

Alfred Chartz House
412 N. Nevada Street
Carson City,
Nevada

HABS NO. NEV-13-15
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY HABS No. NEV-13-15

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.

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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 4, 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:

Scrugham, James G., ed., Nevada, A Narrative Of the Conquest of a Frontier Land, Vol. 11. Chicago: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1935.

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).

Wren, Thomas, ed., A History of The State of Nevada, Its Resources and People. New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1904.

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.

4. Structural system: Wood frame.
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

PART III. Project Information

These records are part of the documentation made during the latter half of 1972 and the summer of 1973 in a project undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Nevada State Park System to record structures in Carson City and nearby areas.

The project was under the general supervision of John Poppeliers, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey. Eric R. Cronkhite, Administrator, Nevada State Park System, and Mrs. Marshall Humphreys of the Nevada Landmarks Society assisted the HABS recorders in Nevada. Professor Harley J. McKee, Supervisory Architect, National Park Service, selected the subjects and provided architectural data for the sixteen Carson City structures which were recorded. Historical documentation for these buildings was prepared by S. Allen Chambers, Jr., Architectural Historian, Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Supervisor for the 1973 Nevada Summer Team, which produced the measured drawings, was Robert L. Hartwig of Harvard University. Student assistant architects were John T. M. Creery (University of Utah), Robert P. Mizell (University of Florida), and Jack W. Schafer (University of Cincinnati). Photographs were made by Aaron A. Gallup of Sacramento, California.