

100-10000-0018
EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received _____
date entered APR 28 1982

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Skeen, William D. House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number _____ not for publication

city, town Plain City _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 01

state Utah code 049 county Weber code 057

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Jack Etherington

street & number Route 3, Box 261

city, town Plain City _____ vicinity of _____ state Utah

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Weber County Recorder's Office

street & number Municipal Building, 2555 Washington Boulevard

city, town Ogden _____ state Utah

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Utah Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes no

date Summer 1980 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Utah State Historical Society

city, town Salt Lake City _____ state Utah

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The William D. Skeen House in Plain City was built ca. 1862 of locally quarried stone. The mason was William Sharp, and the stone, a composite sandstone and quartz, was cut at the outcroppings around the hot springs at the northern end of the valley and carted to the site by wagon. The quartz stone, unusual in Utah, is richly figured under a smooth glazed finish. The walls are coursed rubble. The coursing is uneven, but a certain geometric regularity is imposed upon the building by the mason's use of raised mortar jointing.

Thomas Singleton of Plain City was the principal carpenter and this house design combined several distinctive features. The first floor plan itself is three rooms wide and two rooms deep (see attached plan) with overall dimensions of 38' x 28'. A second story (one large room), is found over the front rooms only. The roof extends back from the ridge of the two story section with a continuous, unbroken eave. This long rear shed roof is the New England "saltbox" type and although the house deviates from the saltbox floor plan the roof shape is one of only four such buildings in the state of Utah.¹

The house has a five-bay facade. Single windows are placed in each of the outside rooms and a cluster of two windows and a door is cut in the center room. Greek Revival stylistic features, including cornice returns, soffit, and a freize, adorn an otherwise plain exterior. Originally the staircase was located in the north front room and was the boxed in, closed type. Later this staircase was removed and the stairway was placed on the exterior of the south wall. Alterations are minimal, however the house has been vacant for many years and it is in a deteriorated condition.

NOTES

¹The other documented Saltbox houses are the Joseph Beesley house in Provo (altered significantly), the Lauritz Smith house in Draper (nominated to the National Register 1982), and the Hampton's Ford Stage Station in Collinston (National Register).

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 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates CA. 1862 **Builder/Architect** William Sharp, Thomas Singleton

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The William Skeen house is significant as an excellent example of the early architecture of northern Utah. Built ca. 1862, it remains as one of the few buildings in the Plain City area from the initial Mormon settlement period and the only stone building left in the town. The excellent masonry and unusual quartz stone are significant features of the house. As one of only ~~six~~^{few} "salt-box" roof houses in the entire state, the William D. Skeen house gains added importance.

The house was built ca. 1862 for William D. Skeen. It is reported to be the first stone house in Plain City. The mason was William Sharp and the carpenter Thomas Singleton. All three men were among the original 28 Mormon families who first settled Plain City in the spring of 1859. Skeen was born January 8, 1839, at Steepleville, Pennsylvania, the second son of Joseph and Maria Amanda Dolby Skeen. He and his family came to Utah in 1850 as converts to the Mormon church and settled in Lehi. He married Caroline Smart Smith in 1858 and a year later moved to Plain City. There he engaged in farming and stockraising. At the time of his death in 1903, he was one of the largest land owners in Weber County, with more than 4000 acres. His wife Caroline was born in Bedfordshire, England in 1840. She came to Utah in 1850 with her family, as Mormon converts and settled in Lehi, where she met William Skeen. Skeen was a polygamist. He lived in this house with Caroline, his first wife. His second wife was Mary Davis, whom he married in 1865. A native of Llanelly, Wales, she came to Salt Lake City in 1856 as a Mormon convert and was also among the first settlers to Plain City. Following her marriage to Skeen, she lived in a house not far from this one.

William Sharp, the mason for this house, was born in Nottingham, England, December 10, 1825. He married Mary Ann Padley in St. Louis, settled in Lehi in 1853, and moved to Plain City six years later with the first group of settlers.

In 1868, Skeen sold this house to Ebenezer C. Richardson. Richardson was also a polygamist and had four wives. This house became the residence of two of his wives who were also sisters, Polly Ann Child Skeen and Phebe W. Child Skeen. Richardson lived in a nearby house with his first wife. By this time, his fourth wife had moved to Oregon. At the time the sister-wives moved in to the house, they had 12 children between them. Polly Ann had four and Phebe had eight. Phebe subsequently had two more children while living in this house. Polly Ann and her family occupied the west half of the house, while Phebe and her family occupied the east half. They shared the kitchen in between the two halves of the house. Each wife had one daughter. The boys from each family slept upstairs, while the two girls slept downstairs.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Ethington, The Life of Caroline Smith Skeen, 1925.
The Life Story of William Dolby Skeen.
Etherington, Nelda, The Old Rock House.
Weber County Records
Taylor, Fern O., An Historical Study of Plain City, 1956.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Plain City, Utah

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	2	4	0	1	9	1	1	2	1	0	4	1	5	7	1	2	9	1	2	1	0
Zone			Easting						Northing												

B

Zone			Easting						Northing												

C

Zone			Easting						Northing												

D

Zone			Easting						Northing												

E

Zone			Easting						Northing												

F

Zone			Easting						Northing												

G

Zone			Easting						Northing												

H

Zone			Easting						Northing												

Verbal boundary description and justification

All of Lot 3 Blk 9, Plat A, Plain City Survey

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John McCormick/ Historian and Tom Carter/Architectural Historian

organization Utah State Historical Society date Summer 1980

street & number 307 West 200 South telephone (801) 533-6017

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 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Melvin T. Smith, State Historic Preservation Officer date December 10, 1980

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
	date <u>8-9-82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

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Richardson died September 27, 1874 and was buried in Plain City. The house has remained in the Richardson family since that time, with Polly Ann and Phebe continuing to share the house until Polly Ann's death in 1905.

William D. Skeen House
Plain City, Weber County, Utah
First Floor Plan

