

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received OCT 27 1986

date entered DEC 1 1986

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

1. Name

historic Scottish Rite Temple (LC13:D8-13)

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 332 Centennial Mall South n/a not for publication

city, town Lincoln n/a vicinity of

state NE code 031 county Lancaster code 109

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	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a 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 type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: fraternal order

4. Owner of Property

name Scottish Rite Temple Corporation

street & number 332 Centennial Mall South

city, town Lincoln n/a vicinity of state NE

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number 555 South 10th Street

city, town Lincoln state NE

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 NE

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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 Scottish Rite Temple in Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska is a reinforced concrete building of one-story plus both a tall basement and an attic story. It is sheathed in Indiana limestone on the principal (west and south) facades and with buff brick on the east (rear), north, and attic story. The west entrance facade features a colossal order of ten engaged Roman Doric columns set in antis, while the south front is divided by paired Doric pilasters into five bays. There is a full entablature and balustraded parapet on the west and south facades, and an ornate terra cotta cornice atop the attic. The principal interior spaces are a wide, barrel-vaulted hall and the large Lodge Room, both on the main floor. The principal, west facade has a high degree of integrity, while that of the south side has been diminished by recent window changes. On the interior, the hall and Lodge Room retain most of their original character. This nomination includes one contributing building.

Lincoln's Scottish Rite Temple is a reinforced concrete, Neo-Classical Revival style building consisting of a principal story atop a tall basement plus an attic story. The major facades (west and south) are sheathed in vertically tooled Indiana limestone, while buff brick is the exterior material of the north and east sides, the attic, and the east addition.

The Temple's most prominent feature is a colossal order of ten fluted Roman Doric columns on the west front, set in antis between blocky end pavilions. The south side is the only other fully developed, limestone-clad facade, with five bays separated by shallow paired, Roman Doric pilasters. Both the west and the south facades have full entablatures. On the west, the frieze above the pavilions has Greek and Latin inscriptions, while above the colonnade the frieze is inscribed: "TEMPLE OF THE ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY." The south frieze reads "HUMANITY LIBERTY FRATERNITY." Above the denticular cornice is a parapet pierced with balustrades, corresponding with the intercolumnation. The attic story is recessed from the north, west, and south facades, masking its buff brick walls behind the parapet when viewed from the west or south. The attic is crowned with an ornate gray terra cotta cornice which closely mimics the limestone below.

The fenestration of the principal, west facade is unaltered, with the exception of the glass and aluminum doorway in the central entrance. That altered doorway and the original double wooden doors on either side of it are topped with carved stone hoods, supported by consoles. The wide steps at the west front span the three central bays and are flanked by elaborate cast iron light standards on the cheek blocks. The basement windows, which on the west have an even sill level with those of the doorways, are covered with Roman-style wooden grills. Within the colonnade, the main floor windows are very tall, with substantial wooden mullions in a double French cross pattern, forming sidelights and transoms. The windows above the three central doorways

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have higher sills than the trio to either side, due to the height of the doors and hoods below. The end pavilions have smaller main floor windows with mullions forming a single French cross pattern. There are carved stone swag panels above these pavilion windows.

The southwest corner of the building is notched in plan, isolating the two principal facades as separate blocks. The notch also contains an exterior staircase down to the basement level. Within the angle at the corner, both the west and south faces have swag panels, but only the south face has a window.

The five-bay south facade has a similar fenestration pattern to the west, with basement and main floor windows, but the former are set lower on the wall and the latter are not so tall, creating a greater space between the two floors of windows, marked by a recessed panel. The south basement windows originally were one-over-one sliding sash, while the upper windows followed the double French cross pattern. All of these windows have been replaced with dark metal sash and dark glass. The basement units are a single fixed pane. The new main floor windows replicate the pattern of the original mullions, but are dark in color and lack the bold projection of the wooden mullions.

The original rear (east) elevation is of buff brick laid in seven-to-one common bond. At center, where it extends windowless to the full height of the attic, the wall has ten projecting vertical piers. The only windows are a pair of small one-over-one sliding sash high on the wall near the south edge. A tall brick chimney rises from the northeast corner of the attic. The low brick addition east of the original building was constructed in 1923. Its small south windows have been bricked in and a grade-level entrance has been added at the southeast corner. Double-hung sliding sash light the east and north sides.

The buff-brick north side of the original building has three tiers of windows, with glass block in the lower level and single French cross pattern mullions above. A fire escape enclosed in concrete blocks has been added to this side.

On the interior, the west entrance opens onto a wide stair, flanked by twin flights to the basement. That level contains a large dining hall, east kitchen, offices, lounge, service areas, and an apartment. At the head of the stairs on the main floor is of a barrel-vaulted hall twenty feet wide, extending one hundred feet north and south. The hall is panelled in mottled gray marble, including piers and pilasters with stylized Ionic capitals, supporting a plaster entablature. The major interior space is the large Lodge Room, measuring sixty by one hundred feet. Built-in, leather covered benches in three tiers line the walls, except at the center of the north end, where a pair of Greek Doric columns support an entablature and pediment, framing a high-backed throne with three seats. The walls have gray marble wainscoting, above which are shallow, fluted Greek Doric pilasters, separating panels framed in a fret pattern. Above the pilasters is a fully developed entablature including triglyphs, metopes, and an enriched cornice, which forms a cove for concealed lighting. The ceiling is deeply coffered, with a large rosette in each coffer.

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Other main floor spaces include offices and lounges on the west side and a small Lodge Room at the south end. Other robe, prop, and small meeting rooms are located on an upper level.

The Temple has a relatively high degree of integrity overall, reflecting solid construction and continuous, unchanged use. According to records, the exterior was sandblasted in 1977. The treatment must have been unusually light, as the vertical tooling of the limestone is still readily visible, especially on the principal (west) facade. That side is nearly unaltered, except for the insertion of the new glass and metal central door, probably also in 1977. The north fire escape and west kitchen addition (1923) have impact only on secondary facades. The conversion of 15th Street into the pedestrian Centennial Mall in the 1970s altered the building's setting to a degree, but the change is arguably a positive one and the Temple's relationship to important surrounding buildings, especially the State Capitol, is enhanced by it.

The most substantial change has been the recent (1986) replacement of the major windows on the south facade with dark-glazed, metal-frame windows. This replacement project was underway before the National Register nomination was initiated. At the request of the city and state preservation offices, the Temple leadership refrained from extending this project to the west front, as originally intended. Instead they have restudied the problem and have resolved to rehabilitate the existing windows.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1917	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1916-1917 **Builder/Architect** Olson Construction Co./Ellery L. Davis of Berlinghof & Davis

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

The Scottish Rite Temple in Lincoln, Nebraska, is locally significant in the area of architecture (Criterion C) as a fine example of the Neo-Classical Revival style, demonstrating the work of a master, Ellery L. Davis, Lincoln's leading architect in the first half of the twentieth century. The period of significance is derived from the original construction date of the building (1916-1917).

History

A Masonic lodge was organized in Lincoln as early as 1868; the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite was organized locally in 1889. By 1916, when the Temple was constructed, there were seventeen distinct Masonic organizations in the city. On April 6, 1916, Lincoln's "Delta Lodge of Perfection No. 4" voted to build a new Scottish Rite Temple. A budget of \$80,000 was set, then increased to \$100,000 when the local Shrine joined the project. Lincoln architects Berlinghof and Davis were hired, along with Olson Construction Company, and by May the work was underway.

The senior partner George Berlinghof was a native of Germany who practiced architecture in Nebraska from 1881, six years before his partner's birth. In addition to major office buildings in Omaha, he designed many county courthouses and Carnegie libraries throughout the state and the region. Berlinghof settled in Lincoln in 1905 and served as architect for the State of Nebraska for several years. Ellery L. Davis (1887-1956) was educated at the University of Nebraska and at Columbia, then joined Berlinghof as a partner in 1910. Their association continued approximately seven years and produced several of Lincoln's finest buildings of that period, including the Miller and Paine Department Store (LC13:C8-362), the Lincoln Commercial Club (LC13:C9-120), and Lincoln High School (LC13:D8-17). The Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie No. 147 (LC13:C9-20) of 1914 is another example of their fraternal clubhouse designs but is a much less ambitious building than the Scottish Rite Temple and has only exterior integrity.

A report of the building committee of the Temple indicates that Davis (who was a member of the Scottish Rite) was the partner principally responsible for this design (Sunday State Journal, 2-25-1917, A14). According to the committee report, the drawings were practically complete before the Shrine joined the project, expanding the space requirements. The report explained:

Therefore to save the cost of replanning, the walls were spread out, the building brought to the lot lines on all four sides, and dropped a little deeper into the ground to prevent undue encroachment upon sidewalk space. While this marred to some extent the exterior architectural effect of the building and grounds, the committee believes the long, low, straight classical lines of the Temple will wear well and in the end be eminently satisfactory.

[SEE CONTINUATION SHEET]

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

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# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property LESS THAN ONE ACRE

Quadrangle name Lincoln, Nebraska

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

1	4	6	9	3	8	8	5	4	5	1	9	9	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 described as Lots 7, 8, and 9 of Block 92, Original Plat, City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska, including all 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 Edward F. Zimmer, Ph. D./Historic Preservation Planner

organization Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Dept. date Sept. 18, 1986

street & number 555 So. 10th St. telephone (402)471-7491

city or town Lincoln state Nebr.

# 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 James A. Hanson

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

date 10-22-86

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

Entered in the National Register

date 12/1/86

Keeper of the National Register

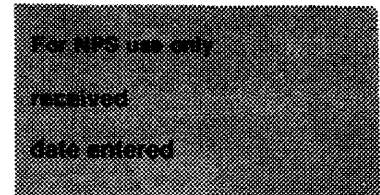
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The cornerstone was laid August 8, 1916, and the Temple was dedicated on Washington's birthday, February 22, 1917, "with only a few electrical fixtures and a few pieces of furniture...missing."

In 1923 an east, basement-level wing was added to the Temple, designed by Davis and Wilson and constructed by Olson Construction Co. for an estimated \$12,000. It provided expanded kitchen facilities and a small dining room. In 1973 the latter was converted into a lounge, with a separate east entrance, at an approximate cost of \$64,000. In the 1970s 15th Street in front of the Temple was converted into part of Centennial Mall, a pedestrian-oriented treatment of the north axis of the State Capitol.

Significance

Several sizable, noteworthy Neo-Classical Revival style buildings were constructed in and around Lincoln preceding the construction of the Scottish Rite Temple, including the downtown Carnegie Library, the Temple Building (LC13:C9-41, 1905-7 by John Latenser of Omaha), the First Methodist Church in University Place (LC13:F12-434, 1908), the downtown First Church of Christ Scientist (LC13:C8-17, 1911 by S. S. Beman of Chicago), and Berlinghof and Davis' own Lincoln High School (1913). To varying degrees, these buildings display the characteristics of the style: large scale, simplicity of rooflines and wall planes, especially compared to the busier Beaux-Arts Classicism, and unadorned, trabeated openings instead of arched or richly enframed fenestration. One local variation from the style as commonly described is that the Lincoln buildings use Roman as well as Greek orders.

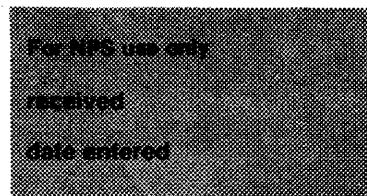
Three of these buildings are extant and are potentially National Register-eligible--Temple Building, First Methodist Church, Lincoln High School--but none are as pure examples of the style as the Scottish Rite Temple. The Temple project afforded Davis a very rare opportunity in Lincoln, to achieve the Neo-Classical ideal of executing the principal facades completely in stone. All the other local examples combined stone or terra cotta with brick on the principal facades. The Second U. S. Post Office and Court House (LC13:C9-110, first wing 1904-6) is also stone, but displays the Beaux-Arts and Renaissance Revival strains of Classicism. Furthermore, the relative simplicity of functions served by the Temple--essentially to provide a single, large meeting room--allowed for a Neo-Classical simplicity of exterior form to a far greater degree than some of the other, more programmatically complex buildings.

While a leap of imagination may be required, it is not inappropriate to note a degree of relationship between the Davis Temple design, especially on the west facade, and some nationally prominent Neo-Classical Revival style buildings which were nearing completion in 1916. Davis and his Lincoln Masonic clients must have been aware of the Scottish Rite Temple under construction in Washington by their national organization, designed by John Russell Pope and built for over \$2,000,000 between 1910 and 1916. That stone, fully peripteral, Ionic temple with high basement and stepped attic is similar to the Lincoln building in only the broadest ways, but it did establish the style and materials to be emulated. Henry Bacon's Lincoln Memorial, built between 1913 and 1922 for about \$3,000,000, provides a closer model for Davis' design in the colossal Doric order (albeit Greek in Washington and Roman in Lincoln), low, horizontal mass, and prominent attic.

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Subsequent major Neo-Classical Revival style buildings in Lincoln are largely confined to the University of Nebraska campus and most are design products of the Davis and Wilson partnership. That firm was responsible for scores of buildings in and around Lincoln in the '20s and '30s and continues today as Davis Fenton Stange Darling. Among their Neo-Classical Revival designs for the University of Nebraska are the College of Business Administration Building, Morrill Hall (1925), and the Coliseum (1927). All of those buildings apply stone colonnades and other trim to brick structures.

The Scottish Rite Temple represents Lincoln's purest, most fully developed Neo-Classical Revival style building. It has a high degree of exterior (and even more unusual, interior) integrity. It is a mature, early work of Ellery L. Davis, who both as junior partner to Berlinghof and in his subsequent association with Wilson designed a large proportion of Lincoln's best public and commercial buildings between 1910 and the '50s. On these grounds the Temple meets Criterion C for listing on the National Register.



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Nebraska State Historical Society, architects file (Berlinghof and Davis).