

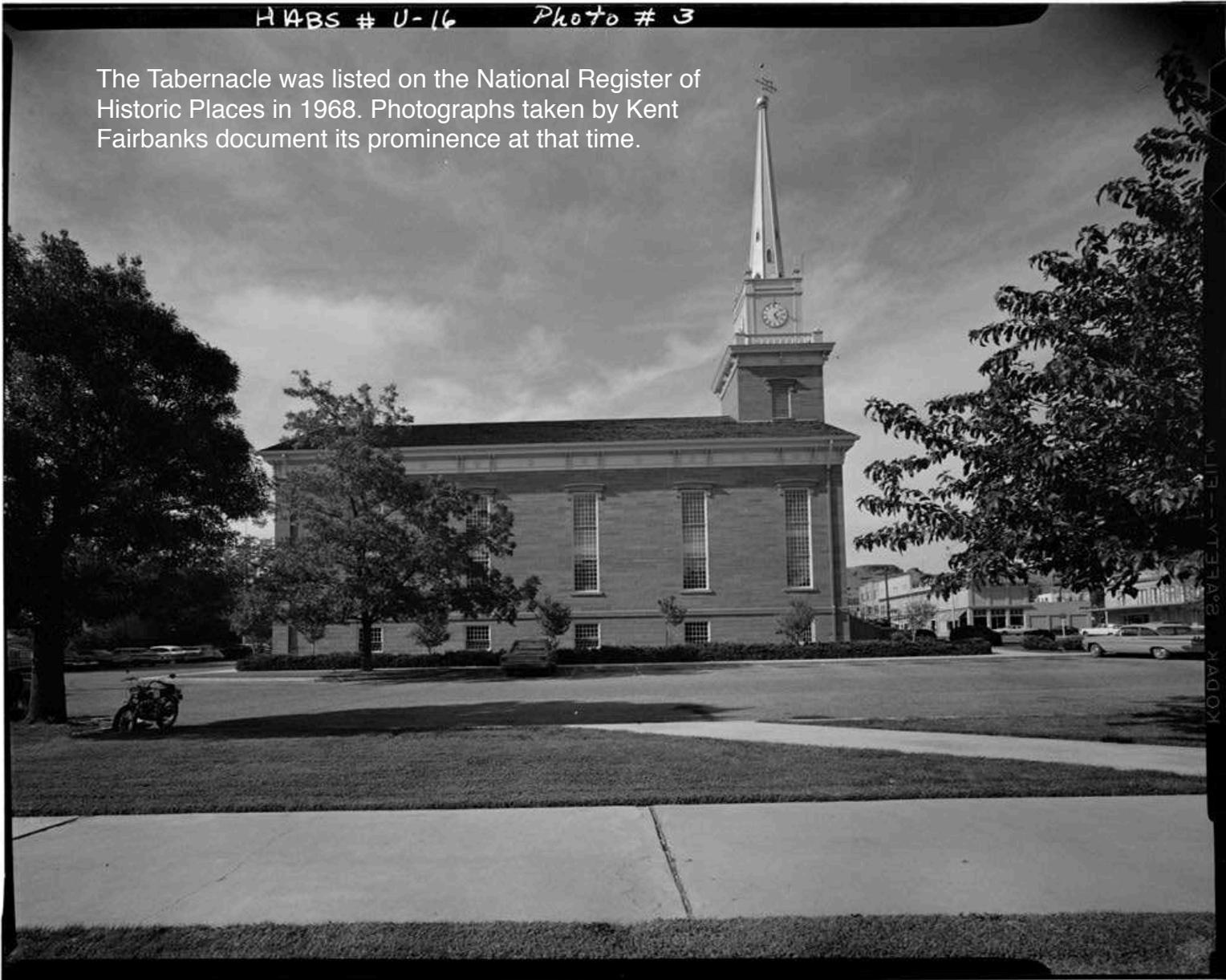
The general design of the meetinghouse was specified by Brigham Young in 1863. The Architect was William H. Folsom, who had been sustained as church architect in 1861. Miles Romney acted as assistant architect and chief carpenter. The chief mason was Edward L. Parry.

Construction began in 1863. The red sandstone for the walls came from the quarry adjacent to present day Dixie Red Hills Golf Course. Limestone for the foundation came from a small quarry in Middleton. Kilns were constructed there to burn limestone rock into powdered lime for the mortar to be placed in stone joints.

By 1869, when the main floor timbering was finished, meetings were held in the basement. The stonework and main roof were complete in 1871. Two years later in 1873, the first meetings were held. Work on the spire, four-sided clock, interior stairways, balconies and finishes continued until late 1875. The building was dedicated by Brigham Young in June 1876. More than 1500 people attended. In 1879, the Saint George Academy, forerunner of Dixie College, was established in the Tabernacle's basement.

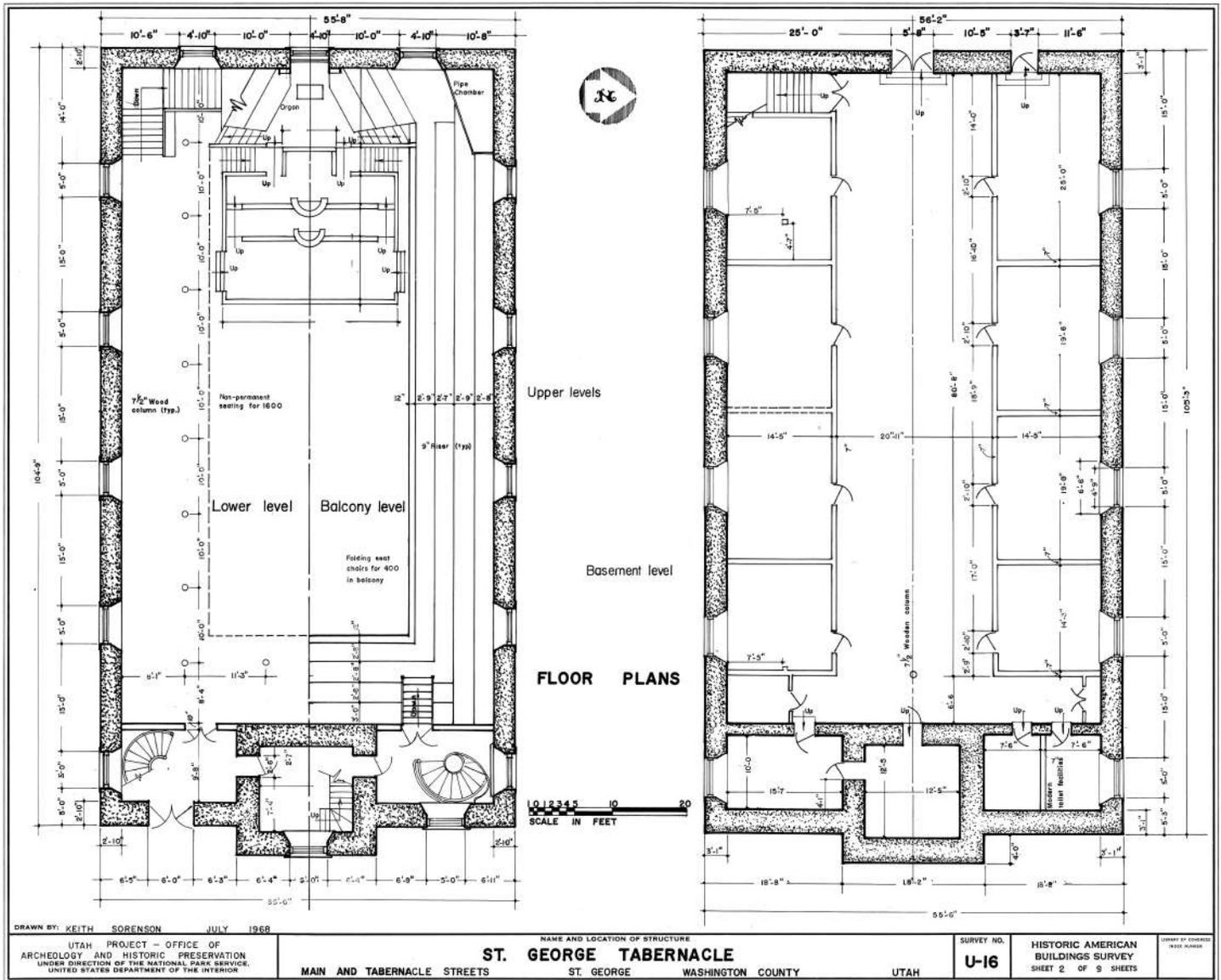
HABS # U-16 Photo # 3

The Tabernacle was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1968. Photographs taken by Kent Fairbanks document its prominence at that time.



The original town plat for St. George was a simple Mormon grid five blocks square with the Tabernacle occupying the central block. The plat evolved quickly changing five times in the first ten years. It grew toward the west and north bounded by Diagonal Street which was situated so that water from West Spring, near the present day Dixie Red Hills Golf Course, ran gently along it toward the center of town. The St. George Temple whose site was selected in 1871 was located past the eastern edge of the plat, and appeared to be just “outside” the town for decades.

These Historic American Building Survey drawings show the dimensions of the building.

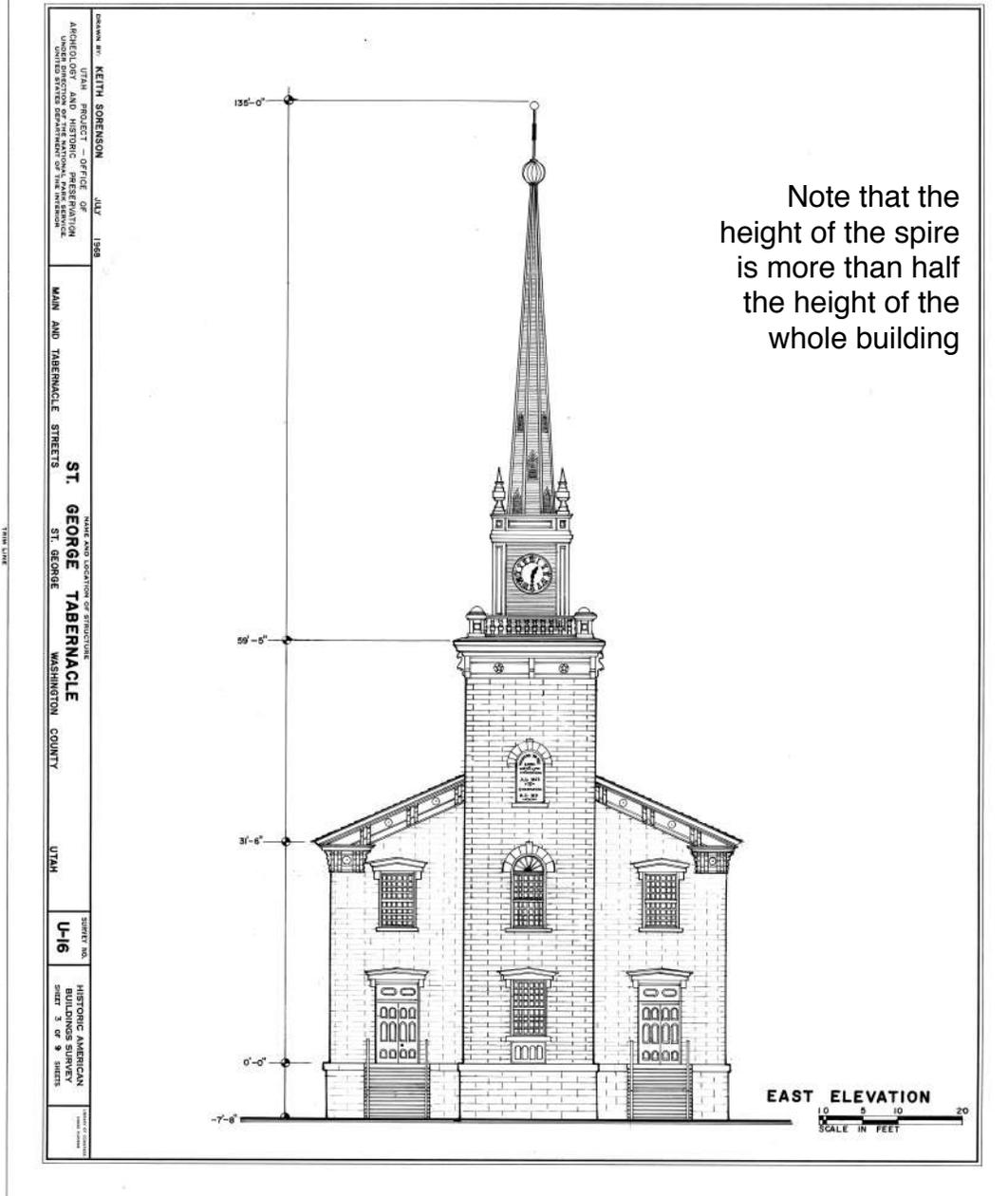


Note the stone walls are 3 feet thick.

Instructions were given by Brigham Young during late stages of construction to lower the balconies. This was done, but the intricate spiral staircases could not be changed requiring the additional of a few descending steps from the upper landing of the spiral stairs.

Washington County Historical Society  
St. George Tabernacle, February 8, 2019

In 1992, an earthquake caused the west (rear) wall of the building to separate from the other walls, leaning out as much as five inches. A local contractor, doing work nearby, used a backhoe to push the wall back in place before noon the next day.



On September 14, 2017 at about 9 am lightning struck the metal scaffolding which enveloped the entire tabernacle during most of a two year seismic renovation which acted like a lightning rod. Portions of the roof and attic timbers just south of the steeple caught fire. Prompt response by firefighters helped minimize the damage.

<https://www.cedarcityutah.com/news/archive/2017/09/14/jmr-lightning-strikes-st-george-tabernacle-starts-blaze/#>.



The 1962 film *Windows of Heaven* relates the events surrounding an 1899 talk church President Lorenzo Snow gave in the St. George Tabernacle concerning the law of tithing and the blessings that are received when tithes are paid.





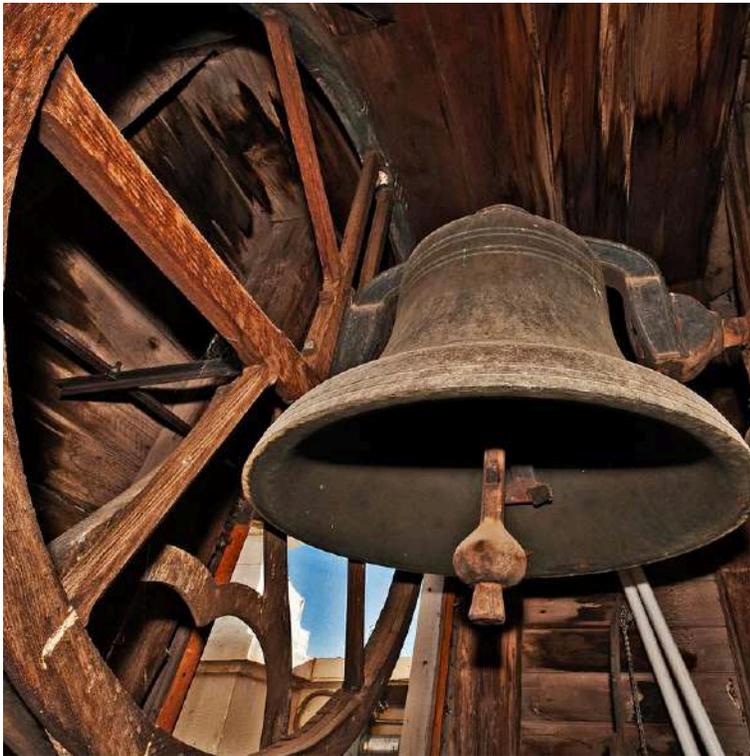
*Photograph showing the March 1935 funeral services held for the 10 people who were killed when Escalante No. 1 oil well exploded a few miles south of town on where Fort Pierce business park is today.*

Music has always been a significant part of Tabernacle events. The story of Saint George surveyor/choir master John M. Macfarlane and Catholic Priest Father Lawrence Scanlan of Silver Reef was retold at the rededication of the Tabernacle in July 2018 by LDS general authority Elder Steven Snow.

In 1878, when Macfarlane asked why High Mass was not performed at Silver Reef, Scanlan explained that they had no large building and no choir. Macfarlane discussed the matter with stake president Erastus Snow and an invitation was extended to use the newly finished St George Tabernacle and its choir. Catholic music was given to the choir master and in two weeks the choir knew the Latin mass. On 25 May 1879, Father Scanlan held High Mass, mostly attended by 3,000 local Mormons and miners.



*The intricate workings of the St. George Tabernacle's bell tower clock, 2018*



In the early days of Saint George, the four-sided tower clock performed a necessary and essential function in an agricultural village dependent upon water delivered by open ditches to homes, orchards and fields. The scarce and precious water was shared by time of day among the shareholders, each with their own discreet 'water turn'. Knowing the precise time diffused many arguments and insured equity in the distribution of water. Saint George's ditches were not replaced with pipes until 1912 and after.

The bell in the tower could be heard throughout town.

*St. George Tabernacle (1863-1876, Mormon)*

These two religious structures are more similar than might be expected given the where, when and by whom they were built. The tabernacle has a four sided clock and impressive twin spiral staircases. The tabernacle is built of native red sandstone.



*Old North Church Boston (1723, Anglican)*

Made famous for “one if by land, two if by sea” and Paul Revere in 1775. North Church has a famous bell tower. Both have steeples of similar design although Old North Church is taller at 176 feet vs. 132 feet. Both have balconies and similar seating layouts.





*Preston, Lancashire, England Temple and Boston, Massachusetts Temple*

These two Mormon temples dedicated in 1998 and 2000 have modern silhouettes derived from the St. George Tabernacle. Appropriately, church architect William H. Folsom was born in New England, chief carpenter and assistant architect Miles Romney was born in Lancashire. The architectural prototype of their collective memory which became the St. George Tabernacle served a century later as the inspiration for these charismatic temples built in their respective homelands.

G. G. L. City, Oct. 1, 1862.  
Elder Erastus Snow,  
St. George, Washington Co., U. T.,  
Dear Brother

Myself and company  
reached home in good health and spirits  
on the 25 ult., having enjoyed a pleasant  
and I trust mutually beneficial trip.

As I have ~~before~~<sup>always</sup> informed you, I  
wish you and the brethren to build, as  
speedily as possible, a good, substantial,  
commodious, well finished meetinghouse,  
one large enough to comfortably ~~accom-~~  
seat <sup>at least</sup> some 2000 persons, and that will  
be not only useful but also an ornament  
to your city and a credit to your energy  
and enterprise. To assist you in ~~at~~ a  
work so laudable and necessary, I hereby  
place at your disposal, ~~for to aid~~ <sup>amount</sup> express  
to aid in building the aforesaid meetinghouse,  
~~and~~ the labor, molasses, vegetable, and  
grain tithing of Cedar City, ~~from~~ <sup>from</sup> ~~and~~  
of all places and persons south of that  
city. ~~With so large an amount of assistance,~~  
I hope you will begin the building at the  
<sup>over</sup>

Letter from Brigham Young to Erastus Snow October 1, 1862 with instructions to build a meetinghouse for at least 2,000 persons.

# MASS IN D,

For 3 or 4 Voices,

By *W. C. PETERS.*

This Mass was originally written for Three Voices: Soprano, Tenor and Bass; to which an Alto has been added.

## KYRIE.

The musical score is arranged in five systems. The first system includes staves for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Organ. The Soprano and Alto parts begin with a rest, followed by the lyrics "Ky - ri - e,". The Tenor part also begins with a rest, followed by "Ky - ri - e,". The Bass part begins with a rest, followed by "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e,". The Organ part begins with a rest, followed by a series of chords and a melodic line. The second system continues the vocal parts with the lyrics "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." and "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." respectively. The Organ part continues with a series of chords and a melodic line. The third system includes staves for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Organ. The Soprano and Alto parts begin with a rest, followed by the lyrics "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." and "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." respectively. The Tenor part begins with a rest, followed by "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." The Bass part begins with a rest, followed by "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." The Organ part begins with a rest, followed by a series of chords and a melodic line. The fourth system continues the vocal parts with the lyrics "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." and "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." respectively. The Organ part continues with a series of chords and a melodic line. The fifth system includes staves for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Organ. The Soprano and Alto parts begin with a rest, followed by the lyrics "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." and "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." respectively. The Tenor part begins with a rest, followed by "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." The Bass part begins with a rest, followed by "Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son." The Organ part begins with a rest, followed by a series of chords and a melodic line.

Sheet music for the Catholic high mass which was performed by members John McFarlane's mormon choir in the newly finished Tabernacle in May of 1879.

Four men are closely associated with the construction of the St. George Tabernacle.



William Harrison Folsom, born in 1815, in New Hampshire. He and his wife Eliza were baptized in the Niagra River near Buffalo, New York in 1842 before emigrating to Nauvoo, Illinois where he worked as a carpenter and joiner on the Temple. He defended the city from the mob in the 1846 Battle of Nauvoo. Afterward, he was accosted for being a Mormon and hung by the neck. He survived. Went to the California gold fields to pay debts. Emigrated to Utah in 1860. Was set apart as church architect in 1861, and helped design the Tabernacle in 1863. Folsom's daughter Amelia was said to be Brigham Young's favorite wife.



Miles Romney, born in 1806. He and his wife, Elizabeth were baptized in Preston, England in 1837 before emigrating to Nauvoo, Illinois. He worked on the Nauvoo Temple. In 1850, his family arrived in Utah. He served a mission to Manchester, England from 1856 to 1858. Called to "Dixie" the family arrived in Grafton by 1862. He was sustained as chief carpenter and assistant architect upon the completion of the Tabernacle in 1876. Folsom and Romney ran a joint building business after 1864 in Utah. He died after a fall at the St. George Temple in 1877.



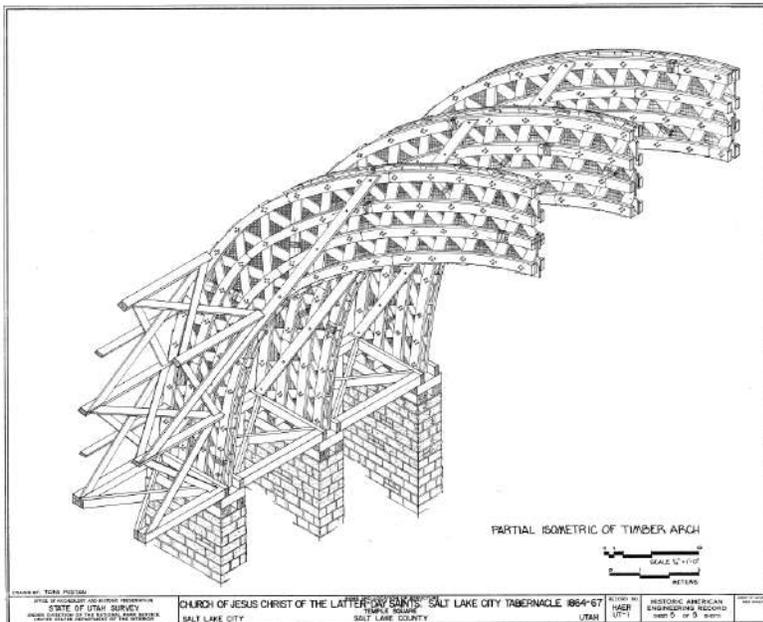
Edward Lloyd Parry, born in 1818, in St. George village, North Wales. His father, grand-father and great-grand-father were well-to-do brick and stone masons. He and his wife, Elizabeth Evans, were baptized in 1848, by mormon elder Abel Evans (my wife Jennifer's great-grand-father). He repaid a perpetual emigration fund debt within a year after arriving in Utah to work on the Salt Lake Temple in 1853. By 1863, he was in St. George serving as chief mason on the Tabernacle, the County Courthouse, and Temple. In 1877, he was in charge of the masonry for the Manti Temple designed by William H. Folsom.



Truman O. Angell, born in 1810, in Rhode Island, he accompanied Brigham Young and the first Mormon colonists to Utah in 1847. He served as Church Architect from 1850 to 1861, and after 1867 until his death in 1887. He was Brigham Young's brother in law. While he did not design the Tabernacle, he was the architect for the St. George Temple. He worked on the Kirkland Temple, and was chief joiner on the Nauvoo Temple, where he would have supervised both Folsom and Romney.



The Salt Lake Tabernacle in 1870. It was a landmark structure in many ways. Brigham Young wanted the roof to be an elongated dome with no interior columns. It was built between 1864 and 1867 on Temple Square. Mormon civil and railroad engineer Henry Grow was its chief architect. Church architect William H. Folsom was responsible for the 44 supporting sandstone piers and foundations.



The roof was constructed with an Ithiel Town (eastern architect) designed lattice truss arch system. Each arched truss was nine feet deep and built without nails. The large timbers are pinned together with wooden pegs. Green rawhide leather was wrapped around the timbers so that when the rawhide dried it tightened its grip on the pegs. The original roof's wood shingles were replaced with aluminum in 1947.

The 700-pipe organ was made by Joseph Ridges, who also made the original organ for the St. George Tabernacle. Many more pipes were added over time. The organ now has 11,623 pipes. At capacity it can seat 7,000 people.