

**WILLA CATHER THEMATIC GROUP:**

**ELM STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued**

The architecture of the Elm Street District is certainly less elaborately attired than the Seward Street District; however, fine examples of basic house-types exist. The best-preserved examples of the three-bay cottage include the Martindale house (WT07-161) and the Hopper-Parkes house (WT07-149). A notable one-and-one-half story version is the Martin S. Ballard house (WT07-148).

Well-preserved examples of the "temple-form" house are conspicuously absent but two "ell-shaped" houses should be mentioned, one at 805 8th avenue (WT07-160) and the brick-and-frame, banked ell known as the Tulleys-Richardson house (WT07-164).

Several square-type houses are notable. The two, two-bay brick squares at 925 and 934 Elm are exceptional examples of the basic type (sites WT07-95, and 39). The existence of only the rear door on site 39 should be noted as a possible ethnic-related site. Two square-type houses have square carriage-barns associated with them — the Leonard Aultz house (WT07-163) and the Henry Cutter house (WT07-150).

One unusual house for the district that appears to be a two-square-wide rectangular dwelling should also be mentioned for its vernacular architectural qualities (WT07-162).

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:**

Acreage: 17 acres (approx.)

- UTM Coordinates: A 14/E541050/N4438240
- B 14/E541280/N4438240
- C 14/E541270/N4437750
- D 14/E541060/N4437750

Verbal Boundary Description: The Elm Street Historic District comprises properties beginning at the south end of the alley at Sixth avenue, west of Block #1 (Smith and Moore's Addition), with the boundary line continuing north approximately 1525' up the alley, west of Block #6 (Smith and Moore Addition) through Block #10, Block #14, then turning east at Tenth avenue for approximately 750'. The boundary line then heads directly south through several outlots for approximately 775', then jogs west on Eighth avenue for approximately 400' turning south again approximately 375' through the alley (Block #5), then making another slight jog west 225' to Elm street, then turning south on Elm street for approximately 375', finally turning west approximately 150'.

**RAILROAD ADDITION HISTORIC DISTRICT**

82 - 4934

DESCRIPTON: The Railroad Addition Historic District is another residential district similar in character to the Elm Street district but distinct in the sparse placement of dwellings. The Railroad Addition was an attempt to span the area between Red Cloud proper and the railroad depot after the Burlington alignment missed the heart of Red Cloud by about a half a mile. The Addition was only sporadically successful, developing into the sparse settlement which is still extant today.

RAILROAD ADDITION HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

Twenty-seven properties are included in the district. Of these, all but one are residential properties. Of the total, one site, or 11% are specific Cather related sites, 17 or 63% are Cather-era sites and 3 others, or 11% are of a type and quality compatible with the Cather-era sites. Only six properties (22%) are intrusive features.

Since the district contains a large number of vacant lots, the percentages of contribution and intrusion change when the lots are accounted for, thus: Cather significance 3%, Cather-era 42.5%, compatible sites 7% and intrusive features 17.5% (leaving 30% of the land as vacant).

The following listing describes the individual contributing and intrusive features of the five-and-one-half square block district:

- WT07-10. Burlington Depot; a significant Cather site, see individual listings.
- WT07-12. John Cox house, west side South Seward between 3rd and Division streets; brick; square; two by two bays; two stories; pyramidal roof with flared eaves; segmentally arched hoods, psuedo-dentilled cornice, full-frontal screen porch, tile addition on rear; 1888; (photo #61).
- WT07-169. 141 S. Seward; frame; square; three bay; one story; truncated pyramidal roof; screen porch on front; c. 1880's.
- WT07-170. west side South Seward between 3rd and Division streets; frame; rectangular; three bay; one story; gable roof; enclosed porch on front; c. 1880's.
- WT07-171. 129 S. Seward; frame; square; three bay; one story; truncated pyramidal roof; full front porch; c. 1880's.
- WT07-172. Burton-Hyde house, southeast corner Seward and 3rd streets; frame; rectangular; three bay; one story; gable roof; shed addition on rear; 1883; (photo #62).
- WT07-173. 221 S. Seward; frame; square; three bay; one story; truncated pyramidal roof; full frontal enclosed shed porch; c. 1880's; (photo #63).
- WT07-174. Vest-Reed house, 229 S. Seward; frame; rear extended square; three bay front facade; one story; hipped roof; double internal chimneys; porch stoop with non-original posts on front; c. 1898, 1910.
- WT07-176. Cumings-Tomlinson house, 242 S. Seward; frame; square; three bay; one story; truncated pyramidal roof; original shed porch on front; c. 1899.

RAILROAD ADDITION HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

- WT07-177. Ernest Welsch house, southwest corner 1st and Seward streets; frame; upright-with-wing; one-and-one-half stories (one story wing); gable roof; one story bay on south, porch in ell; c. 1893; (photos #64, 18).
- WT07-178. 341 S. Walnut; frame with asbestos siding; rectangular upright form; three bay front facade; one story with attic; gable roof; original full-frontal porch; c. 1890.
- WT07-179. 205 S. Walnut; frame; rectangular upright form; three bay front facade; one story with attic; gable roof; psuedo-dentilled cornice; full-frontal Eastlake porch; c. 1890's; (photo #65).
- WT07-180. George Clauson house, 333 3rd street; frame; square; three bay front; one story; truncated pyramidal roof; bay window on south; c. 1893.
- WT07-181. 141 S. Walnut; frame; square with wing; three bay; one story; truncated pyramidal roof with gabled wing, return cornice; enclosed porch in ell; c. 1890.

Other properties which are included as a part of this district are as indicated on the site map and include the following: Railroad Addition; Block 2, lots 1-3, lots 4-5 and lots 30-32; Block 3, lots 7-10; Block 10, lots 13-16; Block 11, lots 3-4.

Intrusive properties are as shown and include: Railroad Addition; Block 2, lots 22-24; Block 3, lots 1-6, Block 9, lots 5-12; Block 10, lots 1-2, lots 21-24 and Part of Jackson's Addition, lots 6-8. Vacant lots, most of which have been historically vacant, are shown as such on the map.

**SIGNIFICANCE:** While growing up, Cather enjoyed her many trips down to the depot (see individual site WT07-10) through this small settlement. These trips, and the area itself, became important, especially in her novel, The Song of the Lark.

"The long street which connected Moonstone with the depot settlement traversed in its course a considerable stretch of rough open country, staked out in lots but not built up at all, a weedy hiatus between the town and the railroad. When you set out along this street to go to the station, you noticed that the houses became smaller and farther apart, until they ceased altogether, and the board sidewalk continued its uneven course through sunflower patches, until you reached the solitary, new Catholic Church." ( Song of the Lark, pg. 37).

". . . Beyond this grove the houses of the depot settlement began, and the naked board walk, that had run in out of the sunflowers, again became a link between human dwellings." ( Song of the Lark, pg. 38).

RAILROAD ADDITION HISTORIC DISTRICT, Continued

The architecture of the depot settlement is characterized by the same house-types as the rest of the community. Unlike the Elm Street District, several gable-fronted houses are extant, perhaps the most notable being the house at 205 S. Walnut with its delicate Eastlake porch and three-bay facade (WT07-179). The only example of the upright-with-wing in any of the districts is included here, that being the Ernest Welsch house (WT07-177), and one, well-preserved three-bay cottage should be noted—the Burton-Hyde house at Third and Seward (WT07-172).

Three square-type houses are of particular interest in the district. The most pretentious is the two story brick square built by John Cox c. 1888 (WT07-12). It's High Victorian proportions, symmetrical two-bay facade, round-arched brick hoods and brick construction set it a part from the common dwellings of the district. The house at 221 S. Seward (WT07-173) can be noted for its steeply-pitched truncated pyramidal roof and the prominent corner pilasters, while the one at 141 S. Walnut is well-preserved and is an upright-with-wing variation of the square house type. Another three-bay, hip-roofed house with double internal chimneys, is proportioned as two square houses back to back (WT07-174).

The character is perhaps less modest than Elm Street, yet less pretentious than Seward Street. The sparseness of the settlement contributes much to its ambience—an ambience which recalls very clearly the days when Cather walked this district, and later wrote about it.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Acreage: 22 acres

UTM Coordinates: A 14/E540665/N4436730

B 14/E540890/N4436730

C 14/E540890/N4436210

D 14/E540665/N4436210

Verbal Boundary Description: The Railroad Addition Historic District comprises properties beginning at the south end of the alley (Block #19, Railroad Addition) with the boundary line continuing north approximately 450' to First street, then turning west on First street approximately 375', then turning north again at the alley (Block #12) and continuing north approximately 1150' through Block #9, #3, to Division street, where the boundary line turns east for approximately 500' to Seward street, turning south on Seward street approximately 450' then making a slight jog east 200' on Third street to the alley of Block Titled "Jackson's Addition" heading south through the Block to Second street, again making a slight jog west 200' to Seward street, finally heading south on Seward street approximately 725' then turning west 150' to the alley (Block #19, Railroad Addition).