

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

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

received NOV 14 1984  
date entered DEC 13 1984

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

**1. Name**

historic Germantown State Bank Building (SW04-1)

and/or common N/A

**2. Location**

street & number N/A Main St. N/A not for publication

city, town Garland N/A vicinity of

state Nebraska code 031 county Seward code 159

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Joe Pankoke

street & number Box 203

city, town Garland N/A vicinity of state Nebraska

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Seward County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Seward 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 type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

The old Germantown State Bank building is a single-storied rectangular structure, faced with limestone and featuring an immaculately detailed "temple" front facade in the Neo-Classical Revival Style.

Located in the farming village of Garland (1980 pop: 257), the Germantown State Bank building occupies a corner lot at the intersection of the village's main street and Nebraska Highway 702. Facing north toward the railroad tracks, the building is the most prominent structure in the one-block-long business section--all other buildings being of frame construction except a brick garage building at the other end of the street (photo #1).

Rectangular in shape, the building measures 6.6 x 18.3 meters (20 x 60 feet), with its narrow facade being the front. Functionally the building is divided into three distinct zones. The front zone provides an entrance vestibule, and the bank president's office which features a fireplace. A "secret" storage area is provided on a second level above the first zone with access by dumb-waiter only. The second zone is the banking hall itself which has no additional floor above. More monumental in scale, the hall has a raised ceiling and elaborate decor. Banking fixtures, along with the marble wainscot, were removed some time in the 1930's. The final zone, that at the rear of the building, is separated from the hall by walls. This zone includes the main bank vault, customer vault, office and lavatory, and stairwells to both the basement and a small second floor. The second floor features private office space, a second lavatory, and a masonry storage vault (directly above the bank vault below).

Technically the building is of brick bearing wall construction, sheathed on the north and west public facades with dressed limestone (referred to as Bedford stone in the Receivership files). Floor construction throughout is of steel and concrete (including the second floor), while the roof structure is of heavy braced-frame construction, known locally as "triple-X" construction. Other technical features included a hand-lift dumb-waiter to the north upper-level storage area, a private water supply system, hot water heating system, electric lights, and two lavatories complete with sink and water closet (Receivership Files).

Formally the building is a long, narrow, rectangular block, with the gently-sloping roof concealed behind parapets on the long side. The north front is distinguished by the prostyle portico whose pediment functions as a raised parapet. In addition to the portico, the mass is articulated by heavy pilasters at the corners, and by the window and door openings--three bays on the north front corresponding to the tetrastyle Doric portico, and five inset bays on the west including one blind window at the vault.

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Spatially the interior modulates from one functional zone to another--starting with a monumental entrance under the portico, through a compressed entry into the high banking hall. The private spaces to the rear, with the upper story, are once again compressed in scale. To some extent, though not explicit, this modulation is visible from the exterior in the placement of two small windows each front and back on the side wall in the frieze on either side of the banking hall windows.

In style the Germantown State Bank is Neo-Classical Revival, with sources in the Greek Doric Order. In particular, the tetrastyle pedimented portico is detailed in very precise Doric fashion, save for some minor simplification of the cornice and the frieze sans carved metopae. The cartouche flanked by foliated scroll in the tympanum, and the parapet-wall extension above the pediment are Neo-Classical Revival departures from the Doric scheme of the portico.

The walls of the building, however, are very much Neo-Classical Revival in design. The Doric entablature continues along the west wall, but other details are more representative of the turn-of-the-century Revival. Wide corner pilasters and carefully detailed window-surrounds enhance the solidity of the building throughout. On the north facade, finely-carved wreaths enrich the clerestory space above the first story openings.

The interior, particularly the banking hall, is finely-detailed in cast plaster. More Renaissance Revival in character, the hall is divided evenly into four bays by wall pilasters and beamed ceiling. False windows on the east, complete with surrounds, mirror the real windows on the west. Detail work is extensive and includes a variety of moldings. Emphasis, however, is placed on a foliated scroll-work frieze and on the decorated pilaster faces. As indicated, banking room fixtures and the marble wainscoting was removed sometime shortly after the bank's failure in 1932-34. A major lack of roof maintenance prior to 1978 has caused extensive damage of the plaster ceiling, a problem which has since been resolved by the current owner.

## 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–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1904–1932 (1919–1920) **Builder/Architect** E. J. Ohlsen/unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Germantown State Bank building is significant in the area of architecture as one of Nebraska's premier bank buildings, both in its formal and functional development of the type, and in its stylistic development, being the state's finest example of Neo-Classical Revivalism in the Greek Doric mode.

The Germantown State Bank was organized as an incorporated bank in the State of Nebraska in 1904. Prior to that time Germantown (as Garland was then known) supported a private banking house known as the Bank of Germantown. The Germantown State Bank was successor to the earlier institution.

Shortly after the close of World War I, August Carl Beckmann, native son and then president of the bank, began plans to construct a new facility in the community, then known as Garland.<sup>1</sup> As will be seen below, details of the bank's operation, and the construction of this building, are remarkably sketchy. Very little useful primary or secondary source material has been found, nor were local informants sure of the dates of construction. A reasonable assumption of a c. 1904 date proved to be nearly two decades early, after a check of property valuations appeared to indicate a much later construction. Even then, of the five newspapers covering the Seward County area during the period, only two contained news from Germantown-Garland, and those did not cover the event in a manner customary for such a remarkable facility in a village of this size. As a result, a more complete history of the bank's operations and the details of its failure, while possibly of sufficient significance to qualify for National Register listing in the area of economics, are not available and cannot be justified here.

As far as the bank building is concerned, planning was initiated as early as May of 1919, and it is known that Mr. Beckmann was securing the services of an architect (Journal, May 16, 1919). The contractor was E. J. Ohlsen (Journal, October 10, 1919), and the carpenters were Jacob Koch and John Petri from Garland (Herald, February 26, 1920). The stone carver was a "...Belgian sculptor from Lincoln..." (Journal, January 16, 1920) and the banking fixtures were shipped to Garland from St. Joseph, Missouri (Herald, April 29, 1920). No mention of a grand opening or post-opening report was ever made in the newspapers. The structure was, however, occupied sometime between May and August of 1920 (Herald, April 29, 1920; August 19, 1920).

<sup>1</sup>. By decree of the District Court of Seward County, December 11, 1918, the name of the Village of Germantown was changed to the Village of Garland (Abstract of Title). The end result of long-standing anti-German sentiment growing out of the World War, it is interesting to note that the predominately German (Missouri Synod Lutheran) community continued to support the bank without a corresponding change of name.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Garland, Nebr.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>14</u>	<u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>19</u> <u>4</u> <u>18</u> <u>10</u>	<u>4</u> <u>15</u> <u>3</u> <u>14</u> <u>3</u> <u>12</u> <u>10</u>
	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

The west half of lot six (6), block ten (10) of the original town of Garland, Seward County Nebraska, including all historically associated real estate.

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

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	code
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state		code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title D. Murphy, Survey Architect

organization Nebraska State Historical Society date 1984

street & number P.O. Box 82554 telephone (402) 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Marion E. Kuntz*

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date 10/30/84

### For NPS use only

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

<u><i>Jean Melores Byer</i></u>	<u>Entered in the</u>	date
Keeper of the National Register	<u>National Register.</u>	<u>12/13/84</u>

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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The bank survived the difficult agricultural years of the 1920's, but not the Depression of the thirties. The Germantown Bank failed between 1932 and 1934, falling into receivership of the State of Nebraska in 1934. The State was able to dispose of the property in 1939, beginning a process which led to a deferred maintenance situation by 1978 when it was last sold at auction.

Circumstances of time-frame, location, and design lead this investigator to a preliminary attribution of the building's design to George A. Berlinghof, noted Lincoln architect. Berlinghof was born and trained in Germany and was known to the local population as a designer of exceptional talent, as other examples of his Seward County work will attest--the Seward County Courthouse, 1904-1906 (SW09-93) and the Goehner Building in Seward, 1908 (SW09-182), both listed in the Seward County Courthouse Square Historic District, and the Deutsche Evangelisch Lutherische Zion Kirch at Marysville, 1917 (SW00-52), a Missouri Synod Lutheran church which is individually listed in the National Register. Additionally, few could match Berlinghof's hand at classicism, with his ability to integrate delicate ornamentation into even the most restrained designs--see especially his Beatrice Public Library, 1902-1903 (GA03-244, NRHP, Gage County), his Scottish Rite Temple in Lincoln, c. 1915 (LC13:D8-13, with Ellery L. Davis), and the Northeast Lincoln Carnegie Library, 1907-1909 (LC13:D10-133).

Architecturally the Germantown State Bank is a premier example of the bank building type in Nebraska, particularly as it developed in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Perfectly corresponding to Longstreth's "Temple-front" type (typology derived on the basis of facade composition),<sup>2</sup> formally and semi-otically the building perfectly expresses the feeling of solidity and strength, and more importantly security which was characteristic of the type during this period. Functionally the Germantown Bank succeeds as well, not only in the utility of its layout, but in the clarity with which the functional zones are disposed and expressed internally. The dignity and security implied in the banking hall's decor, while not explicitly related to the symbolism of the exterior, is nonetheless in accord with the tpyal concerns of bank architecture at this time.

Stylistically the Germantown Bank exists as one of the finest products of the Neo-Classical Revival style in Nebraska, and certainly the single most important example utilizing Greek Doric sources. Such statewide distinction is clearly highlighted by the stark contrast offered in the structure's predominately frame false-front commercial architectural setting (photo #1). While the style never acheived the popularity that the Renaissance Revivals did for major buildings during this period, notable examples do exist, several of which are financial institutions. There are, however, no examples comparable to the architectural sophistication of the Germantown State Bank, either in its temple-fronted prostyle form, or its Doric Classicism.

<sup>2</sup>. Richard Longstreth, "Compositional Types in American Commercial Architecture," "paper presented to the Vernacular Architecture Forum, Madison, Wisconsin, May 6, 1983.

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NEWSPAPERS

Seward (Nebraska) Journal, May 16, 1919, 4:5.

\_\_\_\_\_, October 10, 1919, 4:4.

\_\_\_\_\_, December 19, 1919, 4:5.

\_\_\_\_\_, January 16, 1920, 4:3.

Garland (Nebraska) Herald, February 20, 1920, 1:3.

\_\_\_\_\_, April 29, 1920, 1:3.

\_\_\_\_\_, August 19, 1920, 1:3.

UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

Abstract of Title, prepared by the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey.

Receivership Files, State Department of Banking: Garland, 1933-1940.  
State Archives (RG13), Nebraska State Historical Society.