

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
MAY 11 1977
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED APR 6 1978

**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
William H. Tyler House (LC13-21)
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
808 D Street

CITY, TOWN
Lincoln

STATE
Nebraska

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
First

VICINITY OF
CODE
31

COUNTY
Lancaster

CODE
109

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Miss Gertrude A. Tyler

STREET & NUMBER

808 D Street

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

VICINITY OF

STATE

Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

City-County Building, 555 South 10th Street

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE A Survey of Historic, Architectural and Archeological Sites
in the Eastern Nebraska Urban Region

DATE

July, 1971

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Nebraska State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<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 _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The William H. Tyler house is a moderately large dwelling built of brick on a limestone foundation (photo #1) and situated across the street east from Cooper Park (originally Lincoln Park and formerly F Street Park). Built on a part of the original plat of Lincoln, this is the second house to occupy the site. The first house, a small one-story frame dwelling, was moved slightly to the east and is still extant.

Designed along the formal characteristics of a typical Queen Anne dwelling (i.e. rectangular plan with multi-sided corner tower), the house is detailed in Richardsonian Romanesque motifs. The dwelling is fundamentally square in plan with minor breaks in the north and south walls (at the entrance on the south--photo #3 and at the stairway on the north). Two stories and built of solid brick, the house has a limestone and brick foundation which encloses a partial basement. A large attic is enclosed by the dwelling's steep-pitched hipped roof. Small gabled dormers and eyebrow windows break the roof surface while a two and one-half story bay enhances the west entrance and a multi-sided corner tower overlooks the corner of 8th and D Streets (photo #2). The bay on the west is capped with a hipped roof. The corner tower features a multi-sided bell-shaped dome with shed dormers.

Outside, the house is a modest interpretation of Richardsonian Romanesque. Lacking, with one exception, the round arched openings so common to the mode, the house still basically recalls the imagery associated with the style. The singular exception is the three-centered arched window of the dining room on the south facade (photo #3).

Built of brick and trimmed in sandstone, the house displays the characteristic rough-textured, heavy appearance of the Richardsonian Romanesque mode of design. The brick sets on a bush-hammered limestone foundation with chiseled margins. Rock-faced sandstone is used for the trim and includes belt courses at the sill and head lines of the windows as well as quoins along the sides of the windows and at the corners of the west bay (but not the corners of the house). Attention is drawn to the corner tower where there is a concentration of decorative motifs. Detailed primarily in rock-faced stone, the corners of the tower between the windows feature cut decorative motifs of unknown origin; a frieze of floral pattern terminates the first floor; a Richardsonian checkered pattern separates the first and second floor windows. Other decorative stone features include the stone porch steps (extant only on the west porch--photo #2), the stone balustrades of the porch steps, the voussoirs and trim of the arched dining room window (photo #3) and the decorative date-stone centered on the west facade between the first and second story windows (photo #1).

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The Tyler house contains thirteen rooms. On the ground floor the main (formal) entrance is on the west and enters through a vestibule into the main parlor. Adjoining it through wide sliding doors to the south is the "back-parlor" or family sitting room. The family entrance on the south (photo #3) enters into the main stair hall through a vestibule. Wide doors on either side open into the back-parlor (to the west) and the dining room (to the east). The kitchen occupies the northeast corner of the ground floor and is separated from the dining room by a small pantry with pass-through window into dining area. The well-detailed "dog-leg" stairway is the central feature of the stairhall which starts upward in a northerly direction, turning south at the landing to reach the second floor. A small room occupies the space north of the stairway and was used by William Tyler as the home office for his stone company.

On the second floor, the stairway opens into a hall off of which all but one of the rooms open --five bedrooms and a small bathroom. Adjacent to the main stair, a back stairway leads down to the kitchen (the stairway to the basement is below this back stair). A small sewing room occupies the space north of the main stair above the office on the first floor.

Special features of the interior include original woodwork and two especially fine carved stone mantels over the fireplaces in both the front and back parlors. The whole of the house is in virtually unaltered condition with original gas light fixtures as well as original furniture and artifacts. In 1908-10 (3 to 5 years after William's death) the family decided to try electricity on a trial basis in the upstairs rooms. They eventually chose to go to electricity, but many of the gas light fittings are still extant. In 1927 the family purchased a modern gas stove (for the kitchen) which is still in use and in 1949, after discontinuance of ice delivery, the family abandoned the ice box and purchased a refrigerator. Very little alteration has occurred which would detract from the house's original nineteenth-century character.

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1890-91

BUILDER/ARCHITECT T. P. Harrison and Bros./James Tyler

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The late nineteenth century was a period of intense activity for the stone industry in southeast Nebraska. This area--the drift hills region--is the only one in Nebraska with stone of sufficient quality found near enough to the surface to make extensive quarrying operations profitable. In certain locales, stone became the primary building material during the pioneer era. Later, as quarry operations began to expand, cost prohibited its use for anything but major public and religious buildings--and for foundation materials for which stone saw widespread use through the turn of the century. Stone, of course, also found use in railroad ballast, riprap, and crushed rock for roadways.

The earliest known use of stone in the vicinity of Lincoln was the limestone ford built across Salt Creek at Olatha, twelve miles south of Lincoln, in 1859. By 1861, Delos Mills had built a dwelling and a barn of local limestone at Olatha also. This stone was used extensively for building purposes in this vicinity through the next decade. By the time the capitol was removed from Omaha to the new Lincoln City in 1867, other local quarries had been opened, including some of sandstone nearer to Lincoln than the Olatha quarry.

Associated with the quarrying of stone for building purposes was the need for stonemasons. This need in the new town of Lincoln became readily apparent--for example, construction started almost immediately on the first State Capitol building (initially using limestone from Delos Mills' Olatha quarries until it became apparent that it was not of sufficient quality for dimensional purposes and a Beatrice quarry was chosen for all work above the basement) and on a series of residences, among which was the T. P. Kennard house, which utilized the local sandstone for its foundation materials (see NRHP nomination). Such was the situation which William Henry Tyler found when he came to Lincoln in 1871.

Born in Wales, Tyler was in Lincoln off and on until he established his W. H. Tyler Stone Company in 1881. Prior to this he is purported to have labored on the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Lincoln, a limestone structure built from 1874-79 (see NRHP nomination). The stone company he established was located on the northeast corner of 7th and L Streets

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet, Item #9

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	4	6	9	3	2	1	0	4	5	1	9	1	8	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

B

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

C

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

D

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

D. Murphy, Architect

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

1500 R Street

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

DATE

April, 1977

TELEPHONE

(402) 432-2793

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Marion D. Kvett 5/4/77

TITLE Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Signature]

DATE

4/6/78

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: [Signature]

DATE

4.4.78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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(presently the site of Beatrice Foods Co.), where it was located until after his death on January 22, 1905. He is said to have employed in excess of fifty men in his shops where he utilized the most modern steam-driven equipment as well as traditional hand cutting of stone. He had two private quarries in Nebraska--one at Barneston in Gage County and one in Nemaha County--from which he procured large quantities of limestone.

The Tyler Company also provided masonry work on many buildings for which they supplied stone. Tyler achieved a reputation of providing only the highest quality work and was involved in the erection of many notable buildings in the vicinity. Many are gone, such as the old C. C. Burr house and the Second Nebraska State Capitol Building in Lincoln, but notable others are still extant, including portions of the Nebraska State Penitentiary, the Episcopal Church in Beatrice and the Jefferson County Courthouse in Fairbury (see NRHP nomination).

His own house, built as a showplace demonstrating the various residential uses of stone, reflects the state of the stone-workers art just prior to the turn of the century. With the establishment of an extensive rail network in southeast Nebraska in the late 1860's and 1870's, higher quality stone from Colorado and the great quarry states such as Indiana was able to start competing with the local material. Also, after ten to twenty years of local limestone use, it became apparent that the local material would not withstand the tremendous climatic changes of Nebraska and that it was generally not suitable for sophisticated carving. These three factors led to the decline and eventual elimination of local stone for building purposes by about 1900. The Tyler house to some extent reflects this situation. Local limestone--probably from the Barneston quarry--was used for the foundation materials, but a "foreign" product, bluish-yellow sandstone, was used for the rock-faced and delicately carved trim of the exterior. The finely-carved fireplace mantles of the interior are also of imported sandstone--one of a red color, the other of a blue-gray.

Architecturally the house represents a modest version of the style which emerged from H. H. Richardson's creative work. Designed by James Tyler, William's brother, the house is perhaps more Richardsonian than Romanesque. Resembling the style more in attitude and massing, the few Richardsonian-derived motifs are more delicately detailed than the master's, but not inappropriately for such a moderately scaled dwelling. The house lacks the extensive use of rounded openings so associated with the style; however, the foliated motifs and the contrast of brick with stone trim is generally associated with the popular domestic interpretations of Richardson's primarily non-residential work.

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James Tyler was a talented architect. Little is known of his life; however, this house for his brother reveals an interesting aspect of his career. Whether it was because of changing attitudes in design between the years 1890 to 1905, or whether Tyler was choosing appropriate symbols for the various types of buildings he designed is not known at this time, but the contrast between the imagery of the Tyler Home and that of the Grand Island Carnegie Library which he also designed (1902-05; see NRHP nomination) is striking. Appropriate symbols for differing functions (as dictated by the times) they are, but they also indicate James Tyler's ability to produce competent buildings within quite contrasting idioms.

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Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780, A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1969.

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