

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0677418

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RECEIVED MAR 20 1979
DATE ENTERED MAY 1 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Stein Brothers Building

(AD04-5)

AND/OR COMMON

Stein Brothers Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

630 West Second Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Hastings

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3rd

STATE

Nebraska

CODE

031

COUNTY

Adams

CODE

001

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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Storage

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Elmer J. Babin

STREET & NUMBER

1220 Huron Road

CITY, TOWN

Cleveland

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Ohio

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds, Adams County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

500 West Fourth Street

CITY, TOWN

Hastings

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Adams County

DATE

1978

— FEDERAL — STATE COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Nebraska State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<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 DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Stein Brothers Building is a two-story structure whose mottled brick facade fronts the north side of West Second Street in Hastings, Nebraska, for 110 feet. The situation is in the center of a city block and other buildings in the vicinity are of varying dates and commercial uses. The 1970 census listed Hastings' population as being 23,580.

Since its construction in 1906, exterior alterations to the Stein Brothers Building have been limited to the sidewalk level. Originally there was a centered large entrance from the sidewalk. At an undetermined time, this arrangement was altered to an entrance near either end and the original entrance was replaced with a window. The display windows retain their original dimensions, although narrow wall spaces above and below have been sided with a non-original material.

The upper third of the first floor is a continuous section of diminutive translucent panes, and sheltering the sidewalk is an aluminum marquee. This marquee was installed in 1949 after the first sidewalk shelter, added around 1910, collapsed from the weight of snow during a major blizzard.

Four identical stone lion heads are between floors in the building's center. Originally, these elements served as chain supports that suspended a flat entrance hood. The second level contains ten transomed Chicago windows. Alternating between these openings are broad pilasters of brick embellished with stone cartouches and narrower stone pilasters adorned with lion heads. The brick parapet is vivified by a band of terra-cotta rosettes with decorative brick corbelling below. At either end of the facade's upper level is a pilaster strip that has brickwork forming an abstract composition.

Although the interior of the Stein Brothers Building is presently being used exclusively for storage, it functioned for many years as a retail establishment. Most of the first level is an open space where displaying and retailing occurred, and retained here are a handsome pressed-metal ceiling and suspended fans and lighting fixtures. The ceiling and upper floor are supported by wooden posts with iron feet and caps.

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 checked="" 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 1906

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Stein Brothers Building in Hastings, Nebraska, was for twenty-seven years the location of a progressive and urbane retail establishment. Drawing shoppers from a wide region, the business attained a high reputation and added a cosmopolitan air to an otherwise medium-sized Great Plains community. Architecturally, the building is one of the most refined turn-of-the-century edifices in Hastings, and is notable as being a rare example in Nebraska of Prairie-style features appearing in commercial architecture.

In 1902 Edmund and Herman Stein, natives of Harvard, Nebraska, purchased a dry goods business and an adjacent hardware store in Hastings. The building containing these stores burned three years later and the brothers were forced to relocate while Charles H. Dietrich, a prominent Hastings citizen and a former Nebraska Governor and U.S. Senator, had a new building constructed to house the Steins' business. (For additional information on Dietrich, see National Register nomination of the Nowlan-Dietrich House, Adams County, submitted to Washington, D.C., February 16, 1979). Dietrich's new building was completed in 1906 and the Steins rented the building for nineteen years, purchasing it from the Dietrich estate in 1925 for \$72,500 (The Hastings Democrat, June 11, 1925, p. 1).

The 1890s in Hastings and Nebraska had experienced high taxes and low prices for farm commodities, and between 1890-1900 Hastings' population decreased from 13,584 to 7,188 (Creigh, Adams County: The Story, p. 37). But the twentieth century's first decade was a social and financial renaissance for Hastings: "The weather had been favorable, the crops fine, and prices held; new businesses were coming into town, buildings were being constructed, and there was an air of optimism about everything in general" (Ibid., p. 67).

The Stein brothers selected a strategic time to locate a general-type retail business in Hastings, and as prosperity increased they phased out such items as groceries and furniture to concentrate on finer merchandise:

Buyers for the store made regular trips to Europe, buying Belgian laces, Bavarian china, Bohemian crystal, English silver, French kid gloves, and other goods directly from the manufacturers. An old-time Stein employee recalls that the only time buyers were chided upon their return home was when they did not buy large enough stocks (Creigh, p. 853).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Hastings West

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 14 551720 4492700

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 17-21, Block 18, Hastings, Nebraska

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Daniel Kidd, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

March, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

1500 "R" Street

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 X

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

Marvin D. Knott

3/14/79

TITLE

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

5.1.79

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

William H. Bowman

4.30.79

DATE

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The Steins, who also purchased from manufacturers throughout the United States, were among the first advertisers in local papers to list specific stock and prices, and seasonal displays in the expanse of windows facing West Second Street were anxiously anticipated by residents and shoppers. The Stein Brothers Store came to enjoy the patronage of the people in a wide area of central Nebraska and northern Kansas--a reputation for up-to-date merchandise being no small factor in its success (Hastings Daily Tribune, Nov. 17, 1933, p. 1). "Old-timers who knew the store say now that neither before nor since has any single store in Hastings provided the quality, volume, and variety of goods that the Stein store supplied" (Creigh, p. 852).

With the Great Depression, the Stein Brothers Store was closed in 1933. Between the closing announcement and the final day of business, even the most impoverished citizens flocked to make their last purchases from a store that had been an important part of Hastings' business community. From 1934-68 the building housed a Chicago chain department store, and since 1968 it has either been vacant or used for storage.

The 1906 Stein Brothers is among the best-preserved older commercial structures in Hastings. Interestingly, it exhibits those tendencies that numerous contemporary residences were experiencing; proportions are low, there is a strong horizontal emphasis, the cornice treatment is quiet, and the edifice is generally lacking in those neoclassical tendencies so indicative of early-20th-century commercial buildings. The product can properly be termed a Prairie-style building, with its being surprisingly advanced for a community under 10,000 (ca. 1906) removed from the great metropolitan centers.

The name of the Stein Brothers Building's designer has not surfaced, but it is known that a professional architect was involved. The February 17, 1906, issue of the Hastings Daily Tribune reported: "Both Mr. Dietrich and Mr. Cromier went to Omaha this afternoon to consult their architect..." (p. 1). The Omaha architect referred to in the newspaper was probably John Latenser (1858-1936), a native of Liechtenstein who had attended the Technical School in Stuttgart, Germany, before emigrating to the United States, where he worked in Chicago and Cedar Rapids, Iowa, prior to settling in Omaha (Lincoln State Journal, Dec. 7, 1936, p. 1). Several characteristics of Latenser's works appear in the Hastings building. These characteristics include; the use of colored as opposed to red brick, the application of classical motifs in stone and terra-cotta, an emphatic horizontality, and abstract compositions proclaiming the facade's termini. Also, Latenser did not limit his designs to Omaha; on occasions he planned

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

buildings in central Nebraska, among these the Custer County Courthouse and Jail in Broken Bow, 140 miles northwest of Hastings (see National Register nomination for the Custer County Courthouse and Jail, submitted to Washington, D.C., February 23, 1979).

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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Hastings Daily Tribune. Nov. 17, 1933.
_____. Febr. 17, 1906.

The Hastings Democrat. June 11, 1925.

Lincoln State Journal. Lincoln, Nebraska. December 7, 1936.