

Property Type:

Historic Preservation Research Office

Structure/Site Information Form

Street Address: 990 North 400 East UTM: 12 437880 4469390  
Pleasant Grove, Utah County

Name of Structure: Larsen, Christen, House T. 5 S R. 2 E S. 21

Present Owner: Elroy and Fern R. Nielsen

Owner Address: 990 North 400 East, Pleasant Grove, Utah 84062

Year Built (Tax Record): 1876 Effective Age: Tax #: D-461

Legal Description Kind of Building:  
Com 6 Chs N of NW Cor of Blk 76, Plat A, Pleasant Grove City Sur; N 317 Ft; E 225 Ft; N 11.0 Ft; E 58.14 Ft; S 462 Ft; W 283.14 Ft to Beg. Also: Com 6 Chs N & 4.28 Chs E of NW Cor Blk 76, Plat A, Pleasant Grove City Sur; N 462 Ft to S Line of St; Along So St Line S 89 39' E 37.52 Ft to Pt 340 Ft N 89 39' W of Com Blk 11.0, Plat A, Pg City Sur; S 21' W 120 Ft; S 342 Ft; W 37 Ft M O R L to Beg. Being Part Blk 110, Pl. Grove. Acreage 2.52.

Original Owner: Christen Larsen Construction Date: c. 1876 Demolition Date:

Original Use: Residence Present Use: Residence

Building Condition: Integrity: Preliminary Evaluation: Final Register Status:

- Excellent  Site  Unaltered  Significant  Not of the  National Landmark  District
- Good  Ruins  Minor Alterations  Contributory  Historic Period  National Register  Multi-Resou
- Deteriorated  Major Alterations  Not Contributory  State Register  Thematic

Photography: Date of Slides: 1986 Slide No.: Date of Photographs: 1890, 1986 Photo No.:

Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other

Research Sources:

- Abstract of Title  Sanborn Maps  Newspapers  U of U Library
- Plat Records/Map  City Directories  Utah State Historical Society  BYU Library
- Tax Card & Photo  Biographical Encyclopedias  Personal Interviews  USU Library
- Building Permit  Obituary Index  LDS Church Archives  SLC Library
- Sewer Permit  County & City Histories  LDS Genealogical Society  Other

Bibliographical References (books, articles, records, interviews, old photographs and maps, etc.):

C. C. Larsen history, unpublished, in possession of Fern Nielson.  
Fisher, Louise Larsen, Family Courageous (Salt Lake, 1957), pp. 35, 36.  
Fern Nielson, personal interview, 3 April 1986.  
Larsine Larsen Radmall history, unpublished, in possession of Fern Nielson.  
Driggs, Howard R., Timpanogos Town (Manchester, N.H., 1948) pp. 82, 84.  
Photograph of Christen Larsen House, ca. 1890.  
Danish Military records, 1825-1865 LDS Genealogy Library and Danish Archives.  
1880 Census of Pleasant Grove, Utah County, LDS Genealogical Library.

Architect/Builder: probably Christen Larsen

Building Materials: Soft-rock, Stucco

Building Type/Style: Classical/Vernacular, Pair-house

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:

(Include additions, alterations, ancillary structures, and landscaping if applicable)

Built in 1876, the Christen Larsen House is a one-story example of the pair house type. It is constructed of the local tufa, or soft-rock, and is now plastered. The house faces west, has a gable roof, and is symmetrical with three bays. A hipped roof porch with classical columns is centered over the door. To each side are found a pair of one-over-one windows closely set together. Decorative cornices are present over each window. The eaves are wide and plain. The soft-rock was plastered over on the facade and the sides at an unknown date, probably around the turn of the century; the rear wall remained exposed rock. The plaster exterior was scored to resemble ashlar masonry. Each end has a double sash window centered under a gable. The back now has a shed roof cinderblock addition. This addition was built in 1975, and replaced an earlier addition of the 1930s. Because of its location at the rear, this addition does not significantly detract from the historic integrity of the house. The original three rooms retain their original woodwork, windows, plastered walls, 12 foot ceilings, and transomed doors. The interior is in good repair and unaltered, and the integrity is not compromised in any way. A stone granary stands to the back and north of the house. The granary's origin cannot be documented, but it is thought to be the same as or near the house age. It is used as a tool shed and is in good repair. The

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date:

The Christen Larsen house, constructed c. 1876, is one of 61 examples of the Scandinavian pair house type that have been recorded in Utah. Graphically documenting the migration of thousands of Scandinavian converts to Mormon Utah during the second-half of the nineteenth century, the pair house type makes a significant contribution to the architectural history of the state. The Larsen house is to be included in the thematic nomination, "Scandinavian-American Pair House," listed in the National Register in 1983.\*

Christen Larsen and his wife Anne were the original owners of this Danish style cottage. They emigrated to Utah in 1874 with their 16-year-old son Christen Christensen Larsen. In the spring of 1875, Christen purchased a city lot in Pleasant Grove and built a one-room dug-out house. That summer the family "procured timber and materials for a decent dwelling."<sup>1</sup> It was probably in 1876 that Christen and his son built this house, which was modeled after dwellings in their native Denmark.

Christen Larsen was born September 1, 1825, in Lild, Thisted, Denmark. He married Anna Christensen February 19, 1852, at Bedsted, Thisted, Denmark. They were the parents of four children born in Denmark. Three of the four children emigrated to Utah. Two girls, Anne Marie and Larsine, came to America in 1873, the year before their parents' emigration. In Denmark, Christen served as captain on one of the King's vessels until he was converted to the Mormon faith in 1864. Since the Danish state religion was Lutheran, Christen was dismissed. Being without means of support, he bought a small sailing vessel and began fishing off the coast of Jegindo, an inlet village, where he had moved his family. The children sold fish from door to door to make a meager living. About 1868, a move to Aalborg on the Baltic Sea

Christen Larsen House  
Description (Continued):

granary is not counted as a contributing building on the property since it is not related to the pair house theme.

Number of contributing buildings: 1  
Number of non-contributing buildings: 1

Christen Larsen House  
History (Continued):

necessitated his being gone much of the time. During the next five years the family saved enough money to pay their passage to America. The children contributed by working outside the home---Larsine as a "nurse-girl"<sup>2</sup> and young Christen as a hired hand to fishermen.

Christen Larsen settled his family in Pleasant Grove for the purpose of pursuing his occupation as a fisherman on Utah Lake. The first winter after his arrival, he and his son fashioned a seine 150 yards long that he used to net fish from the lake. Christen was also a cabinetmaker and probably did much of the woodwork on his home. His wood working skills were demonstrated on a new violin that he desired. "He built a fine violin and played on it the rest of his life."<sup>3</sup> In Denmark the seas are unnavigable much of the year, so those who earned their living from the sea also learned a trade or worked as farm hands to help support themselves. Christen was listed as a brick mason on the parish register at the birth of one of his daughters. He probably laid the soft-rock blocks for his house in Pleasant Grove. Christen died December 12, 1881, after having been in America just six years. His wife continued to live in the house until her death on January 13, 1888.

In 1889 Jens Nielson and his wife Ellen Pherson purchased the house for their son, Hogan Nielson. They were 1882 immigrants from Lund, Sweden. Hogan was employed at the Murray Smelter in Salt Lake County. After his marriage in 1890 to Annie Erickson he moved to Pleasant Grove. Hogan bought up other land around the house, and became a small farmer and fruit raiser. He hauled produce by wagon to Salt Lake City, and was also road supervisor for the building of many of the Pleasant Grove roads. As a talented musician, he played his Swedish snare drum in the North Union Band, organized in 1885, and the Silverband of 1895. The Nielson's six children were raised in this house. Elroy Nielson, a son, and Fern Radmall Nielson bought the house in 1945, and they are the current owner/occupants. Fern is the great granddaughter of the original builder, Christen Larsen. Elroy helped construct the U.S. Steel Plant near Pleasant Grove in 1940-44. He was employed for many years as a construction worker for Niels Fugal Construction. During the 44 years that Elroy and Fern have occupied this house, they have raised five children. In 1975, a lean-to kitchen that had been added to the east during

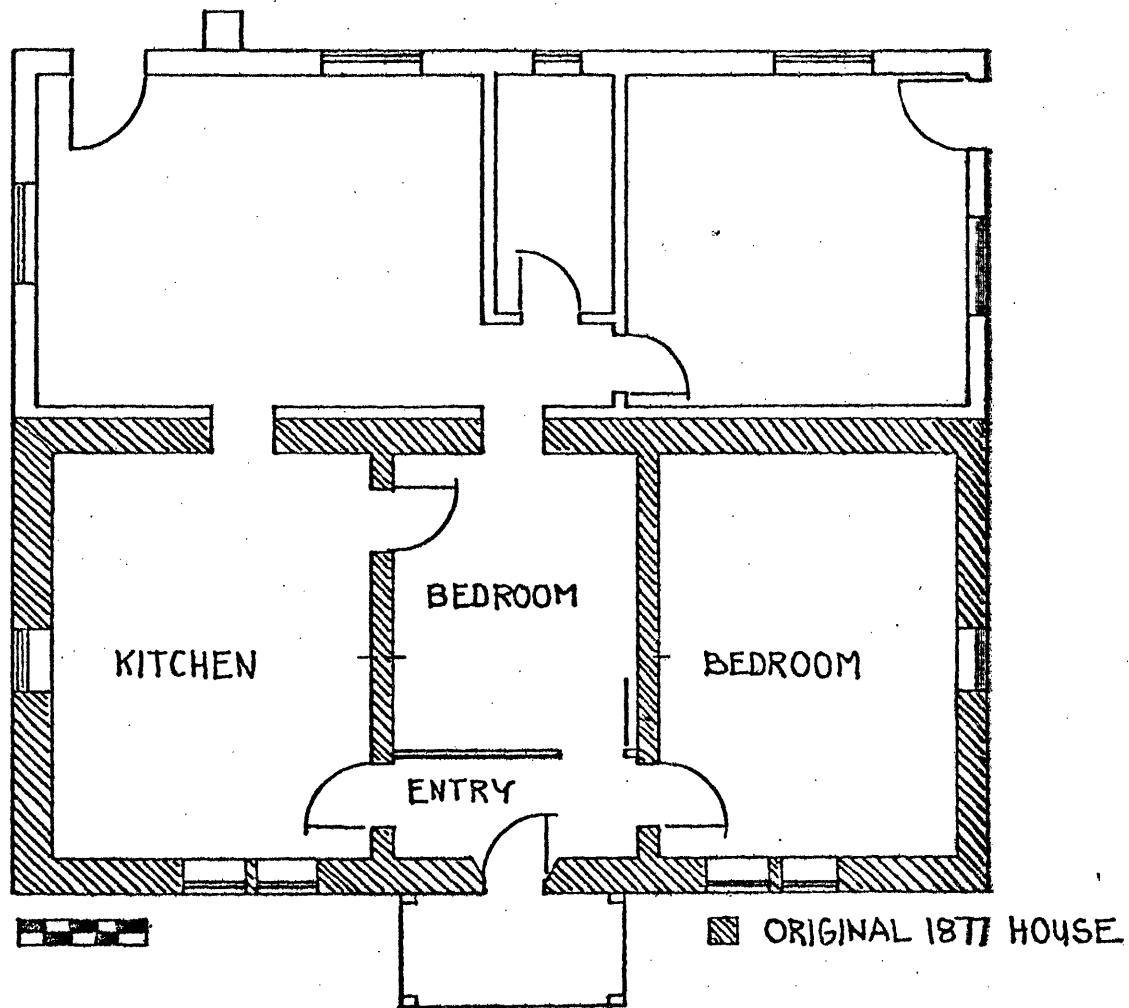
Christen Larsen House  
History (Continued):

Hogan Nielson's ownership was removed. New additions were made in its place which consisted of a basement under a bathroom, kitchen, and work room. The original three rooms have not been changed significantly. The east window has been lengthened and made into a doorway, and the outside rock walls have been plastered.

<sup>1</sup>C. C. Larsen History.

<sup>2</sup>Larsine Larsen Radmall History

<sup>3</sup>Larsine Larsen Radmall History



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