

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 7 1977

DATE ENTERED APR 20 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

 SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS
1 NAME

HISTORIC Robert D. Covington House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

200 North 200 East

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Washington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

02

STATE

Utah

___ VICINITY OF

CODE
049

COUNTY

Washington

CODE

053

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**
 DISTRICT
 BUILDING(S)
 STRUCTURE
 SITE
 OBJECT
OWNERSHIP
 PUBLIC
 PRIVATE
 BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
 IN PROCESS
 BEING CONSIDERED
STATUS
 OCCUPIED
 UNOCCUPIED
 WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
 YES: RESTRICTED
 YES: UNRESTRICTED
 NO
PRESENT USE
 AGRICULTURE
 COMMERCIAL
 EDUCATIONAL
 ENTERTAINMENT
 GOVERNMENT
 INDUSTRIAL
 MILITARY
 MUSEUM
 PARK
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 RELIGIOUS
 SCIENTIFIC
 TRANSPORTATION
 OTHER:
4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Andrew Earle

STREET & NUMBER

200 North 200 East

CITY, TOWN

Washington

___ VICINITY OF

STATE
Utah**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder's Office, Washington County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

197 East Tabernacle Street

CITY, TOWN

St. George

STATE
Utah**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Utah Historic Sites Survey

DATE

January 6, 1971

___ FEDERAL STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Utah State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Salt Lake City

STATE
Utah

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Robert D. Covington House was constructed in 1859 and was probably built by twin brother rock masons, Elijah and Elisha Averett who were also involved in the construction of the fort at Pipe Springs, Arizona, a National Monument, and two National Register properties in Utah, the Washington Cotton Factory and Cove Fort.

The red sandstone rock house sits on the southeast corner of the block facing the south and is an elegant example of the central-hall "I" form house with two end chimneys. It is 21 ft. by 39 ft. The house has two stories and a basement. The west side of the house was stuccoed following a fire which burned the wooden stairs to the second story. The outside walls are approximately 16 inches thick and one bearing wall of singular size intersects the basement and first floors. There are two rooms in the basement with a fireplace in the larger west room. The main floor is similarly divided, with the kitchen to the east, stairs to basement and a chimney and the living room on the west with a fireplace on the west wall. Stairs lead to the second floor and doors open out to the east (kitchen), south (front) west (end) and north. The second floor is currently divided into a bath and bedroom on the west end, a hall and small bedroom in the center and a large bedroom with fireplace on the west end with a door opening to the outside (north). There are two windows on the east, three on the south, one on the east and two on the north (second floor). The main floor has windows on the south, one on the east and one on the west.

An addition of a one-story structure with stuccoed walls 12-1/2 ft. by 39 ft. sits on the north side and consists of a large room (west) and a bath and hall (center) and laundry room (east). It has a flat roof, rather than the much more common lean-to shed roof.

The visual distinction of this vernacular type is a result of subtle variations in decorative, primarily in the shape and dimensioning of the window sills, mullions and lintels. The matching front and back, second-level porches with railings also contribute to the elegance of the exterior.

The original house had a railed front porch which was removed. The current owners have built a new porch which, according to the best documentation available, duplicates the original porch, except that it extends five feet on either side and wraps around the west and east sides nine feet from the front of the house. There is also a porch which has been built over the addition to the north. Originally, the porch was used as outdoor sleeping quarters during the hot summer season and on occasion for dances.

The interior has been changed--ceilings lowered, partitions on the second floor, a stairway to the second floor, etc.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1859

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Robert D. Covington

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Robert D. Covington House is significant as one of the first buildings constructed in Washington and one of the earliest remaining pioneer structures in Utah. It is an excellent example of pioneer architecture and craftsmanship. It provided lodging for many church leaders, including Brigham Young, and as the home of Robert D. Covington, it symbolizes his importance as a pioneer leader of Southern Utah. Its' size and stone construction reflects a commitment to the success of the cotton mission and a permanent Mormon stronghold along the Rio Virgin River.

HISTORY:

Robert Dockery Covington was born August 20, 1815 in Rockingham County, North Carolina. At the age of 22, he married Elizabeth Thomas and moved to Summerville, Knoxabec County, Mississippi where he became an overseer of a large plantation. While in Mississippi, three children were born: John Thomas on August 7, 1840; Emily Jane on January 1, 1842 and Sarah Ann on February 2, 1845. She died later in the year. In the early 1840's he became acquainted with Mormonism and joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on February 3, 1843. In 1845 he sold his property in Mississippi and moved to the Mormon center at Nauvoo, Illinois. His arrival in Nauvoo corresponded with an upsurge of violence between Mormons and non-Mormons highlighted by the death of Joseph Smith, Jr., the previous year. After a short time, Covington left Nauvoo and journeyed to join the main group of Saints at Winter Quarters, Nebraska. During the summer of 1847, Covington and his family journeyed to Utah arriving in the Salt Lake Valley during the late fall of 1847. While enroute, a son, Robert Laborious, was born August 1, 1847 near Scott's Bluff, Nebraska. The rigors of childbirth and the westward journey was a severe hardship for Elizabeth and a few weeks after their arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, she died on December 7, 1847.

Robert Covington spent the first winter at Salt Lake in the old fort. In 1848 he moved to Mill Creek, where he served as counselor to Bishop Ezekiel Lee of the Big Cottonwood settlement. He remained in the Salt Lake Valley until April 1857 when he was called to lead a group of settlers to southern Utah to carry out Brigham Young's plans for the development of a Mormon-controlled cotton industry.

As early as 1851, it had been proposed at the Mormon general conference in Salt Lake City that John D. Lee be sent to establish a settlement at the junction of the Rio Virgin and the Santa Clara Creek where, among other crops, cotton would be raised.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Juanita Brooks, "The Cotton Mission", Utah Historical Quarterly,
July 1961, Vol. 29 #3.

"See Attached Page"

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 1, 2 2, 7, 7, 4, 2, 5 4, 1, 1, 2, 5, 5, 0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B _____
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C _____
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D _____
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

A. Kent Powell, Preservation Historian

ORGANIZATION

Utah State Historical Society

DATE

September 12, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

603 East South Temple

TELEPHONE

(801)-533-5755

CITY OR TOWN

Salt Lake City

STATE

Utah

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL _____ STATE X LOCAL _____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Michael D. Gallivan, State Historic Preservation Officer DATE October 13, 1977

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

4/20/78

ATTEST: Walter J. Cole
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

4/12/78

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Although John D. Lee moved south, he settled at Harmony which was not as ideal for the cultivation of cotton as the proposed location at the junction of the Rio Virgin and Santa Clara Creek. It was not until 1855 that cotton was first grown in southern Utah. The previous year, 1854, a group of missionaries had been sent to work with the Indians of the area. During the winter, one of the missionaries returned from Parowan with a load of supplies and a quart of cottonseed tied in cloth supplied by Nancy Anderson, a convert from Tennessee. The cotton crop was a success and the following year, 1856, the missionaries who had brought their families to the Santa Clara, planted a second crop which was large enough to require the services of a make-shift cotton gin. The group called by Brigham Young and sent under the leadership of Robert D. Covington to southern Utah in 1857 consisted of 28 families and a number of young men, most of whom were from the southern states.

Upon the arrival at Washington, Robert Covington was appointed by President Isaac C. Haight of the Parowan Stake to preside over the new settlement. He served as Bishop of the Washington Ward until October 1869 when he left for a short-term mission to the southern states. As Bishop Covington was responsible for both the secular and spiritual welfare of the settlement, under his direction, the community was established, the cotton planted, and the adherence to Church council maintained. He served during a particularly difficult period as alkali killed many of the cotton plants, reoccurring spring floods washed out the diversion dams built on the Rio Virgin to provide irrigation water for crops, severe droughts characterized the summer months, food shortages prescribed a mundane diet and malaria left even the hardest pioneer weak and bedridden. Under these conditions many of the original settlers left Washington and the settlement appeared well on the road to abandonment when in 1861 as the Civil War threatened the outside supply of cotton, a new group of settlers were sent by Brigham Young to bolster the cotton mission.

Because of his previous experience with cotton in the south, Covington directed the Washington cotton effort. In the fall of 1861, George A. Smith reported on Covington's activities: "Robert D. Covington, who was appointed Bishop of this place (Washington) has cultivated cotton every year since and he has preserved specimens from each year's crop up to 1860 and doubtless will save this year's too. Every year these samples have improved and the seed is becoming more natural to the climate and improvements thus made appear to give manifest evidence of success as well as encouragement for the continuation of the enterprise."¹

In addition to his responsibilities as Bishop, Covington served as a member of the Territorial Legislature in 1858-59 and as a Vice-President of the Washington United Order. The Washington United Order lasted only one year and was abandoned when jealousies, suspicions that others were not doing their share, and perhaps strong traits of individualism among the members made the order impractical in Washington.

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Under Covington's leadership, considerable cooperative effort is evidenced in the construction of diversion dams and other community endeavors. An account from the diary of John D. Lee describes how Bishop Covington supported a proposal made by Lee to give a dinner and party to those who would help him quarry stone and haul the stone to his mill site. The communal effort resulted in 52 loads of stone being provided for the mill.²

Covington was marked by a strong strain of individualism. A great-grandson, A. Karl Larson, reports the following story: "Once while talking in meeting, he, (Covington) had occasion to speak of Jonah and the Whale. In the course of his remarks, he absent-mindedly--he was noted for this idiosyncrasy--said Jonah swallowed the whale. Brother Francis Boggs spoke up saying, 'No Brother Covington, the whale swallowed Jonah.' Bishop Covington, annoyed at the interruption and the broad smiles and the laughter which accompanied them, came back with 'You thus sit down, Old Bushhead! (Francis Boggs had a shock of red hair.) I thus tell you Jonah thus swallowed the whale and I thus tell you that's all there is to it!'" A. Karl Larson, Red Hills of November, p. 298.

The Robert Covington House was constructed in 1859, two years after Washington was settled. As one of the largest houses in the settlement, it served as a church and community recreation center until construction of the Washington meeting house in 1877 and provided accommodations of Church authorities traveling in the area. The second story of the house consisted of one large room which could be reached by an outside stairway on the west, thereby allowing access for community parties, dances and plays without disturbing the privacy of Bishop Covington and his family who occupied the main and basement floors.

Among the Church authorities who visited the Covington House were Brigham Young, Daniel H. Wells, Amasa M. Lyman, Jacob Hamblin and George A. Smith.

Footnotes:

1. Journal History, October 17, 1861, Quoted by Andrew Karl Larson, The Red Hills of November, p.21
2. Robert Glass Cleland and Juanita Brooks, Editors, A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848 - 1876, pp. 289 - 290

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Robert Glass Cleland & Juanita Brooks, Editors, A Mormon Chronical: The Diaries of John D. Lee 1848 - 1876, San Marino, California, The Huntington Library, 1955.

Robert Dockery Covington, Manuscript, "Typewritten history copied by Brigham Young University from the original type copy of Mrs. Marian C. Bradshaw, Orem, Utah. Copy at Historical Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

Lynette Holgate, "Robert Dockery Covington", Research paper - Dixie College - May 15, 1974. Copy at Historical Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Andrew Karl Larson, Erastus Snow, Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press 1971.

Andrew Karl Larson, I Was Called To Dixie, Salt Lake City, The Deseret News Press, 1961.

Andrew Karl Larson, The Red Hills of November, Salt Lake City, The Deseret News Press, 1957

Andrew Karl Larson, "The Robert Dockery Covington Home" Manuscript. Copy at Utah State Historical Society.