

Structure/Site Information Form

IDENTIFICATION 1

Street Address: 1620 S. 1000 East

UTM: 12/427210/4509400

Name of Structure: Alexander Mitchell House

T. R. S.

Present Owner: Elmer L. and Bertha Wellington
1632 S. 1000 East

Owner Address: Salt Lake City, Utah 84105

Year Built (Tax Record):
Legal Description

Effective Age:
Kind of Building:

Tax #:

Lots 9, 10, and 11 of Block 1 of Perkins' Addition subdivision, Block 16, Plat Five Acre A, Big Field Survey.

less than 1 acre

STATUS/USE 2

Original Owner: Alexander Mitchell

Construction Date: 1891

Demolition Date:

Original Use: Residential

Present Use: Residential

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

DOCUMENTATION 3

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

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

Salt Lake Tribune, January 30, 1891, p. 6; August 21, 1892, p. 8.

Architect/Builder:

Building Materials: Brick and Frame

Building Type/Style: Victorian Eclectic

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

The Alexander Mitchell House is a two and one half story brick and frame house with a gable roof and gabled crosswings. Like the other houses in Perkins' Addition, its design was likely drawn from a pattern book or was created as one of a number of patterns that were made available to Perkins' Addition investors for the selection of a house type. One basic plan was used to design seven of the ten houses. The Mitchell House, however, is one of three houses which has elements common among the houses in the Addition, but which differs in plan and elevation from any of the other houses. It is essentially a complex variation of the common type used in the seven houses. Those houses generally consist of a rectangular two and one half story block with a gable roof, projecting bays or crosswings with gable roofs, and a facade composed of a balanced arrangement of four openings. The main entrance in each house is on one side of the facade flanked by a large window. Distinctive one or two story porches over the entrances have gable roofs and ornamentation that echoes the pitch and detailing of the main block. Belt courses and a change in material in the gable break up the vertical thrust of the mass of each house, and distinctive shingle patterns make the gable areas a focal point of visual interest.

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date:

The Alexander Mitchell House is architecturally and historically significant as one of the ten remaining houses that were original to Perkins' Addition subdivision, the most visually cohesive example of a streetcar subdivision in Salt Lake City. Streetcar subdivisions played a major role in the transformation of the land south of the original city from agricultural to residential use in the 1890s, and Perkins' Addition was considered the standard of subdivision excellence. The Mitchell House is one of three houses whose design varies from the standard pattern that was repeated with variations in seven Perkins Addition houses. This variation within a subdivision which is dominated by similar house types indicates that the ideal of personalized expression as a selling point in subdivision development¹ occasionally became a reality. Although a unique type among Perkins Addition houses, the Mitchell house has many design features which visually tie it to other Perkins houses.

The Alexander Mitchell House at 1620 South 1000 East was built in 1891 as one of the thirteen large, brick houses constructed in Perkins' Addition subdivision by Metropolitan Investment Company. Alexander and Jessie M. Mitchell, who contracted to have the house built in January 1891, lived here until 1899.² The Mitchells had come to Salt Lake City around 1887, apparently from Milwaukee³, and had been living at 29 F Street before moving into this house. Mr. Mitchell was a commercial agent for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad. Their thirty-year-old son, Alexander R. Mitchell, manager of the Union Pacific coal yards, lived with them in this house until his accidental death on August 19, 1892.

The Mitchells transferred the property to the National Bank of the Republic via a sheriff's deed in 1898 for \$3800, then apparently left the state. The

Continuation of Description

What ties the Mitchell House to others in the Addition is the combination of brick and frame construction, the prominent gable facade, and the use of bands of fishscale shingles in gable sections of the facade. In this house, however, the single gabled block has been broken into a complex of gable forms. A large front gable section is backed by a slightly lower gable section, and there are prominent crosswings on the north and south sides of the building. A gabled bay, at the level of the crosswing and back gable, projects from the facade gable. The balanced arrangement of four openings on the facade has been maintained in the Mitchell House, although the asymmetrical window arrangement in the gable counters the balanced effect. As in the other houses, the door and front porch are set on one side of the facade. An old tax photo indicates that as originally designed the porch was two story, and had balustrades with a geometric pattern, as was originally constructed on the other houses, such as the Mabry-Van Pelt House, 946 East 1700 South. Unlike the other porches, however, it wraps around the north corner of the building and originally had a flat roof. Also unique to the original porch of the Mitchell House were paired lathe turned porch piers with flat, simplified brackets attached to the top. The original porch no longer exists, and it is difficult to determine if the piers that remain are original.

The whole effect of the massing is quite different in the Mitchell House compared with others in the Perkins Addition. Not only is its form more complex, but the effect of its verticality has more emphatically been negated. The whole stories of most of the houses in the Addition are brick, frame having only been used for half stories, crosswings and side bays. In the Mitchell House, only the first floor was constructed of brick. The upper one and one half stories are frame with shingle siding. The change of material above the first floor in conjunction with the use of a brick belt course below the story division, and the use of bands of fish scale shingles in the gable sections of the facade effectively break up the wall surface into a series of horizontals.

The facade is composed of a second story door centered over the main door, and a double hung window centered over a three part window block. The large first floor window is typical of the period, and variations of the type were used in eight of the ten Perkins' houses. It has one large single pane window and transom centered between two long, narrow double hung sash windows. The front door is typical of Victorian design and appears to be original. Carved panels and pilasters frame the two sections of the door. Double hung windows of varying dimensions have been used throughout the house.

Alterations to the exterior of the Mitchell House have been extensive. Many of the original porch elements are gone, including the second story porch roof and balustrade, the shingle roof section that divided the porch levels, the first story porch balustrade, and the double piers and decorative brackets on both levels. Lattice panels have been added above and below the large, front window. Window changes include the addition of a rectangular panel of windows on the north side, and the reduction of one of the tall double hung sash windows on the west wall. The house was divided into apartments in 1950 which

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may explain those changes. Two small one story frame additions were made to the house, one on the north side, tucked behind the projection of the crosswing, and the other attached to the rear of the house. Both were shingled and designed with roof pitches that do not detract from the integrity of the original building. The changes made to the front porch, which are the most detrimental alterations affecting the original integrity of the building, most likely resulted from the difficulty of maintaining this portion of any house. It is likely that the condition of this area deteriorated with time, and gradually original elements were removed and/or replaced. A photo of the original porch does exist so that restoration of the porch would be possible.

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bank either left the house vacant or rented it out until selling it for \$3500 in 1900 to Robert Hartley, who had arrived in Salt Lake City that same year. Hartley, a native of England, had mining interests in Nevada. He lived in this house until his death on December 3, 1919. His daughter, Ada H. Hartley, who had lived here with him, sold the house in 1920, moved to Sandy and began teaching school at Murray High School.

Paula Lubold, a widow who had first come to Salt Lake City around 1918, bought the house in 1920 and moved here from 770 East 700 South. Soon after, she married Dr. William Sahr, N.D., a naturopath. They opened a naturopathic health care center, East Side Sanitarium, in this house, which also served as their home. Mrs. Sahr, also listed as a doctor and a registered nurse, operated this facility by herself for a time while her husband operated a similar facility, Broadway Sanitarium, in the New Grand Hotel at 377 South Main. Ads for the East Side Sanitarium claim twenty-two years experience in "nature treatments connected with the knowledge what God likes us to do for suffering humanity...." William Sahr either died or moved away in 1924, a year after Broadway Sanitarium closed down. Paula L. Sahr, who also went by Louise M. Sahr, continued to operate the sanitarium and live in this house until her death in 1946.

In 1947, title to the property was transferred to Paula Sahr's brother, Gustav H. Schmidt, who lived here for one year then divided it into two apartments around 1950. Schmidt also owned another of the Perkins' Addition houses at this same time, 936 East 1700 South, which was also divided into apartments, where he lived for several years. Schmidt, who was single, transferred the property to his relatives, Walter and Gustave A. Schmidt, in 1954, a few months before his death.

Bertha and Elmer Lee Wellington, who bought the house in 1955, lived in one of the apartments in the house until 1958, then moved into the house next door at 1632 South 1000 East. Mr. Wellington operated the Wellington Cigar Stand in

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the lobby of the Atlas Building (36 1/2 West 200 South), and Mrs. Wellington worked in the Atlas Beauty Salon, also located in the Atlas Building. The Wellingtons currently own the house, renting out the apartments in it, and continue to live next door.

Notes

¹Gwendolyn Wright, Building the Dream, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), p. 113.

² Salt Lake Tribune. January 30, 1891, p. 6.

³ After their son, Alexander R.'s, death in 1892, his friends in the East desired his internment in Milwaukee, inferring that that was where the Mitchells had lived previously. See Salt Lake Tribune, Aug. 21, 1892, p. 8.