

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

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

For NPS use only  
received **AUG 16 1985**  
date entered **SEP 12 1985**

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

**1. Name**

historic St. Charles Apartments (LC13:F12-225)

and/or common St. Charles Apartments

**2. Location**

street & number 4717 Baldwin Avenue n/a not for publication

city, town Lincoln n/a vicinity of

state Nebraska 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence s
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name William T. Kimball and Ralph J. Mapes

street & number 800 South 13th Street

city, town Lincoln n/a vicinity of state Nebr. 68508

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number 555 South 10th St.

city, town Lincoln state NEBR.

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Nebraska Historic Building Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date on-going  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Nebr. State Historical Society

city, town Lincoln state Nebr.



# 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 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** 1923-4 **Builder/Architect** William Henry Seng (ca. 1869-1958)

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

St. Charles Apartments has local architectural significance as a well-preserved apartment house built in 1923-4 by William Henry Seng, a major building contractor of the 1920s and '30s in the town of University Place. The building is a good example of the freestanding, double-loaded central hall type of apartment house. Its presence in University Place, a block from the commercial district, is emblematic of the increased urbanization of that town in the 1920s, leading to its annexation by Lincoln in 1926.

When St. Charles Apartments was built in 1923-4, University Place, Nebraska, was an incorporated town of about 5,000 population. The town was organized in the late 1880s at the time of the founding of Nebraska Wesleyan University. The commercial spine of the town was built along Warren Ave. (now 48th St.), with residential districts both east of the avenue, around the Nebraska Wesleyan campus, and to the west. Most of the early residences were modest, detached, wood frame houses, along with a significant minority of brick structures and a few apartments above the stores on Warren Ave.

The town's growth by the 1920s led to the residents' vote to accept annexation by Lincoln in 1926. The construction of St. Charles Apartments in 1923-4, accommodating sixteen dwelling units on two lots a block from the commercial street, exemplifies the town's incipient urbanization. It was the first brick apartment house built in the town and the only one erected before annexation.

St. Charles Apartments has local significance both as one of the harbringers of annexation and, more particularly, as a well-preserved apartment house which William H. Seng built, (1923-4), owned (1923-38), and occupied (ca. 1926-38). Seng (ca. 1869-1958) was a major building contractor in University Place from the 1920s to '30s. He came to the Lincoln area in the 1910s from Clatonia in Gage County south of Lincoln where he had operated a grocery store as well as working as a builder. Previous to that he had lived in Richardson County in the extreme southeast corner of the state. In University Place he built a large frame bungalow for his family on land he had acquired in 1910 (3241 N. 48th). The local directories list him variously as contractor, carpenter, or general contractor from the 'teens to '30s. His output included many single family houses, churches in Fairbury and Humbolt, and four apartment houses in University Place.

Seng mostly built brick houses for specific clients, employing familiar forms such as the "Classic Box" (4919 Baldwin, 1923) and bungalow (5218 Walker, 1927). According to family tradition, he was the designer as well as builder

[See Continuation Sheet.]

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Lancaster County Register of Deeds, including 244:543 (1923), 278:292 (1924), 322:167 (1938).  
Lincoln City Directories.  
Lincoln Star, March 8, 1958, 3:5 (obituary).  
Interview with Irma Seng (daughter-in-law of builder), May 3, 1985.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Lincoln, NEBR.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

1	4	6	9	7	7	0	0	4	5	2	3	7	0	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

All of Lots 5 and 6 and north 12 feet of Lots 7 and 8, Block 87, University Place Addition, City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebr., including all property historically associated with the apartment house.

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

state	code	county	code
n/a			

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Edward F. Zimmer / Historic Preservation Planner

organization Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Dept. date July 3, 1985

street & number 555 South 10th Street

telephone (402)471-7491

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

*James A. Hanson*

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date 8/8/85

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date

9/12/85

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**

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of all his projects. Seng's apartment houses (the wood frame "Octavia" of 1921, 4925 Greenwood; St. Charles Apartments; 2827 N. 53rd, 1932; and LeRoy Apartments, 2539 N. 49th St., 1937), were built on his own account, remaining in family ownership for years or even decades.

These buildings appear more idiosyncratic in form and style than his detached houses, generally employing simplified Neoclassical motifs but varying widely in massing and detail. St. Charles Apartments, Seng's largest residential structure, uses Neoclassical motifs on a very blocky mass. The interior is planned around a double-loaded central hall. No air shaft is necessary to provide ventilation, since each apartment has a corner placement. The size of the units in St. Charles Apartments (approximately 900 square feet) and in Seng's other apartment houses approximates that of his smaller bungalows, indicating that the space requirements of University Place homeowners and tenants were similar. Seng moved from his own detached house to the St. Charles Apartments around 1926 and remained there a dozen years.

In summary, this building is evaluated as having local architectural significance as an early example of the apartment house type in University Place and as a well-preserved work of a major local builder.