

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

OCT 27 1989

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Olive, Ira Webster, House  
other names/site number NEHBS # DS07-20

2. Location

street & number 401 E. 13th Street n/a not for publication  
city, town Lexington n/a vicinity  
state Nebraska code NE county Dawson code 047 zip code 68850

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official

October 13, 1989  
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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

5. 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:)

Entered in the  
National Register

[Signature]

11/27/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stonewalls wood

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roof asphaltother wood

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Ira Webster Olive house, located in the town of Lexington in Dawson County, Nebraska, is a large frame two-story, 13 room house constructed in 1889-1890. Harry H. Mills served as the contractor. The Olive House is an excellent, well preserved example of the Victorian Queen Anne style. A two-story sunporch extension of the east gable was added in the early history of the house, c.1900. A small enclosed porch was added to the rear of the house, c.1920. The interior retains original features including carved woodwork, decorative metal hardware and a main staircase. The nomination includes one contributing building: the Olive house. One non-contributing building located on the property is a detached frame garage. The interior and exterior of the house retain features that distinguish it as a turn-of-the-century mansion; the property displays good architectural integrity.

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The Ira W. Olive house is located in Lexington, Nebraska (1988 population 7,040) in Dawson County. At the time of its completion, 1890, it was one of the largest residences in Lexington, Nebraska.

The two-story frame house has a steeply pitched hipped roof with lower cross gables, a one-story wrap-around porch and second story porch with spindle support columns and decorative woodwork, windows with five panes of stained glass and decorative bargeboards. Work on the house, by builder Harry H. Mills, commenced in 1889 and was completed in September of 1890 (Dawson County Gazette, June 14, 1889; Lexington Gazette, Aug. 15, 1890, Oct. 31, 1890).

The main (south) facade has a wrap-around porch, that extends around the east facade, with decorative woodwork, spindle columns and a gable that emphasizes the main entrance. Decorative woodwork, fish scales, stained glass windows and decorative bargeboards enhance the attic story cross gable.

See continuation sheet

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

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The secondary (west) facade also features an attic story cross gable and wrap-around porch with spindle columns. The second-story porch has spindle work support columns and a balustrade.

The Queen Anne style is distinguished by assymetry: variety of roof shapes, round or square towers, decorative woodwork and patterned shingles. The Olive house illustrates the characteristic Queen Anne variety of textures and materials with exterior bands that separate horizontal siding from decorative woodwork and fish scaling. The attic cross gables have decorative bargeboards which contain a semi-circle design intersected by a drop finial.

The two-story sunporch was added as an extension of the east gable during the early history of the house (c.1900). A small porch was added and enclosed on the back of the house probably during the 1920's. The wooden shingles were replaced with asphalt c.1985. No other exterior features have been modified significantly since the structure was completed in 1890.

The interior of the Olive house maintains many of its original features including carved oak woodwork and doors with floral patterns, decorative metal hardware and an elaborate oak staircase. One partition between the two small bedrooms on the second floor has been removed to make a master bath and the wall between the first floor living and dining rooms was partially removed to create a more open appearance. The fireplace, located in the living room, was converted to gas by recent owners and is currently nonfunctioning.

The nomination includes one non-contributing building, a frame commercial structure that was moved onto the property c.1980's and converted into a garage.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Architecture

Period of Significance  
1889-c.1920

Significant Dates  
1889-1890  
c.1900  
c.1920

Cultural Affiliation  
NA

Significant Person  
NA

Architect/Builder  
Mills, Harry H.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Ira W. Olive house is architecturally significant (Criterion C), on the local level, as an excellent example of a Victorian Queen Anne style mansion. The Queen Anne style, popular in Nebraska during the late nineteenth century, is characterized by irregularity of plan and massing and a variety of surface texture and ornamentation. The period of significance is derived from the original construction date of the house (1889-1890) through significant remodellings (c1920).

The Ira W. Olive house, constructed 1889-1890, is an excellent example of Victorian Queen Anne architecture, which is characterized by assymetrical forms, hipped and gabled rooflines and the use of various elements such as decorative woodwork to break up the appearance of smooth walls (McAlester, 1985, p. 263). Other Queen Anne features are wrap-around porches with spindle work supports, second story porches with balustrades, and decorative bargeboards, all of which are found in the design of the Olive house.

The Ira W. Olive house attains architectural significance as a representation of the Victorian Queen Anne style, which played an important part in the development of residential architecture in Nebraska during the late 1880's-1890's. The Queen Anne, a picturesque style, was one of the most popular architectural styles in nineteenth century Nebraska. The Olive House stands as a landmark, both visually and historically, in the town of Lexington. Visually, the dwelling is impressive due to both its size and design. The house is located in a residential area on a large prominent corner lot, and this, along with the surrounding landscape, enhance its local landmark status. Architecturally, the house is the best remaining example of a Victorian Queen Anne

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Chrisman, Harry E., The Ladder of Rivers the Story of I.P. (Print) Olive. Denver: Sage Books, 1962.

Czaplewski, Russell and Steve Holen, Dawson County Historical Society. "Ira W. Olive House," NEHBS Form, August, 1985, on file, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68501.

Dawson County Gazette, June 14, 1889.

See continuation sheet

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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of property Less than one acre.

UTM References

A 

1	4
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4	3	7	8	8	0
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4	5	1	5	1	7	0
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Zone      Easting      Northing

B 

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Zone      Easting      Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is the west 100 feet of Block 7, Abels First Addition, in Lexington, Dawson County, Nebraska.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire parcel of land that has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Amy Vance Meyer, Student Intern date August 1989

organization Nebraska State Historical Society telephone 402/471-4787

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city or town Lincoln

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

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style dwelling in Lexington, which incorporates delicate turned porch supports and spindlework ornamentation. In the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey of Lexington, performed in 1975, one other large frame Queen Anne house, the E. M. LeFrang House (DS07-32) was identified. However, the LeFrang dwelling incorporates classical ornamentation in its design, and as such better reflects the "Free Classic" phase of the Victorian Queen Anne style. Historically, the Olive House is important for its associations with the Olive family, known for their business and social prominence in the Lexington community.

Ira W. Olive, who was born in Williamson County, Texas, relocated to Nebraska in 1877, with his brothers, Isom "Print" and Robert, and their families. He was a cattleman who dealt in grass-fed longhorn cattle, but later branched out to become a businessman and banker. He was instrumental in effecting the name change of his town, Plum Creek to its present-day name, Lexington (Chrisman, 1962, p. 333). Ira W. Olive resided in the home he had built until his death in 1928. The size of the house and the lavish decoration attest to the prominence and wealth of the Olive family in Lexington, Nebraska.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   9   Page   2  

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Lexington Gazette. Lexington, Nebraska, August 15, 1890, October  
31, 1890.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses.  
New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1984.