

Keith-Brown House
529 East South Temple
Salt Lake City
Salt Lake County
Utah

HABS No. UT-97

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

KEITH-BROWN HOUSE

HABS No. UT-97

Location: 529 East South Temple, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah.

Present Owner: H. Ross and Norinne Thompson Brown.

Present Occupant: Terracor.

Present Use: Corporate offices.

Significance: The Keith-Brown House, home of Utah mining millionaire David Keith, is one of the few remaining mansions on the once fashionable South Temple Street. The design by Salt Lake City architect Frederick Albert Hale is in the Classical Revival style.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1898-1900.
2. Architect: Frederick Albert Hale. Active in Salt Lake City at the turn of the century, Hale originally came from Denver and received his architectural training at Cornell University. He is responsible for the designs of some of the major residences in Salt Lake City, of which the Keith-Brown House is the finest.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The Keith-Brown House is built on parts of lots 2 and 3, Block 8, Plat D of the Salt Lake City Survey. The following references to the title of these lots are found in the Salt Lake County Recorder's Office, Salt Lake City and County Building, Salt Lake City, Utah:

1897 Deed, signed July 10, 1897, filed July 10, 1897, recorded in Book 5D, p. 127. Agnes Sharp Caine and A. W. Caine to David Keith, west half of lot 2, for \$1,100.

1899 Deed, signed April 15, 1899, filed April 19, 1899, recorded in Book 5"0", p. 267. Mimie H. Nugent to David Keith, part of lot 2, for \$5,700.

1900 Deed, signed September 26, 1899, filed January 10, 1900, recorded in Book 5T, p. 161. John Daynes and wife Eliza to David Keith, part of lot 2, for \$200.



- 1901 Deed, signed September 4, 1901, filed September 11, 1901, recorded in Book 6E, p. 269. John Daynes and wife Eliza to David Keith, part of lot 3, for \$5,000.
- 1916 Deed, signed May 5, 1916, filed May 8, 1916, recorded in Book 10D, p. 149. David Keith and wife Mary F. to Ezra Thompson, part of lots 2 and 3, for \$10.
- 1917 Deed, signed April 4, 1917, filed April 26, 1917, recorded in Book 10N, pp. 202-205. Ezra Thompson and wife Emily P. to Ezra Thompson Investment Co., part of lots 2 and 3, for \$1, etc.
- 1946 Deed, signed December 17, 1946, filed December 26, 1946, recorded in Book 512, p. 683. Ezra Thomppson Investment Co. to Norinne Thompson Brown, part of lot 2.

4. Original plans and construction: In September of 1898 the house was described in the Salt Lake Tribune along with several other large residences in Salt Lake City. It was to be a sixteen-room house of three stories built on a sandstone foundation in the "Renaissance" style. As described, it was constructed of coursed ashlar, Sanpete limestone with a tile roof.

The plan contains some similarities to Palladio's Villa Rotunda. However, Hale has substituted an octagonal central hall for Palladio's circular hallway. Although the hall of the Salt Lake residence is not under a masonry dome like that of the Villa Rotunda, it is under a stained glass dome which Hale designed to be illuminated at night by floodlights.

5. Alterations and additions: The second owner, Ezra Thompson, added the large wrought-iron and glass front doors.

In 1944, the Browns converted the billiard room into a living room and the adjacent bedroom into a small kitchen.

In 1969, when Terracor leased the mansion from the Brown family, a vigorous preservation and renovation project (exceeding \$250,000) was undertaken for its adaptive use as the firm's corporate offices. Major alterations included the opening of a sunken patio garden and basement entrance on the east side of the building. The basement level was converted into usable storage and office space. The heating system was replaced with a new heating and cooling system and all the electrical wiring was updated to meet the new loads and current codes. Included in these code requirements was the addition of a new interior staircase serving all three floors in the northern half of the

structure. This staircase necessitated the elimination of the pantry between the kitchen and the oval dining room of the main floor. With the exception of the changes in room functions, there were no other alterations to the house.

B. Historical Persons Connected with the Structure:

Born in Nova Scotia, David Keith (1847-1918) came to Utah via the California and Nevada gold fields in 1883. His mining experience gained in these states aided him in his new work in the Park City mines in Utah. Within a decade his wise investments paid off along with those of other Utahns in the Silver King Mine. The mine paid out \$10.25 million in dividends to be shared among the principal investors between 1892 and 1907. Keith lived in his mansion until 1916, at which time ill health forced its sale to Ezra Thompson. Keith then moved to a suite in the Hotel Utah where he died of pneumonia two years later.

Ezra Thompson, another mining man and former Mayor of Salt Lake City, lived in the mansion until his death in 1923. The residence then was passed on to his daughter, Norinne Thompson Brown, the present owner.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Early views: Photographs from the Utah State Historical Society Photograph Collection:

Undated photograph from a publication showing the south and east side of the mansion.

Contemporary view of the skylight above the octagonal hallway.

2. Deed books: Salt Lake County Recorder's Office, Salt Lake City and County Building, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah.

3. Bibliography:

- a. Pamphlets, newspapers:

Salt Lake Herald. David Keith obituary. April 16, 1918, pp. 1 and 3.

Salt Lake Tribune. David Keith obituary. April 16, 1918, pp. 1 and 13.

Salt Lake Tribune. September 4, 1898, p. 9.

Terracor. "History of the Mansion." Salt Lake City, n.d.

b. Books:

Polk, R.L. & Co. Salt Lake City Directory, 1900. Chicago and Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1900.

Warrum, Noble, ed. Utah Since Statehood: Historical and Biographical, vol II. Chicago and Salt Lake city: S. J. Clarke, 1919, pp. 26-30.

Prepared by: Peter L. Goss, Ph.D.
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Architecture
University of Utah
November, 1975

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Italian Renaissance style in a monumental scale.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 50'-1" x 60'-8", three stories and basement.
2. Foundations: Red Butte sandstone, random ashlar.
3. Walls: Sanpete limestone, coursed ashlar, cream colored. Third floor is slightly recessed and the walls are rusticated. The corners are reinforced with Tuscan pilasters which repeat the scale and order seen in the portico.
4. Structural system, framing: Masonry load-bearing. First and second floor framing unknown. Wooden roof framing.
5. Porches, balconies:

South: The south entrance has a two-story portico with paired Tuscan columns supporting an entablature and pediment. An uncovered veranda, which extends to the west and around the corner to the west entrance, has a limestone balustrade and a concrete floor.

East: The east entrance is in a bay framed by slightly projecting two-story Tuscan pilasters and a pediment. The porch has heavy limestone turned balusters, Tuscan columns at the corners, a pressed metal ceiling and an unglazed 3/4" circular ceramic tile floor with limestone border. The second-floor balcony has a pressed metal (zinc) balustrade, enlarged corner posts and urn-shaped cap, with rectangular metal decking.

North: The service entrance has limestone columns and balustrade with a ceramic tile floor. The second-floor balcony has a wood balustrade and pressed metal deck.

West: The west entrance has a two-story projecting porch and balcony with separate Tuscan columns on each level. The columns, pilasters and balustrade are limestone, while the floor is concrete. The second level is capped by a pediment which is similar in appearance to that of the main facade. The portico is connected by a low balustrade and open porch to the main facade and portico.

6. Chimneys: Four limestone chimneys.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The south front entrance has an arched opening with radiating voussoirs, two cast-iron stile and rail doors with a scroll grill. The balcony doorway has a pedimented lintel, sidelights, leaded glass transom window, and a stile and rail door.

The east entrance has a plain lintel, and a stile and rail door with one glass light and a transom window. The north doorway has a plain lintel with a stile and rail door. The west entrance has an arched doorway, recessed sidelights, transom window, and a stile and rail door with a glass light.

b. Windows and shutters: Combination of double-hung sash and fixed light windows, several with leaded glass and one stained glass. The openings have plain and decorated lintels and arches with radiating voussoirs.

8. Roof: Truncated hip roof with copper tiles in a modified pan and roll configuration, 12" wide. The gable dormers have cornice returns on the gable and brackets.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Basement: There are three exterior entrances and one interior stair. The central space serves all of the perimeter rooms, the work room (bedroom), the wine cellar (vault), the storage room (office), mechanical equipment room, the coal room (snack room), and hallway (office).
2. First floor: The front entrance opens into an enclosed vestibule and then into the central hall (octagonal reception room), which serves a series of perimeter rooms. The entry has block flooring and a wooden wainscot. Wallpaper covers the plaster and the ceiling is wood.

The two rooms flanking the vestibule have 2" oak flooring with wood base and shoe. The east room (library) fireplace has glazed tile for the face and hearth, while the west room (music room) has similar tile and a wooden mantel with Ionic columns flanking a mirror. In the central hall is a wooden-manteled fireplace including the glazed tile face and hearth, and to its left is the oval dining room, which has carpet on the floor and a paneled wainscot below the plastered walls. There is a plaster cove ceiling. All plaster has been painted while the wainscot is stained and varnished.

The service rooms in the northeast corner have painted plaster or plasterboard walls and ceilings with oak trim. Between the kitchen and the dining room is a pine stairway, formerly the butler's pantry, serving the second and third floors with an exterior door.

3. Second floor: The main stairway with turned balusters and square newel post leads to the balcony of the central hall. The balcony handrail has a wood post at each intersection which supports a single arch. The balcony handrail is wood while the wall is plaster with wood wainscot. The walls over the arches are wood and this leads upward to a stained glass domed skylight.

Surrounding this balcony are the bedrooms and baths. These corner rooms have similar finishes of carpeted wood floors, plaster walls with wooden cornices and plaster ceilings. A toilet room, which once served the southwest bedroom, is entered from a narrow wainscotted corridor on the west axis. The floor has unglazed tessera laid in a fan pattern and the walls and ceiling have a dull glazed ceramic tile including a visual pattern of buttons on the ceiling.

4. Third floor: Only the servants' staircase leads to this floor. Most walls are painted plaster or plasterboard with a sprayed ceiling, birch casing, trim and base. Located above the central hall in the center of the mansion is the top side of the leaded

stained glass dome, which has a wire glass skylight at the roof. The billiard room has a 2-1/2" beaded pine wainscot, top and bottom molded trim, with plaster walls above and a herringbone panelled ceiling. The fireplace located on the west wall has a brick hearth while the rest of the floor has been covered with carpet.

5. Hardware: Brass mortised passage and locksets have very decorative escutcheons. The brass butts have a round head.
6. Lighting: Incandescent electric fixtures with a few fluorescent used in a few rooms.
7. Heating: A boiler system including cast-iron radiators and a recently added air conditioning system with ducts inconspicuously placed.

D. Site:

The mansion is oriented with the main entrance facing south, a secondary entrance facing west and both of these entrances face onto streets. There are two walks leading from the mansion to the two streets. Located to the east and rear of the mansion is the carriage house, recently converted to offices. Near it is a parking lot and a screened cooling tower. To the east is a driveway, which serves the side entrance to the mansion and terminates at the carriage house.

Prepared by: Burtch W. Beall, Jr.
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November, 1975

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The State of Utah survey, conducted by the Historic American Buildings Survey, was cosponsored by the National Park Service and the Utah Heritage Foundation, and supported by the Utah State Institute of Fine Arts jointly with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Union Pacific Railroad. All work was recorded under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, during the summer of 1975 at the HABS field office at the Graduate School of Architecture, University of Utah. The survey team consisted of Burtch W. Beall, Jr., architect (University of Utah), project supervisor; Dr. Peter L. Goss (University of Utah), project historian; architects Stephen Barratt Smith (University of Utah), Gregory D. Steinbeck (University of Arkansas), Patrick M. Burkhardt (North Dakota State University), and Stephen A. England (University of Cincinnati), project foreman. Photographs were taken by Louise T. Taft in 1985. The written data were edited by Alison K. Hoagland, HABS Historian, in 1985.