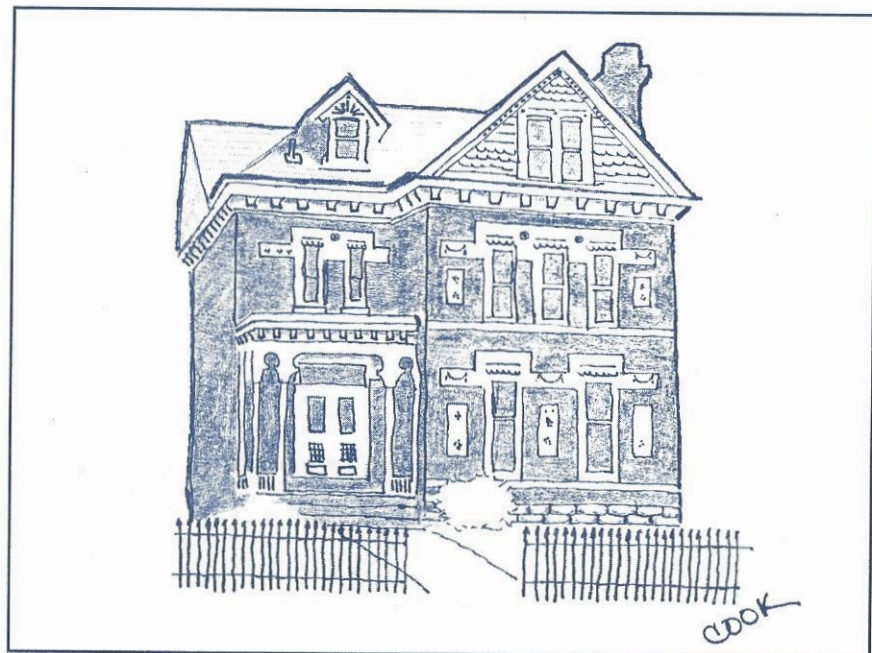




Samuel and Mary Brown House

**822 N. 6th Street • 1886 • attributed to Harvey Chatten • Eastlake
Queen Anne Style**

In 1886 local architect Harvey Chatten was just beginning to wrest himself from the influence of his mentor, Robert Bunce, whose local architectural practice he had taken over. The North Side was the laboratory for Chatten's experiments in the exuberant eclectic manner that would soon become his stock in trade.

Chatten's design for the Browns clearly shows where he was heading. The exterior sports an unusual melange of pressed tin, chip-carved stone, and machine-carved wood ornament. Much of the exterior ornament carries into the woodwork of the interior. The *piece de resistance* is a magnificent walnut staircase that curves gently into the stairhall. Its mix of chip-carved and turned work typifies English designer Charles Eastlake's influence on American architecture of the 1870s and 1880s. Though Eastlake himself preached simplicity, the effect of his work was to make fair game of every piece of trim in the house, inside and out. This kind of ornamental shaping and carving was previously reserved for furniture.

In order to simplify the craftsman's work, the first story trim is made of soft red fir stained to look like the walnut of the staircase. This reverses standard practice; the upstairs rather than the downstairs is trimmed in hardwood, in this case the locally abundant butternut. Front and rear bedroom fireplaces appear to be architect designed. Which one was for the lady of the house and which one for the man is easily perceived.

The present owners have added a number of features in keeping with the style of the house. A front fence, though not original to the house, dates to the same period. Art glass in select windows, like the kitchen trim, is not historic, yet it picks up design elements typical of other houses of the period.

Current owners: Floyd and Sue Lish

*BEHIND CLOSED DOORS
OCTOBER 17, 1992*