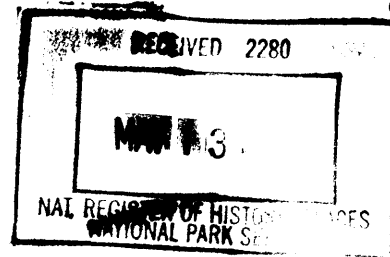


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

oh
683



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name THE DEVON APARTMENTS

other names/site number BENNETT'S FLATS

2. Location

street & number 800 - 808 W. 12TH STREET not for publication

city or town TOPEKA vicinity

state KANSAS code KS county SHAWNEE code 177 zip code 66612

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally, statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Richard D. Parkrat, DSHWC 12-14-01
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Eason H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 6/29/02 Date of Action

THE DEVON APARTMENTS
Name of Property

SHAWNEE COUNTY, KANSAS
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: MULTIPLE DWELLING

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: MULTIPLE DWELLING

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
MOVEMENTS

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: LIMESTONE
walls BRICK
STONE: LIMESTONE
roof TAR
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation Sheet

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Summary or Overview

The Devon Apartments (c. 1887, 1906), commonly referred to as "The Devon," is a three-story brick structure, U-shape in plan, located where Taylor, 12th, and Western avenues meet in Topeka's Holliday Park neighborhood. Built on the southwest corner of the city's original townsite and two blocks south of Bethany Square, addresses are listed principally as 800-808 SW 12th St. plus 1131 SW Taylor and 1132 SW Western Ave. reflecting the multiple entrances to the tenement block (the fourth, or north, facade is bounded by an alley). Erected in 1887 as Bennett's Flats, subsequent owner James Willis Gleed remodeled it in 1906, keeping many of the 19th century exterior and interior features. Since that date there have been few, if any, significant modifications to the outside fabric and not all that many inside except for the normal improvements like "modern" kitchen and bathroom fixtures. A product of Topeka's 1880s building boom and precursor to a smaller "boom-let" of 1906-11, The Devon stands as a contrast to the predominantly one to 2½-story single family, detached dwellings from the turn-of-the-century neighborhood. It is also an important, local example of a tenement block incorporating commercial businesses or stores on the ground floor level with residential units on the first and upper floors. The 22 apartments vary in size and shape (the latter due, in part, to the trapezoidal character of the building) though most boast of some special internal feature including carved moldings, door transoms, access to interior light and ventilation courts, etc.; one apartment possesses French and pocket doors. Its main facade faces south overlooking the busy 12th St. thoroughfare and the 1½-acre Holliday Park, an urban enclave in central Topeka. The Devon's broad eaves, general horizontal appearance and lines, and its two wide arch entrances all stamp this large tenement block as one of Topeka's premier apartment buildings.

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Description

Located in the central Topeka neighborhood of Holliday Park, The Devon Apartments is a three-story, over basement, brick masonry structure originally dating to 1887 but significantly remodeled in 1906. Its irregular plot--where Taylor, 12th, and Western avenues meet--ensured an uniquely shaped building where the east and south facades join at a 90° angle but the south and west facades meet at an angle that exceeds 90°. Therefore the length from the northeast corner to northwest corner is greater than the length of the south facade--hence, a trapezoidal building. A rear courtyard, though, creates a U-shape plan for The Devon with two wings, east and west. The north side of the west wing is therefore longer than the north end of the east wing.

The Devon's three principal facades--along Taylor (east), 12th (south), and Western (west)--are asymmetrical, again, due in large part to the original 1887 design. An approximately two foot solid parapet crowns the roof line; below it a three foot wide eave juts from the three facades. An enclosed or boxed eave, simple brackets are spaced out beneath it, and it is ventilated, many of the ornate grill covers appearing to date from the 1906 renovation. The second and third stories are clad in a red brick veneer whereas the lower or first story has a mottled brown brick. Red sandstone string courses form the sills of the second floor windows. A broad, wood course divides the first and second stories.

Ten windows, varying in width, line the second and third stories along 12th; eight/ten windows, also of varying width and placement, are found on the second and third stories along Taylor and Western. Being double hung sash; some third floor windows have six lights over one or two lights while the broader windows have eight over one or two. Most second story windows, on all three main sides, feature in the upper half five smaller lights surrounding the larger light; photographs from the 1890s indicate these are original.

First floor windows on the south front date from the 1906 remodeling as do some or all of the first floor, east and west fronts. Two half round windows each, found a third of the way down Taylor and Western from 12th St., possess limestone sills and are original from 1887. Presumably they provided high illumination for the two corner stores. On the Taylor side the third story has eight windows, more or less evenly spaced out, ten windows

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on the second floor, and four windows on the first along with an entrance to the southeast corner store and an entrance to a hallway and stairs to apartments. More randomly distributed, on the Western Ave. facade the third story has ten windows, two of them paired; ten windows on the second story, three extremely narrow and all varying in width; and five windows on the ground floor, two paired, along with a rear entrance to the southwest corner store plus a recessed entrance to stairs and interior apartments. Basement windows, above and below grade, are spaced along all three sides.

The southeast corner store front, formerly occupied by a drugstore, has been altered since 1906 with newer plate windows, corner entrance, ceramic tile work, etc., but retains the transom above the store windows with its small squares of dark glass. The southwest corner store front, until 1985 a grocery, preserved some features, in particular its structural columns though it, too, at some point was modified. The Devon's most distinctive features are the two Richardsonian Romanesque arched entries, both with impost returns. As the major component of this main facade, they are nevertheless off-centered or off-balanced being located, reading left to right, in the third and sixth bay of the ten bays spaced along the 12th St. facade.

Another unique element may be seen on all three principal facades but only at the second story level, space between windows is recessed resembling or giving a paneled look forming pilasters surrounding either side of the windows. As indicated by 1890s illustrations, this design effect dates from 1887; it is not found on the first or third stories. Two fire escapes descend from the roof along the 12th St. front while the Taylor and Western Ave. sides each have one fire escape. Centered between two windows, equal distance along the third story front is a carved stone panel that reads "The Devon."

The rear, or alley, facade is broken allowing for the courtyard that gives the building its U-shape plan. Covered galleries or balconies are formed for the second and third floors though for some reason, possibly due to an early fire, a gap exists part way along the base of the "U". Exterior stairs are found on both the east and west sides, rising from the courtyard. Above nearly all windows and doors are segmented arches. The north end of the east wing, narrower than that of the west wing, has just a single row or bay of windows, first to third floors. The north end of the west wing has three bays of windows, of varying size, and some

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topped with arches; brick work indicates that several windows on this end have been bricked over.

Entrances off Taylor, 12th, and Western lead to hallways and narrow stairs to apartments above. Entrances through the Romanesque arches, instead, lead to a central hall or lobby where stairs with half turns and landings wind up to the third floor. Overhead both lobbies is a skylight illuminating the open stairs. Small light wells help ventilate and provide light to interior rooms and spaces, most of them kitchens or bathrooms. The 22 apartments vary in size, shape, and number of rooms though typically those apartments above and below one another are similar in dimension; too, corner apartment units tend to be larger. Hardwood floors, carved moldings, transoms, paneled doors, and wide baseboards are some of the features commonly found in the units.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1887 - 1906

Significant Dates

1887, 1906

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

BENNETT, HENRY (BUILDER, 1887)

LUNDGREN, JOHN A. (BUILDER, 1906)

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

THE DEVON APARTMENTS
Name of Property

SHAWNEE COUNTY, KANSAS
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property LESS THAN ONE ACRE

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 1 | 5 | | 2 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 | | 4 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
Zone Easting Northing
2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing
4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title DOUGLASS W. WALLACE

organization _____ date AUGUST 17, 2001

street & number 706 GRANDVIEW AVENUE telephone 785-357-4196

city or town TOPEKA state KS zip code 66606

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name ROGER AND TREND A YOUNG

street & number 1104 SW TAYLOR STREET telephone 785-234-1522

city or town TOPEKA state KS zip code 66612

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Statement of Significance

The Devon Apartments (c. 1887, 1906) is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the growth and development of Topeka. The Devon is an unique example of a tenement block incorporating commercial and residential units found in a turn-of-the-century Topeka neighborhood.

History

Though seemingly an uncomplicated building in its architecture, The Devon has a surprising early history and in less than two decades metamorphosed from a Victorian structure with some Second Empire features to an Edwardian era apartment house. During the late 1880s, Topeka experienced an exhilarating period of economic expansion simply referred to as the "1887-89 building boom." Besides the addition of several major downtown business blocks including the Davies, Thacher, Crawford, and Knox (Columbian) buildings (all on the National Register), scores of small and large suburban subdivisions were platted on the fringes of town, in particular to the west and south. One of the prime forces in this extensive construction was contractor Henry Bennett (1841-1926) who erected several of those "boom" edifices, among them the Crawford and Knox (Columbian).

On September 16, 1887, Bennett took out building permit No. 5663 for a 109' x 90' business house to be two stories with brick and stone side and rear walls plus a brick front facade, tin roof, and 16 flues. The next evening's State Journal, September 17, 1887, simply recorded how "Henry Bennett has commenced a \$30,000 building on Twelfth street." His site was near the southwest corner of the Original Townsite (1855) where the first platting of Topeka met subsequent plats resulting in a useless triangular plot that became, c. 1895, Holliday Park.

The surrounding neighborhood was sparsely developed, as seen in the 1889 Sanborn Insurance map, with individual houses scattered or in small groups. Nevertheless, considerable building was taking place, filling up empty lots; two examples being the Seabrook-Stanton Res., 1211 Western (permit #4630, April 26, 1886) and Culver Res., 1213 Western (permit #5589, August 15, 1887). At the same time, other interests were promoting transit lines which served the immediate area as well as proposed residential districts to the west, among them the West Side Circle Railway along King (now Munson) St. and the Topeka Rapid Transit system along 12th.

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While some suburban plans were speculative, indeed "pie-in-the-sky," it would have been obvious to any Topekan of the 1880s that the near empty prairie between 12th and Western and the city's only co-educational college (Washburn), two miles farther west, would soon give way to houses.

Contemporary photographs of Henry Bennett's tenement, known as Bennett's Flats, show a plain but massive 2½-story block, its distinctive features being a mansard roof with dormers and large second floor oriels jutting out from the southeast and southwest corners. Other significant elements included brick molding below the cornice and tall chimney stacks; centered along the Taylor, 12th, and Western Ave. sides rose bays, flush with the facade, to the roof line--all adding further to the Flats' vague Second Empire look.

Five shops lined the ground floor along 12th St. with two stores each set aside for both Taylor and Western Ave. fronts. Photos, plus Sanborn Insurance maps and city directories, show that at least four of the 12th St. row were occupied during the 1890s and early 1900s: two groceries, a pharmacy, and a bakery (the latter's ovens still found in the basement). At different times green grocers, meat markets, and/or feed and grain businesses were found off Taylor and Western; however, the 1889 Sanborn map (p. 20) also inferred that 1130 Western may have been used temporarily for a school classroom and 1132 Western as a Presbyterian church (no other source has confirmed it).

By 1905 the Holliday Park neighborhood, centered on the triangular park of the same name, had essentially achieved its present (2001) appearance and characteristics. While several houses on Western Ave., facing Holliday Park, were built in the late 1880s, the majority of those residences facing the park on Taylor date from early in the first decade of the 20th century: e.g.; the Drum Res., 1218 Taylor (permit #10929, May 25, 1903); Bowman Res., 1220 Taylor (permit #10088, May 13, 1901); and Brown Res., 1224 Taylor (permit #10533, May 23, 1902).

For \$12,000 Topeka attorney and businessman James Willis Gleed acquired Bennett's Flats in late February, 1904, from the Merchants and Farmers Mutual Fire Insurance Co. Gleed (1859-1926), with brother Charles S. Gleed, was partner in the law firm of Gleed, Ware & Gleed and also served, until his death, as general attorney for the Southwestern Bell Telephone Co., St. Louis. Affiliated as

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solicitor with the St. Louis and San Francisco R.R. (the Frisco), he was something of a Renaissance man having once taught Greek at his alma mater, the University of Kansas, as well as writing for numerous legal and non-legal journals (brother Charles was involved in the 1895 AT&SF Rwy. reorganization).

Like many prosperous attorney of the day, James Gleed owned considerable property and developed several sites, among them the 1902 construction of a two-story tenement on the northeast corner of 6th and Topeka Blvd. Comparable to his later 12th and Taylor venture in Holliday Park, a grocery and drugstore formed the ground level commercial nucleus of "Gleed's Flats" with apartments upstairs on the second floor. Around this same time, the opening years of the 20th century, local newspapers endorsed new apartment house construction (especially for bachelors), and several small residential buildings soon sprang up about town.

Two years after obtaining Bennett's Flats, Gleed took out on February 10, 1906, a permit (#12250) for remodeling it, estimating the cost at \$14,000. Granddaughter Mary Louise Corbett recalled for the October 6, 1993, Topeka Metro News a family legend how he supposedly spent nights in the family den sketching plans for his new property. Due to its scale, presumably an architect assisted or drew the final blueprints though, at present, none is known to have worked on the design. Regardless, its remodeling contractor is known: Swedish born John A. Lundgred (b. 1867) who had also built the flats at 6th and Topeka.

This 1906 work gave the old Bennett's Flats--re-christened The Devon--its present look; indeed, there have been only minor exterior changed over the past 95 years. Remodeling construction masked the 12th St. front in new brick plus two arch entrances and added a full third story. In the process, the second story facade was hardly altered except for removal of the corner oriels. Thus, with respect to the exterior, the first and third story facades along 12th date from 1906, the second story facade from 1887. Those on Taylor and Western, the first and second story facades, likewise largely date from 1887.

Its interior, too, is a combination of "old" and "new." Two open stair wells, featuring stairs with half turns and landings, are reached by short hallways from 12th St. entrances and rise the full three stories. Skylights illuminate these wells; this configuration, stairs, newels, etc. may be original (c. 1887).

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Apartments, especially those on the second floor, boast decorative window and door moldings, transoms, etc., all part of the 1887 fabric. The 22 apartments (plus a basement custodian's quarters) vary in size and shape due to the building's peculiar proportions. Some units have access, through balconies or galleries, to the rear (north) courtyard formed by The Devon's U-shape plan.

Gleed's remodeling reduced the number of 12th St. store fronts from five to two, these originally consisting of a drugstore on the southeast corner (800 W. 12th) and a grocery store on the southwest corner (808 W. 12th). For several years, at least through 1912, a meat market was listed at 1134 Western, directly in back of the green grocery. Charles Joslin (1872-1959) operated the first Devon pharmacy, from the beginning to c. 1927; then Pat Rowland (1884-1971) took it over, the store becoming part of a local chain: Crescent Drug Store No. 6, until it closed in late October, 1959. Next, the space was used for, among other businesses, a television service shop, Shawnee County Association for Mental Health office, the Corbett-Miller Insurance Agency, liquor store, and, currently, a restaurant (the Café Holliday).

While, in over half a century, its drugstore only had two owners, the grocery in nearly 80 years witnessed a succession of proprietors--the first being John C. Taupert in 1907 and last Tom Morgan in 1986. One of the better known firms at this address was that of William A. Lawson, Jr., whose family owned several Topeka and Oakland neighborhood stores. When it permanently closed in October, 1986, The Devon's market was one of Topeka's last neighborhood, "mom & pop" groceries, the life of which was recorded in the December 7, 1980, Capital-Journal. Later a cleaning supply business and then an antiques store rented 808 W. 12th, presently (2001) site for a nail salon.

With respect to The Devon's residents, a survey of the 1907 Radges' City Directory, the remodeled flats' first year, reveals that at least 19 of the apartments were occupied as of that time. Also from the directory, it can be deduced that these apartments were rented not only to singles (many being widows) but also "traditional" families as well as two or more non-related individuals who shared a flat (e.g., three women employed by the Y.W.C.A.; apt. #12). The directory's brief notation of occupation infers that a majority of the 1907 tenets probably came from a middle to upper middle class social/economic background. For instance, there were: 1) small businessmen (e.g., Fred Brown, co-proprietor White Star Laundry;

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apt. #8); 2) manufacturers (e.g., William Graves, Pres. The Graves Manufacturing Co.; apt. #6); 3) professionals (e.g., John L. Hunt, attorney; apt. #2); 4) educators (e.g., Frank Dains, Washburn College professor); 5) railroad clerical employees (e.g., Charles Morton, traveling passenger agent, C.R.I.& P.; apt. #22); and so forth. Of two State of Kansas employees, one was then state Attorney General, Fred Jackson.

Subsequent city directories, for the interwar years of the '20s and '30s, record a similar community, largely middle class: white collar and clerical predominating. Single women tended either to be widows; sales clerks for downtown stores like The Palace (e.g., Mrs. Emma Bowman in 1942, apt. #3) and Pelletier's (e.g., Mrs. Bonnie Bellman in 1948, apt. #3); or teachers, a number of whom taught at the nearby Topeka High School (e.g., drama coach Gertrude Wheeler in 1948, apt. #18). During the same period, possibly the most prominent Devon resident would have been W. Walter Bowman, Vice President of the National Bank of Topeka and Secretary of the Kansas Bankers' Association (apt. #8). One person who spent her last years here (apt. #14) was the builder's widow, Mrs. Grace Greer Glead.

After the Second World War, social patterns again changed through suburban development and especially new apartment construction; the latter both on the outskirts of town and downtown, too. Featuring modern, all-electric appliances, these new, multi-family dwellings lured the well-to-do or more mobile singles and couples--once a mainstay for The Devon which now catered more and more to people on small, fixed budgets like college or post graduate students. These tenants saw The Devon only as a temporary home before moving on to something better.

Descendants of James Willis Glead owned The Devon until 2000 when they sold it to the present owners, who have instituted further renovation and restoration work. Vacancies, a problem ten years ago, are now down with more and more units being rented. This likewise underscores a positive change in the Holliday Park neighborhood where people are fixing up and restoring their turn-of-the-century homes, as reported in the February 24, 1996, Capital-Journal ("Recapturing Topeka's Past"). Truly a time capsule, The Devon, virtually unaltered on the exterior and little changed inside, literally stands at the heart of the community. Its architecture reflects both its dates of construction and remodeling but as well the time line of the neighborhood: once on the edge of the city, a 19th century suburb, and then a fully mature, urban place where

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bankers and teachers and store clerks, young and old, all lived and resided side by side...a community within the city.

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- Radges' Topeka City Directory. Topeka, KS: Polk-Radges Directory Co., 1907, 1912.
- Sanborn Insurance Map. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., November, 1889, sheet No. 20.
- Sanborn Insurance Map. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1896, sheet No. 27.
- Sanborn Insurance Map. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1913, sheet No. 65.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The Devon is located on lots 389, 391, 393, and 395 of Taylor Street in the Original Townsite of Topeka, Kansas. The nominated boundary is bounded by an alley on the north, Taylor St. on the east, 12th St. on the south, and Western Ave. to the west.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property contains all land and features historically associated with the site.