

STERLING BANCORP  
Form 4  
November 10, 2008

**FORM 4**

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

OMB APPROVAL

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

**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

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
**ABRAMS ROBERT**

(Last) (First) (Middle)

650 FIFTH AVENUE, 4TH FLOOR

(Street)

NEW YORK, NY 10019

(City) (State) (Zip)

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

3. Date of Earliest Transaction  
(Month/Day/Year)  
11/10/2008

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

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

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

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)  
 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 Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
Common Stock	11/10/2008		P	V Amount (A) or (D) Price 700 \$ 12.81	700	I (1)	By Immediate Family
Common Stock					33,360	D	

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

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SEC 1474 (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 Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)		
				Code	V (A) (D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares
Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 14.74					06/29/2002 <sup>(2)</sup>	06/29/2006	Common Stock	2,288
Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 13.71					07/31/2002 <sup>(2)</sup>	07/31/2006	Common Stock	4,350
Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 17.73					06/30/2004 <sup>(2)</sup>	06/30/2008	Common Stock	4,720
Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 18.78					07/31/2004 <sup>(2)</sup>	07/31/2008	Common Stock	4,570
Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 21.93					06/30/2005 <sup>(2)</sup>	06/30/2009	Common Stock	4,720
Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 21.41					07/30/2005 <sup>(2)</sup>	07/30/2009	Common Stock	4,570
Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 20.34					12/19/2005 <sup>(3)</sup>	06/30/2010	Common Stock	4,720
Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 19.5					06/30/2007 <sup>(4)</sup>	06/30/2011	Common Stock	4,720

## Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other

ABRAMS ROBERT  
650 FIFTH AVENUE  
4TH FLOOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10019

X

## Signatures

/s/ Abrams,  
Robert

11/10/2008

\*\*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.

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

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure.

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