

1001

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JUL 26 2005

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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historic name Sieber Grocery and Apartment Hotel

other names/site number Sieber Village

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2. Location

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street & number 1305-1313 North Hudson Avenue not for publication N/A  
city or town Oklahoma City vicinity N/A  
state Oklahoma code OK county Oklahoma code 109  
zip code 73103

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant      nationally      statewide X locally. ( N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 7-25-05  
Signature of certifying official Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO  
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 commenting or other official Date

      
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
✓ entered in the National Register Edson H. Beall 9.7.05  
          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):       
for            
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification  
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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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub: <u>hotel</u>
<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>specialty store</u>
<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>restaurant</u>
<u>AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE</u>	<u>processing</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>VACANT/NOT IN USE</u>	Sub: _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

walls BRICK

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

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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.)

- 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.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance 1922-1943  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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10. Geographical Data  
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Acreage of Property 1 Acre MOL

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>14</u>	<u>634620</u>	<u>3927480</u>	3	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
2	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	4	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>

N/A 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.)

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11. Form Prepared By  
=====

name/title Cynthia Savage, Architectural Historian, for Sieber Holdings

organization ARCH Consulting date February 2005

street & number 364 County Road 1230 telephone 405/459-6200

city or town Pocasset state OK zip code 73079

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Additional Documentation  
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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)

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
Sieber Grocery and Apartment Hotel  
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

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

name Sieber Holdings, LLC: Marva Ellard, Robert Magrini & J. Todd Scott  
street & number 1521 N. Shartel Ave. telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73103

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SUMMARY

Robert G. Sieber had the two-story, L-shaped, brick Sieber Grocery constructed in 1922 and the six-story, U-shaped, brick Sieber Apartment Hotel in 1928. The two buildings are divided by a three-foot walkway but connected by an original below-grade tunnel, common ownership and intertwined history. Stylistically, both buildings are classified as Commercial Style with the grocery being fairly plain and the apartment hotel more opulently treated with cast stone ornaments and brick detailing. The buildings have been vacant for over twenty years. The windows and doors in the grocery store building are boarded but include two aluminum-framed storefronts and wood-framed, one-over-one, double hung second floor windows with cast stone sills. The Sieber Apartment Hotel has wood, one-over-one and two-over-two, double hung windows with cast stone sills. Many of the windows, including all of the first and second floor windows, in the apartment hotel are completely or partially boarded. For security reasons, the main entry on the Apartment Hotel has a padlocked, metal, slab door. The secondary doors on either side of the main entry and other elevations are boarded. Decorative details on the grocery building consist of simple brick tables ornamented with cast stone squares. The apartment hotel features both cast stone ornamentation and brick detailing, including a double cast stone belt course, cast stone coping, cast stone pediments and brick pilasters and a brown brick band along the upper wall.

Both buildings have been altered by the boarding of windows and doors; however, this is a reversible alteration with rehabilitation plans underway using investment tax credits to return both buildings to full use featuring their historic fenestration pattern. Notably for both buildings the configuration of the windows and doors has not been permanently modified. Other alterations include the replacement of both storefronts on the grocery building with aluminum-framed, double display windows and glazed slab doors. Additionally, the first floor of the grocery was altered by the application of structural glass panels which, although they were removed at an unknown time, have resulted in a deterioration of the mortar on the first floor. Despite being vacant for over twenty years, the Apartment Hotel retains a good degree of integrity with the only notable modification being the historic change to the entry. Between the apartment hotel's opening in 1928 and 1933, the courtyard entrance to the main central entry was enclosed, the interior lobby enlarged and an ornate cast stone entry surround constructed.

The setting of the buildings has changed over the last seventy-plus years. The area retained its dominant residential character through at least the 1950s. As

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found in the majority of large cities, the neighborhood began to decline in the 1960s with popular residential development spreading to outlying "bedroom" communities, such as Yukon, Mustang, Piedmont, Warr Acres and Bethany. Further changing the area was the spread of the central business district which resulted in the wholesale demolition of single family homes to make room for the construction of small, modern, office buildings. Although not much remains of the historic neighborhood, and therefore the historic setting of the area, the retention of both the Sieber Grocery and the Sieber Apartment Hotel is critical to maintain integrity of feeling and association for the buildings. The presence of both buildings provides a microcosm of the historic character of the area. Despite the damage to the setting caused by demolition and new construction, both buildings maintain the strong ability to convey their historic significance. In addition to retaining their overall integrity of location, design, materials and workmanship, the two buildings exhibit a strong degree of feeling and association.

SIEBER GROCERY: EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Sieber Grocery is a two-story with a basement, L-shaped, red brick, flat-roofed building. The Commercial Style building is decoratively treated only on the principal east elevation including simple brick tables and cast stone squares. All of the windows and doors are currently boarded but previously consisted of wood, glazed, paneled and glazed slab doors and wood, one-over-one, double hung windows. Originally, the building contained two stores on the first floor, a pharmacy and grocery store, and a community room and owner apartment on the second floor. Occupying the rear two floors was an original meat processing plant. In the early 1940s, the community room was converted to several apartments. The building continued in use until about the early 1980s and has been vacant since.

The east elevation of the Sieber Grocery contains a middle entry to the second floor between two storefronts on the first floor. Barely discernible, the south storefront is slightly larger than the north storefront, placing the middle entry off-center. The storefronts have been boarded but they both consisted of a central entry with a transom, flanked by large display windows with brick kickplates. The storefronts were modernized probably in the 1940s with double, aluminum-framed, display windows and glazed slab doors with tall transoms. Additionally, structural glass panels were placed around the storefronts; the structural glass panels have been removed but this has affected the mortar on the first floor, resulting in a what appears to be a color difference in the brick between the first and second floors. The middle

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entry, with a nonoriginal wood covered transom area, has been boarded. The first and second floors of the east elevation are separated by three flush header brick tables accented by square stone markers. The middle table is small, located immediately above the central door. The outside two tables extend the length of the storefronts with the south one being slightly longer than the north.

Unlike the first floor, the second floor openings on the east elevation are equally spaced so they are not located directly above the corresponding opening on the first floor. All but one of the five sets of second floor windows are double and all have stone sills. Additionally, all of the wood, one-over-one, double hung windows are covered with wood. Although the top of all of the windows is set at the same level, only three of the windows extend down to almost the brick table separating the floors. The two outermost and central windows are larger, with the two inside windows ending about a quarter of the way above the brick table. The south inside window is also the only single window on this elevation. Above the second floor windows is a continuous, brick, recessed table, accented by brick headers and square cast stone ornaments. Each corner of the table is set off by the stone ornaments and there are four stones on the top and bottom which correspond to the stone corner markers on the table between the first and second floor. The extreme upper wall of the east elevation is composed of yellow brick ornamented with a continuous band of red brick corbelling.

The front portion of the south wall of the Sieber Grocery is obscured by the north wall of the Sieber Apartment Hotel. Like the other elevations, all of the openings are boarded. The south wall has three double, single pane, wood windows on the first floor and four wood, one-over-one, double hung windows on the second. All of the windows have cast stone sills. The first floor windows are located high on the wall, approximately eight feet off of the ground and measure four foot by eighteen inches. To the west side of the first floor is a boarded pedestrian door with a transom. A painted ghost sign, reading "Hudson Pharmacy," the original occupant of the store, remains evident above the easternmost first floor windows. The second floor windows are evenly spaced and do not correspond to the windows below. There are four second story windows with the three eastern windows being double and the westernmost window, directly above the entry, being single.

The back portion of the south wall is set back, creating the trunk of the L-shape. This side of the south wall has four boarded basement windows. On the west corner of the elevation is a basement-level door with a transom. To the

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east of this on the first floor is an at-grade door with a flat brick header. East of the second door are two single boarded windows with stone sills. The second floor of this section of the south elevation has five window openings which from west to east consist of a triple window, then a single window, then another triple window, then a shorter single window, then a double window. All of the windows have continuous stone sills and no headers. Several of the windows are not fully boarded and they are wood, one-over-one, double hung.

The west elevation also consists of two sections. The inset section contains two boarded windows with a continuous stone sill in the northernmost corner, midway between the basement and first floor. On the second floor of this section, there is a boarded entry and a single, short, boarded window with a cast stone sill. The other section of the west elevation contains a single visible basement window on the south side with a single, boarded, first floor window above this. The other basement windows are obscured by the existing grade level. The second floor of this section contains five window openings with the outer two openings being double and the inner three openings single. The three inside windows are not evenly spaced with the two southern windows being set closer together. All of the windows have cast stone sills. The roofline of this section is not level with the southern side being slightly higher than the north. Marking the north edge of the southern section is a brick chimney.

The north wall is flush along its entire length. There are three basement level windows towards the west side of the wall. The first floor windows are small, double, single pane, boarded windows with brick sills. The first floor windows match in placement and size the corresponding windows on the south elevation. There are two covered entries on this elevation. Towards the middle of the elevation is an at-grade door with an above-grade loading door located towards the west. The loading door has a concrete sill and steel panels protecting the brick sides. The second floor has a combination of single, double and triple windows. All of the wood, one-over-one, double hung windows are boarded and have continuous cast stone sills. Starting from the east side, there is a double window; then a triple window; then two single windows which are shorter than the other windows; then two sets of triple windows; then two single windows of the same height as the double and triple windows; then a final set of double windows. The roofline has a brick coping and is stepped in the front by two and towards the rear with a single step. The north wall is also divided by a square metal drain spout and two round steel exhaust pipes. The drain spout extends from the ground to nearly the roofline between the two short single windows. The smaller, middle, steel pipe angles from just off the

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west corner of the pedestrian door to above the roof. The larger, round, steel, exhaust smokestack extends from mid-way on the first floor to above the roof. There is also the top portion of a drain spout immediately to the west of the larger exhaust smokestack.

SIEBER GROCERY: ALTERATIONS

The most notable alteration to the Sieber Grocery is the replacement of the storefronts with flush, modern, aluminum-frame doors and display windows. This type of alteration is common to buildings of this size and scale. Additionally, structural glass panels were placed on the first floor around the storefronts. The removal of the panels at an unknown time has resulted in the degeneration of the mortar on the first floor facade so the brick appears brighter than on the second floor. Both the change to the storefronts and addition of structural glass panels probably occurred simultaneously in the 1940s. As the first floor retains its overall original configuration, consisting of two storefronts separated by a central entry, and the upper floor maintains its historic features and decorative details, these alterations do not prohibit the ability of the building to convey its historic significance.

Other alterations to the Sieber Grocery building include the boarding of all doors and windows. This is directly related to the non-use of the building and the coverings are all temporary, merely covering the windows not obliterating them. Overall, the Sieber Grocery retains its integrity of location, design, workmanship, feeling and association to a good degree.

SIEBER APARTMENT HOTEL: EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Sieber Apartment Hotel is a U-shaped, six-story, flat-roofed building constructed of brown brick on the first floor and red brick above that. The foundation of the building is concrete. Financed by Robert G. Sieber, the building was designed by Patrick H. Weathers and constructed by W. G. Lowe, general contractor. Stylistically, the building is best defined as Commercial Style. For security reasons, the majority of doors have been boarded with the main entry being nonhistoric, metal, slab. Many of the windows have also been boarded with all openings on the first and second floor being covered with sheets of plywood. Portions of the windows on the upper floors have been boarded but many original windows remain intact. The windows are wood, one-over-one, double hung and wood, two-over-two, double hung. All the windows have narrow cast stone sills with ten facade windows also having wide, cast stone, decorative headers. The symmetrical window pattern includes single and

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double windows. Decorative detail includes both cast stone and brick detailing with most ornamentation occurring on the first floor and roofline. This includes cast stone entry surrounds, cast stone window headers, a double cast stone belt course, cast stone coping with small central stepped cast stone pediments, cast stone corner markers and cast stone diamonds inset in the upper brick wall. Brick detailing includes a contrasting brown brick belt course above the sixth floor windows and brick pilasters ornamenting the three sections of the facade. The building also has nonoriginal painted lettering along the upper wall of all four elevations, stating the name and function of the building.

Facing onto Hudson Avenue, the east elevation is the primary wall of the building. As the building is U-shaped, the facade is composed of three sections, two wider, matching, outside bays and a recessed, narrow, center section. The first floor of the center section is extended almost flush with the rest of the facade. Originally, the first floor was partially recessed, allowing for a small courtyard in front of the main entry. As evident from photographs of the building in The Daily Oklahoman between 1928 and 1933, the courtyard was enclosed, bringing the entry virtually level with the rest of the elevation. A large, elaborate, cast stone surround was constructed to highlight the central entry. The surround includes a recessed entry, now consisting of a metal slab door, in a Tudor, or flattened Gothic, arched opening. Above the arch are two decorative elements squaring off the area above the arch and creating a straight line for the incised letters above which reads in all capitals "SIEBER." Above this is a frieze area defined by two narrow, projecting, stone bands which wrap around the three sides of the element. Decorating the frieze are five, equally-spaced, circular ornaments. Crowning the surround is an elaborate pediment consisting of two curvilinear side elements flanking a large cartouche. On either side of the entry are paired, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows set on top of the wide concrete foundation. Both windows are covered with painted plywood. Topping the windows is the double cast stone belt course which divides the first floor from the second floor. Above this is a wider section of cast stone with a cast stone coping which joins the surround with the adjacent brick side walls. Two small, square holes on the outside edges of the upper element provide drainage from the flat roof of the center section. Equally spaced on the roof are two large skylights which provided light for the spacious, ceramic tile and marble interior lobby.

Above the one-story section, the recessed center bay remains a focal point of the building. Like the rest of the facade, the center bay is divided into

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three sections. Projected, stepped, red brick pilasters separate the three sections with a slightly narrower, projected, matching, brick pilaster also dividing the center section. The nearly symmetrical windows consist of double, two-over-two, wood, double hung windows on each floor of the outside sections and two, shorter, single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows on each floor of the middle portion. All of the windows have continuous cast stone sills. As the center section windows are just over half the size of the flanking windows, there are small, square, cast stone ornaments set at the level of the sills of the larger windows. The shorter windows in the middle section also have wide, flat, cast stone headers which match the width of the windows below.

The sixth floor windows in the outside sections have headers created by the wide, brown brick belt course encircling the main elevations. Above the sixth floor windows of the middle section are round, double, cast stone arches which connect to the cast stone quoins of the large pediment ornamenting the roofline. The stepped pediment has a wide, stepped, cast stone coping and a cast stone, rectangular, decorative element in the center. The center brick of the pediment is decorated with three, cast stone, diamond-shaped ornaments.

The outside bays of the facade are identical except for the painted signage on the upper wall. Painted on the south section is "Sieber" and the north section reads "HOTEL." The signage was painted on the building after the period of significance. Centrally located on the first floor of each section is a double entry. Originally, the south entry allowed access to the building restaurant and the north entry led to the other commercial shops housed in the building, for many years a beauty shop and dry cleaners. Both entries are now covered with plywood. Each entry has a flat, cast stone surround which is ornamented with a simple, incised, closed pediment with a center circle. The surround is slightly projected above the incised pediment, forming a second larger pediment which extends above the double belt course separating the rest of the first floor from the second. The larger pediment is also marked by narrow, incised, vertical bands on the lower portion of each side. Immediately above both surrounds are four wide, stepped, cast stone ornaments which connect to the narrow, continuous, cast stone sill of the second floor windows. Unlike the other sills, the continuous second floor window sill extends fully around the east, south and part of the north elevations. Flanking both entries are large, triple, display windows with transoms, all of which have been boarded.

The upper five floors of the outside bays of the east elevation are also symmetrical and consist of three sections. The bays are defined by projecting brick pilasters which extend from the second floor window sill to above the roofline. The pilasters are detailed with cast stone ornaments at the top and

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at the level of the brown brick belt course above the sixth floor windows. The larger outside sections contain on each floor paired, one-over-one, wood, double hung windows. The center section has a single, two-over-two, wood, double hung window. All of the windows have cast stone sills. From the second floor to the fifth floor, the center windows have wide, cast stone, flat headers which overlap the brick pilasters separating the sections. Above the center window on the sixth floor is a wide, stepped, rectangular, cast stone, flat header. The second through fifth floor windows in the outside sections have no headers. The sixth floor windows have brown brick headers created by the continuous, brown, brick belt course which encircles the main elevations of the building. Ornamenting the frieze area of the upper wall are three cast stone diamonds, placed in the center of each section. In addition to the cast stone coping which encircles the main elevations, the roofline of the outside bays is ornamented with a stepped parapet. Centrally located on the parapet is a plain cartouche.

The inside walls of the outside bays of the facade are also identical. The fenestration pattern of the second through sixth floor includes, from east to west, three sets of single, two-over-two, wood, double hung windows; then a short, single, one-over-one, wood, double hung window; then a set of double, one-over-one, wood, double hung windows; then a single, one-over-one, wood, double hung window. The windows all have cast sills with the double windows having continuous sills. The windows on the second through fifth floor do not have headers. The sixth floor windows are topped by the wide, brown, brick belt course encircling the main elevations. Above the brown brick belt course are three, evenly spaced, cast stone diamonds.

The south elevation of the Sieber Apartment Hotel faces onto Northwest Twelfth Street. Like the east wall, the south elevation is constructed of brown brick on the first floor and red brick on the floors above. The wide concrete foundation which covers the facade extends only past the first two window openings from the east corner on the south elevation. The first window east of the corner on the south wall's first floor is a triple, wood, one-over-one, double hung window. West of this is a matching triple window with a wide concrete sill. Continuing westward, there are two single, matching, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows with narrow cast stone sills on the first floor. West of this is a single, wood, one-over-one, double hung window which is raised slightly above the other first floor windows and consequently it cuts into the double cast stone belt course encircling the primary elevations of the building. To the west of that window is a single pedestrian entry which also extends above into the belt course. West of the entry are four single, wood,

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one-over-one, double hung windows which originate immediately below the belt course and have cast stone sills. As on the facade, the second floor windows of the south elevation have a continuous cast stone sill above the double belt course separating the first floor from the upper floors. The symmetrical window pattern on the second through sixth floors is identical and, from east to west, consists of two single, wood, two-over-two, double hung windows on the east side; then two shorter, single, one-over-one, wood, double hung windows; then four single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then two shorter, single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then two single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then a set of double, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows. All of these windows have narrow cast stone sills. Only the sixth floor windows have a header, consisting of the brown brick belt course encircling the primary elevations. Above the brown brick belt course are three inset cast stone diamonds with the two outer diamonds centrally located over the corner windows and the third diamond evenly centered above the seventh and eighth windows. Covering the center diamond and much of the frieze area is a painted sign reading "Sieber MOTOR HOTEL." Edging the roofline is the continuation of the cast stone coping.

The west, or rear, elevation is unadorned with the cast stone detailing wrapping just around the corners before ceasing. At the same height as the upper cast stone belt course, there is a decorative band of brick consisting of a header row above a soldier row which wraps around the north side of the building. The concrete foundation also increases from the south side to the north, being below the first floor windows on the south side and surrounding the windows towards the center and continuing north. As on the other elevations, the first and second floor windows are completely boarded. The first floor windows match the upper floors in placement but are shorter and do not have sills. The first floor windows are all single with some of the windows set at different heights. In about the middle of the first floor there is a single pedestrian door with an above-grade window immediately adjacent on the north side. To the south of the door are five single windows, set at roughly the same height as the first floor windows on the south elevation. North of the door and adjacent window are five windows which are set higher, being immediately below the decorative brick band extending the length of the wall. The second through sixth floor windows are identical and, proceeding south to north, consist of single, wood, one-over-one, double hung window; then two shorter, single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then two single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then two single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows set at mid-floor level in order to light an interior stairwell; then two single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then two

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shorter, single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then a single, wood, one-over-one, double hung window. The parapets of the side elevations are clearly visible on the edges of the west elevation which has a simple metal coping. Between each set of the shorter windows are small, metal, drain pipes which extend from the roof to the first floor. Centrally located on the roof is the large, brick, original, elevator penthouse. Painted on the west side of the penthouse are the words "HOTEL/VACANCY" with other lighted signage on the north and south sides. Only the north side sign remains intact and it simply reads "HOTEL."

The north elevation is partially blocked by the adjacent Sieber Grocery. Similar to the west elevation, the north elevation is not as decoratively treated as the east and south walls with the cast stone ornamentation ending about a quarter of the way from the west corner. As on the west side, a decorative brick band extends from the end of the cast stone belt course to the corner. Along the far west side, the concrete foundation covers much of the first floor, from the brick band down. The westernmost section of the first floor on the north elevation has no window openings. About a quarter of the way east, there are two small boarded window sets in the concrete foundation. East of this, is a single, boarded, pedestrian door. There are three single windows to the east of the door. The one closest to the door is smaller than the other and set towards the middle of the first floor. The other two are longer and extend from mid-level to the ground. East of the single windows are two sets of triple windows. The easternmost triple window is boarded with the other triple window being completely infilled with concrete block. The windows on the second through sixth floor are identical to the corresponding windows on the south wall and, from east to west, consist of two single, wood, two-over-two, double hung windows on the east side; then two shorter, single, one-over-one, wood, double hung windows; then four single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then two shorter, single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then two single, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows; then a set of double, wood, one-over-one, double hung windows. Matching the other walls, all of these windows have narrow cast stone sills and the sixth floor windows have a flat header formed by the brown brick belt course encircling the north, east and south elevations. The upper wall ornamentation on the north wall is also identical to the south elevations, except for the painted signage. On the north wall, the painted sign is between the easternmost diamond and the center diamond and reads "SIEBER HOTEL."

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ALTERATIONS: SIEBER APARTMENT HOTEL

Between 1928 and 1933, the Sieber Apartment Hotel's entry was modified as the original, first floor, hotel lobby was extended to be flush with the rest of the facade. This alteration resulted in the construction of a new, elaborate, cast stone surround for the entry and the elimination of a small courtyard. As the modification occurred within five years of the original construction and has gained historic significance of its own, it is included within the property's period of significance.

Nonhistoric alterations to the Sieber Apartment Hotel include the boarding of all first and second floor openings. Only one first floor window, on the hardly visible north elevation, has been permanently infilled with concrete block. Various windows on the floors above have also been completely or partially covered with wood. The covering of the fenestration is a security measure as the building has not been in use since the early 1980s. Sufficient material remains intact to allow for an accurate rehabilitation of the openings. Other modifications to the building include nonhistoric painted signage on all four elevations. The signage probably dates to the early 1960s as the elaborate "S" painted on the walls match advertisements in the local newspaper. Overall, the Sieber Apartment Hotel retains a notable degree of integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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SUMMARY

The Sieber Grocery and Apartment Hotel are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as excellent examples of two distinct property types. The Sieber Grocery building is an excellent example of an early 1920s, two-story, neighborhood commercial building in Oklahoma City. This type of building was found throughout Oklahoma City's residential areas in the early 1920s, providing space for locally-necessary retail establishments, as well as a community room and living area for the owner's family. Constructed in 1922 by Robert G. Sieber, the building served a large residential area directly north of Oklahoma City's central business district. Five years after the building of the two-story Sieber Grocery, and reflecting the substantial development of Oklahoma City in a short period of time, Sieber caused the construction of the six-story Sieber Apartment Hotel immediately next to the Sieber Grocery. While long term residence in hotels was not a new concept, the advent of the apartment hotel began in Oklahoma City in the 1920s. Apartment hotels are distinct from other similar property types because they combined transient and long-term lodging by providing furnished quarters that included kitchen facilities in the apartments and a convenient, accessible restaurant and other expected services for the hotel guests. Between 1926 and 1929, four comparable apartment hotels were constructed north of downtown Oklahoma City. Of these four, only the Sieber Apartment Hotel retains its historic integrity.

The Sieber Grocery and Apartment Hotel are herein nominated together under the category of building(s). Although somewhat unusual, the two buildings have historically and functionally operated as an indistinguishable unit. In addition to being physically connected by a below-grade tunnel, the two buildings have been jointly featured in advertisements from the 1930s through the 1960s. Further, the two properties have never been legally separated. On a functional level, the first floor stores in the smaller grocery building functioned for decades as an extension of the commercial services available at the apartment hotel. Beginning in the early 1940s, the apartments on the second floor of the grocery building were also included in the count of available units at the Sieber Apartment Hotel.

The period of significance extends from the construction of the Sieber Grocery in 1922 through the alteration to the entry of the Sieber Apartment Hotel in 1933, including the 1928 construction of the Sieber Apartment Hotel. The alteration to the main entry, which consisted of enclosing a small courtyard and construction of an elaborate cast stone entry flush with the other sections

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of the east elevation, has gained its own significance as it is this entry that has become identified with the building. Both buildings ably convey their significance from this period.

BACKGROUND

Robert G. Sieber was born on 14 December 1884 in Germany. The Sieber family migrated to the United States in about 1888. First residing in Dayton, Ohio, the family, eventually including Robert G., his parents, three brothers and one sister, then moved to Riley, Kansas, before settling on a farm near Orlando, Oklahoma, in 1896. In about 1906, Sieber moved to Oklahoma City where he graduated from Draughon's Business College and met his wife, Nora Pittman. Nora, born in Pleasantville, Iowa, in 1880, moved to Oklahoma City in 1905 to attend Draughon's<sup>1</sup> Business College. Married in 1908, the couple had five daughters, Thelma, Lenore, Constance and twins DeLois and Delrose. Of the girls, Delrose never married, taking over her parents' business concerns in the 1940s, including operation of both the grocery building and apartment hotel.<sup>2</sup>

Founded the year after the Sieber family migrated to the United States, Oklahoma City experienced the growing pangs of other cities in a different manner. From its overnight formation in April 1889, the city matured rapidly. A scant two months after the opening, the town boundaries were set at Seventh Street on the north, Walker Avenue to the west, Seventh Street to the south and the Santa Fe Railway on the east. The total population stood at 4,138 people, with the majority being male. By the turn-of-the century, Oklahoma City was booming with several industries, including two cotton gins, a flour mill, ice factory and three railroads, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe, present before the land opening; the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific, which arrived in the city in 1895; and, the Saint Louis and San Francisco Railroad, which entered

<sup>1</sup>Also spelled Draugons Business College in Nora Pittman's Obituary, The Daily Oklahoman, (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 19 December 1955.

<sup>2</sup>The Daily Oklahoman, 22 June 1934; 18 July 1941; 26 February 1943; 19 December 1955; 10 November 1957; and, 10 September 1962.

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the city in 1898. The 540 percent increase in city population between 1900 and 1910, from 10,037 to 64,205, is credited largely to the railroads.<sup>3</sup>

To accommodate the persistent demand for housing, the city continuously annexed more land. Between 1907 and 1908 alone twenty-two additions were incorporated into the city, bringing with it a population of three thousands persons. By 1910, the city limits extended to Thirty-sixth Street on the north. During the 1910s, city development slowed down but in no way halted. Oklahoma City increased in population only 42 percent, rising to number 91,295 in 1920. For the most part, the working class largely resided around Third Street, while the business class lived in the vicinity of Eighth Street.<sup>4</sup>

Critical to the expansion of the residential areas away from downtown Oklahoma City was the development of public transportation means. Beginning around 1902, electric street cars provided an important source of public transportation throughout Oklahoma City. With essentially all of the electric track within Oklahoma City laid by 1916, use of Oklahoma City street cars reached their zenith in 1919, carrying a total of 17.5 million passengers. Riding of street cars fell in 1924 to just about twelve million due to increased automobile travel. In 1925, the railway company put its first buses into operation, further detracting business from the street car system. By 1930, bus service was available throughout Oklahoma City. However, street car use rose briefly again in 1930 to seventeen million but it became increasingly obvious that the future of public transportation was moving ever closer towards buses exclusively. Street car service continued in Oklahoma City until 1946, when the decision to convert to strictly a bus system forced the sale of assets related to inner-city street car lines.<sup>5</sup>

The Roaring Twenties proved to be another significant decade of growth for Oklahoma City. It was during this decade, especially the latter half, that

<sup>3</sup>Susan Allen and Cynthia Smelker, "Final Survey Report: Intensive-Level Survey of the Central Park, Jefferson Park and Paseo Neighborhoods in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma," (March 1994), Available Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 11, 12-13.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 14.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 18-19.

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Oklahoma City once again entered a major boom period. City population experienced a tremendous increase, growing by over a hundred percent in ten years. Although this does not equal the phenomenal 540 percent escalation of the first decade of the twentieth century, substantially the 1920s were a greater decade of growth as the population increased from 91,295 to 189,389 by 1930. While residential development continued north towards Thirty-ninth Street, the 1920s also brought dispersal of the population on an east-west basis. White collar workers continued their northward thrust, with Tenth Street functioning as the southern boundary. Blue collar workers resided primarily in the business district and southern half of Oklahoma City.<sup>6</sup>

Valuation of building permits issued in the city increased slowly from about five million dollars in 1920 to eight million dollars in 1924. Permits slumped slightly in 1925 but rebounded admirably to exceed eighteen million in 1928 and remarkably twenty-four million dollars in 1929. The increased development was credited to the city's critical locale. As stated by the 1929 president of the Chamber of Commerce, Ed Overholser, "No city is better situated with respect to variety and volume of resources within its own trade territory." Companies associated with agriculture, utilities and various industries continued to locate in the Oklahoma City area, creating persistent demand for housing.<sup>7</sup>

Probably the greatest economic incentive during the late 1920s and 1930s was the discovery of oil in the Oklahoma City vicinity in 1924 and within the city itself in 1928. Oklahoma City benefited greatly from its central location in the Mid-Continent Oil Field, one of the largest producers of oil in the United States in the latter 1920s and 1930s. Largely due to the presence of oil and its related industries, Oklahoma City was able to sustain growth during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The city went from a base population of 189,389 in 1930 to reach 204,224 by 1940.<sup>8</sup>

Although the oil industry and related developments bolstered city finances, Oklahoma City, of course, did not completely escape the ruthless path of the Great Depression. Due to the harsher impact of the depression on rural and small town residents, Oklahoma City experienced an inundation of new citizens

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 20. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 6 January 1929.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 22. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 3 January 1943.

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seeking jobs, housing and aid. This naturally contributed to the economic burden of the city. In the early depression years, camps of substandard housing developed along the North Canadian River and destitute Oklahomans filled the soup lines. The Dust Bowls of 1935 and 1936 sent many people scurrying to the greater stability of the city, intensifying the need for affordable housing.<sup>9</sup>

Oklahoma City continued to thrive through the 1940s, with the establishment of Midwest Air Depot, now Tinker Air Force Base, in 1941. The depot, located to the southeast of the city, boosted the monetary resources of Oklahoma City by creating nearly fifteen thousand civilian jobs at the depot and an additional twenty-three thousand jobs at the related Douglas Cargo Plane Plant. The Douglas Plant manufactured many cargo and other types of planes necessary for successful deployment in World War II. This new economic force allowed Oklahoma City to come out of the Great Depression with a roar. The depot has continued to perform an important role in the city finances to the present day.

The depot, however, spurred residential growth in a new direction, the southeast. Midwest City, located at the depot's front gate, developed quickly between 1941 and 1943. Other residential development continued in that direction with Del City a few years later.<sup>10</sup>

COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

In 1912, Robert G. Sieber opened his first grocery store at 702 Northwest Fourth Street. Located near the heart of downtown Oklahoma City, nothing remains of this building or the adjacent buildings as the block is now a grassy void. Ten years later, Sieber had constructed a new, two-story, brick building at 1311-1313 North Hudson Avenue, three blocks east and eight blocks north of his first location. The general contractor for the project remains unknown. As discussed above, Oklahoma City was booming but not at the rate it would towards the latter part of the 1920s.

In the first years of the 1920s, residential neighborhoods in Oklahoma City were experiencing significant growth, particularly those between Northwest Tenth Street and Northwest Thirty-ninth Street. Ideally located on a main thoroughfare connecting downtown Oklahoma City to the expanding white collar

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 23-24.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 24-25.

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residential districts, Sieber Grocery was situated in an overwhelmingly residential area. Although a few lots remained vacant, for the most part, the blocks between North Broadway and North Lee avenues and from Northwest Tenth to past Northwest Seventeenth streets were filled to capacity with primarily one- and two-story houses. The area did contain a few two- and three-story flats, a public school on North Harvey Avenue and a number of churches along North Robinson Avenue. Wesley Hospital, including a separate two-story annex and nurses home, was located at the corner of North Harvey Avenue and Northwest Eleventh Street and Oklahoma State Baptist Hospital, later Oklahoma City General Hospital, was at Northwest Twelfth Street and North Walker Avenue, a block west of the Sieber building. North of Northwest Tenth Street there were a few scattered small commercial buildings, mainly located on the corners. South of Northwest Ninth Street, small commercial buildings lined the majority of North Hudson Avenue all the way to Northwest Second Street.<sup>11</sup>

When conceived in the early 1920s, the Sieber Grocery was a typical, relatively small, commercial building, intended largely to serve the surrounding neighborhood, as well as take advantage of the traffic flowing from downtown to further out residential areas. A vital part of Sieber's Grocery Store was Sieber's wholesale meat business. The building at 1313 Hudson Avenue was expressly built to accommodate the butcher business. The rear portion of the two-story building was a meat processing plant, intended to process meat but not slaughter it. According to Sieber, "The original plant investment was estimated at \$20,000." Sieber was forced to close the business in 1943 because the inability to slaughter the meat prohibited him from acquiring sufficient product during the rationed years of World War II. In its hey day, the processing plant handled about thirty beeves per week and as many as forty head of hogs in a single day. In addition to "...all items of the sausage line, bologna, lunch meats, frankfurters and salami," Sieber pickled and smoked hams and cured bacon. When the shop closed in 1943, the business was estimated to be earning \$150,000 per year, not an insignificant sum at the time.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the grocery and meat business, Sieber built his new building to include sufficient space to generate further revenue from rent. A second, larger storefront occupied the south portion of the first floor and upstairs, in addition to an apartment for Sieber and his family, was a community room.

<sup>11</sup>Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1922.

<sup>12</sup>The Daily Oklahoman, 26 February 1943.

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From 1922 until about 1944, the Hudson Pharmacy occupied the south storefront, providing a steady tenant with a compatible, neighborhood-friendly business. In addition to serving the pharmaceutical needs of local residents, the drug store was also ideally located to draw from the nearby Wesley Hospital and the even closer Oklahoma City General Hospital.<sup>13</sup>

Shortly after construction of the Sieber Grocery was complete, the upstairs community room was rented to the First Divine Science church. The congregation moved into the building in late September 1922 with services being immediately held in the "auditorium." Adjoining the auditorium was the reading room which was to be open weekdays from 10:00 in the morning to 1:00 in the afternoon. The Divine Science church continued to meet in the Sieber Grocery until October 1924 when they moved to the banquet room of the Huckins Hotel. Even before the church vacated the building, the upstairs was also serving as a more general community room. Aptly named Sieber's Hall, public lectures and dance lessons were held at the building by June 1923. Sieber's Hall continued to exist through about 1942 when the space was converted to multiple apartments.<sup>14</sup>

From its construction in 1922, the Sieber Grocery filled a critical need for the neighborhood. While the street car lines, and later automobiles, were encouraging the development of suburban neighborhoods, for at least most of the first half of the twentieth century, the majority of shoppers remained dependent on stores within walking distance for their basic goods. This is evident in the fact that in 1923 Oklahoma City had more than four hundred grocery stores. Within ten years, the number of just meat markets covered four, multi-column pages of the Oklahoma City directory. Spread throughout the city, all of these stores were located in the midst of their greatest service area.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Polk City Directories, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, (Available Oklahoma Historical Society, Research Library, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 1922-1960.

<sup>14</sup>The Daily Oklahoma, 29 September 1922; 8 June 1923; 30 September 1923; and, 3 October 1924. See also Polk City Directories, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1922-1960.

<sup>15</sup>Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1922, 1949 and 1955. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 30 January 1923 and Oklahoma City Polk Directories, 1932.

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Although not a unique type of property, the Sieber Grocery is an excellent example of a neighborhood commercial building in inner city Oklahoma City. While relatively simple, the two-story, Commercial style building is the epitome of historic retail construction set in the heart of residential development in early 1920s Oklahoma City. As was common, the building contained more than one retail space in order to ensure the revenue-generating capability of the property. Somewhat unusual is the meat processing plant occupying both floors of the rear section and accounting for the atypical L-shape of the building. The front portion of the upstairs was used as living quarters for the proprietor and his family to minimize outside expenses with the remaining second floor area put to more varied but still income-producing use for community and other social events. While the majority of the neighborhood, and indeed much of the adjacent central business district, has lost its historic character, the Sieber Grocery maintains that original feeling and association.

Critical to the Sieber Grocery's retention of historic integrity is the adjacent Sieber Apartment Hotel. In 1922, the lot to the south of the grocery was vacant with a single family dwelling situated on the adjacent west lot. The house was demolished by 1928 when Robert Sieber financed the construction of the six-story, U-shaped, Commercial style apartment hotel. In addition to a common owner, the two buildings were connected by a below-grade tunnel. Located just east of the middle of the two buildings, the tunnel allowed private access from the meat processing plant to immediately off the hotel lobby. In addition to facilitating movement between the Siebers' two businesses, the tunnel eased transportation of meat and other grocery products from the store into the restaurant located on the southeast side of the first floor of the apartment hotel. From a legal standpoint, the two buildings have also never been separated. For example, when Sieber transferred the property from his name alone into both his and his wife's name in early 1939, there was no distinction between the two buildings.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the two distinct property types of the buildings, from a functional standpoint, the combination was both practical and successful. The retail establishments in the grocery building enhanced the amenities available at the apartment hotel and the occupants of the apartment hotel provided a new pool of consumers for the businesses in the grocery building. The effectiveness of the

<sup>16</sup>The Daily Oklahoman, 26 March 1939.

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combination is evidenced in a 1933 advertisement in the local newspaper. In addition to advertising the ice cold beer available at the hotel restaurant which was open until midnight, the ad notes, in a clear reference to the grocery store, that ice cold beer was also procurable by the case at any hour of the day or night. Obviously connected to the Sieber's Grocery was the "...all kinds of sausage and cheese sandwiches, ...such as only SIEBER knows how to make" which were available at the café. The location used in the advertisement was simply 12<sup>th</sup> at Hudson and the name of the business was given as R.G. Sieber Hotel-Grocery. This trend of combining the two buildings continued for decades as a circa 1940s postcard featured both buildings above the title of "Sieber Hotel - North Hudson at Twelfth - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma." The back of the postcard list the amenities available which included "100 Rooms and Apartments - ...Dining Room - Beauty Shop and Drug Store in Connection...". The count of rooms includes the units available in both buildings and the only drug store at the two buildings was in the Sieber Grocery building. Joint promotion lasted into the early 1960s as an advertisement in the 28 August 1960 edition of the local newspaper featured a large photograph of both buildings under the inducement of "...air conditioned rooms with free television (and) free parking...".<sup>17</sup>

The construction of the apartment hotel was also tied to larger developments within Oklahoma City. When Sieber built the grocery building, he could not have anticipated the rapid escalation of major growth within the city. The opening of oil wells in the vicinity of the city in 1924 created a new overwhelmingly force which greatly increased demand for all kinds of businesses and services, along with the available monetary resources to make all sorts of enterprises immediately viable. The discovery of oil in the city itself in late 1928 furthered the explosion of development. The oil surge enhanced all commercial aspects of the city, as well as social, political and recreational, so that construction of large, multi-story buildings replaced the more practical, small buildings of just a few years earlier. In order to shelter the influx of businessmen, support staff and blue collar workers, housing on both a permanent and transient basis also became critical.

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 17 July 1933 and 28 August 1960.

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 The apartment hotel was one answer to these housing needs. The apartment hotel is a distinct property type in that in offering both transient and long-term lodging, only the apartment hotel provided the amenities for both types of lodging. Unlike hotels which catered to transient guests and did not allow cooking anywhere except the hotel restaurant, apartment hotels included kitchen facilities within the rooms for long-term occupants. And unlike apartments which included kitchens but not readily accessible restaurants or other services desired by short-term visitors, apartment hotels featured an on-site restaurant, maid service and, typically, a beauty and barber shop, as well as a clothes cleaning operation. From an investment viewpoint, apartment hotels combined the potentially higher but seasonal incomes of hotels with the steady cash-flow of apartments.<sup>18</sup>

The local newspaper announced Sieber's intention to construct a new multi-story building in early September 1927. Initially, the newspaper noted the "Grocer Will Build (a) \$150,000 Apartment." Within a week, the cost had risen to \$200,000 for the then-planned five-story building designed by Patrick H. Weathers. Weathers had practiced in Oklahoma since before statehood and was hired by the first State Board of Affairs as the first State Architect. As such, he designed many of the early public buildings in Oklahoma before turning to private practice. Weathers actively continued his architectural practice until about 1937 when he was "...stricken by paralysis...". He died in July 1940 of cerebral hemorrhage after collapsing "...in his office on the fifth floor of the Herskowitz building.". When the Sieber Apartment Hotel opened, Weathers advertised himself as having "...made an extensive nationwide study of apartments and apartment hotels.". He further claimed to be "...in position to give those desiring to build such structures, be they small or very large, the benefit of his personal attention in developing the project to its highest degree of efficiency and earning capacity."<sup>19</sup>

With ground to be broken the first week in January, Sieber obtained the building permit for his new venture in late December 1927. At an estimated cost of \$202,000, the new edifice was to be "...six stories high, 96 feet deep

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<sup>18</sup>Paul Groth, Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1994), 84-85, 178.

<sup>19</sup>The Daily Oklahoman, 4 September 1927; 11 September 1927; 10 November 1928; and, 18 July 1940.

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and will have a 90-foot frontage." Construction was expected to be complete within four months.<sup>20</sup>

By late April 1928, the steel work for the "...new six-story fireproof apartment hotel..." was complete with "Other work on the building...progressing rapidly." The general contractor for the project was W.R. Lowe, a "specialist" in constructing larger apartments and buildings. Obviously exceeding the original estimate, the building was completed and opened to the public in early November 1928, a full eleven months after the building permit was acquired. At the opening, the apartment hotel contained 20 three- to five-room "efficiency" apartments and 56 "bachelor quarters," as well as provisions for the Sieber family. With all rooms being furnished, the building contained steam heating, refrigeration and high-speed elevators, both automatic and operator controlled. Radio and telephone service was also available within the building. In addition to a Kelvinator in each apartment, smooth top gas ranges were selected to maintain the "highest efficiency possible" in the new building.<sup>21</sup>

When originally finished, the Sieber Apartment Hotel featured a recessed main entry with a small courtyard in front. That the entry was not flush at the time is evident in photographs of the building in the local newspaper. Taken looking towards the southeast corner of the building, photographs from both the opening of the building in November 1928 and an early 1929 collage of buildings constructed in 1928 clearly show that the one-story center entry with the elaborate cast stone surround was not present. Although the exact date of the alteration is unknown, an advertisement for the "Sieber Village" in March 1933 featured a photograph of the building which visibly included the new elaborate entry. Present within five years of original construction and as the primary entry to the apartment hotel, the alteration became an intrinsic feature of the building.<sup>22</sup>

The Sieber Apartment Hotel was not the only multi-story apartment hotel in Oklahoma City. The first mention of construction of an apartment hotel in Oklahoma City occurred in early 1920. At the time, the Classen Highlands

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 29 December 1927.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 22 April 1928 and 10 November 1928.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 12 March 1933.

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Company, headed by prominent Oklahoma City developer Anton Classen, proposed to build a commodious, six-story, U-shaped apartment hotel at the corner of Classen Boulevard and Shartel Avenue. Although "Sufficient applications from prospective tenants to fill the building have already been received...", the project did not transpire at that time. In early 1925, the project was again announced with the expected completion date of January 1926. Notably, neither Anton Classen, who had passed away in December 1922, or the Classen Highlands Company was mentioned. The enlarged plans for the building, prepared again by the premier Oklahoma architectural firm of Layton, Hicks and Forsyth, showed an eight-story, U-shaped, brick building of the Commercial style. Despite the advanced plans and the indication that construction work would begin within a few weeks, the building was never constructed.<sup>23</sup>

The title of first apartment hotel in Oklahoma City goes to the 1926 Herriman Apartment Hotel at Northwest Ninth Street and North Robinson Avenue. Located five blocks south and three blocks east of the Sieber Apartment Hotel, the building was situated closer to downtown Oklahoma City on what was commonly called "church row" due to the high number of historic church buildings. Owned by Mr. and Mrs. David B. Herriman, the building opened in early January 1927. The five-story, brick, Commercial style building remained in use as an apartment hotel through 1960. Since then, it has been converted to use as an office building. The building's integrity has been negatively impacted by the replacement of all of the upper floor windows with modern, fixed, single pane windows. Modifications to the first floor storefronts have also robbed the building of much of its historic character.

Ten months after the Herriman opened, the Aberdeen Apartment Hotel opened. Located the farthest north at the corner of Northwest Fifteenth Street and North Robinson Avenue, the seven-story with a basement, rectangular-shaped, brick building is an interesting example of the Tudor Revival style. The building remains in use as an apartment under its original name. Its setting, however, has been compromised. It has been incorporated into a circa 1970s apartment complex to the rear with a large covered parking lot connecting the two. Additionally, other modern, multi-story apartments have been erected to the side.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 28 March 1920 and 15 February 1925.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 25 September 1927.

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=====  
The opening of the Aberdeen in late 1927 was followed by the almost immediate construction of the Sieber Apartment Hotel in 1928. This was followed by the 1929 construction of the Marais des Cygnes Apartment Hotel at the corner of West Eleventh Street and North Lee Avenue. Situated midway between the Sieber Apartment Hotel and the Herriman Apartment Hotel, the Marais des Cygnes was located west of both, about three blocks west of the Sieber and five from the Herriman. Owned by E.S. Swan, the building was designed by Maurice Jayne and constructed by the Sieber Apartment Hotel's general contractor, W.R. Lowe. The six-story with a basement, flat-roofed, reinforced concrete and brick, Commercial style building opened in late January 1930 with the elucidation "Built for a Thousand Years." The building changed names in the 1940s to the Leonhardt Apartments and continued to operate as such through 1960. Contrary to the original expectation of a thousand years, the building was demolished after 1960 to allow for construction of a multi-level parking garage at the circa 1950 Osler Building, now the Pasteur Medical Building.<sup>25</sup>

After 1929, apartment hotel construction in Oklahoma City ceased for several years as the city battled the effects of the Great Depression. As the trying decade of the 1930s closed and the war-time boom years of the 1940s exploded with construction of the Midwest Air Depot and Douglas Cargo Plane Plant in south Oklahoma City, housing again became a major profitable concern for Oklahoma City entrepreneurs. Many like Robert Sieber converted available space in buildings like the Sieber Grocery to apartments for rent by the federal government. Others, like oilman Wirt Franklin, converted his seven-story office building to an apartment hotel which was also taken over by federal authorities. Although there is compatibility in converting from an office building to an apartment hotel and vice versa, such as the Herriman, there are defining elements of the buildings which are fundamental to their original use and the change in use can have a negative impact on their historic integrity.<sup>26</sup>

Plans for new apartment hotels in Oklahoma City again picked up in the latter part of the 1940s and continued for several decades. For example in 1959, the Towers Apartment Hotel was constructed at the northeast corner of Northwest Ninth Street and North Robinson Avenue, diagonal to the Herriman Apartment Hotel. These later apartment hotels differed markedly from the late 1920s

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 26 January 1930. See also Polk City Directories, 1930-1960.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 29 March 1949 and 8 April 1956.

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apartment hotels in the choice of construction materials, architectural style and size. By either adding many more stories or spreading out, the later apartment hotels were constructed to accommodate a higher number of residents and, therefore, generate more revenue.<sup>27</sup>

As with many other enterprises, the line distinguishing apartment hotels from other similar property types was frequently blurred on both sides. Numerous hotels in Oklahoma City also allowed long-term lodging in their facilities. For example, one of Oklahoma City's best known luxury hotels, the Skirvin Hotel (NR 1979), provided extended residence to many notables, including in her later years socialite and diplomat Perle Skirvin Mesta. Interested more in the bottom line, owners also advertised their properties in every possible applicable category. The nonhistoric painted signage on the Sieber Apartment Hotel is an excellent example of this. On the south side of the building is painted "Sieber Motor Hotel." In point of fact, a motor hotel is one that allowed direct access from the room to the automobile, which was never a possibility at the Sieber Apartment Hotel.

Despite the loose use of terminology, the Sieber Apartment Hotel is an excellent example of a late 1920s apartment hotel in Oklahoma City. Only three other buildings of the same property type and comparable size were identified as being constructed in Oklahoma City in the late 1920s. While one of the buildings has been demolished, the other two lack the essential retention of historic qualities to be eligible for the National Register.

From its construction in 1928, the Sieber Apartment Hotel was not a stand-alone entity. The adjacent Sieber Grocery was a two-story extension of the apartment hotel. Predating the apartment hotel by six years, the Sieber Grocery is an excellent example of a two-story, neighborhood, commercial building that typified commercial construction in Oklahoma City's residential areas in the early 1920s. Overall, both buildings maintain their historic integrity and ably convey their architectural significance as distinct property types that combined created an eminently successful venture.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 17 August 1947; 29 June 1948; 19 May 1949; and, 10 July 1949.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Lot 12, Block 7, Vendome Subdivision of McClures Addition, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundaries include all of the property historically associated with the grocery and apartment hotel.