

**Structure/Site Information Form**

1 IDENTIFICATION

Street Address: 90 West 1st North UTM: 12/356425/4237500  
 Name of Structure: T. R. S.  
 Present Owner: Bruce R. and Barbara Baker Less than one acre  
 Owner Address: 558 the Alameda  
 Berkeley, CA 94707  
 Year Built (Tax Record): Effective Age: Tax #: B-147  
 Legal Description: Kind of Building:

Plat A Blk 37 Southwest Quarter of Lot 2

2 STATUS/USE

Original Owner: Murdock, John Riggs & Construction Date: c. 1880 Demolition Date:  
 Mary Ellen Wolfenden, House (Beaver MRA)  
 Original Use: Present Use:  
 Building Condition: Integrity: Preliminary Evaluation: Final Register Status:  
 Excellent  Site  Unaltered  Significant  Not of the  National Landmark  District  
 Good  Ruins  Minor Alterations  Contributory  Historic Period  National Register  Multi-Resource  
 Deteriorated  Major Alterations  Not Contributory  State Register  Thematic

3 DOCUMENTATION

Photography: Date of Slides: Slide No.: Date of Photographs: Photo No.:  
 Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other

Research Sources:  
 Abstract of Title  Sanborn Maps  Newspapers  U of U Library  
 Plat Records/Map  City Directories  Utah State Historical Society  BYU Library  
 Tax Card & Photo  Biographical Encyclopedias  Personal Interviews  USU Library  
 Building Permit  Obituary Index  LDS Church Archives  SLC Library  
 Sewer Permit  County & City Histories  LDS Genealogical Society  Other Fieldwork

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

c. 1956 photo on tax records  
 Dewolfe Murdock (John R. Murdock's grandson), interviewed in August of 1976 in Beaver  
 by L. L. Bonar.  
 Mr. and Mrs. Roger Kissler, interviewed 8/76 in Beaver by L. L. Bonar.

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Building Materials: Brick

Building Type/Style: Originally a two-story "I" house

**Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:**

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

The home was originally a two-story "I" house, complete with a central-hall plan. Several subsequent additions have been built, first giving the house a "T" plan and finally a square plan. The last addition was built in 1924, but a fire during the early 1940s burned the original gabled roof off and it was replaced by a hipped roof. On the front facade, there is a large bay window with elaborate, decorative woodwork on it, there are complex brackets, jig saw work and tiny scallops. The bay window is balanced by two large windows on the other side and a central door (though one of the windows was enlarged and made into a door). Over these doors and windows are more decorative woodwork and some brick fancy work. The porch contains very elaborate woodwork, with spindles and other elements similar to the bay window. Upstairs, there are large windows and a central door that leads out on to the porch. There is a second bay window on the east facade, but most of the later additions are quite plain. The grounds are surrounded by a white picket fence and there is a sturdy granary built of black rock to the rear of the house. Despite the many alterations, the house maintains a degree of visual integrity compatible with National Register standards.

**Statement of Historical Significance:**

Construction Date:

The John Riggs and Mary Ellen Wolfenden House, built in about 1880, is significant for its association with John Riggs Murdock and as one of three houses built by Murdock for his three polygamous wives. Together with the John Riggs and Mae Bain Murdock House, 94 W. Center St. and the Almira Lott Murdock House, 85 W. 1st N., this house helps to document and illustrate the physical logistics and adaptations of the institution of polygamy in Beaver. John Riggs Murdock, as a town reorganizer and LDS stake president, was a central figure in the development and growth of Beaver, and after the anti-polygamy Edmunds Act of 1882 lived exclusively in this home with one wife, Mary Ellen Wolfenden Murdock.

This home had been built in about 1880 by John Riggs Murdock for Mary Ellen Wolfenden Murdock, one of his three plural wives. John married Almira Lott in 1849, and in 1863 married both Mary Ellen Wolfenden and May Bain. As president of the Beaver Stake of the LDS Church, John Riggs Murdock had ascended to the most powerful position possible on the local level. As a devout member of the Mormon Church, he practiced plural marriage. When the anti-polygamy legislation was strengthened in 1882 by the passage of the Edmunds Act, federal arrests and prosecution of polygamists prompted Murdock to reside solely with Mary Ellen Wolfenden Murdock.

The house for Mary Ellen was the second home built by Murdock. It, as the house for Mae Bain Murdock, had a central-hall plan, and inside contains an interesting metal fireplace that Murdock purchased in the 1896 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition. John Riggs Murdock lived in this residence for the remainder of his life.