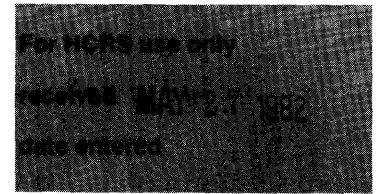


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



**1. Name**

historic Oscar Roeser House (HL06-59)  
and/or common Roeser-Gartner House

**2. Location**

street & number 721 W. Koenig St. N/A not for publication  
city, town Grand Island N/A vicinity of congressional district Third  
state Nebraska code 31 county Hall code 079

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Reginald and Linda Pauley Gartner  
street & number 721 W. Koenig  
city, town Grand Island N/A vicinity of state Nebraska

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hall County Courthouse  
street & number N/A  
city, town Grand Island state Nebraska

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date On-going  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society  
city, town Lincoln state Nebraska

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Roeser house is a very simple yet tastefully designed two-story frame structure, rectangular in shape and covered by a hipped roof. Hip-roofed dormers are centrally located on each side. Covered with clapboards and enframed by simple wood corner pilasters, entablature and watertable, the chief feature of the house is the sophisticated recessed and projecting porch of the north and east facades.

The Oscar Roeser house was built in 1908 by Henry H. Falldorf following the plans of architect Thomas R. Kimball. Of frame construction on a brick foundation, the walls are two stories in height and covered with wood clapboards. Hip-roofed dormers penetrate the steeply-pitched hipped roof which shelters an additional half-story above the second floor. The house is a deep rectangular shape, the narrow side serving as the front facade.

Fenestration is primarily arranged according to the functional needs of the interior, and consists of the one-over-one double-hung type. Exceptions include the two picture windows in the front parlor, the bay window in the back parlor, and the single pane windows in the dormers, the second-story closet and the sidelights at the front door. Formal emphasis is placed on the symmetrically arranged north front entrance facade. The second story of this facade is perfectly symmetrical, featuring paired double-hung windows on either side of the small closet light. Below, single windows balance the paired windows above. The centrally located door completes the composition.

The entrance and porch are of primary architectural interest. The half-sidelight on one side of the door is a distinctive feature and is repeated in the rear, south door. The porch itself is a rather sophisticated spatial composition with a projecting portico covering the entrance steps and a recessed portion along two-thirds of the front facade which wraps around the east corner, becoming a projecting porch along the east facade.

The property, which includes a single-story, hip-roofed brick garage, is in excellent physical condition. Alterations are minor. Wrought iron railings were added to the front entrance steps, and a shed-roofed wing was extended from a portion of the rear (south) facade. This wing is finished in clapboard to match the original, and provides a modest passive-solar space off the kitchen. The addition is unobtrusive in that fencing, historic landscaping and the garage create a rear court which nearly completely conceals the new work.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1908 **Builder/Architect** Henry Falldorf/Thomas R. Kimball

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Oscar Roeser house is significant in the area of architecture for associations with nationally renowned architect Thomas Rogers Kimball, for associations with locally noted contractor Henry H. Falldorf, and as a unique product of German-American architecture executed in a sophisticated "vernacular" Neo-Classical style; in the area of commerce for associations with the owner, Oscar Roeser, prominent Grand Island businessman and civic leader.

Thomas Rogers Kimball (1862-1934) was an architect of exceptional talent. Most noted for his strong Academicism,<sup>1</sup> the Roeser house attests to his skills in solving domestic problems and his ability to detail exquisitely in vernacular modes.<sup>2</sup> In the Roeser house also, Kimball was able to satisfactorily provide for the needs and desires of a German-American client (see discussion below), producing a dwelling quite unlike any previous in his experience.

The house is representative of a class of residence preferred in some numbers by German-American citizens and/or designed by German-American architects during this period -- that is, narrow-fronted, two-story, two-and-three-room-deep plans with steeply-pitched roofs, either hipped with hip-dormers, or highly decorated gable fronts.<sup>3</sup> These distinctive houses, while obviously borrowing from currently available American architectural motifs, bear scant resemblance to contemporary Anglo-American architectural styles.<sup>4</sup>

The Roeser house is a prime example of this particular class of residence. The house is oriented deep on the lot with its distinctive, symmetrically arranged narrow end facing the front. The two story walls with diminutive eaves give the steep roof a dominant sheltering character. Other German-American features of note include the side door which enters directly into the heart of the house (the front door enters a completely closed hall space), and the recessed porch, a recurrent architectural element among certain German and French settlers in the trans-Mississippi region.

Kimball, a native of Ohio, received his advanced education at the University of Nebraska, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Cowles School of Art in Boston and at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. His career began in 1888 in Boston with the firm of Walker, Kimball & Best (later Walker & Kimball). In 1891, he established a branch office in Omaha where the remainder of his career was spent.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

DTM NOT VERIFIED  
See continuation sheet

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Grand Island, Nebr.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	4	5	5	1	9	5	4	5	2	9	7	7	0
Zone		Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

## Verbal boundary description and justification

This property is located on lots 3, 4, Block 129, Koenig and Wiebe Addition to the City of Grand Island; the historically associated property.

## List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title D. Murphy, Architect; Joni Gilkerson, Survey Associate

organization Nebraska State Historical Society date March, 1982

street & number 1500 "R" Street telephone 402/471-3850 or 471-3270

city or town Lincoln state Nebraska

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Morgan O'Sullivan 5/13/82

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Albin Byer Entered in the National Register date 6/25/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET    Significance    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 2

Kimball's distinguished career led to his selection in 1901 as a Fellow in the American Institute of Architects. He served as national president of that organization from 1918 to 1920. In addition to his many noted buildings, Kimball was Architect-in-Chief with C. Howard Walker for the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition in Omaha (1898) and acted as professional advisor to the Nebraska Capitol Commission during the period 1919-20 when he wrote the innovation program for the competition.

Henry H. Falldorf was one of Grand Island's premier building contractors. A native of Hanover, Germany, Falldorf was educated in Germany and in the public schools of Hall County, Nebraska. He learned the stairbuilder's trade and practiced it for twenty years before becoming a general contractor. In addition to the Roeser house, he built another Kimball building, the Hall County Courthouse (NRHP, Grand Island, Hall County), and the Grand Island Carnegie Library (NRHP, Grand Island, Hall County), by architects James Tyler & Son.

Oscar Roeser (1852-1936) was born in Michigan less than two years after his parents arrived from Germany. He came to Grand Island in 1877 where he was first employed as the manager of his uncle's lumberyard. In the fall of 1881, he set up a partnership with Louis Veit and established a grocery business under the firm name of Veit and Roeser. In 1886 Mr. Roeser established his own retail grocery and chinaware business, the "Bee Hive Store," later, the Roeser Store. The store continued in operation after his death, under the proprietorship of his son, Oscar, until 1940.

In 1884, Roeser married Miss Minnie Stolley, daughter of William Stolley. William was one of the pioneer settlers of Hall County, establishing the German Colony that settled on the Grand Island of the Platte River in 1857.

In civic affairs, Mr. Roeser served as a member of the County Board for more than five years, starting in 1900, being chairman of the building committee during the planning and construction of the Hall County Courthouse (NRHP, Hall County). He also served as director of the Chamber of Commerce and president of the Retail Merchant's Association. In addition, Mr. Roeser was affiliated with several social organizations of the city, including the Liederkrantz (NRHP, Hall County), for which he served as director for many years.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

---

1. see for example his Hall County Courthouse (Grand Island, Hall County), the Burlington Station (Hastings, Adams County), Omaha Public Library (Omaha, Douglas County), and St. Cecilia's Cathedral (Omaha, Douglas County), all listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
2. another less academic building that portrays his sophisticated sense of proportion is the Webster Telephone Exchange Building (Great Plains Black Museum), Omaha, Douglas County (listed in the National Register).
3. notable examples of this class of residence include the Frederick Korsmeyer house and the Morris Friend house (Lincoln, Lancaster County--both listed in the National Register as part of the Mount Emerald and Capitol Additions Historic District), and the Andrew Colman house, Diller, Jefferson County (pending NRHP). A two-room-deep plan example would be the L. Frederick Gottschalk house, Columbus, Platte County (pending NRHP).
4. To dub them simply as vernacular examples of Anglo-American styles because of their non-conformance to accepted rules, or to force their association with certain styles (whether pure or eclectic), somehow misses the point. These houses are "big" in the sense that they compare in size with other substantial houses built by prosperous citizens during the period, and compare equally in overall aesthetic merit and in the sense of detail achieved both inside and out with other more "academically correct" houses of the period.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

---

Batie, David L., "Thomas Rogers Kimball: Was He a Nebraska Architect?"  
Unpublished Masters Thesis. Lincoln: University of Nebraska  
College of Architecture, July, 1977.

Buechler, A. F. and R. J. Barr, History of Hall County, Nebraska,  
Western Publishing and Engraving Company. 1920. pp. 634-636,  
690-691.

Harris, Cyril M. (ed). Historic Architecture Sourcebook. New York:  
McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1977.

Kimball, Thomas, R., Architect. "Residence, Grand Island, Nebraska,  
Oscar Roeser, Esq." (Job #566). Copy of Blueprints in Nebraska  
Historic Buildings Survey (HL06-59), Nebraska State Historical  
Society.

"Oscar Roeser, Sr., Taken by Death Today". Grand Island Daily Independent,  
June 13, 1936. p. 4, c. 1, 2.

"Pioneer Firms are Observing Anniversaries", Grand Island Daily Independent,  
Nov. 13, 1937, p. 4.