The house still has original walnut woodwork.

A one-story stone ell was added in 1884 to provide guest bedrooms. It has a three-bay front with a central door and stone steps. When this wing was constructed over a basement, a runway was built to the kitchen in the original block. Also, decorative bargeboards were probably added to the eaves of the original block at this time.

When the Simcock house was enlarged to become the Marks Apartments, the frame additions on the east were sided with shingles and clapboards. At the northeast corner an exterior stair leads to a second story landing and entrance.

The first story of the porch across the southeast front of the building has brick posts with a stone cap and square posts with chamfered edges. There are ornamental cornices on both levels of the porch. The second story has turned posts and railing spindles.

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The two-story frame addition at the north end of the original house has a gable roof and clapboard siding. There is a brick chimney centered in the ridge. Two exterior stairways provide access to the second story.

When the frame sections were built in 1902, a central heating system with a coal furnace and radiators was installed. Bathrooms were also included in this remodeling.

ALTERATIONS

Recent alterations to the Simcock House include the installation of dark brown metal storm windows and aluminum storm doors. Wooden casement screens were removed. The east end wall of the stone ell and the stone chimney of the original house have been stuccoed.



## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1860, 1884, 1902

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

G. M. Simcock

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

One of the earliest permanent dwellings built in Council Grove, the G. M. Simcock House is significant for its design and construction as well as its associations with the early settlement and development of the town. Three distinct periods of occupation from 1857 to the early twentieth century are physically denoted by the additions to the original block.

Goodson M. Simcock first visited the site of Council Grove, Kansas, while accompanying a government survey party mapping a mail route to New Mexico in 1849. He returned to the settlement three years later and worked as a clerk in a store which supplied Santa Fe Trail travelers and Kansas Indians from a nearby reservation. In 1854 at the age of 25, Simcock married Mary White of Council Grove. The young couple spent the winter of 1855-56 at Columbia, a settlement on the Neosho River southeast of Council Grove.

In 1857, however, the Simcocks returned to Council Grove. Simcock entered into a mercantile business which he continued until 1873. Simcock and Seth Hays, another pioneer settler of Council Grove, were partners until 1861 when Hays sold out and left for the Colorado mines.

After the Simcocks returned to Council Grove in 1857, they lived in a log cabin. According to oral tradition, Goodson promised his wife a house when she had a child. The couple's first son, Albert, was born in September, 1857. Simcock built the two and a half story stone house near the Neosho River some time during the next three years.

The upright, rectangular block with a gable-end entrance and large regularly spaced windows seems to be derived from the Greek Revival temple form popular in the eastern United States early in the nineteenth century. Although the house is relatively plain the front doorway with its transom and sidelights evidences characteristic detail of the Greek Revival Style. Simcock was born in Virginia, but grew up in Missouri so he may have seen such houses there. The form was common in Kansas from the 1850's to the 1870's.

Simcock was one of the organizers and stockholders of the Council Grove Town Company in 1857. The town was incorporated by the territorial legislature one year later. The first lots were sold in 1860. Simcock also served as county treasurer in 1863. During the 1860's the mercantile trade boomed, but when the Kansas Pacific Railroad built a through line to Denver sixty miles north of



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Council Grove in 1866, the wagon freighting business on the old Santa Fe Trail collapsed. About this same time, the Kansas Indians were also removed to a new reservation in Indian Territory.

Simcock's mercantile business never really recovered from these changes. He became a partner in the operation of the Morris County Mills from 1867 to 1873 and established a branch grocery store in Salina, Kansas. He served as county commissioner in 1869 and then was president of the new Council Grove Savings Bank in 1870. After selling these interests, Simcock farmed for two years from 1873 to 1875. None of these ventures equaled the success he had known in the 1860's.

Finally, the Simcocks left Council Grove for New Mexico in 1875. The attempt to establish another mercantile business was unprofitable and the couple returned to Kansas in 1879. In August of that year, Mary died at the family residence. When Goodson Simcock died in 1886, his career was summarized in the Council Grove Cosmos: "At one time he was one of the wealthiest men in Council Grove, conducting a large and flourishing trade, but the vicissitudes of trade swept most of his property from him and he died comparatively poor, although surrounded with all the ordinary comforts of life."

In 1884, two years before his death, Goodson Simcock sold the house to an up-and-coming Council Grove businessman, David C. Webb. Webb added the one-story stone wing on the east side of the main block to provide two more bedrooms. Webb had operated a dry goods and clothing store in Council Grove since 1876. By 1883 he had a second store in Strong City and four farms in Morris County. He was also a director of the Morris County Bank. Webb's purchase of the Simcock house bears witness to his success. At this time the building was considered the "showplace of Council Grove." In 1893 Webb moved to Kansas City, Missouri. His wholesale mercantile business in that city was the largest of its kind for several years. Webb also had investments in manufacturing and real estate.

The next owner of the Simcock house was W. H. Marks. When Marks acquired the house in 1902, he added a frame second story to the stone wing and two large two-story frame wings to the rear. The Marks family owned the house for more than seventy-five years.

W. H. Marks was a large landowner in Morris County, one of several prominent citizens who in 1902 invested in the Council Grove Development Company--an unsuccessful attempt to bring in an oil or gas well. At this time Marks enlarged the Simcock house to provide rental rooms and apartments; the building became known as the Marks Apartments.



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Council Grove was experiencing a "boom" in 1902. As the Council Grove Republican reported on March 14, for the past three years there had been considerable immigration into the county and many real estate transfers. In an article published January 30, 1903, entitled "Rent Houses in Demand," the paper noted, "It is simply remarkable the great demand for houses without any for rent... Rent house investments have been the best things that could be made the past year."

Since 1902 the building has been used as an apartment house. The house is no longer owned by the Marks family, and because it is only a few hundred feet from the Neosho River, it is presently known as the Riverside Apartments.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO FUTURE AMENDMENT.

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ARTICLES

"Rent Houses in Demand," Council Grove Republican, January 30, 1903.

"They Are Drawn to Morris County," Republican, March 14, 1902.

BOOKS

Andreas, A. T. History of Kansas. Vol. I (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883).

Brigham, Lalla M. The Story of Council Grove on the Santa Fe Trail.  
(Council Grove, Kansas, 1921).

Council Grove: Historic Conservation. (Manhattan, Kansas: College of  
Architecture and Design, Kansas State University, 1975).

Whitney, Carrie W. Kansas City, Missouri: Its History and Its People.  
Vol. II. (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1908).

Family records and recollections. Mrs. Lee Marks, Council Grove, Kansas.



## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

### ARTICLES

"Death of David C. Webb," Kansas City Journal, December 26, 1906.

"Death of G. M. Simcock," Council Grove Cosmos, June 25, 1886.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .40 acre

Council Grove quadrangle  
scale: 1:24,000

### UTM REFERENCES

A 14 718280 4282055  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property occupies all of lots 14, 15, and 16, Block 22, except for the south forty feet of each lot vacated for Columbia Street, city of Council Grove, Kansas.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Julie A. Wortman, Historic Preservation Specialist II  
Dale Nimz, Program Assistant; Nora Pat Small, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION Kansas State Historical Society DATE   

STREET & NUMBER 120 West 10th TELEPHONE 913 296-3251

CITY OR TOWN Topeka STATE Kansas 66612

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL    STATE    LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE *Julie A. Wortman*

TITLE Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

DATE Jan. 27, 1982

### FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE   

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
ATTEST:

DATE   

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Simcock House/Marks Apartments  
Council Grove, Kansas  
Morris County

UTM Reference: 14/718280/4282055

14/718280  
4282055

