

Robinson Eliot S  
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 \*  
Robinson Eliot S

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

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)

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

\_\_\_\_ Director \_\_\_\_\_ 10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below) \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify below)  
Exec VP Sterling National Bank

650 FIFTH AVENUE, 4TH FLOOR

(Street)

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

6. Individual or Joint/Group Reporting

(check applicable line)

NEW YORK, NY 10019

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

(City) (State) (Zip)

**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 Ownership (Instr. 4)
Common Stock	12/31/2008		J	336 (1) A \$ 0	3,278	D	
Common Stock					9,795	I	By 401(k)

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)	\$ 17.99	Â	Â	Â	Â Â	Date Exercisable: 03/15/2012 <sup>(5)</sup> Expiration Date: 03/15/2017	Common Stock 10
Incentive Stock Option (right to buy)	\$ 8.69	Â	Â	Â	Â Â	Date Exercisable: 02/12/2000 <sup>(2)</sup> Expiration Date: 02/12/2009	Common Stock 12
Incentive Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 6.94	Â	Â	Â	Â Â	Date Exercisable: 02/11/2001 Expiration Date: 02/11/2010	Common Stock 11
Incentive Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 14.6	Â	Â	Â	Â Â	Date Exercisable: 02/06/2003 <sup>(3)</sup> Expiration Date: 02/06/2012	Common Stock 14
Non-qualified Stock Options (right to buy)	\$ 26.94	Â	Â	Â	Â Â	Date Exercisable: 12/19/2005 <sup>(4)</sup> Expiration Date: 03/22/2011	Common Stock 10

## Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
Robinson Eliot S 650 FIFTH AVENUE 4TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10019	Â	Â	Â Exec VP Sterling National Bank	Â

## Signatures

/s/ Robinson,  
Eliot S 01/28/2009

\*\*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) These common shares were acquired through a shareholders' dividend reinvestment program.

(2) Options became exercisable in two installments on the first anniversary of the grant, for a term of 10 years from date of grant (first exercisable date listed).

(3) Options became exercisable in three installments on the first anniversary of the grant, for a term of 10 years from date of grant (first exercisable date listed).

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 granted to officers on March 22, 2005 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. Such restrictions on transfer will expire as to 10% of the grant on the first anniversary of the date of grant, an additional 15% of the grant on the second anniversary of the date of grant, an additional 25% of the grant on the third anniversary of the date of grant and the remaining 50% of the grant on the fourth anniversary of the grant.

(5) Non-qualified options become exercisable commencing on the fifth anniversary of the grant for a term of 10 years from grant date (first exercisable date listed).

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