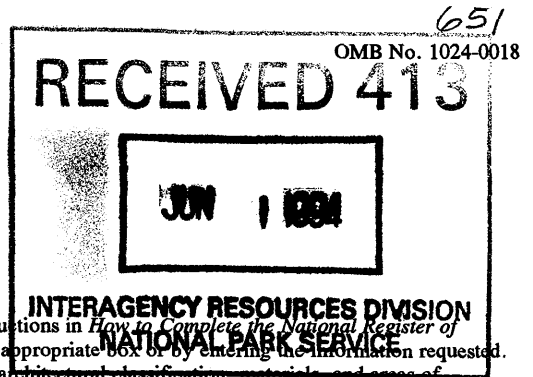


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

historic name Kiesselbach, Theodore A., House

other names/site number NeHRS# LC13:E11-13

#### 2. Location

street & number 3232 Holdrege Street not for publication [N/A]

city or town Lincoln vicinity [N/A]

state Nebraska code NE county Lancaster code 109 zip code 68503

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Lawrence Sommer  
Signature of certifying official

5/23/94  
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
[ ] See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
[ ] See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.

[ ] other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall

for Entered in the 7.1.94  
National Register  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

Kiesselbach House  
Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply) (Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

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

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling  
Domestic: Secondary Structure  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling  
Domestic: Secondary Structure  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th Century and early 20th Century American  
Movements: Prairie School  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Brick  
roof Asphalt  
other Wood, Limestone  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

See Continuation Sheets.

Kiesselbach House

Name of Property

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**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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

**Period of Significance**

1913-1946

**Significant Dates**

1913

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Kiesselbach, Theodore A.

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Smith, John R./Hanson, Paul G.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)  
See Continuation Sheets.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data:**

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

Name of repository:

Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Dept.

Kiesselbach House  
Name of Property

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County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .31 (less than one acre)

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	696110	4522070	3.			
2.				4.			

See continuation sheet.

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

See Continuation Sheet.

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title James P. Wigton, Preservation Intern

organization Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Dept. date 3/21/94

street & number 555 South 10th Street telephone (402) 441-7491

city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68508

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert & Vicki Dugger

street & number 3232 Holdrege Street telephone (402) 464-8611

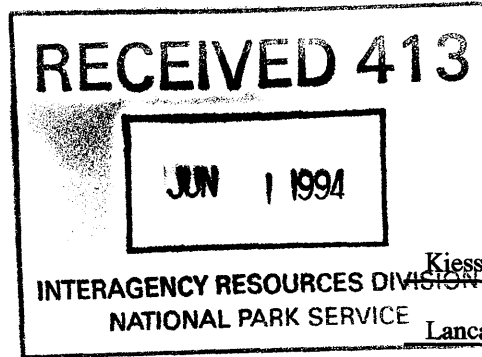
city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68503

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet



Kiesselbach House  
Name of Property  
Lancaster County, Nebraska  
County and State

Section 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

The Theodore Kiesselbach House in Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska, is a two-and-a-half-story, rectangular building constructed in 1913 for University of Nebraska agronomy professor Theodore Alexander Kiesselbach. The wood-frame structure, designed by John R. Smith, a noteworthy local architect, is veneered in dark brown brick and features a hipped roof with wide eaves. This nomination includes two contributing buildings, the house and a garage. The exterior of both retain a high degree of integrity; major interior features of the house are also extant.

The Theodore Kiesselbach house is a two-and-a-half-story house of frame construction veneered in brown brick. The house displays all the features of what Alan Gowans refers to in *The Comfortable House* as an American Four-Square: cubic massing, a full length porch, and low hipped roof of asphalt shingles. In Lincoln such a house is typically referred to as a "Prairie Box." The Kiesselbach example also displays simplified elements of the Prairie School style in its horizontality, simple ornament, wide eaves, and sweeping porch.

Located on a prominent corner lot, the house has a principal elevation to the south with the second major facade oriented to the east. Both the west and north facades are less significant, with the west facade in close proximity to the house adjacent and the north (rear) side facing an alley. The principal roof structure is hipped, punctuated by two hipped-roof dormers, one facing south, the other, west. The porch extends the full width of the south facade and wraps around the east facade, features a low hipped roof with wide eaves. The exterior has limestone window sills and trim. The irregular fenestration is predominately one over one sash, but includes several leaded windows of diamond-shaped, beveled panes.

The principal south facade has an oak front door, off center to the west, and is dominated by the large, wide porch. All of the wide eaves feature bead-board soffits and narrow bed molding. Central on the first story is a large tripartite window, with a center picture window topped by a narrow sash, flanked by two narrow, double hung windows. All the windows are oak, and all three units have leaded, beveled top sash.

The east facade includes the continuation of the wrap-around porch, which terminates in a 2-story sun porch wing. French doors open from the porch into that wing. The west and north facades are less visible and are treated less formally. The west facade features irregular fenestration, with windows on all four floor levels (basement, ground, second and attic). Basement windows maintain iron bars. Ground and second floor windows are varied in size, and several feature the diamond pattern beveled glass. The west side of the roof has a dormer with two square windows, both with X-pattern muntins. The wall plane is unbroken by any additions or wings. The north facade is obscured by dense landscaping. Features include a back porch entry enclosure located right of center with a steep hipped roof. That roof has a steeper pitch than either the front porch or the principal roof structure.

A one-story brick garage is situated on the northeast corner of the lot, facing east. Apparently contemporary with the house, the garage features a hipped roof and brickwork matching the house.

The corner lot is wide and open to the south and southeast, providing a prominent setting for the principal facades. A large burr oak dominates the south yard. Mature lilacs and other shrubs are clustered near the sunroom wing and throughout the rear yard.

The front entrance to the house opens into a large rectangular living room located across the south half of the first floor. The main staircase is situated directly to the west of the front entrance. The kitchen area is located in the northwest quadrant, with the dining room occupying much of the northeast portion. A small square sunroom, located at the extreme eastern edge of the living room, was used by Professor Kiesselbach as a study. French doors featuring beveled glass panes provide access from the living room. The entire first floor features oak floors, quarter-sawn oak woodwork with heavy baseboard, and crown moldings throughout all rooms including closets. Oak door moldings with decorative cornices surround all doors.

The interior features extensive use of beveled glass in French doors, mirrors, and above important windows in the living room. A fireplace is centrally located on the north wall of the living room and is clad with a glazed tile surround. The opening features a decorative wrought iron cover.

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Kiesselbach House

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

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**Section 7 Page 2**

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**DESCRIPTION, cont.**

The main staircase is also quite prominent, with decorative oak newels, balusters, and baseboard with a multi-level series of landings. A narrow secondary staircase is located on the west side of the hallway that extends from the living room to the kitchen.

The five-sided dining room features oak baseboard, crown molding, door frames, and pocket doors. Additional pocket doors are located between the dining room and kitchen, and between the dining room and living room areas.

The second floor retains its original configuration and woodwork. While much of the woodwork is oak, it is not all quarter-sawn. The main staircase leads to a center hallway opening on the four bedrooms on the second floor. Significant features include the upper portion of the sun room wing located on the east side of the structure, and an attic stairway accessed from a closet in the northeast corner bedroom. Three of the bedrooms along with the sunroom are connected by a series of doorways. The attic story is unfinished with the roof structure exposed.

The exterior of the Kiesselbach House retains a high degree of integrity with few changes evident. Reroofing was completed in 1993. On the interior, a sympathetic remodeling of the kitchen area was also completed in 1993.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Kiesselbach House

Name of Property

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Section 8 Page 3

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Kiesselbach House in Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska is significant on the statewide level in the area of agriculture for its association with Dr. Theodore Alexander Kiesselbach (Criterion B), a pioneering Nebraska researcher in corn and other crops who developed the corn hybrids that significantly increased farm production and income throughout the state. The period of significance extends from the house's construction for Kiesselbach in 1913, until he sold the property in 1946. The majority of the period of significance occurred more than fifty years ago; therefore Criterion Consideration G is not applicable. No other historic property is as clearly or closely associated with Kiesselbach and his research.

Kiesselbach was born in Shelby, Polk County, Nebraska in 1884. As a young boy, he grew up in Nebraska and Michigan. The family moved to a farm near Lincoln in 1899. He graduated from Lincoln High School in 1903 and entered the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture, where he remained throughout his academic career. He received a bachelor of arts degree in 1907, and a bachelor of science degree in agriculture in 1908, whereupon he joined the staff as an instructor. Kiesselbach married Hazel Hyde in 1909. On January 1, 1912, Kiesselbach was selected to head the University's Agriculture Experimentation Station after the resignation of department chairman E. G. Montgomery. Kiesselbach received a master of science degree in 1912, and his doctorate in 1919.

In August of 1912, Kiesselbach purchased a large corner house lot near the Agricultural (East) Campus from Edgar J. Burnett, the Chancellor of the University, and built a large brick house on the site in 1913. Burnett lived in the house at 3256 Holdrege St., directly across the street from Kiesselbach. Kiesselbach and his wife raised their four children in the house, residing there 33 years, while working at the nearby East Campus.

Kiesselbach retired from the Agronomy Department in 1952 after more than 40 years of service. In his retirement he remained an active researcher, author and lecturer. He completed an autobiography entitled "What's in a Life" before he died in 1964 at the age of 80.

Kiesselbach's most important contributions stem from his pioneering work in crop research and development, specifically, his dedication to the development and production of hybrid corn plants. In 1909, Kiesselbach became interested in the work of two corn researchers from Connecticut. Their work involved the breeding of corn plants in order to produce a specimen with higher yields and "hybrid vigor". Based on the theories and limited success of Schull and East, both Kiesselbach and department chairman E.G. Montgomery began inbreeding, then cross breeding the best local varieties of open pollinated corn. In 1912, Montgomery resigned to assume a position at Cornell University. However, Kiesselbach continued to cross the inbred plants until 1913 when he became the first man to successfully grow corn hybrids west of the Allegheny Mountains (*Omaha World-Herald Magazine*, 10/22/1950). This success and his continual work in corn breeding, along with his investigations into the improvement of other crops, including alfalfa, sorghum and sweet clover, made Kiesselbach one of the key agronomists of his day. The year 1913 was doubly significant as the date of Kiesselbach's first successful corn hybrids, and the year of construction of his house.

Throughout the 1920s and '30s he continually worked on the improvement of his hybrid corn plant, resulting in the first production of hybrid seed by Nebraska farmers in 1934 (*Omaha World-Herald Magazine*, 10/22/1950). He was so closely associated with corn and the breeding of corn hybrids, that his colleagues fondly called him "Mr. Corn," a name that stayed with him until his death. His research and eventual success with hybridization enabled farmers to produce more and better corn at less expense per bushel than previous varieties.

By 1950, hybrid corn based on Kiesselbach's work was being planted in 96% of the total corn acreage in Nebraska, and accounted for all of the acreage planted by Iowa and Illinois corn producers. Kiesselbach's work was directly credited with a \$42 million increase in farm income for the year 1949 alone. In 1950 that number had grown to over \$59 million (*Lincoln Sunday Journal and Star*, 3/16/1952).

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Kiesselbach House

Name of Property

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

Speaking of Kiesselbach in March of 1952, Dean M. V. Lambert commented, "He has contributed more than any other man in the United States to the knowledge of corn and how it grows. Nebraska is a better state because of his work." (*Lincoln Evening Journal*, 3/13/1952.) While his research centered in Lincoln, its impact was felt throughout Nebraska and the Corn Belt.

In addition to his pioneering work with corn hybrids, sorghum, alfalfa, small grains, and sweet clover, Kiesselbach was also a prolific writer. He authored, or co-authored, over 64 research bulletins published by the University's Agricultural Experiment Station, and more than 70 papers appearing in various technical and professional journals. He was also a frequent contributor to a great number of popular farm, trade, and general magazines. *The Structure and Reproduction of Corn* was his best known work, published in 1949.

The day after his death, the *Lincoln Evening Journal* declared: "Nebraska's benefits from agricultural scientists are often too technical and too obscure to be fully appreciated by the residents of the state. But the contributions of Dr. Theodore A. Kiesselbach are visible, tangible, and can be appraised in dollars and cents. It is safe to say that his work has been instrumental in adding billions of dollars to the economy of Nebraska and the nation's Corn Belt." (*Lincoln Evening Journal*, 12/28/64.) His contributions were recognized posthumously in 1968 with the dedication of the Kiesselbach Plant Laboratory on the East Campus of UNL.

His home is the historic resource associated with Kiesselbach that is most appropriate for National Register listing, even though it was not the only locus of his primary research. The majority of Kiesselbach's work took place at various locations on the University's East Campus or Farm Campus as it was known at the time. The upper floors of the Livestock Judging Pavilion (ca.1908), served as the seed laboratory for much of his early research and experimentation, while the Agricultural Experiment Station Building (ca.1899) was used for the preparation of seeds and the processing of harvested materials. Much of his field work was done at experimental plots located on the northeast corner of 70th and Adams Streets, known as the Agronomy or Havelock Farm. He maintained an office on the second floor of the current Plant Industry Hall building (ca.1913). It was from this location that he did much of his writing and office work.

None of the other sites reflect as clearly or survive as well as his house at 3232 Holdrege St. The Livestock Judging Pavilion suffered extensive damage as the result of a fire in 1931. Later in that same year, the structure was remodeled and became Animal Husbandry Hall. With the loss of the seed laboratory, a new building was constructed and began operation in 1933. Known as the Crops Laboratory or Seed Laboratory, the building housed facilities for the preparation and processing of harvested materials such as corn, soybeans, wheat and other test crops. This structure was later named for Kiesselbach. The Agricultural Experiment Station continued to house the Agronomy department until 1959 when it was remodeled for use as the new Department of Information Building. The Plant Industry Hall Building was remodeled in 1953, and suffered damage as the result of a fire in August of 1975. The site of the Havelock Farms has recently been developed for residential and commercial uses. Of all the sites linked to Kiesselbach and his work, the Livestock Judging Pavilion, the Agricultural Experiment Station Building, the Plant Industry Hall Building, and his experimental plots at the Havelock Farms, his home is the most intact resource directly associated with his life and work.



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Kiesselbach House

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Kiesselbach House

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

This property is described as Lot 8 and the east 1/2 of Lot 9 of Block 1 of the Hillsborough Addition to Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

These boundaries include all of the property historically associated with the Kiesselbach, Theodore A., House.