

Structure/Site Information Form

IDENTIFICATION 1

Street Address: 1604 South Fifth East
 Salt Lake City, Utah / Code 049 / Salt Lake
 Name of Structure: Woodruff, Wilford, Farm House
 Present Owner: John T. Coomans
 Owner Address: 1604 South Fifth East, Salt Lake City, Utah

Zone Easting
 UTM: 12 426010
 Northing: 4509450
 T. R. S.

Year Built (Tax Record): Effective Age: 1859-60 Tax #:
 Legal Description: Kind of Building: Building; private; occupied; accessible: yes,
 Geographical Data: Less than 1 acre restricted; present use: private residence
 Quadrangle: Salt Lake City South
 Quadrangle Scale: 1:24000
 Beg. at 194.9 ft south from NE corner of Lot 20, Blk 13, 5-ac Plat A., Big Field Survey:
 S 66.1 ft., W 10.5 rds, N 66.1 ft., E 10.5 rds to beginning

STATUS/USE 2

Original Owner: Wilford Woodruff Construction Date: 1859-60 Demolition Date:
 Original Use: Farm House Present Use: Private residence

Building Condition: Integrity: Preliminary Evaluation: Final Register Status:

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant	<input type="checkbox"/> Not of the	<input type="checkbox"/> National Landmark	<input type="checkbox"/> District
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor Alterations	<input type="checkbox"/> Contributory	Historic Period	<input type="checkbox"/> National Register	<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Resource
<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated		<input type="checkbox"/> Major Alterations	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Contributory		<input type="checkbox"/> State Register	<input type="checkbox"/> Thematic

DOCUMENTATION 3

Photography: Date of Slides: Slide No.: Date of Photographs: Photo No.:
 December 19, 1980
 Views: Front Side Rear Other
 Views: Front Side Rear Other

Research Sources:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Abstract of Title	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/> U of U Library
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plat Records/Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City Directories	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utah State Historical Society	<input type="checkbox"/> BYU Library
<input type="checkbox"/> Tax Card & Photo	<input type="checkbox"/> Biographical Encyclopedias	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/> USU Library
<input type="checkbox"/> Building Permit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Obituary Index	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LDS Church Archives	<input type="checkbox"/> SLC Library
<input type="checkbox"/> Sewer Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> County & City Histories	<input type="checkbox"/> LDS Genealogical Society	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Bibliographical References (books, articles, records, interviews, old photographs and maps, etc.):

- Anderson, Helen Woodruff. Interview, Salt Lake City, Utah, 11 February 1980.
- Christiansen, Emma Rose Woodruff. Interview, Salt Lake City, Utah, 16 February 1980.
- Coomans, John T. Interview, Salt Lake City, Utah, 12 February 1980.
- Deseret News. Obituary notices for Wilford Woodruff, 2, 3, and 8 September 1898, pp. 1 & 4, 1, and 1 & 4 respectively; Obituary notices for Mrs. A. O. [Helen May Winters] Woodruff and Abraham Owen Woodruff, 7 and 21 June 1904, pp. 1 and 12 respectively.

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Building Materials:

Building Type/Style:

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:
(Include additions, alterations, ancillary structures, and landscaping if applicable)

The Wilford Woodruff farmhouse is a two-story, white stuccoed, "I" house type with an off-centered front porch and salt box extension in the rear (added later). The house is built of hewn logs. The floor plan of the front two-story part has two rooms on each floor.

In all probability the house originally did not have a porch. Some evidence exists that the farmhouse once contained quarters for two families. The front door, between the first and second windows from the south, remains; another front door once existed between the first and second windows from the north. Likewise two doors once led into what is now the salt box extension. Thus the house was symmetrical, with four second-story windows directly over four bottom-story windows and with the two front doors between the windows pertaining to each half of the house. The front door which has been blocked off would open just north of the porch, which further suggests that the porch is a later addition.

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date:

The Wilford Woodruff farmhouse, built in 1859-60, is significant as the earliest holding on the farm of Wilford Woodruff, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1887-98. Under President Woodruff the Manifesto of 1890 was issued which ended polygamy among the Mormons and initiated the process of their integration into the mainstream of American life. The house also derives significance as one of the earliest dwellings built in the southern end of Salt Lake City. This farmhouse represents the initial phase of Mormon pioneer agricultural settlement and the role of the Wilford Woodruff family in that process.

According to the best estimates, the Wilford Woodruff farmhouse was built between 21 May 1859 and 26 July 1860. In his journal entry for 20 May 1859, Wilford Woodruff recorded that he, Wilford (his son), and Robert (Robert Scholles, his son-in-law) had just finished cutting approximately three hundred logs "to build a House down on the farm." It was, incidentally, hard work in considerable snow. They cut approximately one hundred logs averaging thirty-five feet long each day and slid them down the mountain. "It was the first time in my life I had laboured in 3 feet of snow on the 20 day of may." On 26 July 1860, he wrote in his journal, "I went down into the Field I moved Susan Cornelia [his daughter, the wife of Robert Scholles] down to the farm house."¹

Apart from its age, the Wilford Woodruff farmhouse carries historical significance for several other reasons. It is located on what appears to have been Wilford Woodruff's earliest holding on his farm. A map of the Five-Acre,

Description, Wilford Woodruff farmhouse, continued

The symmetry of the house may not have been perfect. The current owner, John T. Coomans, stated that at one time a chimney and hearths on the main floor and the second floor existed on the north end, for remnants of the hearths remained in the house when he bought it, although the chimney had been torn down and the fireplaces blocked up. No evidence of a corollary chimney and hearth(s) on the south end of the house existed when Mr. Coomans bought the house.¹ Indeed, if such a chimney did once exist, it may have been removed before 1911 as the Sanborn map for that year shows a bay on the south.² The bay was taken out by Mr. Coomans and replaced with a large window in the 1950's.³

The original floorplan of two rooms on each floor in the front part of the house still exists. The partitioning wall is quite thick, and Mr. Coomans has removed a small section of the wood paneling and replaced it with a pane of glass to reveal the original rough-squared logs and adobe chinking. The former front and rear doorways have been converted into shelf space.

Evidence in the attic suggests that the salt box construction was a later addition. An opening, once a window, from the upstairs north bedroom towards the back of the house, now opens into the attic over the extension, revealing a roof over the extension below the window. The floor plan of the extension has changed at least once. It now contains two rooms; Mrs. Helen Woodruff Anderson, who lived in the house as a young child, said that at that time there were three small rooms, a small bedroom, a kitchen, and a pantry, in that part of the house. She also indicated that the porch had a railing around the roof and spoke of only one front door.⁴ From this I infer that the change from two front doors to one occurred in the 1800's.

¹Interview with John T. Coomans by James F. Cartwright, Salt Lake City, Utah, 12 February 1980.

²Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps of Salt Lake City, Utah (New York, 1911), Vol. II, map #206.

³Coomans interview, 12 February 1980.

⁴Interview with Helen Woodruff Anderson by James F. Cartwright, Salt Lake City, Utah 11 February 1980.

Significance, Wilford Woodruff farmhouse, continued

Plat A, of the Big Field Survey of Salt Lake City drawn in 1857 shows Wilford Woodruff owning two five-acre lots (#1 and #20) in Block 13.² The farmhouse is on Lot 20. In addition to these two lots, Wilford Woodruff's farm eventually included Lots 2, 3, 10, and 11.

On his farm, Wilford Woodruff planted corn; wheat; oats; potatoes; fruit trees and bushes including peaches, plums, apples, apricots, currants, and almonds; sugar cane; and Hungarian grass for hay. He built a mill to crush the sugar cane he and his neighbors grew in order to make molasses.³ In addition, he served as president of both the Utah Horticultural Society and the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society. He campaigned for a state-wide membership in the latter society and for sponsoring county fairs and a state fair for farmers to display their production and compete for honors.⁴

The farmhouse is significant as well in regards to the settlement of the Salt Lake Valley. It was among the early houses built south of Ninth South but still part of the city. Although several other communities existed by the time Wilford Woodruff built the farmhouse, those communities possessed their own identity; on the other hand, the farmhouses in the five-acre plats of the Big Field represented Salt Lake City's expansion, illustrating the city's evolving away from the original plan of a city of limited size and population to a growing metropolis. Wilford Woodruff's farmhouse, while certainly not the first house in the Big Field, is among the oldest still surviving.⁵

A final historical significance of the farmhouse lies in its being Wilford Woodruff's main home from 1886 to 1892. Much of this time he lived in "underground" to escape prosecution under anti-polygamy laws; nevertheless, his journal contains several entries scattered over these years indicating he stayed at the farm, sometimes for several days in succession. During these years, Wilford Woodruff functioned as the church historian, as president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and then as president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In 1890, while the farmhouse functioned as his primary residence, Wilford Woodruff issued the Manifesto ending the practice of polygamy among Mormons and initiating the process of integration of Mormons into the mainstream of American life.

Although Wilford Woodruff moved one of his married daughters into the house in 1860, one of his wives, Emma Smith Woodruff, lived there from fairly early. In 1875 Wilford Woodruff finished another house on the farm and moved his last wife, Sarah Delight Stocking Woodruff, into it; later city directories indicate that she and her sons lived on Third East Street near Harrison Ave. This is part of Lots 10 and 11 of Block 13 and was part of Wilford Woodruff's farm.⁶ If Sarah Delight and her children had lived in the farmhouse before moving to the other part of the farm, the alterations changing it to a single-family dwelling could have occurred as early as 1875.

In 1892 Wilford Woodruff finished a new house to the south of the farmhouse and moved into it with Emma and her children. The city directories of the time do not clarify who lived in the farmhouse until 1898 when Abraham Owen Woodruff, a son of Wilford and Emma, moved into the house.⁷

Significance, Wilford Woodruff farmhouse, continued

Abraham Owen Woodruff was born in the farmhouse in 1872. In 1893, he began a mission of approximately four years for the LDS church in Germany and Switzerland. After his return to Utah he married Helen May Winters, 30 June 1897, and the following October was ordained one of the twelve apostles of the church. In May of 1904 he and his wife traveled to Mexico on a church assignment. His wife contracted smallpox and after about two weeks died in Mexico City. While traveling back home, Abraham O. became sick, and on 20 June he died in El Paso, Texas.⁸

From the death of Abraham O. until 1924 when the Polk directories began including a list of householders by address, I do not know who lived in the farmhouse. It became the property of the three surviving children of A. O. and Helen Woodruff; the estate was probated in 1923, and in 1925 two of the children transferred the property by warranty deed to the third. The following year he sold the house to D. L. Van Wagonen (or Van Wagenen or Van Wagener).⁹ Renters occupied the house at least through 1931; H. Chase Van Wagenen lived in it through 1936, though his name is often spelled differently than is a DeLisle or DeLyle Van Wagoner's name in the Polk directories for these years.¹⁰ From 1937 through 1949 Anne Ohlin owned and lived in the farmhouse. By 1951, John T. Coomans, the current resident, lived in the house; the following year he received title.¹¹

¹Wilford Woodruff, "Journal," entries for 19 and 20 May 1859, and for 26 July 1860, unpublished MS in LDS Church Historical Dept., Box 3, Folders 1 and 2.

²"Five-Acre, Plat A, Big Field Survey, Salt Lake City," unpublished map dated 15 April 1857, Utah State Historical Society, Map 536.

³Woodruff, "Journal," 1859-60, passim, Box 3, Folder 2.

⁴Ibid.; Obituary notices for Wilford Woodruff, Deseret News, 2 Sept. 1898, pp. 1 and 4; 3 Sept. 1898, p. 1; and 8 Sept. 1898, pp. 1 and 4.

⁵That other houses existed in the Big Field before Woodruff built the farmhouse, contrary to some published accounts stating that the farmhouse was the first to be built south of North South, is proven by his entry in his journal for 12 May 1859 in which he recorded that he and a son took refuge in another house when they were threatened with a particularly bad storm.

⁶Woodruff, "Journal," spring and summer 1875 passim; Stenhouse and Co., Utah Gazeteer, 1892-93; R. L. Polk and Co., Salt Lake City Directory, 1893, 1894-95; Abstracts of Titles, Salt Lake County Recorder's Office.

⁷Polk, Salt Lake City Directory, 1898.

⁸"Mrs. A. O. Woodruff," and "Death of Apostle Woodruff," Deseret News, 7 and 21 June 1904, pp. 1 and 12 respectively.

⁹Abstracts of Titles, Salt Lake County Recorder's Office.

¹⁰Polk, Salt Lake City Directory, 1926-37.

¹¹Polk, Salt Lake City Directory, 1937-52; Abstracts of Titles, Salt Lake County Recorder's Office.

Bibliographical References cont. , Woodruff farmhouse

Five-Acre Plat A, Big Field Survey, Salt Lake City." Unpublished map dated 15 April 1857, Map #536, Utah State Historical Society Library.

Polk, R. L. and Co. Salt Lake City Directory 1893, 1894-95, 1898-99.

Salt Lake County Recorder's Office. Abstracts of Titles; Plat Maps. Salt Lake City-County Building, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Sanborn Map Co. Insurance Maps of Salt Lake City, Utah. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1911, Vol. II, map 206.

Stenhouse and Co. Utah Gazeteer, 1892-93.

Utah Gazeteer, 1884.

Woodruff, Wilford. "Journal," unpublished MS in LDS Church Histoian's Office, Box 3, Folders 1 and 2; and Box 5.