



Preliminary Report: Sess Residence, 4114 Tennyson Street



Approximate date of construction: 1896

Original Owner: Theodore and Abigail Sess

Style: Queen Anne

Lot size: 6,340 *Zoning:* U-MX-3 *Zillow est:* \$901,400 (July 2019)

Description: Two-story; brick walls with brick quoins; decorative shingles on overlapping gable faces; cross-gable; segmental arch windows with stone sills; one-story enclosed porch; off-center porch topped by balcony with tapered square columns, balustrade, frieze, and brackets; projecting bay window or porch topped by balcony on south; brick chimney on rear. Three bedrooms, two baths according to Assessor. There appear to be three outbuildings.

Landscape: Set back from Tennyson Street. Slightly elevated lot enclosed on front by low stone retaining wall topped by wrought iron fence. Grass lawn with shrubs and trees). Commercial buildings on either side.

Alterations: Enclosed porch on front; two one-story rear projections.

History

Theodore Henry Sess, born in St. Louis, Missouri, 30 March 1852; died 27 January 1938 in Denver. He was the son of German immigrants Henry and Elizabeth Sess. His father was a carpenter who worked in New York and St. Louis before moving the family to Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1855. His father advocated for a free Kansas during the period of slavery and was killed at a sawmill he owned in 1863 (Theodore was 11). Theodore, the oldest child, attended public school. He then was apprenticed to a carpenter and cabinet maker in Creston, Iowa. Afterwards he worked in the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad carpenter shop for 11 years, becoming assistant foreman in the coach and cab department.

Theodore married Abigail Elizabeth Smith in Creston, Iowa, in August 1876 and the couple was wed 57 years. She was born on 2 November 1858 in Illinois, and died 13 May 1941 in Denver. They had two children, Herbert Henry Sess (1879-1968) and Mildred E. (1886-1915). The Sesses moved to Denver in 1889. In 1893 Theodore started his own carpentry business with partner O.N. Combs. The firm specialized in store and office fixtures and fine cabinets. Theodore was a member of the Carpenters & Builders Association. This house is likely also representative of his work and success in Denver.

Abigail "Abbie" Sess was listed as the first owner of the house; this was somewhat common in those days for men who owned businesses and wanted to protect their assets. As befitting an upper-middle class woman of the era, Abigail participated in local women's clubs, which were a way for educated women to combine social activities with educational, political, and charitable interests. Often, the clubs Abigail participated in met at this house and she was an officer in them. For example, in 1902 the Argyle Women's Club, of which she held various leadership positions, met in the house. In 1919 the Alcott PTA had a community sing there. The Berkeley Women's Christian Temperance Union met at the house in the 1920s and 1930.

The Sesses daughter, Mildred Evelyn, was a talented singer who often performed at gatherings. In 1906 the Sess family made a trip by covered wagon from Denver to Lander, Wyoming, where a relative lived. Mr. Sess went on part of the trip, leaving the family at times to return to Denver by train. Mildred, age 19, kept a journal of the trip with photographs. A video created from the journal and photographs can be seen on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhxvTyG4Jw0>



[Mildred Sess's Journal - 1906](#)

Journal of a cover wagon trip taken in 1906 from Denver, Colorado to Lander, Wyoming

www.youtube.com

Daughter Mildred died in January 1915 at the age of 28 and her funeral was held in the house. She is buried at Crown Hill.

An indication of the Sesses's wealth and prominence is the news report that Mrs. Crawford Hill, who was known as being part of the city's social elite, called upon Theodore Sess when she started a movement to raise money to support families of Colorado soldiers during World War I.

Following Mr. and Mrs. Sess's deaths their son Herbert inherited the house. It remained in the Sess family until 1969. In that year, Richard M. and Linda J. Voss became the owners, followed in 1972 by James E. and Guadalupe Aragon. The current owner is Richard A. Stewart.

Timeline

1894 Theodore Sess living on Dunkeld Ave. in Denver

1898 Abbie Sess, grantee, owner

1899 Theodore H. Sess of Combs and Sess, carpenters and builders. Herbert Sess graduated from North High school.

1933 Theodore H. and Abby E. Sess celebrate 57th wedding anniversary.

1938 Theodore H. Sess dies. Obituaries: DP, 27 January 1938, 34; RMN, 28 Jan 1938, 21; DP, 28 Jan 1938, 19; RMN, 29 Jan 1938, 34.

1941 Abigail Sess dies. Herbert H. Sess becomes owner.

1950 Herbert H. Sess, et al, owner by decree.

1967 Herbert John Sess & Jane S. Keeler: 1/6 each; Ted and Herbert 2/3 in JT. In same month Ted W., Herbert H. Sess 5/6) & Jane S. Keeler (1/6) grantees

1969 Ted W. Sess and Jane S. Keeler, grantee, Ritl

1969 Ted W. Sess, grantee, WD

1969 Richard M. and Linda J. Vose, WD

1971 Richard M. Vose, grantee, QC

1972 James E. and Guadalupe Aragon, grantee WDJT

Present Owner: Richard A. Stewart, Denver

July 2019. This property and two others nearby listed for sale:

Coldwell Banker Commercial
303-843-1600

Richard Drahn
Managing Broker
303-921-7902

Kristen Anilionis
Listing Agent
303-304-9900

Laurie Simmons, 22 July 2019