



THE OVERCARSH HOUSE



1. Name and location of property: Overcarsh House, 326 W. Eighth St.

2. Name, address, telephone number of present owner and occupants:

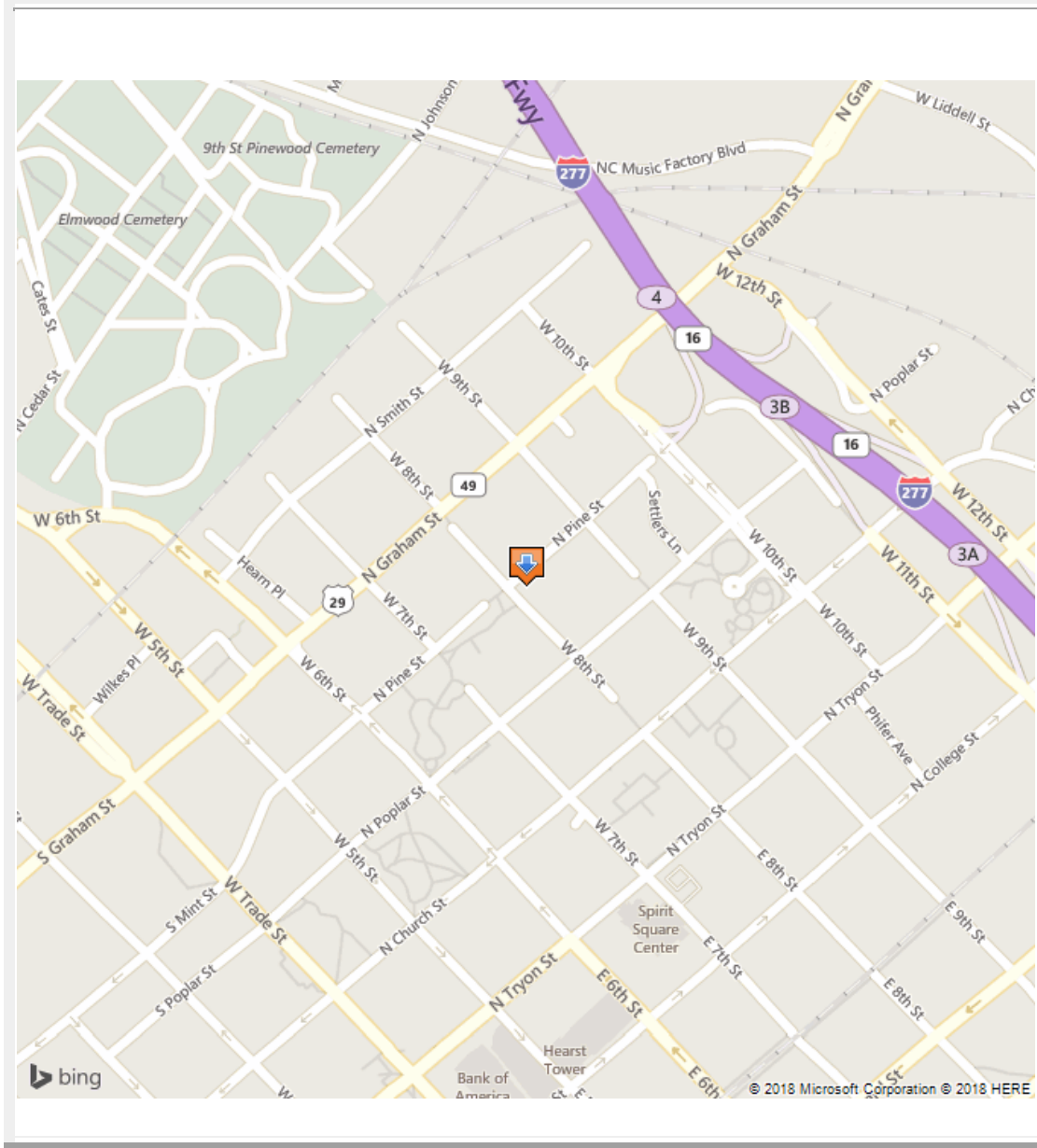
C. C. Dees

3609 Tuckasegee Rd

(The occupants are renters).

3. Representative photographs of the property: Four photographs of the structure are included in this report.

4. A map depicting the location of the property: The report includes a map depicting the location of the Overcarsh House.



5. Current Deed Book Reference of the property: Mecklenburg County Deed Book 2793, page 157

6. A brief historical sketch of the property:

The property was purchased in 1879 from D.H. Byerly Mecklenburg County Deed Book 22, pages 436-437. The exact date of construction is not known; however the 1879-1880 City Directory indicates that Rev. Elias Overcarsh was living at 338 W. Eighth St. at that time. This strongly suggests that the house was constructed in 1879-1880. Rev Elias Overcarsh was a school teacher and Methodist minister in Charlotte

and Mecklenburg County. In 1896, Rev. Elias Overcarsh sold the property to his son B. J. (Bryan) Overcarsh (Mecklenburg County Deed Book 110, page 179). In 1945 B. J. (Bryan) Overcarsh sold the property to his son B. J. Overcarsh, Jr.(Mecklenburg County Deed Book 1157, page204). In 1966 Mildred Hartman Overcarsh, widow of B. J. Overcarsh sold the property to C. C. Dees (Mecklenburg County Deed Book 2793,page 157). The property will be purchased by Calvin E. Hefner and Dennis Cudd within the next two weeks. The Overcarsh House is of the Queen Anne style with Italianate and Eastlake features exhibiting a tower with "fish scale" shingles, an unusually large front porch, and large sun bursts in the gables. The carving around the front entrance is especially notable. The majority of the interior trim is intact. The doors and windows are all heavily molded. A wainscoting runs throughout the entrance hall, central hall and staircase, and through the upstairs hall. The oval windows in the dining room and the upstairs bedroom are cost unusual and were repeatedly noted by the Survey team as was the heavy rail in the dining room. The downstairs mantles all have overmantels. There is decorative, stamped hardware throughout the house. There is an etched window over the door that leads from the front porch to the master bedroom.

7. Documentation of why and in what ways the property meets the criteria as set forth in N.C.G.S. 160A-399.4:

a. Historical and cultural significance: The house is a good example of the Queen Anne style of architecture. It is one of only a few left in Mecklenburg County. It was the home of a local schoolteacher and minister who influenced the religious development of Mecklenburg County.

b. Suitability for preservation and restoration: The house has been modified only slightly and this addition will be removed. The evaluation of the Survey Team of March, 1975, indicated that the interior of the house should be restored. There are fine mantels, stairs and doors and decorative brass hardware throughout.

c. Educational value: This Queen Anne style home exhibits a tower, sun burst gables, carved doorways and etched windows, all of which constitute craftsmanship exemplified by few remaining structures.

d. Cost of acquisition, restoration, etc: Calvin E. Hefner and Dennis Cudd have acquired the house for the purpose of restoration and to be used as their residence. Financing has already been arranged through local banks.

e. Possibilities for adaptive or alternative use of the property: The survey team of March, 1975, recommended restoration or preservation only. If used for adaptive purposes, the details, both interior and exterior should be maintained.

f. Appraised value: 1975 assessed value = \$14,060.00

g. The administrative and financial responsibility of and person or organization willing to underwrite all or a portion of such costs: Dennis Cudd and Calvin E. Hefner have been approved by the banks and will be given the financial backing for restoration costs.

8. Documentation of why and in what ways the property meets the criteria established for inclusion on the National Register:

a. Events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history: Elias Overcarsh had a great influence on the religious development of Mecklenburg County serving as minister in eight area churches. His grandfather, Franz Oberkirsh was a founder of the Organ Church in Rowan County.

b. Associated with lives of persons: The house was built by Elias Overcarsh who came to Charlotte in 1866. He established a grocery business and a farm in the area between Poplar and Church to Trade Street; taught school in two area schools and was a minister to eight churches in the area.

c. Type, period, method of construction: The Queen Anne style house, built in 1880, is one of only a very few remaining structures that exhibit the use of a tower, projecting bays, carved doorways, heavy moldings and mantles and the brass decorative hardware.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission maintains that the evidence presented in this report demonstrates that the property known as the Overcarsh House does meet the criteria for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

9. Documentation of why and in what ways the property is of historical importance to Charlotte and/or Mecklenburg County: Elias Overcarsh, whose grandfather was a founder of the Organ Church in Rowan County, came to Charlotte in 1866. He had a grocery business on the corner of Trade and Church Streets. His farm extended from the present McClung House on Poplar Street to Trade and ran between Poplar and Church. He taught school in Charlotte at Prospect and Hickory

Grove. In 1870 he was licensed as a minister by the Quarterly Methodist Conference meeting at the First Methodist Church. Serving as minister at eight churches: Fair Prospect, Calvary, Hebran, Big Springs, Harrison, Dows, Trinity, and Hickory Grove, Reverend Elias Overcarsh had a significant influence on the religious development of Mecklenburg County. An incident of interest: Bryan Overcarsh, son of Elias Overcarsh, was noted in Charlotte for his artistic ability. He designed and built the prize winning float in the parade of May 20, 1909, celebration when President William Howard Taft was a guest in the city.

Bibliography

Charlotte City Directory 1879-1880

The Charlotte Observer (March 30, 1930)

Mrs. T. L. Milwee, 824 Henley Place, interviewed by Dennis Cudd

Mr. Creasy Overcarsh, 254 Hillside, interviewed by Dennis Cudd

Mrs. Hazeline Overcarsh, 254 Hillside, interviewed by Dennis Cudd

Mr. A. H. Overcarsh, 812 E. Kingston, interviewed by Dennis Cudd

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission Preliminary Survey of Fourth Ward, March, 1975.

Records, Deeds, Wills on file at Mecklenburg County Deeds Office and Court House.

Architectural Description

The late Victorian period house at 326 West Eight Street, known as the 'Overcarsh' house is one of the few remaining Queen Anne style buildings remaining in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The house is a simple rectangular structure, as compared to the vigorously irregular plans of many structures of the time done in Queen Anne style.

Variations in the exterior are achieved with a moderate angular two story bay on the west side, a round turreted tower of the southwest corner facade, one story wings extending to the east and to the north, and a rectangular gabled turret added to the southeast second floor corner bed chamber. The simplicity of the execution does not diminish the significance of the house. It represents, with selective detailing, many of the appealing design elements of the popular Queen Anne architecture of the late nineteenth century. A style which was often repeated in Charlotte in the post civil war years and was the motif of many elaborate mansions in elegant Queen City neighborhoods, as well as the guiding light for more simple dwellings as represented in this house. During these years designers were influenced by styles other than Queen Anne and there are some suggestions of other influences on this house.

While 'Queen Anne' design meant variation in exterior surfaces, steep pitched roofs, verandas and porches, light frame construction, and open interior spaces, some "Eastlake" influence is noticeable in the elaborate trim, oval decorative motifs, and shingle surfaces here and there. Additionally, there is some hint of the 'stick style' appearing in gable stick work and in the curious built-up flare of roof overhangs where gutters are concealed. The exterior wall surfaces are covered with square edge, lapped clap board beginning suddenly above a low brick foundation wall with no drip molding. This siding extends to the second floor roof cornice where a wide overhang defines the roof line. This overhang is simply trimmed, lacking the expected ornamental brackets. Across the front is a narrow tin-roofed veranda sheltering the main entrance and turning down the east side a short distance. Here a side door connects to an unusually high ceilinged one story east wing. This side door has a unique patterned glass transom. The veranda roof is supported by solid square wood columns with intermediate chamfered edges and elaborate Eastlake carved brackets. The porch railing is a geometric pattern with turned, widely spaced posts connected with molded and fluted rails.

The ceiling of the porch shows a sensitive pattern of narrow beaded boards following a gentle vaulted shape as it rises from the column line toward the main house wall. On the west of the rectangular plan is a two story bay with angled corners containing windows on each floor. In the center segment of the bay unusual flat oval windows, likely stained glass originally, are set at eye level on each floor. This bay is crowned with a full gable roof frame which overhangs the angle corners, and is set off with molded supporting brackets and turned dropped pendants. In the gable face is a pattern of applied vertical and horizontal boards reflecting half timber construction. The upper panels of this framing are faced with a pattern of fan shaped wooden segments, creating a highly decorative feature. At the corner facade a circular turret tower presents the most important (and typical Queen Anne) design feature on the exterior of the house. This tower is covered with tight courses of 'fish scale' wood

shingles through its full height, now painted but no doubt stained green initially. At the foundation wall and at the line of window sills and heads the shingles flare out to form distinctive bands at each level.

The turret rises well above the second floor roof line and includes small windows in the garret above two full length windows which occur on each floor below. The tower is capped with a high slate covered pointed roof, supported on closely spaced brackets. The peak of this roof terminates in a well proportioned turned wood crest spear. Above the veranda roof an unusual rectangular bay extends diagonally from the southwest corner bed chamber. This bay is simply detailed, containing one full size window in the outside face and being topped with a simple gabled roof. In the corner of the veranda a definitive square framing pattern in the ceiling indicates a probable cupola tower over the corner at one time. The one story east wing is covered with a slate surfaced gabled roof. On the gable wall there are small rounded 'fish scale' wood shingles and an arched wood louvered vent. The gable rake overhang is wide and the verge boards terminate in decorative carved motifs at the eave ends. In the gable peak a horizontal molded frame creates an elaborate design. After several attic fires damaged the original slate, the main roof surfaces were covered with asphalt shingles. It is likely that the original shingles were slate, similar to those on the one story east wing. Windows are typically high, double hung units divided in each sash with vertical center muntins creating an 'Italianate' theme, a theme which is reinforced in the shoulder trim of the veranda window casing. The front entrance door is heavy panelled oak with glass inserts at eye level. Framing the entrance, elaborate wide carved wood trim includes stylized pineapple motifs.

From the entrance hall inside the front door panelled folding doors open expansively to a parlor at one side and a sitting room at the other. In each room one finds carefully crafted fireplace mantels with beveled mirrors in each over-mantel. These mantels are classical in design and reflect a definite colonial influence. To the rear of the left side parlor and connecting also to a rear stair hall is a carefully detailed dining room, featuring an extraordinary molded plate shelf on four walls. Also, in the dining room is another fine classical mantel. Reflecting the simple rectangular shape of the house, the interior consists of a large central hall from which open two rooms at each side on both floors. In all first floor rooms as well as in the central hall the walls are wainscoted with carefully executed vertical 'veed' boards of various woods stained and finished to simulate golden oak. On the second floor the millwork has less distinction. This house is representative of probably the largest group of late Victorian Queen Anne style buildings erected in Charlotte during the late nineteenth century. While it lacks the elaboration often found in larger, more expensive structures, it was a sensitive development of the style in simpler terms and is unique in Charlotte, if not in the state.