

Property Type:

Historic Preservation Research Office

Site No. 49-UT-25-A-062-
014

Structure/Site Information Form

IDENTIFICATION 1

Street Address: 405 North 500 East
Pleasant Grove, Utah County

UTM: 12 438040 4468690
Orem Quad/1:24000

Name of Structure: Richins, Thomas A., House

T. 5S R. 2E S. 21

Present Owner: E. Mark Bezzant

Owner Address: 1190 East 200 South, Pleasant Grove, Utah 84602

Year Built (Tax Record):
Legal Description

Effective Age:
Kind of Building:

Tax #: D-344-A

Com. at NE Cor. lot 9, Blk 62, Plat A, PGCS; 582', W 132', N 82', E132' to beg.
.25 acre

STATUS/USE 2

Original Owner: Thomas A. Richins

Construction Date: c. 1897 Demolition Date:

Original Use: Residence

Present Use: 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic |

DOCUMENTATION 3

Photography: Date of Slides: 1986 Slide No.: Date of Photographs: 1986 Photo No.:

Views: Front Side Rear Other

Views: Front Side Rear Other

Research Sources:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Abstract of Title | <input type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> U of U Library |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plat Records/Map | <input type="checkbox"/> City Directories | <input type="checkbox"/> Utah State Historical Society | <input type="checkbox"/> BYU Library |
| <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> LDS Church Archives | <input type="checkbox"/> SLC Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer Permit | <input checked="" 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.):

Personal Interview with Eva Proctor, July 29, 1986, by Beth Olsen.
Pleasant Grove Review, June 28, 1947, p. 1.
 Utah County land title records, Utah County Court House
 Personal Interview with Ruth Christiansen, Sept. 8, 1986, by Beth Olsen.
 Personal Interview with Lynn Hilton, Sept. 3, 1986, by Beth Olsen.

Architect/Builder: unknown/unknown

Building Materials: Soft-rock

Building Type/Style: Hall parlor/vernacular

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:

(Include additions, alterations, ancillary structures, and landscaping if applicable)

Built c. 1897, the Thomas A. Richins House is a one-story, hall-parlor vernacular house with a gable roof, soft-rock exterior walls, and a soft-rock shed roof extension on the rear. The rear section closely matches the main part of the house and was probably an early addition, if not original. Alterations include the addition of metal porch awnings on the front and side and the enlargement of one of the front windows. These changes do not significantly affect the original integrity of the house.

The house has a symmetrical, three-bay facade with a central transomed door flanked by two windows. Another door is located in the north wall (right side) of the lean-to section. Brick chimneys are found at either end of the gabled roof. An unattached garage was built in 1950 over the entrance to the rock root cellar under the rear extension.

The house was covered with siding in 1950 by Cloyd Christiansen. When Christiansen purchased the home in 1949 it had been serving as two, two-room apartments during the World War II housing shortage. (By locking the single

(See continuation sheet)

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date: c. 1897

Built c. 1897, the Thomas A. Richins House is one of the 13 buildings included in the Pleasant Grove Soft-rock Buildings Thematic Resource nomination. Soft-rock buildings are significant because they help document the distinctive regional diversity found in nineteenth-century building stones in Utah. They also represent a distinct phase of the building construction industry in the Pleasant Grove area. Mormon community building in the Great Basin West rested upon the dual principles of order and permanence, and the grid-iron town plan and the use of stone as an early building material have become important symbols of Mormon settlement values. A great variety of local stones were used throughout the state, and the soft and easily worked tufa stone, popular in Pleasant Grove between about 1865 to 1900, remains one of the most distinctive. About 130 soft-rock buildings were known to have once stood in Pleasant Grove, yet there are only 13 well preserved examples today. Most of the earlier buildings in the community, constructed during the 1850s and '60s, were made of adobe, which was easily made and worked. As fired brick became more available and fashionable during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it replaced soft-rock as the dominant local building material. The remaining soft-rock buildings are important examples of a local architectural tradition and contribute to an understanding of the regional diversity of Utah's early architectural history.

History

Thomas A. Richins was born May 15, 1866 in Goshen, Utah. His father, Thomas Richins, was a Mormon immigrant from England. Two years after Thomas A. was born the family moved to Pleasant Grove, where they remained for a short time before moving on to Henefer, Utah. In 1873 they returned to Pleasant Grove to

(See continuation sheet)

Thomas A. Richins House
Description Continued:

door between the two sections of the house privacy was possible for renters without changing the interior.) Wanting to update the house and restore it to a one-family unit for his own use, Christiansen converted the pantry into a bathroom and installed a furnace in the root cellar. The duct work was difficult as a foundation of field stones, two feet wide, ran all the way into the ground under every room partition. Interior wood work, transoms, and walls remain unaltered. In 1974, Lynn Hilton, another owner, removed the exterior siding to expose the soft-rock walls. Aside from a slightly updated kitchen in 1979, and the previously mentioned bathroom, the interior and exterior appear much the same as they did at the turn of the century.

Number of contributing buildings: 1
Number of non-contributing buildings: 1

Thomas A. Richins House
History continued:

stay.¹ Thomas A. grew up in Pleasant Grove and married Ellen Jay on November 7, 1888.¹ He made his living as a farmer, and in 1896 purchased about two acres of land from his father.² He built this house on that property probably that same year. Richins and his wife occupied the house until their deaths. Thomas A. passed away August 1, 1928, and Ellen died on June 25, 1947.³ Since 1947, the home has had various owners for short periods until 1978. At that time the present owner, E. Mark Bezzant, purchased the home. He has rented out the house for the past several years.

A Richins family member tells of Thomas A.'s father and Uncle John having a knowledge of quarrying a soft-stone in Painswick, Gloucester. Since this stone was apparently similar to the soft-rock found in Pleasant Grove, the Richins brothers were sent by Brigham Young to use their knowledge in the Pleasant Grove quarries.⁴

¹Richins family records, unpublished, in possession of Eva Proctor.

²Utah County land title records, Utah County Courthouse

³Pleasant Grove Review, June 28, 1947.

⁴Personal Interview, July 29, 1986, with Eva Proctor, by Beth Olsen.