THE ARCHITECTURE OF CARSON CITY NEVADA

SELECTIONS FROM THE HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

number 14
THE
ARCHITECTURE
OF
CARSON CITY, NEVADA

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NUMBER 14
by S. ALLEN CHAMBERS, JR.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION** ........................................ page iii

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS**

- NEVADA STATE CAPITOL .................................. 1
- UNITED STATES MINT ..................................... 21
- UNITED STATES POST OFFICE............................. 37
- NEVADA STATE PRINTING OFFICE ....................... 47

**CHURCHES**

- METHODIST CHURCH ....................................... 56
- ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ................................ 66

**COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES**

- E. D. SWEENEY BUILDING ...................................... 78
- VIRGINIA & TRUCKEE RAILROAD SHOPS .................... 87

**RESIDENCES (arranged chronologically)**

- STEWART - NYE HOUSE ........................................ 102
- THE SMAIL HOUSE .............................................. 114
- G.W.G. FERRIS HOUSE .......................................... 121
- HENRY MARVIN YERINGTON HOUSE ......................... 133
- A. CURRY HOUSE .................................................. 150
- MATHIAS RINCKEL MANSION ................................... 162
- DAVID SMAIL HOUSE ............................................ 176
- ALFRED CHARTZ HOUSE ......................................... 186

Cover: Nevada State Capitol illustration courtesy Nevada Historical Society
INTRODUCTION

The records which comprise this book represent a portion of what is anticipated as a long range effort to record the architectural resources of the State of Nevada. This effort, undertaken jointly by the Historic American Buildings Survey and The Nevada State Park System, will hopefully result in a fuller understanding, documentation, and evaluation of the State's historic architecture, about which much yet needs to be ascertained.

As the initial step in this project, Professor Harley J. McKee, Supervisory Architect, National Park Service, undertook a threefold task commencing in August, 1972. Touring the state, he compiled a basic inventory of Nevada's structures, towns, ranch and mine complexes, and other building forms which are of visual, architectural, and/or historic interest; and consequently should become part of the records of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Secondly, using the inventory as a basis, Professor McKee suggested priorities for recording efforts, and arranged the subjects into geographical areas for convenience of future recording teams. Lastly, as an example of the sort of architectural records the Survey envisions to obtain throughout the State, he made a concentrated study of a selected area: Carson City. Essentially, Professor McKee's third section consists of detailed architectural descriptions on sixteen structures in Carson City, ranging from what is perhaps the State's foremost historic structure -- The Nevada State Capitol -- to a simple, unpretentious frame cottage typical of the vernacular idiom of Carson City's first decade. This volume encompasses the work of this third section.

Following Professor McKee's work, S. Allen Chambers, Jr., Architectural Historian, Historic American Buildings Survey, assumed the responsibility for obtaining and assembling historical data on the sixteen structures selected. This was primarily accomplished in Carson City in October and November, 1972. It was also during this time that the photographic recording of these buildings was begun. Except for the majority of the documentary illustrations, and one current photograph, Aaron A. Gallup of Sacramento, California has provided all of the photographs which accompany this report.

The Nevada recording project is under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey. In Nevada, Eric R. Cronkhite, Administrator, and Wilbur E. Wieprecht, Historic Preservation Specialist, Nevada State Park System, coordinated the project and gave direction to the recorders.
Those primarily responsible for the material herein presented could
not have accomplished their task without the assistance of many in­
dividuals. First and foremost is Mrs. Marshall Humphreys of the
Nevada Landmarks Society, who gave unsparingly of her time, energy,
knowledge, and material which she has gathered on Carson City's
historic structures. Information and documentation generously pro­
vided by Mr. Stephen E. Drew of Oakland, California was absolutely
essential in obtaining a full understanding of at least two of the
structures included in the survey - The Virginia and Truckee Rail­
road Shops and the Henry Marvin Yerington House. Mr. Drew also
supplied valuable documentary photographs, several of which are re­
produced herein. Reproduction of photographs identified as being
from The Drew Collection is restricted. Staff members of the Nevada
Historical Society in Reno, the Nevada State Archives in Carson City,
and The Nevada State Museum, also in Carson, were without exception
helpful and able to provide valuable material. Particular thanks
are tendered to Mrs. Pamela Crowell of the Nevada State Museum.
Lastly, all concerned with the project appreciate and give thanks to
the owners and occupants of the various buildings which have been
documented. They rearranged their schedules, (and only occasionally
their furniture) to accommodate the recorders, and for this we are
grateful.

As this is written, preparations are being made to send a "summer
team" to make measured drawings of several of these, and other,
structures in Carson City and the surrounding area. The material
thus produced will be added to that herein presented to form the first
chapter of the story of Nevada's historic architecture as recorded
by the Historic American Buildings Survey. If errors or omissions
are noted, it will be appreciated if they are brought to the attention
of The Survey, whose address is noted below.

SAC
The Library of Congress, where it forms a portion of the HABS archives. Copies of these records may be obtained, at the Library's stated prices, by writing to the Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540.

The Historic American Buildings Survey is carried on by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior in cooperation with the American Institute of Architects and the Library of Congress. The HABS collection, containing measured drawings, photographs, and other documentation for thousands of buildings in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, is one of the largest archives of its kind in the world. The Survey continues recording each year in an effort to fulfill its goal of broad geographic and typological representation of all periods of American architecture. For further information on the program, inquiries should be addressed to the Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.
NEVADA STATE CAPITOL

THE PLAZA

Nevada State Capitol, West (Front) Facade, 1875. Courtesy Nevada State Museum and Nevada Historical Society.
Nevada State Capitol, West (Front) Facade, 1972.

Nevada State Capitol, Central Pavilion West Facade, 1972.

Nevada State Capitol, South Wing Facade, 1972.
Nevada State Capitol, East Facade, Sept. 17, 1872. This, one of the earliest views of the structure, shows the East facade and porch to have been identical to the West Front originally. Courtesy Nevada State Museum.

Nevada State Capitol, Main Stairway and Hall, First Floor, 1972. Notice frieze in upper right corner, depicting the industries and resources of the state.

Location: The Plaza (bounded on the west by Carson St., on the north by Musser St., on the east by Fall St., and on the south by Second St. (which has been blocked off), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: The State of Nevada

Present Occupants: Offices of the State of Nevada

Present Use: Executive Office Building for the State of Nevada. The State Legislature now meets in a building to the south of the Capitol, completed in 1969. The former Assembly Chamber, in the north wing, is used as an art gallery, and the Senate Chamber as a museum.

Statement of Significance: This, the first capitol built by the State of Nevada, is a building of monumental character and harmonious proportions. It is of substantial masonry construction with classical details. Later additions have respected the style and details of the original construction.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The "Act to provide for the erection of a State Capitol" was introduced into the Nevada State Assembly on January 20, 1869, was passed, and signed into law by Governor Henry G. Blasdel on February 23, 1869. After securing plans, construction bids were taken and opened on April 14, 1870. The cornerstone was laid on June 9, 1870, and within six months the building was sufficiently complete to house the Fourth Session of the State Legislature. The building was completed by May 1, 1871.

2. Architect: The building was designed by Joseph Gosling of San Francisco. The original drawings are all signed:

   Joseph Gosling, Architect
   No. 9 Post Street
   San Francisco
   California

3. Original and subsequent owners: When Carson City was first platted in September, 1858, Abe Curry, the founder of the
town, saw to it that an area equivalent to four city blocks (10 acres) at the center of the town was reserved for the future state capitol. Curry's optimism and vision were aided by his shrewd manipulations, and it came to pass that Carson City was named the Capital City. When the Capitol building was constructed, it was naturally located on "the plaza," which had, some ten or eleven years earlier, been designated for it, and given for that purpose. Mark Twain described the site of the future capitol as it was in 1861: "a large, unfenced, level vacancy, with a liberty pole in it, and very useful as a place for public auctions, horse trades, mass meetings, and likewise for teamsters to camp in."*


4. Original plans, construction, etc.: Once Governor Blasdel signed into law the Act to provide for a Capitol, an architect had to be selected. The Act authorized the State Board of Capitol Commissioners, itself a creation of the Act, to secure an architect for a fee not to exceed $250.00. Joseph Gosling apparently found the terms acceptable, and drew up elevations, sections, and plans.

Several of his original drawings are preserved in the Nevada State Archives, which currently occupies the Capitol Annex. The drawings are:

No. 1. Front Elevation
No. 2. Roof and Basement Plans
No. 3. First Floor Plan
No. 4. Second Floor Plan
(no number) Sections and Plan of Cupola
(no number) Three Sections
No. 7. Lavatory

All of the drawings are signed by Gosling. They have been photocopied and are included in the HABS collection.

On April 14, 1870, the Board of Capitol Commissioners opened bids which had been received from six contractors. The bids ranged from a high of $160,000 to a low of $84,000. Peter Cavanaugh and Son, of Carson City, submitted the low bid and got the contract. The 1869 Act authorized $100,000 for the building. Money was to come from a special
tax levy, plus the proceeds from the sale of forty sections of public land. In order to keep costs down, the building stone was furnished by the State, free of charge, to the contractor; having been quarried at the State Prison Quarry just outside Carson City. In spite of this, the construction costs mounted to some $170,000, exceeding even the high estimate of 1870. The Legislature of 1871, to cover the rising costs, appropriated an additional $60,000 for construction, plus $15,000 for furnishings and $6,000 for contingent costs.

It was agreed that Cavanaugh would receive monthly payments, and that he would have the building ready by January 1871, in time for the Fourth Session of the Legislature to meet there. Assisting Cavanaugh in the work were W.J. Thompson, Foreman Carpenter, Carson City; Barney Radican, Foreman Plasterer, Carson City; J. Davis, Glazier, San Francisco.

On April 18, 1870, the first load of rock was delivered to the site, and on April 21, 1870, ground was broken.

The cornerstone was laid on June 9, 1870, with appropriate Masonic rites. A brass box, measuring 10" x 10" x 12" and lined with velvet, was deposited in the stone. The box contained "documents relating to the occasion, newspapers of the time, coins of the period, mine specimens," etc. The actual cornerstone is currently unknown.

Although finishing touches were still being applied in January 1871, the building was complete enough for the Legislature to meet in it. By mid-February, Governor Bradley moved in, and by May 1, 1871, the building was considered complete.

The glass panes in the windows and above the doors are of 26-ounce French crystal. Alaska marble was shipped in 20-ton blocks from Alaska to Richmond, California, where it was cut and polished, then shipped to Carson City, where it was used for the flooring on the first floor and for the wainscot.

The decorative frieze along the cornice of the first-floor halls was done by A.V. Higgins of Reno.

The building, as completed in 1871, was cruciform: a central rectangle 76' wide by 85' deep and two wings each 35' wide by 52' deep, with three-bay porches on the west and east fronts.
The first floor contained central halls extending longitudinally and transversely. In the central portion there was a major office at each corner: Governor's, Treasurer's, Comptroller's and Attorney General's; the last was smaller than the others and the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction was placed alongside. In each wing there were two offices on each side of the hall.

At the second floor, each wing was filled by a legislative chamber, the Assembly occupying the north wing and the Senate the south wing. They were connected by a longitudinal hall which contained two stairs giving access from the first floor. On the east side there was a Supreme Court room, flanked by two offices to the south and four to the north. The west side was occupied by the State Library and its reading room, and two offices for the Secretary of State.

A cupola on an octagonal base, with eight windows and an octagonal dome, admitted light to the second-story hall. The cupola remains, but the opening admitting light to the hall is now closed.

Both the west (principal) and east elevations comprised two-story pedimented central portions five bays wide, to which was attached a one-story porch three bays wide, at the center. Each wing was two bays in length. The whole rested on a podium of medium height and was surmounted by the central cupola. Corners were marked by quoins. Windows were round-arched with rusticated architrave trim.

5. Alterations and additions: In 1875, only five years after the building was constructed, the Nevada State Legislature authorized $25,000 to be expended on repairing and repainting the building and to erect an iron fence around the Plaza. Bids for the fence were called for, and the lowest, that submitted by Miss Hannah K. Clapp, for $5,500 plus $950 for freight charges, was approved. Miss Clapp, one of the pioneer educators of Nevada, was the founder of the Sierra Seminary, a private coeducational school in Carson City. She later joined the faculty of the University of Nevada, and apparently never ventured into the field of fence building again. The actual assembly of the fence, which was manufactured in Philadelphia by Robert Wood & Co., was done by Z.B. Ravenelle, a local contractor. The fence and gates still stand.

In 1891 a walkway was authorized to be constructed around the Capitol.
In 1899 the State Library, originally housed in quarters provided on the second floor of the Capitol, had expanded to take over the room formerly occupied by the clerk of the Supreme Court. Soon thereafter several thousand volumes were stored in the dome, and by 1904 their weight was causing serious structural problems. In 1905 the State Legislature authorized $40,000 for the building of an annex to house the State Library. The construction of the annex necessitated the removal of the superstructure of the one story porch on the east facade of the original building. The annex currently (1972) houses the State Archives.

In 1913 the Legislature authorized $60,000 for the construction of two wings to house the Senate and Assembly, and to provide more office space. The architect for this work was F.J. De Longchamps of Reno, whose design shows great sympathy for the original structure.* Bids were advertised on July 3, 1913, and opened on August 18, 1913. The low bidder was C.G. Sellman of Reno. His bid was for $41,420 and was accepted. Work was to have been completed by July 1, 1914, but it actually continued beyond that date and eventually cost some $60,000. Mr. De Longchamp's addition added new offices on the ground floor. On the second floor, the old Senate and Assembly chambers were removed, and their center sections made a continuation of the longitudinal hall of the old building. New offices and lavatories were installed in what had been the east and west thirds of these chambers, which occupy the entire second floor of the south and north wings respectively. On the halls of both floors, materials and trim of the original structure were imitated. Trim and decorative elements in the legislative chambers, however, were not copied from the original work, and are more strictly classic in feeling.

The State Archives has a wealth of documentation on the construction of these wings. Mr. De Longchamp's specifications (though not the plans), accounts, bids, and contracts are included. These are filed primarily in a container labeled "Capitol Commissioners, Board of, 1911-1939." The Archives also has similar material relating to minor repairs and changes made from 1864-1914.

*The drawings consisted of (1) Basement Plan, (2) First Floor Plan, (3) Second Floor Plan, (4) West Elevation, and (5) End Elevation and scale details. The architectural practice of Mr. De Longchamps, who was for many years in effect the State Architect, was taken over by Mr. Hewitt Wells, who has kept many of the former's drawings. The Nevada State Archivist is currently (1972) investigating the collection, which may include a set of the plans for the Capitol wings.
An elevator was installed in the building in 1948. In 1969 the dome was insulated, fireproofed and sheathed in fiberglass, the cost of this work being $75,000. Also under the administration of Governor Paul Laxalt (1967-1971), the Governor's Office was decorated in a late nineteenth-century motif.

Later in the same administration, after the removal of the Assembly and the Senate to the new Legislative Building, the chambers formerly occupied by these bodies, as well as the former Supreme Court and the hallways, were refurbished. The cost for this work was $96,000 and was under the supervision of Edward S. Parsons, architect, of Reno. New carpeting replaced the linoleum on the stairways at the same time. The firm of Solari and Sons did the papering the painting on this restoration. This restoration was finished in October 1970, although further work is planned, particularly in the two legislative chambers.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Inasmuch as this is the first building erected by the State of Nevada to serve as its capitol, and since it was opened only seven years after Nevada achieved statehood, the building has great historical interest and associations. Every Governor except the first (H.G. Blasdel) has had his office in the capitol. State Legislatures met in the building from 1871 until 1970. Names of all the officials, elected and appointed, who have served in the building, can be found in The Political History of Nevada (see Bibliography below).

From a preservationist standpoint, one of the more important pieces of legislation which emanated from the Capitol is "Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 22," passed at the 1959 Legislative Session. Quoted in full below, the Resolution came about as the result of a proposal made by the State Planning Board to demolish the Capitol and replace it with a new building on the same site. The legislators who used the building obviously felt much stronger about its significance than the planning board:

"Whereas, The state capitol in Carson City is of substantial cultural and historic value to the citizens of Carson City and the State of Nevada; and
Whereas, This historic building is a symbol of our glorious past and a constant reminder of the great men who served this state and nation; and

Whereas, The master plan of the state planning board provides for the demolition of the present state capitol and the construction of a modern replacement of the site; and

Whereas, It is better to preserve and repair than destroy, that which has meant so much to the history of this great state; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of Nevada, the Senate concurring, that the state planning board is hereby directed to discontinue any plans, designs or work looking toward the demolition of the state capitol until such time as authorized by a like resolution."*

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, XLV, February 23, 1878, p. 421 has a woodcut of the building.

Both the Nevada Historical Society, in Reno, and the Nevada State Museum, housed in the Old Mint in Carson City, have extensive photograph files on the Capitol dating from as early as 1872. Both sources have both exterior and interior photographs. Several of these have been photocopied for the HABS records and accompany this report.

There is an early lithograph of the Capitol facing page 17 of Thompson and West's History of Nevada (see first bibliographic entry). There is an 1875 photographic view of the building facing page 973 of Davis, The History of Nevada (see bibliography). Lastly, there is a circa 1871 photograph of the building reproduced as the first illustration in Nevada, A Guide to the Silver State, American Guide Series (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mort, 1940).

2. Bibliography:


*The matter was resolved with the construction of the new Legislative Building to the south of the Capitol in 1969.


Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
November 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: The first capitol built by the State of Nevada is of substantial masonry construction embellished with details adapted from classical prototypes.

2. Condition of fabric: The building, of monumental character and harmonious proportions, is in excellent condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The structure is 236' in width and 85' in depth, not including porch.

2. Foundations: The foundations, approximately 5' high are constructed of four courses of rock-faced sandstone with a beveled water table.

3. Walls: Constructed of sandstone, the walls are 3'-0" thick at the first story, 2'-6" thick at the second story. The
courses are \(1'\frac{1}{4}\)" in height and the face was roughly dressed with a pick and a narrow chisel. Mortar joints have modern pointing. There are alternating quoins at the corners, chisel-dressed with drafted margins and beveled joints.

The stonework of the original portion and of the 1913 additions are well matched. Material for both came from the same quarry, on the site of the State Prison, East Fifth Street, Carson City. This stone is a dull yellow or light brown. Its condition appears excellent. There is virtually no deterioration or discoloration or evidence of cracking and uneven settlement.

4. Structural system: The load-bearing masonry walls and major partitions support the wooden floor framing of mostly sawn timbers and the roof trusses of hewn and sawn timbers with iron tension members. Purlins extend horizontally from truss to truss. There has been some modern strengthening: additional columns under the first floor and some splicing of key timbers in roof trusses.

5. Porches: A one-story porch with four wooden Tuscan columns having slender and fluted shafts and a wooden entablature, is centered on the west front. It is one bay in depth. Six granite steps lead up to each bay, between sandstone pedestals. The floor is concrete.

The east porch was similar originally; now only the platform remains. An open porch one bay wide by three bays in length connects with the Annex (built 1905). This has six fluted wooden, modified Tuscan columns with concrete bases supporting a narrow entablature and a second-story enclosed wooden passageway with three semi-circular arched windows on each side. Each window is divided by a Tuscan colonnette; each half being semi-circularly arched. There is a small roundel window in the lunette.

At the north and south entrances there are granite steps and a stoop.

6. Chimneys: None presently visible

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors: There are similar doorways at the center of all four sides. Each is recessed behind a semi-circular arched masonry opening with rusticated architrave trim. The reveal is paneled in wood with a
flat paneled soffit. The interior wooden wall of this recess has an arched opening, the upper half of which is glazed with rectangular panes. Above the transom is a pediment supported on thin colonnettes with modified Corinthian capitals. In the tympanum of this pediment there is an ornamental relief. The doors are double, perhaps dating from 1913. Each has a single large beveled plate glass light above a moulded panel. Each is hung on three large brass or bronze butt hinges. The floor of the entrance reveal is paved with marble similar to the interior hall. The threshold is brass or bronze.

b. Windows: Typically the windows are in a semi-circular arched masonry opening with rusticated architrave trim with interior splayed reveals. The sills are wide and are supported on two sandstone brackets. The opening contains wooden tracery, the central mullion being a fluted colonnette with a capital of inverted bell shape. There are two round-arched divisions and a circular division at the top. Sash are double hung: one light over one light at the first story, and are taller at the second story, with two tiers of lights over one light.

8. Roof:

a. Shape: The roof is gabled and is covered with material resembling composition shingles.

b. Cornice: There is a wooden cornice, generally conforming to a Roman Corinthian entablature. The modillions are somewhat blocky, however, and the frieze contains long horizontal panels. The gables are pedimented. A wooden balustrade extends along the edge of the roof, except at the pediments.

c. Cupola: On the ridge of the central pavilion there is a wooden octagonal cupola, domed with sheet metal. There is an arched opening on each side, divided by a central mullion with a Corinthian colonnette, with a large paneled key block. At each side of the opening there is a paneled pilaster strip with brackets at the top and scrolled buttress at the side.

Above a wooden cornice containing a dentil course, there are two "steps" and then the dome, which has a double
curved profile (an inverted cyma-recta).

At the base of the cupola there is a plain octagonal drum.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Plan: First floor - Longitudinal and transverse halls give access to offices at each side. Second floor: Legislative halls, now given over to displays, occupy the north and south ends; between them a longitudinal hall gives access to offices at both sides.

2. Stairways: Symmetrical similar stairs are located in the longitudinal hall. Each is a straight flight, seventeen risers to a landing and sixteen more risers to the second floor. There is a large ornamental wooden octagonal newel with a moulded handrail and two turned balusters per tread. The openstring has ornamental step ends. There is a wooden dado with moulded panels, base and rail up the run.

3. Finish: First floor, general- The first-story halls are floored with gray figured Alaskan marble. In the halls there is a wainscot of gray figured Alaskan marble, the pieces being matched. Door-ways have a plain architrave trim; typically, there is a glazed transom, a door with one large glazed panel and a moulded panel below. The reveals of the openings are paneled in wood. In the offices there is heavy moulded architrave trim around doorways; doors have six panels. In the office now occupied by the Comptroller (originally the Treasurer's Office), much of the trim appears to be original; some newer partitions in this area have matching trim.

A painted frieze extends around the halls; garlands hung from upright miner's picks are supplemented by symbols and words representing the natural resources of the State. There are narrower ornamental bands at the top and bottom of the frieze. Brown, yellow and green predominate.

Above the end of each stair there is a "diaphram" arch springing from moulded corbels.

Door butt hinges are ornamented with scrolls.

Governor's Office: This office is in its original location.
It is divided by a wide wooden archway of elliptical form, with architrave, impost and archivolt. A composition wainscot, above a wide moulded wooden base, is enriched by a small-scale geometrical pattern. There is a wide plaster moulded cornice; in one half of the room there is an egg-and-dart moulding below it. Reveals of doorways are paneled in wood. An ornamental plaster centerpiece in the ceiling of the larger area is a replacement, said to be a replica of the original. An electric fan suspended from the ceiling was installed in recent years; it is an early twentieth-century piece brought from Goldfield, Nevada.

In the southeast corner of the office is the original built-in iron safe. The door, which is four-paneled on the side facing the room, swings on pivots. It retains its original combination lock, to which a modern lock has been added.

This room contains two old steam radiators. They are probably not original, however, because it is thought that the room was originally heated by stoves.

Hall, second floor: The stair railings continue around both stair wells, and the paneled wooden dado along the wall at one side of the stairs continues around this hall. There is a moulded plaster cornice with an enriched ovolo bed moulding, and a narrow frieze; this is painted brown and yellow.

Door trim consists of a wide moulded architrave and the reveals are paneled. Doors have six raised panels, with panel moulding. Above them there is a moulded transom bar and glazed transom.

On the ceiling there are two plaster centerpieces. Walls and ceiling are plaster, painted. Five electric chandeliers are suspended from the ceiling; although these are modern they were made following old drawings. The second and the fourth chandeliers hang from ornamental medallions, while the first, third, and fifth do not; the first and fifth are in the newer portion of the building. These mark the center of the old legislative chambers.

Supreme Court Room: This room is now used for other purposes: meetings, etc. Its corners are rounded. There is a wide plaster frieze, in which bands of enriched mouldings (egg-and-dart, guilloche, leaf-and-tongue) alternate with plain fascias. Above the cornice there is a small
cove. In the ceiling there is an ornamental centerpiece.

Trim in this room is generally similar to that in the hall but the wainscot is not paneled. Two semicircular-arched windows on the east wall have moulded plaster hoodmoulds carried on foliated corbels; this may be typical of the original part of the building. On the south wall there is an oak wall-piece three bays wide; the bays are marked by Ionic pilasters and columns, the central one crowned by a pediment. The judge's bench is not original to this building, having been obtained from the old Washoe County Courthouse.

Offices, second floor: These rooms are generally simple; they have had some partitions inserted and some mezzanine storage areas built. There is a moulded base on a high plinth, and a narrow moulded cornice.

Legislative Chambers: These rooms, constructed in 1913, are similar. At each corner there are coupled fluted Roman Corinthian pilasters. Above the entablature there is a large cove. In the ceiling there is a large square panel (apparently once a skylight) with its border featuring a guilloche and smaller enriched mouldings.

Above the entrance vestibule to each chamber there is a shallow gallery carried on four Tuscan columns. There is a balustrade above the entablature of this order. Opposite the entrance, on the end wall, there is a Speaker's rostrum, framed by coupled Corinthian pilasters. The rostrum is varnished oak: panels between small Ionic pilasters.

There are three arched windows on the west wall, and one on each side of the Speaker's rostrum. They have enriched hoodmoulds with consoles and key blocks in the form of consoles. The pedestal of the Corinthian order forms the wainscoting of these chambers.

4. Finish, wood - Original woodwork is quite dark brown, painted to imitate wood graining. That in the 1913 additions matches it. In the offices, some of this wood trim has now been repainted, in light colors.

D. Site and Surroundings:

The capitol is located at the center of a square "plaza," which is two blocks long on each side. The main facade faces west to Carson Street. On the east axis there is a semi-detached Annex.
At the northeast corner of the plaza there is a modern state office building. The area is planted with trees, and traversed by axial and diagonal walks.

1. Fence: An iron fence surrounds the capitol plaza, with openings at the entrance to walks; no gates remain. Pedestals are cast, rails are rolled, and pickets are rolled with cast "spear points" and junction pieces. The base is one course of large sandstone blocks. The pedestals bear the name of the makers: Robert Wood & Co., Philadelphia.

2. Outbuildings: The Annex - this was built in 1905 as the State Library. It now houses the State Archives.

The Annex is basically octagonal, two stories above a high basement, with a projecting vestibule wing on the west side. The over-all dimensions are about 58' in diameter, and 68' long, including the vestibule.

Foundations are high (seven courses of stone), with a rock-faced beveled water table.

Walls are rock-faced sandstone ashlar, the only drafted edges being at corners of the building, and at openings. The corners of the octagonal part of the building are marked by two rock-faced pilasters having sheet-metal, Doric capitals.

The entrance doorway, centered on the west side, is rectangular, the head consisting of a flat arch. There are double doors with a transom. A similar entrance on the east front is approached by thirteen granite steps between cheek walls.

On each side of the basement there is a single rectangular window: flat arched. At the first story there are three windows on each side which are closely spaced. The central one is larger than the others. They have a transom and flat arches. At the second story each side contains a group of three windows, of which the central one is semi-circular arched. The smaller windows flanking it are flat arched, their heads being at the spring line of the central opening. The central opening is divided by wooden tracery into two windows and a circular light is in the tympanum.

The cornice is a three-part entablature of sheet metal, painted white.

The roof is pyramidal in shape, of low pitch, and carries a large cupola and is covered with sheet metal. On each of
the eight sides of the cupola there are two bays of semi-circular-arched windows framed by Corinthian pilasters. Above the entablature there is an octagonal dome having a semicircular-gabled dormer with a round window at each side. Above the dome, on a low pedestal, there is an open octagonal lantern with stubby Corinthianesque square columns, an entablature, and a small octagonal dome with a finial.

Above the vestibule wing there is a pair of octagonal domes of pointed section, each carrying an open lantern, comparable to the main one but simpler in detail.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
UNITED STATES MINT

CARSON ST. between ROBINSON & CAROLINE STS.

United States Mint, South Side (left), and East Facade, circa 1879. Except for the removal of chimneys and the large stack, this view is essentially the same now as then. Photo courtesy Nevada State Museum and Nevada Historical Society.
United States Mint, Front (East) Elevation. Original drawing, courtesy Nevada State Museum.

United States Mint, Front (East) Facade, 1972.
Built as designed, except for subtle variations in the belvedere and spacing of cornice brackets.

United States Mint, North Side and New Annex, 1972. Stones in wall in foreground are from old annex.
UNITED STATES MINT (NOW NEVADA STATE MUSEUM)

Location: On block bordered by Carson, Caroline, Curry, and Robinson Streets (building faces east on Carson), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: State of Nevada

Present Occupant: Nevada State Museum

Present Use: Museum and offices of Nevada State Museum

Statement of Significance: This was the first building designed by Alfred B. Mullett after his appointment as Supervising Architect to the Treasury Department in 1866. The structure has important historical associations, and in spite of a current usage far different from its original, the building is largely in original condition.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The plans, specifications and authorization papers for the construction of the mint arrived in Carson City on July 17, 1866. Ground was broken the next day at 8:00 a.m., and the cornerstone laid on September 24, 1866. Delays in appropriations, labor disputes, high costs, etc. plagued the construction, but on December 13, 1869, after an inspection, the architect pronounced the building completed to his satisfaction.

2. Architect:

Alfred Bult Mullett (1834-1890) served as Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department from 1866 until 1874. His tenure of office coincided with an accelerated government building program following the Civil War, and Mullett was responsible for the design of many public buildings in cities and towns throughout the country. The buildings erected by the Treasury Department while Mullett held the office of Supervising Architect are unexcelled by any American structures of their time in scale and solidity of construction.
Mullett was born in Taunton, England on April 7, 1834. In 1843 his family emigrated to the United States, settling in Glendale, Ohio, a suburb of Cincinnati. Mullett received his academic training in Ohio and Europe, and in 1860 was employed in the office of the noted Greek Revival architect, Isaiah Rogers, who had moved to Cincinnati in 1848. Rogers became Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department in 1862 and brought Mullett to Washington as a member of his staff. Mullett's rise in rank was rapid, and in 1866 Secretary of the Treasury Hugh McCulloch appointed him to the post of Supervising Architect.

Mullett inherited the classical tradition of Federal building from his predecessor and mentor, Rogers. In Washington he completed Robert Mill's Treasury Building by adding a north wing, adhering closely to the style in which Ammi B. Young and Rogers had built the south and west wings. Mullett's Post Office and Courthouse in Portland, Maine and his Custom House in Portland, Oregon also reflect the style which had become so identified with government buildings of the young nation.

The Old San Francisco Mint has been adjudged Mullett's most important work in the Classic Revival style. In fineness of detail and quality of construction, it carried on the principles which had influenced public building for over 30 years. As the last major example of Classic Revival architecture, the Mint signaled the end of an era in American monumental architecture.

Mullett also worked in the more elaborate and decorative style of the Second French Empire. As Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department, he was responsible for many Federal buildings executed in this lavish style including post offices in New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, and St. Louis and buildings elsewhere including assay offices, custom houses, and hospitals.

The former State, War, and Navy Building was the grandest edifice erected in Washington, D.C. in the Second French Empire style and was rivalled elsewhere in the nation only by John McArthur, Jr.'s Philadelphia City Hall. The State, War, and Navy, now the Executive office building, was the capstone of Mullett's career. However, personal conflicts during the building's long period of construction eventually
led to Mullett's resignation and the end of his career of public service. He continued in private architectural practice in Washington, D.C. until October 20, 1890, when he took his life in a fit of despondency over the failure to receive compensation claimed for his work, done many years earlier, on the State, War, and Navy Building.

3. Original and subsequent owners: The United States Mint is built on Block no. 65 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City. (Frank M. Proctor and B.F. Green were two of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which Carson City was platted). The following references to this block are from the Ormsby County, Nevada Deed Books:

1863: Deed September 22, 1863, recorded in Book 5, page 196. The United States of America purchased the South half of block 65 from Moses Job and Margaret Job, his wife.

Deed September 28, 1863, recorded in Book 5, page 199. The United States of America purchased the North half of Block 65 from James L. Riddle.

1865: Deeds, May 3, 1865 and June 19, 1865 recorded in Book 9, pages 185, 186. Reaffirmations by Riddle and Job of the 1863 sale.

1939: Deed, December 8, 1939, recorded in Book 46, pages 169-174. The State of Nevada purchased Block 65 from the United States for $5,000 for the Nevada Museum and Art Institute, it having been declared that there was no further Federal need for the building.

4. Original Plans, construction, etc.: Many of the original drawings, both for the building and the mint machinery housed therein, are preserved in the Nevada State Museum. A partial list of the drawings - furnished by the museum - is as follows:

1. Originals and prints - Basement, first and Second floors, U.S. Mint
2. Mint Building - elevations
3. Machinery plans
4. Tanks, shops, etc.
Construction began on the Mint on July 18, 1866, and the Carson Daily Appeal prophesied that the building would be completed by winter. However, the initial construction took over three years to complete.

Abraham Curry, Superintendent of Construction, first hired Chinese laborers to do the work, but was forced under pressure from the townspeople to hire Occidentals at a far higher rate. By the winter of 1866-67, only the footings, extending seven feet below the basement floor, had been laid. Work was suspended until April 9, 1867, because of the severe Nevada winters. When it was resumed, work proceeded rapidly, and the roof was on by December. However, finances were in a precarious state, and on December 5, Curry left for Washington to plead for more funds for the building and its machinery. He was successful in his efforts and by the summer of 1868, the interior cabinet work was being completed. Most of the machinery arrived in November 1868, and by the end of that year, all that remained to be built was the chimney stack. The fire brick had arrived too late for construction that winter; consequently the stack was not finished until the spring of 1869. On November 1, 1869, Curry, who had by now become Superintendent of the Mint itself, in addition to being superintendent of its construction, made a test of the machinery, and found it to be operational. In December, Architect Mullett pronounced the building complete.

The Mint is constructed of sandstone blocks from the Nevada State Prison Quarry, (which had been opened originally by
Curry. The common brick, used in interior partitions, the cupola, etc. came from the Adams Brick Works in nearby Genoa, Nevada. Fire brick for the furnaces and stacks was ordered from England. By the end of 1869, the total expenditure on the structure was $426,787.66.

Thompson and West, in their History of Nevada give the following description of the Mint and its construction:

"Granite from the prison stone quarry. Pict (sic) style of architecture. Portico, Ionic. Hall, twelve feet in width; main hall 12 x 40; on the right of the entrance. Paying Teller's office, 13 x 16 feet. Coining room, 19 x 19. Spiral staircase conducts above. Whitening room, 10 x 1 1/2 with a vault in solid masonry 5 x 6. Annealing furnace and rolling room, 17 x 24. Gold and silver melting room, 10 x 24. Melters and refiner's office, 12 x 19 feet. Deposit melting room, 14 1/2 x 19. Deposit weighing room, 19 x 19, with a strong vault 6 1/2 x 10 1/2 feet. Treasurers' office, 13 x 16, with a vault five feet square. Engine room, 16 1/2 x 53 feet. Beside which there is a cabinet, adjusting room, ladies' dressing room, watchman's room two store-rooms attic, basement. As a preventive against fire the floors are double, with an inch of mortar between. The foundations are seven feet below the basement floor and laid in concrete. Building two and a half stories high."

5. Alterations and Additions: In his report to the Treasury Department on December 13, 1869, Mullett, while announcing the building completed, noted that additions would be needed in the near future. In November 1873, the Director of the United States Mint came to Carson City from Washington to investigate the possibility of enlarging the facility. He recommended immediate expansion, but funds for the addition were not yet forthcoming. However, early in 1874, the Superintendent of the Carson City Mint added new tanks, furnaces, and chimneys, and was able to double the refinery's output. In 1875, another Washington official inspected the facility and recommended its enlargement, and again no funds were appropriated. In January 1876, the Superintendent of The Mint went to Washington to seek funding. He got Representative Woodburn of Nevada to introduce a bill requesting $200,000 for the purpose, but the bill was defeated.

Finally, in October 1878, work on the addition was begun. The old boiler room was demolished and a 64' x 27' stone wing added in its stead. The addition housed a new and enlarged
boiler room, an engine room, carpentry shop, and store-
room. The addition, in 1878, was only one story in height.
In September 1881, construction was commenced on a second 
floor to the rear wing, to house a new refinery. This was 
completed in November 1881.

The Carson City Mint was made an Assay Office in 1899, and 
remained so until 1933. It was then used by the United 
States Government as an office for the Works Project Admin-
istration. In 1939, the building was sold to the State of 
Nevada for Museum usage.

The Mint was first remodelled for museum use in 1941. 
Work began on February 2 and the building was dedicated and 
opened to the public in October. The "remodelling" consisted 
primarily of repairing and renovating, rather than completely 
altering the building. The original iron shutters, the 
granite stairway, vaults, etc. were left in place. In 1959 
the Clark J. Guild Hall, containing additional exhibit space, 
was built to the southwest of the building; directly behind 
the main block and south of the rear wing, with which it 
shared a common wall. In 1971 the rear wing which had been 
added in 1878-81 was demolished and replaced by the John W. 
Calhoun Annex, which includes both exhibit areas and admin-
istrative offices of the museum. Stone from the demolished 
rear wing (which is also sandstone from the Nevada State 
Prison Quarry), was used in a wall around the parking lot 
on the northwest corner of the block, as coping for the 
annex, and also in the new Ormsby House Hotel in Carson City. 
The Nevada State Museum has the plans for the work done in 
1959, in 1971, and for the earlier remodelling work done on 
the Mint building itself, as follows:

Plans for 1958 addition
Loose sheets, C.J. Guild Annex
Preliminary plans - Structural and safety construction
Safety corrections 1961
Safety survey report - John Webster Brown
Proposed Annex, 1964 (North annex)
Floor plans visitor's guide
NSM Heating system
Heating plans, first and second floors
Floor plans, second floor
Remodelling Mint Building
Basement plans
Floor Plans for NSM, 1st and 2nd floor
New Annex negatives and prints, 1964-
B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

Many historic personages are involved in the story of the Carson City Mint. The first superintendent, who had earlier been the Superintendent in charge of building, was Abraham Curry, the founder of Carson City (see A. Curry House, HABS No. NEV-13-13). Instrumental in having the Mint established were Nevada's first two Senators, William B. Stewart and James W. Nye (see Stewart-Nye House, HABS No. NEV-13-12).

A list of the Superintendents of the Carson City Mint and the years in which they were appointed, is found on page 104 of Mint Mark "CC" (see bibliographical information below). The same volume also lists, on page 102, all of the first employees of the mint.

Perhaps the most famous, or infamous, "event" connected with the structure was the scandal of 1895, during which it was revealed that some $75,000 had been taken from the mint by several employees. Details of the affair are told both in Mint Mark "CC" and in Davis' The History of Nevada. See also U.S. Post Office. (HABS No. NEV-13-8) where the subsequent trial took place.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: The Nevada State Museum has many photographs, exterior and interior, in both the Mint and Nevada State Museum files. An excellent series of interior photographs, taken in 1895, 1896, and used as exhibits in the case of "The United States vs. Henry Piper," is included.

   The Nevada Historical Society in Reno also has many early photographs of the building. An early exterior view is found facing page 987 of Davis The History of Nevada.

2. Bibliography:


   Hickson, Howard, Mint Mark: "CC" (Popular Series, No. 4, Nevada State Museum). Carson City: Nevada State Museum 1972

UNITED STATES MINT (NOW NEVADA STATE MUSEUM)
HABS No. NEV-13-22 Page 8

Thompson, Thomas H., and West, Albert A., History of Nevada. Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958. (Facsimile reprint of this volume which was originally published in 1881.)


Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement: The old Mint at Carson City is a late nineteenth-century building of a type which is very rare. It is largely preserved in its original state. The condition of the fabric of this two-story, cruciform-plan building is good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The main building is 58' (five bays) x 88' (seven bays), with a 12' x 15' entrance porch. The original west wing is 27' x 86'.

2. Foundations: The foundations are about six feet high constructed of rock-faced random ashlar sandstone laid in four courses including a plain projecting water table.

3. Walls: The random ashlar sandstone is mostly rock-faced but dressed in some areas. Edges are drafted. Near the corners, the courses vary in height from about 1'-0" to 1'-3" infilled occasionally with smaller courses.

A string course at the second floor level consists of a rock faced course with a beveled moulding beneath it.

Projecting gabled central pavilions are on the east and west elevations through that of the west is nearly hidden by a modern addition.
4. Entrance Porch: The single bay porch located at the center of the east front and is one story high above a platform having eight granite steps on each of three sides. At each front corner a massive pier, L-shaped in plan is composed of coupled Tuscan pilasters, with echinus moulded capitals, on rock-faced pedestals. The piers, are spanned by a stilted segmental arches on each elevation. Between the Tuscan capitals and the cornice the wall is plain. The cornice consists of a corona supported by a bevel moulding which conforms to the height of the string course along the main wall. Above the corona there is a simple three-part parapet without pedestals. The stonework of this porch is dressed, except as noted. The ceiling is matched and beaded boarding.

5. Chimneys: A number of chimneys once projected above the roof, along the perimeter of the building, as seen in old photographs. These have all been removed above roof line. There was also a massive tall chimney on axis on the west wall; this, too, is no longer visible, although the lower portion remains, at the first story inside the building.

6. Openings:

a. Entrance doorway: The high opening is spanned with a segmental arch and is framed by wooden architrave trim. The jambs and soffit are faced with plain wooden paneling. The double doors below a wooden transom bar, are recessed and are modern replacements.

b. Windows: First and second story windows are similar with semicircular-arched openings. The voussoirs bond with the ashlar of the wall. Sills are plain and are dressed on the face with a wide 9 or 10-toothed chisel. The lower sash contain six lights; the upper sash, extending into the arched head, contain eight lights. The one at the center has a round head below the top two quadrant lights. The basement windows openings, which are segmentally arched, are blocked with masonry.

At the central pavilion of the east elevation the windows are grouped in pairs. A lunette window is in the pediment of this pavilion.
7. Roof:

a. The roof shape and covering is hipped with gables at the east and west pavilions. It is covered with composition shingles.

b. Cornice: A bracketed cornice consists of a plain projecting course of dressed sandstone below the lower end of dressed stone, cyma reversa profile brackets, two courses of rock-faced stone high. The brackets have a small ovolo-moulded cap which receives the cornice of a conventional form: a cyma recta above a corona.

c. Cupola: A brick cupola above the roof is placed on the main axis somewhat forward (east) of the secondary axis of the building. Three semicircular-arched windows on each elevation contain double-hung sash with six over four lights. It is crowned by a large wooden cornice, with a prominent dentil course, and a low pyramidal roof.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Plans:

a. First Floor: The plan is symmetrical; a series of rooms around the perimeter are served by a rectangular central stair hall, which is entered on the east through a large vestibule. The function of these rooms is given on a floor plan displayed in the museum, showing the allocation of spaces between 1866 and 1878. The treasurer's office was just south of the vestibule. This office connected with the first of three rooms, the deposit weighing room along the south side. To the west were the deposit melting room and the melter's and refiner's office.

On the north side of the vestibule was the paying teller's office, which opened into the first of three rooms, the coining room, along the north side. Behind the coining room was the whitening room, then the coiner's office. At the center of the west side, behind the stair, were two rooms: the north annealing and rolling room; and the south gold and silver melting room.

b. Second Floor: The floor plan is similar except that
there was a room above the entrance vestibule, and a single room, the refinery, is at the west.

At the center of the east side was the clerk's office; adjoining this to the north was the superintendent's office, and to the south the watchman's room. Along the south side were the assayer's weighing room, the assayer's cupelling and boiling room, and the humid assay and store room. Along the north side were the adjusting room, cabinets, and store room.

c. Basement floor: This layout was similar to the others.

d. West wing: This wing was a single story in height. It contained an engine room, boiler room, carpentry shop and store room.

2. Present state of the interior: The rooms described above are still intact. The refinery on the second floor has been divided by a partition. The space has been adapted to museum displays, so that a number of walls and openings have been hidden from view; modern doors and lighting have been installed though very little of the original building has been removed. The basement is occupied by a display mine.

3. Stairway: This is a straight flight of twenty-eight risers, each 7" in height. The floor to floor height is approximately 16'-4". The steps are solid granite with moulded nosing. There is an open string. A very large moulded handrail is supported on heavy, turned balusters, two per tread. The railing continues around the stair well at the second floor and terminates at the first floor at a large round newel. Below the stair is an exclosed basement stairway.

4. Interior finish: Old photographs on display in the museum indicate that office walls were plastered and that the stonework was exposed in the refinery and similar work rooms. Except for the walls in halls, which are plastered, the other rooms have composition board covering the walls and ceilings today. Floors are covered with modern composition tile. Visible original trim consists of a wide wooden base, 1'-1" high with a moulding above a plinth; architrave trim resting on a plinth and paneled door reveals; cavetto-moulded caps above windows; moulded window stools; vertical matched and beaded wainscoting with moulded cap rail (the height is about 4'-6" in the hall), plain trim on some second-floor
doorways; iron or steel interior shutters, many of which remain; and heavy iron or steel vault doors in various offices.

D. Site and Surroundings:

This building occupies an entire block and faces east on North Carson Street. The area is commercial. The terrain is level.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee  
Supervising Architect  
National Park Service  
Date of visit: August 20, 1972
UNITED STATES POST OFFICE

CARSON ST., between SPEAR & TELEGRAPH STS.

Location: In block bounded by Carson, Spear, Plaza and Telegraph Streets (building faces west on Carson), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: State of Nevada

Present Occupant: vacant

Present Use: The building is currently (1972) being remodelled to house the Nevada State Library.

Statement of Significance: The former United States Post Office is an imposing late nineteenth century building on an entire block in the heart of the city. It is the first Federal Building in the State of Nevada, and has interesting and well-executed brick details.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The contract for the building was awarded May 25, 1888; the cornerstone laid on September 29 of that year; and the structure completed and occupied on May 19, 1891.

2. Architect: The architect was M.E. Bell, Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. Several of the working drawings of interior details bear the stamp of Will Frost, who succeeded Bell as Supervising Architect of the Treasury. Drawings for the heating and ventilating apparatus (drawings dated June, 1889) bear the stamp of James Windrum, who became Supervising Architect of the Treasury in March of that year.

3. Original and subsequent owners: The old United States Post Office is built on Block 42 of Musser's Division of Carson City. (J.J. Musser was one of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch upon which Carson City was platted). Prior to the erection of the Post Office, The Carson City Opera House was on the NW corner of this block. The following references to the title of Block 42 are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada, Deed Books.
1876 Deed, March 2, 1876, recorded in Book 16, page 594. George Gilson sold to Jacob Klein his half interest in Block 42 (except for the NW portion) for $5,000.

1877 Deed, December 19, 1877, recorded in Book 18, page 556. The "Carson Opera House Association" paid $2,000 to George Gillson and Jacob Klein for the NW portion (49 feet on Carson Street and 120 ft. on Spear Street) of the block.

1886 Deed, February 27, 1886, recorded in Book 24, page 201. Jacob Klein sold to H.M. Yerington for $7,500 the whole of block 42 except for the NW portion (49 feet on Carson Street and 120 on Spear Street) which had been conveyed by Gilson and Spear to the Carson Opera House Association on December 19, 1877.

1886 Deed, February 27, 1886, recorded in Book 24, page 203. The Carson Opera House Association sold to H.M. Yerington the portion excepted in the foregoing deed. Price paid was $5,000.

1886 Deed, March 1, 1886, recorded in Book 24, pages 205, 206. H.M. Yerington sold all of block 42 of Musser's subdivision bounded by Spear, Plaza, Telegraph, and Carson Streets to the United States. The United States had the option of paying $9,500 to him and giving The Carson Opera House Association legal title to the block of land bordered by King, Minnesota, Musser and Division Streets (block 11 in Musser's subdivision), or paying the $9,500 to him and $1,500 to the Carson Opera House Association. The United States chose the latter course, paying a total of $11,000. The Carson Opera House Association retained the right to remove any buildings on the property "with all convenient speed." Soon thereafter, the Opera House building was moved across Spear Street.

1971 Deed, May 17, 1971 recorded in Official Records Book 110, pages 69-80. The United States of America deeded all of block 42 of Musser's subdivision to the State of Nevada, acting through the Nevada State Planning Board. The quit-claim deed states that the property has on it a "multi-story brick building, containing approximately 20,616 sq. ft., formerly a United States Post Office and Courthouse."
4. Original plans, construction etc.: The Nevada State Planning Board, which is supervising the current renovation, has on file at its office in Room 306 of the new Legislative Building in Carson City, blueprints of the original working drawings, as well as later drawings concerned with alterations or additions. The drawings are as follows: Nos. 1-38 (not inclusive) are signed by Bell, 50-56 by Frost, and 66-76 by Windrum.

2. Concrete Plan
3. Basement Plan
4. First Floor Plan
5. Second Floor Plan
6. Third Story
7. Section A.A. through the building from N to S
8. Front Elevation
9. North Elevation
10. South elevation, dated 5/31/87 and 6/28/87
12. Attic plan, dated 5/9/87
13. Roof Plan
14. Brick details
17. Piling and Concrete Sections
18. Concrete plan, dated 6/20/1887
20. Box girder and cast iron columns
21. First floor beam plan
22. Second floor girders
23. Column heads and stands
24. Box girders in first story
25. First floor framing plan
26. Second Floor framing plan
27. Third floor framing plan
28. Attic floor framing plan
29. Attic framing plan
33. Plan at first floor line
34-35. Concrete plans and sections
36. Basement plan
37. Trusses
38. Arches

The following drawings are signed by Will A. Frost, Supervising Architect of the Treasury:
50. Corbelling details
51. Joiner work details
52. Details of Post Office screen
53. Details of plaster work
54. 3/4" and full scale details of staircase
55. Details of joiner work for doors
56. Plumbing details

The following drawings are signed by James Windrum, Supervising Architect:

66. Heating and ventilating apparatus, basement
67. Heating and ventilating apparatus, First floor dated 6/12/89
68. Heating and ventilating apparatus, second floor, dated 6/11/89
70. Heating and ventilating apparatus, attic dated 6/11/89
71. Heating and ventilating apparatus details

The following drawings are unsigned, though they do have the stamped mark: Supervising Architect, Treasury Department

73. Diagrams of space for clock machinery
75. Heating and ventilating alterations (a note on these plans states that these alterations were "made necessary because of variations in the construction of the building from the working drawings").
76. Bracing, dated July 25, 1890

The following drawings were done by the Public Works Branch of the Procurement Division of the Treasury Department:

83. New elevator and stairs, dated 9/10/35
84. Details of new elevator and stairs, dated 9/10/35
85. Framing plan for new elevator and stairs, dated 9/14/35
86. Details for temporary wood stairs, dated 11/26/35

There are also two sheets of drawings for new plumbing facilities installed in 1908. These are dated 5/22/08 and signed by James Knox Taylor as Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department.
There are also three recent, though undated, drawings by the firm of Vhay and Ferrari of Reno showing alterations currently being made for converting the building to the library. These are a basement plan, third floor plan, and attic.

The several safe in the building were made by the National Safe and Lock Company. The clock in the tower, a seven-day type, was made by the J. Borborka Co. of Iowa City, Iowa. The ornamental iron grilles in the bases of the columns also serve as heating vents. Original construction cost of the building was $134,605.53.

5. Alterations and additions:

1. New lavatories were installed in 1908. In 1935, an elevator, the first in Carson City, was installed in the well of the main stair. The first of the notes on the drawings for the elevator (sheet 83) directed the contractor to "remove present wood stairs." The original wood stair, with elaborate newels and balusters, was replaced by a metal one. A loading dock was installed on the rear of the building at the southeast corner in more recent times.

2. The exterior of the building has remained much as it was when built. The interior underwent minor modifications but remained relatively intact until the present time. The interior is currently being extensively remodelled to serve as the new home of the Nevada State Library. Ceilings in many instances are being lowered and suspended but the old ceilings are cornices will remain in place above them.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

On January 5, 1885, the United States Senate passed a bill appropriating $100,000 for a public building in Carson City. Nevada Senators Stewart and Nye were largely responsible for the appropriation, and on page 278 of his Reminiscences, Stewart notes that he "prevented the conversion of the Mint into a public building and secured mandatory legislation with an appropriation for the construction of the present Government Building at the capital." Several citizens of Carson City were
then appointed as a commission to select an appropriate site for the building. A protracted search ensued, during which time the not-too-distant city of Reno offered a block appraised at $30,000 if the building would be located there. Some three years after the original appropriation, work was begun.

Upon completion, the building was occupied by the Post Office, land office, United States Courts, and the Weather Bureau. In all, sixteen rooms were assigned to various agencies. As might be expected, the occupant most involved with affairs of a historic nature was the United States Court. Perhaps the most noted events the building witnessed were the trials relating to shortages in the refinery at the United States Mint: "U.S. vs. Heney, James," December 1895, "U.S. vs. Jones, John T.," May 1896, and "U.S. vs. Piper, Henry," March, 1896. The details of the trials are dealt with in the book Mint Mark "CC" (see bibliography). Suffice it to say here that the trials were conducted in the U.S. Federal Court presided over by Judge Thomas P. Hawley, and that all three men, former Mint employees, were found guilty. In all, some $75,000 had been taken from the Mint vaults.

The last Federal Judge to preside in the new building was Bruce R. Thompson, whose court moved to Reno in 1965. The building ceased to serve the last of its original functions on September 20, 1970 as the new Carson City Post Office was opened the same day.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Both the Nevada State Museum in Carson City and the Nevada Historical Society in Reno have file folders on the Old Post Office, which have many photographs (almost exclusively exterior ones) of the building. These are variously dated. None of these was photo-copied for HABS inasmuch as the exterior of the building has been virtually unchanged since its completion. An early exterior photograph is on page 368 of the first bibliographical entry. Another early exterior photograph is facing page 218 of Wren's A History of Nevada (see bibliography). An interior photograph of the Post Office, showing the elaborate wooden screen, is on display in the lobby of the new Carson City Post Office.


O'Hara, Joan. It's Tough to Grow Old (article in The Nevada Appeal, Sunday, April 12, 1970).


Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: The Carson City Post Office is a late nineteenth-century public building of picturesque composition with interesting brick details.

2. Condition of Fabric: Good; the interior is undergoing extensive renovation to adapt the building to library use.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions, about 85 ft. by 73 ft., 4 by 4 bays, three-and-a-half stories, T-shaped layout.

2. Foundations: About five feet high, rock-faced granite ashlar with moulded water table.

3. Walls: Pressed red brick, all-stretcher bond, with dark mortar joints. Belt courses are varied: some two courses and three courses wide of ordinary face brick, corbelling outward successively. In a frieze at the second floor level, bricks are laid in squares, two tiers high, three vertical units alternating with three horizontal units. Trim is yellow sandstone.

4. Composition of west front: The northern bay is four stories high, constituting a corner tower. The central two bays are three-and-a-half stories, high, gabled. The southern bay is two stories high.
First Story - In each end bay there is a wide arched window; in the central bays there is an arcade of four semicircular-arched doorways. Each arch consists of three concentric rows of soldiers and a thin moulded brick hoodmould. Piers of the arcade are square, those at the center being a coupled pair, with carved sandstone capitals having prominently undercut conventional foliage between a neck and the abacus.

The Main entrance consists of four double doors with rectangular glazed transoms about them, recessed behind the four-bay arcade. Door frames are moulded cast iron; between openings there are side-light panels. This is essentially a metal and glass screen set behind the masonry arcade. Each door leaf is wooden: a large glazed panel above two panels. One opening has been altered. Ten granite steps lead up to the entrance. In each opening there is a granite threshold.

Upper portion of central two bays - This is slightly recessed behind the plane of the end bays. At the second story each bay contains a large triply-divided window with transom, within a segmental brick relieving arch. There are smaller triple windows at the third story, and a large semicircular window in the gable. This central portion extends the full depth of the original building, and is gable-roofed.

Upper portion of north bay - At the second story there is a double window, and a triple window at the third story. At the level of the third story, corner pilaster strips "grow" out of the masonry walls and are terminated by large sandstone capitals carved with conventional foliage. Above this rises an octagonal story, its four major faces containing a pair of windows above which, corbeled out slightly, there is a gable with a clock. The diagonal faces are smaller and terminate in a corbel table. Above this there is an octagonal pyramidal roof, covered with sheet metal and crowned by a golden ball on a thin rod. The height of this "tower" is 106 feet.

Upper portion of south bay - At the second (top) story there are a double window in a segmental-arched opening, and a corbeled frieze.

5. Composition of south wall: This has three bays, similar at the first and second stories to the south bay of the west front. The central bay has a third story: a large
hipped dormer having brick pilasters with carved sandstone capitals at the corners. Above this wall can be seen the south clearstory wall of the central two bays, which contains a group of four windows at the east end of its third story. The north wall resembles the south one except for containing the corner tower.

6. East Wall: The fenestration resembles that of the west front except that round-arched windows occur in the central two bays of the first story. A modern one-story wing has been added to the southeast corner of the building.

7. Roof: The central portion has a gable roof, the north and south wings a hip roof. These are covered with standing-seam sheet metal, painted. There are several small dormers.

C. Site and Surroundings:

This building occupies an entire block, facing west toward Carson Street. The terrain is level. The site is in the downtown part of the city.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
August 20, 1972
NEVADA STATE PRINTING OFFICE

SOUTH FALL ST.

Nevada State Printing Office, North Side (left) and West Facade, 1972.
Location: South Fall Street, between East Second and East King Streets, facing the Capitol Plaza, Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: State of Nevada

Present Occupant: The ground floor is occupied as offices by the Division of Buildings and Grounds, State of Nevada. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Nevada State Fire Marshall both occupy offices on the second floor.

Present Use: Offices

Statement of Significance: The Nevada State Printing Office is a substantial stone building which complements the more imposing State Capitol across the street. It was the first addition in what has become a cluster of State buildings in this section of Carson City, and was the first State Printing Plant.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1885-1886

2. Architect: M.J. Curtis of Reno. Curtis was later involved, to a limited degree, in another State project, the Governor's Mansion, for which he submitted a design in 1907. S. Pixley (see below), was also involved in the design of the State Printing Office.

3. Original and subsequent owners: The Nevada State Printing Office is located on Block 3 of Sears, Thompson, and Sears Division of Carson City. On March 24, 1885, A.W. Pray sold lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and the north 17 feet of lots 8 and 9 of this block to The State of Nevada for $500.00. (Deed recorded in Ormsby County, Nevada, Deed Book 24, page 28). The property continues to remain in State ownership.

4. Original plans, construction, etc.: A law authorizing construction of the State Printing Office was passed on March 12, 1885. The very next day, the Board of Capital Commissioners advertised in the daily Carson City Index for proposals for the sale of lots near the Capital for the
building. The advertisement also invited architects to submit plans. When the bids were opened on March 20, the lowest property offer was that of S.W. Pray, which was accepted. On March 21, the Board requested S. Pixley to draw up plans and specifications, and to have them ready the next day. The Warden at the State Prison was directed to begin quarrying stone at the prison quarry for the building. On March 22, Pixley unexpectedly requested an extension of time from the Commissioners. The extension was granted, and on April 6, 1885, S. Pixley and M.J. Curtis, of Reno, were both given $25.00 as "payment in full for services in getting up plans and specifications."

This entry seems to mark the last involvement with Pixley in the project, and the beginning of Curtis' association with the building. At the April 6 meeting, Curtis received the contract for his plans; he was also hired as the Superintendent of Construction on a day to day basis, receiving $6.00 per diem.

J.W. Boles was the low bidder for the contract of hauling and delivering two grades of sand for mortar ($.95 per load) and also received the contract for unloading the sandstone blocks at the building site. (The rock was quarried and loaded at the Prison Quarry by convict labor).

On October 9, 1885, the Commissioners ordered the following notice to be placed in the Carson City Tribune:

"Capitalists of Carson having an interest in the completion of the State Printing Office, now in course of construction, are invited to meet the Board of Capitol Commissioners, at the office of the State Controller on Monday, October 12."

Not one "interested capitalist" attended the meeting, so written subscriptions were invited, and several were received. Curtis was called up before the Board on December 2, 1885, and was dismissed. On December 5, 1885 several new contracts were awarded. The firm of Hall and Catlin received the contract for completion of the carpentry work at $700.00. John Heritage received the painting contract for $450.00. A note accompanying the awarding of these contracts states that the first floor was to be finished by December 28, 1885, and the second by March 1, 1886. However, on March 20, 1886, the Board accepted two more construction bids: Mr. Cross to do the plastering at $6.50 per diem, and C. Ouillette to prepare, mix, and carry mortar at $3.00 per diem.
In September, 1886, the Commissioners advertised for wood for fuel to be supplied to the State Printing Office, a fairly conclusive indication that the building was finished and occupied.

In the 1885 Act for construction of the State Printing Office, the sum of $5,000.00 was appropriated to cover costs. This was supplemented by an additional sum of $9,743.66 which was appropriated in 1887, making the total original cost of the building $14,743.66.

5. Alterations and additions: The building has not been altered on the exterior to any great extent though numerous additions have been made to the east. Originally, the first floor of the north wing was open and housed the printing machinery. The office of the Superintendent of State Printing was on the first floor of the south wing, and the bindery was on the second floor.

The several additions are of relatively recent construction, and are easily discernable. The first was constructed in 1938, a second in 1951, a third in 1955 and a fourth in 1958. The last addition, completed in 1960, was a pre-fabricated steel warehouse for paper storage. None of the additions attempt to emulate the original construction, either in design or material.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

Orion Clemens, appointed Secretary of Nevada Territory in 1861, had as one of his many duties the responsibility of having the House and Council journals printed. According to his brother, who accompanied him to the territory, his printed instructions ordered him to "pay one dollar and fifty cents per 'thousand' for composition, and one dollar and fifty cents per 'token' for press-work, in greenbacks." However, local printers would accept only gold coin, not greenbacks, and when the value of paper dollars fell to $.40, Clemens had a difficult time having the journals published. This situation was at least partially responsible for the establishment of the office of a State Printer, once the Territory had become a State. Consequently the office of State Printer was established by Statutes in 1865. John Church was elected by the State Legislature as the first State Printer for 1865-66. In 1877, the office of State Printer was abolished, to be effective in 1879. Work was awarded by contract from 1879-1880. During this time, the Board of State Printing Commissioners, made up of the Secretary of State, State Controller, and State Treasurer, was responsible for having State material printed.
In 1879, the office of Superintendent of State Printing was created, to become effective in 1881. The first Superintendent of State Printing was John W. Maddrell, appointed by the Board of State Printing Commissioners to hold office for two years. From 1883 on, the Superintendent of State Printing has been elected by the people of Nevada.

At the turn of the present century, the building also housed the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a museum donated to the State by the Society of Pioneers, and at least one Federal office. These were housed on the second floor. All printed matter done under state auspices for three-quarters of a century issued from this building, from statutes and annual reports to textbooks and presentation volumes.

In 1964, the State Printing Office moved to new and larger quarters and the building ceased to serve in the capacity for which it was planned and built. It still, however, houses the offices of State agencies.


D. Sources of Information:


Nevada State Archives, files on construction of this and other State Buildings (research done by Mrs. Marshall Humphreys 1972).

Thompson, Thomas H. and West, Albert A. History of Nevada. Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958 (facsimile reprint of this volume, which was originally published in 1881)


Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
December 1972
PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: A substantial public building of the late nineteenth century, of pleasing composition and simple, bold details, with important historical associations.

B. Detailed description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: About 68 ft. by 72 ft. The layout is roughly L-shaped, the north wing being 72 ft. (5 bays) long by 34 ft. (2 bays) wide, and the south wing 34 ft. (2 bays) long by 34 ft. (2 bays) deep. Two stories.

2. Foundations: The portion of the exterior wall which is below the first floor line is not differentiated from the rest of the wall; it is two courses (2 feet) high.

3. Wall construction, finish and color: The exterior walls are rock faced sandstone ashlar. The material was quarried at the site of the present State Prison, on East Fifth Street, Carson City. It is a dull yellow color and shows very little discoloration. Some blocks have been roughly dressed with a pick in places. There are chisel-dressed quoins, long and short blocks alternating, at the exterior angles. They have beveled joints. The walls have been re-pointed in modern times, so the original mortar is not visible on the surface. Each course is almost exactly one foot high; there are 27 courses from grade level to the bottom of the frieze.

On the interior of the first story the stone wall is exposed; here it was dressed with a pick and the margins drafted with a chisel.

The stone masonry throughout is excellent. Joints do not exceed one-half inch in width. It is in good condition.

4. Structural System, Framing: Exterior bearing walls of sandstone ashlar. The south wing is divided in the middle by a similar sandstone partition; presumably the wooden floor joists span from wall to wall—about 15 to 16 feet. In the north wing there is a central longitudinal wooden girder supporting the second-floor framing; it is supported on square wooden columns with chamfered corners and bolster
capitals. Other framing was not visible.

The first floor appears to rest on the earth.

5. Porches: There are none.

6. Chimneys: On the east wall of the south wing there is a projecting brick chimney—an obvious addition. If there were any chimneys originally, they are no longer visible.

7. Openings:
   a. Doorways and Doors: Door openings appear in all four bays of the west front but only one (second from south end) is now in use. There is an active door opening opposite it in the east wall. There is another doorway in use at the east end of the north wall. Along the south wall of the south wing there is a door at the second floor affording emergency exit down a metal fire-escape stair (a later addition).

   The first-floor doorways are similar (except for one which has been altered): segmental-arched masonry opening with dressed voussoirs, keystone, and dressed plain trim. A single stone block forms a step up to the stone threshold. The jamb reveals and intrados of the arch are treated with moulded wooden casing. Sash are double hung, one light over one light. There is a glazed transom, below which are double doors, each having a small moulded lower panel above which are two talled moulded glazed panels.

   b. Windows: Window openings are segmental-arched and the trim is similar to that of the doorways, although the window openings are narrower. Within the masonry opening there is a simple moulded wooden casing. Sash are double hung, one light over one light. Sills are dressed sandstone.

   In the west gable there is a circular window.

8. Roof:
   a. Roof Shape, Covering: The roof of each wing is gabled. Recently it has been given a covering of composition shingles with a metal edge turned over the upper edge of the cornice.
b. Cornice: There is a moulded wooden cornice which returns a considerable distance at the corners of the gable ends. It has ornamental brackets in pairs; between each pair there is a moulded panel in the frieze. The cornice woodwork appears to be deteriorating. In some places the symatium piece has been replaced by a plain board.

The whole cornice is now painted dark brown.

Gutters are built in. Several round sheet-metal conductors lead down the wall to splash blocks of uncertain date.

c. Dormers: There are none.

C. Detailed Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

a. First Floor: Originally the north wing must have been open. A wooden partition between the two wings appears old and was probably an original feature. Half of the space in the south wing was and is partitioned off by a stone wall. It is evident that the printing machinery and similar heavy equipment must have been located in the first story, which has a ceiling height of thirteen feet. There are modern wooden partitions.

b. Second Floor: A stairway at the northeast corner of the building gives access from the exterior to the second floor. This L-shaped area appears to be divided substantially as it was originally: a central hall with rooms at each side. This floor is now occupied partly by the State Fire Marshall and partly by a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The first floor is now occupied by the State Division of Buildings and Grounds. The second story has a ceiling height of about eleven feet.

2. Stairways: A wide stair with 24 risers ascends along the east wall of the north wing in a straight flight. It is enclosed at the first story but open above, with a railing at the second floor. There is a round newel; balusters are turned and the handrail is moulded. The treads and risers now have a modern surface covering.

If there were other stairs originally there appears to be no
evidence of them now. There are some modern wooden stairs to mezzanine storage areas above the first floor.

3. Flooring: The first floor is concrete of uncertain date, resting on the ground. It has modern covering in some areas. The second floor is covered with modern materials.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: Large areas of the first-story walls are exposed stonework (see above) which has been painted. Modern adaptation of some areas for office use has introduced modern covering and finish.

The second story is plastered throughout. It has recently been put in first-class condition.

5. Doorways and Doors: The doors of the second story in general appear to be original. Typically the openings are rectangular with a two-light transom above a moulded bar, a single door with four moulded panels, and architrave trim. Window trim is similar.

D. Site and Surroundings:

This building faces west onto South Fall Street and toward the State Capitol Plaza. Parking lots adjoin to the north and south. The terrain is level.

One-story structures of later date abut toward the east.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of visit: August 16, 1972
METHODIST CHURCH

(FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH)

200 N. DIVISION ST.

Methodist Church, South Side and East (Front) Facade, 1972.
Methodist Church, South Side and East (Front) Facade, prior to 1909. Courtesy Nevada State Museum.

Methodist Church, South Side and East (Front) Facade, July 1910, showing changes made in 1909 renovations. Courtesy Nevada State Museum.
Methodist Church, Pressed tin ceiling and circular window in South "transept." These features, installed in the 1909 renovations, are presently hidden from view by a lowered ceiling. Courtesy B. Baxter Matheny.
PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1865. Although the property on which the structure was erected was not deeded to the trustees of the church until 1866, most accounts give 1865 as the date for the beginning of construction. While one reference states that by June 1866, the church "still incomplete, had involved an outlay of $5,000*", court records indicate that the land was not secured by the church until September of that year. It has been stated, and may well be the case, that the property had been acquired earlier, but that the official transaction was not made until later. It is known that the building was completed by September 1867 and was dedicated on the 8th of that month. Total cost was given at $10,000.

2. Architect: none known

3. Original and subsequent owners:

   The Church is built on lots 8 and 9 of Block No. 14 of Proctor and Green’s Division of Carson City. (Frank M. Proctor and B.F. Green were two of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which Carson City was platted).

The following references tracing title to the church property are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada Deed Books:

1865 Deed, February 1, 1865, recorded in Book 8, page 590. Mrs. Ruth Lecky bought all of Block 14 from Henry Fulstone for $500.00.

1866 Deed, September 7, 1866, recorded in Book 10, page 100. The trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "and their successors in office," received a deed in fee simple to lots no. 6 and the west 16 feet of lot no. 7 in Block No. 10, and the whole of Block no. 14, all in Proctor and Green's Division. A recording fee of $33.10 was paid by the trustees.

1867 Deed, September 3, 1867, recorded in Book 12, page 302. The trustees of The Methodist Episcopal Church paid J.M. Lacky and wife $500 for Block 14 of Proctor and Green's Division.

4. Original plans, construction, etc.: The Rev. Warren Nims, pastor of the church from 1863 to 1866, seems in large part to have been responsible for the construction. Thompson and West's History of Nevada notes that during 1865, Nims "might have been seen every week-day driving a two-horse team hitched to a lumber wagon, on which he hauled all the rock used in the construction of the edifice." (The stone was hauled by the Rev. Mr. Nims from the Nevada State Prison Quarry.) Nims had the prisoners quarry and square the stone; then he hauled them and laid them himself. As built originally, the church was rectangular in plan, and four bays long. Bay divisions were marked by buttresses with pinnacles. A square tower projected slightly at the center of the east front. This was stone up to a point just above the roof ridge. Above that there was a square wooden belfry having one pointed-arched opening on each side, with louvers. This carried a pinnacle at each corner, and octagonal spire. An early photograph showing the building in this original state is in the HABS records.

5. Alterations and additions: In May 1874, only seven years after its dedication, according to Thompson and West, the church was "repaired, re-painted, the windows stained, and the pews and choir-gallery remodeled." In 1909 the building was further altered. At the south side, the central two bays were taken down and a wide gabled projecting wing resembling a transept was built in a style matching the
original work. The stone used was also from the Prison Quarry. At the same time, a one-bay porch with modified Corinthian details was built to shelter the entrance doorway. A stone flight of steps, apparently the present ones, was built to give access to this porch. A one-story addition was built along the north side, providing a Sunday-school room and accessory rooms. A wide opening was made in the north wall of the church to connect with the Sunday school room. The opening was filled with a paneled screen which could be raised and lowered. This addition also extended one bay along the west end of the church, at the south corner of which the present secondary entrance porch was added. A small porch, also still existing, was built at the northeast corner of the church, to shelter a direct entrance to the Sunday school wing.

The interior of the church was given an apse whose floor was elevated above that of the church auditorium. It had a door opening to a small vestibule on the south, and another door opening to the north. On the wall at each side of the apse there was a tall window-like panel containing a painting. These were painted by Mrs. Hornaday, wife of the Rev. W.H.D. Hornaday, then pastor of the church. The ceiling sloped on each side to a central ridge; a large coved cornice marked its intersections with the walls.* These major alterations were said at the time to have given "to the Capital City the finest Methodist house of worship in the State."** The "new" church was dedicated by Bishop Edwin Holt Hughes during the annual meeting of The Nevada Mission in Carson City on August 25-30, 1909. The building was valued at $18,000 at the time.

During the pastorate of J.L. Collins, who served from 1917 to 1921, the church was re-roofed.

In 1948, major interior changes were made. A dropped ceiling was installed, and the chancel and chancel furniture replaced. It was at this time that the tower assumed its current appearance, and that the entrance porch, installed c. 1909, was removed. The old, pressed tin ceiling and


** The description of the church after the 1909 renovations was taken from an old photograph taken before 1909, a post card some time after 1909, a reproduction of an interior photograph taken between 1908 and 1918, a letter written in July 1971 by Mrs. Mary E. Jasper, Santa Clara, California to the Rev. W.E. Banghart, Minister of the Church, and examination of the existing structure. (Mrs. Jasper is the daughter of the Rev. Hornaday, under
remnants of the wall paintings done by Mrs. Hornaday still exist above the present lower ceiling. The chancel was again redecorated in 1968. The Sunday School wing appears little altered, except for the addition of one toilet and modernization of the kitchen.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

Among the early members of the Trustee Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Carson City was Gov. H.G. Blaisdell, the first elected Governor of the State of Nevada. Blaisdell served two terms, from 1864 to 1870. In 1869, Gov. Blaisdell paid off the remaining $1,500 debt on the $10,000 which the building had cost.

The many pastors who have served the church are listed in "One Small Step" (see bibliographical entry).

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: There is an exterior photograph of the church as it existed from 1867 to 1909 in Steeples In The Sage (see bibliographical entry below.) The Nevada State Museum has early photographs of the exterior showing both the first stage (1867-1909) and the second (1909-1948). These are reproduced in the HABS collections. An interior photograph, 1909, after the interior remodelling undertaken then, is in the possession of Mrs. Marshall Humphreys of Carson City. It has been reproduced in The Good News (see bibliographical entry below). An early panoramic view of Carson City, reproduced both in the Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Historical Society, 1909-1910, and Davis, The History of Nevada (facing page 979), shows the building in its original condition.

2. Bibliography:


whose charge the alterations were made). The documents were kindly furnished by Noreen Humphreys (Mrs. Marshall) of Carson City who has made a study of the history of this church.

62

Thompson, Thomas H., and West, Albert A. History of Nevada. Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958 (facsimile reprint of this volume, which was originally published in 1881).


Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December, 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement: The well constructed mid-nineteenth century stone church has details of Gothic derivation and interesting early twentieth-century additions. Now largely altered on the interior the church is in generally good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: approximately 64' (five bays) x 75' (five bays); one story; rectangular with projections.

2. Foundations: Sandstone ashlar foundation, with a plain water table, is generally low though the height varies somewhat because of the slight rise in grade toward the west.

3. Elevation details:

a. General: The walls are dressed sandstone ashlar, light brown or yellow in color. This material was quarried locally and is variously dressed with pick and chisel. Courses vary in height between 1'-0" and 1'-6". Joints vary from 5/16" to 3/8" in width. Some old sand-lime mortar is visible in the joints but there has been considerable repointing at various periods. The older repointing was well done but some more recent cement mortar pointing is sloppy. Angle-buttresses are at the corners. The stonework of the additions matches the original work with the same material course heights.
The two-centered pointed heads of the masonry openings are constructed as corbels, not true arches. One tie rod extends through the eastern portion of the building.

b. Church: East Front: A centrally placed tower, square in plan, projects three feet from the gabled facade. A central entrance at the base of the tower consists of a pair of eight-panel doors below a colored glass transom which fills the head of the opening and is the form of a two-centered pointed arch. Above the entrance is a single pointed window containing colored glass. The tower with one pointed window on each elevation, terminates in a stone cyma recta moulding. Completing the tower is a low wooden belfry with three louvered openings on each elevation and a low pyramidal roof. A sheet-metal cornice, painted white, extends up the rakes of the gable and has short returns at the corners. The bed moulding is enriched with an egg-and-dart motif.

The South Front: One bay west of the front is a wide gabled wing suggesting a transept which projects four feet from the south wall and contains a single large two-centered arched window. This is a true arch. The window is triply divided by wooden colonnette mullions and tracery, glazed with colored glass. Above is a circular window in the gable, also containing colored glass. An extension on the west elevation end includes a porch with stone steps and two octagonal stone columns supporting a wood and sheet-metal entablature. The cornice is the same as the raked cornice. Under this porch is an linteled entrance having a door with five horizontal panels below a transom of colored glass.

c. Sunday school addition: On the east front, adjoining the church to the north, the wall of the addition contains an entrance sheltered by a small porch and one bay containing a pointed window. The concrete foundation is just above grade. An angular buttress is at the corner.

The entrance porch, which is at the interior angle between the north wall of the church and the east wall of the addition, has a single fluted sheet-metal entablature. The entrance consists of a door with five horizontal panels with a rectangular transom of colored glass. At the north elevation are four bays, each containing a pointed window.
d. West Elevation: This one-story wall is of stone and contains four windows and a rectangular doorway. A gabled projection which continues the axis of the church, rises above the wall and is faced with "rock-faced" sheet metal on its sides and gable. This part of the building is hip roofed, with half-gables on the east. The north and west elevations are covered with "rock-faced" sheet metal. The entablature matches that of the church and is also sheet metal.

4. Windows: Typical windows are glazed with colored glass, and have double-hung sash below a fixed rounded triangular unit at the head. The stone sills are plain.

C. Description of Interior:

This description applies only to the Sunday school addition, because the interior of the church has been entirely altered.

1. Plan: The central two bays of this wing are occupied by a square Sunday school and general purpose auditorium. This area was formerly connected to the church auditorium by a wide opening in the south wall, which has been closed. East of this room, is an entrance hall which leads to the east end of the church and to the outside. A larger area occupies the northeast corner of the wing and serves as a small meeting room. It connects with the larger room through a wide cased opening containing folding doors. West of the Sunday school room, is a kitchen. At the northwest corner a rear entrance hall gives access to the kitchen and to two toilets.

2. Interior finish: Varnished oak trim is typical. The plain window trim is beaded and the door trim has caps. Wainscoting is of vertical boarding. The high moulded base is new, as is the composition floor covering. Doors are yellow pine and have five horizontal panels.

D. Site and Surroundings:

This lot is located at the Northwest corner of Musser Street, on the south, and Division Street on the east. The main entrance is toward the east.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of visit: August 19, 21, 1972
SAINT PETER'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

312 N. DIVISION ST.

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, South Side (left), and East Facade, 1972.

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Interior, looking West to Chancel, 1973.
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH       HABS No. NEV-13-11

Location: 312 N. Division Street (SW corner N. Division and W. Telegraph Streets), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: The Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestrymen of St. Peter's Church and Parish

Present Occupant: St. Peter's Parish

Present Use: Sanctuary and Sunday School

Statement of Significance: The best preserved of Carson City's early churches, St. Peter's is an interesting and attractive building reflecting both Gothic and classic prototypes.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: In July 1867, the Vestrymen announced their intention to build a church. By October 27, 1867 the building was shingled and sided. By November 3, the steeple had been raised and topped with the cross. The first service was not held until August 9, 1868, and the church was not consecrated until June 1870.

2. Architect: none known

3. Original and subsequent owners:

St. Peter's Church is built on the northern half of block 35 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City. (Frank M. Proctor and B.F. Green were two of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch upon which Carson City was platted). The following references to the title of these lots are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada Deed Books.

1865 Deed, April 27, 1865, recorded in Book 9, pages 70, 71. Francis Mandlebaum sold the northern half of Block 35 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City to the rector, church wardens, and vestrymen of St. Peter's Church for $750.00.

1867 Deed, January 9, 1867, recorded in Book 11, page 177. The Rector, Church Wardens and Vestrymen of St. Peter's Church received clear title to lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 and
the north half of lots 5 and 6 in Block 35 (the
northern half of the block) along with other properties
upon payment of $35.40 recording fee.

1891 Deed July 1, 1891, recorded in Book 25, page 391. The
church bought lots 7, 8, 9 and 10 and the south 17 feet
of lots 5 and 6 of Block 35 from Andrew Robert for
$3,500. The deed describes this as the south half of
block 35, and mentions that it has on it "a brick
dwelling house known and commonly called the Dean Hatch
property." This purchase gave the church title to the
entire block, and provided a parsonage for the minister.
The "Dean Hatch" house still serves this purpose.

4. Original plans, construction, etc.: The 1867 portion of the
building was constructed by the Corbett Brothers, and cost
$5,500.00. The original building included the tower and the
major portion of the sanctuary. The church as it then stood
was 46' x 27'. It was described several years later as
"very plain but substantial."

5. Alterations and additions: In October 1873, work was begun
to enlarge the church. This work was completed by April
1874. An account of the changes appears in the July 1874
issue of The Nevada Pulpit, a monthly magazine published
by the rector of St. Peter's during that year:

"The edifice was enlarged twenty-four feet, making the audi­
tory seventy feet. Two wings of the same height as the main
part, were added for Lecture and Sunday-school room, being
together fifty-eight feet by twenty-one.

"The auditory contains fifty-nine pews, arranged in three
rows with two aisles.

"The gallery in the east end was extended six feet and is
entered by stairs from the vestibule in the tower.

"Across the west end is a canopy of three elliptical arches
supported by four square fluted columns surmounted by
Corinthian capitals.

"The two center columns, resting on the platform raised three
steps from the main floor, and the two half columns in the
rear, one on each side of an elegantly designed triplet
stained glass window, form the chancel.

"On either side of the chancel there is a passage leading into
the school-room over each of which is one of the other remaining arches of the canopy. In front over the chancel arch within an elliptical figure, are the words in gilt letters shaded with black, 'The Lord is in His holy temple.' The chancel is enclosed with a rail on three sides." (This rail, of wood, has since been replaced by a metal one.) The stained glass windows in the sanctuary were installed during this remodelling.

The Sunday School room was so arranged that, by opening the doors on either side of the chancel and raising the sash in the chancel window, it could be used as an extension of the church proper. The two areas combined could hold some five hundred persons.

The 1873-74 remodelling was done under the supervision of Mr. John G. Parker. Assisting him were "several excellent mechanics, viz: Messrs Davis, Garbett, Lamb, Lynch, McQuarry, Osborne and Sturr," (the stained glass window above the balcony was donated by these men to the church). Mr. John Meighan was the mason for the work. The exterior painting was done by "Messrs. Hood and Bros.," and the interior was done by John S. Dickson, assisted by Charles G. Hood.

In March 1889, a platform was built in the Sunday School room, and 1895 gas fixtures were installed, the gift of Mrs. H.M. Yerington. In May 1895, a fence was constructed around the property. In 1891, at a cost of $500, the south transept was arranged to house a pipe organ. The organ, costing $1,900, was built by Mr. T.W. Walley of Oakland, California. In 1911, the church was enlarged to include a guild room, kitchen, toilet, and study. The cost of this was $1,000; paid for by a legacy of $500 from the Yerington estate, with an equal sum donated by Mrs. Yerington.

In 1919, electric lights replaced the gas fixtures. In 1924, it was realized that the church, and especially the roof, were in bad repair. Due to financial difficulties the parish was not able to begin work until the next year. By then water had leaked into the pipe organ, and had ruined several feet of the plaster cornice. The exterior of the church was painted, and the interior repaired, including replacement of the damaged plaster. The pews were reset to allow for more kneeling space.

In 1943, repair work was again undertaken. New exterior siding was placed on the west, south, and east sides, and on the tower. The south half of the roof was reshingled, as was the west roof of the parish house. At this time the
exterior color was changed from the original yellow drab with dark drab trim to an overall off-white.

In 1950 the stained glass windows were repaired.

In 1957, the interior of the Parish Hall was redecorated, a new floor laid there, and gas wall-heaters installed. In the fall of 1958, at the cost of $1,350, a new oil furnace was installed in the narthex, and floor registers installed in the sanctuary.

Under the pastorate of the Rev. A.P. Daughters (1959-1962), the interior of the church was remodeled. New flooring was laid in the chancel and nave and covered with carpeting. The altar rail was moved forward to enlarge the chancel. The ceiling, walls and woodwork were repainted by Mr. Frans Benson and the lettering over the sanctuary arches was repainted by Mr. Mike Wagner. Also at this time, the old pipe organ was removed and an electric organ installed. A sacristy was made from the space occupied by the old organ.

In April 1962, the foundations were repaired. Redwood timbers (8" x 8") were laid under the flooring and walls, and the exterior of the entire building painted.

In 1965, an explosion in a building across Telegraph Street blew out the stained glass windows in the north wall of the nave. These were replaced by extremely well executed copies of the originals, using the windows in the south wall as models. The most recent alterations include installation of a double swinging door between the vestibule and the nave. Formerly, there were two small doors to the left and right of the space occupied by the present double door, leading directly into the two aisles. A new stained glass window has been installed in the window opening in the tower above the front door, and a sanctuary lamp installed over the altar as a memorial.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

The organizational meeting to incorporate a Protestant Episcopal Church in Carson City was held on November 9, 1863. At this meeting, the first Wardens and Vestrymen were elected. They were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sam D. King</td>
<td>H.M. Yerington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.H. Griswold</td>
<td>A.W. Tjader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.C. Dorsey</td>
<td>P.W. Van Winkle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James W. Nye</td>
<td>Geo. Turner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.F. Rice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
King and Griswold were selected as Wardens, the rest as Vestrymen. All of these men were well known and prominent citizens of Carson City in its formative years. Perhaps the most noted were James W. Nye, Governor of Nevada Territory (see Stewart-Nye House, HABS No. NEV-13-12) and H.M. Yerington, later to become General Superintendent of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad (see H.M. Yerington House, HABS No. NEV-13-18).

Among the men who have served the church in a ministerial capacity, the Right Reverend Ozi William Whitaker is perhaps the best known. He was born in 1830 in New Salem, Massachusetts and ordained at Grace Church, Boston in 1863. His first parish in Nevada was at Gold Hill. In 1867 and early 1868, Whitaker also served St. Peter's in Carson City, conducting week-day services for the congregation, then without a regular minister. It was during this time that the church edifice was under construction. In October, 1868, he was appointed Bishop of the Missionary District of Nevada. In June 1870, Whitaker consecrated the enlarged St. Peter's, Carson City. In 1886, he became Bishop Coadjutor of Pennsylvania, and later Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Page 31 of The First Hundred Years (see second entry in Bibliography) has a photograph of the exterior c. 1910. Page 33 of same shows the interior c. 1940 with the pipe organ to the left of the chancel. An early panoramic photograph of Carson City, reproduced both in the Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Historical Society, 1909-1910 and Davis, The History of Nevada (facing page 979) shows the church in its original state, prior to the 1873-74 enlargements.

A copy of an early, undated photograph of the interior is owned by Mr. Stephen Drew, 4180 Randolph Avenue, Oakland, California, 94602. The original was in the possession of the Yerington family.

2. Bibliography:


Thompson, Thomas H., and West, Albert A. History of Nevada. Berkely: Howell-North, 1956 (facsimile reprint of this volume which was originally published in 1881).


The minutes of the Vestry are kept in the Office of the Episcopal Diocese of Nevada, 2390 West Seventh Street in Reno, Nevada. These were not consulted for this report, but may provide additional information.

Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
November 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: A mid nineteenth-century church with attractive features of medieval and classic origins, including a notable chancel screen, largely in its early state.

2. Condition of Fabric: Good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: about 25 ft. x 81 ft. (3 x 6 bays), plus accessory rooms about 37 ft. by 57 ft. One story, T. shape.

2. Foundations: Low; sandstone ashlar, roughly pick-dressed.


5. Porch: A simple porch (1 x 1 bay) shelters an entrance to the accessory rooms at the west end of the north side of the church.

6. Openings:
a. Doorways: The main entrance is centered on the east end, in a projecting tower. It is contained within a high pointed-arched motif which contains a pair of arched panels above the doors, and above that a pointed window divided by wooden tracery; this entire motif is framed by mouldings. The doors are double, each leaf containing a single panel with a pointed head, in which there is a diaper pattern in low relief, now partially obscured by paint. Four sandstone steps lead up to the entrance, between ornamental metal railings. On the north wall of the accessory wing there is a doorway with a label, transom light, and four panels of diagonal matched boards.

b. Windows: There are four windows on each side of the church, their heads in the form of a two-centered arch. Each is divided by a central mullion which branches near the top, forming two lancets and a diamond-shaped light. In the chancel there is a group of three lancet windows, the central one being the widest. In the north and south gables of the accessory wing there are windows (one in each) similar to those of the nave. Above each there is a small divided window.

In the west wall of the accessory wing there are four windows: two each of two designs. One type is Tudor-arched, divided by a central mullion, with a hoodmould. Each half is double hung, one light over one light. There are three simple brackets below the sill.

The other type is square-headed, trimmed by a label. Below a moulded transom bar there is a double-hung sash, two lights over two lights. The transom light is leaded; small vertical panes have triangular heads. Below the sill there are two simple brackets.

On each side of the doorway in the north wall of the accessory wing, there is a small triangular-headed window with a hood-mould resembling a small gable. At each side of the trim there is a scrolled buttress. Below the sill there are two simple brackets. The glazing is divided into three vertical panes, which at the top form an X-shaped motif.

7. Roof: The church has a gable roof. The accessory wing adjoining the west end of the church has a gable roof per-
perpendicular to it. The western portion of the accessory wing is lower and is covered with a hipped gambrel roof. The covering is wood shingles.

8. Eaves: are boxed, with small brackets widely spaced.

9. Tower: A tower about ten feet square in plan projects from the center of the east front. Above the entrance motif, described above, a horizontal moulding course terminates the lower stage of the tower. Above this there is a section containing a circular louvered opening on each side, capped by a wide echinus moulding and fillets. Above this the tower is smaller, and cruciform in plan. There is a gabled projection on each side, having pilastered corners, a pointed louvered opening, and bracketed eaves. Above the gables there is a spire which is square in plan, placed diagonally. It terminates in a small globe and a plain cross.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Plan: The church is rectangular, consisting of a four-bay nave, a shallow chancel at the west end, and a vestibule in the base of the east tower. There is a small gallery at the east end, reached by stairs at the side of the vestibule.

The accessory rooms adjoin the west end of the church. This part of the buildings forms the cap of a T whose stem is the church.

2. The Nave: The profile of the ceiling is an inverted V of moderate pitch (less than the roof pitch, as though there were scissors trusses). At the junction with the side walls there is a plaster cornice consisting of two coves and smaller mouldings. Plaster mouldings also extend along the apex of the ceiling, interrupted by three large circular center-pieces whose central panel is enriched by a foliated motif. The lighting fixtures which hang from these points appear to be modern.

Walls and ceilings are plastered, above a wainscot of vertical matched and beaded boards which has a moulded cap.

There are three rows of pews or benches, which appear old. The ends have scrolled arm rests and are paneled. They are painted in imitation of wood graining.

An octagonal stone font is located on axis a short distance
from the eastern entrance to the nave.

The windows, four at each side, contain colored leaded glass. In the lancets there is a brown monochromatic diaper pattern, around which extends a simple foliated border: blue, yellow, red and green. In the diamond-shaped area at the top of each window there is a symbol: anchor, angel or cherub, rose, crown, lily, lamb, Bible and dove, respectively.

In the gable above the gallery there is a single window containing the figure of King David playing a harp, within a trefoil-headed niche with colonnettes. The colors are predominantly red, blue and yellow. This "window" is actually a door, opening into the tower room above the vestibule.

3. The Chancel: The floor of the chancel is elevated three steps above that of the nave. An arcaded three-bay screen emphasizes the symbolic separation of these two areas. Two square fluted Roman Corinthian columns on pedestals support semi-elliptical arches with moulded archivolts. The central opening is wider than the others. Corinthian pilasters serve as recalls on the west and north walls; the one at the south wall is lacking. In the lunette above the arches there is ornamental grisaille painting: in an elliptical medallion is the motto "The Lord is in His Holy Temple." This is flanked by symmetrical foliated scrolls. The Corinthian capitals are gilded.

In front of the chancel screen there is a brass railing, semi-elliptical in plan. Scrolled members form an open design. There is a gate in the center.

Three colored glass windows on the west wall, visible through the central arch of the screen, contain medallions framed by a border. In the central one there are a chalice, a font and a dove. The window at the left contains a symbol of the Trinity; the one at the right has the monogram IHS. Between the medallions, areas are enriched with foliated scrolls.

On the west wall in each outer bay there is a door within a pointed opening. Each door has two vertical panels with pointed heads; in the tympanum the paneling echoes the tracery pattern of the windows in the nave.

D. Site and Surroundings:
This church faces east toward Division Street. It, with the accessory buildings, occupies the north half of the block bounded by Division, Telegraph, Minnesota and Proctor Streets. The terrain is level. The Rectory adjoins to the south. The light post next to the entrance is an old gas light from Virginia City which has been electrified.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of visit - August 19, 1972
E. D. SWEENEY BUILDING

102 S. CURRY ST.

The Sweeney Building, 1875. East (left) and North Facades, showing original "gallery" and exterior stairway. Courtesy Nevada State Museum.

The Sweeney Building, 1973. Same view as above. During the ensuing ninety-eight years, the structure has lost its "gallery" and exterior stairway, and acquired a bay window and paint. The basic fabric, openings, and cornice remain.
E.D. SWEENEY BUILDING

Location: 102 South Curry Street (SW corner of South Curry and King Streets), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: Gary A. and Joann Sheerin

Present Occupant: Gary A. Sheerin (Attorney's Offices) and others

Present Use: Offices (2) on ground floor; apartments (2) on second floor

Statement of Significance: This is one of the earliest commercial buildings in Carson City, and one of the few brick buildings remaining from the city's earliest years. Located at what was an important intersection, the building has had a varied and interesting history of occupancy.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: circa 1860. The traditional date for this building is 1859. This would seem to be the earliest possible date which could be ascribed, inasmuch as Carson City was not platted until the fall of 1858, and the building conforms to the lot lines established in the plat.

The earliest deed found relating to the property was dated September 1863. Whether the building had been erected by then is not answered by the deed.

Stylistically, the structure could well date from 1860. Historically, the corner on which it was erected was at the very center of the young town and would undoubtedly have been one of the earliest to be built upon.

In a biographical sketch on E.D. Sweeney, Davis' History of Nevada states that he "built the first brick building in the city of Carson, wherein was situated the United States Land Register Post, and other Federal offices". Undoubtedly referring to the building in question, this statement would also lend credence to the early date generally ascribed to it. However from the title records, it seems as if Sweeney's first association with the property was in 1864, which, if he did construct it, would place the building several years later than its traditionally ascribed date.
2. Architect: none known

3. Original and subsequent owners:

This building is located on lot 1 of block 7 in Sears, Thompson, and Sears Division of Carson City. The following references to the title of the property are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada, deed books.

1863 Deed, September 7, 1863, recorded in Book 6, page 234. James E. Wood sold lot 1 of block 7 of Sears, Thompson, and Sears Division to George Eaton for $1,800.

1864 Deed, February 6, 1864, recorded in Book 6, page 621. E. Wood and Lottie Wood his wife sold lot 1 of Block 7 to Edward Sweeney for $800.00.

1878-1883 The property changed hands several times during these years, was mortgaged once, and was often sold in transactions involving several properties. Persons involved in the transactions were Matt Rinckel (Book 19, page 30), Sweeney (book 22 page 420) and John Egan (book 22 page 420).

1894 Deed November 5, 1894, recorded in Book 25, page 517. Lillian A. Dauchy, Administratrix of the estate of John F. Egan, deceased, deeded several of his properties to P. Manogue of Sacramento California for $5.00. Among these was lot 1, Block 7 of Sears, Thompson, and Sears Division. P. Manogue was the Reverend Father Patrick Manogue, priest and builder of the well known church of St. Mary's in the Mountains in Virginia City, and later Bishop of the Diocese of Sacramento. The details of his interest in Egan's property are given in Book 20, Page 549.

1898 Deed, July 18, 1898, recorded in Book 29, page 68. E.D. Sweeney bought from George Tyrell, Ormsby County treasurer and ex officio tax collector, several properties to settle the estate of P. Monogue, on which there were delinquent taxes. The sale was on January 17, 1898, and among the several properties was "lot 1, Block 7, Sears, Thompson and Sears Division Brick Dwelling" assessed at $600. Sweeney paid $248.51 for this and several other properties.
1913 Deed, February 17, 1913, recorded in Book 36, page 327, Sweeney deeded the lot to his wife.

1919 Deed, August 22, 1919, recorded in Book 37, page 125. W.T. King bought from Nellie Lammon, Administratrix of the estate of Mrs. E.D. Sweeney, deceased, lots 1, 9 and 10 of Block 7 for $800.00.

1944 Deed, November 21, 1944, recorded in Book 51, page 29, Wesley L. Davis, Jr. and Mary Edith Davis bought from Emma L. King (widow) all of lot 1, Block 7.

1959 Deed, September 4, 1959, recorded in Book 81, page 494. Patricia Ann Howard bought from Wesley L. Davis Jr. and Mary Edith Davis, his wife, all of lot 1 of block 7.

1968 Deed, October 25, 1968, recorded in Official Records, Book 80, page 605. Gary A. Sheerin and Joann Sheerin husband and wife, bought lot 1 of block 7 from Patricia A. Wilkinson (who acquired title as Patricia Ann Howard).

Original plans, construction, etc.: The following description of the building prior to its recent remodelling is based upon physical evidence in part, on copies of an 1875 and a 1925 photograph, copies of which are in the HABS collection, and on descriptions by the present owner and occupant, Mr. Gary Sheerin, Attorney.

(1) Exterior. A one-story porch or gallery, to use the local term, extended along the north, east and south sides of the building, being five bays long on each side. The bevelled posts were square, the entablature thin and simple; above this there was a railing with pedestals and lattice-type infilling. The porch roof was a deck. An exterior stair in a single flight, along the east side, gave access to it from the sidewalk.

(2) Plan. The interior contained, on the first story, a store in the eastern half, and probably another in the western half. A stair ascended on center from an entrance at the north, to the second floor.
(3) Internal Structure: A longitudinal girder extended from north to south, to carry the second-floor joists. It was supported on timber columns with simple bolster capitals. The roof was carried on a similar girder at the second story. Adobe brick not much larger than ordinary brick were used to insulate the roof by filling in the spaces between ceiling and roof. The weight of this material eventually caused the framing to deflect, so it was removed during the recent remodelling. Mr. Sheerin has samples of these adobe bricks on display in his office.

5. Alterations and additions: The porch which once extended along the north and east sides has been removed. The exterior stairway has also been removed. The window on the first floor of the east front is a bay window which is not original to the building. It was formerly located on Thaxter's Drug Store and was installed here by Mr. Burd Lindsay in the 1920's. It served originally as a display window for the millinery shop operated by Mrs. Emma King. The building was purchased in 1968 by Mr. Gary Sheerin, who has since renovated the interior.

B. Historical Events & Persons connected with the Structure:

E. D. Sweeney, who is said to have built this commercial structure, was born in County Cork, Ireland, in 1825. At an early age he came to Boston, and at age twenty-two went to South America, where he mined for two years. In 1849, he came to California, and in 1857 went on to Eagle Valley, the future site of Carson City. Sweeney remained in what was to become Carson City until his death at age eighty-seven. He was married to Ellen Cavanaugh in 1866. She was the daughter of Peter Cavanaugh, who later built the Nevada State Capitol. Sweeney apparently gave up his earlier interest in mining and concentrated his efforts in commercial ventures.

While the majority of historical accounts concerned with the early days of Carson City give Abe Curry (see HABS No. NEV-13-13) full credit for the establishment of the town, Davis' History of Nevada gives equal allegiance to Sweeney:

"Realizing the great beauty of Eagle Valley as the ideal site for the Capitol of the State, he bent his efforts toward staking out and establishing the City of Carson."

One of Sweeney's tangible efforts at promoting the growth of the city is the commercial building herein described. The
structure has served a variety of purposes over the years. It was apparently erected to have shops in the first floor and offices or apartments in the second. One of the earliest photographs of the building (dated circa 1868) shows it with three signs attached: U.S. Land Office, Edwards' Law Office, and one advertising "Groceries and Provisions."

The 1868-69 Directory gives the office address of "Edwards, T. D., Lawyer and agent C.P. Railroad" as Sweeney's Building. The 1871-72 Directory lists the following as occupants of the building:

Clayton and Davies, Attorneys at law, SW Corner King and Ormsby.

T.D. Edwards, Attorney and Councillor at law, has offices at SW corner King and Ormsby.

Foster, B. F., groceries and provisions, corner King and Ormsby. (The Carson City "Daily Appeal" of June 1, 1870 carried the following notice: "B. F. Foster (late with George T. Davis), groceries stand will open this morn in the brick store corner of King and Ormsby").

The building also served for a time as the Post Office. A notice in the Carson City "Daily Appeal" of February 28, 1875 states that "again the Post Office has been removed, this time to Sweeney's Building corner of King and Ormsby."

From 1919 to 1944, the building was the property of first Mr. W.T. King and later his widow, Mrs. Emma King. Mr. King was born in Genoa, Nevada in 1860 and died in Carson City in 1936. He was a printer and Justice of the Peace. Mrs. King had a millinery shop in the eastern portion of the first floor, resided in the western side, and rented rooms on the second floor.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: Both the Nevada Historical Society in Reno and the Nevada State Museum in Carson City have several early photographs of the building.

2. Bibliography:

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement: Architectural Merit and Interest:
An early commercial building of a type once common in the region, representing a small number of survivors in Carson City; it has been considerably altered.

Condition of fabric: Good; it has recently been remodeled inside and put in excellent repair.

B. Detailed description of exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: approximately 33 ft. (4 bays) by 40 ft. (3 bays); two stories; rectangular.

2. Walls: Structure - Exterior brick walls are 13 inches thick. They are now painted on the exterior and plastered on the interior.

   a. Composition of north front. This is symmetrical, four bays wide. Four large segmental-arched openings are filled with wooden windows and doors. On the second story there are four segmental-arched windows; the lower third of these openings has been bricked in.

   b. Composition of east front. This is three bays wide. A segmental-arched opening at the south end serves as an entrance. At the north end there is a bay window which was installed between 1875 and 1925 (then used to display hats for a millinery store). Two of the second-story windows have been reduced by bricking in the lower third of the openings.

   c. Cornice. This appears to be substantially in its original form. There is a plain frieze four brick courses high, corbeled out slightly from the face of the wall. A
row of brick dentils is two courses high, above which there is a single course of bricks flush with the outer surface of the dentils. Above this there is another projecting course. There is a low parapet: three courses, one projecting course, and one recessed course. At the center of each facade there is a slightly higher parapet panel.

3. Roof: The roof is flat.

C. Interior at present:

There are two suites of offices on the ground floor, one occupying the eastern half, and the other the western half of the building. The second floor contains two apartments, one at the northern part of the building, and the other at the southern part.

D. Site and Surroundings:

This building occupies the southwest corner of King Street (on the north) and Curry Street (on the east); it is approached from both streets. The terrain is level. The area is now at the fringe of both Public (State and County) and commercial activity.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of visit: August 18, 1972
VIRGINIA & TRUCKEE RAILROAD SHOPS

Between PLAZA, ANN, STEWART, and SOPHIA STS.

V. & T. Railroad Yards, May 29, 1949. Left to right: Oil Tank (1908), Shops (1873), Paint Shop (1877), Sand House (1875). Only the main shop, the subject of this study, remains. Courtesy Stephen E. Drew collection.

Virginia and Truckee Railroad Shops, East Facade, First Part of present century. Illustration shows convergence of tracks, except for those leading to the three left portals, at the "roundtable." Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

VIRGINIA AND TRUCKEE RAILROAD SHOPS HABS No. NEV-13-7

Location: West side of Stewart Street, occupying entire "double block" bordered by Plaza, Ann, Stewart and Sophia Streets, Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: Mr. Paul Larquier and Mrs. Omer Wolf

Present Occupant: Hodges Transportation, Inc.

Present Use: Automotive Testing Center

Statement of Significance: This large building is the most impressive visible remainder of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, one of the most famous of America's Short-Line Railroads.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Construction began in December 1872. The shops were reported to be "in full operation" by February, 1874, although they had been "inaugurated" by a gala ball on July 4, 1873.

2. Architect: none known. Contemporary sources refer to the structure as Curry's building. It is known that A. Curry (see HABS No. NEV-13-13) erected the structure, but is not known if he provided the design.

3. Original and subsequent owners:

The Virginia and Truckee Railroad Shops are built on Blocks 16 and 17 of Proctor and Van Winkle's Division of Carson City. Throughout the early 1870's the V & T acquired much property in this area of Carson City. Purchases and costs of the individual parcels are generally not differentiated in the Ormsby County, Nevada Deed Books. Eg:

1872 Deed recorded December 10, 1872, in Book 15, page 64. The V & T bought Blocks 6, 16, and 20 of Proctor and Van Winkle's Division of Carson City from P.C. Lander of San Francisco for $100.00.

In 1950, the Interstate Commerce Commission after extended hearings, authorized the abandonment of the railroad, and in December of that year the V & T shops at Carson City were
offered for sale. They were purchased by Paul Louis Larquier. The current owners, Mrs. Omer Wolf of Carson City and Mr. Paul Larquier of California, inherited it from their father. Deeds relating to the current ownership are found in the Ormsby County Official Records as follows:

Book 67, page 121, Deed March 31, 1955


4. Original plans, construction, etc.: The following references to the building during the course of construction come from letters written by Henry Marvin Yerington (see HABS No. NEV-13-18), General Superintendent, and later Vice President, of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad. These letters are in The Yerington Collection at The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley:

October 31, 1872. Yerington to Darius Ogden Mills, one of the three original owners of the V & T, saying that the shops should be in Carson and that the best stone was to be found at the State Prison Quarry. The letter also states that "Curry's figures were slightly less than others," indicating that work was ready to proceed and that construction bids had been opened. (The original shops, begun in 1868, were located in Virginia City).

January 1873. Yerington to Wm. Sellers, Philadelphia: "We are now putting up some pretty extensive machine shops."

January 21, 1873. Yerington to Mills: inquiring whether the shops should have iron trusses or wooden rafters in the roof structure. (Iron trusses were chosen)

April 11, 1873. Yerington to Mills: announcing that a portion of the roof (supplied by the firm of Huntington and Hopkins of Sacramento) had arrived. The letter also states that "Curry is doing his work right along."

June 25, 1873. Yerington to M.J. Booth and Co., San Francisco ordering a boiler for the shops.

July 18, 1873. Yerington to Mills: "new shops fitted up and ready to move in."

November 12, 1873. Yerington to Mills: Sellers and Co. beginning to supply machinery.

November 22, 1873. Yerington to Mills: Curry was paid in
full, but was out $4,000 due to a labor strike.

December 8, 1873. Yerington to Mills, announcing the shops had cost more than expected. James W. Bowker, the master mechanic of the V. & T., moved from Virginia City to Carson.

February 11, 1874. Yerington to William Sharon, one of the founders of the railroad: "shops in full operation."

Several notes on the building's construction are found in the following account of the preparations for the aforementioned July 4, 1873 ball, which was published in the July 3, 1873 issue of the Carson "Daily Appeal":

"As before noted, the apartment of the new Railway shops selected for this festive affair is that which is to be occupied by the car builders. This room is 65 feet in width by 163 feet in length. Its walls are as white as new fallen snow—made so by successive coats of white wash; and there is neither a pillar nor a post to obstruct the view from one end to the other. Some idea of the magnitude of the room itself may be gathered from the following single fact relative thereto: There are not less than 50,000 feet of lumber employed in the construction of the floor. Of course this includes foundation timbers, (which rest on solid masonry) sills and everything else. The flooring is three inch planks, firmly spiked to the timbers beneath; and Curry has had these stout planks all planed nicely, and the whole surface of the floor will be so levelled and smoothed as that the fantastic toe may never may never encounter the slightest obstacle to its triumphant progress."

The main shop building, with which we are concerned, housed the engine room, carpenter shop, machine shop, pattern shop, trimshop, blacksmith shop and foundry. It was constructed of sandstone from the Nevada State Prison Quarry. In addition to the main shop building there were many frame shops and appurtenances around the yards. Among these were the sand house (1875) paint house (1877) oil tank (1908), etc.

5. Alterations and Additions:

There have been few major alterations to the V. & T. shop building. The basic structure still stands much as it did when built, although its appurtenances and surroundings are quite altered. All of the tracks, which led to each of the doors on the east facade and converged at the "round table" in front, have been removed, as have all of the subsidiary
frame shops and appurtenances which once stood in close proximity.

In September 1901, the sills, joists, and trim were repaired, and in 1916, the roof was repaired. In 1919, an equipment report of the railroad was made. At this time the Carson City shops were described as being in 85% of their original condition. This account evaluated the building in prime (new) condition as $76,881 and gave its 1914 value at $65,349.00.

In December 1948, the railroad, then in its final decline, made a study of the building which ended in the recommendation that a new steel machinery shop be erected to replace the older building. Among the reasons given were that the "roof trusses are in bad shape, need repairs; roof is all rotted out in spots due to age, smoke and weather action, too large for any operation of company; impossible to keep warm in winter at any reasonable cost."

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

By 1865, the initial output of the Comstock Lode had dwindled to a trickle. Virginia City experienced its first decline, and many of its inhabitants left to seek new fortunes elsewhere.

What had actually happened, and what was guessed at by a few shrewd business men, was that the major lode, the "Big Bonanza", was yet to be reached. In addition, the tailings and slag heaps surrounding Virginia City contained much low assay ore in them. This ore had heretofore been discarded because it was too expensive to cart in wagons down to the reductions mills on the Carson River, near Dayton.

Among the few men who gauged the situation correctly was William Sharon, Virginia City representative of the powerful Bank of California. He persuaded Darius Ogden Mills, President of the bank, that what was needed was a railroad to run from Virginia City down to the mills on the Carson River, taking the heretofore unprofitable ore to the mills on the downgrade run, and returning with timber to shore up the tunnels of the mines as they penetrated ever deeper to the bonanza under the slopes of Mt. Davidson.

To aid in the operation, Sharon acquired for the bank, generally through foreclosure, the seven largest of the Carson River Mills. These were organized into the Union Mining and Milling Company.
By 1868, the Nevada legislature had given a charter to the railroad, and financing had been arranged. Early in 1869, work began on grading, and by the end of the year the railroad was operational, though it did not reach Virginia City until early in 1870. The next year, 1871, a line was run to Reno, to connect with the Southern Pacific and consequently with the world beyond. Upon completion of the line from Virginia City to Carson City, the price of transporting wood was lowered from a third to a half of the cost the year before. During 1870, a two mile extension of the line was run from Carson City to reach the end of Yerington's flume, to expedite the shipping of timber to Virginia City. By 1874, when the Big Bonanza was tapped, the railroad was running 100 cars a day, taking ore down the hill and lumber back up. So great was the traffic that new rails had to be put down between Virginia City and Carson during that year.

The first shops of the V. & T. were in Virginia City, but by 1872, Superintendent Yerington was urging that the proposed new shops be located in Carson City. Construction began in December of that year, and by July 1873, work was far enough along on the building to host a "grand ball." This, the "fete champetre" of July 4, 1874 was perhaps the most momentous "event" associated with the building. The brainstorm of A. Curry, the founder of Carson City and builder of the shops (see HABS No. NEV-13-13), the ball was described "the broadest, longest, steepest and biggest-round of any ball that was ever held in Carson or anywhere else in the Great American Basin-unless it might have been a Mormon dance, in a godly way, in the Great Tabernacle at Salt Lake City...Mr. Ralston and his fellow excursionists were there to represent grand cash and broad gauge (sic) capital, and the most humble and unpretentious employees of the railroad of which he is a principal owner were also there; and the while the Governor and other State officers gave dignity and tone to the affair, the sovereigns did not fail to 'shake a fut wid Fanny there'."

After its grand opening, the shops settled down to a more routine existence.

The 1878-79 Bishop's Directory of Carson City mentions that the V. & T. R.R. "has at Carson a mommoth railroad building, built of stone and iron, which embraces a machine shop, round house foundry, and car manufactory."

Darius Ogden Mills was persuaded by the railroad's general superintendent, Henry M. Yerington that a man of his position should have a private car. The Pullman Company gave a $35,000 estimate for constructing such a car, whereupon Mills instructed Yerington to have the Carson shops rebuild one of the regular passenger
coaches for the purpose. The shops performed the transformation for only $2,500 and the result was good enough for Yerington himself to appropriate it for his own use when it was not being used by Mills.

It has been said that the Carson Shops of the V. & T. could "fabricate anything from a cotter pin to a mine hoist". The V & T. shops not only took care of their own, but built machinery for industries and repaired locomotives for other railroads throughout the area. On May 23, 1878, Superintendent James Crawford of the Carson City Mint arranged for the V. & T. shops to cast a new iron arch on the first of the mint's coin presses. The V. & T. proudly put one of its shop plates on the press, and charged the mint $800.00. The job was finished on September 21, 1878. Both the press and the V. & T. identification are now on display at the Nevada State Museum, formerly the Carson City Mint (see HABS No. NEV-13-22).

The bell of the Methodist Church at Carson City was cast at the V. & T. foundry, but was found to be faulty. It would always crack in extreme changes of weather. After the sixth recasting the bell was perfected. In August 1881, the bell of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Carson City was recast in the V. & T. shops. This newsworthy happening was commented upon in the local press:

"and after the hanging
its regular clanging
will bid the worshippers bend the knee
in spire of St. Peter
'twill sound far sweeter
than in the shops of the V. & T."

In 1890, the shops manufactured a 30 foot flagpole, topped with a ball and star, for the school at Dayton, Nevada.

The shops gradually began to curtail their work, both for the V. & T. and for others, during the early and mid-twentieth century. The outside shop profits for fiscal year 1902 were $10,000.00. In 1936, the paint shops were closed after the death of the paint foreman. In July 1938, the foundry closed for good, and by 1943, the machine shops had retired and sold some 35% of their equipment. The cessation of activity in the shops was symptomatic of what had been happening to the V. & T. itself in the years since the "Big Bonanza."

The natural corollary of any boom is a bust, and by 1879, less than 1/5 of the tonnage of 1875 was being shipped on the V. & T. In the 1890's the railroad ceased paying dividends, a far cry
from the $100,000 monthly profits divided between Mills, Ralston, and Sharon in 1873.

During the slack mining periods, the V. & T. made a profit on its excursion business. On March 18, 1897, the Corbett-Fitzsimmons fight was held in Carson City, and the participants, as well as practically all of the dignitaries who witnessed the fight, came by way of the V. & T.

In the early 1920's increased mining activity in Virginia City once more made operations profitable, but after 1924, deficits were again reported. The pattern was not to change this time.

Ogden Mills, Jr. acquired full control of the V. & T. in 1933 and personally kept the line running until 1937, when he died. In 1938 the railroad went into receivership and in 1941 the rails to Virginia City were pulled up and sold for scrap. The profits from sale of the scrap helped keep the railroad solvent for a few years, but in 1950 the I.C.C., after extended hearings approved abandonment of the line.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: Both the Nevada State Museum in Carson City and the Nevada Historical Society in Reno have extensive photographic files on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad which include early photographs of the shops. Both volumes by Messrs. Beebe and Clegg (see bibliography below) have early photographs of the shops. Mr. Steven Drew (see bibliography below) also has an extensive photographic collection of the building.

2. Bibliography:


The Carson Daily Appeal, July 3 and 6, 1873.


Myrick, David F., Railroads of Nevada and Eastern California.
3. Other sources:

The Bancroft Library at the University of California at Berkeley has extensive material on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad and on its Superintendent, H.M. Yerington. The material has been researched by Mr. Stephen E. Drew, 4180 Randolph Avenue, Oakland, California, 94602, who generously gave of his information for the preparation of this report.

Interview November 3, 1972, with Mr. Burd Lindsay of Carson City. Mr. Lindsay worked for the V. & T. in several capacities; at one time as car builder in the shops.

Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
December 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A rare early industrial building with important historical associations, largely in its early state, of interesting architectural character.

2. Condition of fabric: Exterior stone walls are in generally good condition; roof covering is in poor condition and sagging indicates the possibility of some deterioration in the framing; exterior woodwork is considerably deteriorated.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: about 183 ft. by 312 ft.; 11 bays by 35 bays; one story; rectangular U-shape.

2. Foundations: are low, the floor being at or very near ground level, and are not differentiated from the walls.

3. Walls: Coursed rubble of roughly-squared local sandstone with
dressed sandstone trim. (Some mortar joints need repointing but the walls appear sound throughout.) The excellent workmanship of squaring and dressing of the stones shows a variety of methods of tooling. It is probable that this work was done by prisoners at the State Penitentiary, where the stone was quarried.

a. East Elevation: At this elevation eleven large arched openings provided access for railroad equipment into the building. Except for the interval between the first and second openings at the north end, the openings are regularly spaced and form an arcade.

Piers are coursed ashlar, crowned by plain impost blocks. The voussoirs of the arches, which are semicircular, are dressed and have projecting keystones. A few voussoirs have slipped but none of the arches appear unsound.

Each opening is closed by double wood doors. Each leaf is hung with a long strap hinge near the bottom, another below the impost, and a third one just above the impost. The upper hinge appears to permit independent operation of the top quadrant panel. These hinges are supported on heavy iron pintles embedded in the piers at joints between courses.

Each leaf has two tiers of three panels, the central one being slightly wider than the others. Above is a row of windows: two with nine lights each, with a wooden mullion between them. Very few of these openings retain either glass or muntins. Above this, in the arch, is a quadrant panel in which matched and beaded diagonal boards extend from keystone to springline.

The doors deteriorated but largely intact, except that a number of boards near the top have come loose. The iron hinges and reinforcing straps just below the keystones appear to be quite well preserved.

b. North and south elevations: These two symmetrical elevations are similar. At the center is a large segmental arched doorway flanked by four rectangular windows; this section of the wall is terminated by pilaster strips of regular ashlar. Beyond are symmetrical sections of wall containing seven rectangular windows, terminated by pilaster strips. Next are symmetrical sections of five
similar windows, and pilaster strips. At each end a short section of wall contains a wide window opening with a segmental arch, and a wide pilaster strip of regular ashlar, which extends around the corner with returns. All the window openings have a wide plain hoodmould and plain sill. Most of the openings are closed with boards or plywood. Where window casings are visible they appear deteriorated.

c. West Elevation: This facade consists of two similar gabled walls, each about 66' wide, separated by an open court. Each is divided into three sections by pilasters, the central one being somewhat narrower than the other. Each contains two rectangular windows. The windows have plain hoodmoulds with those of each pair being linked by horizontal band at their lower terminus. The pilasters have simple capitals similar to, and at the same height as, the cornice of the side walls. In the gable there is a round window.

The windows of this facade retain glazed sash, which have six over six light sash.

4. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The low-pitched roof has hips at the east end and gables at the west end. It is covered with corrugated sheet metal which is rusting.

b. Cornice: The cornice consists of two narrow courses of dressed sandstone, which corbel out successively; this also continues up the rakes of the gables. Behind the cornice of the side walls is an interior gutter, which drains through plain cylindrical water spouts located at intervals. A similar gutter extends along the east wall, with a waterspout located above each pier.

c. Monitors, vents: Near the west front of the building is a monitor on the ridge. The roof pattern indicates that monitors may once have been on the ridge in other places.

A number of large cylindrical sheet-metal vents are on the roof, especially toward the east end. In some cases only the base of the vent remains. They are capped by double conical caps, and stayed by wires or cables with turnbuckles.
C. Site and Surroundings:

This building occupies an entire block. Sophia Street at the north, and Ann Street, at the south, are not paved. The railway tracks which once entered from the east have been removed.

Prepared by:  Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of visit:  August 19, 1972
STEWART-NYE HOUSE

108 N. MINNESOTA ST.

Stewart-Nye House, South Side, 1972. Judging from an 1881 drawing of the house, the left bay window is a later addition; the one on the right original.

Stewart-Nye House, Southeast Room (Parlor), showing later interior trim. 1972.
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

STEWART - NYE HOUSE  HABS No. NEV-13-12

Location:  108 North Minnesota Street, (house and grounds occupy the entire block bounded by Minnesota, King, Phillips, and Musser Streets, Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner:  Roman Catholic Church

Present Occupant:  Priests assigned to St. Theresa's Roman Catholic Church

Present Use:  Rectory of St. Theresa's Church

Statement of Significance:  One of Carson City's earliest homes, the Stewart-Nye House is a substantial stone building. Its first noted occupant was William M. Stewart, first United States Senator from Nevada, who sold it to James W. Nye. Nye was the first Governor of Nevada Territory, and later became the State's second United States Senator.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1860. It is known that William M. Stewart moved to Carson City in 1860, and the first Territorial Directory (1862) has him (as well as Mr. Atchinson) residing at the NW corner of King and Minnesota. The deed of September 28, 1861, states that the Stewarts were then residing on the property.


3. Original and subsequent owners:

The Stewart-Nye House is built on Block 12 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City (Frank M. Proctor and B.F. Green were two of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which Carson City was platted). The following references to the title of this block are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada, Deed Books.

1861 Deed September 28, 1861, recorded in Book 1, page 28. (deed not recorded until February 14, 1862). J.H. Atchinson sold to William Stewart his one half interest...
in the lot of land in Carson City bounded by Musser, Minnesota, King, and Phillips Streets (Block 12) for $3,000. The deed states that the lot is that now occupied by the Stewarts. (The First Directory of Nevada Territory [1862] gives the address of both John Atchinson and William Stewart as NW corner of King and Minnesota, which is the address herein described).

1862 Deed August 2, 1862, recorded in Book 4, page 5. William N. Stewart and Anna E. Foote Stewart, his wife, sold to Mrs. Elsie B. Nye of New York City (the wife of Territorial Governor James W. Nye) "the lot of land (block 12) now occupied by them" (the Stewarts) for $8,000.00.

1879 Deed September 26, 1879, recorded in Book 19, page 436. Charles Mason Nye of St. Louis and Mary Nye Waller of New York, son and daughter and sole heirs of James W. Nye and Elsie B. Nye deceased, sold all of Block 12 to Mrs. Louisa C. Shrives of Carson City for $4,300.00.

1880 Deed January 14, 1880, recorded in Book 19, page 438. Mrs. Louisa C. Shrives sold all of Block 12 to Jacob Klein for $4,000.00.

1896 Deed, October 29, 1896, recorded in Book 27, page 630. Jacob Klein deeded all of Block 12 to his daughter Clotildia Therese Klein for $1.00 and in consideration of love and affection (sic.).

1903 Deed, July 8, 1903, recorded in Book 36, page 565. Clotildia T. Klein and Mrs. Marie Isabelle (Klein) Dupuis (sisters), sold all of Block 12 to George F. Talbot for $10,500.00.

1917 Deed, September 28, 1917, recorded in Book 37, page 24. George F. Talbot sold all of Block 12 to Thomas Grace, Roman Catholic Bishop of Sacramento for $6,000.

4. Original plans, construction, etc.: No plans are known to exist. The building is constructed of sandstone, most likely from the quarry opened by Abraham Curry, at what became the Nevada State Prison.

5. Alterations and additions:

The exterior has been altered only to a minor degree. The front door and surrounding trim are not original, though
set in the original framed opening. That portion of the facade covered by the front porch has had stucco applied, with simulated joints painted on. The bay window nearest the southwest corner also seems to be an addition. It does not show in the circa 1880 lithograph of the house reproduced in Thompson and West's "History of Nevada" (see item C, I, "Old Views"), is smaller than the other two bays, and does not have the same trim. The rear wing is an addition, but a very early one. It is shown in an 1875 "birds-eye view" of Carson City and is also seen in the lithograph referred to above. The interior finish has been extensively changed, though the basic floor plan of the house seems undisturbed. The first floor trim is painted to resemble golden oak, and is "neo-colonial" in conception. It more than likely dates from the turn of the present century. The southwest bay window and front door trim accord with the interior work described herein, and are undoubtly part of the same redecorating and remodelling scheme.

The house was purchased in 1903 by George F. Talbot, who came to Carson City from Elko, Nevada in that year to serve on the Nevada State Supreme Court. There is a series of photographs of the house in the Nevada Historical Society showing the interiors as they now are. Several show Judge Talbot also, and it may well be that he "updated" the interior of the house at that time.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Building:

William Morris Stewart (1827-1909), was one of the first two Senators to the United States Congress from Nevada. He was born on August 9, 1827 in Wayne County, New York. In 1835 the family moved to Trumbull County, Ohio. In 1848, Stewart entered Yale University, where he stayed a year and a half.

In January 1850, Stewart obtained passage from New York to Panama, crossed the isthmus, set sail again and arrived in San Francisco in April 1850. He immediately joined the rush to Nevada City, California, where he remained until 1862; amassing a sizeable estate in mining, selling water to the miners to aid in their operations, and operating a sawmill. In addition to these enterprises, Stewart found time to read law, was granted a license, and in 1854, at age 27, was appointed Attorney General of California. In 1855 he married Anna Elizabeth Foote, the daughter of one of his law partners Henry S. Foote, ex-governor and United States Senator from Mississippi.

The Stewarts moved from California to Nevada in 1859, where
Stewart soon became one of the leading lawyers in the Territory, settling first in Genoa, then in Virginia City. In 1860, Stewart moved his family to Carson City from Virginia City, and settled in the house herein described.

Though Stewart and his family resided in Carson, he admitted that most of his practice was in Virginia City. One of the reasons he gave for living in Carson City was its good water supply, compared to the then erratic and unhealthy supply in Virginia City.

Stewart realized that Carson City, rather than Virginia City, would be the more logical choice for the capital of Nevada Territory. At the first Territorial election in August 1861, Stewart was chosen a member of the Territorial Council. He was elected as the member representing district No. 3, Empire City and vicinity, just outside Carson City. Due in great part to Stewart's activity and influence, the Territorial Legislature declared Carson City the capital. During the first session of the Territorial Legislature, Stewart introduced more bills than any other member, and all were adopted. In 1862, as mining litigation was taking most of his time, Stewart resigned from the Territorial Council.

In August, 1862, the Stewarts sold the Carson City house to the Nyes and in 1863 moved back to Virginia City, where they built on Stewart Street, which had been named for him and which is the highest street in the City. The frame home cost $30,000, and was considered far more elegant than the one in Carson. Stewart is said to have given his wife $40,000 to spend in San Francisco on furniture for it.

On October 31, 1864, Nevada became the 36th state of the Union. The first legislature convened on December 12 and elected Stewart as the first Senator on December 15. James W. Nye, the other Senator, was elected the next day. Stewart served two terms in the Senate from 1865-1876. It was during this time that his activities won for him the title "Father of the Mining Laws of the United States." He also, during this time, worked for enactment of the fifteenth amendment. Upon its passage in the Halls of Congress, Stewart telegraphed the news to Carson City, and the Nevada legislature became the first of the State legislatures to ratify it.

In 1875, Stewart resumed his private law practice in San Francisco. In 1885, however, he was back in Carson City, having bought a house at the corner of Robinson and Minnesota
Streets, four blocks from his former home. It was known, and was stated in the local press, that Stewart had come back to live in Nevada so he could once more run for the Senate. One of Stewarts most urgent reasons for running was to rectify the "Crime of '73" (the Mint Bill of 1873) by which the gold standard had been decreed, much to the detriment of Nevadians.

Stewart was elected in 1887, and in 1892, the old law relating to silver was repealed. In 1896, however, McKinley was elected President, and the pro-silver forces were defeated. Meanwhile Stewart had been elected for another term as Senator on the Silver Party Ticket, serving from 1893 to 1899.

In 1898, Stewart was again back in Carson City, this time renting a suite of rooms at the Ormsby House, to campaign for re-election, again running on the Silver Party ticket. He was elected yet again and served until 1905. Retiring from the Senate after 30 full years of service, and 78 years of age, Stewart again returned to his beloved Nevada, this time to Rhyolite, where he lived with his second wife and daughter until his death in 1908.

The Stewarts sold their house on August 22, 1862 to Mrs. Elsie B. Nye of New York City. Mrs. Nye was the wife of James W. Nye, of Madison County, New York, who had been commissioned Governor of Nevada Territory on March 22, 1861, by President Lincoln. In addition to his appointment as Governor, Nye was also commissioned Commander-in-Chief of the Militia and Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Prior to his appointment, Nye had been the Police Commissioner of New York City and had been campaign manager for William Seward. When Seward became Secretary of State, he recommended Nye's appointment to President Lincoln.

Nye arrived in Carson City on July 8, 1861, having come by way of the isthmus of Panama. Three days after his arrival, Nye proclaimed the organization of the Territory completed and announced the Territorial officers. Nye's first official act was promptly followed by others, and in short order the machinery of the Territory was well organized and in full operation. A census was taken in July and election of members of the Territorial legislature was held on August 31, 1861. Nye issued a proclamation that the newly elected legislators would meet on October 1, 1861 at Carson City. From that time Carson City's bid to become the capital was practically sealed.

Much of Nye's term as Governor was taken up with issues involv-
ing the War Between the States. Nye, known as the "Gray Eagle" steered the course of Territorial government in a firm and steady manner throughout these years. In March 1864, President Lincoln issued the Enabling Act, by which the people of Nevada Territory were given the right to form a constitution and State government, prior to being admitted to the Union as a State. By September of that year, the Constitution had been adopted and approved by the citizens of Nevada, and on October 31, 1864, Nevada was admitted to the Union as the 36th State. Governor Nye carried on as Governor for the first five weeks of statehood. On November 8, 1864 an election was held, and Henry G. Blasdel became the first elected governor of the State.

In December 1864, a joint session of the new State Legislature was held to elect the two United States Senators. William Stewart was elected on December 15 as the first, and Nye was elected on the 16th, as the second. The two men drew lots to decide the length of terms; Stewart drew the four year term and Nye the two year one. Two years later, in November 1866, Nye was again elected U.S. Senator, to serve the full six year term from 1867 to 1873.

In 1872, Nye again ran for the Senate, but was defeated by J.P. Jones, known in the state as "The Commoner". After his defeat, Nye went to live with daughter in New York City. He became senile and was committed to an asylum in White Plains, New York, where he died on December 25, 1876. In his notebook was found a penciled message "come up tonight and swap jokes (signed) Lincoln."

The house on Minnesota Street was sold by Nye's children after his death, and was purchased by Jacob Klein, a well known Carson City figure who at one time was President of the Bullion and Exchange Bank, and owner of the Carson Brewery. Klein left the property to his daughters, who kept it until 1903, when it was purchased by George Frederick Talbot.

Talbot was born in Connecticut in 1859 and came to Nevada in 1869 with his parents. They settled in Elko. Talbot went back East to study law and on his return was admitted to the State Bar in 1881. He was elected District Attorney in 1884 and 1886. From 1895-1902, he was the Judge for State Judicial District No. 4, which included Elko, White Pine, and Lincoln Counties. In November 1902 he was elected a Judge of the State Supreme Court, and moved to Carson City the next year. Under the State Constitution, by virtue of being the senior Justice, he became Chief Justice in 1907. Talbot was also an
early President of the Nevada Historical Society. He sold this house in 1917, three years after the expiration of his term on the Supreme Court. Since that time, the house has served as the rectory for the Roman Catholic Church of St. Teresa of Avila which is located directly across King Street.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: There is a lithograph of the house facing page 548 in Thompson and West's History of Nevada, cited below.

   The Nevada Historical Society in Reno has a series of interior photographs taken circa 1903-1910 (showing the trim as it is now). These are in the "Ormsby County Homes" file. Several of these show Judge Talbot, which would seem to date them no earlier than 1903, when he purchased the property.

2. Bibliography:


3. Other Sources: Historical material received from the Reverend Harold P. Vieages, P.O. Box 177, Lovelock, Nevada,
89419. Father Vieages formerly lived in the house, and was one of the first to realize its importance in the history of Nevada.

Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December, 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement: Architectural Merit and Interest: An early stone house which has been altered, with attractive interior features, having important historical associations.


B. Detailed description of exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Original portion approx. 34 ft. x 42 ft., front porch 6 ft. deep; western addition 24 ft. long. One-and-a-half stories. Rectangular. (Bay count is not relevant in this case)

2. Foundations: One course of sandstone.

3. Walls: Squared sandstone rubble, randomly laid, brownish yellow in color. Joints have been pointed in modern times. Gable of east front is ashlar, painted light yellow. The lower part of the east front was stuccoed at some subsequent time and simulated stone joints were painted on.


5. Porch: A shallow wooden porch of five unequal bays extends across the eastern front. Columns are square, paneled, with moulded capitals of a modified Doric type. The entablature is simple except for small brackets. There is a railing with turned balusters. The floor is of narrow matched boards. A low hip roof covers this porch.

6. Chimneys: Two chimneys are visible on the north side of the original building, one near each end. There is one
chimney on the south wall of the western addition.

7. Openings - doorways and doors: The main entrance is located somewhat off center of the east front. It appears to be a later alteration set in the original opening. There are wide wooden mouldings in the masonry opening, with a frieze at the top. The single door has a large elliptical glazed panel at the "corners" of which are ornamental wooden panels, the whole forming a vertical rectangle.

Windows: There are three bay windows: two on the south wall and one on the north wall of the original building. The other windows have double-hung replacement sash, set into the masonry openings without exterior trim.

8. Roof: The original building has a shingled gable roof. The western addition has a flat roof with a slight pitch toward the west end; there is a low parapet on the north and south sides.

Cornice: The original building has a wooden boxed cornice with plain frieze, bed moulding and cymatium. There are no gutters on this portion.

Dormers: There are two gabled dormers on the south side and two on the north side.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: First floor - The original portion has two rooms along the south side and three along the north side, the one at the east front being smaller than the others. A longitudinal hall leads from the front entrance past the southeast room, to the southwest room. Just north of this hall, a narrow enclosed stair gives access to the rooms above.

The western addition contains a modern kitchen at the south, and accessory spaces.

Second Floor: Two rooms, one at each end, are finished off under the roof; they are connected by a small hall which contains the stair. Parts of the ceiling follow the slope of the roof. Some traces of early finish indicate that this space was probably finished at the time the house was built.

D. Interior Finish of note:
1. The second-floor rooms retain some small areas of old matched and beaded wall boards, and some narrow matched flooring. A simple rail in the hall adjoins the stair. Aside from this these rooms have been modernized.

2. Typical finish on the first floor appears to date from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Wooden trim is painted to imitate golden oak. Door and window architraves are moulded. Walls and ceilings are papered, the walls having a moulded wooden base. Solid doors have five horizontal panels; some have glazing above two panels.

3. Southeast room: This is a reception-parlor or living room. It is entered through a wide rectangular opening on the north wall. A large approximately semicircular bay window is opposite this opening, on the south wall. The west wall contains a fireplace with a high mantel shelf carried on fluted Ionic colonnettes. Between the fireplace opening and the entablature of the mantel shelf there is an oak frieze ornamented with delicate "Neo-Colonial garlands below which is a glazed ceramic tile facing, blue-green in color. The fireplace opening is covered with an ornamental bronze cover. A cabinet adjoining the fireplace on the north has a leaded-glass door. There is a door adjoining the fireplace on the south. There is a picture moulding extending around the room, above which is a plain frieze; no cornice.

4. Entrance Hall: At one side of the entrance door there is a coat-rail with silver hooks. The entrance door has an elliptical beveled plate glass light.

E. Site and Surroundings:

This house occupies a spacious site at the northwest corner of Minnesota Street and King Street. The terrain is level. The entrance is from the east. The lot is surrounded by a hedge and is planted with trees. There is a small one-story shed at the west end of the lot.

It is thought that this setting has changed but little for a long time.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
August 17, 1972
(date of visit)
SMAIL HOUSE

512 N. CURRY ST.

The Smail House, East Facade (left), and North Side, 1972.
Location: 512 North Curry Street (SW corner of North Curry and West Robinson Streets), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: Mr. Burd G. Lindsay

Present Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Vienneau

Present Use: Dwelling

Statement of Significance: A typical small Carson City dwelling of the mid-nineteenth century, the Smail House has surprisingly sophisticated details and trim.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1862. The property was sold in 1862 by one of the four men who platted Carson City to James Smail. The 1862 Directory of Nevada Territory lists one N. Smail, carpenter, as living at the S.W. corner of Curry and Robinson Streets. (Presumably, both sources refer to the same Mr. Smail). Smail sold it the month after he bought it, but for almost three times his purchase price, indicating that a substantial improvement had been made.

2. Architect: none known

3. Original and subsequent owners: The house at 512 North Curry Street is located on lot number 1 of Block 57 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City. (Frank M. Proctor and B.F. Green were two of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which Carson City was platted.) The following references tracing the title of this lot are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada Deed Books.

1862 Deed May 5, 1862, recorded in Book 1, page 201. James Smail bought from F.M. Proctor the lot on the SW corner of Curry and Robinson Streets (34 ft. on Curry and 80 ft. on Robinson), "being lot 1 of Block 57", for $250.00.

1862 Deed June 13, 1862, recorded in Book 1, page 288. John McAvoy bought lot 1 of Block 57 from James Smail for $600.00.
1862 Deed July 16, 1862, recorded in Book 1, page 378. G.D. Hall bought lot 1 of Block 57 from John McAvoy for $500.00.

1863 Deed January 10, 1863, recorded in Book 4, page 381. Edward Sweeney bought lot 1 of Block 57 from Garven D. Hall for $1,000.00.

1877 Deed February 20, 1877, recorded in Book 16, page 272. Matt Rinckel bought several properties from Edward Sweeney, one of which was lot 1 in Block 57, for $4,624.00.

1878-1891 Several transactions of large blocks of real estate, including lot 1 of Block 57 are noted in this period. References are made to Deeds of 1878 (Book 19, p. 35), 1883 (Book 22, p. 419), 1886 (Book 24, p. 226) and 1891 (Book 25, p. 396).

1894 Deed November 5, 1894, recorded in Book 25, page 517. Lilian A. Dauchy, Administratrix of the estate of John F. Egan, deceased, deeded several properties, among which was lot 1 of Block 57, to P. Manogue of Sacramento for $5.00. (note: P. Manogue was the Reverend Father Patrick Manogue, priest and builder of the well known church of St. Mary's in the Mountains in Virginia City and later Bishop of the Diocese of Sacramento. The details of his interest in Egan's property are given in Book 20, page 599.)

1898 Deed July 18, 1898, recorded in Book 29, page 68. E.D. Sweeney bought lot 1 of Block 57 from George Tyrell, County Treasurer and ex officio tax collector, to settle the estate of P. Monogue. The property was assessed at $300.00.

1913 Deed February 17, 1913, recorded in Book 36, page 328. Sweeney deeded the lot to his wife.

1919 Deed September 23, 1919, recorded in Book 38, page 5. B.G. Lindsay and Ellen Lindsay, his wife, bought from Nellie W. Lammon, acting Administratrix of the estate of Mr. E.D. Sweeney, lot 1 of Block 57 for $325.00.

1925 Deed December 3, 1925, recorded in Book 65, page 189. Burd G. Lindsay obtained from Ellen L. Lindsay an undivided one half interest in several lots, among which was lot 1 of block 57 for $10.00.
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: none known. The cornice shows an interesting, and knowledgeable, modification of classic forms, and is more elaborate than would be expected on an other-wise modest building. Seemingly original, the cornice may well owe its existence to the fact that the first recorded occupant of the property, and perhaps builder of the house, was a carpenter.

5. Alterations and additions: The front porch may be an addition. It is not shown in the 1875 "Birds Eye View of Carson City" drawn by Augustus Koch. While this omission in the view cannot be taken as concrete evidence that the porch did not then exist, the view is known to be accurate in most particulars. Structurally and visually, the porch is joined to the facade in a rather awkward fashion, blocking the cornice return on the gable, which may also indicate its later provenance. The solid frame parapet wall on the lower third of the porch is a later modification.

The only interior decorative modification of note is the cabinet installed in the wall between the dining room and kitchen. This appears to date from the turn of the century, and is known to have been in the house when it was purchased by the present owner in 1919.

B. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: The house is shown on the "Birds Eye View of Carson City, Ormsby County, Nevada, 1875," drawn by Augustus Koch and published by Britton, Rey and Co. of San Francisco. (Copy in the Nevada State Museum, Carson City).

2. Bibliography: Ormsby County, Nevada, Deed Books.


Interview, November 3, 1972, with Mr. Burd Lindsay, current owner of the property.

Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
November 1972
PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: A small mid-nineteenth century house with interesting details showing modification of Classic forms.


B. Detailed Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions 20 ft. (3 bays) by 45 ft. (4 bays); one story; rectangular shape.

2. Foundations: Low; large blocks of squared sandstone.

3. Wall Construction: Narrow bevel siding on main portion of the house. Novelty siding on the western wing. Corner boards. Walls are painted yellow with white trim. There is no indication of the original color.


5. Porch: Across the eastern front there is a three-bay porch five feet in depth, covered with a shed roof. The columns consist of paired 2" x 2" pieces with a space between them; they have moulded capitals. A solid parapet wall now interrupts the lower part of these columns; this appears to be an alteration.

6. Chimney: There is a small brick chimney on the ridge at the west end of the main portion of the house; it is supported on corbels inside the building.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors: There are three openings to the east porch. In the central opening there is a four-paneled door; those at the sides contain glazed (French) doors. Plain trim has cap at the top consisting of a dentil course and mouldings.

b. Windows: There are three windows in each side wall, with plain trim. Sash are double hung, six lights over six lights.

8. Roof:
a. The main portion of the house has a gable roof covered with painted shingles. The porch and a low section at the west end have shed roofs; that at the west is covered with corrugated sheet metal.

The house cornice is boxed and is crowned with a cyma recta; it returns at the gable ends. Below it there is a frieze with a dentil course, divided into plain panels (suggesting metopes) and triglyphs, which consist of two cyma recta mouldings symmetrically joined, placed vertically. There are narrow mouldings at the top and bottom of this frieze, which also extends under the raking cornice of the gables. The shed roof at each end has a small cornice moulding of slight projection, under which is a dentil course.

b. There are no dormers.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The main portion of the house is divided into four rooms, the pair on the north side being wider than the two bedrooms on the south side. At the west end there are two rooms: kitchen on the north and bathroom at the south.

2. Flooring: The floor is covered with modern materials.

3. Walls and Ceiling: Papered, apparently over plaster. Those ceilings over the western part slope, and are finished with matched and beaded boards.

4. Doorways and Doors: Doors, which appear to be original, have two plain vertical panels. Some at the west end have four moulded panels. There is a wide rectangular opening between the two major rooms - living and dining. The bedrooms and bathroom are reached through a single door in the north partition of each.

5. Trim: Door and window trim is plain. That of the openings in the east front extends to the floor. There is a simple base around the rooms.

6. Cabinetwork: In the partition between dining a room and kitchen there is a cabinet with leaded-glass doors, below which there are drawers. This appears to date from c. 1900.

7. Hardware: The vertical-paneled doors have cast-iron box locks and porcelain knobs.
D. Site and Surroundings:

This house faces east and is located on level ground at the southwest corner of North Curry Street and West Robinson Street. The lot is small.

At the west end there is a frame garage with a sandstone block foundation, novelty siding, gable roof covered with corrugated sheet metal, and open eaves.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of Visit - August 17, 1972
G. W. G. FERRIS HOUSE

311 W. THIRD ST.

This "neo-colonial" feature is not an original element.
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  HABS No. NEV-13-14

GEORGE WASHINGTON GALE FERRIS SR. HOUSE

Location: 311 West Third Street (SE Corner W. Third Street and S. Division Street), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Herron

Present Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Herron

Present Use: Dwelling

Statement of Significance: An attractive nineteenth century house with later, elaborate Colonial Revival interior trim. This building was the boyhood home of the inventor of the Ferris Wheel.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: c. 1869. G.W.G. Ferris bought the property in 1868 from the Sears, who had subdivided this portion of Carson City. The 1868-69 Directory for Nevada Territory lists "Ferris, George W., Farmer" as residing on "3rd, between Nevada and Division" which is the property in question. Stylistically, the original portions of the house accord well with this date.

2. Architect: none known

3. Original and subsequent owners:

The Ferris House is located on lots 2 and 3 of Block 28 of Sears, Thompson, and Sears Division of Carson City. The following references tracing the title of these lots are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada Deed Books:

1868 Deed, March 10, 1868, recorded in Book 11, page 608. George W.G. Ferris bought from G.A. Sears and Mary A. Sears the west half of Block 28 (comprising lots 2, 3, 6, 7 and 10), the east half of Block 32, and also lot no. 2 in Block 32 of Sears, Thompson and Sears Division. Price $1,800.

1890 Deed, September 9, 1890, recorded in Book 25, page 292. G.W.G. Ferris (now of Riverside, San Bernadino County, California) bought from H.F. Dangberg of
Douglas County, Nevada several properties in Carson City; among which was the remainder of Block 28, for $10,000.

1890 Deed, September 9, 1890 recorded in Book 27, page 180. Mary F. Ardery of Carson City bought all of Block 28 from G.W.G. Ferris for $3,000. (Mary Ferris Ardery was the daughter of G.W.G. Ferris).

1922 Deed, May 11, 1922 recorded in Book 37, page 365. Narick E. Maher and Mary M. B. Maher bought all of Block 28 from Mary F. Ardery for $6,330.

In the late 1930's Mrs. Maher sold off portions of the property, keeping only lots 2 and 3 on which the house was built, and lot 6 as a unit.

1956 Deed February 28, 1956, recorded in Deed Book 67, page 515. Thurman W. Cross bought lots 2, 3 and 6 in Block 28 from John R. Ross and Margaret B. Ross.

1968 Deed April 25, 1968, recorded in Official Records Book 75, page 58. Ferdinand Hirzy and wife bought lots 2, 3 and 6 in Block 28 from Thurman W. Cross and Belle M. Cross.

1968 Deed July 8, 1968 recorded in Official Records, Book 77, page 467. Charles W. Herron and Corine Herron, husband and wife, bought lots 2, 3 and 6 in Block 28 from Ferdinand Hirzy and wife.

4. Original plans, construction, etc: none known

5. Alterations and additions: The earliest known representation of the house is the small scale drawing shown in an 1875 "Bird's Eye View of Carson City." This shows the house to be essentially the same in shape and outline as it is today. A 1916 photograph of the north facade shows this portion of the house to be virtually unchanged. It should be noted, however, that the detail and trim of the front porch, which also carry over to the front bay, and which appear in this photograph, do not reflect original construction. This exterior trim was more than likely altered at the time of the major interior renovations.

The interior of the house has received far more alteration
than the exterior. (The various and specific changes are noted in Part II of this report) It will suffice here to say that the woodwork, in scale and design, seems to reflect the "neo-Colonial" style, popular in the 1890's and early 1900's. Trim is of extremely small scale, and classical motifs, such as egg and dart moldings and urns are used repeatedly. These details were much in vogue at the time of, and largely as a result of, the Chicago World's Fair (The World's Columbian Exposition) of 1893. It may well be that the Arderys, who owned the house from 1890 to 1920, decided to modernize it in keeping with the "Eastern" fashion promulgated at the fair. This connection with the fair may have been quite a strong one, inasmuch as Mrs. Ardery's brother played a major role by providing one of the Midway's major attractions. (See Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building).

In addition to changes of trim and detail, the plan and usage of spaces has changed over the years. The south wing is now a separate apartment, and the dining room was formerly a part of the kitchen. The roof, of red cedar shakes, was installed by Mr. Burd Lindsay, during the Ardery's ownership.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated With The Building:

George Washington Gale Ferris, Sr. came to Nevada with his family from Galesburg, Illinois in 1864. According to tradition he, Mrs. Gale and their children crossed the plains in a carriage, not in a covered wagon. The family settled first at a farm in Carson Valley. In addition to the usual farm products, Ferris planted trees of many varieties, to the extent that he was singled out for particular mention in the following passages from Thompson and West's History of Nevada:

"A prominent feature of the agriculture of 1871-72 was the attempt, or the beginning of planting and raising shade, ornamental and forest trees. The most prominent man in connection with this was G.W.G. Ferris, who imported a great number of eastern forest trees, such as hickory, black walnut, chestnut, etc."

"What is home without fruit trees - apple, pear or orange, or grapevines, as the case may be? He who plants fruit trees is intending to stay. In Ormsby County were 125 walnut trees, 125 elms, 300 box-elder, 1,000 white maples, presumably the property of G.W.G. Ferris, who had manifested a commendable enterprise in the planting."
The Ferris family remained in Carson Valley for several years, but by 1869 had moved to Carson City. The 1868-69 Nevada Directory shows that Mr. Ferris was still primarily interested in agriculture in listing the occupant of the house at 3rd and Division Streets as "Ferris, George W., farmer."

George Washington Gale Ferris, Jr., who was to become the most prominent figure associated with the house, was a young boy when the family moved to town. He was born in Galesburg on February 14, 1859, came with the family to Nevada in 1864 and after 1869, spent his youthful years in the house here-in discussed. He later graduated from a military academy in Oakland, California, and 1881 graduated in engineering from Rensaeelaer Polytechnic Institute.

After a short period in which he was associated with railroad and coal interests in West Virginia, he began to become primarily involved in bridge building. He also became expert in testing and inspecting structural steel and organized the firm of G.W.G. Ferris and Co. of Pittsburgh, to conduct such work in shops and foundries throughout the country.

While the value of Ferris' contributions in these fields is undisputed, it was a more dramatic work that made his name become a household word.

In 1892, Daniel M. Burnham gave a challenge to American Engineers. He asked that they produce something for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 which would rival the Eiffel Tower, erected for the Paris Exposition. Ferris rose to the occasion with his gigantic wheel. The wheel cost $390,000 and took some six months to fabricate. It was built in Pittsburgh, taken down, and reassembled in Chicago. Although Ferris had received little encouragement on his invention, it soon became one of the major attractions at the fair.

The original "Ferris Wheel" was 250 feet tall, had thirty-six cars, each holding some forty passengers, and took twenty minutes to make a full revolution. The daring of its design, the precision of the machine work involved in its construction, and the accuracy of its movements, as well as its huge size, won for the wheel the admiration of engineers and the hearty approval of fairgoers.

Ferris returned to Pittsburgh from the Fair, and died there in 1896 at the age of thirty-seven. He was survived by his wife, Margaret Beatty.
Literally and figuratively, Ferris' wheel lived on after him. The original wheel was taken down after the Chicago fair, and was erected again nine years later for the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904. It was then dismantled, and the parts sold for scrap. Its progeny, though usually much smaller than the parent, are found in countless fairs, carnivals, and circuses throughout this country and abroad.

Family tradition has it that Ferris conceived the idea of his wheel from his early days in Nevada, where he would watch the waterwheels on the Carson River which were used to crush the ore from Virginia City.

In 1890, the elder Ferris, who had moved to California, sold the house (and all of Block 28) to his daughter, Mary Ferris Ardery. Mrs. Ardery, who lived in the house until the early 1920's, was married to Alexander M. Ardery on September 29, 1880. Ardery, born in New York State in 1850, had come west in 1861 with his parents. In 1870, he was employed by the Virginia and Truckee Railroad as a telegraph operator and assistant dispatcher. In 1881, he became chief dispatcher, and in August 1883, Master of Transportation. In 1909, he became Vice-President and General Manager, replacing Henry M. Yerington, who had died the previous month (see HABS No. NEV-13-18, H.M. Yerington House). After his death, his widow continued to live in the house until 1922, when it passed out of the hands of the Ferris Family.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views:


A photograph of the W. Third Street facade, dated 1916, in possession of Mrs. Marshall Humphreys, shows the house as it is today.

2. Bibliography:

PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: This one-and-a-half story, late nineteenth century house has attractive interior features and significant historical associations.

2. Condition of fabric: Fairly good. Recently some rooms have been refurbished.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Approximately 60' x 60'. The plan is complex being roughly a T with various offsets and projections.

2. Foundations: Large squared sandstone blocks form a low foundation below a wooden water table.

3. Walls: The walls are covered with beveled siding between corner boards.

4. Structural system: The frame is of rough sawn, dimension timber.

5. Porches: At the north front a square distyle entrance porch occupies in part the angle between the front wall and a large bay window, beyond which it projects. Two unfluted columns with angular Ionic capitals having large volutes similar to those of the Temple of Apollo at Bassae. Two pilasters serve as responds. The Greek Ionic-type entablature contains a dentilled cornice. The porch has balustraded
railings, narrow pine floor boards and a half hipped roof. Secondary porches are located on the west elevation toward the rear, and on the east elevation in a re-entrant angle.

6. Chimneys: Three brick chimneys are located at or near the roof ridge.

7. Openings:
   a. Doorways and Doors: The main (north)entrance is set within a paneled reveal trimmed with an architrave. The door, which appears to date from the 1890's, is glazed with single pane of diamond pattern pressed glass. Below is a small horizontal moulded panel and a nearly square panel ornamented with a wreath of applied composition.

   b. Windows: A number of windows appear to be original and have plain trim with moulded caps. The double hung, one over one light sash may be replacements.

      In each gable a small "pointed" window, a two-centered pointed arch, with plain trim has one over one light sash.

      Three first floor windows, one on the east elevation and two on the west, appear to have been installed in the 1890's. The horizontally rectangular openings have high sills, plain trim and moulded caps. Each contains beveled plate glass in a geometrical pattern, consisting of elongated vertical hexagons between diamond-shaped pieces.

      The bay window which appears to be of original construction, on the north front is rectangular in plan, with a double front window a single side window. The openings have semicircular heads and double-hung, two over two light sash. Between the openings and at their sides, are round-headed panels. Below the moulded string course of the sill are moulded panels. The roof of the bay window is continuous with the north porch roof and has a matching cornice.

8. Roof:
   a. Shape and Covering: The main roof is gabled and is covered with wood shingles. However, the porches have half hipped roofs.
b. Cornice: A boxed cornice having a small covetto bed moulding is completed with a cyma recta crown moulding. The cornice has returns at the gable ends, and extends up the rakes. A wide frieze board is below the bed moulding. There are no gutters.

c. Dormers: One shed dormer on the west elevation breaks the eaves.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans

a. First Floor: The north wing, the base of the T plan, has an entrance hall on the east side and a living room at the west side. To the south is a long room with the main stair in the west portion.

The south wing contains a large room on the east, the master bedroom; and one on the west, the dining room; smaller rooms along the south side, the breakfast room, kitchen, and wine-cellar. A secondary stair is located between the master bedroom and the dining room.

b. Second Floor: The room layout is a somewhat modified version of the first-floor layout, being curtailed by the roof.

2. Interior Finish

a. General: A number of original features remain in the north bay window, the large room containing the principal stair, and at the second story. The first-story rooms of the north front, and the principal stair, appear to have been almost entirely remodeled with the use of Georgian Revival details popular in the 1890's. Some rooms at the south end of the first story have had still later alterations, but some, such as the kitchen, still contain early trim. The flooring is of five-inch pine boards, under modern carpeting.

b. Entrance Hall: The entrance door is at the north end, and a high horizontal window of leaded beveled plate glass is on the east wall. A door is at the south end and a flat arched opening is on the west side connecting the front living room. Door and window openings have architrave trim, the mouldings are very delicate in scale and some are enriched with egg and dart and bead
and reel. Each opening has a cap with a dentil course and small mouldings. Some architraves have two fascias, others have three. Picture moulding extends around the dentil course.

In the flat arched opening, are two unfluted columns on paneled pedestals. The column capitals are angular Ionic with an enriched low relief anthemion band as necking. Above the pedestals, is a narrow opening between each jamb and the adjacent column. This woodwork is now painted white. Originally, it may have been varnished as is the outside face of the front door.

c. Front living room: On the east wall is the columned opening. A fireplace is centered on the south wall and a doorway adjoins it to the east. On the west wall a high horizontal window is similar to the entrance hall window. On the north side the central portion opens to a rectangular bay window. The head of this opening is a semi-elliptical arch with a keystone supported on consoles above paneled pilasters. Extending around the three sides of the bay is a window seat above paneling. The fireplace is located on a projecting chimney breast. Around the firebox is a facia of brick and a wooden architrave, Doric colonnettes support a mantel shelf. The brick hearth may be a replacement. The remaining trim in this room is similar to that of the entrance hall.

d. Room containing the principal stair: This room is divided into two unequal areas by a wide, moulded ceiling beam. The eastern area, which is the larger, has two windows on the east wall and a doorway on the south wall near the east corner, all with older type architrave trim. The door has four moulded panels.

The western end contains a stairway whose lower flight and landing are centered on the west wall. Above the landing is a horizontal window like the entrance hall window. Several steps lead to the landing, above which the stair ascends along the west wall and turns, with winders, to land near the middle of the north wing at the second floor. The soffit and the low wall under the stair are wood, treated with very small moulded panels. The open string has turned balusters, and ornamental step ends. Newels at each angle are square in plan in the lower paneled portion, round and moulded in the central portion, square and paneled above, and completed with finials above the railing.
e. Southern Rooms: There have been alterations in plan in this part of the house. Wainscoting with vertical matched and beaded boards remains. The kitchen retains four-panel doors and architrave trim, as well as wooden wainscoting.

f. Second-story rooms: Some openings have plain trim, and four-paneled doors, unmoulded but with raised fields in the panels. Other openings have architrave trim and four panel doors.

3. Wall and Ceiling Finish: The plaster on lath is painted.

4. Notable equipment: A number of old brass electric wall sconces remain which originally may have been gas fixtures. Between kitchen and breakfast room large hinges provide for a double swinging door.

D. Site and Surroundings:

The house on level terrain faces north onto Third Street with Division Street at the west side. A wooden picket fence is similar to the one shown in the 1916 photograph. At the south there was an artesian well, of which no trace remains.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of Visit: August 18, 1972
HENRY MARVIN YERINGTON HOUSE

512 N. DIVISION ST.

H. M. Yerington House, East Front, c. 1870. This, the earliest known view of the house, was taken soon after the Yeringtons acquired the property. Photo courtesy Stephen E. Drew collection.
Yerington House, South Side and East Front, c. 1872. Former side porch has been converted into glazed arcade, serving as a conservatory. Photo courtesy Stephen E. Drew collection.

Yerington House, View from former front parlor into former dining room, 1972. (Essentially the opposite end of the room shown above.)

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Circa 1870. The property was deeded to Mrs. Yerington in the fall of 1869. The 1871-72 Directory for Ormsby County is the earliest directory having Yerington living at this address. Further, there is a photograph of the house, dated c. 1870, from the Yerington family album.


3. Original and subsequent owners:

The Yerington House is built on the northern half of Block No. 59 of Proctor and Green’s Division of Carson City. (Frank M. Proctor and B.F. Green were two of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which Carson City was platted). The following references tracing the title of the property are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada, Deed Books:

1866 Deed, September 8, 1866, recorded in Book 11, page 158. James Fraser received title to lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 and the north half of lots 5 and 6 in Block 59 in fee simple from the United States Government. (The lots are the northern half of Block 59).
HENRY MARVIN YERINGTON HOUSE
HABS No. NEV-13-18 Page 2

1868 Deed, February 14, 1868, recorded in Book 11, page 600. Peter Lightle bought lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 and the north half of lots 5 and 6 in Block 59 from James Fraser for $800.00.

1868 Deed, November 14, 1868, recorded in Book 12, page 184. O.P. Willis bought lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 and the north half of lots 5 and 6 from Peter Lightle and Anna Lightle for $900.00.

1869 Deed, October 4, 1869, recorded in Book 12, page 445. Susan Mary Yerington (wife of Henry M. Yerington) bought the north half of block 59 from Orlando P. Willis and Margaret R. Willis for $1,200.00.

1920 Deed April 9, 1920, recorded in Book 37, page 325. Clara V. Yerington (second wife and widow of Henry M. Yerington) sold the north half of Block 59 to Peter Heitman for $5,500.00.

Title to the property changed hands several times during the 1920's and the rear lot, on which a stable had been located, was sold during this decade. The house was eventually purchased by George B. Russell, who lived in it until his death in 1967.

1968 Deed June 6, 1968, recorded in Ormsby County Official Records, Book 76, page 616. Omer W. Wolf and Marie Rose Wolf bought the northern one-half of Block 59 (except for the west 60 feet) from the estate of George B. Russell, deceased.

1971 Deed, March 8, 1971, recorded in Ormsby County Official Records, Book 106, page 625. John R. Bullis and Bonnie J. Bullis purchased the northern one-half of Block 59, except for the west 60 feet from Omer W. and Marie Rose Wolf.

5. Alterations and additions: The major additions to the house seem to have been made early in the Yerington tenure. The north wing, now a separate apartment, was originally the wine cellar and service wing. It consists of several small rooms wrapped around a hollow core which is several feet below grade. This was the wine cellar, and may have served for cold storage as well. It is reached by a flight of several steps from the front (east) room of the north wing.
The ceiling of the wine cellar is lower than the ceiling height of the rooms which surround it. Storage shelves, closets, etc., are installed above it. These open into the several surrounding rooms with doors near the ceiling level.

This wing is shown in a photograph which is dated circa 1870. In all probability, it is a very early addition, if not in fact contemporaneous with the main block of the house.

The rear portion (SW) of the southern wing is also an early addition, and is seen in an 1872 photograph. By 1872, there was a sun parlor on the southeast of the house, this wrapped around the east front of the wing and the southern side of the main block.

From the notes and bills in the Yerington papers at The Bancroft Library of the University of California at Berkeley, it would seem that there was much construction activity on the house during the years 1873-1876. The work must have been essentially complete by May 31, 1876, when an item occurs concerning the laying of carpets. It is more than probable that the present southeast room, which is not present in the 1872 photograph, was added at this time. The sun parlor, or porch, was removed from its original location and at least a portion of it placed to the east of the new room. It may well be that it was at this same time that the arch of Philippine mahogany was installed in the dining room. In the original scheme, the dining room would undoubtedly have been two rooms, perhaps connected by double doors. With the addition of the new formal parlor, (the SE room), the partition wall between the old parlor and the dining room could have been removed, and the arch installed as both support and decoration.

During their recent restoration the present owners found several initials and a date (RER, FTR, CMB, 1887) on the ceiling of the dining room under a plaster medallion.

During the mid 20th century, under the ownership of Mr. Russell, the house was divided into three apartments: one on the south, one in the middle (comprising the original portion of the house), and one in the north wing. The first two divisions have been eliminated, and the former southern and middle apartments are now reunited. The northern wing, formerly the servants quarters, still functions as a separate rental unit.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:
Henry Marvin Yerington was born in Colburne, Ontario, Canada on September 5, 1829. In 1858 he married Susan Mary Hume, and in 1863 with his wife and two sons came to Carson City. At this time Yerington was associated primarily with milling operations. He is listed in the 1868-69 Directory as "Yerington, H.M., millman". He constructed the first flume for sending timber down from Lake Tahoe to the Carson Valley. By 1868 he was associated with the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, which was organized in March of that year, and drove the first and the last spikes for the V. and T. tracks from Virginia City to Carson City. In 1872, he was appointed General Superintendent of the V. & T.

There were three sons and a daughter of this first marriage. The first Mrs. Yerington died in May 1874, and in 1887 Mr. Yerington married Clara Bender. There was one child, Henry Herbert, of this marriage. In 1876 Yerington became Vice-president, as well as continuing to be General Superintendent, of the railroad. He was also largely responsible for the Carson and Colorado Railroad, which was completed in 1882 and sold to The Southern Pacific Company in 1900.

During the course of his many faceted professional career, Yerington was involved in over forty companies, generally as an officer or member of a Board of Directors. In addition to the railroad, his major interests were in milling, mining, and timber operations. He was also at one time president of the Carson Water Works. The Yeringtons were very active in the Episcopal Church (see HABS No. NEV-13-11). Yerington himself held no political office but by virtue of his position with the railroad and consequently the mining and industrial interests, was able to influence many of the policies and decisions of Nevada politics of his time.

In his later years, Mr. Yerington became deaf, and according to the children in the neighborhood, quite irascible. Perhaps a truer measure of the man is the fact that the day before he died, he went to his office and burned all the notes due him from individuals to whom he had lent money over the years. The next day, November 25, 1910, he passed away. His funeral, held at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, was the largest which had then been held in Carson City. Special trains were run from Virginia City and Reno. Yerington is buried in Lone Mountain Cemetery in Carson City.

The Yerington family held the house until 1920. During the mid-twentieth century, Mr. George E. Russell was perhaps the most noted of its occupants. Russell was a native of Elko, served
two terms in the Nevada State Assembly, and in 1910 became Supervisor of the U.S. Census for the State. In 1927 he was appointed State Treasurer, and moved permanently to Carson City. In 1928 he was elected to the post of treasurer and served for eight years. In 1934 Russell became bailiff of the U.S. District Court in Carson City and held this position until his retirement in 1960. Russell made the house into three apartments and occupied the central one.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: The Yerington family album contains many pictures relating to the house, both exterior and interior. The present owners of the house have an extensive collection of these photographs hung in the appropriate rooms of the house. These were furnished by Mr. Stephen Drew (see Bibliography), who also has a large group of early photographs of the house.

2. Bibliography:

Beebe, Lucius, and Clegg, Charles. Steamers to The Comstock

Beebe, Lucius, and Clegg, Charles. Virginia and Truckee, A Story of Virginia City and Comstock Times. Berkeley:

Brown, Bertha Bender. A Tale of Three Cities, Reno, Carson, San Francisco, 1863-1930 Naturegraph Co., 1964. (The author of this volume is the niece of the second Mrs. Yerington. There is a chapter entitled "Stories of Uncle Henry").

The Nevada Appeal Carson City, October 27, 1967 (obituary notice of George B. Russell).


Thompson, Thomas H., and West, Albert A. History of Nevada Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958 (facsimile reprint of this volume which was originally published in 1881).

The most extensive collection of Yerington material is in the Bancroft Library at the University of California in Berkeley. There are some 60,000 letters relating to H.M. Yerington, in addition to other papers. This material has been researched by Mr. Stephen E. Drew, 4180 Randolph Avenue, Oakland, California, 94602, who is one of the leading authorities on Yerington and the Virginia and Truckee Railroad (see HABS No. NEV-13-7). Mr. Drew generously gave of his time and material in the preparation of this study.

Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
December 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: A late nineteenth-century house of unusually decorative character with important historical associations.

2. Condition of fabric: Good; recently repaired and put in good condition. Now well maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:


2. Foundations: Low, largely covered with a wooden base member, wooden water table. Brick foundation under bay windows and porches.

3. Walls: The oldest part is covered with siding exposed four inches; other parts have novelty siding with seven-inch exposure. There are corner boards. The exterior is now painted a cool gray with white trim.

5. Porches: East: on the main front there is a one-story porch, one by three bays. Columns are made of two 2" by 4" pieces with a space between; this is a type common in the locality. The columns have a moulded base, a "dado" band and a cap band. Above the caps there are foliated-scroll brackets. There is a narrow cornice. A shed roof of low pitch has the rafters exposed underneath, with the ceiling of matched and beaded boards. The floor is of narrow matched pine boards.

A porch on the east side of the northwest wing is similar in size and design. Its roof is covered with composition shingles.

At the west end of the building there is a rear porch.

6. Chimneys: There are modern brick chimneys in the east gable and near the center of the south side. Older chimneys are located on the south portion of the east front, at the west gable of the original portion, and on the south wall of the southwest wing.

7. Openings:

a. Doors: The main entrance is near the center of the east front (SE corner of original portion). It is recessed, the jambs and soffit being paneled. There are narrow side-lights with colored glass etched with an ornamental vine motive. Amber and blue backgrounds alternate; the vine is clear glass. Above the door there is a transom with a figure composition, "Spring and Autumn"; the background is red, the figures clear glass. The door has two horizontal panels in the lower part, with raised fields ornamented with horizontal reeding. In the upper part of the door there is a large glazed panel; a geometrical pattern of beveled leaded plate glass. It does not appear to have its original hardware.

At the south end of the entrance porch a doorway enters an enclosed porch. The door has a semicircular head and is glazed. At either side there is a narrow semicircular-headed sidelight.

The entrance door to the northwest wing is modern.

b. Windows: Windows in the oldest part have plain trim with a moulded cornice; sash are replacements, one light above one light, double hung. In other places some windows are rectangular, others segmental-arched. Sash are double hung, one light above one light. Most rectangular windows have cornices.
Windows of the bays and enclosed porch are grouped; they have semicircular heads and trim with a roll moulding. Double-hung sash have one light above one light. There are panels below the sills.

8. Roof: There is a gable roof over the original part of the house, now covered with composition shingles. The other areas have either flat or shed roofs. There are no dormers.

9. Cornice: There are a plain frieze band, ornamental brackets in pairs, a course of large dentils, corona, cavetto and ovolo mouldings.

On the enclosed porch and bay windows, there are a narrow architrave band, plain frieze, a course of large dentils, (single) modillions with pendant acorn, corona and small cavetto.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Plan: The original (central) portion appears to have had a stair hall along the south side and two rooms along the north side (front and rear). There may have been a service wing at the west end.

At present the stair hall is central, with two large rooms on the south and a single long room on the north. Toward the west end there are smaller rooms, and wings at the north and south sides.

On the second story, which extends only above the original building, there are front and rear rooms separated by a small hall. These appear to be original.

2. Stairway: There is an open-well stair with winders at the turn. It is rather narrow, with open string, moulded handrail, a newel which is partly round and partly octagonal, and two turned balusters per tread. There are eighteen risers.

3. Flooring: Most floors have modern coverings. Second-floor rooms have 3 1/4" pine boards, painted.

4. Finish: Room by Room: (all items described are old).

a. Southeast room: Although a later addition, this area can be considered the east half of a double parlor, since there is a wide opening on the west wall.
At the center of the east wall there is a fireplace of gray marble with incised gilded ornament. At each side of the opening there is a pilaster strip; in the entablature there is a projecting central tablet. In the overmantel, colonnettes support a low two-centered pointed arch. There are brackets above the capitals and scalloped cresting along the top. This overmantel is wood, varnished, of a dark brown color.

Door and window openings have architrave trim, now painted white. There is a moulded base, on a plinth. At the top of the wall there is a frieze about two feet wide, containing delicate, very low relief composition ornament; geometrically arranged scrolls and foliage. An enriched picture mould marks the bottom of this frieze.

A wide rectangular opening on the west wall contains double sliding doors, each having four moulded panels; there is a silver mortice lock. Above the doors there is a grille which appears to be cast brass; it is divided into three square panels and two horizontal rectangular panels, symmetrically. In each smaller panel there is a torch super-imposed on a wreath, with scrolls in the corners. In each larger panel there is a wreath with four radiating anthemions, their axes forming an X; at the outer corners there are anthemion-like scrolls.

At the center of the ceiling is suspended a combination gas and electric lighting fixture, made of brass. There are three globes on brackets and a globe at the bottom. This fixture has been in the house for a long time, but was installed after 1889, since it does not appear in a photograph of that date.

b. South central room: This opens to the southeast room and is of the same size and shape. Each room has a large bay window at the center of its south wall, containing a decorative grille at the head of the opening to the room. The trim is largely similar.

In this room the old ceiling is visible. Above a frieze similar to that described above, on the ceiling, there is a border formed by a meandering conventional scroll in low relief. In the center of the ceiling there is a gilded centerpiece. On the ceiling of the bay window there is an ornamental panel containing a foliated design.

c. Enclosed porch: This extends beyond the east wall of
the southeast room, connecting with it through a door south of the fireplace. The porch is shallow, and in character resembles a large bay window. Along its east wall there is a group of six arched windows resembling windows on fine railway cars of the period. (According to Noreen Humphreys, their measurements are identical). At the south end there are two similar windows. Walls above a low dado rail are faced with horizontal matched and beaded boards. The chimney projects into this area and is faced with matched beaded boards; at each side there are small shelves. The ceiling is of matched and beaded boards. All woodwork in this room is now painted white, except for natural bamboo grilles at the head of each window.

d. Stair hall: Door trim is similar to that in the rooms described above. Above the base there is a wainscot ornamented by a low-relief geometrical interlacing pattern in red, black and yellow. There is a frieze containing a rinceau of mixed style, somewhat Moorish, in relief; it is predominately brown. The ceiling has a wide painted ornamental border of the same color.

e. North Room: This area, apparently two rooms of equal size originally, is now a single long room used as an office. The room had reached its present state by 1889, however. It has two windows on the east end, two large bay windows on the north side, and a fireplace centered on the west end.

A wooden screen divides the room into two equal areas. It has the form of a segmental arch (of low rise) supported on two columns and pilaster responds. The head of this opening consists of two carved planks, with a space between them, the carved faces facing the halves of the room, respectively. The wood is Philippine mahogany in its natural color. The carving design is a symmetrical foliated scroll, rather bold in scale. Each column has a tall capital with an abacus, below which are acanthus leaves; midway up the shafts there is a moulded band. These columns rest on pedestals. The pilasters are fluted, with plain capitals moulded to an S-profile. Columns and pilasters are also finished natural color.

There is a high moulded wooden base. Around the openings there is architrave trim. One old four-panel door remains, with a porcelain knob; two others, with five horizontal
panels, are of a later date. There is paneling in the bay window recesses, above and below the openings. These windows are similar to those in the enclosed porch, and have bamboo grilles in the heads.

The room cornice is wood, consisting of a flat cove between moulded bands. Below it there is a frieze about one foot wide, ornamented with a complex scroll motive in low relief; yellow on a brown background.

The walls are covered with a low-relief ornamental pattern of conventional foliated character, whose principal lines are undulating verticals. This is yellow on a green background; the colors appear to be original. The material is some kind of a composition.

The western half of the room has a wainscot, containing a somewhat naturalistic floral pattern in low relief: dull gold against dull green. Its lower border is formed by an interlace band, and at the top there is a band of overlapping rosettes.

The fireplace is comparable to those designed by Eastlake; it has an overmantel with bracketed shelves and coved hood. The hearth is of ceramic tiles with a floral border; plain tiles alternate with ornamental ones. The colors are brown, dark green, light yellow and dull red. The fireplace opening has a border of diamond-shaped ornamental tiles on a background of plain triangular units. At each side there is a small colonnette with an elaborate base and a crocket capital. A bracket above each colonnette supports the mantel shelf, whose bed moulding is an ovolo in which sections of greater and lesser diameter alternate. A frieze between the opening and the shelf contains a panel in the form of a segment of a circle. This panel and the colonnettes are made of wood whose grain contains burls; the remainder of the fireplace woodwork is pine, stained and varnished. In the overmantel there is a rectangular mirror with beveled edges, at each side of which there are shelves. The coved hood is ornamented with a pattern in low relief: two sizes of rosettes alternating. At the top there is a small railing. All woodwork of the overmantel is dark brown.

Moulded trim at the corners of the bay-window openings was cut off near the top at some early date, and mahogany capitals inserted. These have the profile of a cyma reversa above a bead, and are covered with carved ornament.
In the ceiling there are two plaster centerpieces. Traces of relief ornament can be seen in some places along the ceiling, comparable to that on the walls.

There are four wall-bracket electric lighting fixtures, each double.

f. Miscellaneous finish: Corridors in the western part of the house have high wainscoting of matched and beaded boards, visible in places beneath a later covering. There is a plain base. The second-floor rooms have dwarf side walls and cove plaster ceilings. Doors have four moulded panels and porcelain knobs; the trim is plain. In the hall there is a wainscot of five-inch vertical matched and beaded boards, visible in places beneath a later covering. There is a plain base. In the ceiling of the hall there is an unusual opening: a glazed window-ventilator, hinged with a counterweight and pulley.

D. Site and Surroundings:

This lot is at the southwest corner of North Division Street, to which the building faces, and West Robinson Street. The terrain is level. Most of the lot is occupied by the building.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
August 18, 1972
(date of visit)
A. CURRY HOUSE

406 N. NEVADA ST.

A. Curry House, showing original cupola and porch. Members of Curry family are on porch. Photo, which is undated, courtesy Nevada State Museum.
Location: 406 North Nevada Street, Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: August Berning and D.E. Berning

Present Occupant: None

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of Significance: This house was built and lived in by the founder of Carson City, who was also the first Superintendent of the U.S. Mint at Carson. The house resembles much earlier prototypes and is largely in its original state.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: circa 1871. In the Storey, Ormsby, Washoe and Lyon Counties Directory for 1871-72, Curry's address is given as The Warm Spring Hotel. The 1873 Directory has him living at the NW corner of Telegraph and Nevada, the property herein considered. A panoramic photograph of Carson City dated 1869 reproduced both in the Second Biennial Report of The Nevada Historical Society 1909-1910 and Davis' The History of Nevada shows the house. The dating of this photograph is, however, questionable. Lastly it should be remembered that Curry did not acquire the property until December 1870, and the purchase price ($600 for 8 lots) would not indicate that there was any substantial structure on the land at that time.

2. Architect: none known. It is highly likely that Curry, who constructed the United States Mint at Carson City and who is reputed to have said "There isn't a stone building in Carson City that I did not erect;" designed his own home. There is certainly no reason to think that he did not at least supervise its construction.

3. Original and subsequent owners:

The Abraham Curry House is built on lots 5 and 8 of Block 39 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City (Frank M. Proctor and B.F. Green were two of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which Carson
City was platted. The property changed hands several times in the 1860's and was purchased by Curry in 1870. The following references tracing the title of these lots are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada, Deed Books:

1870 Deed, December 13, 1870 recorded in Book 14, page 133. A. Curry purchased lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 in Block 39 from H.O. Beatty for $600.00.

1871 Deed March 28, 1871, recorded in Book 14, page 192. A. Curry bought lot 9 of Block 39 from Moritz Fisher for $175.00.

1875 Deed April 5, 1875, recorded in Book 16, page 291. Mary A. Curry sold to Jennie E. Turner lot no. 9 in Block 39 of Proctor and Green's Division, fronting on Nevada Street 35 feet and on Telegraph Street 90 feet, for $200. (This is the lot on the southeast corner of the block).

1876 Deed September 30, 1876, recorded in Book 18, page 247. Frank Campbell bought from Maryette Curry and daughters, lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Block 39 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City for $1,500.00 (This is the portion of the block to the north of the Curry House, upon which the Chartz House (HABS No. NEV-13-15) was built).

1890 Deed December 4, 1890, recorded in Book 25, page 333. Mary A. Curry, widow of A. Curry, deeded to Mariette Curry, her daughter, all of lots 5, 6, 7 and 8 in Block 39 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City for $5.00.

1902 Deed August 2, 1902, recorded in Book 29, page 420. W.H. Cowan (Curry's grandson) bought from George W. Cowing, Ormsby County Treasurer and ex officio tax collector "lots 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 in Block 39 (Stone Dwelling)" for $31.92. (For fiscal year 1900, there was a delinquent tax on the property and it was consequently offered for sale).

1915 Deed December 18, 1915, recorded in Book 36, page 533. Lucy Ann Metrick of San Francisco deeded lot 9 of Block 39 to Mrs. W.H. Cowan for $10.00. (This is the southeast corner lot of the property, see supra 1875).
1919 Deed November 4, 1919 recorded in Book 37, page 152. Julia E. Cowan (Mrs. W.H. Cowan) of Reno deeded the property to A. Berning.

1926-72 During the past 46 years the title to the property has changed hands several times among members of the Berning family. Deeds concerning these changes are found in the following: 1926 (Book 413 page 101), 1937 (Book 43, page 458), 1938 (Book 43, pages 456, 457), 1939 (Book 46, pages 152, 153). The last inhabitants of the house were Pierre and Edith (Berning) Marconnot. Since Mrs. Marconnot's death in 1971, the house has been vacant. Title is currently in the hands of August Berning Jr. and Duane E. Berning, Jr. (Official Records Book 116, page 129).

4. Original plans, constructions, etc.: none known. The building is constructed of stone from the Nevada State Prison Quarry.

5. Alterations and additions: Originally the house had an octagonal cupola centered on the ridge of the roof. The cupola was of one stage, each face being glazed, and was capped with a projecting cornice and a truncated, pyramidal roof. The cupola, Georgian in style, served as a skylight for the dining room of the house, which was otherwise without exterior light.

There was also a front porch of five-bays which ran in front of the projecting front pavillion and returned against the walls of the main block. Porch supports were panelled, square pillars with caps supporting a cornice which appears to have been a reduced version of that on the house itself, except that there was no frieze.

Both the cupola and the porch were removed during the Berning ownership.

The rear wing, which is of stone construction on its south and west walls, and frame on the north, is said to have been constructed after the main house to serve as the schoolroom for a private school conducted by Maryette Curry, Abraham's daughter. The wing shows in the early panoramic view of Carson City (see C. 1.) and was undoubtedly an extremely early addition. It was later converted into a kitchen and service area.

The Marconnots, who most recently occupied the house, made it into two apartments, but did not effect any major structural changes in so doing.
3. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Abraham, Abram, or Abe, Curry was born in Ithaca, New York in 1815. Little is known of his early career, but by 1858 he was in Western Utah. In company with three other men, he came to Genoa in that year from California, intending to establish a general store there. Finding the price of land in Genoa too high, the four men - A. Curry, B.F. Green, Frank M. Proctor and J.J. Musser - rode a few miles north to Eagle Valley, then owned by John Mankin, who operated the Eagle Ranch. They asked Mankin the price, which was the same as a small lot in Genoa, and bought it from him for even less than his first asking.

Although there were four "proprietors" of the Eagle Ranch, from all accounts it seems that Curry is the one to whom credit should be given for making the ranch into a town. It was he who in September 1858 proposed to have a town site surveyed and platted. This was soon done, and an equal division of town lots made between the four. At first, the partners are said to have sold the lots for $50.00 or to have given them away to any who would build on them.

Curry, however, became sole owner of that portion of the property known as the Warm Springs, just to the east of the townsite. Green sold his one-quarter share for a pony and Proctor and Musser gave Curry their interests in this parcel.

On this tract, Curry established both a sandstone quarry and built a stone hotel, one hundred feet long, thirty-two feet wide and two stories high. It was to this hotel which Curry invited the first Territorial Legislature in October 1861. (Governor Nye had issued a proclamation in the summer that the newly elected legislators would assemble in Carson City on October 1, 1861).

This first Territorial Legislature held a forty-nine day session, and on the last day, November 29, 1861, declared Carson City the county seat of Ormsby County. The County Commissioners at first met in rented quarters but on October 14, 1862, they purchased the "Great Basin Hotel", another of Curry's enterprises, for $42,500.00, and converted it into a courthouse.

Among the several offices created by the first Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Nevada in 1861 was that of Warden of the Prison. On January 1, 1862, Governor Nye appointed Curry to fill this position. Curry leased his property at
Warm Springs for the prison. On the property was the stone quarry, where the prisoners could be put to work, and which provided the building material for many of the city's early buildings. In 1862, the quarry was described as covering some sixty acres.

Curry served as Warden of the State Prison for several years, and in 1864 the Territory of Nevada paid him $80,000 for the prison and twenty acres of land, including the stone quarry. During this same year Curry and an associate were granted the right to build, and charge a toll on, a macadamized road from Carson to Empire City.

As early as 1862, the United States Congress had recommended the passage of a bill authorizing the construction of a branch mint in Carson City. Due to many reasons, it was not until 1865 that a mint in Carson City was finally approved. In December of that year Abraham Curry was named by Secretary of the Treasury Hugh McCollock as one of the three Commissioners to establish the Mint at Carson City. When on July 17, 1866, the plans, specifications, and authorization papers arrived in Carson City from Washington, they were addressed to A. Curry, "Superintendent of Construction." Curry was also elected County Surveyor of Ormsby County in 1866, a position he held for two years. In 1867, he was one of the charter members of the Carson Encampment No. 2 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. The Mint (see HABS No. NEV-13-22) was completed by December, 1869, and when it began operation in January, 1870, it was A. Curry who had been promoted from Superintendent of Construction to Superintendent of the Mint. The document, dated April 15, 1869, and signed by President Grant, appointing Curry as Superintendent is still preserved and displayed in the building.

Curry served as Superintendent of the Mint until September 1870, when he resigned to campaign for the Republican nomination for Lieutenant-Governor, a race he lost.

Curry's next big project was the building of the mammoth shops for the Virginia and Truckee Railroad (HABS No. NEV-13-7) in Carson City. Construction began in December 1872 and was completed in July 1873. The grand ball, held on the Fourth of July 1873, by which Curry inaugurated the new shops, was his swan song. On October 19 of that year, at the age of 58, he died. His funeral was the largest held up to that time in Carson City and the Mint ceased operations for the day out of respect to its first superintendent. He is buried in Lone Mountain Cemetery, Carson City.
In spite of, or perhaps because of, his far-flung enterprises, Abe Curry, according to his widow, died with just one dollar in his pocket. In the years after his death, the neighbors helped pay the bills, provided firewood, etc. Maryette Curry taught a private school in the rear wing and boarders were taken in. Still, portions of the property were sold in 1875 and 76.

In 1902, there were delinquent taxes on the property, and W.H. Cowan paid them and obtained title to the property. Cowan was the son of Elvira Curry, Abe's daughter. The Cowans owned the property until 1919, when it passed out of the hands of the builder's family.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: The Nevada State Museum has an early view of the house, showing the porch and cupola. This is also reproduced on page 10 of "Mint Mark "CC" (see bibliography below), and is reproduced in the HABS records.

   The house may also be seen in a panoramic photograph of Carson City, dated 1869, which is reproduced facing page 979 of The History of Nevada by Davis, and in the Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Historical Society, 1909-1910.

2. Bibliography:


   Thompson, Thomas H. and Albert A. West. History of Nevada Berkeley, California: Howell-North, 1958. (Facsimile reprint of this volume which was originally printed in 1881.

   Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
   Architectural Historian
   Historic American Buildings Survey
   November 1972
PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: A late nineteenth-century house resembling much earlier prototypes in the eastern states, substantially built, with details of Georgian derivation, largely in its original state; the home of an important historical figure.

2. Condition of fabric: Stone masonry is in good condition; woodwork is deteriorating. The house is unoccupied and has been for some time.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: approximately 36 ft. by 55 ft. (7 bays), excluding a narrow added wing 40 ft. long. One story. The original portion is rectangular with slight-projecting pavilions at the center of the two long walls. When considering the added wing, the whole becomes an L-shape.

2. Foundations: The foundations are low, built of sandstone, with a plain water table.

3. Walls: The east front is regular sandstone ashlar; the other sides are random ashlar. The color is dull yellow or light brown. This stone was quarried locally, at the site of the State Penetentiary. It was dressed variously with picks, plain chisels and tooth chisels; presumably this was done by prisoners. Margins are drafted only at corners. Plain lintels project about 1 1/2" beyond the face of the wall. Window sills are plain. Mortar joints are raised. The walls are generally in good condition; some mortar joints have been repointed in recent years.

4. Structural system: Exterior load-bearing masonry walls; wooden floor and roof system.

5. Porches, Stoops: A modern concrete stoop or terrace extends across the entire east front. Two granite steps which lead up to this terrace appear older, however, and may be contemporary with the original granite threshold of the entrance.

The north side of the west wing is taken up by a five-bay
wooden porch, which is visibly deteriorated. It has four columns which are square in plan and have moulded capitals.

6. Chimneys: There are five brick chimneys, all along the perimeter: one on the south wall near the east end, another on the south wall of the wing, one at the interior angle of the L, one at the center of the west wall, and one at the center of the north wall.

7. Openings:
   a. Doorways and doors - The entrance is at the south corner of the central pavilion on the east front. The opening is rectangular, being spanned by a sandstone lintel. Within the masonry opening there are a wooden casing, colonnettes and transom bar, so that the single door is framed by sidelights and transom light. The jambs and soffit of the casing are paneled, the doorway being deeply recessed. The door has two moulded panels: a large glazed one above and a smaller one, nearly square, below. Below each sidelight, which is divided into two panes by a muntin, there is a paneled wooden section resting on a plinth. The colonnettes have compound shafts; their capitals are now deteriorated to the point that one cannot discern whether or not they once contained ornamental mouldings or carving. The portion of the transom immediately above the door contains a diamond-shaped pane and four trapezoidal panes; at each end of the transom there is a single vertical pane.

   The glass in the sidelights and transom appear to have been etched with an ornamental pattern.

   b. Windows: Window openings are rectangular and have no trim other than that afforded by the lintels and sills. Small wooden casings are set well back in the jambs. Double-hung sash have four lights above four lights. They are noticeably deteriorated.

8. Roof
   a. Shape: The original portion has a hip roof, covered with composition shingles which appear to have been recently applied. The wing has a shed roof, in poor condition. There are no dormers.
b. Cornice: This is wooden. There is a plain frieze with a moulding at the lower and upper edges. The cornice proper has a block modillion course and terminates in a cyma recta. There are some signs that this woodwork is deteriorating.

The wing has no real cornice; in its place there is a simple board along the upper part of the wall.

C. Description of Interior:

Access was not allowed to the interior of the Curry House. The following description is based on information provided by Mr. Ronald Machado of Carson City, who resided in the Chartz House (HABS No. NEV-13-15) next door for several years and who is familiar with the Curry House.

Plan: The central pavillion of the original portion consists primarily of a hall, parlor and dining room; with a rear hall, kitchen, bath, and closet at the rear. These latter rooms are very small and represent later modifications of the original plan.

To the left of the hall is the master bedroom, behind which is a small sitting room. To the right of the parlor is a guest bedroom and behind it another, this latter guest bedroom is entered through the dining room.

In the rear ell are another kitchen, bath and washroom, or laundry. The two kitchens reflect the conversion made by the Marconnots into two apartments. The dining room and parlor are separated by very thick "buttress walls." These were necessary to carry the roof and cupola structure above. The dining room which has no exterior walls, had no natural light source. Originally the cupola, seen in the early photograph, provided natural illumination to this room.

Trim in the house is very plain, typical doors are five panelled. There are round plaster medallions or rosettes in the major rooms ceilings. The ceilings are 16 feet high, and the stone walls some 22 inches thick.

D. Site and Surroundings:

This is a level site at the northwest corner of Nevada and
Telegraph Streets. The house faces east toward Nevada Street. An old wooden picket fence encloses the yards; it has simple pedestals with moulded caps at intervals.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of visit - August 19, 1972
MATHIAS RINCKEL MANSION

102 N. CURRY ST.

Mathias Rinckel Mansion,
Porch and Entrance Details,
1972.

Mathias Rinckel Mansion,
Front Parlor, looking
East from Rear Parlor,
1972. Carpet, draperies,
and pier mirror are
original furnishings.
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY    HABS No. NEV-13-17

MATHIAS RINCKEL MANSION

Location: 102 North Curry Street (NW corner of Curry and King Streets), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: Mrs. John Lindstrom, Redwood City, California

Present Occupant: vacant

Present Use: none

Statement of Significance: One of the most sophisticated and elaborate of Carson City's later nineteenth-century houses. Many of its original ornamental features, both exterior and interior, are well preserved.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1875-76.


3. Original and subsequent owners: The Rinckel Mansion is located on lots 9 and 10 of Block 9 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City. (Frank M. Proctor and B.F. Green were two of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which Carson City was platted.) The following references tracing the title of these lots are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada, Deed Books.

1866: Deed September 7, 1866, recorded in Book 11, page 151. Anna E. Mooney bought lots 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 of Block No. 9 of Proctor and Green's Division from the United States Government.

1870: Deed March 22, 1870, recorded in Book 12, page 566. Edward D. Sweeney of Carson City bought from Isaac T. Mooney and Annie E. Mooney, his wife, of Downieville, Sierra County, California, the south one-half of Block No. 9 for $325.00.

1875: Deed May 8, 1875, recorded in Book 16, page 292. Mathias Rinkel [sic] of Carson City bought from
Edward D. Sweeney and wife of Carson City all of lots 9 and 10 and the east 17 feet of lot no. 8, all being in Block No. 9 of Proctor and Green's Division: frontage of 85 feet on north side of King St. and 80 feet on west side of Curry St. Rinckel paid $1,500.

The property has been in the hands of members of the Rinckel family since 1875. Mrs. Rinckel lived in the house until her death in 1933. The Rinckels' daughter, Louise, and her Husband, George F. Blakeslee, then lived in the house. After Mr. Blakeslee's death, his widow lived there until her death in 1960. The property is currently (1972) owned by Mrs. John Lindstrom of Redwood City, California. Mrs. Lindstrom is the granddaughter of the builder, Mathias Rinckel.

4. Original plans, construction, etc.: Several of the original drawings, consisting of the front and side elevations, and the second floor plan, are in the possession of the owner, Mrs. Lindstrom.

Sandstone used in the foundation came from the Nevada State Prison quarry. The foundations extend six feet below grade. Lumber used in the house is of kiln-dried, knot-free Jeffrey and Ponderosa pine from Glenbrook, Nevada, on the shore of Lake Tahoe. Floor joists are 10" x 2", laid 10" on center.

The walls are of pressed brick, made at a kiln in Carson Valley.

5. Alterations and additions: A small one-story room at the northwest corner of the house appears to be a later addition. It contains a servant's room and a bathroom. The room can be entered through a former exterior door in the rear hall of the house, or from its own exterior door in its east wall.

The original roof was of wooden shingles. The present metal roof was installed c. 1916. Very few changes have been made on the structure, and the earliest known representation (see section C.1, Sources of Information, first entry) shows the house as built to be essentially as it is today. The balustrades on the curved steps leading from the front walk to the front porch have been removed.
Mathias Rinckel (1833-1879) was born in Altenheim in Germany. He was the youngest of a family of seven children. When he was nine months old, the family immigrated to America and settled in Warsaw, Illinois. In 1849, "Matt," then a sixteen-year-old farmer, joined a group of five young men and proceeded west to the gold fields. He remained in the Feather River district in California for ten years, by which time he had accumulated a degree of wealth in placer mining.

Leaving California, Rinckel came to Genoa in what was then Carson County, Utah Territory, and the next year, 1860, went to Virginia City, where he increased his fortune in mining.

In 1863, he settled permanently in Carson City, where he engaged primarily in livestock and butchering. He gained contracts to furnish meat for Virginia City miners, the timbermen at Glenbrook on Lake Tahoe, and others. By 1875, he was able to being construction on his mansion, which was finished in 1876. He built his house on the northwest corner of King and Curry Streets on the site of Carson City's first Post Office. Rinckel was to live there only three years. He died in October 1879 at the age of 46.

In addition to his previously mentioned activities, he owned and rented out many commercial structures in Carson City. A short biographical sketch of him on pages 561, 562 of Thompson and West's History of Nevada states that "Many monuments of his untiring energy are still visible in Carson, in the shape of fine buildings."

Mrs. Rinckel continued to live in the house until her death in 1933, after which it was occupied by the Rinckels' daughter, Louise, and her husband, George F. Blakeslee.

In addition to living in the house, the Blakeslees operated it as a house museum. They were induced to do so in 1941 at the urging of members of the cast of The Remarkable Andrew, a Paramount Pictures film which used the mansion as a backdrop in one of its scenes.

Louise Rinckel Blakeslee died in 1960 and the house continued to be shown as a museum until 1968, under the curatorship of Ronald Machado of Carson City.
The house has been vacant since that time. A recent robbery resulted in the loss of the family silverware, some furnishings, and portraits of the builder and his wife. More recently, many of the furnishings have been sold, though the house still contains many of its original carpets, draperies, lighting fixtures and paintings.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: There is a lithograph of the house facing page 96 in Thompson and West's History of Nevada, (see bibliographical entry below).

The Nevada Historical Society in Reno has many photographs of a fairly recent vintage of the house in its "Ormsby County Homes" files. Several of these show the house as it appeared with its original furnishings.

2. Bibliography:

"The Pony Express," Vol. XXIII, No. 1, No. 265 (June 1956), Sonora, California.

Thompson, Thomas H. and Albert A. West. History of Nevada Berkeley, California: Howell-North, 1958. (Facsimile reprint of this volume which was originally printed in 1881).

Interview and visit to the house with Mr. Ronald Machado, former curator, November 1972.

Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: A representative late nineteenth-century house of pretentious character with well preserved ornamental features.

B. Detailed Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions of main portion are approximately 40' x 40'. It is two stories and square with minor projections. The rear wing is 21' (2 bays) long and is one story.

2. Foundations: The low foundation is two courses of picked dressed sandstone ashlar with plain projecting water table.


4. Porches: At the center of the east front there is a one-story wooden porch which is six-sided in plan and fills in the area between canted bays on either side. It presents on the front three arcaded bays, the two at each side. The columns, depending on their position, are polygonal or square in plan; they rest on pedestals and have moulded capitals with applied fleur-de-lis ornaments on the neck. Ornamental brackets with incised scrolls, above the capitals, give the openings the appearance of cusped arches. The cornice has a course of modillion-brackets. A deck roof has a balustrade with pedestals. The porch floor is of narrow pine boards; some repairs have been made to the flooring. A balustrade with turned balusters is above skirting of vertical boards between the porch floor and the ground. The skirting is enriched with a pierced design. Along the south wall of the west wing there is a two-bay wooden porch. Its columns are square in plan and are chamfered and rest on pedestals. The capitals are moulded below brackets. This porch has a sheet-metal shed roof.

5. Chimneys: There are three brick chimneys with patternwork ornamenting the caps. All are on the perimeter: one centered on the north wall, one about ten feet from the front on the south wall, and one on the west wall about the same distance from the south corner.

6. Openings:
   
   a. Doorways and Doors: The main entrance is located at the center of the east front, sheltered by the porch described above. The opening is rectangular; the cap or lintel appears to be cast iron, painted. A thin wooden casing is inside the brick opening. A transom with two lights, contains ornamental white etched glass. The transom bar carries incised ornamental scrolls.
There are double doors of walnut, each with a large glazed panel, the glass being treated ornamentally. Below this there is a moulded panel of composite shape: a vertical rectangle with a semicircular projection at each side.

The rear door is located on the west wall, approached through the porch on the west wing. It has four panels and a transom.

b. Windows: Typically the windows are double hung with one light above one light. The openings have stone sills and ornamental, printed lintels of cast iron. A typical lintel consists of a cornice carried on a pair of acanthus-leaf brackets; above its central portion there is a paneled rectangular tablet with a semicircular projection at the center of the upper edge. The whole is decorated with incised and relief ornament. Above a double window at the second story over the main entrance, is a larger lintel of comparable design.

There are three two-story canted bays, one near the west end of the south wall and the others symmetrically located on the east front. Each contains three typical windows on each story.

7. Roof:

1. Hipped roofs extend over each portion of the house. The one over the main two-story portion is covered with stamped sheet metal in a hexagon pattern. Ornamental metal cresting extends along the sides of a deck and along the ridge of a smaller gabled roof above the projection of the southwest bay window. This metalwork appears to have been well preserved but it is now in need of repair.

There are no dormers.

2. Cornices: A wooden cornice consists of corona and cymatium supported on brackets. The brackets rest against a paneled frieze, one panel between each brackets. This woodwork, in common with much of it in other places on the house, needs painting.

C. Detailed Description of the Interior:
1. Floor Plans:

a. Basement: There is a cellar under the rear (kitchen) wing only. This is entered via a stairway opening off the kitchen, and was used for food storage. It has a dirt floor.

b. First Floor:

The double front doors open directly into the stairhall. To the left is the front parlor, and to the right, the master bedroom. All three of these spaces extend approximately half way through the depth of the main block. Behind the front parlor, and separated from it by screen walls and double sliding doors, is the rear parlor, which extends to half the width of the stairhall, through which it may also be entered. On the back wall of this parlor is a door leading to the rear porch. The dining room is to the right of the rear parlor, and behind the master bedroom, through both of which rooms it may be entered. At the rear of the dining room is a door leading into the rear, kitchen wing. The door leads directly to a small rear hallway. To the left is the pantry, to the right a bathroom (in a later addition) entered through a former exterior door, and behind the hall, the kitchen itself. There are two exterior doors in the kitchen, one to the rear porch and one behind the aforementioned bathroom.

c. Second Floor:

The second floor layout is a somewhat modified version of the first, having four large bedrooms at each corner of the house, over the four principle rooms below. Near the head of the stairs, a portion of the bedroom over the rear parlor is given over to a former "trunk room" now a bathroom.

4. Interior finish, general:

Walls are plastered, the plaster being one inch thick, and either painted or papered. All interior doors are four paneled, are of Ponderosa or Jeffrey pine, and have two-light transoms, hinged in the middle. Except in the parlors, where the doors and trim are painted white, all woodwork in the house is grained. The graining of the first and second floor stairhalls resembles walnut. In all other rooms it
simulates golden oak, except in the right rear bedroom on the second floor, where it imitates curly maple. The grain­ing is beautifully done and in excellent condition. There is ornamental plasterwork in several rooms. Flooring is of pine boards but is covered with carpeting or linoleum in all cases. The first floor rooms are 11' 7" in height and the second floor rooms 10'. All rooms have a molded baseboard, 11" high, except the rear wing which has a 4' high wainscot of matched beaded boards.

5. Room Descriptions - First Floor:

a. Stair Hall: The double, elaborately paneled and glazed entrance doors, with their surrounding trim, occupy the full width of the stairhall's eastern end. Immediately to the right is a door to the master bedroom, beyond which the stair begins its ascent. The stair takes up half of the width of the hall. To the left, several feet down the hall, is the door to the front parlor. At the rear on axis with the portion of the hall not taken up with the stair, is the door to the rear parlor. The walls are painted pink. All doors and trim in the stairhall are of pine stained and grained to resemble walnut. The stairway itself is of walnut. The stair consists of nineteen risers 7 1/2" high, and ascends in a straight run against the right wall for thirteen risers. At this point, the stair curves to the left and reaches the second floor at a 90° angle to the main run. The soffit of the stair is open from the fourth riser. The red velvet stair carpet and the gold plated holders are said to be original. The original gas chandelier is in place.

b. Front Parlor: The front parlor is entered through a door from the stair hall, and is connected to the rear parlor by double sliding doors. The front (east side) of the room is taken up with a large triple bay window. The south wall has two single windows, between which is an ornate Eastlake type pier mirror said to have come from the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876. All the windows have gold valances. All trim in this room is painted white, as are the walls. The floor is covered with the original carpet. The most elaborate features of the parlor are the ceiling and cornice. Just below the cornice is a thin gold leaf picture mold. The cornice members are picked out in shades of pink and pale green. The ceiling itself is painted pale yellow.
In the center of the ceiling is a medallion from which hangs the original chandelier. Four ribs radiate from the center to meet ribs parallel to the cornice forming a decorative panel in the ceiling. The ribs and medallion are painted pink.

c. Rear Parlor: The east wall of this room is taken up with doors - the double sliding doors leading to the front parlor, and a single door leading to the rear of the stairhall. On the north wall, close to the door to the stairhall, is a door leading to the dining room. On the rear wall is a door to the back porch. This door has been closed for some time, and is fitted with bookshelves below the transom. The south wall is, like the east wall of the front parlor, given over to a triple bay window. Trim in this room is white, the walls pink, the floor is carpeted. As in the front parlor, the most elaborate feature here is the ornamental plaster ceiling, similar in design and color to that in the front parlor. The chandelier in this room is a three part composition - the center part of which may be lowered independently of the others, to serve as a reading light. There is an ornamental wood stove in this room, which served to heat both the front as well as the rear parlor.

d. Dining Room: The primary entrance to the dining room is the door from the rear parlor, which is in the south wall, near the SE corner of the dining room. There is also a door in the east wall, near the south east corner of the room leading through a short passage to the master bedroom. The north wall of the dining room has two windows, between which is a marble mantel shelf hung on brackets. There is a wood stove in front of the shelf. There was never a fireplace; the shelf was placed there to hold a clock. On the west wall is a door to the rear hall and kitchen beyond. All the trim, and the doors, in this room are grained to resemble golden oak. The walls are painted a deep ox-blood red. A thin gold leaf picture mold at the intersection of wall and ceiling, serves in lieu of a cornice in this room.

e. Kitchen Wing: The kitchen wing is entered through the door in the west wall in the dining room. This door leads directly into a small hall, with doors in each wall.
That to the left, or south, goes into a pantry. To the north of the hallway is a door leading to the bathroom. This door was at one time an exterior door, and the bathroom floor is one step lower than the rest of the first floor. The east wall of this room has an exterior door and a window. This addition is said to have served as the quarters for a Chinese servant prior to having been made into a bathroom. It is said that this bathroom was installed in the 1880's but the present fixtures, while old, are not of that vintage.

The rear door of the hallway leads to the kitchen itself. The north wall of the kitchen has an outside door at the northwest corner of the room. The rear or west wall has no openings. The south wall has a window and a door, both opening to the rear porch. The stairway to the basement is entered through a door near the door to the rear porch. The kitchen has a wainscot of matched beaded boards, approximately 4 feet high. This too, was originally grained to resemble golden oak. It has since been painted an off-white. The center of attention in the kitchen is the cast iron cook stove, labelled "Delmonico" and made by Rathbone Sard and Company of Albany, New York. It is elaborately decorated with garlands, cupids, etc. The "Delmonico" was the gold medal winner in the American Range Display at the Philadelphia Exposition, and it is there that the Rinckels are said to have seen it.

f. Master Bedroom: The master bedroom occupies the right front corner of the first floor. It may be entered through a door from the front hall, or from the dining room. The east or front wall of the room is given over to a three part bay window. The north wall has a single window near the north west corner. The west wall has two doors, that on the right leading to a closet and that on the left leading through a passage, in which there are shelves for linens and closet space, to the dining room.

Trim in this room is also grained golden oak, and a thin gold leaf picture mold serves as a cornice. The walls are painted a bright green.

6. Room descriptions - Second Floor

a. Stairhall: This space corresponds to the stairhall below
and has the same trim grained to resemble walnut. All four bedrooms, as well as the former Trunk Room, now a bathroom, open from it. The stairway reaches the hall near its rear wall and because of the curve, lands at the second floor level facing west. The stairhall is lit by a double window in the east wall, one portion of which is hinged at the side to act as a door leading to the deck over the front porch. The walls here, as in the stairhall on the first floor, are painted pink.

b. Guest Bedroom: (left rear bedroom). This bedroom is over the rear parlor, though not as large as that room. It is entered through a typical transomed door in its east wall from the hall. Its south wall is occupied by another of the three windowed bays. Trim in this room is stained to resemble golden oak. A portion of the floor of this room which had been taken up at the time of the recorder's visit for the installation of electric wiring, revealed the floor joists to be of 2' x 10' pine laid 10" on center. The walls are painted light green, and a maroon stenciled pattern near the ceiling takes the place of a cornice. A door in the southeast corner of this room leads through a closet-passage to the left front bedroom.

c. Left Front Bedroom: This room is entered by way of a door in its east wall from the hall, or at its southwest corner through a door leading to the guest room. There are two windows on the south wall, and a three part bay window on the east wall. All the window heads are several feet below the ceiling level, but curtain rods and draperies are hung several feet above to give an impression of added height. In place of a cornice in this room is a picture mold. Again the trim is of pine stained to resemble golden oak, while the walls are pale pink. A closet opens off the west wall of this room.

d. Right Front Bedroom: This room is entered through the hall and is over the master bedroom. The east or front wall, has the last of the three windowed bays, and there is a window near the rear of the room on the north side. Next to this is another marble mantel shelf, though this room was heated by a stove. There is a hand stencilled yellow cornice pattern in this room. The floor is covered with a Brussels carpet. The closet to the rear of this room has an early linoleum floor, and formerly
had porcelain hooks for clothes. The walls are painted a pale ivory. A second door in the west wall gives access to the right rear bedroom.

e. Right rear bedroom: This room, entered through the hall or the right front bedroom, was originally the nursery. Alone in the house, its pine trim is grained to resemble curly maple. The original circulating drum stove, designed to catch the heat from the dining room stove below, bears the mark "S.M. Ransom and Company, Albany, New York, Patented 1858".

f. Trunk Room: At the rear of the stairhall, and entered only from it, is the Trunk Room, now a bathroom. The attic is entered through a small opening in the ceiling of this room. This bathroom is said to have been installed in the 1930's.

D. Site and Surroundings: The Rinckel Mansion stands on a corner lot, with Musser Street to the south and Curry Street to the east, toward which the house faces. The ground is level and the yard is planted with trees. It is enclosed by an old picket fence having simple pedestals and gates, resting on a low sandstone base. This wooden fence is deteriorating.

Exterior Description Prepared by:

Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of visit: August 19, 1972

Interior Description Prepared by:

S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December 1972
DAVID SMAIL HOUSE

313 W. ANN ST.


David Smaill House, circa 1885, during ownership of Pitton family, shown standing in front. Courtesy Nevada State Museum.

Location: 313 West Ann Street (NW corner West Ann and North Division Streets), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Felix Sarcinella

Present Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Sarcinella

Present Use: Dwelling

Statement of Significance: This is a representative small house of the late 19th century, typical of those erected by Carson City's early settlers. Architecturally, it is noteworthy for its elaborate ornamental trim.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1870's. The construction date of the house is not definitely known, but several references tend to place it in the mid 1870's.

Moses Dow, whose name has been given as the builder, did own the property from 1863 to 1873. However, Dow is not listed in the several directories of the period as living at this address. In 1873, Dow sold the property for $100 less than his purchase price ten years earlier, which might indicate that the economy was in a depression, that he was a poor businessman, or that he had not made any improvements, such as building a house on the property during his time as owner.

From 1873 to 1876 the property was owned by Charles H. Jones. It was during this time that the 1875 Birds Eye view of Carson City, which shows no building on the lot, was published. Until 1876, the property on which the house was built (the west half of lots 9 and 10 of Block 11 of Curry's Division of Carson City) was part of a large parcel. In 1876, however, Jones divided the tract by selling the west half of lots 9 and 10 separately from the rest.

In July, 1876 the property was bought by Mrs. David Smaill for $255.00. In October, 1877 it was sold by Mr. and Mrs. Smaill for $1,600.00. This price increase in little over
a year would seem to indicate that a substantial improvement had been made on the property during that time. Further, when the property changed hands in 1882, after interim ownership by the Johnson and Bigler families, it was described as "the property known as the Smaill property." It would seem, then, that 1876, in light of the present state of investigation, would be a strong contender for the year in which the house was erected.

2. Architect: none known

3. Original and subsequent owners: The house is located on the western portion of lots 9 and 10 of Block 11 of Curry's Division of Carson City. A. Curry, the founder of Carson City, was one of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which the city was platted (see HABS NEV-13-13). The following references tracing the title of these lots are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada Deed Books.

1860 Deed August 20, 1860, recorded in Book 1, page 165. A. Curry of Carson City, Utah Territory sold all of Block 11 of Curry's addition to E.E. Edson for $500.00.

1862 Deed June 6, 1862, recorded in Book 1, page 267. Eugene E. Edson sold to Frank Perkins of Carson City, Ormsby County, Nevada Territory lots 4, 5, 9 and 10 in Block 11 of Curry's addition. Perkins paid $600.00.

1863 Deed October 19, 1863, recorded in Book 8, page 248. Frank Perkins sold lots 4, 5, 9 and 10 in Block 11 to Mrs. M.B. Dow for $600.00.

1873 Deed May 13, 1873, recorded in Book 15, page 185. Moses Dow sold lots 4, 5, 9 and 10 in Block 11 to Charles Henry Jones for $500.00.

1876 Deed July 2, 1876, recorded in Book 18, page 83. Charles M. Jones and wife sold one half of lots 9 and 10 (being the west half, 40 feet on Ann Street and 68 feet on Division Street) to Mrs. David Smaill for $225.00.

1877 Deed October 31, 1877, recorded in Book 18, page 517. David A. Smaill and Rachel E. Smaill sold the west half of lots 9 and 10 in Block 11 to W.A. Johnson of Alpine County, California for $1,600.00.
1881 Deed March 12, 1881, recorded in Book 22, page 44. William A. Johnson of the Town of Bodie, Mono County, California sold the west half of lots 9 and 10 in Block 11 to James Bigler of Carson City for $525.

1882 Deed, August 19, 1882, recorded in Book 22, page 243. James R. Bigler and Louisa Bigler, his wife, of Oakland, California sold the west half of lots 9 and 10 to Russell Fitton for $400; "the same subscribing the property known as the Smaill property."

1890 Deed March 22, 1890 recorded in Book 25, page 57. Russell and Annie Fitton sold to A. Livingston the west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10.

1908 Deed, October 28, 1908 recorded in Book 36, page 30. A. Livingston deeded to May Livingston for $1.00 the west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10.

1943 Deed, May 12, 1943, recorded in Book 48, page 367. May Livingston, widow, of San Francisco, sold to Liva B. McCabe the west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10 for $10.00.

1949 Deed February 25, 1949 recorded in Book 55, page 375. Liva B. McCabe, widow, sold joint tenancy of west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10 to Thomas O. McCabe for $10.00.

1956 Deed August 8, 1956, recorded in Book 71, page 136. Liva B. McCabe and Thomas O. McCabe and Jessie Agnes McCabe (the latter two husband and wife) deeded the west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10 to Margaret E. Coe. The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Sarcinella, obtained the property from Margaret Coe in 1966.

4. Original plans, construction, etc.: none known

5. Alterations and additions: Aside from the expected changes in kitchen and bathroom facilities, there has been little alteration of the basic fabric. An 1885 photograph of the house, reproduced in the HABS records, shows additional ornamental trim on the porch which has since disappeared. The present owners have installed a brick hearth and fireplace in the southeast corner of the dining room.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

Moses B. Dow, whose name has been associated with the house, was a blacksmith and wagon maker, whose shop was located on N. Carson
Street between Robinson and Spear Streets. In 1873, his residence was at the corner of Ormsby and Washington Streets. In 1882 the property was bought by Russell Fitton, who had come to Carson City from Ireland in 1875. Fitton was a machinest in the railroad shops of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: The 1875 "Birds Eye View of Carson City," drawn by Augustus Koch and published by Britton, Rey, and Co. of San Francisco, significantly does not show the house (see item A-1 above).

The earliest known view of the house is a photograph taken in 1885, reproduced in the HABS records. Ann Donehue Fitton, wife of Russell Fitton, is shown in it with two of their children, Martha on the left and Marion on the right.

2. Bibliography:

Ormsby County, Nevada, Deed Books.

Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December, 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: A good representative small house of the late 19th century with interesting ornamental wooden details, largely in its original state.


B. Detailed description of exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: approximately 24 ft. (three bays) by 49 feet (five bays). One story; slightly modified rectangular shape.

2. Foundations: low; rubble masonry.

3. Wall Construction, finish: Frame, covered with novelty siding, seven-inch exposure, corner boards five inches wide. Painted; no indication of original color.
4. Porches: There is a small entrance porch, one by two bays, at the east part of the north front. The columns consist of two square pieces between which there is fretted ornament. They have moulded capitals above which there are pierced ornamental brackets. A low railing is also pierced in an ornamental design. The floor consists of narrow matched boards. This porch and the adjoining bay windows are covered by a hip roof of low pitch.

On the west side toward the south end there is a small square porch serving to shelter a secondary entrance. It has square posts with chamfered corners, moulded capitals, and simple bracket-like tracery work above the capitals.

At the south (rear) end there is a small recessed porch.

5. Chimneys: There is a small brick chimney on the ridge near the south end of the main portion of the house.

6. Openings - Doorways: The main entrance is at the center of the north front. The opening has plain trim. There is a single door with four moulded panels, the upper panels having semicircular heads. Above it there is a rectangular glazed transom.

There is a secondary entrance on the west side, and there are two entrances through the rear porch—one at each end of the porch.

b. windows: Windows are rectangular and have plain trim. Sash are double hung, two lights above two lights. Windows on the north front are double.

At the west part of the north front there is a bay window rectangular in plan and projecting about five feet (the same as the depth of the entrance porch). Below the window openings there are moulded panels.

In the north gable there is a round ventilating opening, filled with fan louvers.

7. Roof:

a. Shape, Covering: The main part of the house and its main southern part have gable roofs. The main (northern) part is covered with wooden shingles in somewhat weathered condition, and the remainder with composition shingles.
b. Cornice: There is a box cornice with bed moulding and cymatium, below which there is a plain frieze. Along the sides of the house the soffit slopes according to the slope of the roof. At the north gable there are pierced ornamental barge boards, scalloped along the lower edge. At the apex of the gable there is an ornamental pendant.

c. There are no dormers.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plan: Along the east side there are, beginning at the north front, an entrance porch and three bedrooms (the southern-most projects slightly on the east; it is now used as a utility room). Between the middle and south bedrooms there is a bathroom. Along the west side there are a living room, dining room and kitchen. Between the north bedroom and the living room there is a small entrance vestibule.

2. Flooring: All rooms have modern floor covering.

3. Wall and Ceiling Finish: Walls and ceilings are plastered and covered with wallpaper. The kitchen has a wainscot of vertical matched and beaded boards, painted. Walls generally have a moulded wooden base, painted.

4. Doorways and Doors: Door openings are rectangular; typical doors have four moulded panels and are hung on two butts.

   Between the living and dining rooms there is a wide rectangular opening, whose height has been lowered somewhat.

5. Trim: Door and window openings in the four front rooms and entrance vestibule have architrave trim. In the kitchen there is plain trim. Some rooms have ornamental plaster centerpieces in the ceiling.

6. Mechanical equipment: In the entrance hall there is an old gas lighting fixture suspended from the ceiling. It is cylindrical in shape and the glass is etched. It has been electrified.

   The water closet has a round water tank of unusual form; this may date from around 1915.

D. Site and Surroundings:

The house located at the southeast corner of Ann and Division
Streets, facing north to Ann St. The terrain is level, blocks are small, and lots are small—typical in Carson City. An 1885 photograph shows trees along the north and west sides, and a wooden picket fence with cased posts. At present there is a picket fence which is a more recent replacement.

Southeast of the house, and close to it, there is an L-shaped wooden gable-roofed garage, of uncertain date.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
August 16, 1972
ALFRED CHARTZ HOUSE

412 N. NEVADA ST.

Alfred Chartz House, East (Front) Facade and North Side, 1972. The two dormers are later additions.
Chartz House, Front Parlor, looking East from Rear parlor, 1972. The plain interior finishes serve as effective background for the elaborate and authentic furnishings.

Chartz House, Rear, general view from Northwest, 1972.
ALFRED CHARTZ HOUSE

Location: 412 N. Nevada Street (SW corner of N. Nevada and W. Spear Streets), Carson City, Nevada.

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Gerald M. Harwood

Present Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Harwood

Present Use: Dwelling

Statement of Significance: The Chartz House is an attractive and well preserved late 19th century building. The facade, with elaborate bay windows and doorhood, is one of the most ornate of its period in Carson City.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: c. 1876. The property was part of the Curry estate until 1876. The house does not show in an 1875 "Birds Eye View" of Carson City.

2. Architect: none known

3. Original and subsequent owners:

The Chartz House is built on lots 1 and 4 of Block 39 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City. (Frank M. Proctor and B.F. Green were two of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which Carson City was platted). Prior to 1876, the lots on which the house was built were part of the Curry property (see HABS No. NEV-13-13). The following references tracing the title of these lots are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada Deed Books:

1876 Deed, September 30, 1876, recorded in Books 18, page 247. Frank Campbell bought from Maryette Curry and others, lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Block 39 of Proctor and Green's Division of Carson City for $1,500.

1889 Deed, May 28, 1889, recorded in Book 25, page 28. John Elliott bought from Frank Campbell and wife lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Block 39 for $2,250.

1894 Deed October 16, 1894, recorded in Book 27, page 418. Alfred Jean Chartz bought from John Elliott lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Block 39 for $3,500.
1943 Deed October 19, 1943, recorded in Book 48, page 492. Emma Chartz (widow of Alfred) deeded the property to her children: Helen Haley, Beatrice Chartz, and John M. Chartz.

1971 Deed December 3, 1971, recorded in Official Records Book 117, page 350 Marcelline C. Smith, who acquired title as Marcelline K. Chartz, (daughter of John M. Chartz), sold lots 1, 2, 3 and 9 excepting the west 60 feet of lots 2 and 3, in block 39 to Gerald M. Harwood and Elaine H. Harwood, his wife.

4. Original Plans, construction, etc: none known. The exterior during the early years of the Chartz occupancy was painted cream with maroon trim. Currently, the house is painted white with brown trim.

5. Alterations and additions: According to Miss Beatrice Chartz, there was a fire which damaged the house six years prior to the time the Chartz family moved there. (This would date the fire in 1888). The present rear wing is said to have been added immediately after the fire. Originally there were two large rooms on the second floor, lit by large windows in each gable end. Around 1909, as the family increased, the second floor was partitioned to make four bedrooms, and the two hipped dormers on the northern roof slope were installed. There was a large two-story stable on the rear of the property facing Division Street. This has been replaced by a brick dwelling.

An early photograph of the building (reproduced in the HABS collection) shows the ornamental slates over the door hood and bay windows to have had two distinct colors. Currently, all the slates are black. There was also, as shown in the photograph, a fence with ornamental gateposts, surrounding the property. The photograph shows the house before the dormers were installed.

B. Historical Events & persons connected with the Structure:

Although neither the builder nor the first owner of the house, Alfred Jean Chartz is the most noted of the personage associated with it, and the one who gave it his name.

Chartz was born on February 9, 1851, at La Baye du Febvre, Canada. In 1863, at the age of twelve, he went to California with his father, two sisters and a brother; his mother having
died several years previously. At age 14, Chartz began work as printer’s devil on the *Oakland News*. In 1869, he journeyed to Nevada where he held several jobs in Virginia City, Carson City, and Dayton. He then settled in Eureka, where he married Miss Emma Rader in 1877. In Eureka, he worked first on the Eureka Sentinel, then in March 1878, according to Thompson and West’s *History of Nevada*, he became a reporter and business manager for the Eureka Republican. Edward Ricker, a conductor on the Eureka and Palisade Railroad, had been offended by an article in the paper, and quarreled with Chartz. The latter shot Ricker on June 16, 1878, and he died two days later. This caused the demise of the Republican the next week, and caused Chartz to be sentenced to the State Prison for life. However, as one account of the affair states: “since his incarceration and the declining excitement attending the tragic event, new evidence has been obtained mitigating his offense, and great efforts have been made to procure his pardon.” His pardon was granted, and Chartz and his wife moved to Virginia City where he worked on The Territorial Enterprise and then on The Evening Chronicle, becoming Editor of the latter paper. Chartz also found time to read law under W. F. Dehl in Virginia City, and taught himself typing and stenography. In 1894 he passed his Bar exam and came to Carson City to practice law. It was at this time that he purchased the house here-in discussed. His practice in Carson City was involved primarily with civil, water, and mining cases. Chartz also became a director of the Bullion Exchange Bank. A portrait of him has been given to the Nevada State Museum by his children.

The current owner-occupants (Mr. and Mrs. Harwood) have furnished the home with an extensive and appropriate collection of furnishings and decorative objects of the second half of the 19th century. Many of these objects were formerly housed in the Savage Mine Office (HABS No. NEV-15-58) in nearby Virginia City, which was restored, lived in, and operated as a house museum by the Harwoods until 1972.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Photograph of the house soon after it was purchased by the Chartz family (circa 1894). The photograph shows the house before the dormers were added. Photograph is in possession of Mrs. Beatrice Chartz, 411 N. Division Street, Carson City, Nevada.

2. Bibliography:

Thompson, Thomas H. and Albert A. West. History of Nevada Berkeley, California: Howell North, 1958 (facsimile reprint of this volume which was originally printed in 1881).


Interviews: Miss Beatrice Chartz, daughter of Alfred and Emma Chartz, October 31, 1972.

Mr. Burd Lindsay November 3, 1972, of Carson City.

Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Interest and Merit: The Chartz House is a late nineteenth-century house with attractive exterior features, and is largely in original condition.

2. Condition of fabric: Generally good; recently reconditioned and put in good repair on the exterior and part of the interior.

B. Detailed Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: The original portion is approximately 36' x 33'. An old one-story addition extends the length 24'. Original portion is one-and-a-half stories with three by three bays. The layout is rectangular.

2. Foundations: low; large sandstone blocks; wooden water table

3. Walls: Novelty siding with corner board; painted.

5. Porches, Stoops: On the east front there is a low wooden porch between the bay windows, which serves as an entrance stoop. On the north front of the addition there is a one-story porch with a shed roof, three bays long and one bay in depth. The columns are square. Between them there is a balustrade of boards pierced with an ornamental design. The floor is wood.

6. Chimneys: There is a chimney on the ridge near the center of the original portion and another on the addition.

7. Openings:
   a. Doorways and Doors: The main entrance is located at the center of the east front. It is sheltered by a hood with brackets and dentils; at each side of the opening there is a pilaster strip. The single door has moulded panels; the upper pair have rounded heads and cusped lower corners. The lower panels have cusped corners. Above the door there is a rectangular transom with a delicate etched pattern in the glass.
   
   b. Windows: There are four bay windows, all of them on the original portion: two on the east end and one on each of the (north and south) sides, near the west end. The pair on the east front are rectangular in plan and have two windows on the front and one on each side on sandstone foundations. A moulded wooden panel is below each window sill. At the corners and in the center of the front, there are round colonnettes with a simple base and capital, and sash beads. The entablature consists of a narrow frieze, and a cornice with dentil course, corona and cymatium. Each bay window is covered by a hip roof of slightly concave profile, surmounted by a turned finial.

The other bay windows are similar in size and plan, but have paneled pilaster strips at the corners, a wide frieze with brackets, and a pent roof somewhat resembling a mansard.

Other windows have plain trim and are capped with a small moulded cornice. All are double hung, two lights above two lights. In the east gable there is a pair of windows with shutters which are only ornamental.
8. Roof:
   a. Shape, covering: The gable roof is covered with wood shingles.
   b. Cornice: There is a boxed cornice with bed and cyma mouldings, above a plain frieze. It returns at the gable corners.
   c. Dormers: On the north side of the original portion there are two hipped dormers.

C. Detailed description of Interior:

1. Plans - First Floor: The original portion has a central hall extending from the east entrance to the west; south of this are two major rooms, and north of it there is a large "double parlor." The addition has a large "double dining room" extending across the entire width of the house except for the space occupied by the north porch. To the west of this room there are a kitchen and accessory rooms. A stair rises from the southeast part of the large room to the second floor, where there are minor bedrooms. The first-floor ceilings are fourteen feet high.

2. Interior finish:
   1. First-floor hall. There is a high plinth and moulded base, above which is a wainscot of "lincrusta" ornamented with a small scale diaper pattern (the local corruption of this term is "Lindquist."). Door openings are rectangular with architrave trim; they contain four-panel doors, moulded transom bar and two-light transoms. There is no cornice. Except for the wainscot, which is found only in the hall, this finish is typical of the other rooms on the first floor of the original portion. The ceiling contains an ornamental plaster centerpiece.
   2. Double parlor. The front and rear halves of this room are divided by a very wide rectangular opening. At the center of the ceiling in each half there is an ornamental plaster centerpiece.
   3. On the west wall of the southeast room, a major bedroom, there is a fireplace with a white marble chimneypiece of
conventional design. Its opening is arched below a cartouche; the mantel shelf is thin. There do not appear to have been any other fireplaces on the first floor.

4. Miscellaneous. Flooring is of five-inch boards, which have been covered by carpeting for the most part. Walls and ceilings are plastered and papered. The woodwork is painted with imitation graining.

First-floor rooms are well-proportioned and large in scale, but contain few ornamental architectural features.

D. Site and Surroundings:

This house occupies a corner lot: the southwest corner of Nevada and Spear Streets. It faces east to Nevada Street. The terrain is level. There is a small shed at the west end of the lot.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
Date of visit: August 18, 1972