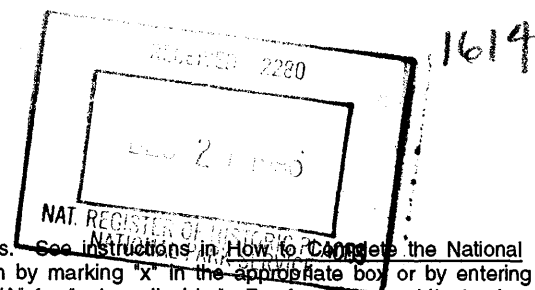


**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**



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 any 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 Charlton, William H., House

other names/site number Prairie Hill Learning Center/NeHBS# LC00:127

**2. Location**

street & number R.R. 1 Box 17 [N/A] not for publication

city or town rural Roca [N/A] vicinity

state Nebraska code NE county Lancaster code 109 zip code 68430

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Wendell Sommer  
Signature of certifying official

12/17/96  
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society  
State or 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 this 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of Keeper

1-27-97  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	1	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: Single Dwelling \_\_\_\_\_

Domestic: Secondary Structure \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education: School \_\_\_\_\_

Domestic: Single Dwelling \_\_\_\_\_

Domestic: Secondary Structure \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_ Stone \_\_\_\_\_

walls \_\_\_\_\_ Wood: Weatherboard \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

roof \_\_\_\_\_ Asphalt Shingles \_\_\_\_\_

other \_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

See Continuation Sheets.

**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 a 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.)

See 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  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Architecture**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

ca. 1872

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1872

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Roberts, Artemas

**Primary Location of Additional Data:**

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

Name of repository:

Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Dept.

**Charlton House**

Name of Property

**Lancaster County, Nebraska**

County and State

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property Less than one acre**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1.	14	693980	4550800
	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.)

See Continuation Sheet.

**Boundary Justification**

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

**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Jacqueline S. Stumpff, Preservation Internorganization Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department date March 25, 1996street & number 555 S. 10th Street telephone (402) 441-7491city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68508**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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name James A. & Lynda L. Dyckstreet & number R.R. 1 Box 16 telephone (402) 794-6075city or town Roca state NE zip code 68430

**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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Charlton House

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

Section number 7 Page 1

**DESCRIPTION**

The Charlton House in rural Roca, Lancaster County, Nebraska, is a two-story, hip roof, building of rectangular plan constructed ca. 1872 for farmer William Charlton. The Italianate-style, wood-frame structure was designed by Artemas Roberts, an early architect from nearby Lincoln, Nebraska, and is one of his earliest extant works. This nomination consists of one contributing building, the house, one contributing feature, a root cellar, and one non-contributing building, a garage. The exterior of the Charlton House retains a high degree of integrity. Significant interior features are also extant.

The Charlton House in rural Roca, Lancaster County, Nebraska, is a two-story, wood-frame farm house. It is a locally rare and significant example of the Italianate style, with characteristic tall proportions, emphatic porch, decorative window surrounds, and bracketed eaves. The house does not have the typical asymmetry, tower or cupola, masonry materials, and varied mass of a large Italianate "villa," but instead displays the style applied to a smaller frame house. It was built around 1872 from designs by Artemas Roberts, who had settled in Lincoln in 1870 and was one of the first trained architects in the new capital city. The architect's careful contribution is embodied in a surviving elevation drawing and specifications for the house, and reflected in such elements as the careful alignment of brackets and windows, and the inclusion of a false chimney for the sake of symmetry.

The clapboard-sided house stands on an embankment above U. S. Highway 77, facing east across the roadway. The main, two-story block of the house has a simple, rectangular plan and a truncated hipped roof. An elevation drawn by Roberts and an early 20th century photograph of the house show a balustrade at the top of the roof, which has since been removed. The house has a two story rear (west) wing, which appears to be contemporary with the main block, and a one-story rear addition at the southwest corner.

The main block of the house has a wide frieze band with scalloped molding and brackets. The wing displays the frieze, without the scallops or brackets. The fenestration of the main block has decorative eared and shouldered architraves, while the windows of the wing do not.

The principal (east) facade is three bays wide, with the front entrance off-center to the north. There is a full-length, one-story porch with a truncated hipped roof. The elevation drawn by Roberts includes chamfered, square-section porch pillars and decorative cresting at the curb of the porch roof. The early 20th century photograph of the house establishes that the porch had been remodeled to its present form by that time, including Tuscan columns, a low railing with plain spindles, and a small gable forming a pediment above the central steps.

The south facade is also prominent, facing a broad yard. The main block of the house has three bays of windows and a fourth, blank "bay" on the east end, corresponding to the chimney location. The Roberts drawing and the early photograph show tall chimneys with decorative caps. The south chimney has since been shortened and has lost its cap. At the rear (west) of the south facade is a one-story addition with a shed roof, with skylights along the lower edge for most of its length. The wing is both clearly modern and unobtrusive on the historic design, in its position, low height, and compatible materials (clapboard siding and wood shingle roofing).

The north facade is even more shaped by interior features than the south side. The main block of the house is windowless for most of its length, with paired windows near the northwest corner, on both the first and second stories. The long blank wall corresponds to the interior location of the staircase. The north face of the rear wing includes an added exterior staircase, serving a door that leads to the second floor. The north chimney shown in the Roberts elevation and early photograph is now gone. It apparently was the "fake flue" mentioned in specifications for the house written by Roberts, since its position above the staircase precludes any fireplaces along that wall. A second brick chimney on the west side of the main block of the house, near the north corner still exists. Its height matches that of the chimneys shown in the early images, and it retains a simplified version of their decorative caps.

The rear (west) of the house is altered by the southwest addition, and an added roof that shelters the rear entrance. About fifteen feet west of the house is a mound of earth covering an early root cellar. Its entrance is a bulkhead, set partially into

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Charlton House

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

Section number 7 Page 2

---

a low curved-top wall of limestone rubble, capped with concrete. The mound slopes down from east to west, and near the back of the root cellar is a brick chimney for ventilation.

Northwest of the root cellar is a gable-roofed, frame double garage. Although its scale and materials are compatible with the house, it was moved to the site in recent decades and is therefore regarded as a non-contributing building.

The nominated property measures 160 feet north-to-south by 140 feet east-to-west. The front yard on the east side is demarcated by two large conifers--a tall Austrian pine of about 18 inch caliper, and a massive Scotch pine with a trunk measuring 40 inches in diameter. The southeast corner of the nominated property is marked by two black walnut trees, which begin an east-west row of mixed deciduous trees. The west and the north edges of the nominated parcel correspond to driveways on the larger property. The remainder of the farmstead contains a mix of agricultural and educational buildings. In location, materials, and scale they are compatible with the historic farmhouse, but they relate more strongly to the contemporary educational use of the property than to the historic agricultural functions, and therefore are not included in the nominated parcel. Artemas Roberts' specifications for William Charlton include a cow barn, which burned down approximately in the 1970s.

The integrity of the exterior of the house is very high, especially on the principal south facade, which closely resembles the architect's original drawing, except in modest alterations to the porch (probably ca. 1905). The west and the east elevations of the main block of the house are also very intact, while modifications to the rear wing, such as creation of a sunporch/entry at the northwest corner, are compatible in materials and the original structure and modest in scale.

The interior of the house has been more altered, in order to accommodate educational functions, including removing a wall that separated the entrance/stair hall from the front parlor. A fine interior feature is the staircase against the north wall, which has a newel post, turned spindles, and broad handrail, all of black walnut.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Charlton House

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

Section number 8 Page 3

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Charlton house in rural Roca, Lancaster County, Nebraska is significant on the local level in the area of architecture under Criterion C, as a very early, well-documented, and well-preserved work of a pioneer Lincoln architect, Artemas Roberts. He was active in Lincoln from 1870 (three years after the founding of the city) until about 1904, and occasionally returned to the city to carry out projects through the 1910s. Among the major projects of this local master were the original Lincoln High School (1872), First Congregational Church (1883), the A. J. Sawyer House (1887), the Herpolsheimer Department Store (1880s), and Fairview (the W. J. Bryan home, 1902). Of Roberts many Lincoln-area buildings, the only extant structures are a small number of houses, of which Fairview is the most prominent and the Charlton house, by far the earliest. The house is the clearest demonstration of his training, skill, and style at the very beginning of his career in Lancaster County. The period of significance coincides with the date of construction, ca. 1872.

The Charlton House in rural Roca, Lancaster County, Nebraska, is a two-story, hip roof rectangular building constructed ca. 1872 for a prominent farmer, William Charlton. The wood-frame structure, designed and built by Artemas Roberts, master architect, is Italianate style, an eclectic form of country-house design, fashionable in England and the U.S. from the early 1840s and 1850s. This style is characterized by low-pitched, bracketed roofs, tall proportions, ornate window architraves, and emphasis on porches or verandas, all of which this house displays. More significantly, the Charlton House demonstrates the skills in drafting, specification writing, and design with which Roberts began his career in Lincoln. Only a few houses of comparable age are extant in Lancaster County, and most are within the urban area of Lincoln, such as the T. P. Kennard House (1869, NRHP), Lewis-Syford House (ca. 1878, NRHP), and Jacob Miller House (ca. 1874, 1029 E St., not listed). Of those only the Kennard House is known to be architect-designed, by a practitioner from Chicago. In rural Lancaster County, only the Retzlaff farmhouse (ca. 1867, NRHP) is comparable in age to the Charlton House.

Roberts was born at Richmond, Indiana, on October 28, 1841. He lived there until 1852 when his parents moved to Pendleton, Indiana. That was his home until 1863 when he entered Michigan University, at Ann Arbor. Engineering and architecture were special studies his last year of college. He graduated from Michigan University in 1863, and returned home to practice architecture.

In February, 1870, he moved to Lincoln, ahead of the railroads, and set up his office at 8th and P Streets. Soon after, Roberts began his architectural work. His first commission was to design some furniture for the executive offices at the then new first State Capitol. Roberts' first work of "importance" in Lincoln was the old high school (the Lincoln High School building). Later he purchased the Roberts farm on East A (now Roberts Park), but he continued his architectural work (for some time as a partner in the firm of Roberts and Woods), also serving as city engineer for two years. He designed many of the most significant commercial, residential, and religious buildings in Lincoln between 1870 and the early 1900s, including the Commercial Block, the State Normal School building at Peru, the A.J. Sawyer home at Seventeenth and F Streets, the old First Congregational Church, the Herpolsheimer store, and many other commercial buildings and residences. The culmination of his Nebraska architectural career was probably the design of William Jennings Bryan's Fairview in 1902, in partnership with A. W. Woods.

Roberts retired to Florida in the early 1900s, after disposing of his Lincoln holdings. He then purchased a fruit ranch in Dade City, Florida. He returned to Lincoln occasionally to visit family and carry out work for his sons, including Charles' house of ca. 1916 at 3158 Sheridan Blvd. In 1924 he made the exterior design for his son James' Roberts Dairy building on Twentieth Street. He also continued to practice architecture in his "retirement" in Florida, with projects including residences, commercial buildings, and the county courthouse in Dade City. He died in May, 1944, at the age of 102, and is buried at Wyuka Cemetery in Lincoln.

The Charlton House also depicts the resources and aspirations of Roberts' young client. William Charlton was born in Bonaparte, Iowa in 1845. At the age of 18, Charlton travelled to California to farm and raise livestock. He moved to Lancaster County, Nebraska in 1868 to settle on a farm on Section 26 Centerville precinct, which is near the present town of Roca. Charlton purchased tracts of land at various times and acquired title to 1,400 acres of land in Centerville precinct. He supervised the

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Charlton House

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

Section number 8 Page 4

---

operation of all of his farms and at one time specialized in breeding shorthorn and Hereford cattle, but during the greater part of his active connection with stock raising interests in this county, he engaged in feeding large herds of cattle for the market.

Charlton married Mary E. Lidolph in May, 1872, who died in March, 1877 at the age of 25, after bearing her husband three children. Charlton commissioned a marble monument from John Currie of Western Marble Works in Lincoln for the grave site (in Centerville Cemetery). The stonecarver's receipt for this monument still exists, indicating a cost of \$375, equivalent to the price of 30 acres of Charlton's farm. In December 1902, Charlton married Phoebe Adelaide Thornton. He retired from active farm life in 1906 and died in 1917.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Charlton House

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

Section number 9, 10 Page 5

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Andreas, A.T. History of Nebraska. Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1882.

Charlton, Anna, interviewed by Jim Dyck, 1992, Roca; transcribed by J. Stumpff, typescript at Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Dept.

Lincoln Star. "Artemus Roberts, 102, Early Lincoln Architect, is Dead." May 8, 1944.

Morton, J. Sterling and Albert Watkins. Illustrated History of Nebraska. Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Co., 3 Vol., 1905-1913.

Rifkind, Carole. A Field Guide to American Architecture. New York: New American Library, 1980.

Sawyer, Andrew J. Lincoln, the Capital City and Lancaster County, Nebraska. Chicago, Illinois: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, Vol. 1, 1916.

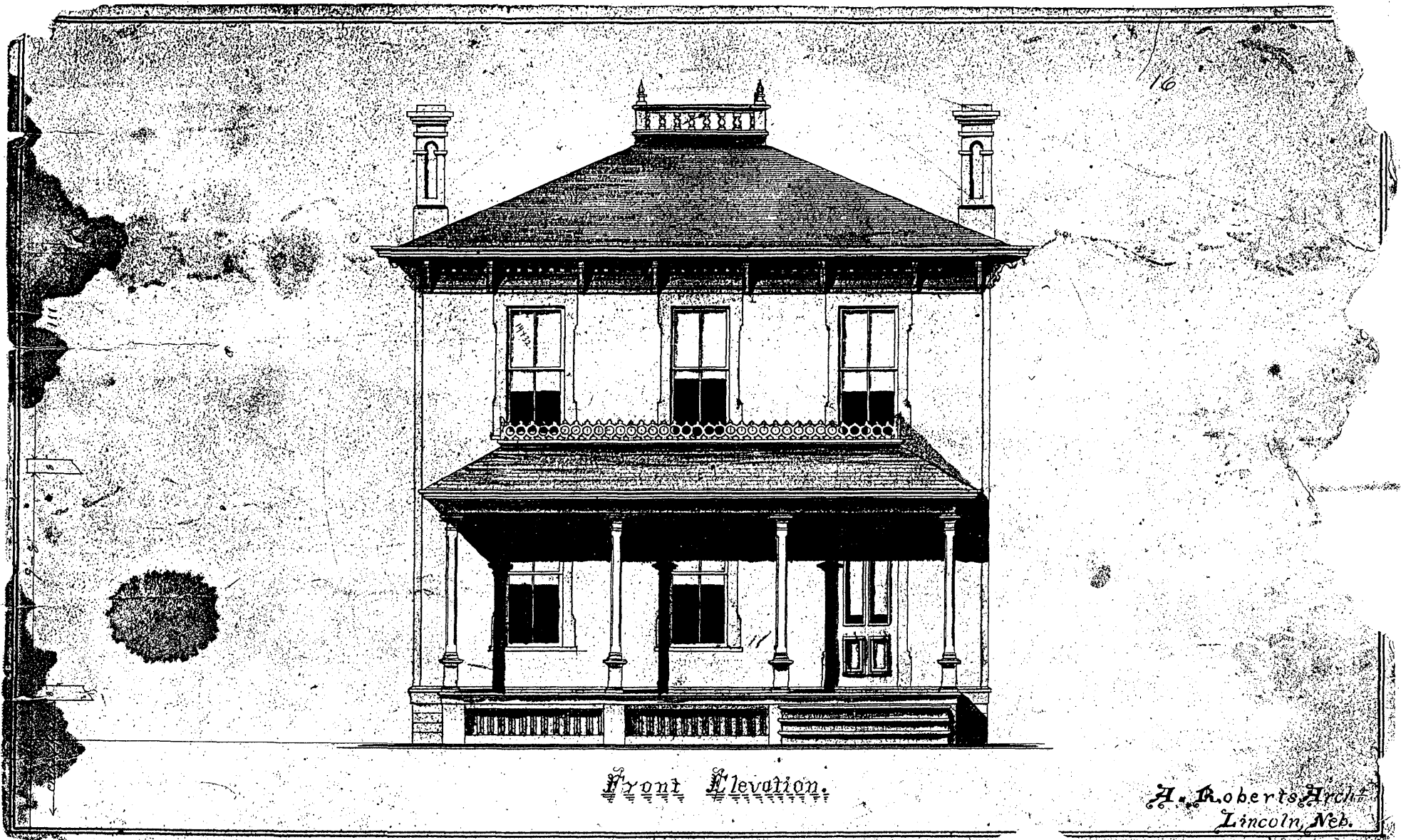
Zackerson, Annette and Ed Zimmer. Preservation Association of Lincoln: "A Monument for a Monumental Price." Winter 1994 Newsletter.

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

This property is within Lot 4 in the north half of the NE quarter of Section 26, Township 8N, Range 6E, Lancaster County, Nebraska, consisting of a parcel measuring 160 feet north-south and 140 feet east-west, bounded on the north by the south edge of the existing driveway.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

These boundaries include the farmhouse and the yard historically associated with it; the boundaries exclude more recent buildings added for the educational use of the property. The historic farmstead has lost key structures and new buildings and features have been added; therefore only the house and its associated yard (defined by major tree plantings) are included.



Front Elevation.

A. Roberts Archt.  
Lincoln, Neb.

Charlton, William H., House  
NeHBS #LC00:127  
rural Roca, Lancaster County, NE  
Elevation drawing by Artemas Roberts, ca. 1872