

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Edgar A. Burnett HouseOther names/site number LC13:E11-014

2. Location

Street & number 3256 Holdrege StreetNot for publication ☐City or town LincolnVicinity ☐State Nebraska Code NE County Lancaster Code 109 Zip code 68503

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

/s/ Michael J. Smith

Signature of certifying official

May 24, 2006

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 for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/TitleDateState or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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): __________
Signature of Keeper_____
Date of Action

Edgar A. Burnett House

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ Private
☐ Public-local
☐ Public-state
☐ Public-federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

☒ Building(s)
☐ District
☐ Site
☐ Structure
☐ Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th Century and early 20th Century American
Movements: Prairie School

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation Concrete

Walls Wood Siding

Roof Asphalt

Other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** Removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** A birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** A cemetery.
- ☐ **E** A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** A commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education

Architecture

Period of Significance

1904-1941

Significant Dates

1904

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

Edgar A. Burnett

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Fiske and Dieman (architects)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 for additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other Lincoln/Lancaster Co.
- Name of repository: Planning Dept.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	696126	4522094	3.			
2.				4.			
				[]	See continuation sheet		

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David A. Gaspers, Historic Preservation Intern; with E. F. Zimmer, Historic Preservation Plannerorganization Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department date March 17, 2006street & number 555 South 10th Street telephone (402) 441-6360city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68508

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Kathleen A. Foote Trusteestreet & number 3256 Holdrege Street telephone (402) 464-1291city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68503

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Edgar A. Burnett House

Name of Property

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Section 7 Page 1

The Edgar A. Burnett House in Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska, is a two-and-a-half-story, rectangular building constructed in 1904 for University of Nebraska associate dean of agriculture Edgar A. Burnett, who later would become Chancellor of the University. The wood frame structure, designed by the locally prominent architecture firm of Fiske and Dieman, is an American Foursquare design with Neo-classical ornament and retains a high degree of integrity on both the exterior and interior features. A detached garage built in 1926 is located north of the house and is a non-contributing structure.

The Edgar A. Burnett house is a two-and-a-half story house of frame construction sheathed in clapboard siding. The house displays cubic massing and a full width porch that are common features of what Alan Gowans refers to in *The Comfortable House* as an American Four-Square. In Lincoln such a house is typically referred to as a "Prairie Box." The Burnett house displays exterior neo-classical architectural details in its porch columns, Palladian window, bay windows and returning eaves.

Located on a large, prominent corner lot, over half an acre in size, the house has a principal elevation to the south. It is bordered to the west by Grace Avenue and has a large side and rear yard to the east and north. North of the house is a single story, gable roof, framed garage facing Grace Avenue.

The principal roof structure is front gabled with side gables on the east and west facades. The porch extends the full width of the south facade, features a low-hipped roof and wide eaves. The corner porch piers have the same clapboard siding as the rest of the house. The two middle columns are of the classical Tuscan variety with their base situated on top of a closed rail that serves the porch railing. The foundation is of textured concrete block. The irregular fenestration is predominately one over one sash, but includes several leaded beveled panes and X-pattern muntin single sashes.

The principal south facade has an oak door slightly off center to the west, and is dominated by the large, wide porch. All of the eaves feature bead-board soffits with narrow crown moldings used as shingle and bed moldings. To the right of the entry door is a large double hung window with diamond pattern, leaded beveled panes in the upper sash. To the left of the door is a full length projecting bay window with each flanking wall containing large double hung windows. The second floor displays a symmetrical pattern of one large double hung paired with a single sash adorned with diamond shaped wood muntins. Above the second floor fenestration features, the primary south gable wall plane is punctured with an eaves return across the full facade. The attic level has a prominent Palladian window consisting of flanking single sashes with X-pattern muntins and a decorative center double hung. A wide cornice is placed above the single sashes and a heavy surround emphasizes the Palladian fenestration.

Each of the other facades is less visible and is treated less formally. Each gable wall is punctured with the eave return across the full facade. The east and west facades feature irregular fenestration, with windows on all four floor levels (basement, ground, second, and attic). The east facade features a masonry chimney that breaks through the side gable eave and a two-story projecting bay window with large double hung sashes. The west facade continues the primary facades projecting bay and a decorative, beveled single sash window. The rear, north facing facade also features a beveled window with a diamond pattern. Entry into the house from the north facade is through a small hipped roof porch on the west corner. A period 2nd floor sleeping porch on the north facade is an obvious, but unobtrusive modification to the original design. The first story of the porch was later paned and a small deck was added to the east. Its location on the northeast corner of the house maintains the original appearance of the structure from both 32nd Street and Holdrege Street.

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The front entrance of the house opens into a small vestibule that empties into a large front hall. A pocket door that mimics the front entry door can close off the vestibule from the front hall. The staircase is positioned quite prominently in the main hall and exhibits a decorative oak newel post, balusters, and baseboard with a multi-level series of landings. The octagonal library occupies the southwest portion of the first floor, adjacent to the staircase. The landing is screened from the library by a paneled half wall topped by an oak column and square spindles. The transition from the main hall to the living room is achieved through two flanking, built-in oak cabinets. The focal point of the living room is the large brick fireplace and the leaded glass front window. A five panel oak pocket door separates the living and dining rooms. The dining room is dominated by the large projecting bay window situated on the east wall. A decorative oak plate rail is prominently placed on the remaining walls. The north wall features a diamond pattern, leaded beveled pane single sash that adds a refining element to this grand room. The rear portion of the home is used for the kitchen, pantry and toilet rooms. A narrow, spiral staircase from the kitchen provides additional access to the second floor servants quarters. The entire first floor features oak floors, quarter-sawn oak woodwork with heavy baseboard and crown moldings throughout excluding the kitchen, pantry and toilet rooms. Oak door moldings with decorative cornices surround all doors.

The second floor features three large bedrooms and has painted woodwork throughout. The front two rooms are connected with a pocket door and the southeast corner room features a brick fireplace. The master bedroom is located in the northeast corner of the second floor and leads to a sleeping porch on the north facade of the house. The attic is well finished and is dominated by the Palladian Window on the south wall. Overall, the Edgar A. Burnett house displays a high degree of physical integrity throughout its exterior and interior features. The north facade sleeping porch is the only major modification and its placement to the rear of the home is unobtrusive.

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The Edgar A. Burnett House in Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska is significant on the statewide level in the area of education for its association with Dr. Edgar Albert Burnett (Criterion B), a renown educator and administrator who served the University of Nebraska as Professor of Animal Husbandry, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Chancellor. The house is also locally significant under Criterion "C" as an important work of master architect Ferdinand C. Fiske and retains a high level of integrity of exterior and interior features. The period of significance extends from the house's construction for Burnett in 1904 until his death in 1941. No other historic property is as clearly or closely associated with Dr. Burnett and his contributions to the state of Nebraska.

Dr. Edgar Albert Burnett: A Lifetime of Service to the University of Nebraska

Dr. Edgar Burnett served the University of Nebraska in escalating levels of contribution from 1899 until his death in June 1941. He was born in Hartland, Michigan on October 17, 1865. His early years were spent working on his father's grain and livestock farm (*Lincoln Sunday Journal and Star*, 6/ 29/1941). He attended Michigan State Agricultural College, the first college of its kind in the country, and graduated with a Bachelor's of Science in 1887. After graduation, Burnett became an assistant to the faculty at the Agricultural College for four years and then became a Professor of Animal Husbandry at South Dakota State University. At SDSU, Burnett implemented the state experimental station program and focused his research on swine production. In 1899, Professor Burnett married SDSU English Professor Nellie Folsom and accepted a position at the University of Nebraska. Professor Burnett quickly assumed additional duties, as by 1901 he was named Associate Dean of Agriculture and director of the Experiment Station.

In December of 1902, Edgar and Nellie purchased a large corner house lot just to the west of the Agricultural (East) Campus in Lincoln. By 1904, the couple was living in the large, 2-and ½ story Prairie Box house situated on the lot at the northeast corner of 32nd and Holdrege. The home was built from plans by Ferdinand C. Fiske, who had recently returned to Lincoln to resume his practice in the community.

Burnett's most notable early accomplishments were the successful establishment of a comprehensive system of experiment stations across the state and his direction of the total curriculum, discipline and degrees of the agriculture students (Prairie U pg 49). These early leadership roles led to Burnett to be appointed Dean of Agriculture in 1909 when the Industrial College was divided into the Colleges of Agriculture and Engineering. At the same time, the College moved in total to the Agricultural Campus. Under Dean Burnett's leadership for twenty-five years, the College grew from an adjunct to the city campus into a independent unit of 750 students with its own staff and ten large buildings (*Prairie University*, pg. 81).

Burnett's work on establishing the school of Agriculture as a growing independent College of the University did not go unnoticed by his peers across the country. He was bestowed by his alma mater, Michigan State Agricultural College, the honorary degree of doctor of science in 1917. Two years later, Dr. Burnett, as a member of the American Education Corps, was placed in charge of agricultural lectures in the first army of the American expeditionary forces at the University of Beaune, France. In 1925-26, he served as the president of the American Association of Land-Grant Colleges.

In January of 1927, Burnett was appointed interim chancellor of the University of Nebraska by the board of regents in the absence of Chancellor Samuel Avery. Burnett was elevated to the post of chancellorship in 1928. Chancellor Burnett led the University through some of its toughest times, as the institution faced financial shortfalls throughout the Great Depression of the 1930's. In an attempt to fight the legislative cutbacks, Burnett reduced some faculty wages by 10 percent and his own salary by 20 percent. He tirelessly lobbied for the

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University's financial needs and touted both the cultural and agricultural contributions the institution provided for the state. During his administration as chancellor, from 1927 to 1938, several significant buildings were erected on campus including Morrill Hall, Andrews Hall and the Student Union.

Perhaps Chancellor Burnett's most enduring legacy to the state was his promotion and establishment of the University Foundation. Under the leadership of Chancellor Burnett, thirty businessmen across the state came together to establish the foundation in 1936 to promote alumni endowments as a source of revenue for the University. The Foundation in 2006 has grown to be a major funding source for the University, giving a record \$77.5 million in the 2005 fiscal year and controlling over \$1.2 billion in total assets. The Foundation remembers the efforts of Chancellor Burnett through the Burnett Society, an honor club for those who have named the Foundation as a beneficiary of their estate or made a planned gift to the Foundation.

Ferdinand C. Fiske, A Master Architect returns to Lincoln

Ferdinand Comstock Fiske arrived on the Lincoln architectural scene in 1887 from Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he had been practicing architecture since studying at Cornell University. He immediately established an architectural practice in the city and set to work. Fiske received prominent commissions almost immediately and was chosen to design such structures as the Hurlbut/ Yates house (NHRP 1998), the Barr Terrace (NHRP 1979), and the David E. Thompson mansion (1893), which later became Nebraska's governor's mansion, during his first decade of work.

Fiske left Lincoln after the Panic of 1893 to continue his practice in St Louis, Missouri and Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In 1902, Fiske entered into a partnership with Charles A. Dieman and returned to Lincoln to resume his practice in Nebraska's capital. Fiske's reputation as a quality designer with the ability to work in a wide variety of architectural styles grew during this partnership. In the period 1902-1910, he produced many significant residential and commercial structures, including Agriculture Hall and the Home Economics Building on the University's East campus, the Little Building at 113 North 11th Street (NHRP 1987), and the Apothecary building (801 P St) and Graniger Bros. warehouse (744 O St) in Lincoln's Historic Haymarket (a 1982 locally designated, federally-certified historic district). Stylistically significant residential works include the Shingle Style "Maple Lodge" for Arthur Ziemer at 2030 Euclid Avenue (NRHP 1971) and the Mission Style Frank Spalding house at 2221 Sheridan Boulevard (NHRP 1998).

Besides his association with Charles Dieman, Fiske had successful partnerships in Lincoln at various times with George W. Peters, Harry W. Meginnis, Edward G. Schaumberg, and Jesse Boaz Miller. Between partnerships, Fiske maintained his own architectural practice. Fiske was the architect for Lincoln's Municipal Lighting and Waterworks Plant at 2901 A Street (NHRP 1986), Antelope Grocery at 2046 J Street (NHRP 1987), the Jacobethan Revival Style Prescott School at 1930 South 20th Street (1922), and the Neo-Classical style Whittier Junior High School at 2240 Vine Street (1923).

Significance of the Burnett House

The Burnett house displays another stylistic exploration by Fiske, a vernacular expression of the American Foursquare, commonly known in the Midwest as a "Prairie Box". This is the third known house designed by Fiske that displays similar cubic massing. The Weare-Gage house in Cedar Rapids Iowa, built in 1897-98, exhibits similar size and bulk as the Burnett house, but is a strong example of Colonial Revival architecture. One of

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Fiske's first commissions in Lincoln was the J.L. Teeters house at 1812 D Street. This home, built circa 1902-03, is again similar in size and shape of the Burnett house and displays stronger characteristics of the Prairie Box style.

The American Foursquare became the most dominant housing style in America after the turn of the century through the 1920's. Distinguishing characteristics of the foursquare include its boxy shape, two-story height with a single front facade attic dormer and full-width front porch. Nationally, most foursquares have low-pitched hipped roofs, but in Lincoln, the predominant style was a front facing gable. The very simple shape of the Foursquare could be detailed with a wide variety of other styles, including the preceding Victorian style and the corresponding Craftman style. The Neo-classical detailed Prairie Box style home for Edgar Burnett postdates Fiske's other significant works in the Foursquare style and signals his return to Lincoln. It represents the work of a master architect, and illustrates his ability to produce significant structures in a broad range of styles.

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Lincoln, NE. *City of Lincoln Deed Records*. 1902-1904.

Lincoln Star (Lincoln), 30 June, 1941

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University of Nebraska Foundation. *A Tradition of Excellence. Sixtieth Year Anniversary Brochure*, 1996

Wigton, James P. "Kisselbach House". *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 1994.

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is legally described as Snells Subdivision Lots 7 & 8 & Outlot 8 & Vacate E-W Alley Adjacent, in Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska.

Boundary Justification

These boundaries include all the property historically associated with the Edgar A. Burnett House.

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Section Photos Page 1

The following information applies to all photographs:

Edgar A. Burnett House
Lincoln Lancaster County, Nebraska
All Photos by E. Zimmer, March 2006
All negatives at Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department, Lincoln, Nebraska

Photo 1 of 5

View from the southwest of the Burnett House, showing the principal, south façade.

Photo 2 of 5

View from the west of the secondary (west) façade of the Burnett House.

Photo 3 of 5

View from the east of the secondary (east) façade of the Burnett House.

Photo 4 of 5

Interior view of staircase and landing, looking west

Photo 5 of 5

Interior view of the library and staircase, looking west.

Photo 1 of 5



Photo 2 of 5



Photo 3 of 5



Photo 4 of 5



Photo 5 of 5

