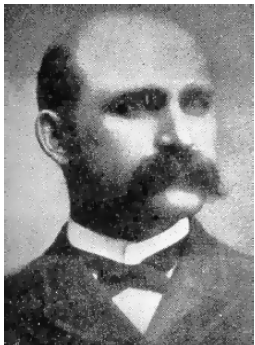




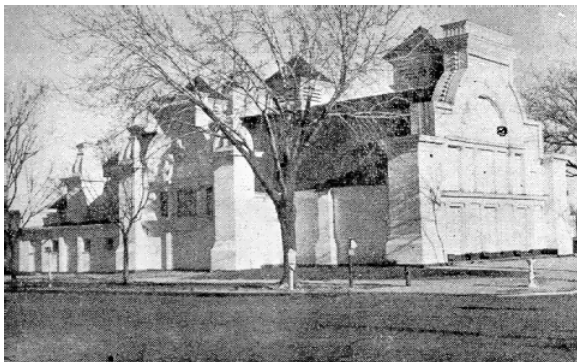
WILLIAM NICOL FIFE,
pioneer architect and
builder.



The original pioneer tabernacle building



WILLIAM WILSON FIFE
(son) remodeled the
tabernacle.



The Pioneer Tabernacle as it is today (1956)

The Pioneer Tabernacle

During July of 1855, when Ogden boasted some fifty families, William Nichol Fife, architect and builder of Salt Lake City, and Walter Thompson were commissioned by Brigham Young to come to Ogden and build a Tabernacle for the saints of this area. According to William Fife's diary, now in the possession of his granddaughter, Mrs. James (Iretta Fife) Lindsay, he received about \$100 and some foodstuffs in pay. They went to work under the direction of President Lorin Farr and in spite of the hard winter the work progressed satisfactorily with volunteer labor giving able support. Red pine logs were cut in the mountains east of Ogden and floated down Ogden River and sawed at Farr's mill. With nails costing \$100 a keg-and none to be had-it was necessary to fasten the timbers in the huge roof rafters and arches with wooden pegs. The foundation was of rock and the two-foot thick walls were made of adobe.

The structure located on the corner of 2nd and Main (22nd and Washington) originally had a plain dirt floor and the benches were made from hand-split logs. When Johnson's Army invaded Utah (1857-58) the tabernacle was utilized as a headquarters for the Ogden Division of the Utah Militia. Amidst the hardships of the times the saints sacrificed a great deal to complete the building, using it in the meantime for many meetings and entertainments. Finally completed it was dedicated on the 10th of October, 1859. Since most of the materials and labor were donated no account was kept of the original cost. Considered relatively large for the times, it seated 1,200 persons.

During the building of the Tabernacle, John Isaac Hart arrived in Ogden and in 1859 organized the first choir to be heard in the building. These twelve voices provided music for the Sacrament Services each Sunday afternoon. Continuing through the years the group was finally augmented with a small reed organ. Increasing in number and accomplishments during the following years under the direction of Thomas Hardy, Hugh Finlay, John Fowler, William Pearce, C. Wilford Hinchcliffe and George Hyde, the Tabernacle Choir received high recognition, including invitations to sing at the General Conferences in Salt Lake City.

After the coming of the railroad in 1869 a move began to plan and build a new tabernacle and to utilize the old one as a concert hall. Work was actually begun and red sandstone foundations reached a height of about four feet when the plans were abandoned and the center of the square became a heap of rubble and debris. Eventually, most of the red sandstone blocks were sold or given to

Pages 14 and 15 are reproduced from the 40 page Souvenir Program published for the dedicatory services of the new Ogden Latter-day Saints' Tabernacle, Sunday, February 12, 1956. President David O. McKay, Presiding.

as early as 1894 each woman in Weber Stake was asked to give 5¢ a month and her "Sunday Eggs" to a building fund for a Relief Society Stake Hall to be erected on the Tabernacle Square. The dream was finally realized when the hall was completed in 1902, becoming the first such hall to be built in the entire church. As the stake became divided and the need for a separate hall no longer existed, it was given to the Weber County Daughters of Utah Pioneers as a meeting place and relic museum.

During the many years Tabernacle Square was the center of community activity, housing circuses, carnivals, athletic events and other entertainment. "Buffalo Bill" brought his tent show, complete with Indian village, to the square several times.

In 1896, under the direction of President Lewis W. Shurtliff, a large county fair, called the Tabernacle Fair, was held to raise money for the remodeling of the Tabernacle. During fair week the whole tabernacle was fenced in and admission charged to view the many exhibits and entertainments provided. Handiwork, produce and other items were sold to aid the cause. Mrs. Richard Smith of North Ogden was chosen Queen after more than \$500 was raised in a queen contest. Other contests, dancing, sideshows, and all sorts of entertainment were included. Finally a total of \$15,000 was raised for the remodeling project.

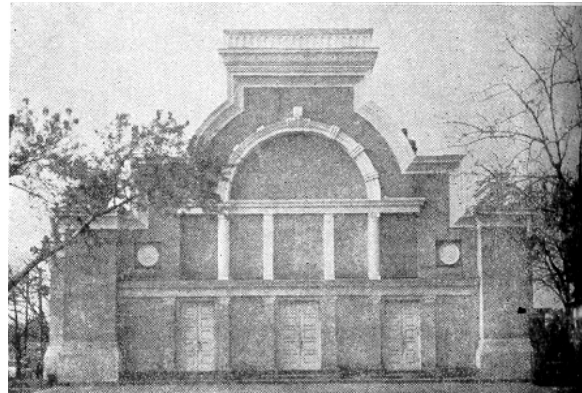
William W. Fife, son of William N. Fife, Tabernacle builder, and born during the early construction of the Tabernacle, was selected as architect and builder. He had served his apprenticeship under his father and assisted in the building of many landmarks still in use in Ogden. Although the building remained unchanged, the inside and outside were remodeled and redecorated. An imposing front and entrances, together with other side wings, sloping floor and other changes made it one of the outstanding edifices in the state. The vestry was made into a choir loft to provide quarters for the Tabernacle choir, now grown to 121 voices. A large reed organ (with elaborate dummy pipes) and pedalboard was installed and Squire Coop was called to direct the choir. Mrs. James Lindsay, daughter of William W. Fife, who supervised the remodeling, recalls how her father made all the plaster-of-paris molds from which the decorations on the great arched beams and cornices were made. Many present residents will remember the glittering array of lights that lined the interior arches when electricity later became a practical reality.

Ignace Paderewski, Josef Hoffman, Leopold

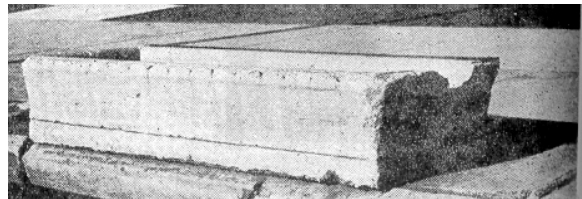
The program committee consisted of Albert L. Bott, Ferrell E. Carter and Julian R. Stephens, publisher. Mrs. Iretta Fife Lindsay was one of the important contributors.

No. 9860
OGDEN TABERNACLE FUND.
 I hereby agree to give _____
 monthly, for one year, for the completion of the
 Tabernacle in Ogden, and may God bless my reso-
 lution.
 (Sign Here) *Marianne Miss*
 Date *March 1933* Ward _____
 January _____ May _____ September _____
 February _____ June _____ October _____
 March *25* July _____ November _____
 April *5* August _____ December _____

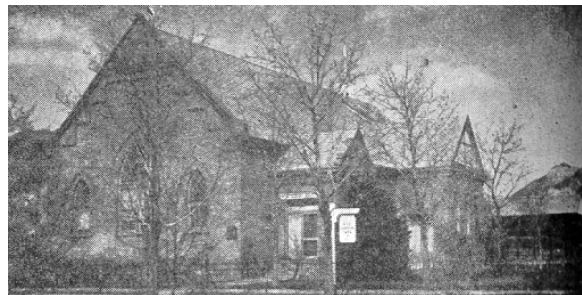
An original contribution pledge



A more recent remodeling covered front windows to eliminate traffic noise.



The old water trough cooled many a team.



The Relief Society Hall now a Daughter of Utah Pioneers museum.