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 National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House

Other names/site number Mitchell, Ulysses G., House (KHRI 045-3010-00370)

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, KS

2. Location

Street & number 1313 Massachusetts Street

City or town Lawrence

State Kansas Code KS County Douglas Code 045 Zip code 66044

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO Date

Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

____ entered in the National Register

____ determined eligible for the National Register

____ determined not eligible for the National Register

____ removed from the National Register

____ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
### 5. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

### 6. Function or Use

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<td>DOMESTIC – Single Dwelling</td>
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### 7. Description

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<tr>
<td>MOVEMENTS: Craftsman</td>
<td>Roof: <strong>ASPHALT</strong></td>
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Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State

Narrative Description

Summary

The Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House, located in Lawrence, Kansas, is composed of the original 1870 house, and subsequent historic additions or modifications in 1874, between 1897-1905, 1921, c.1927, and c.1960. As the city of Lawrence expanded, the house also expanded to match styles and design trends popular at their time; therefore, the house reflects multiple design changes through its additions and modifications. The Roberts/Luther/Mitchell house is a good local representative of the National Folk style building as defined in the multiple property documentation, *Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas*. The House maintains its character features such as overall shape and interior space arrangement, its historic materials, and historic design alterations to keep up with trends and the growth of the city.

The 1870 house is a 1-½ story gable-front National Folk style house. The 1874 addition includes a 1-½ story gable-roof expansion in the National Folk style and a rear single story shed-roofed expansion; the addition created a front-gable T-shape house. The modifications made between 1897-1905 include a rear single story shed-roofed addition and a south bay window. The 1921 modifications include an extension of the east-west gable over the rear single-story extension, a north bay window, a Craftsman entrance foyer, a south Craftsman style triple window, and two second-story dormers. The c.1927 modification is a north single-story expansion. The c.1960 modifications include an expansion on one of the dormers and the addition of a third dormer. Character features, including limestone foundation, wood lap siding and trim, wood windows, interior wood trim, wood flooring, and plaster, remain. Their conditions range from deteriorated for the foundation, to partially deteriorated for plaster, to worn for interior finishes, and good for siding and trim. Though modified over time, the house retains great historic integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Elaboration

Setting & Location

The Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House is located on the 1300 block of Massachusetts Street, the original commercial street through downtown Lawrence, Kansas. Although Massachusetts Street represents the historic commercial district of the downtown, the section south of 13th Street developed residentially as the eastern edge of the Oread Neighborhood.

The Oread Neighborhood is situated between the downtown commercial district and the University of Kansas. The neighborhood first expanded from the west side of Massachusetts during the rebuilding period after Quantrill's Raid destroyed much of the city. 1 Development of Lawrence was spurred by the completion of the transcontinental railroad branch to Lawrence in 1864. 2 Additionally, the establishment of the University of Kansas in 1866 accelerated residential development in the Oread Neighborhood near the university. 3

Between 1874 and 1899 during the period of “Agriculture and Manufacturing, Foundations,” the Oread Neighborhood was one of the most heavily built upon areas in Lawrence. The railroad made large amounts of lumber available, and as a result, most of the houses built during this time in the Oread Neighborhood are constructed of wood in popular styles such as Queen Anne, Italianate, and Folk Victorian. Despite the popularity of wood construction, there were still some houses being constructed of masonry such as the John N. Roberts House (listed on the National Register in 1974) which neighbors the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House to the north. 4

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3 Ibid, p. 12.
Due to its proximity to the commercial district and the University, the neighborhood attracted a diverse set of residents such as business owners, professors, and students. This diverse makeup of residents is reflected in the variety of architectural styles ranging from an elaborate Romanesque mansion to modest National Folk dwellings.

Today, the neighborhood retains much of its historic character, and the population reflects that of historic trends; the portion of the neighborhood roughly bounded between W 9th Street and 12th Street and the alleys behind Louisiana and Kentucky Street is Nationally Registered as the Oread Historic District (listed on the National Register in 2007).  

Although not included in the Oread Historic District, the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House retains its historic character and represents the trends of the neighborhood through its architectural features. The property of the house sits on is a typical residential lot near downtown Lawrence, Kansas: 117 feet by 50 feet. The east side of the property is bounded by Massachusetts street, with dense commercial lots to the north. The west side of the property is bounded by the alley between Massachusetts and Vermont Street. The north and south sides are bounded by adjacent properties, the John N. Roberts House to the north and the Woods House (KHRI 045-3010-00371), a Folk Victorian dwelling, to the south. Located on the property, is a contributing c. 1919 one-car garage west of the house.

Overview

The original 1870 house is a 1-½ story gable-front (east-west ridge) National Folk dwelling approximately 26'-0" E-W by 16'-0" N-S. When the house was first built, the interior was one room wide by two rooms deep on both the first and second-story. Near the center of the south facade is a 1921 brick chimney; the original brick chimney was located near the middle of the original portion of the house. The footprint of the original house sits on a stone foundation and basement.

The 1874 1-½ story gable roof (north-south ridge) National Folk style addition expanded the original dwelling and altered the footprint to be a front-gable T-shape; this addition is approx. 16'-0" E-W by 12'-0" N-S. On the west façade, there is a single-story shed-roofed extension that is approx. 28'-0" N-S by 12'-0" E-W. In 1921, the south 2/3 of this addition was incorporated into the east-west gable which was extended over it. These portions of the house also have a stone foundation and basement.

Between 1897-1905 a single-story addition was added to the west facade; it is approx. 10'-8" N-S by 6'-0" E-W. At the time it was constructed it had a flat roof; however, it has since been altered to have a shed roof. During this period, a bay window was added to the south facade; the windows from the 1870 house that were in the location of the bay window were reused for the south face of the bay. On the east and west sides of the bay window, new windows were added. The bay window is approx. 9'-0" E-W by 3'-7" N-S. The single-story addition on the west facade has a concrete foundation, and the bay window has a stone foundation.

As previously mentioned, one of the 1921 modifications extended the E-W main gable over the rear single-story extension to expand the second-story. Additionally, a bay window was added to the north facade; like the south bay window, the 1870 windows were relocated to create this bay window. The bay window is approx. 9'-10" E-W by 3'-7" N-S. In the L created by the wings of the gable ends, a Craftsman entrance foyer was added; it is approx. 12'-4" N-S by 11'-0" E-W. On the north facade, a Craftsman style triple-window was added. Lastly, two second-story shed-roofed dormers were added to the south roof slope. Around 1927, the west corner of the north facade was extended to be flush with the north face of the 1921 bay window. These additions and modifications to the house have a brick foundation and crawlspace.

The c. 1960 modifications include the expansion of the west dormer on the south roof plane; it was expanded to the west end of the west facing gable. Additionally, a third dormer was added on the west roof plane of the N-S gable.

The overall exterior size of the house is approx. 38'-0" E-W by 31'-6" N-S. The exterior of the house is finished with 4" wood lap-siding. Underneath the overhang of the roof and the corners of the house, there are wood trim pieces of varying widths. The steep pitched areas of roof all have new, laminated asphalt shingles. Flat or low-slope areas of roofing currently have white TPO type roofing.

The first-story layout consists of six rooms (2 rooms wide by 3 rooms deep) with E-W oriented straight-run stacked stairs connecting all levels (basement, first, & second stories) near the middle of the floor plan. The second-story has three bedrooms, a center hall, a bathroom, and a stair to the first-story.
East Façade

The east facade is approximately 28'-0" wide and consists of the original 1870 front-facing gable with approx. a 13:12 pitch roof and the 1921 entrance foyer and porch with a flat roof. The original front-facing gable is approx. 15'-8" wide. Fenestration in the front-facing gable is composed of two first-story and one second-story 1870 2/2 double-hung, wood windows with wood trim; the lintel has a triangular pediment detail.

The 1921 entrance foyer is approx. 12'-4" wide and has a central Craftsman style door made of wood with glass panels. On each side of the door, there is a sidelight window with similar Craftsman detailing. The porch projects from the east elevation by approx. 5'-4"; it is approx. 11'-0" wide. There are two concrete steps lined with brick cheek walls down the sidewalk, and one concrete step also lined with brick cheek walls up to the front door. Like the porch, the steps are all faced with brick as well. Above the concrete porch there is a low-sloped gable entry canopy that attaches to the east facade of the house with wood brackets for support; two 4x4 wood posts were added at a later date for additional support.

South Façade

The south facade is approximately 45'-0" wide and can be divided into four irregular bays. From east to west (front to rear), the first bay consists of the south side of the original 1870 house’s front room. Centered on this bay, there is a 1921 triple in-swing casement window with craftsman detailing; it is identical to the triple casement window on the north facade. The second bay is the south bay window that was added between 1897 and 1905. The bay window has two 2/2 double-hung, wood windows. The bay has wainscot panel detailing beside and below the windows. The bay originally had a flat roof, and now has a shed roof with a similar pitch as the dormers above. The third bay consists of the southwest room of the 1874 addition; on this bay, there is an off-center twin double-hung, wood window with wood trim. The last bay consists of the south elevation of the 1897-1905 single-story addition; centered on this portion of the facade, there is a twin 2/2 in-swing wood casement window.

On the south slope of the E-W gable, there are two 1921 shed-roofed dormers and the brick chimney. The easternmost dormer is above the triple casement window; in the dormer, there is a twin in-swinging casement window. The second dormer is along the western half of the roof. Originally, the dormer was identical to the east dormer, but it was expanded in c 1960. Above the bay window, the second dormer has a 1921 twin in-swinging casement window that is identical to the east dormer's window. Centered on the remaining portion of the dormer, there are 1960s double-hung windows. The brick chimney is located between the two dormers. The original brick chimney was located in the center of the original portion of the house; it moved to this location in 1921.

West Façade

The west facade is approximately 31'-6" wide and consists of the 1874 single-story shed-roofed extension, the west side of the c. 1927 north single-story extension, the 1897-1905 single-story addition, and the 1921 extension of the E-W main gable over the rear single-story extension.

The west facade of the 1874 single-story shed-roofed extension is approx. 27'-6" wide. There is a door and window on this portion of the facade. The door is wood with 15 glass panels; the trim around the door is also wood, and the lintel has a triangular pediment detail identical to the 1870 windows on the east facade of the house. The window is a 2/2 double-hung, wood window with similar trim detailing as the door. The west side of the c. 1927 north single-story extension is separated from this portion of the facade by a piece of vertical wood trim; it extends the west facade by approx. 3'-7".

The 1897-1905 single-story addition projects approx. 6'-0" from the west facade of the single-story shed-roofed extension; It is approx. 10'-8" wide. Off center on the addition, there is a four-panel wood door. When this addition was first constructed, it had a flat roof; however, it has been altered since to have a shed roof. Above this addition, is the west facade of the E-W main gable. Off center in the gable, there is a 1960s 1/1 double-hung window.

On the west slope of the N-S gable, there is a single dormer that was added to the house c. 1960. It has a twin 1/1 double-hung window.
North Façade

The north façade is approximately 45'-0" wide and can be divided into four irregular bays. From east to west (front to rear), the first bay is the north side of the 1921 entrance foyer. Centered on this bay, there is a triple in-swing casement window with craftsman detailing. The second bay includes the 1874 gable end and the 1921 bay window modification. The 1921 bay window modification projects from the north façade by approx. 3'-7". Centered on the bay window, there are two 1874 2/2 double-hung, wood windows with a wood trim. In the gable, there is one centered 1874 2/2 double-hung, wood window with wood trim. The third bay consists of the c. 1927 modification to the north elevation; it is flush with the north face of the 1921 bay window. On this portion of the north façade, there is an off-center twin double-hung, wood window. The last bay consists of the north elevation of the 1897-1905 single-story addition; centered on this portion of the façade, there is a twin 2/2 in-swing wood casement window.

Interior

The first-story layout consists of six rooms (2 rooms wide by 3 rooms deep). The interior appears to have been remodeled in 1921 as the woodwork is consistent with the details of the 1921 entry foyer. Unless otherwise noted the walls and ceilings are lath and plaster, and the floors are narrow oak strip flooring. On the north wall of the entry foyer, there is a built-in-cabinet; it has wood cabinets with 3/1 glass panels. Between the entry foyer and the living room, there is a 5'-0" wide opening with Craftsman-detailed casing. Between the living room and the dining room, there is a 6'-0" wide arched opening; this is where the original chimney was located. In the dining room, there is a built-in-cabinet next to the brick chimney. Between the dining room and the kitchen, there is a kitchen pass-through. The kitchen was remodeled in 1921 and possibly again at a later date. In the dining room, there is a built-in-cabinet next to the brick chimney. Between the dining room and the kitchen, there is a kitchen pass-through. The kitchen was remodeled in 1921 and possibly again at a later date. The east wall of the kitchen is finished with tile, and the floor is unfinished. Attached to the kitchen is the 1897-1905 single-story addition or mud room. The east wall of the mud room is finished with the house's exterior wood lap-siding. Between the kitchen and the back room, there is a full bath with tiled floor and walls. North of the kitchen and bathroom, there is a back room. A double door with craftsman-styled glass paneling separates the back room from the master bedroom. The master bedroom has a closet with built-in shelving.

In the center of the house, there is an E-W oriented straight-run stacked staircase connecting all levels (basement, first, & second stories). This appears to be the original stair location, but the original stair was likely more compact with smaller treads, taller risers, and winder treads at the top and/or bottom to fit within the original house footprint.

The second-story has three bedrooms, a center hall, a bathroom, and a stair to the first-story. Each bedroom is in one of the wings of the house (north, east, west). The north and east bedroom connect to attic space under the eaves of the house. The west bedroom connects to a closet under an eave of the house. The west bedroom’s walls and ceiling are finished with modern wood-paneling. There is a full bathroom centered along the south wall; it has tile floor and walls. The painted wood base and trim are simple rectangular shapes. Windows are wood and are original to their era of construction, either to the original house or later modifications and additions. Doors are wood and are either four or two panel, also original to their era of construction.

Condition and Integrity

Even with its historic alterations, the condition and historic integrity of the house is good.

The general character defining features, and their condition and integrity, include:

Setting: The area around the house retains its residential character, and while Massachusetts Street has been widened over the years, there are still sidewalks along both sides and ample green space and separation between the house and vehicular traffic. The house retains its basic 1921 site configuration with the house fronting Massachusetts Street and the detached Garage facing the rear alley. Alterations were made to the site in the early 2000’s when the neighboring John Roberts House was significantly rehabilitated; parking spaces were added beside the garage off the alley with a steel picket fence separating the parking from the house’s rear yard; sidewalks were added from the parking to the John Roberts House and to the rear entries of the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House; and a patio made of concrete pavers was added behind the house. These changes do not damage the overall residential feel of the house’s rear yard.
Overall shape of plan: The house retains its basic shape as established by its 1921 additions and remodeling. Minor modifications to 2nd story dormers near the rear of the house occurred ca.1960, but these do not negatively affect the historic integrity or the overall shape.

Arrangement of interior spaces: The house retains its basic arrangement of interior spaces as set by its 1921 additions and remodeling. On the 1st story, the 1921 Entrance Hall remains at the NE corner, the Living Room and Dining Room remain in the original 1870 portion, the Kitchen remains in the SE 1874 expansion, and the Boarding Rooms remain in the NW quadrant. The central stair appears to be in its original 1870 location but was likely reconfigured slightly in 1874. On the 2nd story, three bedrooms remain (one in each gable-roof wing), and the bathroom added in 1921 remains centered along the S side adjacent to the central hall and stair.

Construction materials: The original limestone basement foundation walls remain, and these are in need of rehabilitation due to deterioration of mortar joints and dislocation of stones. The original painted exterior wood siding and trim from each era of construction remain, and is in very good condition, with few areas needing more than minor rehabilitation and fresh paint. The roofing is modern asphalt shingles on the steep slopes and modern single-ply synthetic membrane on low slopes; while these are not historic materials, they do not negatively affect the overall integrity.

Roof shape: The basic roof shapes remain from the original construction and from the various historic additions. On the second story, the side low-eave walls are not full-height and sloped portions of the roofs create sloped ceilings along the sides of the bedrooms; the 1921 dormer additions provide more usable head height in the rooms, but the feel of the original room shapes is still apparent.

Structural system: The basic wood framing of the original house and various additions remain. Walls are balloon framed, floors are dimensional lumber (with actual sizes varying slightly based on dates of construction), and roofs consist of rafters and ceiling joists. The members are generally in good condition with some areas of framing rehabilitation needed, particular where different ages of construction interface.

Specific character defining features, and their condition and integrity, include:

Porches: The front entrance stoop and roof dates to 1921. The stoop retains its original materials consisting of concrete slab with brick edging, brick cheek walls at steps leading to the stoop, and 32” tall brick wing walls. There is some deterioration of the paving and edging at the landing below the stoop. The porch roof retains its original shape and Craftsman style support brackets; however, two modern support posts have been added at the low-eave outside corners, apparently to eliminate sagging of the front gable. Even with these alterations the front entrance porch retains integrity.

Windows: All of the windows in the house date to either original construction or one of the historic alterations. 1870 windows and 1874 windows are tall 2/2 wood double-hung with sash counterbalance weights. 1921 windows are wood awning or casement type with divided sashes of either four square panes in square sashes or nine panes in vertical rectangular sashes; the nine pane sashes consist of two rows of three square panes in the top half and one row of three tall panes in the bottom half. Windows ca.1960 are wood double-hung with counterbalance springs. Original 1870 and 1874 windows were relocated at a south 1st story bay extension ca.1897-1905 and at a north 1st story bay extension in 1921. All of the windows are in fairly good condition and are in need of general rehabilitation due to age and weather.

Doors: The painted wood front door dates to 1921 and includes partial height sidelights extending from the door head down to 32” from the floor. The door has a nearly full-height light with Mullions dividing it into nine panes in a pattern of two short top rows and one wide center column flanked by a narrow column on each side; a similar pattern divides the sidelights into six panes with two rows of two square lights at the top, and two tall narrow lights below. Interior doors primarily date to 1870 or 1874 and are painted wood with four raised-panels. Interior doors on the 1st story from the Entrance Hall into the Boarding Rooms in the NW quadrant date to 1921 and are painted wood with nine lights; the mullion pattern of the lights has a short top and bottom row, and a narrow column on each side. Door hardware consists of original hinges, original latching devices, and modern surface mounted locking devices. Doors are in relatively good condition and latch hardware is in deteriorated condition, with several doors missing handles. Overall, the doors retain integrity in workmanship, feeling, and association.

Chimney: There is evidence in the basement of a chimney near the center point of the original 1870 portion of the house. This would be in-keeping with common design practice of placing a central chimney serving cooking/heating stoves in National Folk style houses of this era. It is likely the current existing chimney, which is located against the S exterior wall, was placed in this position with the 1921 alterations to allow for a more open connection between the Living Room and
Dining Room. As such, the chimney is a character feature of the more open-plan Craftsman style design from 1921 and it retains historic integrity in this position.

**Dormers**: The 1921 dormers added at the 2nd story roof convey the feeling and association of design to the Craftsman style, yet they are small enough in scale to not diminish the overall feeling and association of the original National Folk style. The ca.1960 westward extension of the SW dormer has a more negative impact on historic integrity, but is not significant enough to have a great impact on the general overall historic integrity, especially since it is near the rear of the house and is not very visible from the primary front façade.

Significant interior features:
The interior of the house retains its original 1921 configuration, and many significant features, including:

**Stairway**: The stairway to the 2nd story appears to have been reconfigured in 1874. Based on comparison to similarly sized houses from the same time period, it appears to be in the original stairway location but altered to be less steep and to provide a landing at the top allowing access to the N bedroom added at that time. The stair is in good condition and retains the original guardrail at the top separating it from the parallel central hallway.

**Spatial relationships**: The spatial relationships on the 1st story retain their 1921 configuration. The NE Entrance Hall is separated from the Living Room with a wide doorway opening, and the Living Room is separated from the Dining Room with a wide shallow-arched opening. This configuration creates a free-flow between the public reception and entertainment rooms which was an important part of their function as the home of a Kansas University professor.

**Flooring**: The original interior wood flooring remains in fairly good condition and is in need of minor rehabilitation and refinishing.

**Plaster**: Original interior plaster remains and is in various conditions throughout, with minor cracking in some walls and severe deterioration at the entry hall ceiling from previous roof leaks.

**Trim**: Interior trim is painted wood, and dates to 1870, 1874, and 1921. At the 1st story 1870 and 1874 areas, baseboards are tall with a molded cap; in the 1921 areas they are tall without molded caps. Throughout the entire 1st story all of the door trims match. They consist of rectangular shapes with beveled edges through the main body of the trim pieces and square edges at the bottom and top corners. The side trim pieces extend vertically a few inches above the top trim. The window trims on the 1st story are similar to the door trims, with the exception of having a typical window stool and skirt detail. It is unclear whether the door and window trims were all updated in matching style in 1921, or whether the trim installed in 1921 was detailed to match earlier 1870 and 1874 trim style; in either case, the interior trim retains integrity of materials, workmanship, and feeling.

**Outbuildings**: The original 1921 detached garage remains at the SW corner of the site. It retains original materials and features. Its concrete foundation is somewhat deteriorated; the wood framing and wood siding is in fair condition. The original painted wood vertical-sliding sashes and the east-facing man-door are in fair condition. The alley-facing sectional overhead garage door is modern, and is shorter and narrower than what was likely an original horizontal-folding vertical-panel door. Even with these deficiencies and alterations, the garage retains historic integrity.

**Conclusion**: The Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House is a relatively unusual resource. With essentially two periods of significance, 1870-74 and 1921, and two distinct yet blended architectural styles, National Folk and Craftsman, it represents an important example of vernacular residential design in Lawrence. It has an unusually intact National Folk body with an equally intact Craftsman entrance vestibule, dormers, and interior. It has two distinct periods of architecture blended in a manner that provides a significant example of architectural evolution for the middle class in Lawrence. It is a modest structure with few facade alterations or loss of features. It retains integrity in its floor plan configuration, fenestration patterns, facade composition, exterior finishes, and interior finishes. The house retains good integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1870-1921

Significant Dates

1870, 1874, 1921

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)
The period of significance for the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House begins in 1870 the date of construction, and ends in 1921 after the last major and important historic alteration was made. The period therefore captures the architectural significance tied to the property based on its local significance and registration requirements defined in the MPDF for the "National Folk" property type. Though there were some minor ca.1960s alterations, these changes were not substantial or important in their design. The focus of this nomination is the National Folk style of the house, and the historic design changes made in the National Folk and Craftsman styles that are reflective of the periods of growth in Lawrence and also defined in the MPDF and historic context below.

Criteria Considerations (justification)
N/A
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Douglas County, Kansas

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Summary

The Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House is locally eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in Architecture as it embodies distinctive characteristics of type, period, and method of construction in multiple eras through its additions and modifications. Most notably, the house expresses distinct characteristics of the National Folk style that was popularized with the expansion of the railroad. Additionally, the house expresses characteristics typical of a Craftsman house through its later additions. The house meets the requirements of the MPDF Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas as a “National Folk” style property type in the area architecture.

Symbolic of their owners’ financial wealth and social standing, these houses represent stability of not only the individual residents, but of the community as well. These were the houses which replaced the early rough settlement houses, and reflect on the owner’s desire to appear modern and urbane. … The National Folk Residences, generally built by the less affluent, are typical of others built across the country. They are linked by common methods of construction, and within each subtype, by plan, form, and in some instances, architectural detailing.6

Overall, the house portrays a high degree of historic integrity on the exterior and retains historic features and finishes on the building’s interior. The house retains the character defining features of the MPDF including the integrity of historic design, materials, workmanship and location, with rear historic additions, original and historic fenestration patterns, and historic porch.

Elaboration

History & Settlement of Lawrence, Kansas

When Lawrence was first settled in 1854 by members of the New England Emigrant Aid Society, an anti-slavery political group, they chose to settle in the area surrounding Mount Oread as it was a prominent feature in the landscape. The construction that followed the settlement was temporary and/or rudimentary in design; most of these buildings would later be destroyed in 1863 during an attack on the city by pro-slavery supporters, known as Quantrill’s Raid.7

Following Quantrill’s Raid, the city experienced a boom in construction supported by the completion of the transcontinental railroad branch to Lawrence in 1864. Additionally, new jobs in construction and local manufacturing were created with the construction of the Kansas Pacific and of the Leavenworth, Lawrence, and Galveston railroads in 1867. Overall, the city of Lawrence experienced an unprecedented growth in population during this period that would later become known as the City-Building Period (1864-1873).8

History of the Oread Neighborhood

City-Building Period (1864-1873)

As the city rebuilt its commercial district following Quantrill’s Raid, Lawrence experienced its largest boom of construction centered along Massachusetts Street. Additionally, the neighborhood of Oread also grew from Massachusetts Street and expanded west towards the University of Kansas which opened in 1866.9

In 1869, John N. Roberts, an officer in the Civil War, and his wife, Emily S. Roberts moved to Lawrence, Kansas. They purchased many lots in town including Lot 167 and 169 on Massachusetts Street (the two lots north of the subject

property) where they lived in a residence. Later, in 1893-1894, they would build their castle-like home, the John N. Roberts House, in this location.10 In July of 1870, John and Emily purchased Lot 171 (the subject property) from Arthur B. Bixler.11 After purchasing the lot, the Roberts built the original portion of the subject house: a modest gable-front National Folk style house.12 In 1871, the Roberts sold this house to E.H. Benham who had recently moved to Lawrence as an agent for the Continental Life Insurance Company; by 1872, the Roberts regained ownership of the subject house.13

The character of National Folk housing was largely determined by the expansion of the railroad between 1830 and 1930. With railroad transportation, construction materials were no longer constrained to local availability; lumber from sawmills could be moved rapidly and cheaply over long distances. As a result, light balloon or braced framing covered by wood sheathing became the standard for National Folk houses. Although the railroad changed the construction method of folk houses, the shapes or forms of previous folk houses continued to influence design such as the gable-front form that was used for the original construction of the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House.14 This simple form was “particularly suited for narrow urban lots” in expanding cities such as the residential lots along Massachusetts Street.15

This historic house exemplifies the City-Building Period in Lawrence when many dwellings were built with simple forms to house the rapidly growing population.

Agriculture and Manufacturing, Foundations of Stability (1874-1899)

The panic of 1873 ended the City-Building Period and began a new era in the city of Lawrence: the “Agriculture and Manufacturing, Foundations of Stability (1874-1899) period.” During this time, the Oread Neighborhood was one of the most heavily built upon areas. The railroad and local sawmills continued to provide large quantities of lumber, and as a result, most of the houses built during this time in the Oread Neighborhood were constructed of wood.17

In 1873, the Roberts sold the subject house to Caleb Luther, a grocer and businessman in Lawrence.18 Along with his partner, Luther opened his own store in 1874.19 An increase in the property tax valuation of the subject property indicates that Luther completed the north wing and west extension addition of the subject house in 1874.20 Luther’s grocery business quickly prospered; by 1875, he was expanding his store on Massachusetts Street.21 In 1879, his business expanded again as he began producing and selling mincemeat from the store, as well as supplying other stores in town and a few in Kansas City.22 In 1885, Luther was expanding his store yet again and building his family a new house a block-and-a-half further south on Massachusetts Street.23 Between 1885-1898 the subject house was sold a few more times, before eventually being purchased again by John N. Roberts in 1898.24

10 The Daily Kansas Tribune, “Real Estate Transfers,” May 1, 1870, p. 3; National Register of Historic Places, John N. Roberts House, Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas, KHR# 045-3010-0007.
11 Lawrence Republican Daily Journal, July 3, 1870, p. 3.
18 City of Lawrence. Tax Roll of City of Lawrence, Douglas County, 1873. Watkins Museum of History, Lawrence, KS; City of Lawrence. Tax Roll of City of Lawrence, Douglas County, 1874. Watkins Museum of History, Lawrence, KS.
20 Property tax records 1863-1922, City of Lawrence, Kansas, on file at Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas.
21 Lawrence Daily Journal, March 12, 1875, p. 3.
During the Luther's residency at 1313 Massachusetts (1873-1885), two events took place that caused damage to the house. The first event was a lightning strike in 1877; the lightning tore one corner of the summer kitchen (likely in the rear single-story extension) and siding off the house. Another incident which caused damage to the house was a fire in 1882. The Luther's domestic service worker, Vetta Anderson was taking down a lamp in the kitchen when it fell and burst into flames. Anderson ran into the yard after her dress caught fire, and Mrs. Luther ran out after her and smothered the fire with a bedquilt; Anderson suffered fatal burns. The neighbor, Mr. Hemphill saw the fire put the kitchen fire out with a bucket of water before it could spread to the rest of the house. The newspaper article states, "the inside of the kitchen was considerably burned, though no great damage was done." Some of the historic changes made to the house could have been a result of these incidents.

During this period, the Oread Neighborhood was diverse in terms of its economic and social makeup; the neighborhood was home to a variety of individuals ranging from "laborers and dressmakers to physicians and university professors." The range in economic and social status is reflected in the architecture as the "families constructed homes that were in line with their financial ability." The historic additions on the subject house completed by Luther were done in the National Folk style like the original portion of the house. These additions reflect Luther's success in his business and are an excellent example of new business-class residential architecture during the "Agriculture and Manufacturing, Foundations of Stability (1874-1899) period.

Quiet University Town (1900-1945)

In the years leading up to the "Quiet University Town" period, professors and students began moving into the Oread Neighborhood due to its proximity to the University of Kansas. Under the leadership of Chancellor Frank Strong, the student population at the university grew dramatically; with the increasing student population, "the Oread neighborhood maintained its high number of student rentals." Additionally, several influential professors from the University lived in the neighborhood such as Chancellor Strong.

In 1914, Ulysses Grant (U.G.) Mitchell and his wife, Lulu Grace began renting the subject house from John N. Roberts; later, in 1916, they purchased the house. U.G. Mitchell was a 1906 graduate from the University of Kansas; after graduating, he went on to receive his Ph.D. degree in Mathematics from Princeton University in 1910. He returned to Lawrence where he served as a KU faculty member for 31 years (1910-1941) and as the math department chair for 10 years. U.G. Mitchell and his wife were active members in the university’s community and hosted numerous university events and meetings at their home. For instance, U.G. Mitchell hosted the Mathematics Club, and Mrs. U.G. Mitchell hosted the “University Dames” several times at their home. The University of Kansas experienced another boom in student population during World War I; the student population grew from 2,959 students in 1915 to 4,002 students in 1919. During this time, many students lived in the army barracks. However, in 1919, the barracks were demolished making student housing increasingly difficult to find. The university’s newspaper, the Kansan reported, "Rooms are absolutely impossible to find and it looks as if half of the students will be forced to sleep in the streets if something isn’t done to aid the situation." As a result, many people in Lawrence began offering rooms to students, including the Mitchells who rented out rooms in their home at 1313 Massachusetts.

Due to the compassion of Lawrence residents and the proximity to the university, the student population in the Oread neighborhood continued to grow.

25 Lawrence Daily Journal, July 1, 1877, p. 4.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid, p. 4
30 Ibid, p. 5.
35 Ibid.
During the nearly 30 years that the Mitchell’s lived in the home, they made several alterations to the house including a Craftsman entrance foyer, a south Craftsman style triple window, two second-story dormers, and a kitchen remodel. The early modern Movement in the United States created an “innovative vocabulary of ornament that did not mimic historic forms”; thus, these Craftsman characteristics indicate a shift towards modernization in architecture that came with the turn of the century. Additionally, the layout changes and additions reflect the Mitchells social life and participation in housing Kansas University students. The foyer creates an official entrance to the house to welcome the Mitchell’s guests. The opening between the living room, dining room, and kitchen creates a more open floor plan for entertaining. Lastly, the changes to the northwest room, including an exterior door reflect the trend of housing students in Oread neighborhood houses. The exterior door would allow students renting from the Mitchells to come and go without disturbing the rest of the household.

**Lawrence Modern - Present Day (1945-1975 to 2021)**

With the end of World War II, the University of Kansas saw its greatest influx of students, largely due to the G.I. Bill. Students continued to rent Lawrence houses, especially in the Oread Neighborhood. Between 1945 and 1948, Lawrence saw its greatest period of construction brought on by the increasing prominence of the university; however, there was little construction done in Oread during this time. During the 1970s and 1980s, a number of historic homes were destroyed to make room for 36 student apartments.

In 1947, Libuse Kriz-Fiorito and her husband, Louis L. Fiorito bought the adjacent John N. Roberts House, saving it from demolition. She operated the Castle Tea Room restaurant out of the Roberts House from 1947-2004. They purchased the subject house around the same time as the Roberts House, and Kriz-Fiorito owned it until her death in 2004.

Before Kriz-Fiorito died, she created the Libuse Kriz-Fiorito Historical Foundation. When the foundation was first formed, it owned both the John N. Roberts House and the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House; today, the foundation still owns the John N. Roberts House. After Kriz-Fiorito died, André Bollaert became the executive director and proposed rehabilitation projects for both the John N. Roberts House and the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House. The projects for the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House included listing it on the National Register of Historic Places and using it as a support space for the Castel Tea Room Events that took place in the John N. Roberts House. Consequently, the rehabilitation for the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House was never completed or used in conjunction with the Castle Tea Room, and the house was sold to a new owner.

**National Folk Style and Craftsman Style**

In Lawrence’s historic working-class neighborhoods, the National Folk style residence is the predominant dwelling type. As building materials became more readily available via rail transportation across the country, and as construction techniques changed, simple and inexpensive forms of National Folk houses and sub-types became the norm. The Gable-front subtype evolved from the Greek Revival Style common in the northeast region, from where many early Lawrence residents emigrated, and it became a dominant urban form through the early twentieth century nation-wide. In Lawrence it was popular in neighborhoods with narrow lots and its most common form was two stories with a moderate to steeply pitched roof. Another subtype, the Gable-front & wing, was a further elaboration derived from the Greek Revival Style that included a side-gabled wing forming an L-shaped plan. These were often larger houses, but over time smaller and simpler versions were common in both one- and two-story examples. Internal configuration of houses in

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41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Lawrence Journal-World, “Historic Castle Tea Room Building to be put up for Lease as Nonprofit Ownership Falls on Hard Times,” by Chad Lawhorn, April 17, 2019.

this era expressed the separation of public and private areas. Kitchens were hidden from visitors and back stairs were provided to upper story private bedrooms. A front parlor, close to the main entry, served as entertainment area for guests and as the primary common family space. The Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House began in 1870 as a simple National Folk, Gable-front subtype, and its 1874 addition converted it to a National Folk, Gable-front and wing subtype. Its configuration and detailing are similar to other houses of the same type and style from that era. The Kansas Historic Resources Inventory lists 83 examples of National Folk houses and 22 Folk Victorian houses in Lawrence dated between 1865-1880 (the primary determination of Folk Victorian vs. National Folk style appears to be the inclusion of spindle-work in detailing of the front porch). The majority of these properties are contributing to historic districts and have alterations that may make them not individually eligible, unlike the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House. Few of those are very similar to the 1871 Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House including:

- Achning House, 1132 Rhode Island Street, KHRI 045-3010-01636, ca. 1870
- Gleason House, 913 Connecticut Street, KHRI 045-3010-00179, ca. 1865
- Martin House, 545 Ohio Street, KHRI 045-3010-00668, 1871
- Delahunty House, 1106 Rhode Island Street, KHRI 045-3010-01598, 1871

Of these, the original portion of the Delahunty House is very similar to the original portion of the 1870 “Roberts” portion of the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House. These two houses are the same width, 16 feet, and vary in length by only two feet, 28 feet for the Delahunty House and 26 feet for the Roberts House. The Delahunty House retains its original steep stairway within the original footprint; it also retains its centrally located chimney and its separation between Living Room and Dining Room. The Delahunty House is part of the property associated with the Delahunty Complex, which also includes 1100 Rhode Island Street, the office of Hernly Associates Inc., author of this nomination.

The MPDF, “Historic Resource of Lawrence”, describes the Bungalow/Bungaloid type residence as the primary carrier of Craftsman style detailing and materials, but also discusses the application of Craftsman style detailing to other dwelling types. Besides detailing, hallmarks of the Craftsman style Bungalow emphasized informality, unpretentiousness, and flexibility with openness in the floor plan. Originally inspired by the architects Greene and Green in California, who were influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement, bungalows in the Craftsman style were the dominant dwelling type from 1905 to the early 1920’s. The 1920 alterations of the Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House fall into the Craftsman style in detailing and in spatial arrangement. The entrance foyer addition, the dormers, the windows, and the doors, all reflect the Craftsman style design aesthetic, and the interior connection between the Foyer, Living Room, and Dining Room through wide doorless openings, reflects decreasing formality within the home.

Conclusion

The Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House is truly a unique residence. It retains historic integrity from two distinct periods of significance. It retains integrity in design, materials, workmanship, and location through its blended National Folk and Craftsman style origins. In many ways it reflects in a microcosm a blending of eras and design styles similar to the vernacular residential development around it, where seven styles, (National Folk, Folk Victorian, Richardsonian Romanesque, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Craftsman/Bungalow, Contemporary Folk), make up the twenty dwellings in the 1300 block of Massachusetts Street. It reflects distinct characteristics of two distinct time periods and historic design trends that have occurred in Lawrence, Kansas. The building is locally eligible for its architectural significance as defined within the Historic Resources of Lawrence MPDF.

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45 Hernly, Stanley Clay, “Cultural Influences on Suburban Form: with examples from Lawrence, Kansas,” M. Arch. thesis, University of Kansas, p. 33.
9. Major Bibliographical References

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


City of Lawrence. Tax Roll of City of Lawrence, Douglas County, 1872, 1873, 1874, Watkins Museum of History, Lawrence, KS.


Lawrence Daily Journal, "Improvements," April 7, 1885, p. 4, accessed online at newspapers.com.


Lawrence Journal-World, “Historic Castle Team Room Building to be put up for Lease as Nonprofit Ownership Falls on Hard Times,” by Chad Lawhorn, April 17, 2019 accessed online at ljworld.com.

Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property


National Register of Historic Places, John N. Roberts House, Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas, KHR# 045-3010-0007.

National Register of Historic Places, Oread Historic District, Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas, #10024-0018.


Taft, Robert. “Across the Years on Mount Oread,” Lawrence, KS, University of Kansas Press, 1941.


Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House

Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas

County and State

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 #
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: LDJ; LJW; LDJW; LRDJ;

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.13

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 38.959426 -95.236243 3

Latitude: __________________________  Longitude: __________________________

2 __________________________  4

Latitude: __________________________  Longitude: __________________________

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Lot 171 Massachusetts Street, Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas, with the following dimensions: 50'-0" east, 117' south, 50'-0" west, and 117' north.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary reflects the lot on which the building is located and historically associated.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stan Hernly & Megan Bruey

organization Hernly Associates, Inc.

date 06/17/2021

street & number 1100 Rhode Island Street

telephone 785-749-5806

city or town Lawrence state KS zip code 66044

e-mail stan@hernly.com

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Patrick Watkins

street & number 830 E 13th Street

telephone 785-550-8794

city or town Lawrence state KS zip code 66044
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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**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**

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<tr>
<td>County:</td>
<td>Douglas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photographer:</td>
<td>Stan Hernly</td>
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<td>Date Photographed:</td>
<td>Spring 2021</td>
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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include a description of view indicating the direction of camera:

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<td>#16</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Interior View of East Bedroom</td>
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### Figures

Include GIS maps, figures, and scanned images below.

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#### Lawrence map showing the location of the Roberts/Mitchell/Luther House

![Map of Lawrence showing the location of Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House](image-url)
Figure 2: Topographic Maps of Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House located at
Latitude: 38.959426  Longitude: -95.236243
Figure 3: Sketch & Boundary Map of Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House located at
Latitude: 38.959426 Longitude: -95.236243
Figure 4: 1873 Beers Atlas shows the original construction of the house as a simple rectangle.
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State

Figure 5: 1897 Sanborn Map shows 1 ½ story addition on north façade and single-story west extension

Figure 6: 1905 Sanborn Map shows the bay window and west single-story addition

Figure 7: 1912 Sanborn Map

Figure 8: 1918 Sanborn Map
Figure 9: 1927 Sanborn Map shows the extension of the E-W gable over the west single-story extension, the north bay window, and the entrance foyer on the northeast corner of the house; it mistakenly excludes the south bay. This map also shows the existing garage.
Figure 10: First and Second Story Plans showing when each portion of the house was constructed.
Figure 11: Photo Map 1 for exterior photos.
Figure 12: Photo Maps for interior photos.
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Photo 1

Photo 2

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 5

Photo 6
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
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County and State

Photo 13

Photo 14
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 15

Photo 16
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House
Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas
County and State
Roberts/Luther/Mitchell House

Name of Property

Douglas County, Kansas

County and State

Photo 19

Photo 20