

PH0682888

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED AUG 23 1978

DATE ENTERED NOV 28 1978

**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

Frank Kell House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

900 Bluff Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Wichita Falls

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

13

STATE

Texas

VICINITY OF

CODE  
048

COUNTY

Wichita

CODE

485

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Bess Kell Blair

STREET & NUMBER

900 Bluff Street

CITY, TOWN

Wichita Falls

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Wichita County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Wichita Falls

STATE

Texas

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Kell house is a two-story, brick, Neo-Classical Revival building exhibiting a hipped roof, wide bracketed eaves, and double hung single-glazed windows with limestone lintels and sills. The symmetrical front (east) facade is dominated by a massive, flat-roofed, two-story portico supported by four Doric columns. The portico is broken at the second floor level by a balustraded porch which extends beyond the main portico on either side to form rounded, one-story bays supported by smaller Ionic columns. The bays continue the balustrade on both the first and second floor levels. The portico roof partially obscures a large gable dormer on the roof behind; smaller hipped dormers are present over projecting wings on the north and south facades.

The house was probably designed by elaborating a less complex, center-hall, pattern book plan of rectangular shape. On this the architects (Jones and Orlopp, a local firm) superimposed the elaborate portico and bays; to the rear they extended the rectangle to include a large octagonal dining room, smaller dining room, kitchen, and related service rooms. The usual dining room area to one side of the center-hall plan was thus released to provide space for an unusually large, oak-paneled entry with end fireplace and massive side staircase. This area, with dark-brown staining and coffered ceiling, contrasts dramatically with the adjacent formal living room which has light-colored plaster walls, elaborate wall and cornice mouldings, and a sculpted wood and plaster mantle. Much of the original furniture, late American Victorian in style, was bought from the Sanger Bros. in Dallas and remains in the house.

The only significant alteration to the house appears to be a harmonious one-story library wing added to the north facade ca. 1925. The original architectural drawings of the house survive and are in the possession of the present owners. An early two-story, hipped-roof brick carriage house to the rear has been altered to provide a modern garage and overhead servants quarters. The house remains in excellent condition and is now occupied by two daughters of the original owner.

# 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" 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 1909

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Jones and Orlopp,  
Wichita Falls

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The house is significant principally as the home of one of Wichita Falls' pioneer merchants and railroad builders, Frank Kell (1859-1941), whose activities were pivotal in the early growth of the town.

Kell, who built the house in 1909 and occupied it until his death in 1941, was born in Clifton (Bosque County) Texas. An energetic and largely self-educated man, he operated grain export and milling enterprises at Clifton and at Galveston.

In 1897 Kell moved to Wichita Falls to join his brother-in-law, J.A. Kemp, as a grain merchant. At that time the town had a population of 2,000 (1910-8,000; 1920-40,000; 1977-100,000). The partners soon became involved in acquiring and developing local railroads to encourage their expanding grain business. Through their efforts rail lines were extended in all directions from Wichita Falls, which thus became a transportation hub. This, in turn, led to the city's dominance as a regional center of trade and commerce. Kell's railroads were ultimately sold to become part of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas, Santa Fe, and Missouri-Pacific systems.

Kell was active in many other business and civic enterprises. He organized the town's first electric company and, in 1909, he and Kemp developed its first street railway. In 1911 they built its first major office building. In 1914 Kell was elected to the board of the newly created Eleventh Federal Reserve District. In 1929 he sold his extensive milling and grain enterprise to General Mills (Minneapolis) but was active in other business interests until his death in 1941. The house is currently owned and occupied by two of Kell's daughters.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet Item 9

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY one

UTM REFERENCES

A 14 | 546500 | 3751825  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 C | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | |  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 D | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 1 of Block 235 of original townsite of Wichita Falls, Texas (see attached site plan). The lot is on the northwest corner of Bluff Street (116 ft. frontage) and 9th Street (250 ft. frontage).

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

M.W. Brown and A.L. McAlester

ORGANIZATION

Envirotechnics

DATE

July 28, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

3511 Cedar Springs

TELEPHONE

(214) 521-2641

CITY OR TOWN

Dallas

STATE

Texas

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

*[Handwritten Signature]*

TITLE

SHPO

DATE

8-11-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*[Handwritten Signature]*  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

*[Handwritten Signature]*  
 MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*[Handwritten Signature]*  
 Keeper of the National Register

DATE

11-28-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED **AUG 23 1978**

DATE ENTERED

**NOV 28 1978**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Blair, Bess Kell, and Mary Jo Petty. Personal interview, 9/76.
- Hofsommer, Donovan. Katy Northwest, The Story of a Branch Line Railroad. Boulder, Colorado: Pruett Publishing Co., 1976.
- Morgan, Jonnie. The History of Wichita Falls, Oklahoma City: The Economy Co., 1931.
- Reed, S.G., A History of the Texas Railroads. The St. Clair Publishing Co., 1941.
- Wichita Falls Times and Record News, Newspaper files (Frank Kell).
- Wichita Falls, Heritage Society. Wichita Falls in Watercolor, 1880-1922, 1976, p. 16-17.
- Williams, J.W. "Frank Kell" West Texas Historical Assn. Yearbook, Vol., 1/p. 131-138, Oct. 1941.

Property Kell, Frank, House

7800 3378

State Texas

Working Number 8.23.78.3948

**TECHNICAL**

Photos 3  
Maps 1

**CONTROL**

*OK 8.24.78*

**HISTORIAN**

The areas of significance indicated are **ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN** commerce and transportation. The owner, Frank Kell, was one of Wichita Falls' early merchants and railroad builders. Architecture is not included in significant area. The house is an unexceptional example of its style and period yet is reportedly in excellent condition.

The only major alteration was made during **ARCHEOLOGIST** Mr. Kell's occupancy. Brian Bergman - 11/21/78

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

See assessment above. Property is of unusually important local associational value.

*Sheffy for ↑*  
11-27-78

Notification as performed should be sufficient.

*accept*

**BRANCH CHIEF**

**KEEPER**

*Accepted 11/28/78*

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Register Entry 2-6-79

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_  
Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Entered NOV 28 1978

INT:2106-74



Frank Kell House  
900 Bluff Street  
Wichita Falls, Wichita County, Texas

East Elevation  
Mike Yancey 1977  
Texas Historical Commission

AUG 23 1978

NOV 28 1978



Frank Kell House  
900 Bluff Street  
Wichita Falls, Wichita County, Texas

Southeast Oblique  
Mike Yancey 1977  
Texas Historical Commission

NOV 28 1978

AUG 23 1978

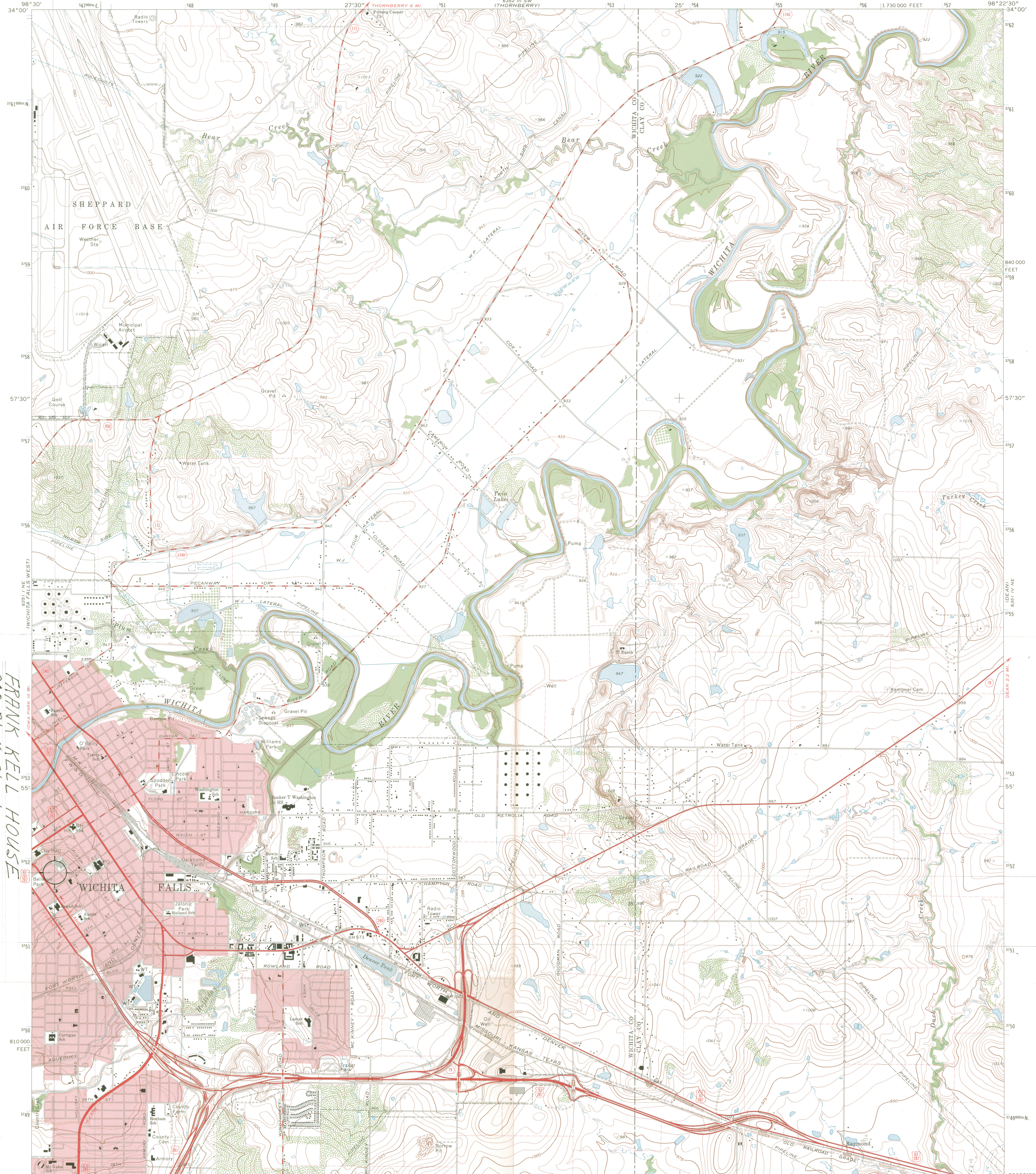


Frank Kell House  
900 Bluff Street  
Wichita Falls, Wichita County, Texas

East Elevation of Carriage House  
Mike Yancey 1977  
Texas Historical Commission

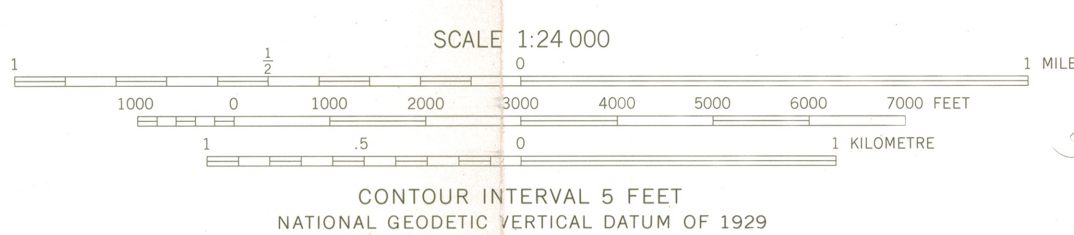
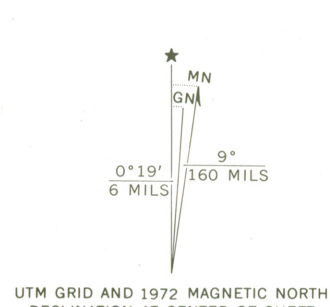
NOV 28 1978

AUG 23 1978



FRANK KELL HOUSE  
900 Bluff Street  
Wichita Falls, Wichita County, Texas  
UTM References 14/546500/3751825

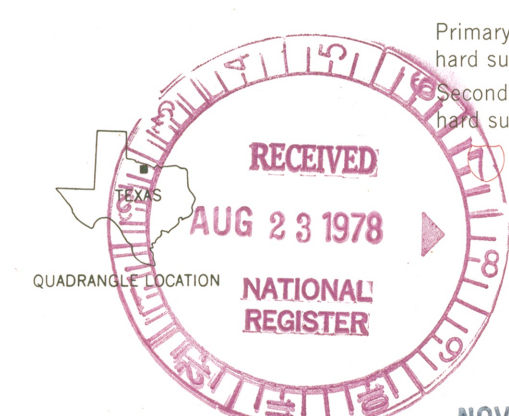
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1954. Topography by planetable surveys 1957  
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1971. Field checked 1972  
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Texas  
coordinate system, north central zone (Lambert conformal conic)  
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue. 1927 North American datum  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark  
buildings are shown  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route



WICHITA FALLS EAST, TEX.  
NW/4 WICHITA FALLS EAST 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3352.5-W9822.5/7.5  
1972

Marcella -

Two questions:

- 1.) The State. of Signif. says that two daughters own the house. Must they each receive a letter 'though they both occupy the house?
- 2.) The verbal bound. descript. says to see the site plan. I find none. Does it refer to the UTM?

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# TELEPHONE REPORT

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OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

---

PROJECT:

---

TO/FROM:

DATE:

10/4/78

---

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

---

STAFF MEMBER:

*S. Byers*

DIVISION:

---

REPORT:

*Mrs Helen Anderson - 965-2530  
Washington Correspondent for the  
Wichita Falls Times and Record News  
would like to be notified when  
listed*

---

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      TEXAS

Date Entered      NOV 28 1978

Name

Kell, Frank, House

Location

Wichita Falls  
Wichita County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen  
Honorable John G. Tower  
Honorable Jack E. Hightower

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director  
Texas State Historical Commission  
P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711

# NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

① NAME as it appears on federal register: Kell, Frank, House  
 ② OTHER NAMES:  
 ③ date of entry: NOV 28 1978  
 ④ county code: 485

⑤ LOCATION street & number: 900 Bluff St.  
 city / town: Wichita Falls  
 vicinity of:  
 state: TX  
 county: Wichita  
 ⑥ NPS REGION: SW

⑦ OWNER  PRIVATE  STATE  MUNICIPAL  COUNTY  MULTIPLE  FEDERAL (agency name)  
 ⑧ ADMINISTRATOR:

⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS  HABS  HAER  NHL  
 ⑩ FUNDED?  YES  NO  
 ⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT 13  
 ⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION  STATE  FEDERAL  
 if state who prepared form?

⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES, NAME  NO  
 ⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?  YES, NAME  NO  
 ⑮ ACREAGE  
 LOCAL  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

⑯ CONDITION  deteriorated  altered  original site  
 excellent  ruins  unaltered  moved  
 good  unexposed  reconstructed  unknown  
 fair  unexcavated  excavated  
 ⑰ features:  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3  
 NOT INTACT-0  NOT INTACT-0  
 UNKNOWN-4  UNKNOWN-5  
 NOT APPLICABLE-7  NOT APPLICABLE-8  NOT APPLICABLE-9

⑱ ACCESS  YES-Restricted  YES-Unrestricted  No Access  Unknown  
 ⑲ ADAPTIVE USE  YES  NO  
 ⑳ SAVED?  YES  
 IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT?  yes  no

㉑ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE :  
 ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2  COMMERCE-6  ENGINEERING-11  LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15  POLITICS/GOVT.-21  RECREATION-28  
 ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1  COMMUNICATIONS-7  ENTERTAINMENT-26  LAW-16  RELIGION-22  SETTLEMENT-29  
 AGRICULTURE-3  CONSERVATION-8  EXPLORATION-12  LITERATURE-17  SCIENCE-23  URBAN PLANNING-31  
 ARCHITECTURE-4  ECONOMICS-9  HEALTH-27  MILITARY-18  SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24  OTHER (SPECIFY)  
 ART-5  EDUCATION-10  INDUSTRY-13  MUSIC-19  SOCIAL/CULTURAL-30  
 INVENTION-14  PHILOSOPHY-20  TRANSPORTATION-25  
 ㉒ CLAIMS: explain  
 'first'   
 'oldest'   
 'only'

㉓ functions  
 WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT:  
 CURRENTLY:  
 ㉔ dates of initial construction:  
 major alterations:  
 historic events:  
 ㉕ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION

㉖ architectural style(s):  
 ㉗ architect:  
 ㉘ master builder:  
 ㉙ engineer:

㉚ landscape architect / garden designer:  
 ㉛ interior decorator:  
 ㉜ artist:  
 ㉝ artisan:  
 ㉞ builder/contractor:

㉟ NAMES give role & date  
 PERSONAL:  
 EVENTS:  
 INSTITUTIONAL:

㊱ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP