

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 9 1985
date entered

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

MAY 9 1985

1. Name

historic BALDWIN, NATHANIEL, HOUSE

and or common

2. Location

street & number 2374 Evergreen Avenue not for publication

city, town Salt Lake City X vicinity of

state Utah code 049 county Salt Lake code 035

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Melvin Forsman

street & number 2374 Evergreen Avenue

city, town Salt Lake City vicinity of state Utah

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Salt Lake City and County Building

street & number 400 South State Street

city, town Salt Lake City state Utah

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Nathaniel Baldwin House, built in 1923, is a large, one-story Prairie Style bungalow. Typical of Prairie Style bungalows in Utah, it has a low pitch hip roof, wide overhanging eaves, a projecting front porch, a concrete foundation and brick exterior walls. Simple decorative exterior features of this house include the multi-color brick, cast concrete Prairie Style elements on the porch columns, and bay windows on both the west and east sides. Bands of casement windows are in the bay windows and in various other window sections of the house. The interior of the house is more expressively elaborate than the exterior, featuring an abundance of woodwork, primarily oak and fir, on the floors, window frames and surrounds, doors, built-in bookcases, chair rails, and baseboards. Minor alterations have been made on the interior, particularly in the kitchen, which has recently been remodeled. The only exterior alterations of note are the additions of a 9'x12' greenhouse on the rear and a covered porch on one of the rear corners. Those alterations do not affect the historical integrity of the house.

A two-bay garage located to the rear of the house is also included in this nomination as a contributing building. Judging from its materials and styling, the garage was apparently built at the same time as the house. It is virtually unaltered.

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

Specific dates 1923 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Nathaniel Baldwin House, built in 1923, is significant for its association with Nathaniel Baldwin during the years of his greatest success as an inventor and manufacturer of highly advanced electronic sound transmission devices. Between about 1914 and 1930, Baldwin's company was among the most successful and innovative companies of its kind in the United States, and was one of the largest employers in Utah. His wireless headphones were a major breakthrough in the radio electronics industry, and their success propelled him into a position of prominence both locally and nationally. Although his business eventually failed, his contribution to the field of electronics was significant and lasting.

The large bungalow at 2374 Evergreen Avenue was built in 1923 for Nathaniel Baldwin at the zenith of his career as an inventor and manufacturer of electronic sound transmission devices. Shortly after this house was completed his business suffered a number of reversals that eventually led to the demise of his company and his prosperity. Although he and his family lived in this house for only six or seven years, it is the house most closely associated with his impressive career and was the "dream home" that accompanied his success. His factory buildings, located nearby at 3474 S. 2300 East, have lost their integrity through recent alterations.

Nathaniel Baldwin was born in Fillmore, Utah, December 1, 1878 to Nathan Bennett Baldwin and his second polygamous wife, Margaret Oler Baldwin. Nathaniel attended Brigham Young Academy, the Utah Agricultural College, and Stanford University, concentrating on science studies. After completing his college work, Baldwin worked at a number of different jobs, ranging from physics professor at BYU to operator of an electric generating plant, during which time he worked at inventing and perfecting sound equipment and other devices. In 1910 he patented his first and most important invention, radio headphone receivers. He was unsuccessful at attracting attention to his device until, acting on a suggestion from the Smithsonian Institution, he contacted the U.S. Navy and received a positive reply. After testing the headphone they ordered a few sets and soon after several more sets. Then, anticipating perhaps the entrance of the United States in the European war, the Navy requested one hundred sets "at once." In order to meet the demand, Baldwin quit his job as power plant operator and built a twelve-by-fourteen-foot wooden factory in the Salt Lake area at 3477 South 2300 East. In 1915 he added a second building, and for a time the power for both buildings was generated by another of his devices, a hydro-electric generator on adjacent East Mill Creek.

Baldwin's factory transformed this rural area, East Millcreek, into a manufacturing center. The high wages he offered--four dollars a day for a forty-eight hour week--attracted people from all over Utah to his factory. His business continued to expand and by 1922 it employed 450 people, who

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worked in three shifts around the clock, producing 150 headsets per day. The cost of his headsets ranged from 50 to 200 percent higher than those of many of his competitors, but the quality was apparently commensurate with the price, and demand almost always exceeded supply. Baldwin also produced loudspeakers, hearing aids and other sound transmission devices at his factory.

A fire in one of his factory buildings and increasing demand for his products led to the construction of a large brick factory near the old one at 3474 South 2300 East. Even the capacity of this new factory was not enough, however, to meet the growing demand of his products. He therefore contracted with another firm to produce Baldwin equipment, constructed another factory in the nearby community of Holladay, and signed contracts with companies in Canada and Japan. Baldwin was reportedly offered over a million dollars for his business, but he refused to sell, afraid that the operations would be moved out of state and his employees and friends would lose their jobs. Such generous and altruistic tendencies eventually contributed to the downfall of Nathaniel Baldwin's business.

In the mid-1920s events began to transpire that marked the beginning of the end for Baldwin. A number of bad investments brought financial stress, and his lack of business savvy led to poor management decisions. Legal battles ensued when a group of his former employees began operating a competing business, and the affair was further complicated by the fact that many of those people were religious associates of Baldwin. In 1930, after a near-fatal incident of receivership, the company folded when Baldwin and a number of other directors of the company were convicted and sentenced to five years in federal prison for fraudulent use of the mails for promoting and selling the company's stock. Nathaniel served two years of his five year term, then returned to the East Mill Creek area where he lived until his death in 1961. He was never able to regain his position as a prominent inventor and businessman.

Baldwin had supported and helped nurture the growth of a Fundamentalist Mormon group which espoused the principle of polygamy, a former, but by then forbidden, tenet of the Mormon church. Many of Baldwin's employees and directors were members of that religious group, and Baldwin used much of his money to aid the large families of his polygamous friends. He even constructed for them a dozen or so houses near his own, and the area became known locally as polygamy alley. It is unknown for certain whether Nathaniel ever took a plural wife himself, though it is rumored that he did marry a Mrs. Steed, a widow, who lived for a time in one of the houses on the north side of Evergreen Avenue.¹ That "Mrs. Steed" may have been Lily S. Steed, who worked for Baldwin's company for several years and who lived for a time on Evergreen Avenue.²

Baldwin's house on Evergreen Avenue was purchased in 1931 by James Vernon Glade, a prominent Utah businessman, who lived there for over 25 years. Glade was founder and president of Glade Candy Company, one of the largest candy firms in the Intermountain West. Baldwin and his family moved back into the frame bungalow which he had built in 1916 at 3471 S. 2300 East, where they remained for two or three years before moving elsewhere.³

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Notes

1. Jared Baldwin, interview.
2. Salt Lake City directories, 1920s-'30s.
3. Baldwin, interview.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Dunyon, Joy F., and Walker, F. Earl. "Part I: East Mill Creek History." The Pioneer (Sept.-Oct. 1971): 7. Salt Lake City: Sons of Utah Pioneers.
"Nathaniel Baldwin." Utah Since Statehood Vol. 3: 887-888. Chicago-Salt Lake City: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1919.

continued

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property 0.45 acre

Quadrangle name Sugar House

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	2	4	3	0	5	4	0	4	5	0	5	1	8	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning E 569.1 ft. from NW corner Sec 34 T1S R1E Salt Lake Meridian, thence S 226.75 ft., W 101.42 ft., N 226.75 ft., E 101.42 ft. to beginning.

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 Roger Roper/Historian

organization Utah State Historical Society

date February 1985

street & number 300 Rio Grande

telephone 801-533-6017

city or town Salt Lake City

state Utah 84101

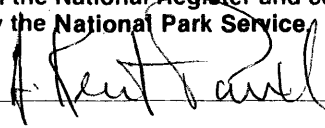
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title A. Kent Powell, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date February 28, 1985

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

5-9-85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Singer, Merrill. "Nathaniel Baldwin, Utah Inventor and Patron of the Fundamentalist Movement." Utah Historical Quarterly 47:1 (Winter 1979). Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1979.

Baldwin, Jared. Interview with Roger Roper, March 22, 1985, Salt Lake City, Utah.