

MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

Several of the buildings in the district are architecturally significant as individual entities while the district as a whole is significant as a collection. The Farmer's and Merchant's Bank, one of Nebraska's finest French Chateausque products, has been mentioned earlier (See WT07-72). Others which are significant products of late nineteenth century commercial architecture include the old First National Bank Building (site #28, photo # 39), the north half of the Cotting and Miller Building (site #29, photo # 40), the notable State Bank Block, an early multi-functional building with considerable architectural variation as a result (site #30, photo #41), the multi-stored Moon Block (site#32, photo # 26), and the smaller Newhouse and City Pharmacy Buildings (site #'s 69, 70; photo # 29).

The district exemplifies a significant grouping of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial architecture. Most important are the buildings along the west side of Webster from the southern to the northern boundaries of the district and the grouping at the northeast corner of Webster and 4th avenue. While considerable stylistic variety exists, the groupings tend toward Renaissance Revival in composition with the detailing, on the nineteenth century buildings, being predominately High Victorian Italianate. As a whole, the district represents one of the best preserved of such groupings in the State of Nebraska.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

- Acreage: 8 acres (approx.)
- UTM Coordinates: A 14/E540940/N4437630
- B 14/E541060/N4437630
- C 14/E541060/N443740
- D 14/E540940/N4437400

Verbal Boundary Description: The Main Street Historic District comprises properties beginning at the south end of the alley (block #25) with the boundary line continuing north approximately 700' across fourth avenue, north through alley (block #5), then turning east approximately 340', then turning south at the alley (east of block #4) approximately 700' across fourth avenue into the alley (block #3), ending at Third avenue, and finally turning west for approximately 340'.

SEWARD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

42-4933

7. DESCRIPTION: The Seward Street Historic District is a well preserved section of Red Cloud including most of the finest homes built in the village during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This residential district, like others included in this thematic group, was identified as an area through the Cather literature and defined by the scatter of significant Cather sites and Cather-era sites on the map.

The district distinguishes itself from the other two residential districts primarily in the size of the houses and the architectural pretention assumed in their construction. While in many cases these features are not entirely marked, in others the differences are readily apparent.

SEWARD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Ninety six properties, primarily residential, are included in the district. Seven of them are specific Cather sites (listed individually) and amount to 7% of the total. Thirty seven others are Cather era sites (39%) while forty (42%) are compatibly related to the overall character of the district. Twelve intrusive properties are included, amounting to 13% of the total giving the district an overall figure of historic integrity of 87%.

Individual descriptive data is given below:

- WT07-1. D. J. Myers house, 741 Cedar; frame; ell-shaped variation of the familiar "upright with wing" or "temple form" house; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof; Eastlake wraparound porch on the wing, one-story bay window centered on the upright section, shingle siding; built for the owner of a real estate and loan agency.
- WT07-2. Woodbury house, 217 Cedar; frame; rectangular; one-and-one-half stories; assymetrical four-bay facade; gable roof; central chimney; porch with turned posts centered on front; c. 1879, (photo #45).
- WT07-16 Miner house; a significant Cather site, see individual listings.
- WT07-17. Creighton house, west side of Seward street between 2nd and 3rd avenues; frame; irregular shape; four bay front facade; one-and-one-half stories; hip roof with gable-roofed wings, flared eaves; lunette in front gable; hipped dormer centered on front; c. 1890's
- WT07-18. Perkins-Wiener house; a significant Cather site, see individual listings.
- WT07-19. southeast corner of 2nd avenue and Seward street; frame; square with rear wing; three bay front facade; one story with loft; pyramidal roof; dentilled cornice with paired brackets, c. 1880's (photo #46).
- WT07-20. Walter Sherwood house, northwest corner Seward and 3rd avenue; frame; articulated rectangle; two stories with attic; gable roof with gabled bay and hipped dormer; vernacular Queen Anne with non-original siding and modern porches.
- WT07-26. Magee-Cather house; a National Historic Landmark as the Willa Cather Childhood Home, see individual listings.
- WT07-43. Mathew R. Bentley house; a significant Cather site, see individual listings.
- WT07-44. northwest corner 9th and Cedar; frame; rectangular with rectangular addition; three-bay front facade; two stories; gable roof with hip roofed addition; one-story bracketed bay on addition; wrap-around porch with corner pediment, porch posts non-original; c. 1900.

SEWARD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

- WT07-45. Frederick Turnure house, 809 N. Cedar; frame; rectangular; three-bay front facade; two stories with attic; gable roof with gabled dormers; Neo-classically derived porches on front and side; c. 1910.
- WT07-46. northwest corner 7th and Cedar; frame; rectangular; two bay front facade; two stories with attic; gable roof with hip dormer; full-frontal Neo-Classical porch, imbricated gabled with semi-circular hood over pseudo-Palladian window, one-story square bay with mansard; c. 1900.
- WT07-47. Webster County Jail, 621 N. Cedar; brick; ell-shaped; two-stories; hipped roof with gablets at former chimney locations; round arched windows on lower level, segmental above, segmental on brick cell wing to west, limestone foundation, pressed metal cornice; used as the sheriff's residence as well as jail, walls stuccoed; 1889.
- WT07-51. Catholic Church, northwest corner Seward and 4th avenues; brick; rectangular with asymmetrical frontal towers of continental form, lower tower crenellated, upper tower with flared-pyramidal roof, slightly projecting transepts, lancet windows; gable roof; ca. 1906.
- WT07-52. 421 N. Seward; frame; ell-shaped; one-and-one-half story; gable roof; flat-arched windows with pedimented molds, upper level decorated, ell-shaped corner porch, double corner entries; c. 1880's.
- WT07-53. Frank Smith house, west side Seward between 5th and 6th avenues; frame; square with gabled extensions; two bay; one story; pyramidal roof, central chimney; front porch with non-original columns; c. 1908.
- WT07-54. Warner-Cather house; a significant Cather site, see individual listings.
- WT07-55. Methodist Episcopal Church, northwest corner Seward and 6th avenue; rock-faced concrete block; irregular variation of square form; single story over raised basement; truncated pyramidal roof; octagonal corner turret, lancet arched windows—those of the main sanctuary blocked-up, stuccoed additions with hip roof; c. 1905.
- WT07-56. McNeny house, 544 N. Seward; frame with asbestos siding; square with rear wing; two bay; two stories; mansard roof with iron cresting and decorated gabled dormers; flat hoods with semi-circular pediments, carriage house of similar style, reconstructed gazebo; 1886-87 (photo #47).

SEWARD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

- WT07-57. Whitaker house; northeast corner Seward and 7th avenue; frame; rectangular; two bay front facade; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof with cross-gable; four-sided, one-story bay with flared-pyramidal roof, frontal porch, c. 1900.
- WT07-58. Smith-Gilham house, 737 N. Seward; demolished 1979.
- WT07-59. J. W. Bogenrieff house, northeast corner Seward and 8th avenue; frame; rectangular; three bay front facade; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof with cross gable; wrap-around porch with pedimented corner entrance; 1907.
- WT07-60. J. G. Myers house, northwest corner Seward and 8th avenue; frame with asbestos siding; rectangular with rear wing; 3 bay; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof with central front gabled wall dormer; one story bay window, front porch with Eastlake columns; c. 1890's.
- WT07-61. C. D. Robinson house, east side Seward between 8th & 9th avenues; frame; rectangular gable-fronted form; three bay front facade; one-story with attic; gable roof with cross-gable; one story bay window with side porch, front porch enclosed; c. 1908.
- WT07-62. Winter W. Kaley house, 841 9th avenue; frame; deep rectangular form; 3 by 3 bay; two stories with attic; hipped roof with gabled dormers; full-frontal Beaux-Arts porch, paired-brackets under eaves; c. 1904.
- WT07-63. Charles W. Kaley house, 909 Seward; frame; irregular shape; two stories; gable roof with a hipped section; gabled front with projecting gabled entrance pavilion, wrap-around porch with Eastlake columns, square bay on side with iron cresting, imbricated gables with semi-luminate attic lights, carriage house at rear; vernacular Queen Anne style; c. 1888 (photo #48).
- WT07-78. First Baptist Church; a significant Cather site, see individual listings.
- WT07-97. 825 Cedar street; frame; rectangular with elevated rear wing; 3 bay front section; one story; gable roof; shed porch across front, screened, imbricated gable above front section; c. 1880's.
- WT07-103. east side Seward between 4th and 5th avenues; frame; ell-shaped; one story with attic; gable roof; one story bay window centered on the upright section, pendant in steeply-pitched gable, porch in ell; vernacular Gothic revival, possibly relocated to this site; c. 1880's.
- WT07-104. Webster County Courthouse; a significant Cather site, see individual listings.
- WT07-116. Temple house, 842 9th avenue; frame; irregular plan; two stories; gable and hip roof sections with a singular jerkinhead; Eastlake porch on north; c. 1885, (photo # 49).

SEWARD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

- WT07-117. 830 N. Seward street; frame; square; three bay front facade; one story; pyramidal roof with flared eaves; entry with transom light, bay window on south, full-frontal Neo-Classical porch, corner pilasters; c. 1880's; (photo # DM 7902-21.)
- WT07-118. Robert B. Fulton house; demolished 1979.
- WT07-119. Jefferson G. Myers house, 819 N. Seward street; frame; rectangular; three bay symmetrical facade; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof; frontal, hip-roofed, Neo-Classical porch; c. 1902; (photo #50).
- WT07-120. John R. Shirley house, 742 N. Seward; frame; tee-shaped; one story; gable roof; bay window on south, wrap-around porch with chamfered columns; c. 1887, (photo # 51.)
- WT07-121. 617 N. Seward street; frame; square; two by two bay; two stories with attic; pyramidal roof, front gabled dormer with return cornice; entrance with sidelights, full frontal Neo-Classical porch; c. 1910.
- WT07-122. Parkes house, 513 N. Seward; frame; ell-shaped; one story with attic; gable roof; cut-out porch in ell, screened; c. 1880's.
- WT07-123. Cornelius S. Potter house, 435 N. Seward; frame; rectangular; three bay; one story with attic; gable roof; front gablet with pedimented attic light, shed porch enclosed on front; 1881.
- WT07-124. A. P. Hadel house, west side Seward between 4th and 5th avenues; frame; ell-shaped; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof; modern picture window in front gable, screen porch in ell; c. 1900, 1904.
- WT07-125. Howard house, 434 N. Seward; frame; rectangular upright form; three bay front; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof; square bay on north, front porch with non-original columns; 1890.
- WT07-126. 421 N. Seward street; frame; square; assymmetrical three bay front facade; one story; truncated pyramidal roof; frontal, bracketed Eastlake porch, square bay on south; c. 1880's.
- WT07-127. DX Gasoline Station, southeast corner Seward and 4th avenue; stuccoed tile and brick; obtuse ell-shape; one story; steeply-pitched, flared gable roof; irregular brick water table, half-timbered gable, English Vernacular Revival; c. 1920's.
- WT07-128. 341 N. Seward street; frame; rectangular upright form; one-and-one-half stories; jerkinhead roof with cross-gabled jerkinhead; one story bay on north, semicircular, partially recessed corner porch; c. 1910.

SEWARD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

- WT07-129. John C. Allen house, east side Seward between 3rd and 4th avenues; frame; rectangular upright form; symmetrical three bay facade; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof; full-frontal porch with vernacular Victorian cutouts; c. 1884; (photo #52).
- WT07-130. Annie L. Mitchell house, 310 N. Seward; frame; square; one story with attic; flared pyramidal roof; full-frontal porch enclosed; 1890.
- WT07-131. 302 N. Seward Street; frame; ell-shaped; one story; gable roof; porch in ell with non-original columns, gabled side porch; c. 1880's.
- WT07-132. 235 N. Seward street; frame; rectangular upright form; three by three bay; one story with attic; gable roof; hip roofed porch, lunette in imbricated gable; c. 1905; although moved from its original site on the north side of Fourth Avenue, west of the alley between Cedar and Seward in 1968, the house is important to the architectural character of the district; (photo #53).
- WT07-133. southwest corner Seward and 2nd avenue; frame with asbestos siding; rectangular upright form; three bay symmetrical facade; one story with attic; gable roof; c. 1880's.
- WT07-134. Samuel B. Lightfoot house, 126 N. Seward; frame; square; three bay symmetrical facade; one story; truncated pyramidal roof; shed porch along front; c. 1900.
- WT07-135. Garber rental property, 105 N. Seward; frame; rectangular upright form; three bay symmetrical facade; one story; gable roof; front porch with chamfered columns; c. 1880's.
- WT07-136. Edward J. Pulsipher house, 55 N. Seward; frame; square; three bay; one story; truncated and flared pyramidal roof; imbricated and decorated gablet on front, frontal porch with Italianate columns, c. 1888; (photo #54).
- WT07-137. Samuel VanHorn house, east side Seward between Avenue A and 1st avenue; frame; rectangular; three bay symmetrical facade; one story; gable roof; imbricated gablet above ridge from gabled rear extension; c. 1885-86.
- WT07-138. Joseph S. Blair house, 50 N. Seward; frame; rectangular upright form; assymmetrical three bay facade; one story with attic; hip roof with gabled dormers; transomed doors and pedimented hoods on all openings, shed porch on front; 1900. (photo #55).
- WT07-139. Peter Conover house, 51 N. Seward; frame; rectangular; 2 by 3 bays; two stories, gable roof; one story bay on south, enclosed porch on east front, return cornice, corner pilasters, pedimented hoods on original construction; c. 1890.
- WT07-140. east side Seward between 1st avenue and Avenue A; frame; rectangular upright form; two bay front facade; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof with flared eaves; door with sidelights, imbricated gable, front porch; c. 1905.

SEWARD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

Other properties which are included as a part of this district are as shown on the map and include the following, not-here-to-fore described parcels: Garber's Addition; Block 3, lots 15-17; Block 4, lots 3-4, 5-7, 8-10. Original Town; Block 11, lots 4-6, 7-9, 18-20 and s½ of 21; Block 13, lots 13-15, 16-18; Block 14, east 42 feet lots 13-18; Block 16, lots 11-12; Block 17, lots 1-2 and n½ 3, s½ 3 and 4-6; Block 18, lots 10-12; Block 20, lots 6-7, 8-9; Block 21, lots s½ 9 and 10-11, 12; Block 22, lots 3-4, 5-7, 8-10; Block 23, lots 15-17; Block 24, lots 4-6, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15, 16-17, 18-19; Block 25, lots 3-6, 7-9, 10-12. Smith and Moore's Addition, Block 7, northeast corner 75 x 142 feet.

Intrusive features are also shown on the map and include the following parcels: Garber's Addition; Block 4, lots 4-5. Original Town; Block 14, west 50 feet lots 13-18, middle 50 X 150 feet, lots 13-18; Block 18, lots 1-5 and n½ lot 6; s½ lot 6 and all 7-9; Block 20, lots 3-5; Block 24, lots 22-24; Block 25, east 91 feet lots 1-2, west 51 feet lots 1-2, east 84 feet, lots 13-15. Smith and Moore's Addition; Block 7, s 10' of e½ and 3 lots 85 x 142 feet (Dallas and Dorothy Mattison); Block 16, lots 19-20 and n part of 21.

8. SIGNIFICANCE: The Seward Street Historic District derives its significance to the major theme of this nomination by its use as the prototype for "Sylvester Street" in Cather's novel, The Song of the Lark. Additionally, the cross street at the northern edge of the district, Ninth Avenue, was utilized as "Quality Street" in Lucy Gayheart. Only a short segment of Ninth Avenue, contiguous with Seward Street, is included in this nomination because of substantial loss of historic integrity east of Cedar and west of Walnut streets.

In The Song of the Lark, Cather describes "Sylvester Street" as the better section of town with the more elegant dwellings situated along its length. This was the street on which her friends the Miner family and the Rosens lived. The Baptist Church, the Methodist Church, the Courthouse and the Bentley house are also located on this street.

"The main business street ran, of course, through the center of the town. To the west of this street lived all the people who were, as Tillie Kronborg said, 'in society.' Sylvester Street, the third parallel with Main Street on the west, was the longest in town, and the best dwellings were built along it. Far out at the north end, nearly a mile from the court-house and its cottonwood grove, was Dr. Archie's house, its big yard and garden surrounded by a white paling fence. The Methodist Church was in the center of the town, facing the court-house square." ( The Song of the Lark, pg. 31).

The Ninth Avenue segment of the Seward Street District is very much in character with the rest of Seward Street, except, perhaps, the dwellings are larger and even more pretentious. Cather's term "Quality Street" for this section probably came from the family's first landlord in Red Cloud, Mrs. Newhouse. According to Mildred Bennett:

"Mrs. Newhouse, though she claimed to trace her ancestry to Charlemagne, had no use for so-called high-society, and when someone thought himself superior because he lived in the north part of town, she named that section, 'Quality Knob'." (Bennett: 1961, p. 9091).

SEWARD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

In Lucy Gayheart, Miss Cather calls it "Quality Street":

"After supper she walked toward the town and turned into the street that people jokingly called Quality Street, because Mrs. Ramsay lived at one end of it and the Gordons at the other. Mrs. Ramsay was sitting in her high-backed chair beside the big front window, the shades up and the silk curtains drawn back. This had always been her way, though her house was so near the sidewalk that every passer-by could gaze in; her neighbors sometimes said it looked as if she were giving a reception to the street. As a little girl Lucy had loved to come to this house; such comfortable rooms, old-fashioned furniture, and soft, flowered carpets. She used to like the feeling that here there was a long distance between the parlour and the kitchen, that they were not always being mixed up together as they were at home. Mrs. Ramsay was then the only woman in town who kept two maids; now Mrs. Harry Gordon kept a man and his wife, Pauline had told her." ( Lucy Gayheart, pp. 162-63).

Architecturally, the Seward Street District contains both the more elaborate examples of common house-types, and architectural specimens unique in Red Cloud. The finest examples of major American styles in Red Cloud include the Italianate (square) Miner house (WT07-16), the French Second Empire (square) McNeny house (WT07-56) and the Queen Anne C. W. Kaley house (WT07-63).

Of the more common house types, mention should be made of the Woodbury house (WT07-2), two houses south of the first Cather house, and the J. G. Myers house (WT07-119). Both are fine examples of the front-facing, side-opening cottage. Excellent examples of the early "temple-form" or gable-fronted dwelling include the Magee-Cather house (WT07-129) and the later house at 235 Seward (WT07-132).

The square house type might best be represented by the Miner and McNeny houses mentioned above. Other more developed examples include the Pulsipher house (WT07-136) and the houses at 830 Seward (WT07-117) and the southeast corner of Seward and 2nd avenue (WT07-19). Another example more European in character, being rectangular in form, is the Blair house at 50 N. Seward (WT07-138).

10. GEOGRAPHIC DATA:

Acreage: 43 acres (approx.)

- UTM Coordinates: A 14/E540720/N4438140  
B 14/E540890/N4438140  
C 14/E540895/N4437050  
D 14/E540720/N4437050



SEWARD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

Verbal Boundary Description: The Seward Street Historic District comprises properties beginning at the south end of the alley (block #4, Garbers Addition) with the boundary line continuing north approximately 3600' through the alley of Block #22, 21, 20, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, (Original Town), North across Block #19 (Original Town), Block #7, 17 (Smith and Moore's Addition) ending at the alley of Block #17, then turning east for approximately 525' across Seward Street, across Block #16 (Smith and Moore's Addition), then turning south at Cedar Street for approximately 1300', then making a slight jog west at Sixth avenue for approximately 150' then turning south approximately 850' through the alley of Block #13, 14 (Original Town). The boundary line then makes another slight jog east for approximately 150' returning to Cedar Street, then heading south for approximately 700', then turning west again at second avenue approximately 150' then turning south approximately 725' through the alley of Block #23 (Original Town) and Block #3 (Garber's Addition) ending at Avenue A, heading west for approximately 375'.

ELM STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

82-4934

DESCRIPTION: The Elm Street Historic District is located in the northeastern section of Red Cloud. A residential district, the area is comprised of smaller, more humble dwellings than those generally found along Seward Street.

The district is composed of a contiguous group of dwellings of like size and qualities, a majority of which are dwellings which were extant during Cather's years of residency in Red Cloud.

Forty-three residential properties are extant in the district. Unlike the other districts, none of these have any explicit Cather associations, except for the neighborhood itself, as a whole. Of the forty three, twenty-three were extant during Willa Cather's residency in Red Cloud or 53% of the total. Fourteen others are of a type, style or scale which is similar to, or compatible with the Cather-era sites. These amount to 33% of the total. Only six, or 14% of the whole, are intrusive features, giving the district as a whole an 86% figure of overall integrity.

Below are described those features which are important to the district:

- WT07-36. northeast corner Locust & 9th Avenue; frame with asphalt siding; rectangular; two-bay; one-and-one-half stories; gable roof; wraparound porch, small addition on rear.
- WT07-39. southeast corner Elm Street and 10th avenue; brick; square; two by two bay; one story; pyramidal roof; central chimney, segmentally arched openings, only door at rear of property, multiple frame additions; c. 1880's.
- WT07-40 821 N. Elm; frame; rectangular; three bay front facade; one story; gable roof; saltbox-like shed addition on rear, shed porch along front with turned columns; late 1880's.