

TOOELE COUNTY COURTHOUSE (TOOELE CITY HALL)  
Vine Street just E of State Route 36  
Tooele  
Tooele County  
Utah

HABS No. U-52

HABS

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

HABS No. U-52  
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UTAH

TOOELE COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
(TOOELE CITY HALL)

23 - Too

Location: Vine Street just East of State Route 36  
Tooele, Tooele County, Utah  
Geographic Location Code: 43-1940- 045  
Latitude: 40 31' 53" N Longitude: 112° 17' 49" W

Present Owner: City of Tooele

Present Occupant: Daughters of Utah Pioneers

Present Use: Relic Hall

Statement of Significance: This is one of few remaining century old civic buildings in the state, a simple but handsome pioneer structure.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:  
Tooele County 1867  
City of Tooele 1899  
Lessee: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1942 (50 years lease)
2. Date of erection : 1867
3. Architect: Not known.
4. Builders, suppliers, etc.: Builders: Isaac Lee, James Hammond, W.C. Gollaher, John Gordan, Plasterers: George Atkin, George W. Bryan.
5. Notes on original plan and construction of building and alterations: Basement was built first with jail cells, then a two room building, started by Isaac Lee, was purchased by the County and placed on the foundation. Jail quarters were subsequently enlarged.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

On January 16, 1855, the territorial legislature designated Richville, Utah, as the County Seat, a position it retained

until 1861 when the legislature repealed the act establishing the county seat there and authorized the County Court to locate the seat. Residents of Tooele City and E. T. City (named after Ezra Taft Benson of the Mormon Church) petitioned to hold an election for this purpose. This was granted and Tooele City was unanimously selected. Court Sessions were still held alternately at Tooele, Grantsville and Richville until 1867 when the courthouse was completed at Tooele. Some of the county officials at that time were Cyrus Bates, Selectman; Richard Warburton, Selectman; and George Atkins, Selectman.

On February 13, 1865 bids were submitted to the county officers for labor and materials to erect the Court House. Isaac Lee, James Hammond, W. C. Gollaher and John Gordan entered favorable bids and were approved to start construction. It was decided to excavate for a basement jail to be used in the event criminals were apprehended in the county. When this was completed, apparently as an economy measure, the County purchased a two room building from one of the contractors and had it placed on the foundation. The two rooms were plastered by George Atkins and George W. Bryan.

Upon completion the building was used for dramatic presentations, entertainments, community functions as well as for city and county business and record storage. On Christmas 1870 the first entertainment was held and the building was leased for \$400. It was not a financial success, as the lessees went broke, and the building was subsequently used only as a courthouse except for special occasions.

Jail quarters were subsequently enlarged, and city officials petitioned the county to let them use part of the building for city offices. This was approved and the building served as a city and county courthouse, jail, and records building until 1899 when the new County Courthouse was built and the county moved out. The city continued to use the building as a City Hall until 1941 when a new building was completed. In 1942 the City of Tooele leased the building for 50 years to the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, who proceeded to restore and preserve it as a museum and relic hall.

#### C. Sources of Information

##### Bibliography:

Daughters of Utah Pioneers, History of Tooele County, Publishers Press, Salt Lake City, 1961.

Inventory of the County Archives of Utah, Historical Records Survey, W.P.A., Ogden, Utah, 1939.

Salt Lake Tribune, February 11, 1945.

Tullidge, Edward W. Tullidges Histories, Volume II, Juvenile  
Instructor, 1889.

Prepared by John L. Giusti, AIA  
August 16, 1968

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

UTAH  
23. Top  
1.

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural interest: This is one of the earliest and simplest of Utah's public buildings.
2. Condition of fabric: Good (Owned and maintained by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers).

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions : Within a simple rectangular mass, 27'3" x 66'5", is enclosed a high ceilinged front space and a two-story rear portion.
2. Foundations: Stone, same as wall.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Stone from Settlement Canyon (Tooele County). Uncoursed rubble.
4. Structural system, framing: Stone masonry with wood framed gable roof.
5. Porches and stoops: Recent concrete stoop.
6. Chimneys: Simple brick chimneys on gable ridge at rear of building and over rear of major room.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Four panel entrance door with four light transom recessed in panelled frame. Arched openings at front over square headed windows and door.
  - b. Windows and shutters: 1874 picture shows nine-over-nine double-hung windows and upper and lower sash individually shuttered with louvered shutters. Now two-over-two. No shutters. Side windows boarded up and recesses used for display shelving.
8. Roof:
  - a. Shape, coverings: Simple gable. Original wood, shingles covered with composition shingles.
  - b. Cornice, eaves: Simple frieze has applied mouldings dividing it into three equal bands.

c. Belfry: Added sometime after 1874 photo.

UTAH  
23-Top  
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C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

a. First floor: Single large room behind which are two small rooms, a former vault, the original jail (now a kitchen) and the stair vestibule.

b. Second floor: A large room with a small vault or closet at the rear of the building.

2. Stairway: Wood framed stairway at northeast corner outside masonry walls.

3. Floorings: Narrow oak flooring covers original wide pine boards.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster above T and G wainscot in 6" widths.

5. Doorways and doors: Not original.

6. Decorative features and trim: No trim of note.

7. Lighting, type of fixtures: Modern electric.

8. Heating: Modern.

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. Orientation: Faces Vine Street on the south.

2. Landscaping and walks, enclosures: Abuts walk on south; Cleaning Shop on west; vacant lot on east; parking lot on north.

Prepared by Paul Goeldner, AIA  
Supervisory Architect  
Utah Project 1968  
June 28, 1968