

ABRAMS ROBERT  
Form 5  
January 28, 2009

**FORM 5**

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL

OMB Number: 3235-0362  
Expires: January 31, 2005  
Estimated average burden hours per response... 1.0

Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).  
Form 3 Holdings Reported Form 4 Transactions Reported

**ANNUAL STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
ABRAMS ROBERT  
  
(Last) (First) (Middle)

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
STERLING BANCORP [STL]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

Director  10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below)  Other (specify below)

650 FIFTH AVENUE, 4TH FLOOR

(Street)

3. Statement for Issuer's Fiscal Year Ended (Month/Day/Year)  
12/31/2008

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Reporting

(check applicable line)

NEW YORK, NY 10019

(City) (State) (Zip)

Form Filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form Filed by More than One Reporting Person

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned at end of Issuer's Fiscal Year (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
|                                 |                                      |  |                                | (A) or (D) Amount Price   |  |  |   |
| Common Stock                    |                                      |  |                                |   | 33,360   | D  |   |
| Common Stock                    |                                      |  |                                |   | 700  | I (1)  | By Immediate Family                                   |

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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SEC 2270 (9-02)

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**Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**  
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)                | 7. Title and Amount of Underlying Security (Instr. 3 and 4) |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy) | \$ 21.93   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â Â   | Date Exercisable: 06/30/2005 <sup>(2)</sup> Expiration Date: 06/30/2009 | Common Stock 4.   |
| Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy) | \$ 21.41   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â Â   | Date Exercisable: 07/30/2005 <sup>(2)</sup> Expiration Date: 07/30/2009 | Common Stock 4.   |
| Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy) | \$ 20.34   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â Â   | Date Exercisable: 12/19/2005 <sup>(3)</sup> Expiration Date: 06/30/2010 | Common Stock 4.   |
| Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy) | \$ 19.5  | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â Â   | Date Exercisable: 06/30/2007 <sup>(4)</sup> Expiration Date: 06/30/2011 | Common Stock 4.   |

## Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address                                       | Relationships |           |         |       |
|--|---------------|-----------|---------|-------|
|  | Director      | 10% Owner | Officer | Other |
| ABRAMS ROBERT<br>650 FIFTH AVENUE<br>4TH FLOOR<br>NEW YORK, NY 10019 | Â X           | Â         | Â       | Â     |

## Signatures

/s/ Abrams,  
Robert 02/12/2009

\*\*Signature of Reporting Person

Date

## Explanation of Responses:

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).

\*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

(1) Reporting person disclaims beneficial ownership of shares.

(2) Transfer of shares acquired by exercise of non-qualified stock options is restricted to even installments over a four year period commencing on the first anniversary of the grant.

On December 15, 2005 the Board of Directors voted to accelerate the vesting and exercisability of any outstanding unvested and

(3) unexercisable non-qualified stock options held by non-employee directors, effective as of December 19, 2005; provided, however, that transfer of shares acquired by such exercise is restricted until the date that the option would have been exercisable prior to such change.

(4) Non-employee directors were granted options for 4,753 shares of common stock pursuant to the final grant under an automatic grant of options adopted in 2002.

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