

Way We Were

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A high society wedding

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Pictured here is Lillian Keith, daughter of the mining millionaire David Keith, on her wedding day in 1900.

David Keith was born in Nova Scotia on May 27, 1847. In his twenties, he moved out to the western United States to take part in the mining and industrial boom. Having had some mining experience from jobs in Canada, he had no trouble finding work and rising in the ranks at mines throughout California and Nevada. He came to work in Park City at the Ontario Mine in 1882 and was tasked with helping to install and maintain the Cornish Pump, built to manage the large underground flow of water in the lower levels of the mine. He associated with Thomas Kearns and others to found the Silver King Mine, which eventually earned the men millions. Like many of the nouveau riche of Utah's mining districts, the men built mansions in Salt Lake City, notably along South Temple Street, some of which are still standing.

Lillian Keith was David's second daughter and third child by his first wife. At the time of her marriage she was nineteen years old and living in the family mansion in Salt Lake City. The wedding was widely reported in local newspapers. A lavish event at the Keith residence was described by the *Salt Lake Tribune*. The paper noted those in attendance, the music played, the decorations and color schemes, and the menu at the "elaborate wedding feast." Lillian's dress "was an exquisite creation of white Liberty chiffon en traine, with a high neck and long sleeves. The bodice and flounce were of rose point lace. Her tulle veil was clasped with a diamond sunburst and she carried a huge bouquet of bride's roses." Guests included many prominent Parkites such as James Ivers, of the Silver King, the Judge family of the Judge mining properties, and Thomas Kearns, also of the Silver King.

Lieutenant Albert Cooper Allen, a soldier in the United States Army who had served in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War, was the groom. The couple moved to Oregon in 1904 where they owned and operated apple and pear orchards and Allen made a name for himself in the emerging motion picture business. They also owned and cared for quite a menagerie complete with, among other things, elk, deer, and four kangaroos.

Lillian's marriage with A.C. Allen ended years later and both eventually remarried. She died in 1931 at the relatively young age of 50. Her father, David Keith, remained in Salt Lake and the Park City area. When he died in 1918, his funeral was well attended. The *Park Record* remembered him as "universally well-liked...a general favorite among all classes."



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Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum, David Keith III Collection

Caption: Mary Woodward, granddaughter of family friend Mrs. Mary Judge, and David Keith, Jr., Lillian's younger half-brother, led the procession at the Keith-Allen wedding in August 1900.