

Jefferson Avenue History

The area on Jefferson Avenue in Ogden, Utah between 25th and 27th Streets was designated as the Jefferson Avenue Historic District by the National Park Service in 1998. The district is both historically and architecturally significant. It is primarily a residential neighborhood constructed between 1882 and 1928, with the majority of the houses constructed between 1882 and 1910. These buildings reflect the rapid growth and prospering economy of Ogden during the 1880 and 1900 period due to the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads and the industries they helped prosper.

The houses in the district were mostly built by affluent businessmen in the popular styles of the time. The district's location in Ogden is also significant as one of the first waves of building up the east bench. The truly imposing structures, that date from this period, hint at "well-to-do" first owners, but the mixture of upper class, upper middle class, and middle class families is also illustrated, not only in some smaller Victorian period homes, but also in the number of early 20th-century style homes built in the district.

The dominant architectural style in the district is Victorian, which was popular during one of the peak growths in the district (1880 to 1900). Most of the Victorian style houses are substantial dwellings, reflecting the economic background of their owners. Victorian stylistic elements in Jefferson Avenue houses include asymmetrical facades, arched windows, patterned shingles in gable ends, projecting bays, and leaded glass windows.

The transition in style preferences is very visible in the number of early 20th-century style houses built during the next period of building (1900 to 1910). These include the eight houses built in the bungalow style, the two built in the Arts & Crafts style, and the three which are the Four Square type. While many of these houses are substantial in comparison with the typical houses being built in other areas in Utah at the same time, they are more modest in scale and reflect a more "middle-class" lifestyle than the large Victorian houses of the prior period. The stylistic features include wide overhanging porches, dormers in the slopes of the roofs, geometrically patterned leaded glass windows, and wide eaves.

The Jefferson Avenue Historic District attests to the rapid growth and prospering economy of Ogden during the decades from 1880 to 1900 by its abundance of substantial Victorian period homes. As in other towns along the Wasatch Front, the preferred residential areas in Ogden have been on the east side, moving farther up the bench as utility services were improved and the population increased. The Jefferson District easily fits into this pattern. It is located only two blocks east of Washington Boulevard, originally Main Street, close to the heart of the city. although some of the buildings replaced earlier dwellings, most were the first on their lot.

Conforming to the grid pattern of planning preferred in the Mormon culture, the Jefferson District is in this respect part of a greater scheme. Studies of Sanborn Insurance Maps and the extant buildings in the Jefferson District suggest a progression of phases. It grew from a sparsely settled neighborhood of smaller homes, to denser development and

larger houses in the Victorian style. Yet some smaller, more modest dwellings survived and multiplied in the midst of the Victorian presumptuousness, indicating that the area was not exclusively upper class, but that it also was within reach of the middle classes for building or rental property. Unique house specimens are nevertheless an important factor in the district's character. Some architect-designed homes are known (i.e., 2523 Jefferson was designed by William W. Fife, a prominent Ogden architect), while others show the originality and sophistication that suggest an architect's involvement (i.e., 2580 Jefferson and 2504 Jefferson).

The Jefferson District could be considered the first "wave" of residential development that marched up the bench east of the main commercial district, beginning with the prosperous economy of the 1890's and continuing until the end of World War I. When the height of the Victorian period waned and the next generation of the prominent families of the neighborhood moved farther east (e.g., Eccles Avenue Historic district), the demand for housing close to the downtown area increased, and as the larger homes were sold, or the original owners died, the houses were divided into rental units to meet this demand.

Ogden grew and prospered so quickly in the late nineteenth century that it attracted real estate promoters and boosters from all over the country. William Hope "Coin" Harvey, perhaps the most famous of these, lived in the Jefferson District. Harvey (2671 Jefferson), who along with his group of boosters known as the Order of Monte Cristo, advertised Ogden as a railroad, mining, and livestock center. As a ploy to endorse Ogden's real estate, Harvey promoted Ogden's Carnival, a grand event planned to coincide with New Orleans' Mardi Gras. Although the carnival only lasted for a few days in 1890, Ogden gained national exposure and a boost in business and real estate. Newspapers outside Utah proclaimed Ogden as the "Boom City of the West." Although Ogden probably felt a slowing of business and growth in the mid-1890's with the "Cleveland Depression," it was booming again by the turn of the century. The townspeople built impressive brick buildings and invested in a host of new export industries which were serviced by the railroad: canning, flour mills, sugar beet production. One example of this is David Eccles (2580 Jefferson) who was the president of the Amalgamated Sugar Company and was instrumental in the development of other Ogden industries as mentioned previously. After his death, his son David C. Eccles (607 25th Street) took over as vice-president and general manager.

Of course, the railroad lay behind most of this prosperity. Railroad business fostered the growth of industry and banking, providing revenue for the construction of beautiful buildings and parks. Many of Ogden's leading financiers lived in the Jefferson District.

- David C. Eccles (607 25th Street) was the president of Utah National Bank of Ogden.
- Patrick Healy (2529 Jefferson) was a vice-president of Commercial National Bank.
- Abbott R. Heywood (2540 Jefferson) was a vice-president of Commercial National Bank.
- Isadore Marks (2547 Jefferson) was an important member of the Ogden community and was representative of the non-Latter Day Saint Utahns who had moved to the

intermountain west after the establishment of the railroad. He was also a vice-president of Commercial National Bank.

Some of Ogden's leading entrepreneurs who became wealthy by participating in railroad-related businesses also lived in the Jefferson District.

- Thomas H. Carr (2520 Jefferson) was one of the founders of Rexall Drug Stores, and owned and operated a prosperous drug store on 25th Street.
- Patrick Healy (2529 Jefferson) built the Healy Hotel located on the corner of Wall Avenue and Ogden's popular 25th Street, which was directly across from the Union Station, the hub of railroad activity in Ogden.
- Hiram H. Spencer (2555 Jefferson) was the mayor of Ogden and also the manager of the Eccles Lumber Company. He was the president of the Ogden Rapid Transit, and a vice-president of Amalgamated Sugar.

Many members of the controlling body that made up Ogden's local government lived in the Jefferson District. Among them were:

- Judge Jacob Boreman (2554 Jefferson) served as a second district judge during Utah's territorial period and practiced law in Ogden.
- Abbott R. Heywood (2540 Jefferson) was the mayor of Ogden and also a vice president of Commercial National Bank.
- Edmund T. Hulaniski (2523 Jefferson) who was significant to Ogden's politics by serving as city, county, and district attorney, police judge, and chairman of the county and city Republican Committees. From 1907 to 1909 he was a member of the Utah State Senate. He lived in the district from 1882 until his death in 1928.
- Thomas A. Whalen (2532 Jefferson) served on the city council, and was also a member of the executive committee for Commercial National Bank.

There were other influential people not previously mentioned, that lived within the Jefferson District and contributed significantly to the growth of Ogden.

- Emil Bratz (2640 Jefferson) established a successful real estate, loan and investment company and was the director of the Hurst Realty & Mercantile Company of Ogden.
- William Eccles (2555 Jefferson) was the brother of the influential businessman, David Eccles. William was affluent in his own right as the president of W.H. Eccles Lumber Company.
- Robert H. Hinckley (2560 Jefferson) was one of Ogden's most prominent Citizens who was recognized for local, state, and national achievement. He established the Hinckley Dodge automobile dealership in Ogden, was a director of the Chamber of Commerce, president of the Rotary Club, and helped develop the Ogden Airport and was a vice-president of Utah Pacific Airways. With his political success, he was asked to join the Franklin D. Roosevelt Administration as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce and the Director of Contracts Settlement. He established the Hinckley Institute of Politics at the University of Utah. He and Ed Noble worked together to

purchase the RCA network and reorganize it as the American Broadcasting Company (ABC).

- Abrelia Clarissa Seely Hinckley (2560 Jefferson) was also a contributing person in Ogden. She was a founder of the Board of Directors of the Ogden YWCA, and also the first president of the Utah Wool Growers Association Women's Auxiliary.
- John Hoxer (2540 Jefferson) manufactured and sold canvas products. He owned and operated Ogden Tent & Awning Company, a nationally known business in the canvas industry.
- Fred M. Nye (2546 Jefferson) was a leading Ogden retail merchant. He also served on the Ogden City Board of Education for 20 years, and was a Trustee of Utah State Agricultural College (now Utah State University). He was elected to the Ogden City Charter Commission, where he aided in drafting the City's council-manager form of government.
- Adam Patterson, Sr., (2547 Jefferson) was the organizer, president and general manager, of the Vineyard Land and Livestock Company. He was also director of the Utah-Idaho Central marriage, theocratic rule, and Mormon-Gentile conflict. Upon his retirement from a judgeship, he moved to Ogden where he practiced law and engaged in real estate.
- Thomas Jordan Stevens (2575 Jefferson) served in several capacities of government on the City and State level, and at one time was the Weber County Sheriff. He was the executive vice-president of the Utah Loan and Trust company, and served as advisor to two territorial governors. He was appointed as Commissary General on the staff of Governor Heber M. Wells, and held the rank of Colonel.
- William H. Wattis (2649 Jefferson), along with his brothers, established the Utah Construction Company, which grew into a major international multi-billion dollar business corporation. Among his other business interests were the Vineyard Livestock Company which controlled some 40 ranches of 250,000 acres of land located in Utah, Nevada and Idaho. He was also the president and vice-president of several Ogden companies, and the president of Dee Memorial Hospital of Ogden. In 1919, he was listed as one of the Men Who Are Making Ogden.
- Thomas Whalen (2532 Jefferson) was an active real estate man. He was also involved with the executive committee of Commercial National Bank, served for two years on the Ogden City Council, and was a tax appraiser. He also built the house located at 2540 Jefferson as the mirror twin of his own and in which John Hoxer resided.

Source: National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Ogden City Planning Division