NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

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 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 WITTER S. MCCURDY HOUSE

other names/site number [illegible]

2. Location

street & number 909 W. 6TH STREET ☐ not for publication

city or town LAWRENCE ☐ vicinity

state KANSAS code 173 county DOUGLAS code 045 zip code 66044-2212

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 Pankratz 8/28/01
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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 commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ 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:)

WITTER S. MCCURDY HOUSE
Name of Property

DOUGLAS COUNTY, KANSAS
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [X] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [X] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

HISTORIC RESOURCES OF LAWRENCE MPS

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: SINGLE DWELLING

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: SINGLE DWELLING

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: FOLK HOUSE NATIONAL

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: LIMESTONE
walls BRICK
roof ASPHALT
other

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

WITTER S. MCCURDY HOUSE
Name of Property

DOUGLAS COUNTY, KANSAS
County and State

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.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1870

Significant Dates

1870

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

ARCHITECT UNKNOWN

BUILDER UNKNOWN

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WITTER S. MCCURDY HOUSE
Name of Property

DOUGLAS COUNTY, KANSAS
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property LESS THAN ONE ACRE

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	14	305360	4513924
2			
3			
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 SUSAN JEZAK FORD

organization _____ date JANUARY 8, 2001

street & number 3628 HOLMES ST. telephone 816-531-2489

city or town KANSAS CITY state MO zip code 64109

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 WILLIAM T. PUGH

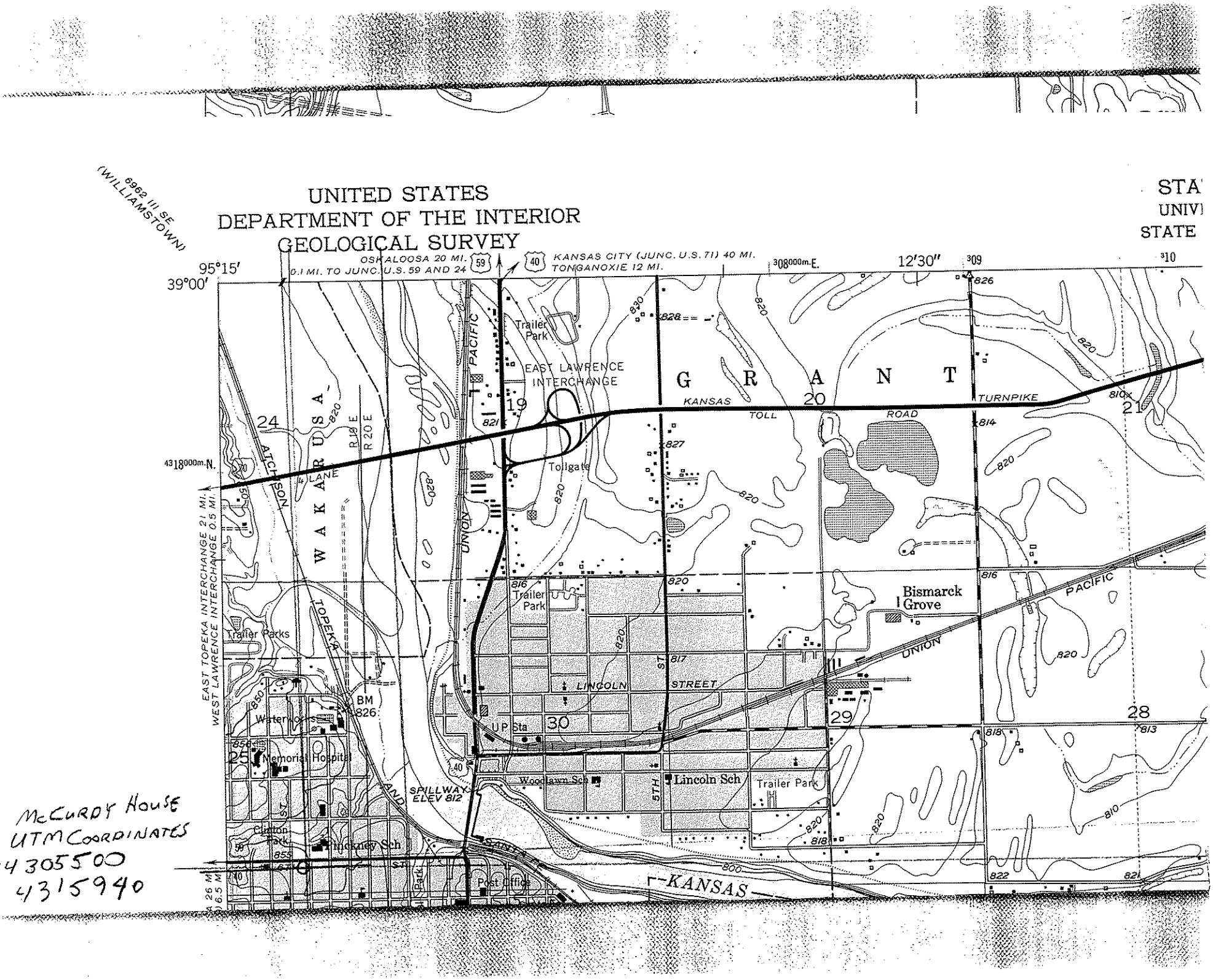
street & number 909 W. 6TH ST. telephone 785-842-7512

city or town LAWRENCE state KS zip code 66044-2212

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.

US GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1993 O - 350-416 QL 3



McCURDY HOUSE
UTM COORDINATES
14 305500
4315940

Overview-Section 7

The Witter S. McCurdy house is located at 909 West Sixth Street in Lawrence, Kansas. Constructed in 1870, it includes additions from circa 1900, circa 1952 and 1990. It is an I-house, built in the Folk House National style, with a gable-end roof and detailing in the Federal style.

The McCurdy house is two stories tall, one room deep and two rooms wide with a center-hall plan. It is built of local soft red brick laid on a foundation of rough limestone blocks, coursed on the north and west façades with a limestone water course also on these façades. All windows on north, west and south sides of the original portion of the house contain dressed limestone lintels and sills on the first and second stories and limestone sills on basement windows. Many of these windows are of hand-rolled glass. All eaves project approximately 12 inches and consist of single planks supported by curved brackets, raked on the east and west gable ends. Additions to the house include a circa 1952 one-story garage on the east side, a 1982-1990 two-story neo-Victorian porch and bathroom addition on the south side and a circa 1900 one-story kitchen and pantry addition on the southwest corner. These additions have altered the original rectangular footprint to a now irregular shape. The house's roof is clad in asphalt shingles.

When built, the house's location was outside of the original town site of Lawrence and, as late as 1880, no street ran in front of it. The house is now located on Lot 56 and the west three-quarters of Lot 54, Pinckney Street, now Sixth Street. The area is now a residential neighborhood, surrounded by single-family homes dating from the early to mid-20th century. Clinton Park and Pinckney Elementary School are located across Sixth Street to the north, commercial development along Sixth Street begins one-half block west of the house, downtown Lawrence begins at Sixth Street several blocks to the east and the commercial area of Ninth Street is located south of the house. The McCurdy house's lot measures approximately 87.5 feet wide by 117 feet deep and the house faces north to Sixth Street, set well back from the curb.

North Façade

The north façade-the front of the house-is arranged into four unequal bays. The brick on this façade is laid in a running bond without header courses. The west bay is considerably broader than the others, although all windows are of the same width. Each window on the first and second stories consists of a six-over-six doublehung unit with a limestone lintel and sill, 6'10" tall on the first story and 6'2"tall on the second story. The western bay and the two eastern bays each have a window on the first and second stories, as well as one in the basement level. Basement windows are three-light single units with stone sills; the watercourse extending across the front of this façade serves as their lintels. The central bay contains a window on the second story and the house's main entrance on the first story. The entry door is somewhat recessed, with a dressed limestone doorsill level with the water table course. The doorway is framed by a 1996 Federal-style frontispiece. Pilasters rise on either side of the doorway, topped by dentilled lintel. This framing encloses the original door-transom configuration, similar to that found originally on the house. The doorway is fronted by a 1981 porch, which replaced two earlier, non-original porches. The new porch has a plain deck of redwood 2x4s supported on six

square, red brick columns topped with square limestone slabs. Four are located the corners of the porch deck and an additional pair flanks the central six wooden stairs. Between the porch columns runs a wood balustrade with lattice in a Chinese Chippendale pattern. The shadow and bolts of the house's first, but not original, roofed porch are faintly visible in the brickwork around the door. This porch was removed circa 1950. Round tie-rod anchor plates are also present on the east and west corners of this façade between the first and second stories.

At the east end of the north façade, set back slightly more than three feet, is the north face of the circa 1952 east garage addition. It is of frame construction, clad in cedar shingles set on a low concrete block foundation. The northeast corner features a narrow corner pilaster. The north wall of this addition rises into an integral parapet with a simple projecting cornice, topped by a plain railing. A six-light single window is centered on this wall.

To the west of the main block of the house is the north side of the basement stair enclosure. This projects westward approximately seven feet and is built of the house's red brick on a low limestone foundation. The side walls are of two thicknesses of brick, bound together by header courses at the 15th and 24th courses. The enclosure has a gable roof, the ridge running east-west.

West façade

The main portion of the west façade is divided into two symmetrical bays placed on either side of the basement stair enclosure. Each bay contains a six-over-six window at the first and second story and a three-light window at the basement level. Two quarter-round windows are located in the gable, flanking the interior chimney flue. The north and south eaves wrap around this side of the house by nearly three feet; these wrapped extensions are supported by brackets. The limestone watercourse extends across this façade. Tie rod anchor plates are located on the north and south corners of the west façade between the first and second stories, as well as in the north corner between the first story and basement levels. A shadow of a non-original brick chimney, removed in 1982, is visible to the right of the southern window. When this chimney was attached to the outside wall, it cut through the projecting gable eave; this projection has been restored.

Between the two bays of the west façade, a one-story projection encloses stairs to the basement. This gable-front enclosure is of red brick matching that of the house. The low foundation is of stone. Under the gable, a doorway with a brick lintel arch, a dressed limestone sill and a pair of beadboard doors is located.

The one-story frame kitchen and pantry extension is attached to the southwest corner of the house. The kitchen contains a broken-pitch gable, with the ridge running north-south; the pitch of the pantry roof is slightly shallower than that of the kitchen. The eaves contain only a gutter. The west wall of this extension contains no openings in the first story; a joined pair of three-light window is centered at the basement level.

Above and behind the kitchen addition, the 1990 two-story bathroom addition is visible. This is of frame construction, covered in narrow clapboard siding with narrow corner boards and a flared clapboard skirt at the

second-story level. The roof is a double-pitched pyramid and the eaves feature a bracketed cornice similar to that found on the original house. This extension is structurally independent of the house, linked on the second story by a narrow enclosed space of the same construction and siding, under a nearly flat roof set just below the eave line of the pyramid roof. This connection has a small four-pane window centered on the west side and does not alter the original cornice or roof. The second story of the extension under the pyramid roof contains a six-over-six doublehung window centered on the west wall. A finial consisting of a copper spike atop a copper ball rising out of a copper pyramid tops this roof.

South façade

The new porch and bathroom wing is the dominant feature of the south façade of the McCurdy house. The south side of the roof and second story of this addition are identical to those of the west elevation, except for a line of brackets-ornate Victorian-style brackets perpendicular to each corner and four smaller, simpler brackets between them. The brackets are based against a plain fascia forming an entablature over the wing's first story, consisting of an enclosed porch. The south front of this porch is divided into three narrow bays. The central entry bay contains a storm door and the other two bays contain two large, removable panes of glass, one atop the other. The openings of each bay are defined by columns-structural steel pipe columns at the corners and square wood columns flanking the door. Non-structural segmental arches of wood run between the columns.

The original back doorway of the house and a four-over-four doublehung window can be seen through the porch. The doorway is closed with a fixed fifteen-light door.

The kitchen addition is located west of this porch. The gable end of the roof faces south; the west plane of the roof is double pitched. The east plane of the roof is of single pitch and descends against the side of the bathroom. The walls are clad in narrow clapboard siding. A joined pair of six-over-six doublehung windows is placed slightly off center of the gable. Directly below is a joined pair of three-pane basement windows, recessed below grade in a window well. The deteriorated original limestone foundation was replace with reinforced concrete in 1982 and a basement, extending under the porch and bathroom, was dug at this time.

Above the kitchen wing, the second story of the west bay of the original brick house can be seen, with a single six-over-six window and bracketed cornice. The two east bays of the brick house are located east of the bathroom wing, each with a window on the first and second stories and in the basement. There is no water table course on this façade, nor do the basement windows have stone lintels; instead, two-course arched brick lintels top these basement windows. Four original threaded rods, all with square nuts on them, can be seen between the first and second stories and three can be seen between the first story and the basement. These rods appear to never have been used.

East of the main house, projecting nearly six feet from the plane of the south brick wall, the south end of the one-car garage is located. This addition is clad in cedar shingles, with corner boards and parapet matching those

on the north façade. Centered on the south wall is a four-section single overhead garage door. A simple beadboard door entry is located on the west wall of the garage.

East Façade
The east elevation of the garage contains no openings. The north and south parapets and railings are returned on this side; between them the shed roof projects approximately eight inches with a gutter.

The east wall of the original house can be seen above the garage extension.. The bracketed eave returns and gable are identical here to those found on the west façade. This façade contains no attic windows. The second story contains a six-over-six doublehung window, set slightly off-center to the south. This window contains a wooden lintel and a wooden sill. A bricked doorway preparation is located to the left of the window, also under a wood lintel surrounded by rowlock bricks. Tie rod anchor plates are located at the north and south corners of this wall between the first and second stories, as well as at the north corner at basement level. The limestone water table course of the main façade does not continue to this side, and the limestone is not coursed as it is on the main and west façades.

To the south of the house's gable end, set back, is the east side of the 1982 porch and 1990 bathroom wing. This side is identical to the south side, except that the first story of the east side has no door. The second story connection between the new extension and the original house has a four-over-four doublehung window. Below this connection, a four-feet-wide porch bay is located between the bracketed façade of the sunporch and the main house.

The back doorway of the kitchen can be seen through the porch. The upper section of the dutch door contains six panes of glass.

Interior
The McCurdy house contains a center hall floor plan true to what was likely the original configuration. The main portion of the house, consistent with floor plans traditional for I-houses, contains two rooms on either side of the central entrance, is one room deep and two stories tall. This layout now includes the circa 1900 kitchen extension on the house's southwest corner, a small bathroom on the first story accessed at the south end of the entry hall and the new second story bathroom accessed at the south end of the second story hallway, via a former closet space.

One enters the house through a long, narrow entryway, measuring 12'9" by 5'7". A stairway to the second story is located on the west side of this space and a door to the first story bathroom is located on the south wall. The room to the east of this entry on the first story is the house's parlor, measuring 14'9" by 17'7"; the room to the west of the entry is the house's dining room, measuring 13'2" by 17'7". The house's original back doorway is at the east end of the south wall; it has a fixed fifteen-light door. The kitchen's L-shaped extension is accessed

through a door in the south wall of the dining room. The second story is accessed by the stairway that abruptly curves ninety degrees in four steps as it reaches the upper story; the balustrade follows this curve and surrounds the stair opening on this story. The second story floor plan follows the same configuration of two rooms wide by one room deep, with bedrooms located on either side of the hallway. Renovations to these rooms done by a previous owner, including the division of the west bedroom into two rooms and the installation of a Celotex tile ceiling and knotty pine paneling in the east bedroom, have been undone by the current owner. The new second story bathroom is accessed via an opening in the south side of the hallway through what was once closet. A passageway connects the original house with the new addition, leading to a half-bath located directly below the original cornice and to a square bath area with a vaulted ceiling that reflects the exterior's pyramidal roof.

The basement floor plan again follows the configuration of two room wide by one room deep, with a three-quarter bathroom located at the south end of the basement hallway. All rock walls in the basement have been cleaned and repointed and concrete floors have been poured. A door prepared for the never-realizeded addition to the east side of the house was opened to the garage in 1992.

The house's interior contains many original details, such as the marbleized slate fireplace and cast brass cupboard latches in the parlor, window and door casings, dining room wainscoting, balustrade, some hardware and most of the second story fir floors. These details are complimented by the installation of historically appropriate wallpapers, period light fixtures and oak floors that replaced those too damaged to save.

The McCurdy House Today

Nearly all major alterations to the McCurdy house have involved additions rather than changes to the original structure. These additions are all located at the back or the side of the house and very little original material has been lost. All changes are obviously different from the core building and do not detract from the house's integrity, leaving the house's character and streetside appearance almost entirely intact. The garage addition is representative of the era in which it was built, as the spread of the automobile required a shelter in which to house it. The two-story rear addition is representative of Victorian-era "updates" made to houses of this era. The main entrance to the house contains the most significant change to the appearance of the building. It is likely that the McCurdy house originally contained no front porch, although threaded rods extending from the front façade were probably intended to support a roofed porch. A small, one-story covered porch was attached to the entrance at one time, likely near the turn of the century. Later owners removed this non-original porch and replaced it, probably in the late 1940s, with a Colonial Revival configuration. The current porch, built in 1981, and the door surround, built in 1996, replace this arrangement with details more consistent with ornamentation found on the rest of the house. The current framing of the door is supported by the house's original tie rods placed within the exterior walls and has restored the use of the house's original transom configuration, which was blocked by the previous arrangement. It is an appropriate and compatible change to the house.

The house has been meticulously restored and updated by the current owner. Structural problems have been corrected, utility systems have been modernized. The house continues to be maintained in excellent condition.

Overview-Section 8

The McCurdy house is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its architecture. It is an excellent extant example of an I-house, as defined in the subtype "National Folk Residences-I-house" property type listed in the Multiple Property Form, "Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas." The I-house is a Folk form that was popular in this country from 1850 to 1890, defined by its gable-end form of two rooms wide, one room deep and two stories tall. Although a number of Folk House National residences survive from Lawrence's "City-Building Period," very few of them are I-houses, as this was a style not commonly used in the city. It is likely that the McCurdy house was constructed of local brick made by one of the three brick manufacturers located within the city at this time. The application of Federal style ornament to this plain form raises it beyond a mere vernacular dwelling, adding a touch of distinction and eastern.flavor.

House History

Witter S. McCurdy, a lifelong bachelor, was born in New York and came to Lawrence in 1858, where he became active in land speculation and Lawrence's real estate market. He acquired Lots 54 and 56 on Pinckney Street, as well as other property, from the trustees of the City of Lawrence in 1868. This property, consisting of approximately three acres, was located in the southwest portion of Lawrence's original town site, but mostly outside of the city limits. At the time, Pinckney (Sixth) Street ended at Illinois Street, just east of the McCurdy House, but McCurdy's property lines consisted of the Pinckney Street line, Winthrop (Seventh) Street, Illinois and Alabama Streets. The southernmost portion of this tract was annexed as Lane's Place Addition in 1871.

The McCurdy home was built in 1869 or 1870. As late as 1880, no street ran in front of the house. The builder and architect of the house are unknown. Within two years, Witter McCurdy sold the house to his brother, Jesse McCurdy. The house remained in possession of the McCurdy family until 1917. The Jesse McCurdy family consisted of parents Jesse and Emily and children John, Anna and Frances. Jesse, a lawyer and land speculator, died in 1897 and in 1902, Emily died as the result of a tragic accident when a bonfire of leaves caught her dress on fire. John died in Mexico City in 1908, Frances sold her share of the house to her sister, Annie Dumars in 1911 and Annie sold the house back to Frances, who never married, in 1912. When Witter McCurdy died in 1908, the funeral was held "from the family home on West Pinckney street."

Kathryn Leighton purchased the house in 1917. Kathryn, a black woman, was married to John Leighton, a white man. Kathryn was reportedly a talented musician and the only black woman in Lawrence to have her own electric automobile. The Leightons did not live in the former McCurdy house, but instead erected a house just west at 913 W. Sixth Street and rented 909 W. Sixth Street. According to City Directories, Kathryn Leighton-then a widow-moved to 907 W. Sixth Street between 1923 and 1925. She sold the former McCurdy house to Mildred and Jennings McKinley in 1946.

When they purchased the house, Jennings McKinley was an executive with the Continental Trailways Bus Company and Mildred McKinley was an interior decorator with Weaver's Department Store. The McCurdy house, in poor condition after serving as rental property for 30 years, received many modernizations and

improvements from the McKinleys. A decaying front porch was removed and a new porch constructed. The one-car garage was added on the east side of the house. Access to the first-story bathroom was reconfigured so that one could enter it from the hallway rather than the dining room. The kitchen was remodeled and its south porch removed. The McKinleys also added tile ceilings to cover crumbling plaster, knotty pine closets in the east second story bedroom and divided the west bedroom to accommodate their two children. The McKinleys sold the house to Phyllis Schaffer and Myrel and Donalda Howard in 1973. Phyllis Shaffer occupied the house until 1977, when she married and moved to Texas, selling the house to its current owner, William Pugh.

William Pugh began restoration of the house immediately after purchase. New, unobtrusive systems were installed, the altered ceilings removed and the historic configuration of the first and second stories restored as much as possible. Space allotted to the first story bathroom from the dining room has been restored to the dining room. Wood floors have been refinished and severely worn areas matched with similar flooring. Historically appropriate wallpapers have been added to nearly every room. The new bathroom wing, designed in 1982 and built from 1982 to 1990 as a freestanding structure, is linked by an enclosed bridge to the house, minimizing intrusion upon the historic fabric of the building. The 1981 porch and 1996 surround return the main entrance of the house to its original transom configuration in keeping with the Federal style of the house.

Lawrence Development

The McCurdy house fits into the period defined as Lawrence's City-Building Period, taking place after the Civil War from 1864 to 1873. During this time, an influx of settlers and a healthy economy contributed toward a brief financial boom before 1873. In 1869, a "Market House" was built at the corner of Eighth and Vermont Streets to house all county and city offices, and the Lawrence Gas and Coal Company began construction of a new plant in 1869; in 1870, a horse-drawn streetcar line began operations.

Fourteen additions and subdivisions were platted in Lawrence during the City-Building Period, including West Lawrence in 1869. Pinckney school, built in 1871, and Clinton Park, part of the original city plat, contributed to the identity of the neighborhood. As West Lawrence and other subdivisions grew, houses in the Folk House National, Italianate, Queen Anne, Folk Victorian and Gothic Revival styles were predominant, especially in West Lawrence.

Style

The McCurdy house is an example of a Midwestern home built by a transplanted New Englander. It is likely that Witter McCurdy arrived in Kansas from the east with an idea of what a proper house should look like, and built his home according to that notion. The combination of the Folk House form with Federal details would be a proper and practical house for the successful McCurdy.

The form of the I-house-side-gabled, two stories in height, two rooms wide and one room deep-is the primary defining element of the style. This form accurately describes the original configuration of the McCurdy house. I-houses evolved from traditional British folk forms and were found in pre-and post-railroad building eras. A prevalent rural form in the Midwest, they are not found in great numbers in Lawrence. This is partly due to the

narrow tract size of lots near town. Many of the early I-houses in Lawrence were built on double lots or in areas that were rural in character at the time of their construction, as was the McCurdy house. Although most I-houses are of frame construction, they can occasionally be found in stone or brick. The depletion of the local timber supply by 1869, the availability of brick and the fireproof qualities of the material may explain why W.S. McCurdy departed from the typical material for his home. The brick construction of the McCurdy house contributes to its uniqueness and undoubtedly its longevity.

Carefully considered Federal details raise the McCurdy house above its vernacular roots.
The Federal style, most popular in this country between 1780 and 1840, is characterized by symmetry, lightness and classical ornament. These elements would have been quite old fashioned for the year of construction, but their association with the ruling mercantile aristocracy of the east coast may have appealed to Witter McCurdy. The simple style and crisp form placed on acreage west of town would have signaled itself as the residence of a prosperous businessman that would withstand the test of time.

At first glance, the McCurdy house gives the impression of a symmetrical house, but window and chimney placement is uneven. Nevertheless, the two-story rectangular shape is balanced and presents a formal appearance on the main façade typically found in the Federal style. The stateliness of this form is further emphasized by another common Federal feature, the tall, narrow six-over-six windows with their flat lintels and sills of stone.

The Federal style is characterized by a lightness and delicacy in comparison to the Georgian style, but many elements are common to both styles. The lack of quoins or other ornament at the corners is part of the Federal style. The turned eaves supported by curved brackets-ornament found on the Georgian and Federal styles-identify the McCurdy house as more than an average house, a high-style addition to the town. According to an 1880 Bird's Eye View of Lawrence, the house did not originally contain a front porch. The 1981 front porch is the most appropriate of all previous porch additions, in keeping with other Federal ornament by creating a simple, flat transom entrance fitting with the Federal style.

Additions to the McCurdy house do not detract from its original appearance. The house was designed and built as a combination of styles, suited to Witter S. McCurdy. Further construction was planned at the outset, as evidenced by the east façade. With a property of this age, it is inevitable that additions will occur through the years, as seen in the kitchen and garage extensions. The design and attachment of the recent rear two-story addition is carefully thought out, making it unobtrusive and the house more livable by today's standards. The alteration of the front porch is in keeping with the house's original appearance and restores the long-hidden transom. The McCurdy house exemplifies the Folk National style and retains much of its integrity in design, materials, workmanship and in its location. It is therefore eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C.

Bibliography

Abstract of Title, Lot 56 and West One Half of Lot 54 on Pinckney Street (now Sixth Street), in the City of Lawrence.

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Verbal Boundary Description
Lot 56 and the west three-quarters of lot 54 on Pinckney Street (now Sixth Street) in the City of Lawrence. The property is bounded on the north by Sixth Street and on all other sides by adjacent property lines.

Boundary Justification
The boundaries include the property historically associated with the house built in 1870 for Witter S. McCurdy. The property is bounded on the north by Sixth Street and on the east, south and west by adjacent property lines.

Photographs
The following information is common to all photographs:
3. Susan Jezak Ford
4. November 22, 2000
5. Negatives will be located at the Kansas State Historical Society.

6. North façade of house; camera pointed south.
7. #1

6. West façade of house; camera pointed east.
7. #2

6. South façade of house; camera pointed north.
7. #3

6. East façade of house; camera pointed northwest.
7. #4

6. Interior stairway; camera pointed south.
7. #5

6. Living room; camera pointed northwest.
7. #6

6. Dining room; camera pointed southeast.
7. #7

6. West bedroom; camera pointed northwest.
7. #8