

# Register of Historic Kansas Places Registration Form

Listed in the  
state register  
08/13/2016



This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts. The format is similar to the National Register of Historic Places form. 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. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name Radical United Brethren Church

Other names/site number Lecompton Community Building; KHRI #045-3060-00004

Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

## 2. Location

street & number 333 Elmore Street  not for publication

city or town Lecompton  vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Douglas code 045 zip code 66050

## 3-4. Certification

I hereby certify that this property is listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Applicable State Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Kansas State Historical Society  
State agency

**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.)

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
	1	object
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Total</b>

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the State Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion: Religious Facility

Government: City Hall

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social: Civic

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Vernacular

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Stone

walls: Stone

roof: Asphalt shingles

other: N/A

---

## Narrative Description

### Summary Paragraph *(Briefly describe the overall characteristics of the property and its location, setting, and size.)*

Located at 333 Elmore Street in Lecompton, Douglas County (2010 population 625), the 1907 Radical United Brethren Church is a single story rectangular limestone building with a small 1960s concrete block rear addition (*Figures 1 & 2, at end of document*). The gable-fronted 32' x 54' building faces east in the center of a 15-lot parcel in Block 20 owned by the City of Lecompton, though only lots 8 & 9 are included within the nominated boundary. The building is nestled between the city's Rowena Park to its south and the Lecompton City Hall to the north. An alley runs along the west boundary of the parcel, and Elmore Street is to the east. The nominated property also includes a metal bell and tower relocated from Lecompton's elementary school; it is considered a non-contributing object.

---

### Elaboration *(Provide a detailed description of the building's exterior, interior, and any associated buildings on the property. Note any historic features, materials, and changes to the building/property.)*



**Figure 3. Undated historic image of church building.**

Construction of the United Radical Brethren Church (now the Lecompton Community Building) began in 1906. The builders utilized the same foundation of the original wooden church structure that burned earlier that year. The stone used to construct the 1906 building was quarried from the B.H. Leslie farm, about 0.7 miles southeast of the building.<sup>1</sup> The church was designed as a 32' (north-to-south) x 54' (east-to-west) random ashlar stone structure, with 20 foot ceilings, 12 windows, and two chimneys.

### Setting

The Radical United Brethren Church fronts Elmore Street, the original historic downtown of Lecompton. A tree-lined grass buffer separates Elmore Street from a brick sidewalk that parallels it. Access to the building from the street is provided by a concrete path, leading to a series of seven concrete steps. A red-brick walkway leads from these steps to a set of five limestone stairs leading into the building. A concrete sidewalk leads around the building to the south; between the sidewalk and the building is a small flower garden with annuals and perennials.

A metal-framed bell tower is located to the northeast of the building. To the building's southwest is a rock garden echoing the rock work of the building itself. The building is separated from Rowena Park to the south by a row of elm trees, which make up the southern boundary of the nomination. The western boundary is the alley. The northern boundary is the north line of Block 20's Lot 8 & 9, and the eastern boundary is Elmore Street's western right-of-way.

### Exterior

The main façade faces east. Centered within this elevation is a large, arched top masonry opening with limestone sill. The arched lintel contains vertical limestone blocks springing from a tall keystone. The historic window has been replaced with a wood panel containing a pair of one-over-one windows in the lower half (*Figure 3*). Access into the building is on the south end of this elevation. A set of limestone steps leads up to a stone archway – a smaller version of the large centered window – that creates a covered porch area with a limestone floor and non-historic double door entry. The gable contains wooden square-butt shingles separated from the stone by thin wooden trim. The roof edge is delineated by a wide cornice board with end returns.

The south elevation of the 1906 building contains five evenly-spaced historic rectangular one-over-one double-sash wooden windows with stone lintels and sills. The south wall of the 1960s concrete block addition is flush with the 1906 building. It contains a solid wood door at the east end; there are no other openings.

The visible portion of the 1906 building's west elevation is similar in design to the east elevation. The exception is that there is a single rectangular window in the north half of the elevation that matches those on the south elevation. The gable

---

<sup>1</sup> As of 2016, this farm is still owned by the Leslie family.

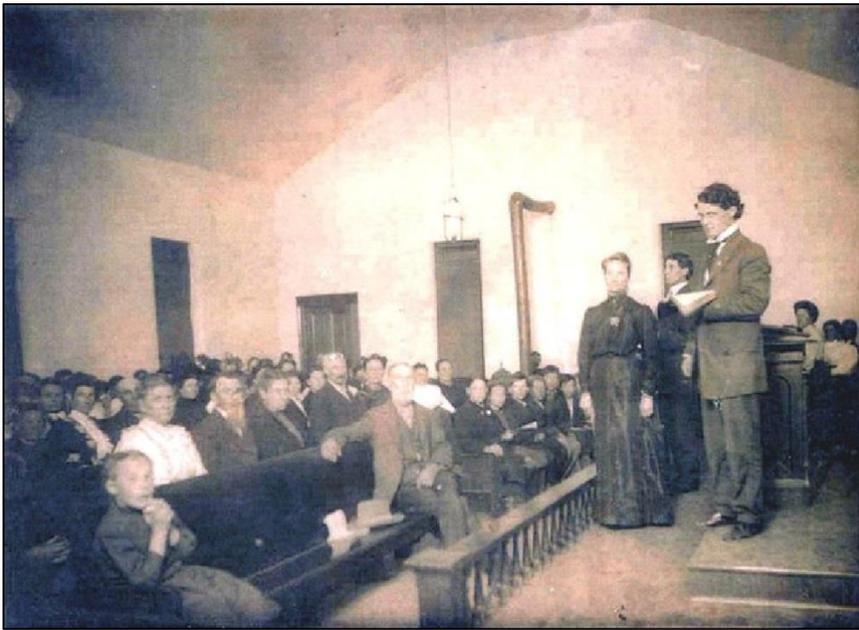


Figure 4: Undated interior image of church, looking west.

double doors in the west wall leads to the main open space, and a single door in the north wall leads into what is now the kitchen.

The kitchen, which measures 23' (N-S) x 12' (E-W) was historically used as a Sunday-school and committee meeting room. The west wall of this space currently contains two openings into the building's main room. In the north half of the wall, sliding doors were historically located here, so privacy could be provided when the occasion demanded. The sliding doors were replaced in circa 1933 by a partial height wall with serving window when the meeting room was changed into a kitchen. This dividing wall and window were improved in 2015 during interior renovations. A trimmed double entry (missing its doors) was located in the south portion of this wall. A wood stove connected to a flue in the west wall of this room. During the renovations in 2015, the chimney hole was filled in; although, this hole is still visible through the HVAC ductwork. The north wall contains a single window; the east wall contains a pair of non-historic windows.

The main room is 32' (N-S) x 38' (E-W) and has remained an open space. The north and south walls each contain four windows. The west wall contains one window on the north end and a masonry opening (which historically contained a window) on the south end that was covered when the 1960s addition was built. A door between this masonry opening and the south wall leads into the addition. This door historically led outside (*Figure 4*).

The 1960s concrete block addition houses two restrooms, storage space, and an attic.

The original ceiling height of the building was 20', but a 12' dropped ceiling system exists now. The interior walls are the original lath and plaster, with the exception of the dividing wall between the main room and kitchen. Originally a pine wood floor existed in the main room; currently the floor is white oak (installed in 2015). The general layout of the interior remains much the same as it did originally. The walls are still lath and plaster, the wood casing and molding around all the windows and doors are still original as well.

## Alterations

The property is in very good condition and has had some moderate alterations since its original construction.

Sometime during the 1960s a concrete block addition was built onto the 1906 building's west end, creating a space for city offices, restrooms, and attic. Additionally a dropped ceiling system was installed through the main room, and the committee room was renovated into a kitchen. At this time, the historic east window was removed. The exact dates of these changes are unknown, but it is assumed the majority of changes occurred in the 1960s.

The Community Building underwent renovations in the late fall of 2015. The original pine hardwood floor and subflooring was buckling due to termite damage, dry rot, and settling of the building. The City of Lecompton, with the help of grant

end also contains square butt singles. The addition's west elevation is symmetrical with the gable end completely filled with asphalt shingles. In the center of the gable is a solid wooden door. There is no stair leading to it.

The north elevation of the 1906 building contains five windows that match those on the south elevation. The spacing of these windows, however, is uneven. No openings are found in the north elevation of the 1960s addition.

## Interior

The interior of the Radical United Brethren Church has a simple floor plan. Upon entering the building from the east, there is an 8' (N-S) x 8' (E-W) entry vestibule. A window on the

south wall provides natural light; the edges of the window opening are rounded (a detail typical on all historic windows). A set of

funds from the Douglas County Heritage Conservation Council, hired Pattin construction to perform the renovations. The pine flooring was replaced with  $\frac{3}{4}$ " white oak with a traditional sand and finish. The layout of the kitchen was reconfigured, to function better and tile flooring was installed in the kitchen and entry ways.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for State 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

---



---



---



---

**Period of Significance**

1906-1966

---

**Significant Dates**

1906-1907

---

1927

---

1933

---

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

---

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

---

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

---

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The building's period of significance starts in 1906 with the beginning of its construction and ends in 1966. The building's significance in social history is tied to its use first as the United Radical Brethren Church (1906-1927) and secondly as the town's city hall (1933-2003). Extending the period of significance to the 50 year mark incorporates this later period as a government building.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

Building is no longer owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

---

## Narrative Statement of Significance

### Summary Paragraph *(Provide a summary paragraph that notes under what criteria the property is nominated.)*

The Radical United Brethren Church (1907) is nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places under Criterion A for its local association with the social history of Lecompton. The current structure was built atop the foundation of an earlier wooden church building that burned in 1906. The building served the local Radical United Brethren congregation from its construction through 1927 when services and committee meetings ceased. From 1933 to 2003, this building served as Lecompton's City Hall and Community Building. The building's period of significance, 1906 to 1966 incorporates these two important eras in the building's history.<sup>2</sup>

---

### Elaboration *(Provide a brief history of the property and justify why this property is locally significant.)*

#### Early Development of Lecompton

The City of Lecompton is located in the northwest corner of Douglas County, Kansas. Douglas County was opened for settlement in 1854. The county experienced much turmoil in the early territorial years. Leaders in Lecompton (the territorial capital at the time) wanted Kansas to be a slave state and leaders in Lawrence wanted Kansas to be a free state. Because of this many events took place, including the drafting of the Lecompton Constitution to admit Kansas as a slave state; although, residents of Kansas Territory rejected this constitution.<sup>3</sup>

Lecompton was also founded in 1854. Originally the settlement was called Bald Eagle; the name was changed to Lecompton in honor of Samuel Lecompte, the chief justice of the Territorial Supreme Court. In 1855 Lecompton became the capital of the Kansas Territory. Some of the first pioneers in the area were A.W. and A.G. Glenn, father and son; G.W. Zinn, David Martin, M.S. Winter and William Shirley. The Lecompton Town Company was organized in 1855; at that time the town consisted of 600 surveyed and platted acres. It was designed with the expectation of making Lecompton, not only the capitol of the Territory but also to make it a large city. The first house was built of logs by W.R. Simmons in the fall of 1854.<sup>4</sup>

In 1855 Lecompton became incorporated and was designated as the county seat of Douglas County. By 1858 Lecompton was flourishing and was considered home to more than 1000 people. During the years 1856-1858 there were between an additional 700-1000 U.S. cavalrymen and territorial militiamen stationed in Lecompton. In 1883 Lecompton had four active churches: Catholic, Methodist Church South, Presbyterian, and United Brethren Church with an estimated population of 284 (1880 US Federal Census).<sup>5</sup>

#### History of the Radical United Brethren in Christ

The Church of the United Brethren in Christ was the first denomination to be founded in the United States. The beginnings of the church occurred toward the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, but soon spread to Virginia, Maryland, and Ohio. The church was led by bishops with itinerant preachers who followed a prescribed circuit. In 1800 the church's congregants began holding annual conferences. The 1815 General Conference adopted a Confession of Faith, and the 1841 General Conference adopted the church's first constitution. Both the Confession and the Constitution were integral to the church's identity.<sup>6</sup>

In 1889 the membership was over 200,000. That year's General Conference held in York, Pennsylvania, however, was fraught with tension. The contemporary Church of the United Brethren in Christ's online history explains:

The controversy centered around the desire to make three changes to the Constitution. However, the amendment procedure spelled out in the Constitution made it almost impossible to change the Constitution. Not to be deterred, the denominational leaders decided to just ignore the Constitution and make the changes anyway. They

---

<sup>2</sup> Although major alterations to this building occurred in the 1960s, the alterations are not necessarily considered historically appropriate.

<sup>3</sup> For more information about the Lecompton Constitution, see Kansas Historical Society, "Kansas Constitutions," *Kansapedia* [online database] <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/kansas-constitutions/16532> (accessed 29 June 2016).

<sup>4</sup> William Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883), n.p. [online transcription] available from Kansas Collection Books <http://www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/douglas/douglas-co-p31.html#LECOMPTON> (accessed 29 June 2016).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA, "Our History," <http://ub.org/about/history/> (accessed 29 June 2016).

essentially adopted a new Constitution—and more significantly, a new Confession of Faith—in an unconstitutional way.<sup>7</sup>

The changes each focused on the church's restriction on members belonging to secret societies (e.g., the Odd Fellows and Masons). The new constitution eliminated the anti-secret order society clause.<sup>8</sup> Only one of the six church bishops, Milton Wright (father of Wilbur and Orville) declared disapproval of the new constitution. Wright led a group – estimated at between 10,000 and 15,000 members – to split from the main United Brethren congregation, calling themselves the United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution) or the Radical United Brethren Church. Over the next few years, bitter disputes arose regarding ownership of church property. Courts eventually sided with the main United Brethren Church, leaving the Radicals without buildings in which to worship.<sup>9</sup>

### Lecompton's Radical United Brethren Church Building

Lecompton's United Brethren Church congregation was organized in 1858 by five members. In 1865 the congregation organized Lane University, acquiring the Rowena Hotel, which stood at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Elmore streets, for their initial college building.<sup>10</sup> Church services were also held in this hotel until a new college building was constructed in 1882-1883.<sup>11</sup>

In the autumn following the General Conference of 1889, a meeting of the Lecompton United Brethren congregation was called to discuss the future of the local church. This meeting was held in the new Lane University building's second floor. The majority of the congregation voted to follow Bishop Wright and become the Radical United Brethren Church in Lecompton. The approximately 100-member group – about one-fifth of the town's population – was now without a place of worship, as Lane University was considered property of the main United Brethren Church.<sup>12</sup>

A new church building was erected in 1892 on the northern most lots of the property that had been owned by the Rowena Hotel. The new Radical United Brethren church building was dedicated by Bishop Milton Wright, present and presiding, on Sunday, September 25 1892 at the first annual conference of the Radical United Brethren Church. Two local men were ordained as pastors. The wood-framed structure was described as follows:

Our building is a structure 32x54, 20 foot ceiling, 12 windows, and a belfry or tower. There will be a room at the East end 16x32 for Sunday-school and committee meetings. This will be made by sliding doors which can easily be adjusted; when occasion demands, both to be thrown into one room. The flue runs from bottom to top with brick. It will be a neat structure. We deserve it.<sup>13</sup>

The Radicals held church services there until March 1906 when fire destroyed the wooden structure in.<sup>14</sup>

In 1907 a new stone church for the Radical United Brethren congregation was completed. The building was identical to the original wood structure and was built on the same location. Lawrence, Kansas's *Jeffersonian Gazette* noted in August 1906, "The Radical United Brethren church in Lecompton, which was burned to the ground last winter, is being rebuilt. The new edifice is to be of stone and about the dimensions of the old building."<sup>15</sup> One design departure from the wooden building was that the stone church was to have no bell-tower. The new building was also built with two chimneys.

The structure served as the Radical United Brethren Church in Lecompton from its completion in 1907 until sometime in 1927, though the church retained ownership of the property until 1931. Newspaper accounts from the decade following the building's construction note large revival meetings held at the building. By the end of the 1920s, however, the congregation's membership had dwindled – as did the town's population of 288 people in 1930 – and had gone without a

<sup>7</sup> Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA, "Our History," <http://ub.org/about/history/> (accessed 30 June 2016).

<sup>8</sup> Milton W. Loyer, editor, "Appendix A: The United Brethren Split of 1889," *The Chronicle: Journal of the Historical Society of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church* 8 (Spring 1996): 83.

<sup>9</sup> Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA, "Our History," n.p. & Loyer, "Appendix A," 83. The contemporary Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA, is descended from the Radical United Brethren Church. The group who amended the constitution, who were known as the Liberal or Evangelical United Brethren Church, merged with the Methodist Church in 1968 to form the United Methodist Church.

<sup>10</sup> Cutler, *History of Kansas*, n.p.

<sup>11</sup> The new building was constructed atop the foundation of what was to be the Kansas Territorial Capitol that was never completed. This two-story building was listed in the National Register in 1971.

<sup>12</sup> The 1890 US Federal Census lists 450 people in the town of Lecompton.

<sup>13</sup> "Presiding Elders Report," *Christian Conservator* (21 September 1892): 5.

<sup>14</sup> "Lecompton Loses Church By Fire," *Topeka Daily Capital* (12 March 1906): 1.

<sup>15</sup> "Rebuilding the Church," *The Jeffersonian Gazette* (29 August 1906): 5.

pastor throughout 1928.<sup>16</sup> The congregation began selling off its assets that year. A bid on the stone structure was received in October 1931, and in May 1932 the building was finally sold to a local resident for \$1, who sold it to the City of Lecompton in June 1933 for \$800.<sup>17</sup>

The locally historic building served as the Lecompton City Hall and Lecompton Community Building until 2003 when the current City Hall building was opened next door. Since that time, this building has served as the Lecompton Community Building. It continues to be utilized as a meeting place for many local community groups, city and individual events. It is a cornerstone of the community.

---

<sup>16</sup> Pages 7 & 9 of the Presidents Report of Kansas Conference 74<sup>th</sup> annual Session, Church of the United Brethren in Christ, October 17-21, 1928 notes, "Lecompton has been without a pastor the entire year."

<sup>17</sup> Kansas Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ Seventy-Seventh Session, "Reports"(21-28 October 1931): 6; Kansas Conference to Walter O. McClanahan, Warranty Deed 131, 12 May 1932; & W.O. McClanahan to City of Lecompton, Warranty Deed 131, 17 June 1933.

---

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

---

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA. "Our History." <http://ub.org/about/history/> (accessed 29 June 2016).

Cutler, William. *History of the State of Kansas*. Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883.

*The Jeffersonian Gazette* (29 August 1906).

Loyer, Milton W. Editor. "Appendix A: The United Brethren Split of 1889." *The Chronicle: Journal of the Historical Society of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church* 8 (Spring 1996): 83-87 [transcription online] United Methodist Archives, Lycoming College Library [http://www.lycoming.edu/umarch/chronicles/1996/chronicle\\_1996.htm](http://www.lycoming.edu/umarch/chronicles/1996/chronicle_1996.htm) (accessed 30 June 2016).

"Presiding Elders Report." *Christian Conservator*. (21 September 1892).

"Reports." *Kansas Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. 74th Annual Session*. October 17-21, 1928.

"Reports." *Kansas Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. 77th Annual Session*. October 21-28, 1931.

*Topeka Daily Capital* (12 March 1906).

Warranty Deeds.

---

**10. Geographical Data**

---

**Acreage of Property**    Less than one

**Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.**

(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 39.044779      -95.394815      3      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_  
Latitude:      Longitude:      Latitude:      Longitude:

2 \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      4      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_  
Latitude:      Longitude:      Latitude:      Longitude:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

The building located at 333 Elmore Street is separated from Rowena Park to the south by a row of elm trees, which make up the southern boundary. The western boundary is the alley. The northern boundary is the north line of Block 20's Lot 8 & 9, and the eastern boundary is Elmore Street's western right-of-way. The total nominated acreage is less than one.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries include the land historically associated with the 1907 church building.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

---

name/title Lynley Sanford, City Clerk with Amanda Loughlin, KSHS  
organization City of Lecompton date Spring 2016  
street & number 327 Elmore PO Box 100 telephone (785) 887-6407  
city or town Lecompton state KS zip code 66050  
e-mail clecompton@yahoo.com

---

**Property Owner:**

---

name Same as above.  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Additional Documentation**

---

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photograph Log**

Name of Property: Radical United Brethren Church  
City or Vicinity: Lecompton  
County: Douglas State: Kansas  
Photographer: Rick Anderson (RA), KSHS & Lynley Sanford (LS)  
Date Photographed: Fall 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 7: East elevation, looking NW (RA).
- 2 of 7: South elevation, looking NE (RA).
- 3 of 7: West elevation, looking SE (LS).
- 4 of 7: North elevation (RA).
- 5 of 7: Looking west from entry foyer (LS).
- 6 of 7: Looking SE at kitchen from NE corner of main hall (LS).
- 7 of 7: Looking east from SW corner of main hall (LS).

**Figure 1.** Contextual view of Lecompton. (Kansas Historic Resources Inventory).  
X indicates location of building. North is up.

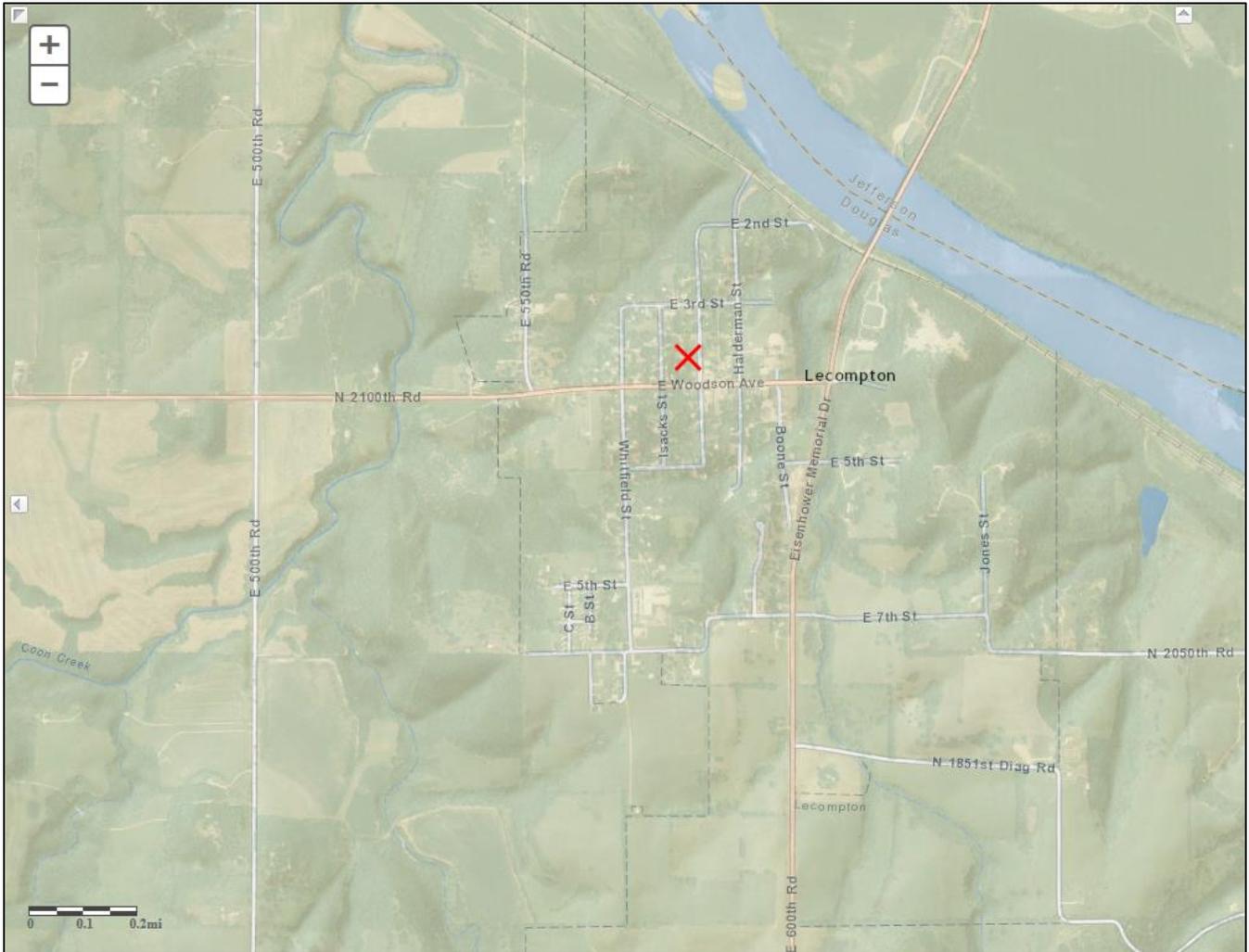


Figure 2. 2015 Aerial image, showing location of building at 333 Elmore Street (Google imagery).

