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GATEWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT

**INTENSIVE LEVEL
ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY**

**PREPARED FOR
THE CITY OF PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA
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ABSTRACT

This report, **GATEWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT: INTENSIVE LEVEL ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY**, explains and documents the findings of the survey of a six-block area of North Sixth Street—Ponca City's Gateway Historic District—during summer, 2001. Funded by a grant from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, the project was sponsored by the Ponca City Community Development Department, where department director, Chris Henderson, provided oversight and Lynda Smith rendered administrative assistance. The survey was carried out by principal investigator Marlys Bush Thurber, with volunteer help from Bret A. Carter and several others named in the body of the document. Ms. Thurber was also author for the project report.

An **Introduction** sets the scene, identifies key preservation concepts, and defines basic terminology. Under the heading, **Project Objectives**, the author explains the rationale and procedures for historic and architectural surveys, states this survey's objectives, and discusses the concepts of *significance* and *integrity* as used in preservation practice. A **Project Components** section provides an abbreviated list of delivery items required under the project contract.

The **Area Surveyed** section describes the neighborhood and adjacent environment, confirms the established boundaries for the Gateway Historic District, and notes the historical origins of the district's name. Following this section, *Figure 1. Survey Area*, shows the district boundary and identifies residential buildings by current address. In the section, **Research Design and Methodology**, several options for guided research are identified, the project's research methods and materials are discussed, and field survey procedures are explained.

Aggregate Survey Results offers a summary of the findings. All dwellings fall into the category of single-family detached residential. Primary structures number 23, with 18 ancillary buildings, including 7 garage-apartments, identified. *Figure 2. Function* shows these by type. More than half the primary residences are two or more stories in height. Construction is predominantly of wood, with brick and stone also present. In terms of architectural style, the district has a diversity of six different historic types, the preponderance being Prairie School, with smaller numbers of Colonial Revival and Bungalow/Craftsman, and one each Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, and Ranch. Character-defining features and details found in the district are typical for each of the styles. Building condition falls mostly in the category of *Good*, with just one structure in *Poor* condition, and it is currently undergoing rehabilitation. All properties, save one 1952 Ranch, clearly contribute to the district's historic character. Three properties, each exemplary of a different architectural style, have been determined to be candidates for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places. *Figure 3. Contributor Status* shows these by category.

Architectural Styles gives a synopsis and timeline for each of the six styles represented. These are: Folk Victorian—1870 to 1910, Queen Anne—1880 to 1910, Colonial Revival—1880 to 1955, Prairie School—1900 to 1920, Bungalow/Craftsman—1905 to 1930, and Ranch—1935 to 1975. *Figure 4. Architectural Styles* shows each primary structure by stylistic period.

In the section, **Properties Documented in the Gateway Historic District**, the resources are organized by block. The historic name, construction date, style, and contributing status are highlighted, and a full descriptive narrative is presented for each. *Figure 5. Construction Dates* shows all buildings by decade of construction, either originally or after major modification.

Historic Context covers the historical evolution of the district—within the larger environment of the municipality—in terms of two areas of significance: Community Planning and Development as the primary area and Architecture as secondary. The first part, *Soil to Oil*, sketches Ponca City's *raison d'être* from the 1893 opening of the Cherokee Outlet for homesteading to E.W. Marland's 1911 discovery of the Mid-Continent Oil Field. A second part, *Growing the Community*, notes specifics of the town's physical development from shortly after the Run to the close of the 1920s. Touching on the undercurrent, *striving for a progressive image*, this part emphasizes the role of Sixth Street's early residents as figurative and literal community builders in the city's formative period.

Under **Recommendations**, four issue-oriented areas for action are addressed. These are: alterations to historic fabric, streetscape enhancement, candidates for future survey, and areas for additional research. A **Summary** and **Annotated Bibliography** complete the project report. The Gateway Historic District Survey Forms are contained in the document's **Appendix**.

INTRODUCTION

Sixth Street north of Ponca City's Grand Avenue is a special place. Stroll past the library on a summer afternoon, and across the tree-shaded sidewalks you'll see a flutter of activity. Neighbors visit on broad porches. Gardeners putter among their roses and hollyhocks. Children ride bikes on the brick pavement and play tag in the grassy yards. Slow to a more leisurely pace and you'll get a wave from a householder keeping an eye on her neighborhood. Look more closely at the surroundings, and you'll find different styles of buildings, several color palettes, and various kinds of construction materials. Clearly, it is a place of diversity. Yet somehow, it's also harmonious and complete—this tiny neighborhood, a mere three blocks long, sandwiched between the library and the park. On this short outing, maybe without realizing it, you've experienced something both significant and endangered in the American landscape: an essentially intact, downtown historic neighborhood.

Instinctively, perhaps, you've taken stock of the things that distinguish this place from others resembling it. Yes, it conjures up a certain sense of feeling and association; but even more, it has a tangible reality made up of many identifiable parts. Taken together and examined, these parts become patterns—ones perhaps unique to this particular environment. It is these patterns and parts that make one building less like its neighbor to the south, for example, and more like the house across the street. Sometimes the differences are glaringly apparent; other times they are subtle as a wink. But—and this is especially true in neighborhoods mellowed by time—they are always there, waiting to be discovered.

Historic preservationists have a specific term for these various and sundry parts: they call them the *character-defining elements*. It is these character-defining elements that, grouped into patterns, define a particular architectural style. Identifying the character-defining elements—of a building, a landscape, or even an entire neighborhood—can be a kind of treasure hunt, except that in historic preservation lingo, it's called a *Survey*. In this instance, it is an *Intensive Level Architectural/Historic Survey of Gateway Historic District*.

Or, as the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines define it:

Intensive Survey—a systematic, detailed examination of an area designed to gather information about historic properties sufficient to evaluate them against predetermined criteria of significance within specific historic contexts.

The perhaps unfamiliar terminology, above, will be explained as the survey report progresses.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Whys and Hows of a Survey

Why do we undertake architectural and historic surveys; or, in preservation-speak, why do we *inventory*, *document*, and *evaluate* our historic and cultural resources? The first and most obvious reason is simply to find out what's there. In the initial survey stage of *inventory and recording*, the surveyor is instructed to observe and write down what he sees, employing rational and non-judgmental observation. While he might not thrill to gingerbread and spindlework, flower-embellished concrete urns, or battered bungalow porch piers, he's not supposed to say so on his survey form.

Once the individual elements have been inventoried, the next step is to *categorize* each building according to its particular architectural style. Although most buildings slide easily into one category or another, in some instances, a judgment call may be required. There may be a hair's breadth of difference, say, between calling a small, one-story house—simple in plan and elevation but with a complex roof—a Folk Victorian/Without Turned Balusters, Spindlework, or Anything Else Fancy, as opposed to a traditionally plainer National Folk/With Funny Roof. Usually, such determinations are not taken lightly. Tempers have been known to flare.

Proceeding further through the survey process, the next consideration is organizing the more-or-less factual information that has been collected into a usable format. To this end, fairly standardized forms and procedures have been developed over the years, by preservationists mostly affiliated with the National Park Service, the State Historic Preservation Offices, or the various universities offering historic preservation curricula. These procedures govern how the

survey findings are written down, *recorded*, by using categories and codes amenable to transfer into a standardized computer database. Each of the fifty states is charged with maintaining its own database through the respective State Historic Preservation Office, more familiarly called the SHPO. Thus, bit by bit, survey by survey, a nationwide inventory of historic resources is being developed. And for what purpose? A deceptively simple one: to encourage and enable the continued preservation and usability of these important markers of our past. Our survey is one such contribution.

Objectives for the Gateway Historic District Survey

For this and other surveys under its purview, the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, OK/SHPO, has followed national preservation guidelines in setting forth four primary objectives. Each of these objectives concerns the degree to which the historic resources—in this instance, the individual buildings within the Gateway Historic District—meet certain standards for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. In common preservation usage, buildings within a district meeting these standards are said to be *contributing*. Buildings not meeting the standards are said to be *noncontributing*.

The first objective of our survey is to determine those buildings which readily appear to contribute to the district and are thus appropriate candidates for the National Register. The phrase most often used is *meet the eligibility criteria for listing*, as quoted from the Request for Proposals, for this project, below:

Objective 1. *To identify, record, photograph, and evaluate through intensive level survey those individual properties and potential districts in the project area that, on the basis of age and integrity, meet the eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and to substantiate such assessments.*

The second objective concerns buildings which would appear, initially, not to contribute to the Gateway Historic District. Before a final decision is made, however, these would get a second look:

Objective 2. To identify, record, photograph, and evaluate through intensive level survey those individual properties and potential districts in the project area that, on the basis of age and integrity, warrant further study to determine eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and to substantiate such assessments.

The third objective is more definitive. Here, buildings clearly not meeting the criteria are excluded from any further consideration:

Objective 3. To identify and characterize those portions of the project area which, on the basis of insufficient age or integrity, warrant no further study to exclude them from consideration for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and to substantiate such assessments.

The fourth and final objective for the Gateway Survey is one that can expedite projects to come; moreover, it can contribute generally to the information pool of resources available to the community-at-large. This calls simply for documenting the sources used in the production of the survey report:

Objective 4. To identify and annotate all reference material necessary for completing National Register nominations of properties and districts located in the study area.

Given community acceptance of the survey report findings, these four objectives are intended to lead to a final, three-part goal: the completion of the National Register Nomination Form; its approval by the Keeper of the

National Register in Washington, D.C.; and the subsequent listing of the Gateway Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.

National Register Criteria

To merit listing on the National Register, properties must meet several key criteria. Primary among these are *significance* and *integrity*. Although the concept of significance is precisely defined, it may be based on one or more of four different criteria. These are described in the short paper, *Researching a Historic Property* (*National Register Bulletin 39, 1991*), as follows:

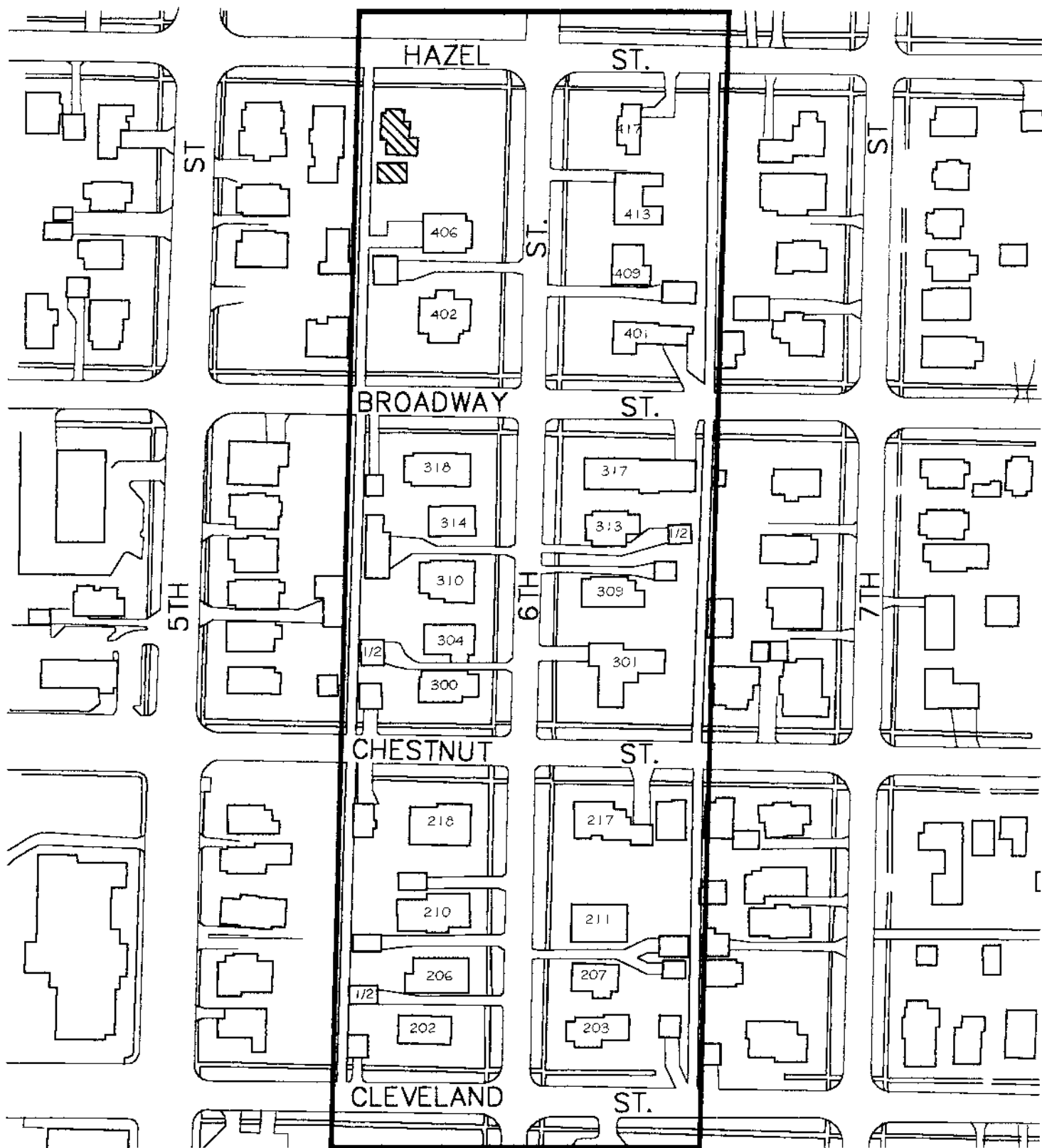
Significance is defined as the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture of a community, a state, or the nation. Significance may be based on association with historical events (Criterion A); association with a significant person (Criterion B); distinctive physical characteristics of design, construction, or form (Criterion C); and potential to yield important information (Criterion D).

Integrity in National Register terms also has a specific meaning, in that it encompasses seven different qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. These and other considerations are elaborated in the National Park Service document, *How to Complete National Register Forms*, the standard reference on the requirements of the National Register of Historic Places program.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

To accomplish the objectives listed above, the survey project consists of four components. These are as follow:

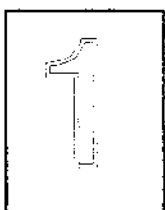
1. This document, the narrative Project Report. Two originals have been produced, one each to the Community Development Department, City of Ponca City, and the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City.
2. Maps showing the survey area, the proposed historic district with structures categorized, and specific structures within the district potentially eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
3. The set of survey forms and accompanying photographs, including contact sheets and negatives in archival folders.
4. Computer disks containing the survey data.



Scale: 1"=150'



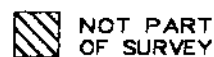
FIG.



SURVEY AREA

GATEWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

LEGEND



AREA SURVEYED

As shown on the accompanying Gateway Historic District map, the survey area is located to the immediate northeast of Ponca City's central business district. The historic district as currently configured is small, consisting of six half-blocks fronting on North Sixth Street. From south to north, the cross streets intersecting with Sixth are Cleveland, Chestnut, Broadway, and Hazel. To the east and west, the district boundaries are delineated by the alleys bisecting each block.

At the southern edge of the residential area are two public building complexes: East Junior High School and the Ponca City Municipal Library block. The latter contains the 1935 library building—which faces Grand Avenue, Centennial Plaza, and the historic Civic Center—and the library's award-winning 1988 addition, affording ramped disabled access from Fifth Street.

In contrast to the public buildings and parking lots on the south, at the area's northern edge, one finds a sylvan setting. This is Pioneer Park, equivalent in size to four city blocks, and the larger, WPA-era War Memorial Park, which stretches north across Highland Avenue about a quarter-mile to the Senior High School. Together, the parks contain several facilities for both active and passive recreation: picnic shelters, a children's playground, tennis courts, and walking paths, as well as a public meeting and performance space. Both parks also memorialize historic events. Pioneer Park, adjoining the district, is the site of a major discovery. Carved into each massive pier flanking the Sixth Street entry, a stone plaque reads:

IN MEMORY OF
C. H. RUBY
PIONEER OIL & GAS PROSPECTOR
FIRST GAS FOUND 1905
1843-1921

It is this gateway from which the historic district derives its name.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Options for Guided Research

Several methods can be used to focus and direct the research for an intensive survey project. Undertakings of a more limited scope may be guided by a *task directive* or *statement of objectives*, such as those elaborated in the previous section. More complex projects may require an actual *research design*, which can help to define expectations for the final product, based upon review of information available before the actual research phase begins.

For many local history projects having an explicit focus, previous research may not have been undertaken. Or, earlier research efforts may be tangential to the scope of the project at hand. Sometimes, previous research may have unearthed fascinating but undocumented or speculative material, which a principal investigator cannot incorporate with any level of comfort. Each of these factors can have an effect on the feasibility of developing a workable research design.

Archival Research

Marlys Bush Thurber was principal investigator for the project. Data review commenced with a visit to the Ponca City Library, where Loyd Bishop, library genealogist, helped in locating the various resources and collections pertinent to the project. In addition to the local and regional histories shelved in the reference section, these included the vertical files containing news clippings and photographs.

The library also has Sanborn Fire Insurance maps on microfilm; however, these consist only of three rolls limited to the period from initial settlement to

the early years of the Great Depression. Mr. Bishop related that these films were acquired in the mid-1980s at a cost of \$500 per roll for a research project conducted by the late Laura McDonagh Streich. While the Sanborn Company continues to update the city's close-in areas on an intermittent basis, the maps are retained at their Massachusetts headquarters. The library would like to acquire a complete set but does not have funds budgeted at present.

Following the initial library research phase, the principal investigator turned to the collections of the Pioneer Woman Museum. There, Karen Ley, historical interpreter, rendered knowledgeable and patient assistance. The Laura Streich files, reflecting several years of dedicated effort, were a serendipitous discovery. According to Ms. Ley, Laura Streich was young woman committed to the preservation of our local historic and cultural resources. In her short life (1959-1995), she accomplished a significant amount of research on early-day Ponca City (Laura Mae McDonagh Streich, Pioneer Woman Museum Dedication Program, page 17). Moreover, she maintained the files in an organized and documented manner.

The Streich collection, which was used extensively for this project, consists of several types of information, much of which focuses on Sixth Street and adjacent areas. There are early-day photographs and news articles, personal interviews, and commentary transcribed from tours of historic neighborhoods. There are brochures on local preservation efforts and resources, information sheets on house tours, informal histories of individual dwellings, and for-sale listings of historic properties. The files also contain correspondence with the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office and other parties involved in cultural resource preservation. All pertinent materials were photocopied for use in the survey's documentation and evaluation phase.

This accomplished, the principal investigator devised a simple filing system consisting of folders numbered by street address and containing the survey form and photographs for each property, in addition to any specific data obtained from the aforementioned collections. Files of a more general nature were also developed. These pertain to such related areas for investigation as the city's founding and early growth; the town of Cross; early maps; lists of building owners; a list of mayors; regional architects and architect-designed local buildings; and miscellaneous data on the locality and the region.

Field Survey

Assisting the principal investigator in the initial field reconnaissance was Bret A. Carter, a local community activist who also wears many preservation hats. Mr. Carter was also helpful in locating the applicable Sanborn maps and in providing a variety of other source materials from his extensive personal collection.

Photography for the initial study phase was done by Bret Carter. Final presentation photographs to accompany the inventory sheets and the finished publication were shot by Chris Henderson, Ponca City's community development director, who also provided project oversight.

With the study photographs and partially completed survey forms in hand, the principal investigator returned to the area to double-check the visual data and compare the footprints of the structures to the relevant Sanborn maps. Then commenced a period of building analysis incorporating all available resources, including photographs, maps, lists, tax records, county records, books on building history and architectural styles, reference books, newspaper articles, and state and federal preservation guidelines.

County Records

The Kay County Courthouse in Newkirk provided another source for information on the district's more intransigent resources. In this regard, help was rendered by Dick Sturdevant, long-time local realtor, community leader, and history buff, who spent several hours in the aptly named Courthouse Dungeon tracing property transfers. This extraordinary effort consequently helped to solve many mysteries of ownership and origin. Insofar as possible, the principal investigator double-checked information contained in the records by follow-up telephone queries to persons affiliated with the properties.

In this regard, many current and former homeowners in the historic district were generous with their time and information resources. Owners now residing there who willingly answered wide-ranging questions include Mary and Bill Forbes, Timilyn and Steve Crank, Laurie and Tom Hoddy, Mindy and Chris LittleCook, Michael Dunkleberger, and Jannie Ross. Former owners and family members who helped resolve issues of history and architecture include R. Bobby Gibson, Karolyn Hron, Kathy Turner, Downing Johnson, and Colleen Bailey Tomlinson. Also providing information was Doug Evans, who along with family members owns several area properties.

Mapping and Maps

A base map of the Gateway Historic District scaled at 1:150 was drafted by Simon Cornell, senior design technician in the City's Engineering Division. Working with the principal investigator, Mr. Cornell also produced the finished project maps.



Scale: 1"=150'



FIG.

2

FUNCTION

GATEWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

LEGEND

- PRIMARY
- GARAGE
- GAR/APT
- OTHER

AGGREGATE SURVEY RESULTS

Number, Function, and Height of Structures

Structures in the Gateway Historic District consist of 23 primary dwellings, 7 two-story garage apartments, and 12 additional lower-profile accessory buildings in the form of garages or garage-shed combinations. Four of the primary dwellings have integral garages; on two properties, a formerly free-standing garage has been connected to the house by construction of a room addition or breezeway.

All structures, both historically and at present, are residential or residential-related. In addition, all primary dwellings are single-family detached. Of the 23, 14 are two or more stories in height, 3 are one and one-half stories; and 6 are one-story.

One property within the district boundaries was not considered a part of the survey. A dwelling and detached garage are located at the district's extreme northwest corner, due west of a vacant lot which contained a primary dwelling during the historic period. Orientation of the extant rear buildings is to the side street, Hazel, in contrast to all other primary properties in the district. For these reasons, the property is considered a survey anomaly.

Construction Materials

Wood is the main material used for both framing and sheathing. Exterior wall cladding for all structures is predominantly weatherboard, with 15 historical examples in the category of primary dwellings. Of these, 4 are covered at present with vinyl siding. Wood shingles are used sparingly, and only in combination with weatherboard, on the wall surfaces of 3 primary dwellings.

Just 1 of the 15 mentioned above has walls finished with a combination of weatherboard and board-and-batten siding. Similarly, only 1 house has walls shingled in a material other than wood, and this has composition-shingle siding.

Stucco and masonry are the two other types of materials employed for exterior wall surfacing. After wood, stucco is the next most commonly used finish; however, the district has but 4 examples of this wall treatment. The remaining 3 primary dwellings have walls of veneered unit masonry over wood framing. Brick veneer accounts for 2 of these structures. The final structure has a combination of stone veneer as the primary material on the lower story and weatherboarding as the secondary material on the upper story and wings.

In terms of roofing, asphalt or composition-shingle types are nearly ubiquitous, with only 2 of the 23 primary structures having another material. This is a rounded, machine-made terra cotta which has the appearance of Spanish roof tile.

Foundations are of three types. Stone predominates in 14 of the 23 primary dwellings. Poured concrete is visible in 5 of the houses, and brick is seen in the foundations of 4 dwellings.

Architectural Styles, Features, and Details

The district's 23 primary dwellings encompass six different architectural styles. In order of frequency, these are: Prairie School—11; Colonial Revival—5; Bungalow/Craftsman—3; Queen Anne—1; and Ranch—1. A discussion of time periods and design characteristics for each of the styles follows in a subsequent section.

Architectural features can be divided into the two categories of interior and exterior. As none of the houses was entered during the survey, interior features

are not considered here. Exterior features, however, are an important survey component. These consist of the larger, defining elements of a building, for example, porches, dormers, chimneys, bays, and wings. In this regard, two primary features stand out: porches, which span the fronts of all but 5 of the 23 primary dwellings; and dormers—hipped, gabled, and shed—occurring on 11 primary examples. Other exterior features to be found throughout the district include chimneys and bays. Although most of the dwellings have one or more chimneys, and many have bays and side-wall projections—the latter frequently added as later additions—these features are not so visually pronounced as are the porches and dormers; hence they are considered to be of secondary importance. Wings are found as additions to 3 primary dwellings, 2 of which have an unusual history. These will be discussed under the heading, Properties Documented.

Architectural details are the decorative elements that can typify a particular style and give a building individuality. They can be as functional and straightforward as window shutters or as fanciful as ogee-shaped rafter tails. For the district as a whole, detailing is found primarily on doors, windows, and porch components such as posts, columns, and balustrades. Several houses have detailed elements integral to their periods. Others boast uniquely decorative details. The single, two-story brick house, for example, has distinctive *quoins*—projecting bricks which demarcate its corners. The district's one Dutch Colonial Revival house has a number of delightful embellishments which will be treated separately.

Building Condition

The Secretary of the Interior's definitions for assessing building condition allow little leeway for interpretation:

***Excellent** is perfectly maintained; **Good** is very well maintained; **Fair** is somewhat in need of maintenance; **Poor** is badly in need of maintenance; **Ruins** means most or all of [the] resource is destroyed or missing.*

Based upon a somewhat cursory overview, properties in the district generally fall somewhere between the Fair-to-Good categories. However, other than an occasional area of peeling paint, some loose shingles, and a few out-of-plumb masonry porch members, no real deficiencies were noted. As a result, all properties except one were assessed at the condition level, Good. The remaining property, which has suffered from a long period of deferred maintenance on the part of aged previous owners, would have to be considered Poor at present; however, the new owners have begun and are committed to a careful and extensive rehabilitation.

Contributing/Noncontributing Status of District Properties

As stated in the Objectives section, the key criteria for a determination of Contributing versus Noncontributing status are two: *age* and *integrity*. Given these criteria, the vast majority of the properties in the three-block neighborhood are unquestionably contributors to the district.

Overall, integrity is not an issue, even in regard to that preservation anathema, vinyl siding. The judgment made of the handful of houses having the siding in place is that, for the most part, the vinyl is appropriate in color and professional in installation. As such, it has an appearance not wholly unlike

the original weatherboard which remains beneath. Moreover, there is the expectation that the synthetic covering is removable and therefore reversible.

A handful of properties post-date the primary period of significance as described in the Historic Context; however, all but one meet the 50-year criterion and contribute in terms of architectural character. Therefore, these have been evaluated to be fully contributing to the district's historic character. The single exception is a ranch style property built in the early 1950s. Because of its clearly modern appearance, it is considered to be noncontributing.

Candidates for Individual Listing

Three properties stand out as candidates for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These are: 202 North Sixth Street, the Dutch Colonial Revival house built originally for Dr. W.A.T. Robertson; 300 North Sixth, the Craftsman Style, H.P. and Margaret Gott house; and 402 North Sixth, the High-Style Prairie House built for L.S. Barnes. These are fully described in the Properties Documented section, following.



Scale: 1"=150'






FIG.

3

CONTRIBUTOR STATUS

GATEWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

LEGEND
Potentially

-  NR-ELIGIBLE
-  CONTRIBUTING
-  NONCONTRIBUTING

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Six distinct historical styles of architecture were identified in the district. In chronological order, and as dated by McAlester and McAlester (2000: 263, 309, 321, 419, 453, and 479), these are summarized as follows:

Folk Victorian—1870 to 1910

Spanning a 40-year period, Folk Victorian is one of three styles in the district which transition from the Nineteenth to the Twentieth Century. Essentially, the style derives from simple house forms which could be pre-cut and shipped by rail, to which Victorian embellishments were applied. These may include spindlework and spandrels or chamfered posts. Inset or full-front porches, usually one-story in height, are nearly always present. Roofs are generally gabled or hipped and may have multiple gables or dormers (McAlester and McAlester: 2000: 308-10).

Queen Anne—1880 to 1910

Although in McAlesters' timeline it appears as a dominant style a decade later than Folk Victorian, Queen Anne was actually the latter's High Style progenitor. Usually two-storied, roofs were steeply pitched and irregular. Smooth or flat surfaces were abhorrent to their designers; therefore elements such as patterned shingles, cutaway bays and single-story, side-wrapped porches were employed to emphasize broken lines and irregular massing. Depending on the subtype, decorative details may include spindlework and turned porch supports, classical columns, or patterned masonry. Plans are generally irregular (McAlester and McAlester: 2000: 262-68).

Colonial Revival—1880 to 1955

Rooted in the Pilgrim century and resuscitated by the 1876 Exposition in Philadelphia, Colonial Revival is the longest-lived of all the revival styles and a mainstay of American culture. McAlester and McAlester (2000: 320-26) identify nine principal subtypes, based upon symmetry, height, roof type, and presence or absence of a porch. Of these, three are pertinent to this study. These are: gambrel roof (1895-1915), also known as Dutch Colonial, which accounts for about 10 per cent of all Colonial Revivals; side-gabled roof (predominating after 1910), two-story, blocky, symmetrical, and accounting for about 25 per cent; and one-story Cape Cod-cottage types appearing mostly in the 1920s and 1940s.

Prairie School—1900 to 1920

From Chicago and the inventive mind of America's premier architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, this native-born style swept southward, putting down roots throughout the Midwest, where it flourished and then died out in the brief span of two decades. McAlester and McAlester identify four subtypes (2000: 438-43), one of which predominates in the Gateway District.:

This subtype, which is sometimes called the Prairie Box or American Foursquare, has a simple square or rectangular plan, low-pitched hipped roof, and symmetrical façade. One-story wings, porches, or carports are clearly subordinate to the principal two-story mass. The entrance, which may be centered or off-center, is a conspicuous focal point of the façade.

McAlester and McAlester, *Field Guide to American Houses*, p. 439.

The writers go on to cite this type as the earliest Prairie form and most common vernacular version. Hallmarks of the vernacular Foursquare are: the single-story, full-front porch; the hipped or gabled dormer; and the double-hung sash window.

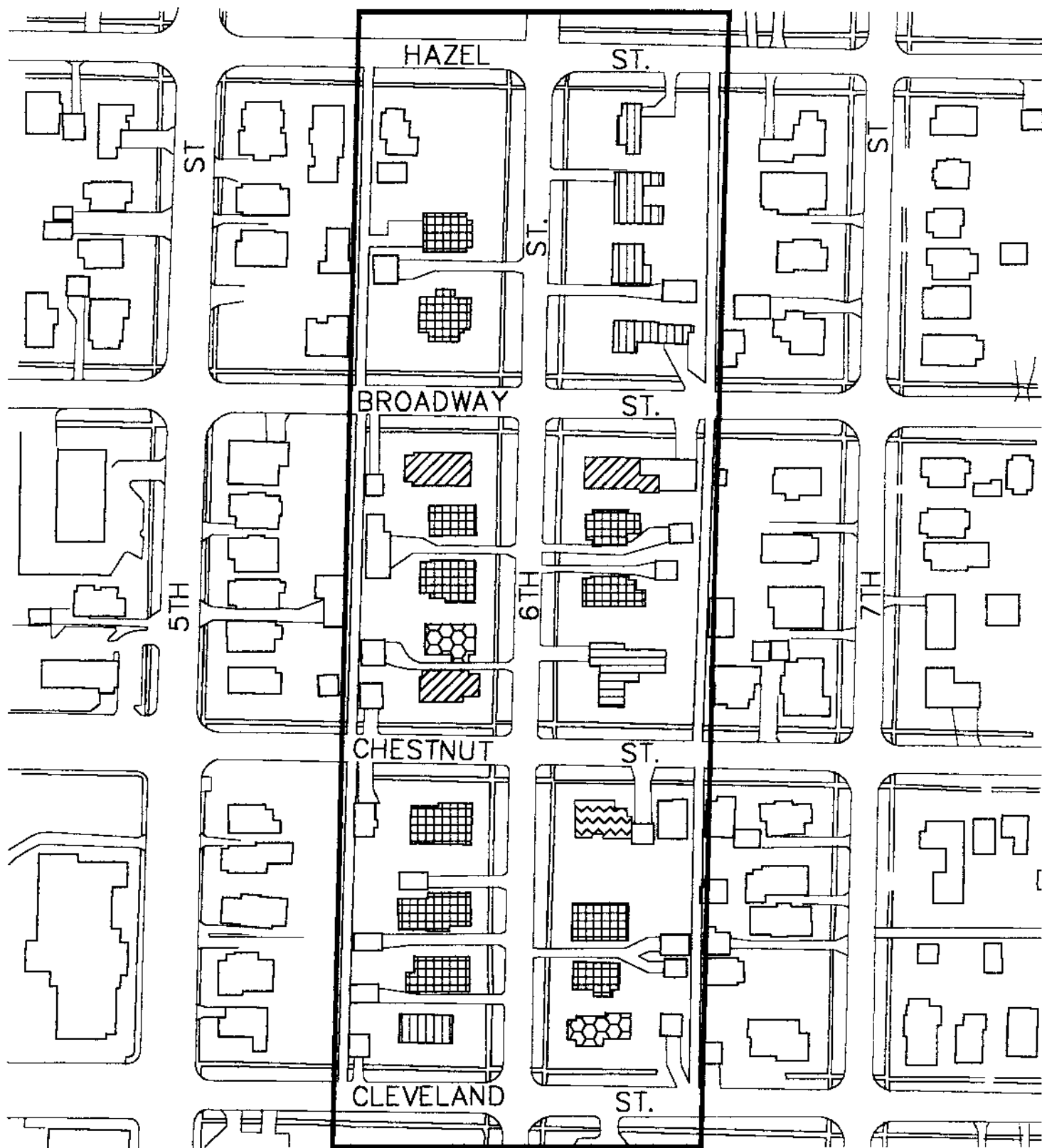
A more unusual version is the high-style subtype McAlester and McAlester label the hipped roof, asymmetrical. This occurs in many variations, but usually has masonry walls and a less conspicuous front entry on account of the dominance of strong horizontal lines. Lower wings, porches, and carports play counterpoint to its two- or three-story mass. There is one outstanding example of this subtype within the Gateway District.

Bungalow/Craftsman—1905 to 1930

Humble, affordable, and ubiquitous, this most American of simple houses had its origins in another continent entirely: 17th-century India (Lancaster 1995: 19-21). Transmuted through the United Kingdom and then to her New World colonies, the bungalow found a natural home in California, where it was dressed—or undressed, rather—to reveal its structural components, thus evolving into the Craftsman style. Character-defining features are many: a massive, low-pitched gabled or hipped roof with deep eaves showing exposed rafters; gabled or shed-roofed dormers; embellished support elements such as knee braces and brackets; and always a porch, whether full-front or partial, with beefy piers usually *battered* to narrow from base to top (McAlester and McAlester 2000: 452-55).

Ranch—1935 to 1975

Technology gave rise to the Ranch House, and the Ranch House transformed Americans from town-dwellers to suburbanites. The Ranch could have come only out of the American West, and specifically from California, where burgeoning numbers of automobiles provided the mobility to access the expansive lots containing the rambling houses. Always close to the ground, with a low-slung, gabled or hipped roof and moderate-to-wide overhanging eaves, its walls may be clad in wood, brick, or both. Details may be derived from earlier Prairie, Craftsman, or Colonial Revival styles, especially the Spanish, and include decorative metal porch supports, wood posts, and shutters. Vestigial porches may remain at the front entry, but the rear-yard patio has replaced the broad front porch as the family's outdoor living area. In frank acknowledgement to the dominance of the automobile, a front- or side-facing double garage is nearly always integral to the house proper (McAlester and McAlester 2000: 479).



Scale: 1"=150'



FIG.

4

ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN

GATEWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

LEGEND

- 1880-1910 FOLK VICTORIAN
- 1880-1910 QUEEN ANNE
- 1880-1910 COLONIAL REVIVAL
- 1880-1910 PRAIRIE SCHOOL
- 1915-1925 BUNGALOW/CRAFTSMAN
- 1935-1975 RANCH

PROPERTIES DOCUMENTED IN THE GATEWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT

200 Block—Cleveland to Chestnut

The block contains eight properties with construction dates ranging from 1903 to 1919. Four architectural styles are represented: 1 Folk Victorian (1903), 1 Dutch Colonial Revival (1907), 1 Queen Anne (1919, remodeled), and 5 Prairie Style (1913, 1919, and 1925). All contribute to the district. One property has been assessed as potentially eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

202 North Sixth Street

- Dr. W.A.T. Robertson House
- c.1907
- Dutch Colonial Revival
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District
- Potentially eligible for individual National Register listing

This elegant and unusual home was built by Robertson, a Canadian physician, who arrived in 1898 and was called “the first modern doctor who came to Ponca City with a microscope” (attributed to Dr. George Niemann, Streich Files, n.d.).

Located at the south entry point at Cleveland and Sixth, the house is distinctive in the district: a Dutch Colonial Revival style with Neoclassical details. One and one-half stories, with painted weatherboard and shingled wood siding under a cross-gambrel, composition-shingled roof, it boasts

intriguing exterior features: a full-front porch with wood-railed deck above, and a flat-roofed, angled bay on the south side, in full view of Cleveland Street.

Its details are unusual for Ponca City, let alone the district, and highly refined. On the façade, the Adamesque entry has an elliptical fanlight and sidelights inset with bevel-cut, leaded glass. Stained glass in a similar curvilinear motif is set into the upper sash of a triple window which follows the chamfered corner on the southeast front. A smaller stained glass window is cut into a shallow bay to the immediate north of the entry. Side-wall openings on the upper level are also distinctive. On the north gable end are paired ovoid openings flanking a double-hung window. At the south gable, above the crenelated side bay, is a tri-part window with a carved shell pediment.

Front porch elements are numerous and varied. The white-painted trim includes a dentilated cornice extending from the porch front around both sides at the upper floor level. Similarly, the wood deck rail is articulated in a splayed geometric design reminiscent of a stylized sunburst. On the porch proper, fluted columns with Ionic capitals rest on limestone piers; paired columns mark the wide concrete staircase. Finally, a stone-capped, solid limestone balustrade has a trellised upper course; i.e., stone set in a checkerboard pattern of interplaying solids and voids.

Documentation for the Robertson house is solid. The 1907 Sanborn map shows the one-and-one-half-story house and detached garage replacing a smaller, one-story building appearing on the 1901 and 1903 Sanborns. The 1910 tax assessment of \$1,000 attests to the property's worth: it is more than double that of the surrounding residences, save one, for that year. One missing piece of information is the identity of the architect who designed the residence.

No doubt the name will come to light as research is continued on a more intensive level.

In terms of integrity, the present-day structure fits the footprint of the Sanborn 1913 house showing a full-width, rear addition. Otherwise, no significant exterior alterations of the c.1907 structure are evident. Adjacent to the alley, at the lot's southwest corner, the c.1913, single-story, double garage is side-accessed from Cleveland. The property's original address is shown as 201 North Sixth Street.

Clearly the W.A.T. Robertson house is in every respect a contributor to the Gateway Historic District. Moreover, based on architectural merit alone, it is a likely candidate for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Documentation sources: 1901, 1903, 1907, 1913 Sanborn maps; 1910 tax assessment; neighborhood group research; Laura M. Streich files, Pioneer Woman Museum.

203 North Sixth Street

- Joseph and Hattie Dreyfus House
- c.1903
- Folk Victorian
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

This simplified Folk Victorian style dwelling is one story in height, with a stone foundation, an asphalt-shingled hipped and gabled roof with multiple iterations, and vinyl-covered weatherboard siding. Wood windows are double-hung; the entry door is wood paneled with glazing. Exterior features consist of a full-front porch, with what is likely a replacement roof, and pronounced cross

gables. The house is devoid of any decorative detail reflecting its Victorian origin; metal porch supports appear to be replacement members.

The side-facing, rear garage is one-story, single bay, with composition-shingle siding and similarly shingled gabled roof.

Located at the northeast corner, intersection of Sixth and Cleveland, the house is likely the district's earliest extant example with its basic form still intact.

Documentation sources include city directories and Sanborn maps. The house is not present on the 1901 Sanborn, but does appear on the 1903 map.

206 North Sixth Street

- c.1919
- Prairie School
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

An American Foursquare, two stories in height, the house has a brick foundation, an asphalt-shingled, hipped roof, and stuccoed walls. Wood windows are double-hung; the entry door is wood paneled with glazing and sidelights. Exterior features consist of a one-story, full-front porch and brick chimney. Architectural details include: tapered wood porch piers; true divided light windows with a squared geometric motif; and a concrete-capped brick balustrade with a decorative eyebrow weephole.

A front-facing, two-story, double-bay garage-apartment abuts the alley at the southwest corner. This structure was built between 1919 and 1925; it is addressed as 206½ North Sixth.

The house is a strong example of the Prairie Box/American Foursquare style with no apparent integrity issues.

Documentation sources: from 1901 to 1913, Sanborn shows a one-story house with a multi-bay, two-story garage at the lot's north rear. In 1919, a two-story dwelling with porch, matching that at present, is shown situated closer to the street; the garage-apartment has disappeared; and a one-story ancillary dwelling has been built on the south property line. Owners listed in city directories are: 1920, M.B. Fountain and T.W. Prentice; 1924-28, T.W. Prentice; 1943, Tom L. Irby.

207 North Sixth Street

- c.1913
- Prairie School
- Contributes to the Gateway Historic District

An American Foursquare, two stories in height, has a stone foundation, an asphalt-shingled hipped roof with vinyl-clad eaves, and composition-shingled walls. Wood windows are double-hung; the entry door is a wood hollow-core replacement. Primary exterior features are a one-story, full-front porch, and a south-facing, two-story sunroom projection. Architectural details include Victorian-style replacement elements consisting of fan-like porch brackets and turned wood balusters. Notably, the porch has the only wood floor in district. The front-facing, one-story, single-bay garage at the alley has weatherboard siding and a flat roof; it shares the driveway with the neighbor to the north, number 211. Although nothing is known of the original owner-builder, the house is a simplified, classic Foursquare with minor, cosmetic alterations.

Documentation sources: Sanborn (1901, 1903, and 1907) shows the double lot as vacant. A two-story box dwelling with full-width front porch appears in 1913; a full-height bump-out on south side and back porch addition is

delineated on the 1919 map; this form is retained to the present day. No garage is shown 1913-1919. In 1925, a one-story, single garage appears and is maintained to the present. City directories list the following occupants: 1920-28, H.M. Reece; 1943, Frank B. Ross.

210 North Sixth Street

- O.F. Keck House
- 1893 with 1901, 1919, and 1925 additions
- Prairie School
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

Likely the district's most frequently remodeled house by its builder-owner, O.F. Keck, the structure is two stories in height, with a stone foundation, an asphalt-shingled, hipped roof with multiple iterations, and vinyl-covered weatherboard walls. Wood windows are double-hung; the entry door is wood paneled with glazing. Primary exterior features are a one-story, full-front porch, a south-facing, two-story fenestrated projection, and three chimneys. Architectural details include squared wood porch columns atop stone piers; a stone-capped stone balustrade, and decorative concrete urns.

The house shows its evolution from a two-room "board shack" to a vernacular Prairie Box. The original structure, c.1893, remains as the living room. The first addition, one-story, by 1901, doubled its size and contained a modern bathroom, a projecting north bay, and a wrap-around porch on the south and rear. A full second story was added by 1919; at the south, a full-height bay replaced half of the side porch; at front, the porch was extended toward the street. A third major alteration by 1925 brought the side porch flush with the south bay and enclosed the porch-like area at rear. A full-width rear

porch is shown as an addition by 1931. The present-day structure fits the 1931 Sanborn footprint. No significant alterations are evident after that date.

Outbuildings: at the northwest corner, c.1901 sheds were one and one-half story by 1903. A two-story garage-apartment built between 1907 and 1913 was razed by 1919 and replaced by a one-story garage at the alley on the south. This structure appears to have been moved or rebuilt at the south property line by 1925; it is shown in situ by 1931. The extant, front-facing, garage is accessed by a driveway on the south.

Documentation sources: first addition, Sanborn 1901; second story addition, Sanborn 1919; third alteration, Sanborn 1925, 1931. Also consulted were city directories and newspaper articles.

211 North Sixth Street

- M.P. Long House
- c.1919; from 1903 and later house
- Prairie School
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

A vernacular Prairie Box verging on high-style, the house is two stories in height, with a brick or brick veneered concrete foundation. The hipped roof has projecting boxed eaves, diamond-shaped asphalt shingles, and ridgecaps. Walls are stuccoed. Double hung wood windows are four-over-one in a vertical configuration. The entry door is wood, flush, with glazing and sidelights. Primary exterior features are a one-story, full-front porch, a one-story projecting side bay at south, and two chimneys. Architectural details include a broken pediment on the low-gabled porch roof; beefy squared wood piers; and a concrete-capped solid brick balustrade.

Sanborn charts the structural evolution. In situ, 1903, is a one-story house with a rear projection and porches at the front and south side; the front porch is shown extended to full width by 1907. By 1919, a full second floor and north bay has been added and the front porch extended toward street: this configuration remains to the present.

Ancillary buildings: one-story shed abutting alley on south, 1907; small addition to north side, 1913; no structure shown, 1919. Emulating house style, a stuccoed, two-story double garage-apartment with hipped roof appears by 1925; remains to present. The garage is accessed by single driveway shared by number 207 at south.

The house was built for M.P. Long, a businessman, civic leader, and longtime associate of oilman-philanthropist Lew Wentz. The Long family resided there for several decades. The present house appears remarkably intact to its 1919 configuration.

217 North Sixth Street

- C.D. Harper House
- c.1907
- Queen Anne
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

Situated at the southeast corner of Sixth and Chestnut, the C.D. Harper house is a striking, well-preserved example of the simplified Queen Anne style. Its owner-builder, Carl D. Harper (1873-1957), arrived in Ponca City from Kansas in 1901 to manage the Ponds Lumber Company. A community leader for five decades, he was in the lumber business for 35 years and in real estate for 15 years (C.D. Harper Dies, Services are Friday, *Ponca City News*, May 28,

1957). As verified by city directories and various news articles, Harper family members are known to have resided in the house until at least the late 1950s.

Built initially around 1907, the house was altered to its present form by 1919. Two stories in height, it has a composition-shingled, steep-pitched gabled roof, with a second offset gable on the front, and lower cross gables. Walls are clad in aluminum siding. A one-story, L-shaped porch with a low hipped roof wraps from the front at west to the north side. There, it meets a two-story, gable-roofed projection with angled corners. On the south, this form is echoed in a full-height, gabled bay with corner cut-outs at the first-floor level.

For the Queen Anne style, its details are relatively simple. Fishscale shingles adorn the gable ends, and square, tapered porch posts boast a stick motif painted to contrast with the body of the house. Similarly painted, in the same shade of dusky violet, are the window trim, the horizontal banding on the gable fronts, and the vertical edging on the house corners and bays. The expansive front porch has stone-capped, stone piers and a balustrade of the same material. The latter feature has an upper course of stone laid in an open pattern forming solids and voids. There are two entry doors: a wood-paneled, glazed front door asymmetrically placed on the projecting west facade, and a secondary doorway in the recess of the north-side ell. Under the porch, the façade has a front-facing triple window with double-hung wood sash and a smaller leaded glass window in the north ell. Remaining windows are simple double-hung wood sash.

Alterations to the house are well-documented in Sanborn. The c.1907 structure is shown with a full-front porch but no north ell, until one appears in 1919. Also by that year, an existing two-story rear projection has been extended to the east, giving the house its present configuration.

Outbuildings also underwent change. A one-story shed at the center rear of the property is shown in 1907. By 1913, this has been supplanted by a larger, one-and-one-half-story structure. This building was further expanded to the west, given an integral north-facing porch, and shown as a dwelling by 1919. The first garage on the property, built between the primary and secondary dwellings, did not appear until after 1925. Both ancillary structures exist in that form to the present day.

The property has considerable integrity, as the present house fits the footprint of the 1919 dwelling, and the ancillary buildings date to the period between 1925 and 1931. All structures on the property have been well maintained: except for the presence of aluminum siding, they exhibit no significant exterior alterations. Both the secondary dwelling, addressed as 610 East Chestnut, and the one-story rear garage, are accessed from that side street. The C.D. Harper house is an obvious contributor to the Gateway Historic District. The addition of aluminum siding eliminates it from consideration as a National Register nominee.

218 North Sixth Street

- C.O. Johnson House
- 1919
- Prairie School
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

This two-story Prairie Box on a stone foundation has a low-hipped, asphalt-shingled roof and hipped dormers on all sides. Walls are clad with vinyl siding. A one-story, concrete porch with stone piers wraps to the north. There are paired single windows with wood sash above and a triple window below.

Noteworthy details are the wood paneled entry door with stained glass, wood porch piers, and a trellised stone balustrade. Originally on site was a one-story house, c.1907, with a shallow front porch and a small integral porch on north rear. By 1913, the structure had been modified to its present appearance, with the addition of a full second story, a rear porch, and a front porch extension to the side.

Outbuildings: small one-story shed on alley, c.1907; larger one and one-half-story structure in same location, c.1913; smaller shed to south, later razed. Sanborn 1919 shows a one and one-half-story building as a garage.

The property is prominently situated on a corner lot. While visible, a deck addition at the side rear does not significantly impact its historic character. The alley garage is side-accessed from Chestnut Street.

C.O. Johnson (1869-1948) was a banker, rancher, and businessman who made the Run in 1893, staked a claim, then returned to Kansas until 1909, when he settled in Ponca City. Johnson family members occupied the house until 1956.

Documentation sources: Sanborn maps: 1907, when the house first appears; 1913, 1919, 1925, 1931; newspapers.

300 Block—Chestnut to Broadway

The 300 block contains 9 contributing properties with construction dates ranging from 1906 to 1924. One property is noncontributing due to later construction and modern appearance. Four architectural styles are represented: 1 Folk Victorian (1906), 3 Bungalow/Craftsman (1911, 1915, and 1924), 4 Prairie School (all 1906), and one maverick Ranch (1952). One property has been evaluated as a likely candidate for individual listing on the National Register.

300 North Sixth Street

- H.P and Margaret Gott House
- 1924 as remodeled from one-story 1908 house
- Craftsman Style
- Contributes to the Gateway Historic District
- Potentially eligible for individual National Register listing

This is a charming, two and one-half-story Craftsman on a stone foundation with an asphalt-shingled, moderate-pitched, cross-gabled roof and gabled- and shed-roofed side projections. Walls are painted weatherboard with wood shingles at the gable ends. The one-story porch at front has a low-pitched, side-gabled roof with exposed rafter ends; squared wood, composite columns with stickwork detail on concrete-capped stone piers; a simple wood balustrade; and concrete urns. A round-head entry door is inset into an arched opening with gabled cap; the entry is framed by triangular knee braces. Paired double and single windows have wood sash and transoms.

The original one-story house, c.1908, was built by Kansas cooler king H.P. Gott and wife Margaret, who resided there until their 1915 departure for

Winfield. In 1924, this structure was extensively remodeled to its present-day appearance by George C. Cannon for owner Ethel Post, who converted it to a boarding house.

Ancillary building: side-facing, two-story garage-apartment shown in Sanborn 1925; remains to present day. The garage is accessed from Chestnut Street. The property has high visibility location at northwest corner of Sixth and Chestnut.

Documentation sources: 1925 and 1931 Sanborns show the house in its two and one-half-story, remodeled configuration. Historical data was obtained from neighborhood group research and the Streich files at the Pioneer Woman Museum. No information was found on the appearance of the 1908 house.

301 North Sixth Street

- R.C. Walker House
- c.1952
- Ranch Style
- Noncontributing due to age and appearance

A classic one-story, 1950s Ranch, this house has a rear L-extension and angled wood deck on the north and east. Construction is frame with buff colored brick veneer and slab-on-grade foundation. The composition-shingled, low-pitched hipped roof has deep boxed eaves extending over the entry. Details include metal “porch” supports with a geometric motif and a knee-height, built-in stone planter below a front picture window. Windows are divided-light metal casement. The replacement entry door is wood with inset glazing. The integral two-car garage projects at the north front. The house was

built for R.C. Walker, community leader and owner of Walker Drug for a quarter-century. The Walker family occupied house until 1969.

The property is on a corner lot with high visibility; however the rear yard is screened from view by a high wood fence. In terms of scale, the house is comparable to several of the smaller, one-story district houses of earlier vintage. Its low-pitched, hipped roof is similar in configuration to the district's Prairie School and Bungalow examples. Similarly, the planar wall surfaces, use of brick, and absence of extravagant ornamental detail echo those same characteristics generally found in the older buildings. Finally, the property's front and side setbacks conform to those of the district as a whole.

Documentation sources: Kay County Assessor's tax records; neighborhood research; Mrs. R.C. Walker.

304 North Sixth Street

- Edward and Frances Smith Catron House
- c.1906 with later additions and alterations
- Folk Victorian (modified)
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

The one-story house was built initially in simplified Folk Victorian style and later modified to emulate surrounding Prairie Box structures. Its moderate-pitched, asphalt-shingled roof has a front hipped dormer. A post-1931 shed-roofed addition is on the south. Frame walls are painted weatherboard on a stone foundation. The full-width porch has three earlier squared stone columns and a single decorative metal support above the stair pier. Original true divided light windows have an angled lancet arch motif on the upper sash; applied diamond-shaped detail on façade windows is a later addition. Shutters are

modern. The two-story, double garage-apartment at the lot rear appears on the 1931 but not the 1925 Sanborn. The garage faces Sixth Street and is accessed from the front driveway. Except for a minor addition on south front, the present-day house fits the footprint of the 1925 Sanborn dwelling. Cosmetic façade alterations do not adversely impact its historic significance.

This was the home of Frances Smith Catron and husband, Edward M. Catron, who arrived in Ponca City in 1903. “First lady of music in Ponca City,” Mrs. Catron was supervisor of music in the city school system for 37 years; active in state, regional, and national music education organizations; and taught piano, elocution, and voice from a studio in the residence. Mr. Catron was a long-time local attorney.

Documentation sources: 1925 & 1931 Sanborn maps; city directories; newspapers; historic photographs; neighborhood group research in Streich files, Pioneer Woman Museum.

309 North Sixth Street

- Margaret Lessert House
- 1906
- Prairie School
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

A simple American Foursquare with 1-story projection at rear; this has an asphalt-shingled, pyramidal hipped roof with overhanging boxed eaves and walls sheathed in weatherboards above a stone foundation. The façade has paired single windows with wood sash above, a triple window below; and a wood entry door with glazing at north. The gabled-roof, full-width porch has

simple squared wood posts, a balustrade with stones laid up in a trellised pattern of alternating solids and voids, and concrete urns.

Accessory building: 1925 and 1931 Sanborns show a two-story, double garage-apartment at the lot rear; addressed in 1925 as 309½. The front-accessed extant structure has a front hipped dormer and exposed rafters.

Built at a significant cost by O.F. Keck and Reese Hoylman, Sr. in 1906, this was the residence of Margaret Lessert (1867-1950). As a child, Margaret Kavanaugh moved from Richmond, Kentucky to Winfield, Kansas, where she was educated in a convent. In 1887, she married Louis B. Lessert, an Osage rancher who died in 1921. She received the 4-bedroom house in a 1910 divorce settlement, rearing her four children and residing there until 1948.

Documentation sources: 1917, 1925, 1935 Sanborn maps; city directories; 1910 tax assessments, obituary. Kay County records show Louis Lessert bought the property in 1898 for \$730; obtained a \$2,650 mortgage from Farmers National Bank in 1906. The present-day house fits footprint of the 1925 and 1931 dwellings as shown on Sanborn. No significant exterior alterations are evident.

310 North Sixth Street

- Robert P. Baughman House
- c.1906
- Prairie School
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

This classic vernacular Prairie Box has low-pitched, asphalt-shingled roof with projecting boxed eaves, a hipped dormer at center front, and a full-height south bay. Walls are weatherboard over a stone foundation, with paired single

wood sash windows on the second-story façade and a triple window below. The glazed wood-paneled entry door is offset to the north. The full front porch wraps to the south side under the projecting lower-pitch, hipped roof; it has squared wood columns with applied stickwork detail. A trellised stone balustrade is laid up in checkerboard pattern of alternating solids and voids; decorative concrete urns are also present. Sanborns 1919, 1925, and 1931 show a shared one-story, three-bay garage straddling the north property line. The garage is accessed by a common driveway from the front. The present-day structures appear virtually unchanged from those shown in early photographs, fitting 1919 and later Sanborn footprints.

The house was built for R.P. Baughman, a founding partner in American Lumber Company, an early Ponca City lumber business. Baughman was active in civic affairs and served as mayor in 1905 for an abbreviated term. Family members resided in the house for more than two decades.

Documentation sources: 1919, 1925, and 1931 Sanborn maps; city directories; newspapers; historic photographs; neighborhood group research in Streich files; list of Ponca City mayors, 1893-1989.

313 North Sixth Street

- Viersen-Middlebusher House
- c.1906
- Prairie School
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

An American Foursquare, this has a composition-shingled hipped roof and dormer and projecting boxed eaves. Weatherboard walls surmount a brick foundation over and older limestone foundation. The façade has paired double

windows with wood sash above, asymmetrically placed windows below; and a glazed, wood-paneled entry to the north. The full-width, concrete porch has a hipped roof, brick piers with battered wood posts, and a simple wood balustrade.

Accessory building: a one and one-half-story, one-bay garage at rear with front access is shown on 1925 and 1931 Sanborn maps. The present-day structure fits the footprint of the 1925-1931 dwelling on Sanborns. No significant exterior alterations are evident from that date.

Edgar B. and Mattie M. Viersen lived on the property from 1906 to 1943. In that year, it was sold for \$6,000 to the Middlebusher family, which included three spinster sisters: Nellie Grace, Hazel Gertrude, and Marjorie Mildred. They resided there until the surviving sister went to a nursing home in 1999. A stone foundation under a brick one attests to existence of earlier structure, probably pre-1906.

Documentation sources: 1925, 1931 Sanborn maps; city directories; 1910 tax assessments. Property abstract of present owners, Tom and Laurie Hoddy.

314 North Sixth Street

- Harry Cragin House
- c.1906
- Prairie School
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

A straightforward Prairie Box of painted weatherboard on a stone foundation, this house has a low-pitched, asphalt-shingled projecting roof with boxed eaves; hipped dormers on the north, east, and south, and a nearly flat projecting roof over the full-width front porch. The façade approaches

symmetry, with paired single windows of wood sash above, a slightly off-center wood-paneled, glazed entry, and a central staircase. The porch has round columns on squared stone piers and a simple wood balustrade with squared balusters. Shutters are modern.

Sanborn 1925 shows a small dwelling addressed as 314½ attached to a shared garage at rear. This structure is not present on the 1919 version; however, it is shown but not addressed on the 1931 map. The three-bay garage at the rear of the lot is accessed from the front. This present-day structure is virtually identical to that in historic photos, and its footprint fits 1919, 1925, and 1931 Sanborns.

A “colorful pioneer” and range-rider in the Cherokee Strip before the Run, Harry Cragin (1879-1959) joined neighbor R.P. Baughman’s lumber business, then developed eight independently-owned yards in three states; invested in oil exploration; partnered in Cragin-Hickman hardware; and was Ponca City’s first mayor under the Commission form of government (1920-22). Cragin and family occupied the house for forty-odd years.

Documentation sources: 1919, 1925, and 1931 Sanborn maps; city directories; newspapers; historic photographs; neighborhood group research in Streich files.

317 North Sixth Street

- George Gephart House
- 1915
- Bungalow
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

This classic bungalow with a low-hipped, shingled roof and center-front blind dormer has replacement vinyl siding over a stone foundation. Paired single windows with wood sash flank the off-center, wood-paneled and glazed entry. The full-front porch has an elliptical overhead arch and round side arches, battered stone piers, a stone balustrade with trellised upper course, and decorative urns. A screened breezeway addition connects the one-story, two-car garage to the house. A freestanding double garage is shown in this location, Sanborn 1925: the structure has been converted to dwelling in Sanborn 1931, with a small garage built between the converted dwelling and house. The side-facing extant garage is accessed from Broadway. The present-day structure fits the footprint of the original. The house is situated on high-visibility corner lot: its breezeway addition is compatible with the historic character.

Little is known about Gephart or his family. The house is one of several on North Sixth built by O.F. Keck. The *Ponca City Courier* gives 1915 as the definitive construction date, calling it “finely finished throughout, modern in every respect, and one of the best in the city.”

Documentation sources: 1925, 1931 Sanborn maps; city directories; *PC Courier*, July 15, 1915.

318 North Sixth Street

- Frank-Clawson House
- 1911
- Bungalow
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

A typical bungalow with painted weatherboard over a stone foundation, the house has a moderate-pitched roof with wide overhanging eaves and exposed

rafter ends. There is a shed-roofed dormer over a shallow bay on the south and a second shed dormer on the north. The full-width, concrete porch has a centered stair leading to an off-center replacement entry door, glazed and wood paneled, with Victorian-style details. Under the porch are a wood, double-hung triple window and a broad single window. Squared stone columns at each end are connected by a concrete-capped stone balustrade with eyebrow weepholes. Sanborns 1925 and 1931 show a side-facing, one-story garage abutting the alley at the south property line. The extant garage is accessed from Broadway.

The dwelling was built by or for Ben Frank, about whom little is known. Frank lived in the house for a decade, after which members of the Millard E. Clawson family occupied it for approximately forty years. In 1911, the *Ponca City Democrat* reported: "Ben Frank has begun work on a handsome dwelling on north 6th street which is said to be a model of beauty, comfort and convenience."

The present-day structure fits the footprint of the original dwelling as shown in Sanborns. Cosmetic exterior alterations do not affect its contributing status. The bungalow is located on a high visibility corner lot and has a charming fenced garden in back.

Documentation sources: 1925 and 1931 Sanborn maps; city directories; newspaper brief, July 20, 1911 gives definitive construction date.

400 Block—Broadway to Hazel

The 400 block, east side, was not fully developed until after 1939, when it was surveyed by metes and bounds. Prior to that time, it was a School Reserve containing a single house and attendant garage. For both east and west blocks fronting Sixth Street, 6 properties are extant, with construction dates ranging from 1916 to 1947. Two architectural styles are represented: 2 Prairie Style (1916, 1919) and 4 Colonial Revival (1925, 1943, and 1947).

401 North Sixth Street

- John and Karolyn Hron House
- 1947
- Cape Cod-style Colonial Revival
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

A one and one-half story Cape Cod-style Colonial Revival, this has a side-gabled, steeply pitched composition-shingle roof with paired gabled dormers at front and a full-width shed dormer at rear. Walls are sheathed in replacement vinyl siding above a concrete foundation. The façade is symmetrical, with triple windows of double-hung wood sash flanking the entry, and a centered portico with a triangular pediment over Doric columns. A stuccoed, stepped chimney is located on the south elevation. To the lot rear, a side-facing, two-story double garage-apartment emulates the style of the primary dwelling: wood shingles underlie composition shingles on gabled roof with false dormers; walls are vinyl over wood siding. A compatible one-story rear addition at east, c.1986, connects garage to house. The second-floor garage apartment is addressed as 609 Broadway; and the garage is accessed from that street.

The property has a high visibility corner location. The rear addition does not significantly compromise historic character.

In 1939, the block was surveyed by metes and bounds. Property chain of title is as follows: George Connors to T.J. Cuzalina, 1945 for \$2,200; T.J. Cuzalina, mortgage from Security Bank, 1947 for \$15,000. Cuzalina, a prominent local druggist, arranged financing for his daughter and son-in-law, Karolyn and John Hron. The Hrons resided there from 1947 to 1958, after which there was a succession of owners.

Documentation sources: Kay County records: Book 150:227; 153:445; 195:152. Communications on site with current home-owner; telephone interviews with R Bobby Gibson and Karolyn Hron.

402 North Sixth Street

- L.S. Barnes House
- 1916
- Prairie Style
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District
- Potentially eligible for individual National Register listing

This is a high-style, stuccoed Prairie house designed by Solomon Layton and built by O.F. Keck. The two and one-half story house has a massive red rounded-tile, hipped roof with ridge caps, deep, overhanging boxed eaves, and front and side hipped dormers. The foundation is brick veneer over concrete. One- and two-story wings have ribbon windows, brackets, and exposed rafter ends. The tiled concrete porch has a flat roof and horizontal panel detail; applied brackets over square stuccoed posts with stuccoed panel detail; a solid, concrete-capped balustrade wrapped at the patio on the southwest corner; and

concrete pedestal urns. The sidelighted entry is offset to the north; its door is wood paneled with glazing. True divided light wood windows are double hung and casement; the front picture window has a transom.

A one-story, hipped-roof, double garage at the north rear is accessed from the front. Except for plantings, the present-day appearance is nearly identical to the original 1916 house. The property is located on a high visibility lot at the northwest corner of Sixth and Broadway.

Louis S. Barnes, the original owner, was the son of Ponca City's founder, B.S. Barnes. The younger Barnes was a merchant, community leader, and financier who established the first local savings and loan, enabling early residents to borrow and build homes rather than rent. Barnes died in 1956; his widow continued to live in the house until 1973.

Documentation sources: 1925, 1931 Sanborn maps; city directories; newspapers. Neighborhood group research, Streich files, Pioneer Woman Museum; on-site communications with current homeowner.

406 North Sixth Street

- Spicer House
- c.1919
- Prairie School
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

A stuccoed Prairie house with a low hipped roof under diamond-shaped composition shingles, this fine example has deep overhanging eaves with coving at juncture of roof and walls and a flat-roofed, one-story bay on the north. The symmetrical façade has a projecting concrete porch with a flat roof over squared, stuccoed posts with stuccoed panel detail; the porch parapet has

same. The foundation is concrete, and concrete also caps the balustrade, porch, and post tops. Double-hung and wood casement windows have diamond-shaped true divided lights on the upper sash. The entry door is wood paneled with glazing and sidelights. A single-bay, basement garage incorporated into the rear of the house is accessed from the alley at the west.

The present-day structure conforms to the 1925 and 1931 dwellings shown on Sanborn. A wood deck addition at the rear is not considered a significant alteration.

The house was owned by Hattie A. Morris from 1921-22, Hattie A. Spicer the following two years, and carries the latter name. By 1938, its owner was Leigh Taliaferro, a manager for oilman-philanthropist Lew Wentz.

Documentation sources: 1925, 1931 Sanborn maps; city directories; newspapers; neighborhood group research, Streich files, Pioneer Woman Museum.

409 North Sixth Street

- M.M. Secrest House
- c.1925
- Colonial Revival
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

An imposing two-story Colonial Revival of brick veneer on a concrete foundation, the house has a side-gabled, moderate-pitched roof tiled in Spanish-style terra cotta, with corbeled brackets under the eaves. Features include a one-story, five-sided bay on the north elevation, gable-end chimneys, and brick quoins. The symmetrical façade has formal details: a brick string course at the second floor; triple wood-sash windows in a nine-over-one

configuration flanking the entry; and stone window sills throughout. A flat-roofed classical portico on Doric wood columns frames the glazed, wood-paneled door and sidelights, and a decorative iron railing is set above.

At the lot's south rear, the one-story, double garage has a side-gabled, tiled roof. A flat-roofed shed is attached to the front-accessed garage on the east. For the property as a whole, no significant exterior alterations are evident.

The block was surveyed by metes and bounds in 1939. Property chain of title is for the building and lot, as the block was formerly a school reserve and the house and garage were the sole structures there for two decades: Merle Paynter to M.M. Secrest, mortgage from Albright Title & Trust, 1940, for \$18,500; M.M. Secrest to Guy Conner, mortgage from Albright Title & Trust, 1942, for \$8,500. Little is known at present about either Secrest or Conner.

Documentation sources: newspapers; Kay County records: Book 129:131; 166:447. Sanborn 1925 shows the house and garage in situ.

413 North Sixth Street

- J. Downing Johnson House
- 1947
- Simplified Eclectic Colonial Revival
- Former parsonage moved to site and remodeled
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

To create this unusual house, a parsonage was moved to the site and remodeled as a two-story, simplified eclectic Colonial Revival with a composition-shingled, moderate-pitched roof. On the first story are board and batten siding and casement, fixed, and circular windows. The entry is framed by a narrow portico with a low-pitched, triangular pediment on slender, fluted,

Doric wood columns. The door itself is a Victorian-style replacement. There is a concrete stoop. The second floor has horizontal board siding and asymmetrical four-over-one windows. An integral single-car garage occupies the one-story north wing. There are two primary alterations and additions by subsequent owners which post-date the original remodel. At the east garage rear, a room was added by the Wilsons in the mid-1960s. In the early 1960s, the Turners enclosed an existing screened porch on the south and converted it to a kitchen and family room.

The most eclectic and probably most altered house in the district, it nevertheless contributes in terms of mass, materials, siting, architectural character, and longevity.

A metes and bounds survey was conducted in 1939. Property chain of title: J. Carpenter to Myrtle Cogdell for \$1,650, 1943; Myrtle Cogdell to Glenn Paris for \$2,200, 1945; Glenn Paris to 1st Christian Church for \$2,200, 1947; 1st Christian Church to Dr. Charles Turner, with improvements \$8,800; \$6,600, c.1959. Turner family sold property to Wilson family, c.1965; Wilsons to J. Downing Johnson family, 1969. Johnsons resided there until 2001. Parsonage of 1st Christian Church moved to site, 1947, and modified in subsequent years.

Documentation sources: newspapers; Kay County records: Book 150:296; 162:76; 162:232; 214:636. Telephone interviews with Turner and Johnson family members, 1st Christian Church.

417 North Sixth Street

- Guy O. Bailey House
- 1944
- Cape Cod-style Colonial Revival
- Former barn moved to site and remodeled
- Contributes to Gateway Historic District

This attractive, one and one-half story Cape Cod Colonial Revival house was converted from a wood frame barn moved to the site. Construction is stone, or stone veneer, and weatherboard siding on a concrete foundation. The steep-pitched, front-gabled roof has composition shingles, paired gabled dormers at front, a shed dormer at rear, and a central chimney. The symmetrical façade has double-hung, six-over-six true divided light, double windows flanking the door, and a concrete stoop. In the north wing, an integral garage faces the rear of the lot to the east.

Recent additions consist of the following: side and rear yard fencing; a wood-railed, wood deck in front at the property's northwest corner; a replacement wood paneled entry door with Victorian details; and a round-head canvas awning over entry.

The corner lot, to the immediate south of Pioneer Park, has high visibility. Circa 1998 alterations, while extensive, are reversible. The garage is accessed from the side street, Hazel, on the north. Currently the house is a rental property.

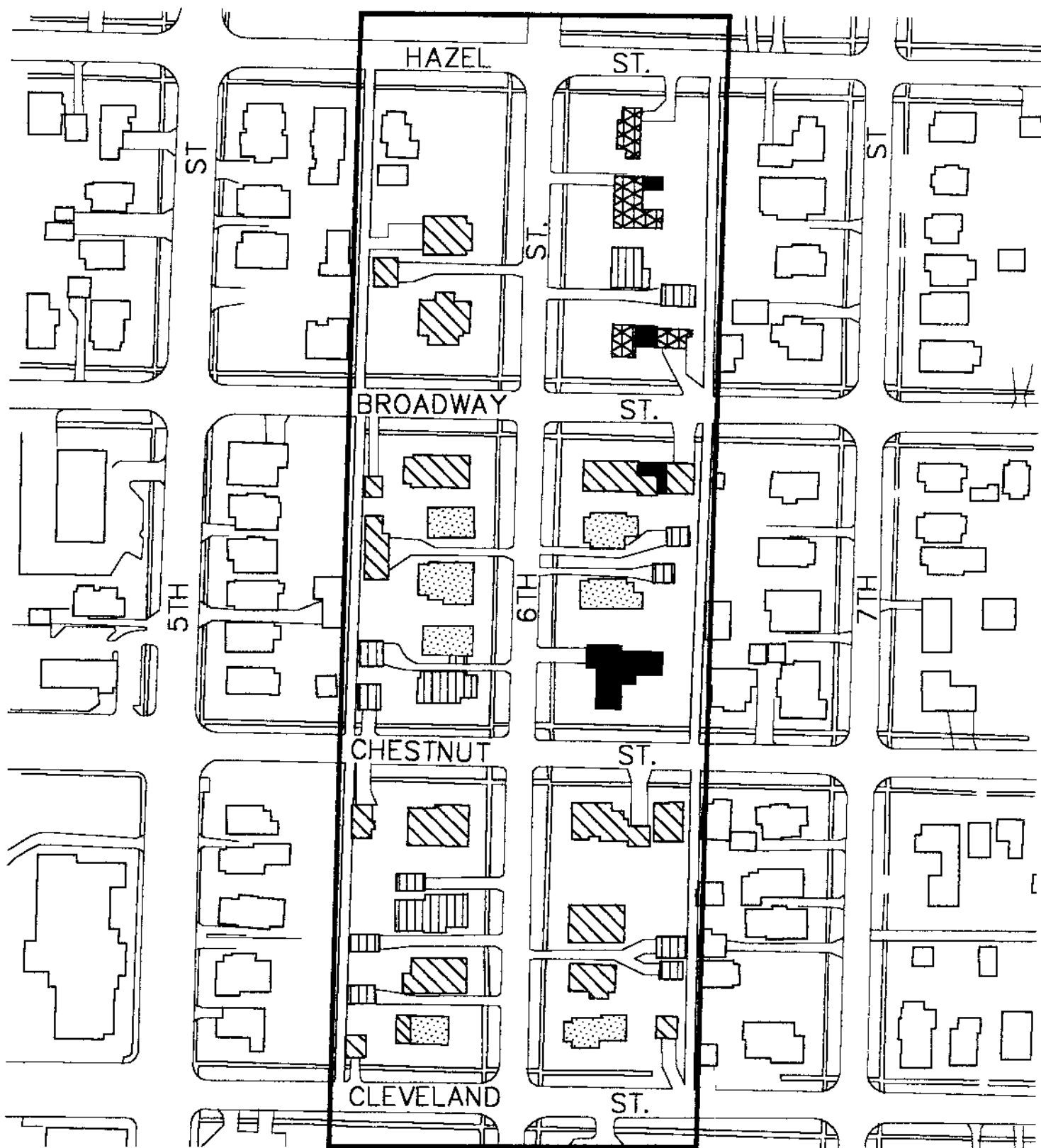
The building site was surveyed by metes and bounds in 1939. Property chain of title is as follows: L.S. Barnes to Merle Paynter for \$1,650, 1939; Merle Paynter to Guy O. Bailey for \$1,950, 1943; court decree for Bailey Estate, 1959. House built around older barn moved to site by Guy O. Bailey in 1944. A Citgo

union head and two-term state representative, Bailey lived there with his family from construction to his death in 1957.

Documentation sources: newspapers; city directories; telephone interviews with Mrs. J.D. Tomlinson, daughter of Guy O. Bailey, and Doug Evans, brother of current owner Tom Evans. Kay County records: Book 137:612; 138:601; 247:376.

The Streetscape

As significant as any of the buildings previously described are the elements that comprise the district streetscape. These are the brick streets themselves, with their patterns of running bond and herringbone; the granite sidewalks; and several stone hitching posts with their metal rings still intact.



Scale: 1"=150'








FIG.

5

CONSTRUCTION DATES

GATEWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

LEGEND

-  1900-1909
-  1910-1919
-  1920-1929
-  1940-1949
-  After 1950

HISTORIC CONTEXT

OKLAHOMA

With an area as great as that of Ohio, Kentucky or Tennessee, and equally as well supplied with running streams, and with a soil unexcelled, this new country has a wonderful future; the altitude being sufficient to render the air pure and healthy. The Summers are long and the Winters are usually short and very mild—so little cold weather that a farmer could often plow every month of the year.

The Homestead Laws, with a brief description of OKLAHOMA TERRITORY, including the celebrated CHEROKEE OUTLET, published by G.W. Doughty, Sr., Washington City, D.C., 1893, p. 5.

Soil to Oil

It was September 16, 1893, almost noon, on a blistering, bone-dry Saturday. Hordes of people and animals, wagons, buggies, and all manner of conveyance, shuffled and strained at the south Kansas border. Suddenly, a shot rang out, and this avalanche of flesh, metal, wood, and dust cascaded into Oklahoma Territory, U.S.A. They were men and women; young and old; white, black, both, and neither. They came from neighboring states; from distant points on the American continent; even from faraway Europe. A motley assemblage, unruly and ruthlessly determined, all raced to claim in a plot of ground the hope for a new start, a new life, in a new land. Treaties with the resident Tribal Councils notwithstanding, the Cherokee Outlet had been opened to homesteaders.

The lucky ones staked their claims, pitched tents, scavenged for water and food, then began to plan for the future, which would happen right away. Town sites would be surveyed and platted; streets would be crudely marked out. Tent dwellers would draw lots for home sites; and because two things—possession

and improvements—were required for an eventual deed, board shacks would pop up without delay. The first of these, a simple, two-room shelter, would appear two blocks from the ramshackle main avenue in the subdivision of Hartman on a street to be named North Sixth. After a lively debate, the town itself would get a name: Ponca City, Oklahoma (NCOHA 1995: 86-8; Homestead Laws 1893: 23). All this would happen mere days after the 1893 Run.

While the future was unfolding, everyone turned to focus on the present. Familiar routines were re-established and everyday life took hold. Leaders of the newly forming community emerged. They came, as a matter of course, from the enterprises and services a new town needs most: banking and finance, dry goods and groceries, medicine, education and—underlying it all—the building trades. Families need shelter; businesses need offices, storerooms, and stores; teachers and students need schools. A new town needs a structure. More importantly, perhaps, it needs an identity.

This Ponca City was to acquire, and shortly. Oil had been discovered in Oklahoma as early as 1859, the same year the epoch-making first well was drilled in Titusville, Pennsylvania. But, until the invention of the internal combustion engine around 1900 and the subsequent proliferation of gasoline-fueled cars, oil was considered more of a nuisance than a valuable commodity. After 1900, with the arrival of prospectors from the East, exploration for oil and gas became serious business. When, in 1905, the Ponca City Oil, Gas, and Mineral Company struck gas in what is now Pioneer Park, gas mains could be installed throughout the city (NCOHA 1995: 125-7). But the one big strike—the oil which would put Ponca on the map—remained elusive.

That boom finally hit in 1911, with E.W. Marland, the 101 Ranch, and the Mid-Continent Field. A Pennsylvania native, Marland had made and lost a fortune before coming west to explore the geological formations he was convinced would produce gushers (NCOHA 1995: 128). Ponca City would never be the same.

Growing the Community

Cities of from 2,000 to 10,000 inhabitants will sleep (many for the first time in life) on their own soil. The promised "vine and fig tree," however, will be supplanted, no doubt, by the tall grass and the blue sky.

The Homestead Laws, 1893, p. 7.

From the first, the town's builders had huddled together, planning its focus, its character, and its direction. They knew that with no natural barriers to expansion, housing could spread from the commercial center in all four compass directions. But, locations closest to downtown were choice. Three close-in subdivisions were platted, the first two—Lynchville and Bluffdale—with names alluding to a scruffy origin. A third, to the immediate northeast of the city's main street, had the more sedate appellation of Hartman. It was April and May, 1894. Spring had arrived, and serious building could begin.

At first, lumber was scarce, rocks hard to find, and bricks and cement nonexistent (NCOHA 1995: 74). As a result, the earliest buildings were simple, utilitarian, and fast to erect. Oscar F. Keck, a builder by trade from Denver, had wasted no time. In but a few days after the Run, he had put up the first frame building in town. A no-frills, two-room affair, it was located between

Cleveland and Chestnut at what is now 210 North 6th Street (*Ponca City News*, Sunday, June 17, 1928, page 2).

As with many others, this mere scrap of a dwelling would evolve rapidly. Once the town and its inhabitants had begun to prosper, the early builders knew, they would modify or replace the shacks. For Keck's house, building would go on non-stop. The first alteration, in 1901, was typically newsworthy:

O.F. Keck has nearly finished the large addition to his house, and he will soon have one of the best residences in town. Fowler & Gott have the contract for making the water connections with all modern conveniences, including porcelain lined bath tub, wash bowls, sinks etc. It does one good to see the institution of modern conveniences and improvements by our property owners and to know that we have firms capable and prepared to do the work.

Ponca City Daily Courier, Tuesday Evening, March 26, 1901.

Time passed. Board shanties gave way to solid wood buildings. The wide and muddy main street became, in name if not fact, Grand Avenue. False fronts there and on the side streets went up, then almost as quickly came down, to be replaced by solid, masonry two and three stories. On those buildings, many of which remain today, early names stand out, topping the stone and brick fronts: Hart, Douglass, Stiles Block, Rip Van Winkle. Others also memorialize their dates of construction: J.P. Souigny 1909, Donahoe Bros. 1909, Harter 1924, Nonnamaker 1929. A handful boasts of the original use or purpose: Gill's Mortuary, Kress, Moose, Community Building. And one, secure in its name recognition alone, carries only a logo—an entwined PCN, for Ponca City News. In the first decades of the new century, these buildings were conveying a serious message: Ponca City, the town, is striving to become a commercial-industrial hub, an agricultural center, and a true city.

Progress, a recurrent anthem, was steady and swift. Even in the days right after the Run many things had been accomplished. The railroad, refusing at first to recognize Ponca City, had been coerced by town founder B.S. Barnes into making a regular stop (NCOHA 1995: 87). The community's first school, a one-room building at the southwest corner of Sixth and Grand, had been built within two months' time (Ruth 1957: 201; NCOHA 1995: 89). Apparently, in the zeal to develop, competition between towns had no limits. Unhappily for the new town of Cross, just a mile to the north, Ponca City promoters both bought and stole several of its buildings. One amazing coup was the railroad depot-master's house--paid for, jacked up, and rolled off in the dark of night. Thus, Ponca City was assured of a railroad depot, and little Cross was all but finished within six months (NCOHA 1995: 87-8).

Ponca was proud of its series of regional "firsts." In less than a year it had electric lights and a flour mill (NCOHA 1995: 88). A brickyard came about in short order. Located in what is now Garfield Park, bricks were formed from clay in the nearby creek, then cured and used to build much of downtown (NCOHA 1995: 91).

Because the city was determined to accommodate its growing population, bricks of another type also found a home. By 1921, the city's dirt streets were being paved with hard-fired, high quality red brick, putting Ponca in the rarefied group of trans-Mississippi towns having that attractive and durable street surfacing. Automobiles had arrived in the teens and, as livery stables began to give way, homeowners built and rebuilt garages at their back alleys (NCOHA 1995:120).

Solid masonry buildings of all types were going up to replace earlier, less substantial ones. Not to be overlooked was the need for impressive as well as

functional public and institutional buildings. The year 1916 was a big one for construction:

More substantial buildings are being erected and more valuable improvements under way in Ponca City at this time than at any time in the history of the city.

Improvements Under Way and Just Completed, *Ponca City Courier*, June 8, 1916

In addition to hotels—including the new Arcade—a bakery, and several stores on Grand Avenue, there was Marland's \$50,000 Grand home, all of brick or stone. On South Seventh Street, the new Catholic church was going up, in brick, at cost of \$20,000. In that same year, the now-familiar O.F. Keck was managing a payroll of another \$20,000 on the construction of the Civic Center Auditorium (Improvements, *Ponca City Courier*, June 8, 1916). As with so many residential structures, it, too, supplanted an older building similar in purpose; but the new edifice, in a stuccoed, Spanish Revival-Mission mix, followed the national craze for styles emulating the Old Southwest. By 1921, with the addition of east and west wings to accommodate the police and fire departments, the auditorium had become the centerpiece in the new Municipal Building complex (NCOHA 1995: 142).

And so the town grew, if not like Topsy, then without a formalized, comprehensive plan. That effort was undertaken in 1927, with Ponca City proud to boast it was the first city in the state to do so. By this time, the third decade of development, the city's infrastructure was firmly in place. The streets were wide, brick-paved, with concrete curb-and-gutter. A network of sidewalks facilitated pedestrian traffic. Santa Fe Railroad cars were a familiar sight and sound rumbling across Grand Avenue. There was also an airport; moreover,

the city had received the “unusual distinction” of being designated a regular air-mail stop on the Chicago-Dallas route (Crane 1927 Plan: 8). Ponca City was enjoying the boom.

This was not to say that things could not be improved, and the 1927 Plan noted several “deficiencies.” These included the lack of grade separation for railroad crossings on several major streets; the absence of zoning regulations governing building height and use; and the City’s inability to control development outside the city limits, i.e., to approve or deny subdivision platting in the exurban area. The plan recommended corrective action: street construction and widening to expedite traffic flow, including construction of railroad overpasses and modification of neighborhood street crossings; tree planting and roadway beautification; acquisition and expansion of school sites; park and playground development; and the creation and adoption of subdivision and zoning regulations. It also forecast an increase in population to 40,000 people by 1940 (Crane 1927 Plan: 11-24). But, as we know all too well, the Great Depression intervened, and that number was never attained.

In the meantime, while the twenties still roared, the city basked in reflected baronial splendor. E.W. Marland had his mansion on the hill, his gardens, and his polo grounds. Other industrious, philanthropic Easterners had arrived to share the riches, as surrounding farms and fields pumped out crude and refineries turned it into black gold. In the Civic Center, impressive public buildings had gone up, and downtown edifices giving credence to the name lined the Avenue Grand. There were churches built to last, attractive, modern schools, and well-tended parks. Fine brick streets under leafy green canopies enhanced the growing number of affluent neighborhoods, and Sixth Street was one of the most desirable. All in all, this town-becoming-a-city was a good

place to be. Oil had made it possible, but spirit and determination had made it happen. Ponca City's builders could be proud.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Alterations to Historic Fabric

For the district as a whole, alterations to historic fabric have been mostly minimal, appropriate where made, and non-intrusive—with two notable exceptions. These are replacement elements of an earlier period, usually Victorian, and the installation of non-historic siding.

The anachronistic use of Victorian-styled building components is seen in replacement doors and, to a lesser extent, porch detailing. Given the limited selection of readily available entry doors in any style other than Victorianaesque, their frequent appearance is somewhat understandable. But, Victoriana's mostly curvilinear lines and considerably more ornate features tend toward incompatibility with the squared and angled geometry of the architecture predominating in the district. Appropriately designed Colonial, Craftsman, and Prairie-vintage doors can be equally or more attractive than their Victorian counterparts, and they are very much more at home in their respective thresholds.

Whether vinyl, aluminum, or another man-made material, the installation of modern replacement siding is problematic. First, although manufacturers and installers might try to convince homeowners otherwise, the historic appearance of an affected building is compromised. Second, claims that the replacement siding “never needs maintenance” and/or “lasts forever” are exaggerated. Third, and probably most significant, is the impact the covering can have upon the historic fabric underneath. Penetration of moisture and the consequent development of fungi, molds, and rot can go undetected until the underlying fabric has suffered significant deterioration. Thus, not only has the original

fabric been lost, but the homeowner is also faced with a serious and expensive repair problem.

Streetscape Enhancement

The 1927 Plan recommends broad tree canopies lining many of the more distinctive residential streets, including Sixth. In fact, photographs of the street taken between 1910 and 1920 show a row of saplings carefully spaced between sidewalk and curb. Over time, most of these original plantings have died out, leaving large gaps in the streetscape continuum. In some instances, replacement trees such as the vase-shaped Bradford pear, which have an entirely different character from that of the original specimens, have been planted. The Sixth Street Neighborhood Group might well research historic plantings with an eye toward eventual replacement of the more brittle, short-lived specimens with broadly canopied varieties of street trees, such as the lacebark and other disease-resistant elms.

Equally important to the district streetscape are its north and south entry points. To the immediate southwest, the adjacent library block has recently assumed a new character. In spring 2001, all trees and shrubs at the northeast quadrant were removed to make way for a concrete parking lot. Although this corner now appears quite stark, new lighting fixtures have been installed and replacement vegetation is scheduled. These improvements should help to soften the hardscape and buffer the lot from the neighborhood. A bench or two would be a pleasant addition as well. Similarly, at the district's southeast edge, plantings to screen the junior high school parking lot would offer significant visual improvement.

Candidates for Future Survey

Following this intensive survey of the Gateway Historic District, a more limited reconnaissance survey of the adjacent residential areas would be a logical next effort. This windshield survey should encompass the area from First to Tenth Street and Grand to Highland. It should focus on possibilities for an expanded single district, or for designation of several pocket districts. Also, a cursory investigation suggests that several buildings in this larger area could be candidates for individual listing on the National Register.

Several early subdivisions, including Marland Addition, Acre Homes, and Hillcrest, merit inventory and study. In addition, individual structures on the west side, as well as the north and east, should be evaluated. Trout Funeral Home at 505 West Grand is one obvious example, but more modest bungalows and other types of resources such as the rock wall at Grand and Peachtree, should receive consideration as well.

In regard to future inventories, probably the most useful effort would be the development of a prioritized list of survey projects as part of a more comprehensive local/regional preservation planning process. This would require close collaboration among neighborhood groups, the Landmark Conservancy, downtown interests, and city, county, and state agencies. As a part of this effort, workshops on survey techniques, maintenance and repair of historic buildings, appropriate alterations to historic fabric, and other preservation-related topics could be presented. Local educational institutions not currently active in preservation also should be encouraged to participate.

Areas for Additional Research

A well-documented morphological study of Ponca City from settlement to the current day would provide a basic resource for future preservation, planning, tourism, and marketing purposes. Comparative studies of early Ponca City with Newkirk, Tonkawa, Enid, Stillwater, and other contemporary towns could offer important clues to the factors underlying growth, stagnation, or decline. For residential, commercial, and public buildings in the local area designed by specific architects—including John Duncan Forsyth, Solomon Layton, and William Caton, among others—an annotated list should be compiled and a subsequent study undertaken. This would constitute an initial step toward National Register nomination, as well as further the awareness and understanding of the city's impressive architectural heritage.

SUMMARY

Ponca City's North Sixth Street between the library and the park is a street of the first community builders, a name as accurate in the literal sense as it is the figurative. From the first board shack that went up days after the Run to the Prairie houses that closed out the 1920s, North Sixth Street drew a varied sampling of the people who built the town. Contractors and building suppliers, bankers and lawyers, doctors and druggists, merchants and managers, teachers, ranchers, three spinster sisters, and at least one single-parent-homemaker all occupied, in turn, the commodious, well-built houses.

No sleepy backwater would Ponca City be. Ever mindful of a progressive image, the builders kept current with architectural trends. Thus, at the turn of the Nineteenth Century, as the fussy Victorians and fancy Queen Annes faded from view, the builders eagerly embraced the new, all-American Prairie house. Straightforward in form and detail, sturdy to weather Oklahoma winds, with massive, sheltering roofs, dormers to brighten interiors, and broad porches to invite evening breezes, a Foursquare or Prairie Box was the perfect house for the place and time.

The Old West has always had its mavericks, though, so a couple of crafty bungalows and a handful of suspiciously Eastern revivals managed to sneak into the neighborhood. Local newshounds watched and duly reported each new groundbreaking, assuring readers of the worth and quality of the dwelling-to-be. Building—all building, it would seem—was a community affair.

Then, as now, location was everything. This particular three-block stretch of Sixth Street was close enough, but not too close, to downtown, the school, and

the city hall. It was just a short stroll to Father's office and a hop and a skip to the grocery for Mother. People walked, then.

Midway though the teens the automobile arrived as the street got paved in fine red brick, so the backyard sheds came down and garages went up instead. Suddenly everyone had to have a two-car garage, just in case, with an apartment over, for the help. Fortunately, the street with its double and triple-size lots could easily accommodate both. With scarcely a thought, the car was relegated to the back of the lot, where it belonged, leaving the shallow frontage open for pedestrian pursuits. Not only that, but the lot designers had cleverly positioned the corner-house garages to face the side streets. This meant fewer driveways on Sixth Street proper and a more continuous ribbon of grass tying front yard to front yard.

A good neighborhood can accommodate a modicum of change, and this one has. Except for one last block—a former school reserve on the east side of Sixth between Broadway and Hazel—the area was nearly built out by the close of the 1920s. Then, during and after World War II, the last unplatted block was surveyed by metes and bounds, and the new lot owners used ingenuity as well as more conventional means to get the housing they needed. A barn was moved to one corner lot and veneered in stone, while next door, a parsonage was transported to the site, turned around backwards to please L.S. Barnes, and built up and around. The last house in the neighborhood, a defiantly ranch-style yellow brick, went up around 1952.

With a preponderance of Prairie houses, a handful of Colonial Revivals, and a sprinkling of bungalow, Folk Victorian, and Queen Anne, the neighborhood today retains its architectural diversity. Several of these—three at last count—are sufficiently distinctive to merit individual nomination to the National

Register of Historic Places. But, as a historic district needs to be, the area also maintains a certain coherence of form, structure, and detail; moreover, it possesses a necessary integrity derived from leaving well enough alone. The homes are well-cared-for, the street has a sedate neighborliness, and the residents unquestionably enjoy their neighborhood. Yes, the Gateway Historic District qualifies as such in every sense of the term, but even more importantly, and in testament to those hardy pioneers who created it, North Sixth Street between the library and the park remains a very nice place to live.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Blumenson, John J.-G. *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1981.

Spare in text and with scarcely a handful of illustrative examples for each period, this work has limited utility even for a "guidebook." It does offer a fairly comprehensive "Index of Terms," as an aid to one's architectural edification. For example, if one knows the term, "apophyge," but not its physical appearance, one can find on page 86 a numbered arrow pointing to the first cylindrical, convex band above the "unenriched base" of a Tuscan column. And who could know but when an informational gem such as this might prove vital? Now, if one could only pronounce it....

Calloway, Stephen and Elizabeth Cromley, eds. *The Elements of Style: A Practical Encyclopedia of Interior Architectural Details from 1485 to the Present*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Cluttered, choppy "encyclopedia" of Anglo-American high-style building components from Tudor/Jacobean to what the authors call Beyond Modern. In addition to several thousand line drawings and photos, it offers capsule descriptions for each category of element in a given period, e.g., Late Georgian walls, staircases, and built-in furniture; British Victorian windows and doors; American Beaux Arts fireplaces and floors. This organization is handy for decorators wanting a look at representative details of a given period but less useful for scholarly study of the development and transition of one stylistic period, or single element, to another.

Crane, Jacob L. Jr. *The Development Plans of Ponca City, Oklahoma*. Ponca City Plan Commission, 1927.

A fascinating look at the city in 1927, and as projected beyond, by a consulting engineer who writes well and includes excellent graphics. Crane describes existing conditions and makes somewhat cautious recommendations in the City Beautiful mode. Major problems cited are few.

Gordon-Van Tine Co. *117 House Designs of the Twenties*. New York: The Athenaeum of Philadelphia and Dover Publications, Inc., 1992.

A comprehensive catalogue from the self-described “premier provider” of the prefabricated house of that decade. The Ready-Cut dwellings illustrated range from every variety of cottage/bungalow to farm houses to several manifestations of Colonial Revival. Each example has a perspective view, a useful plan, and a contemporary sales pitch. If your 1920s dwelling—or a reasonable facsimile thereof—isn’t here, it’s either stick-built, architect-designed, or not a 1920s house.

Historic Context for Ponca City, Management Region 2, prepared by the Ponca City Historic Preservation Advisory Panel, no date.

Well-written but undocumented paper containing a brief history of the town’s early development; a table of population growth from 1900 to 1980; and sections on commerce, transportation, and public buildings, as well as sketches of historic residential properties. There is also a list of local properties on the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory, with the inked notation “not current,” and another list of area properties on the National Register. The 38-page brief also contains a good bibliography, not annotated, which includes theses and unpublished material. Mention of the city’s Certified Local Government panel and dated bibliographic material would appear to date the document to 1987-88. This is an unfortunate and frustrating example of an effort undertaken with much diligence and expertise, but one having limited utility due to the absence of a preparation date and any citations.

THE
Homestead Laws,
with a brief description
OKLAHOMA TERRITORY
including the celebrated
CHEROKEE OUTLET,
on
INDIAN STRIP,
EMBRACING SEVEN MILLION ACRES,
or more than
FORTY THOUSAND CLAIMS,
Showing Who can take "Claims" and How,
also a complete
SECTIONAL MAP,
With every Quarter Section, Township and Range,
published by
G.W. DOUGHTY, Sr.,
(Late of Dalton, Sumner Co., Kan.,)
WASHINGTON CITY, D.C.
1893

With a cover-covering title nearly as inclusive as the contents, one is hard-pressed to say more. This is an evocative little facsimile booklet which spells out the myriad conditions for settlement, including a brief section on town sites.

Lancaster, Clay. *The American Bungalow, 1880-1930*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1995.

Lancaster's definition of a bungalow can seem all-encompassing. Among other unusual types, he includes a canvas-walled tent, the prairie-style house, and a Rustic Peristyle-court design. Based on research carried out in the 1950s, this thorough if polemical work also covers interiors, furnishings, site planning, and gardening. Chapters on origins of the term and native antecedents provide a useful context for understanding a building type that spanned fifty years.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.

Considered the basic resource for the identification of American vernacular architectural styles, the McAlesters offer both meaty descriptive essays and juicy, lesser-known tidbits of information. The book is scholarly but not stuffy, authoritative without affectation: It begins with a cursory overview of the Ancient Classical styles and ends with a mention of quonset huts and A-frames. Clearly drawn and labeled line drawings—on details of construction as well as elements of style—and well-chosen black-and-white photographs supplement an expertly written and cleanly organized text. Field-survey neophytes will discover in the succinct Pictorial Key an instructive guide to building typology. Scholars will find their copies well-thumbed in short order. Of particular note is the selection of illustrative examples: the Dallas-based authors give us a wide range of photos from coast to coast and, atypically, the Central and Southern states also receive their due. There is but one peculiarity: for reasons not explained, the authors avoid the term, bungalow, using instead, craftsman, to describe virtually all varieties of the style. Be that as it may, this is a blue-ribbon, first-class work in every respect.

Mitchell, Richard E., David W. Moore, Jr., and Sophie Roark. Historic Resources Survey of the Buena Vista Heights Addition, Enid, Oklahoma. An Inventory Prepared for The City of Enid, September 2000.

A hefty document produced by the Austin firm of Hardy Heck Moore & Myers, Inc., this is a good model for the intensive survey. The Property Types and Historic Context sections contain particularly useful information for domestic architecture and urban residential development in early-20th century Oklahoma.

North Central Oklahoma Historical Association, Inc., *North Central Oklahoma: Rooted In the Past—Growing for the Future*. Topeka, KS: Jostens Printing and Publishing Division, 1995.

This large and attractive volume is a well-written, copiously illustrated history of North Central Oklahoma, focusing on Kay County, by a capable, committed group of local historians. The first-person accounts of life and times

in early Oklahoma are vivid, articulate, and fascinating. Biographies of the early residents are informative, and the treatment on the growth of the region in the early years is excellent. This is not Hollywood's version but the genuine article. It is with a sense of shock that the reader realizes this hard-won, new land of cowboy, Indian, and community builder alike is also her birthright and her history. Thank goodness for old-timers and old photographs.

Phillips, Steven J. *Old-House Dictionary: An Illustrated Guide to American Domestic Architecture, 1600 to 1940*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1994.

More useful as a reference to individual elements than for any comparative treatment of architectural styles. Drawings, by the author, are well done—simple but sufficiently detailed to convey each illustrated building component.

Ruth, Kent. *Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957.

A revised edition to the 1941 original, compiled and written as part of the extraordinary Federal Writers' Program of the Works Progress Administration. This thick volume contains a wealth of factual material: geography, history, folkways, agriculture, transportation, education, literature, and several more. It also includes profiles of the state's principal cities, including Ponca City, and short, information-packed, virtual tours—three decades before the Internet.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. *Maps of Ponca City, Oklahoma: 1901, 1903, 1907, 1913, 1917, 1919, 1925, and 1931*.

As an aid to determining fire insurance rates for central business districts and their immediate surrounds, the Sanborn Company maps individual structures to show several important elements of construction: building configuration in plan view; building height, by number of stories; predominant type of construction material; and porches or other open or semi-enclosed features. The Sanborn base maps also show block and individual lot numbers as well as street addresses. On an intermittent basis, Sanborn has traditionally updated these maps by the delightfully low-tech method of cutting and pasting scaled paper images of the structures, color-keyed by type of building material.

More fortunate municipalities keep these flat-bound, oversize maps in their planning or engineering divisions where an intrepid detective can peek underneath each pasted layer to detect a building's evolution. In Ponca City, we lack this potential research opportunity: our Sanborn is kept and maintained not on site but at the company's Eastern offices. As a result, we must manage with black and white microfilmed facsimiles, which make materials evaluation a challenge.

Tyler, Norman. *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000.

Useful introduction to the field. In simple language, Tyler describes preservation's United States origins; districts and ordinances; law; economics; technology; and other facets. Appendix includes a list of graduate and undergraduate degree programs in preservation. The pictorial glossary of architectural terms is handy but perhaps a bit too simplified.

Unidentified photocopied resources.

Item 1. Map, 8½ by 14 inches, hand-labeled "1939 Plot Map" and covering the area of Highland Avenue at north, Grand at south, North 3rd at west, and North 7th at east. For the Mystery Block, 400 North 6th, east side, shows lot numbers 11 through 20 (ascending south to north) and block number as 13. Spanning lots 14 and 15 is a single large building with a center front projection and the inked address 409. No other structure is depicted on this block.

Item 2. Two-page large-scale map, 11 by 17 inches, covering the same area as above. Has no title, no date, or other identifying characteristics except the page numbers 16 and 17. Shows dated notations of property dedications and vacations, the earliest being May 12, 1896 and the latest December 27, 1938, the latter appearing as three separate actions. Of importance to this study is block number 13, east side (the present 400 block), depicted as Former School Reserve and not platted.

Upton, Dell, ed. *America's Architectural Roots: Ethnic Groups That Built America*. New York: Preservation Press, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1986.

Two dozen writers explore “pure” vernacular and a few more formalized examples of ethnic regional building before America became an architectural melting pot. A curiously tall and skinny “guidebook” format makes the slim volume hard to handle and limits the options for illustrations. The section, “Native Americans,” contains several brief but interesting references to Oklahoma. The volume includes a good bibliography of seldom-examined works and a comprehensive list of ethnic organizations.

Walker, Lester. *American Shelter: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of the American Home*. Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1997.

Walker, a well-published, East Coast architect who loves to draw, provides a good supplement to McAlester and McAlester. Although covering a similar time period and building typology, he doesn't presume to emulate their depth. Rather, he focuses on a greater number and variety of identified styles, some as esoteric as in his “fantasy” category: 1882's Lucy the Elephant Hotel in Margate, New Jersey; the 1940 Mother Goose House in Hazard, Kentucky; and Bruce Goff's 1957 Norman, Oklahoma, snail-like residence all make the cut. He doesn't forget shacks and shanties either, nor does he leave out falsefronts, baled hay and sod houses, and that icon of the American road, the Airstream trailer. What distinguishes his book is the wealth of hand-delineated illustration: plans, elevations, and exploded perspective views lend an extraordinary clarity to each stylistic example. It's an informative and delightful read.