

Myers Park: Charlotte's Finest Planned Suburb

by Dr. Thomas W. Hanchett

Charlotteans today know the Myers Park neighborhood as one of the city's prestige addresses, an area of fine homes, tree-lined streets, and curving drives. Few realize that the neighborhood's importance extends far beyond Charlotte. Myers Park is of statewide significance because it was the home of many of the textile, banking, and utility leaders responsible for developing the Piedmont Carolinas into a major American manufacturing region in the early twentieth century.

Even more important than its influential early residents were the two expert city planners who designed Myers Park's tree-lined avenues. John Nolen of Boston provided the initial 1911 streetplan, plus planting plans and even individual residential landscape designs. ¹ From his early work in Charlotte, Nolen went on to be one of the nation's top planners, with over 400 projects coast to coast. ²

Earle Sumner Draper began his planning career in 1915 as Nolen's assistant in Myers Park. ³ He soon started his own extensive private practice, and later was first head of planning for the mammoth Tennessee Valley Authority and acting director of the Federal Housing Administration, making him perhaps the most important planner in the Southeast in the first half of the twentieth century. ⁴ Because it served as the training ground for these two influential designers, Myers Park is of national significance.

Architecturally, Myers Park is largely a product of the building boom of the 1920s, though there are residences dating from 1912 to the present year. The primary style is Colonial Revival, especially the red brick Georgian Colonial borrowed from the Virginia colony. [Bungalow](#) influences are also important, particularly in the few dozen houses dating from the 1910s, including the neighborhood's grandest. The [Tudor Revival](#) of the twenties is a third major architectural mode, and it is likely that Myers Park holds the finest collection of Tudor Revival dwellings in North Carolina.

The history of Myers Park may be broken into three eras. First is its creation on the land of J. S. Myers under the direction of developer George Stephens, with the design guidance of John Nolen and Earle Sumner Draper. This era lasted from 1911 till Stephens' departure in 1922. The second period lasted from 1922 until 1935. Myers Park filled out, but some of Nolen and Draper's concepts were set aside, and the area

developed with less green space and more small houses on small lots than they had envisioned. In the third era, from 1935 to the present, the professionally-trained planners' ideas were totally forgotten as the neighborhood was completed. In the sixties much of the Nolen-designed area was even zoned for redevelopment, and only in the last few years have Nolen and Draper's contributions begun to be appreciated and safeguarded.

John Springs Myers was born in 1847 to Colonel William R. Myers and Sophia Springs Myers.⁵ Both the Myers and the Springs families were long-established Mecklenburg plantation owners with reputations for interest in philanthropy and civic beauty. Colonel Myers owned land throughout Charlotte township and is remembered for his donation of the initial land for Biddle College (now JCSU) and of part of the site of [Independence Park](#).⁶ Springfield, the main Springs family home far out Providence Road beyond [Providence Presbyterian Church](#), was noted for its beautiful gardens and landscaped grounds.⁷ From the time of the Revolutionary War, the Springs had also held land closer to town. Adam Alexander Springs (1782-1840), uncle of twentieth-century textile magnate Colonel LeRoy Springs, lived in a farmhouse near what is now Harvard Place in Myers Park.⁸



John Springs Myers

In 1869 at age twenty-two, J. S. "Jack" Myers came into his inheritance, which included 306 acres of farmland around the old site of Adam Alexander Springs

house.⁹ Young Myers had a new house built on the same site, near the old pre-Civil War slave row, looking across a broad front yard onto the dirt track that was Providence Road.¹⁰ Myers lived most of the year in his mansion at East Trade and Myers streets in town, one of a small number of Charlotteans wealthy enough to maintain both a country house and a city house.¹¹

As years went by, Jack Myers bought adjoining property around his inherited land. In 1885, for instance, he purchased 120 acres of farmland from a Mary King and about the same time he bought a contiguous 120 acres from the Russell family.¹² By the 1890s he held 1005 acres lying between Providence Road and Sugar Creek.¹³ For years Myers operated this huge tract as a cotton farm, partly under his own supervision, partly through about twenty tenant farmers whose plots lined Providence Road.¹⁴

Myers, however, was looking forward to the day when he could transform his farmland into a fine suburb. He set out rows of trees along Providence Road and planted the front yard of his country home with flowers and shrubs until it became known as "Myers Park."¹⁵ As early as 1904 a newspaper real estate advertisement referred to a six room suburban cottage for sale "on Providence Road at Myers Park."¹⁶ Jack Myers' country house stood for a while after 1911 behind George Stephens residence at 821 Harvard Place and may have served as headquarters for the landscape supervisors, but it was eventually demolished.¹⁷ Myers' front yard remains, however, as J. S. Myers Park, bounded by Hermitage Road, Ardsley Road, and Providence Road across from the Manor Theatre.¹⁸ It continues to be the centerpiece of the neighborhood, and may well be the thing that gave the suburb its name.

In addition to his beautification efforts, Jack Myers may even have sketched some tentative street plans. An 1890s map shows what is now Dartmouth Place already graded, and the vicinity labeled "Central Park."¹⁹ Careful comparison of early maps indicates that no more than one or two "suburban cottages" joined the tenant farmers' dwellings before 1911, though. Today only one pre-1911 building is known to survive, the 1898 O. J. Thies house at the corner of Providence and Ardsley.²⁰ Charlotte had begun to grow outward, but it would take a rare combination of vision, youthful energy, and social skill to convince the town's leading residents to move this far out in the country.

J. S. Myers found just such a combination in the person of a young man named George Stephens. Stephens had been born near Greensboro in nearby Guilford County in 1873 and attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.²¹ There he was a very popular athlete, "the best pitcher Carolina ever had," who led the baseball team to a championship.²²

Upon graduation in 1896, Stephens came to Charlotte to join the insurance firm of Walter Brem, father of a college roommate.²³ Stephens' university contacts and star athlete reputation must have served him well, for in 1899 he became a partner with established realtor F. C. Abbott.²⁴ Abbott, Stephens, Brem, and textile/banking man B. D. Heath purchased a tract of farmland from Colonel W. R. Myers and developed the suburb of Piedmont Park.²⁵ It was one of Charlotte's earliest, a triangular area along Central Avenue and Seventh Street that is now part of the [Elizabeth](#) neighborhood.



George Stephens, son-in-law of John Myers.

It was as a result of this project that Stephens met John Nolen. In 1904 the Piedmont Park developers, landowner Myers, investors in adjoining Highland Park (now also part of Elizabeth), and other civic leaders put together a parcel of creek-bottom land that was to be the city's first public park.²⁶ The following year the Charlotte Park and Tree Commission brought John Nolen south from Boston to design this [Independence Park](#) and other public spaces in the city.²⁷

Independence Park was Nolen's first public commission upon his graduation from Harvard University.²⁸ He greatly impressed Stephens, and Stephens became his patron for a substantial number of projects in North Carolina over the years, including Myers Park.²⁹

In 1901 with the Piedmont Park development under way, the youthful tycoon, not yet thirty, turned his attention to banking. With F. C. Abbott and boyhood friend Word H. Wood, Stephens set up the Southern States Trust Company, later known as the American Trust Company.³⁰



American Trust Company Building

For its downtown Charlotte office, the bank built a seven-story skyscraper, the city's first, on the site of the present [Johnston Building](#).³¹ One of the tenants in the American Trust tower was J. B. Duke's fledgling Southern Power Company, an important contact for Stephens in years to come.³² The bank also became a major participant in Myers Park's development, holding mortgages for most of the new houses. George Stephens' banking venture proved extremely successful over the years. Today it is the mammoth NCNB Corporation, one of the largest banks in the Southeast.³³

In the midst of all this activity George Stephens found time to marry Sophie Myers, daughter of Jack Myers and granddaughter of Colonel W. R. Myers, in 1902.³⁴ In the words of Charlotte historian Dr. Dan L. Morrill, "The father-in-law had the land. The son-in-law had the business expertise."³⁵ Within a decade Jack Myers' dream of a fine suburb was being realized on a grand scale.

George Stephens' first step was to find partners to help with this large undertaking. On February 27, 1911, he formed the Stephens Company with two other investors, Word H. Wood and A. J. Draper.³⁶ Wood was a Winston Salem native and college classmate of Stephens.³⁷ The pair had earlier co-founded the American Trust Company, and they subsequently owned the *Charlotte Observer* in the mid 1910s.³⁸ Wood went on to serve as president of American Trust from 1927 to 1943, and was a member of the board of the Federal Reserve Bank when it opened its Charlotte operation in 1927.³⁹ Arthur J. Draper was a transplanted New Englander, descendant of the inventor of the famous Draper loom widely used in U. S. textile mills. Investor Draper was no relation to landscape architect Earle Sumner Draper, incidentally, though both had Massachusetts textile backgrounds.⁴⁰ Before Myers Park construction got underway the Stephens Company added two more partners, John M. Miller, Jr., about whom little is known, and utility pioneer William States Lee. Lee was the engineer who was turning J. B. Duke's hydroelectric dream into reality and he later became chief executive of the power company. An innovator in high-tension hydroelectric development, Lee designed the company's first power stations and is "credited with being the first engineer to demonstrate the feasibility of transmitting power by wire over long distances."⁴¹

Stephens arranged an agreement with his father-in-law to buy the old cotton farm in sections, paying for each parcel as lots were sold. The company also purchased additional land to fill out the area.⁴² In 1911, Stephens bought a strip of land from the Thompson Orphanage, probably in the area of the present Kings Drive. The most important purchase was from dairy farmer McD. Watkins.⁴³ The Watkins tract was essential to connect the Myers farm with the Elizabeth Avenue trolley line. Today the Myers Park gates, the first blocks of Queens Road, and all of Colonial and Amherst avenues occupy the old Watkins property.

To design the proposed suburb, George Stephens brought John Nolen back to Charlotte. The partners saw that a high-quality planned community was the only type of suburban development that could lure Charlotte leaders from their long-established residential areas along Trade and Tryon close to the heart of the city. Nolen, for his part, was excited by the possibility of creating a state-of-the-art suburban community. Myers Park, Nolen later wrote, was to be "designed right from the first, and influenced only by the best practice in modern town planning."⁴⁴

The prospect was particularly intriguing because the Stephens Company had both the resources and the vision to carry out Nolen's ideas. National magazines took note. "Built without regard to expenditure," Myers Park was praised as the equal to Baltimore's well-known Roland Park, the suburb that had been designed by the Olmsteds in the 1890s.⁴⁵ To some observers, Myers Park was "the finest unified suburban development south of Baltimore."⁴⁶

In creating this "unified suburban design," John Nolen went far beyond drawing streets and specifying trees and flowers, which many people think of as the extent of a landscape architect's job. It is worth examining his plan in detail to realize his total involvement in the creation of the neighborhood we take for granted today. It is the painstaking work of this pioneer city planner and his successor Earle Sumner Draper that sets this area off from others where the wealthy lived in the same period, and that has made Myers Park Charlotte's most lastingly successful early suburb.

The first crucial decision of the project came before a single pencil was touched to paper. What was to be the mix of land uses? While the suburb did aim at attracting the city's wealthiest citizens, John Nolen and George Stephens believed that a mix of economic classes was desirable. Accordingly, Nolen drew his design with a variety of lot sizes, and today Amherst, Colonial, and Hermitage Court are lined with humble bungalows built at the same time as the neighborhood's finest early mansions. Even in the wealthier streets there was a provision for a range of house prices. 726 Bromley Road, for instance, carried a deed restriction specifying a \$4,000 minimum house cost in 1919. Around the corner on the main boulevard, at 1120 Queens Road, the minimum was \$6,500 the same year⁴⁷.

Nolen also recognized that commercial development had to be included in the land use mix. He planned a small neighborhood shopping center for a triangular block at the busy intersection of Queens Road and Providence. The site was within walking distance of most of the neighborhood, but ingeniously located on the farm roads at its edge in order to avoid having farm wagons run through residential areas.⁴⁸ Site plans for the complex still exist in Nolen's papers at Cornell University. One store was built, nicknamed the "little store" by the students of nearby Queens College, but it stood for only a short time. Myers Park Presbyterian Church and Myers Park United Methodist Church were built on the spot in the 1920s. They may have been a more dignified use, but the need for neighborhood shopping was irrepressible. Today an unplanned commercial strip along Providence Road eats away at the edge of the neighborhood.



Myers Park Methodist Church



Myers Park Presbyterian Church

Nolen and Stephens also saw educational facilities as a key part of a well-planned community. Stephens lured the established Presbyterian College for Women from the center city with an offer of free land.⁴⁹ Nolen provided a spacious site for the institution, renamed Queens College, at the center of his plan. The neighborhood's elementary school was also built on part of this land in the 1920s.



Queens College

Once the mix of land uses had been decided, the next step was drawing a street plan that fitted them to the land. In J. S. Myers farm, Nolen faced an almost blank canvas.⁵⁰ Providence Road already existed, a narrow dirt track. So did today's Selwyn Road and the bit of what is now Queens Road connecting Selwyn and Providence. Dartmouth Place had already been graded, as we have noted, perhaps as part of one of Jack Myers' earlier schemes. Otherwise the area was all rolling farmland, most of it treeless, sloping gently from Providence Road to Sugar Creek.

Nolen discarded the old Charlotte grid, which he termed "unnatural checkerboard streets on an undulating surface."⁵¹ Instead he drew gently curving avenues that followed the topography. Also unlike the old village, there were a variety of street widths. "Not every street is a carrier of traffic," he observed, "Some merely lead to the home."⁵² Nolen's plan featured grand boulevards 110 feet wide feeding a web of narrower residential byways. The streetplan was intentionally complicated, both for picturesque effect and to ensure the residents' privacy. Myers Park was to be a self-contained suburban glen, not a through-traffic route.

The boulevard system was the circulation route for carriages and the new motorcars, and, most importantly at first, for the streetcar. Like all early American suburbs, Myers Park was initially a "streetcar suburb" whose residents commuted to town daily on the electric trolley car. Nolen planned grassy medians down the middle of his boulevards to accommodate the trolley tracks, an arrangement similar to the posh, newly-built suburban Beacon Street in his home city of Boston.⁵³ The trolley needed a way to turn around at the end of the line, and Nolen turned this necessity to a virtue when laying out his plan. At the southern extremity of the suburb he formed the

boulevard into a wide loop so that the cars could turn back to town, and, equally importantly, so that no resident would be more than a two and one-half block walk from mass transit. The boulevard loop was eventually built to a route specified by Earle Draper rather than John Nolen, but its general form still follows the original conception.

John Nolen, by the way, had no input in the names of Myers Park's streets. If he had, newcomers might be less bewildered as they negotiate the boulevards today. Nolen's 1911 plan simply labeled streets with letters of the alphabet and left the naming to the Stephens Company. In July of 1912 George Stephens announced a contest to name the "four mile highway" then under construction through the development, the first leg of the boulevard system. The Stephens Company reported it received hundreds of suggestions before the contest ended August 31, 1912. The winner was a Central High School teacher, Mary Armond Nash, who is said to have chosen the name because of the city's historic association with Queen Charlotte of England.⁵⁴ The name was picked six months before the neighborhood's Presbyterian College for Women was renamed Queens College, incidentally.

Once he had the name for the first leg of the grand boulevard, Stephens went on to apply it to all parts of the boulevard system. The result was several "Queens and Queens" intersections. In an often-repeated Charlotte joke, a newcomer asks where Queens Road is, and is told that "it is every other street in Myers Park." If the boulevard segments had been named with more variety, as was done with Morehead Street, South Boulevard, and East Boulevard in the original [Dilworth](#) boulevard system, Myers Park would now be much more understandable.

Along with curving boulevards and byways, park land was a key ingredient of the Nolen plan. It has already been noted that J. S. Myers' old front yard, an entire small block bounded by Hermitage Road, Ardsley Road, and Providence Road, was set aside as one park, a move which led the suburb's first wealthy residents to cluster their mansions nearby. Nolen so proposed an innovative mid-block play area for children. Located at the center of the block bounded by Granville Road, Queens Road West, and Queens Road, it was evidently used for several years and then abandoned.⁵⁵

John Nolen's most important park concept was the "greenway" idea. He believed that creek banks should be dedicated to public use, rather than left as waste space at the backs of house lots as developers often did. This vision was realized with the building of Edgehill Park (called Longhollow Park on early plats) along a branch of Sugar Creek. The narrow twin roadways of Edgehill Road flank the grassy, tree-lined branch, one of the city's most beautiful drives today.

Originally this greenway was intended to continue across Queens Road to Sugar Creek, and to run the length of its banks.⁵⁶ The 1940s Freedom Park is a legacy of this proposal, but most of it was ignored. After George Stephens left Charlotte in 1922, the Stephens Company under other leaders sold most of the creek banks for private development.

Nolen envisioned the Edgehill and Sugar Creek greenways as the first links in a much greater network. In 1917 he sketched a citywide greenway system that would have brought creek bottom parks and winding parkways to all parts of Charlotte.⁵⁷ His plan unfortunately remained on paper, but the greenway idea has recently been revived with the building of McAlpine Greenway Park at the eastern edge of the city, and similar projects are under consideration elsewhere in the county.

After the overall streetplan was completed, the next task was to design plantings that would transform the former cotton farm into a lush suburb. Myers Park in 1911 was almost treeless. A small cluster of trees stood in J. S. Myers old yard near the present intersection of Hermitage Road and Granville Road, and a larger grove covering several acres extended from Queens College to Providence Road, but the rest of the land was largely open field.⁵⁸ The heavily forested look of Myers Park today is not an accident of nature, but the product of careful planning.

The Nolen office prepared a cross section drawing for each of the five classes of Myers Park streets -- 110 foot wide boulevard with streetcar median, 80 foot main road, 60 foot residence road, 50 foot minor road, and forty foot parkside road.⁵⁹ Each representative cross-section showed the size and placement of trees, sidewalks, and planting strips adjacent to the roadway. "The roads along the park areas," for example, were to have "a five-foot sidewalk and fifteen-foot planting space on one side only, with a motor drive of twenty feet." In contrast, "the eighty-foot type has a drive of thirty-two feet, eighteen foot planting spaces, and six-foot sidewalks."⁶⁰

Nolen specified that the mix of trees on the planting strips would be predominantly "willow, oak, tulip, plane and elm."⁶¹ He also concerned himself with the paving materials; concrete curbs and sidewalks, and concrete or the new biulithic (asphalt) for the roadways.⁶² In addition to the cross sections, the Nolen office also did detailed plans for the ground cover on the planting spaces. A planting plan for the boulevard median and sidewalk areas, for instance, used over two dozen species of flora to provide a carefully orchestrated visual effect. All the plants were listed on the drawing with their precise Latin names, and a gardener today would have little trouble recreating the street's original Nolen landscape.⁶³

John Nolen took great care with the entrance to this wooded glen. Originally Myers Park had just one main entry, at what is now the corner of Fourth Street and Queens

Road. The single entry, marked by a combination gateway and streetcar station, was a careful Nolen touch to set this semi-rural area off from the city. The gate, "of singular beauty and lithic solidity," consisted of a stone arch over the streetcar track in the middle of the boulevard, and a pair of "covered portals" at each sidewalk. ⁶⁴ The central arch was destroyed in recent years to allow turn lanes on Queens Road, but the sidewalk gateways still stand.



Myers Park gate

Nolen used similar stonework elsewhere in the neighborhood. Where Hermitage Road joins Queens Road there is a [shelter](#) for trolley passengers, evidently one of several that once stood along the boulevard. ⁶⁵ Hermitage Court, originally owned by subdeveloper F. M. Simmons, has stone entrance gates of its own, and there is an indication that a similar gateway was envisioned for nearby Colonial Avenue. ⁶⁶

The through planning of this "unified suburb" extended even beyond these public spaces. For most of the earliest lot buyers, the Stephens Company hired Nolen to provide free landscape designs. The Nolen firm would suggest the best placement of the proposed house on the lot, and produce drawings showing drives, gardens, outbuilding location, and tree planting. Today designs for over sixty estates survive in the Nolen collection at Cornell University. ⁶⁷

Few suburbs anywhere in the United States exhibit this level of thorough planning. The service was undoubtedly one of George Stephens' ways of enticing the wealthy to settle at the edge of town. To Nolen it assured "that the general landscape design (would) be harmoniously developed under expert control."⁶⁸ It is this painstaking attention to detail that helps make Myers Park a landmark in Southern city planning.

After John Nolen had worked out his plan, George Stephens and his partners began to put it in place. They knew that it would be many years before the whole 1220 acres could be developed. Construction began first at the northern end of Nolen's plan, closest to town -- the blocks along Queens Road between the gates and the site of Queens College. Today it is this section of Myers Park that follows John Nolen's proposals most closely, and also contains the neighborhood's stately early mansions.

Work began immediately in 1912. By that summer a correspondent for the *Manufacturers Record* of Baltimore reported that "the development included in the present construction is about 200 acres in extent."⁶⁹ It included the first one and seven-eighths miles of the projected four mile trolley line and the initial three and three-eighths miles of the planned twenty-one and one-half miles of streets. A map filed with the County Register of Deeds Office indicates that by 1914 what are now Queens, Providence, Amherst, Lillington, Colonial, Dartmouth, Henley, Bromley, Edgehill, Hermitage Road and Hermitage Court, Harvard, Hopedale, Oxford, Briarcliff and Sharon roads and parts of Ardsley, Coniston, Brandon, Sherwood and Wellesley had been officially surveyed.⁷⁰ These streets form the historic heart of Myers Park.

The grading, tree-planting, finishing and sodding, at least in these early years, were done by the Stephens Company's own labor force. This outfit consisted of twenty-four horse teams, and about fifty laborers, according to the *Manufacturers Record* correspondent.⁷¹ They were assisted by two Charlotte firms, Johnston, Porter and Peck, and J. A. Wallace.⁷² Separate contractors laid the utilities: 17,800 linear feet of water mains, gas mains and sewers the first year.⁷³ All was paid for by the Stephens Company, for the development was well outside municipal boundaries. This substantial initial investment was increased many times over the years. By 1921 Earle Draper wrote that company records showed \$600,000 had been spent on public improvements, a staggering sum in that day.⁷⁴

Stephens and Nolen had obviously done their preparation work well, for well-to-do Charlotteans immediately began building fine residences in the suburb, even as crews were grading the first avenues. The very earliest mansions clustered under the existing trees near J. S. Myers Park, on Granville, Harvard, Hermitage and Providence roads. Soon after, large houses appeared on Ardsley and on the Queens Road boulevard. The middle-class also was eager for suburban "country houses" at the end of the trolley

line, and Dartmouth got its first modest Bungalows in this same period. By the end of 1916, five years after the plans for the new area had been announced, Myers Park had more than fifty residences, and numbered half a dozen of Charlotte's most influential citizens among its residents.⁷⁵

The J. M. Jamison residence at 802 Providence Road is believed to be the oldest "suburban" dwelling standing in Myers Park today, second in age only to the 1898 O. J. Thies country house a block away. The Jamison mansion is a large two story stone structure, designed by M.I.T.-trained Charlotte architect Louis Asbury, Jr., and completed in 1912.



The Jamison House

The residence has recently been carefully renovated as a branch bank for Mutual Savings and Loan. Jamison spent \$30,000 constructing his mansion in an age when a substantial middle class dwelling could be built for \$5,000. The land cost an additional \$8,352, purchased on September 1, 1911, even before John Nolen's final plan was inked. John Jamison owned Charlotte's Stonewall Hotel and had hotel and real estate interests elsewhere in North Carolina.⁷⁶

H. M. Wade was another wealthy Charlottean who built in Myers Park in its first year.⁷⁷ He was a store-fixture manufacturer with a large plant on Graham Street and was quite active in civic affairs. His rambling wooden two-story residence at the corner of Hermitage and Granville faced J. S. Myers Park and had grounds landscaped by Philadelphian J. Franklin Meehan, rather than Nolen. Wade demolished the house about 1928 and built an even grander brick Colonial Revival style residence designed by nationally known society architect Charles Barton Keen. This second Wade house

still stands, amidst grounds designed by Earle Sumner Draper, at 530 Hermitage Road.

Less is known about the three other houses constructed in 1912 according to city water permit records. One was at 934 Granville Road, today the site of a two-story brick Rectilinear style residence that may well date from that year. 824 Harvard Place was a fine two-story stuccoed design, also in the straightforward Rectilinear style. It may have been speculatively built by developer A. D. Glascock who was quite active in Myers Park development. It still stands, though it has been recently "Colonialized" with vinyl siding. 600 Hermitage Road was apparently a wood frame structure demolished in the 1920s like the Wade house. Today a brick mansion designed by architect William Peeps for John Bass Brown stands on the site.⁷⁸

1913 saw six more Myers Park building projects. Three were by developers Patterson and Glascock, at 128 and 221 Hermitage Road and 1626 Queens Road. Louis Asbury designed a fine brick home for Mr. Charles Moody at 830 Providence Road next to the Jamison mansion. Moody was the city's main grain and feed dealer, and the grain elevators of his Interstate Milling Company still tower above Fourth Ward near the central business district.⁷⁹ Builder F. M. Simmons erected a white-columned Colonial Revival mansion for himself at the corner of Hermitage Road and Hermitage Court and looked forward to work on his Hermitage Court subdevelopment. Mrs. Hamilton C. Jones, who had kinship ties to the Myers family and to the Erwin textile family of Durham, also moved her family out of town into a new wood-frame dwelling that still stands at 944 Granville Road.

Seven dwellings were added in 1914, including the neighborhood's first middle class Bungalows, which were developed by E. C. Griffith on his Dartmouth Place subdivision. It was also the year that brought the first textile and utility executives to Myers Park. David Clark, who published the widely-read *Southern Textile Bulletin*, had a handsome Rectilinear style dwelling built at 100 Hermitage Court on the corner of Queens Road by the trolley stop. Clark, like most of his neighbors, was an active civic leader and in the 1950s he was a driving force for construction of the Charlotte Coliseum.

Equally important was Norman Cocke, president of Mill Power Supply in 1913. His large, wood-shingled Bungalow stands at 816 Harvard Place. Mill Power Supply became part of J. B. Duke's Southern Power Company, and Cocke became a top official at Southern Power and later vice president of Duke Power. When the company built its vast hydroelectric lake north of Charlotte, it named it Lake Norman in his honor.⁸⁰

Cocke must have spoken highly of his new neighborhood to his friends at Southern Power, the same men who had gotten to know George Stephens when the company had office space in his American Trust skyscraper. In the years that followed, most Southern Power executives settled in Stephens' suburb. Charles I. Burkholder moved into 801 Ardsley Road about 1915. The same year company president E. C. Marshall had a fine Tudor Revival residence built at 500 Hermitage Road facing the park. Z. V. Taylor's Colonial Revival style home at 400 Hermitage Road overlooking Edgehill Park was completed at the same time.

Utility magnate J. B. Duke himself joined the neighborhood in 1919. He bought Taylor's house and had architect C. C. Hook triple it in size.⁸¹ Duke's [White Oaks estate](#), as it became known, was only one of many houses he maintained around the country. The Charlotte estate's grounds took up the full block between Edgehill, Hermitage, Ardsley and Queens. The gardens were dominated by a fifty foot high fountain that could be seen as far away as Fountainview Place in Dilworth. Most of the block including the fountain site was sold off as building sites in the late 1950s, but the mansion and its immediate grounds remain, still the most important residence in the neighborhood.

Marshall, Taylor, Cocke, and Burkhalter, as well as Chief Engineer William States Lee who bought George Stephens' house on Harvard Place in the 1920s, all served as Southern Public Utility/Southern Power/Duke Power presidents or vice presidents. Under their leadership the company was instrumental in the development of the Carolina Piedmont as a nationally prominent industrial region. The cluster of fine homes near the Duke mansion and J. S. Myers Park was not only the architectural high point of the neighborhood and a social hub of Charlotte, but represented a concentration of men who had great power over the destiny of the region.

1915 was the "take-off" year for Myers Park. Fifteen houses were built that year, including those of the power executives and also the first of another important Myers Park group, the city's real estate and banking leaders. George Stephens himself led the way when he moved into his new mansion at 821 Harvard Place, a progressive design influenced by the new Bungalow movement.



The Stephens House

The same year realtor A. J. Dunavant built his white-columned house at 1040 Queens Road on the corner of Ardsley. V. J. Guthery also came in 1915, commissioning a residence for himself at 837 Harvard Place. He was president of Myers Park Homes, a company which purchased parcels of land from the Stephens Company and over the years built many houses in the neighborhood. Oscar J. Thies, who had a country house for himself at 554 Providence Road in 1898 when the neighborhood was farmland, updated his residence about 1920. He was Guthery's main competitor, head of the successful Thies-Smith Realty firm which erected numerous houses on Queens Road and elsewhere in the city. In 1983, the Thies family still lived in the Providence Road house, and the firm continues as Thies Realty & Mortgage Company.⁸²

Realtor Charles Lambeth, who commissioned a 1927 mansion behind Thies at 435 Hermitage Road, personified the power of Charlotte's real estate community in the political life of the city. Lambeth served as Charlotte's mayor from 1931 to 1933. His white stucco mansion by Philadelphia architect Charles Barton Keen is a major neighborhood landmark today. Among the bankers who joined Stephens was Ward Wood, his partner in the American Trust Company (later NCNB). Wood's house stood on Queens Road near the end of Harvard Place until it was demolished in the 1970s to build the Princess Charlotte Apartments. The stately mansion of First National Bank president H. M. McAden still stands not far away at 920 Granville Road. Designed by Charlotte's Louis Asbury, Jr., it includes heavy neoclassical columns on the exterior, and inside a sweeping Colonial stair and elegant mantels of carved stone.⁸³

If 1915 was a turning point in attracting residents to Myers Park, it was also a banner year for landscape planning. In October of that year, Earle Sumner Draper from Boston got off a Southern Railway train and walked up dusty West Trade Street to begin a planning career that eventually covered the whole Southeast.⁸⁴ Draper had just graduated from what is now the University of Massachusetts with a degree in landscape architecture. His real interest was a field for which no degree was yet offered, what he termed Civic Art -- city planning. He began his career working for John Nolen as on-site supervisor in Myers Park, also spending a week a month directing work at the Nolen-designed industrial new town of Kingsport, Tennessee.

His first task that winter was the landscaping of several of the newly-built Myers Park houses, those of George Stephens, Z. V. Taylor, Charles Burkhalter, and David Ovens.⁸⁵ The Stephens Company, Draper recalled in 1971:

"purchased the shrubbery at cost and supplied the labor to the homeowner in carrying out the plans at actual cost so that a well-landscaped property that today might cost \$4,000 or \$5,000 could be accomplished for less than \$500 labor and materials. I remember prices on flowering shrubs were as low as 10¢ to 15¢ . . . evergreens, broadleaves were somewhat higher. I introduced a number of evergreens from Biltmore Nursery in Asheville, which were unknown at that time and have been in use ever since, including the colorful *Nandina, domestica*."⁸⁶

After the first projects, most of Draper's consulting took place before houses were built. Each lot buyer was "provided free a landscape plan showing a house with rooms best oriented to exposure, and the arrangement of driveways, walks, lawn areas, gardens, and planting."⁸⁷ Draper received \$75 per plan from the Stephens Company, "which at the time represented a fairly satisfactory professional fee."⁸⁸ When Draper left John Nolen's employ in 1917 to set up his own practice, the Stephens company with Nolen's approval continued using Draper.⁸⁹ About 1918, the success of the development evidently assured, the company ended its free lot plan service, "and from then on whatever arrangements I had were made with individual owners."⁹⁰

Draper's residential showplaces over the years included the Charles Lambeth house at Hermitage and Ardsley, and the J. S. Snyder mansion on Queens Road near Queens College. He was perhaps proudest of the design for the Henry McAden estate at 920 Granville Road. Behind the house is an Italian garden with brick walks, fountains, and shrubbery. The project was featured in *Southern Architect* magazine in 1924, and remains in good original condition today.⁹¹

In the winter of 1915-1916 Earle Draper began the project that first made his regional reputation, large scale tree moving.⁹² The wealthy J. B. Duke had taken an active interest in the development of Myers Park and offered "to send his foreman who handled many big trees on his New Jersey estate."⁹³ Draper and the foreman located ten to sixteen inch diameter water oaks and willow oaks out in the country, species chosen by Draper as "the best trees for street use and more resistant to disease than any of the other trees we could use."⁹⁴

Under the direction of the pair and Charlotte nurseryman Henry Harkey and son Lum Harkey, the trees were dug out, roots balled up, and eased onto special mule-drawn carts owned by the Stephens Company. Most of the labor gangs were black, and at least one veteran of the early planting force still works at the Harkey nursery today.⁹⁵ Draper remembered, "The common labor was paid about 10¢ an hour and I think the foreman about 25¢ to 35¢, and if I am not mistaken, a team of mules was about \$3.50 a day."⁹⁶

"Queens Road was the first site of the tree moving experiment and several of the other streets followed, particularly those streets that led from Queens Road towards the Taylor and Stephens residences."⁹⁷ Detailed records were kept, and several survive in the Draper papers at Cornell University. A "Tree Cost Sheet" for the two blocks of Hopedale between Queens Road West and Queens Road, dated December 1, 1916, gives an idea of the detail.⁹⁸ Fifty-four willow oaks with five to seven inch diameter trunks were moved up from the "Lower Belt Road." "Length of haul" was one-fourth mile, half over concrete road and half over clay. Draper's typed comments read, "Weather continually fair; labor conditions good after gang was organized for tree moving work; dirt dry and consequently hard digging--very good balls of earth secured. Pruning costs not included." To move the fifty-four trees cost a total of \$377.69, which broke down to \$6.99 per tree.

The tree moving made an immediate dramatic difference in the visual character of the neighborhood, as Draper showed in before-and-after photographs in his article "Transplanting Big Trees" in a 1919 issue of *The Garden Magazine*.⁹⁹ Mortality rate was extremely low. Nolen reported in 1927 that of one hundred large trees transplanted the first year only one had died.¹⁰⁰ Today in 1983 the trees are at full maturity, and continue to be an outstanding attribute of the neighborhood. The "head start" that they gave Myers Park is still evident. Irving Park in Greensboro, a Nolen design constructed at almost the same time as Myers Park but without tree moving, is today much less luxuriant than the Charlotte suburb.

By 1917 Earle Sumner Draper saw that there was much work in the Southeast for a landscape architect and city planner.¹⁰¹ With John Nolen's blessing he formed his own firm and took over Nolen's contract with the Stephens Company. This work in

Myers Park included not just residential landscaping and tree moving, but also revisions to the overall plan itself.

"The Myers Park development was developed with several blocks in the section put on record at a time..." Draper recalled, "Changes were possible in any parts of the plan that were not on record." ¹⁰² John Nolen's original plan had sketched the outlying portions of the development with very large lots, and as areas were platted, lot sizes were often decreased. This was in part a response to rising building costs in the period, especially a sharp inflationary spurt in 1920-21. ¹⁰³ Earle Draper continued this trend, in some cases rearranging streets to facilitate a broader mix of lot sizes.

Under Draper's direction, Bromley Road was extended from Queens Road to East Morehead Street, splitting one large block of big lots into two blocks of mid-sized parcels. ¹⁰⁴ Draper added Roswell Avenue with big lots along its west side, all overlooking the Myers Park Country Club until 1954 when a large section of its land was sold off for house lots. ¹⁰⁵ Hertford Road, Croydon Road, Westminster Place, and the first block of Westfield Road were added with small to midsized lots to balance Roswell.

Draper also added two major entrances to the suburb by 1921. East Morehead Street cut through from Dilworth to bridge Sugar Creek and join Queens Road. East Boulevard was extended from the same neighborhood to join Draper's newly-routed Queens Road West. Near the East Morehead entrance, across Sugar Creek from Myers Park proper, was what Draper calls "the first real suburban shopping center in Charlotte. There were about five or six stores on the south side of Morehead and everybody at that time wondered how in the world they could get stores to do a profitable business that far out of town." ¹⁰⁶ The complex was evidently developed by the Stephens Company. It still exists, heavily remodeled, at the corner of East Morehead Street and Romany Road.

By 1921 Draper had plans ready for a handful of other areas that were not officially put on record until late in the decade. ¹⁰⁷ These included Sherwood Avenue from Brandon Road to East Boulevard, Hastings Drive, and parts of Radcliffe and Wellesley avenues. Also on paper was his most important planning contribution to the neighborhood, the sweeping curve of Queens Road West between the East Boulevard entrance and Queens Road. Nolen had planned this section of boulevard with picturesque twists and turns, but Draper simplified it into a single memorable sweep. "I didn't feel that you wanted to introduce a curve . . . just for the sake of putting a curve in. You had to have some reason to." ¹⁰⁸

At the same time that Earle Sumner Draper was leaving his aesthetic stamp on the neighborhood, Myers Park was carrying out a political experiment. In 1919 the

community was incorporated as a village. A mayor and three commissioners were elected. C. Hundley Gover served as the first mayor, with Commissioners J. M. Henry, J. P. Little, and Dr. J. S. Clifford. They were succeeded in 1922 by Hunter S. Marshall, Jr., mayor, and A. C. Lee, Lewis Burwell, and R. L. Tate Commissioners.¹⁰⁹

"The town tax rate is 0," marveled the *Charlotte Observer* in July of 1922. "No tax is levied, no police and fire department maintained, no schools constructed. The Stephens Company has maintained the streets and sidewalks, with other incidental improvement expenses, up to this time."¹¹⁰ Paradise did not last long, however. At the next election, in 1924, the citizens of Myers Park voted to allow the city to annex the suburb, evidently in order to get city services.¹¹¹

The 1920s were a time of change for Myers Park. The decade saw a new influx of wealthy residents, especially members of the Carolina's leading textile families. It also saw development control pass from George Stephens and Earle Draper into other hands, who dedicated large areas of the suburb to middle-income house lots.

The changes began in the summer of 1922 when George Stephens, founder of Myers Park, announced he was leaving Charlotte for Asheville. Stephens had long had real estate and newspaper interests in the North Carolina mountain city, and now he wanted to focus his energies there "for reasons based on the welfare of my family in the matter of health."¹¹² He left the Stephens Company in the control of his hand-picked president, Thomas T. Allison, and founding partner, vice president A. J. Draper.¹¹³ Stephens retained his seats on the executive committee and the board of directors.

Stephens' departure had little immediate effect as long as A. J. Draper continued in the company leadership. About 1926 A. J. Draper left the vice-presidency and H. B. Heath came aboard as president with Allison continuing as vice president and general manager. At almost the same time the company switched civil engineers. The Charlotte civil engineering firm of Blair and Drane had since 1911 had the task of carrying out all of Nolen and Draper's plans. In 1926 Wilbur Smith took over the position.¹¹⁴ Smith evidently did his own design work, and with his hiring Myers Park's development was no longer guided by a professionally trained city planner/landscape architect.

In some respects Smith stuck by Draper's sketches. He platted the grand sweep of Queens Road West just as Draper had drawn it, complete with large house sites. Sherwood Avenue and Wellesley also followed Draper's design exactly. Smith built Norton Road in a very different route than Draper had suggested between Brandon

Road and Queens Road West, but in spirit it was much like what Draper had envisioned.

When it came to developing the big triangle of land between Queens and Providence stretching from Oxford to Briar Creek, however, Wilbur Smith and the new Stephens Company leadership departed radically from Nolen and Draper's plans. Smith laid out Beverly, Malvern, Hampton, and the final block of Sherwood in a tight pattern of small building lots. It was quite a break from the mid-sized parcels that Nolen and Draper had proposed and that adjoining residents had expected. Homeowners along Queens Road near Queens College were so angry that they sued the Stephens Company.¹¹⁵ The suit was unsuccessful and Myers Park development took a new turn.

While the 1920s saw an increasingly heavy emphasis on middle-income housing in the outlying undeveloped areas of Myers Park, the wealthiest families in the Piedmont Carolinas continued to build residences elsewhere in the neighborhood. The most important group to come in substantial numbers were members of the state's leading textile-producing families. Textile publisher David Clark had been one of Myers Park's first residents, and the neighborhood's Southern Power executives must have had close business relationships with the textile men who were their most important clients, but the textile people did not begin to move to Myers Park in earnest until the 1920s.

In 1921 textile magnate Benjamin B. Gossett bought an existing mansion at 923 Granville Road. Gossett was chief executive of the Chadwick-Hoskins mills with plants in the Thomasboro section of northwest Charlotte and in Pineville. In addition, he headed several South Carolina mills and later served as president of the American Cotton Manufacturers Association, an important trade organization.¹¹⁶ His rambling residence still stands, one of Myers Park's best Bungalow-influenced mansions.

The even more elegant residences of two subsequent textile families are now gone. The Robert Lassiter House, a farmhouse handsomely redone by Philadelphia architect Charles Barton Keen on a full-block site at the Myers Park gates, was demolished in the 1970s. Lassiter was married to Daisy Hanes of the powerful Winston-Salem textile family, and he served as general counsel to Hanes Mills for many years. 1982 saw demolition of a second large estate, that of R. Horace Johnston. His 1920s home, "Whitehall," was set in acres of Draper landscaping on Queens Road West near the center of the neighborhood. Johnston was the driving force in the development of North Charlotte around Johnston Mills, and his 1924 Johnston Building still towers above South Tryon Street in downtown Charlotte.

In 1928 Stuart Cramer, Jr., commissioned architect Martin Boyer to design a quaint Tudor Revival style residence at 200 Hermitage Road. Cramer was heir to Stuart Cramer, Sr., the pioneer designer of textile machinery whose papers are in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. Stuart Cramer, Jr., ran the family's mills at Cramerton for many years until they became part of Burlington Industries.

The following year Martin Cannon purchased the J. B. Duke mansion at the heart of Myers Park and hired Philadelphia architect Harry Lindeberg to update the interior.¹¹⁷ Cannon was the son of Cannon Mills founder Joseph Cannon and heir to part of his textile empire. The 1929 city directory listed him as President of the Carolina Textile Corporation and Davidson Mills, and through much of the 1920s he was also a top executive of the Southern Yarn Spinners Association, an early trade organization.

At about the same time Colonel LeRoy Springs built a mansion at 1242 Queens Road West, a dignified Georgian Colonial Revival design by Martin Boyer. Springs was a descendant of the same Mecklenburg plantation-owning family that had produced John Springs Myers. He was much more widely known, however. Colonel Springs founded the mammoth Springs Mills, in 1983 ranked among the 500 largest businesses in the United States.¹¹⁸

These textile leaders were joined by others, including members of the Pharr, Stowe, and Lineberger families. Charlotte had long been a major trade and distribution center for the textile industry in the Southeast. Now Myers Park emerged as the residential center for the textile leadership, leading even prestigious Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Along with the established utility and real estate/banking groups and the new textile families, other Charlotte power figures continued to build in Myers Park. Politician Cameron Morrison commissioned a residence at 1830 Queens Road on the corner of Radcliffe Avenue in 1919 on the eve of the decade. In 1921 he was elected Governor of North Carolina, and continued to use the Myers Park house through his term of office.¹¹⁹ J. L. Snyder, the city's Coca Cola executive, built an even finer estate nearby at 1901 Queens Road in 1920. The Georgian dwelling by Martin Boyer with grounds by Earle Sumner Draper has in recent years been used by Queens College as the Carol Hall dormitory, and is still an important visual element in the neighborhood.

Along with the already-set wealthy areas along Queens Road and the sidestreets near J. S. Myers Park, newly-constructed Sherwood Road between East Boulevard and Queens Road became a show-place of fine mansions in the 1920s and 1930s. Osmond Barringer's 1929 Colonial Revival residence by Charlotte architect William Peeps, set

in grounds planned by Philadelphia landscape architect J. Franklin Meehan, was one of these. Barringer was a colorful entrepreneur who sold the city's first automobiles, opened the predecessor of the Charlotte Motor Speedway, and dealt extensively in real estate, donating the city's Revolution Park and Barringer School sites.

In another Colonial mansion down the street at 2200 Sherwood lived a second noteworthy maverick. Gladys Tillett was a longtime champion of women's rights from the fight for the vote through the battle for an Equal Rights Amendment to the U. S. Constitution. She was a respected political leader who served as vice-chairperson of the national Democratic Party from 1940 to 1950, and was named by President John F. Kennedy as U. S. representative to the United Nations Status of Women Commission.

The predominant architecture of the 1920s and 1930s in Myers Park was the Colonial Revival. Its only major competitor was what has been called the Tudor Revival style, inspired by the age-old small-town buildings of England and France. Myers Park is unusually rich in examples this whimsical architecture, and is probably the finest showcase of the Tudor Revival in North Carolina.

Tudor houses come in all sizes from cottage to mansion. Perhaps the best small house in the neighborhood is at 2001 Sherwood Road near the East Boulevard entrance to the neighborhood, built for manufacturer's agent, Frank H. Ross in 1925. Designed by Martin Boyer, it is a fairy-tale hodgepodge of stuccoed wings, steep-pitched roofs, and small-paned windows. The Ross house is well known locally due to its prominent location, but in the period an even smaller Boyer design at Hermitage Court won national recognition. Boyer's 1921 design for physician D. Heath Nesbit was featured nationally in Architecture magazine as a good example of the Tudor Revival style.

The Tudor Revival was equally adaptable to large houses. One of the best was Earle Sumner Draper's own [1923 mansion](#) at 1621 Queens Road. Its brick and half-timbered design was by Franklin Gordon, who had introduced the style to Charlotte with his design of the E. C. Marshall mansion on Hermitage Road facing J. S. Myers Park in 1915. Architect William Peeps proved equally adept at the style, not surprising since he was a native of England. His 1928 mansion at 2038 Roswell Avenue for the Lethco family is a rambling combination of rustic textures, from brick, stucco and wood to rough stone. Dozens of other large Myers Park houses show some Tudor influence, as do a number of speculatively-built dwellings on the middle class 1920s sidestreets. Today there is scarcely a street in the neighborhood without a good example of the Tudor Revival.



E. S. Draper House

In addition to the new mansions, the decade of the 1920s also saw the founding of the Myers Park Country Club. Charlotte already had one established golf club, the 1910 Mecklenburg Country Club at the outer edge of what is today the Plaza-Midwood neighborhood, but by 1921 it was felt that the city was growing quickly enough to support a second. John Nolen had proposed that the southern edge of Myers Park along Sugar Creek be left as a greenway. The country club founders bought land in this area and northward to the corner of Queens Road and Roswell Avenue. Though not open to the general public, the area did at least remain parkland.

The Myers Park Country Club reinforced the neighborhood's prestigious image, for this was the era when golf was becoming America's most fashionable executive sport. Today the Club is still an important component of the neighborhood, though it has seen some physical changes over the decades. A large triangular section of fairway between Roswell and Queens Road East was sold for house lots in the 1950s. The present clubhouse by Charlotte builder William Isenhour was erected at the same time, replacing a smaller early structure.¹²²

In all, the 1920s saw the largest amount of building activity of any decade in Myers Park's history. It coincided with a nationwide building boom that began in the early 1920s and climaxed just before the Great Depression of 1929. Hundreds of Myers Park houses large and small date from the peak years of 1927 and 1928, and the preceding half-decade.

Before we move to the last decade of Myers Park development, it is worthwhile to assess John Nolen and Earle Draper's contribution to Charlotte, and to see what impact their work in Myers Park had on planning elsewhere in the United States. The initial Nolen portion of Myers Park, along with the Olmsted Brothers' work in Dilworth, forever changed Charlotte's concept of suburban planning. Curving tree-lined avenues instantly became the norm in Charlotte. Few major developments after 1911 used the old grid-street approach. Today this continues to be true, and many subdivisions even have a bit of grassy median at their entrances in conscious imitation of Queens Road.

The care lavished on Myers Park's original design has continued to pay off. In its earliest years, the neighborhood had many competitors trying to attract wealthy Charlotteans to the suburbs. When Myers Park opened in late 1911, South Boulevard in Dilworth was lined with fine new mansions, as was Elizabeth Avenue in Elizabeth and Central Avenue in Piedmont Park. To a lesser extent, East Boulevard and Morehead Street in Dilworth, Clement Avenue in Elizabeth, and The Plaza in Chatham Estates (now [Plaza-Midwood](#)) were also desirable suburban addresses for the well-to-do in the early 1910s.

Few of these streets have retained any desirability as residential areas. South Boulevard and Elizabeth Avenue are dreary commercial strips with almost no reminders of their once-proud past. A handful of houses remain on Central, Morehead, and more on East Boulevard, but they have largely lost their residential appeal. The early large residences on Clement and The Plaza are interspersed with small bungalows built when demand for the streets did not meet developers' hopes.

Only Myers Park, to a lesser extent and the Olmsted section of Dilworth, have steadily retained their original prestige. People who know nothing of its history want to live in Myers Park for its sheer beauty. It is no accident that developers with high density projects eagerly eye sites on Queens Road and ignore Elizabeth Avenue only a few blocks away. The area's long term success is a powerful economic argument for the lasting benefits of good and thorough planning.

Myers Park's high quality planning had wide impact throughout the Southeast. The neighborhood, with its high level of detail, its individual lot designs, and its on-site landscape architect, was evidently only the second such "unified suburb" in the region. Baltimore's Roland Park by the Olmsted firm in 1891 was the region's first experiment with curving streets and detailed planning.¹²³ Atlanta, Georgia, followed Baltimore's example in 1892-93 and brought Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., south to provide suggestions for Inman Park and drawings for Druid Hills.¹²⁴ The Atlanta designs were apparently less thoroughly detailed than Roland Park, however, perhaps similar in scope to the Olmsteds' later work in Dilworth in Charlotte.

The detail lavished on Myers Park was unusual in the nation as a whole, as well as in the Southeast. Only a handful of projects could be cited as comparable, according to Nolen: Roland Park, Baltimore, and Forest Hills, Long Island, both by the Olmsted firm; Kansas City's Country Club District; Twin Peaks outside San Francisco; Palos Verdes near Los Angeles; and the San Jose suburb of Jacksonville, Florida.¹²⁵ Nolen was perhaps biased, but scholars today would add no more than a dozen other pre-1911 examples.¹²⁶

The Myers Park design had widespread impact on urban design in the Southeast. The project was heavily publicized in the Charlotte newspapers, read not only by Charlotteans but also by newspaper editors and civic leaders throughout the region. Nolen and Draper both talked extensively about the neighborhood in national magazines, books, and lectures.¹²⁶ *New Towns For Old*, for instance, John Nolen's 1927 treatise on the new concepts of urban planning, devoted an entire chapter to Myers Park as the model of suburban design. The project attracted many visitors and they often returned home to copy what they had seen. Earle Draper remembered in 1982, "Because Myers Park was so noted -- there's nothing like it in Atlanta, nothing in any Southern city comparable to it -- people from all over the South would come to me and say, 'I've got some property. Can you do a development like Myers Park for us, lay it out?'" It was known everywhere.¹²⁷

Myers Park played a formative role in Earle Draper's career, in addition to providing him with a stream of clients. While a student at Amherst he had worked two summers with Midwestern planner A. D. Taylor, but Myers Park was his first full-scale experience at what was to be his life's calling.¹²⁸ Myers Park's restrictive deed covenants taught him the importance of land-use controls. Its tree-lined winding streets were a practical application of the Olmstedian principles he had learned in school.

In private practice between 1917 and 1933 he planned nearly one hundred suburbs and over one hundred and fifty mill villages and mill village extensions all over the South.¹²⁹ Among his designs were Charlotte's [Eastover](#), High Point's Emorywood, and Knoxville's Sequoyah Hills, plus mill villages for Arkay Mills in Gastonia, Firestone Rubber at Silvertown, Georgia, and Johnson and Johnson at Chicopee, Georgia. None directly copied Myers Park's streetplan, of course, but all followed its example in fitting streets to the topography, providing trees and parks, and limiting access to the development to a few entrances. Draper later went on to direct planning at the Tennessee Valley Authority in its formative first decade, and was subsequently a top official at the Federal Housing authority, carrying lessons learned in Myers Park to the national level.

Myers Park was an important stepping stone in John Nolen's career as well. Independence Park in Charlotte was Nolen's first civic commission, and Myers Park seems to have been his first chance to try his suburban planning ideas on a large scale. By the time Nolen prepared the Myers Park designs, he was already emerging as a nationally significant planner. He went on to become one of the United States' half-dozen top planners, with over 400 projects to his credit.¹³⁰ Nolen was especially important in the development of city planning as a professional activity. In 1917, at the same time that he was expanding Myers Park greenways and boulevards into a Charlotte city plan, John Nolen helped found the American Institute of City Planners (now the American Planning Association). It was city planning's first professional organization.

A concrete illustration of the ways in which Nolen and Draper carried Myers Park concepts to later projects may be found in Nolen's planning for Queens College in the heart of the neighborhood., Nolen recommended that the first five campus buildings be arranged to form an "H". This arrangement created two quadrangles, one between the lower legs of the "H," facing Selwyn Avenue, and the other between the upper legs. The proposal was carried out, and the front quadrangle between Burwell Hall and Selwyn Avenue and the rear quadrangle behind Burwell became the key spatial features of the campus. Other proposals by Nolen for later expansion, including additional dormitories, and a chapel as the focus of the rear quadrangle, were not realized, but the double-quadrangle effect remains strong today.

John Nolen took the double-quadrangle idea developed at Queens College and applied it to at least two subsequent North Carolina campus plans. In 1915 he was asked to design a major expansion of Davidson College north of Charlotte.¹³¹ His drawings proposed a new quadrangle space behind the main building, Chambers Hall, matching a less well-defined existing space in front. Little of this plan was implemented at the time, but the idea Nolen planted has eventually flowered in the last decade. Today a new library behind Chambers creates a second quadrangle much like the one proposed in 1915.

In 1918 John Nolen used the Queens College double-quadrangle concept once again.¹³² The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was contemplating a new building program, and George Stephens, Nolen's Myers Park patron and a Chapel Hill alumnus, arranged for the Boston designer to draw the new campus plan. The University already had a roughly-defined quadrangle around the Old Well, bounded by the Old South, Old East, and Old West buildings and Franklin Street. Nolen suggested that some new buildings be placed to reinforce the edges of this space. Back behind Old South he proposed a second quadrangle. Today the UNC campus looks almost exactly as Nolen envisioned it. Wilson Library dominates Nolen's second quadrangle space, completing an idea first developed in Myers Park.

Early in his career Charlotte real estate man E. C. Griffith had worked as a Myers Park subdeveloper under George Stephens, developing inexpensive Bungalows along Dartmouth Place. Griffith eventually joined the Stephens Company and, as the leadership of the company shifted after the founder's departure, Griffith rose in the organization. By the mid 1930s, Griffith was in control. ¹³³

In 1936, E.C. Griffith hired young Charlotte engineer Alse V. Blankenship to replace retiring Wilbur Smith as civil engineer in charge of Myers Park expansion. ¹³⁴ Trained in engineering at Auburn University, Blankenship became Charlotte's most prolific suburban planner from the 1930s into the 1950s, and he took pride in personally creating the street pattern of developments he oversaw. ¹³⁵ With Blankenship's hiring, the Stephens Company discarded the plans that John Nolen and Earle Sumner Draper had drawn for Myers Park. No longer was a trained landscape architect involved in the neighborhood's design.

Post-1935 development -- the completion of the original 1220 acre Myers Park -- consisted almost entirely of relatively small lots for middle-income home buyers. Through public contributions, the Charlotte Lions Club purchased the land for Freedom Park and deeded it to the city, but other areas long earmarked for park space were instead platted for house lots. ¹³⁶ Most of the long banks of Sugar Creek, which Nolen had set aside as a greenway, became the route of Kings Drive with houses hiding the creek. Even the design of Kings Drive itself, a straight, flat, highway, was a sharp break from the curving avenues of the early development.

Blankenship and Griffith broke with another of the neighborhood's basic concepts when they at long last completed the Queens Road boulevard loop in 1945. ¹³⁷ Queens Road east followed a route close to what Earle Draper had drawn, but instead of elegant tree-lined twin roadways with a grassy median, the road narrowed to become an ordinary two-lane minor street with no center planting strip.

In addition to doing Kings Drive and the last section of Queens Road, Blankenship laid out Chilton, Hampton, Portland and Sterling, all near the southern end of the neighborhood. He also completed Brunswick, Ardsley, Coniston, Hopedale, Maryland, Norton, Wellesley and Westfield. Today these streets are largely occupied by one story Suburban Rambler style houses from around the 1950s.

In 1953 the Stephens Company put its last few parcels of land up for auction and went out of business. ¹³⁸ Not surprisingly the E. C. Griffith Company purchased much of the undeveloped land. Today the Griffith Company remains active in the area, in new offices on Brunswick Avenue.

In the early 1960s, on the heels of the official "completion" of the neighborhood, Myers Park began its most critical fight since J. S. Myers had first sought to lure residents out to the suburb. In 1962 Charlotte passed its first comprehensive zoning ordinance.¹³⁹ The period was the heyday of the automobile and the ever-outward suburban dream. Charlotte's citizen planning commissioners believed that no one would ever again want to live near downtown or in the earliest suburban ring.

The 1962 zoning plan blithely zoned large sections of Myers Park and adjoining suburbs for multifamily high-rise, office, and commercial development. In Myers Park the areas considered disposable were precisely those first planned by John Nolen, his fine landscaping just reaching maturity. All of the large houses lining Queens Road from the gates to Queens College, and all the middle-class Bungalows on Dartmouth Road, Hermitage Court, Moravian Lane, Henley Place, and much of Bromley Road were zoned for destruction.

The zoning came at a crucial point in the lifecycle of the neighborhood. Myers Park's first-generation residents and their immediate heirs were reaching the ends of their lives. As owners died and houses came on the market, younger couples were discouraged from buying by the new zoning. Instead, real estate speculators bought up houses with an eye to profits from eventual redevelopment. The potential for more intensive land use drove up prices, a second factor discouraging young families. The speculators often rented out the fine old residences with minimum upkeep, allowing them to run down until time was ripe for demolition. By the end of the decade Myers Park's oldest residential streets were beginning to look a bit frayed around the edges, and it came almost as a relief when the first few apartment buildings began popping up along Queens Road.

However, not everyone was willing to abandon what had not long before been touted as "the finest suburban area south of Baltimore." In October, 1971, residents formed the Myers Park Homeowners Association, one of the city's first strong neighborhood organizations.¹⁴⁰ In an area that still held many Charlotte professionals, lawyers, and upper income citizens, the MPRA had no trouble raising funds or getting expert legal help. Despite these built-in strengths, the MPRA faced a long-shot battle. It was fighting the city's entrenched real estate interests, who had long had great influence in city government.

In 1973 the MPHA petitioned to rezone most of the affected parcels to their existing single-family use. Any properties already being used for multi-family or office would be allowed to remain. The Charlotte Planning Commission, after exhaustive study, strongly recommended that City Council approve the change. The Council quickly voted down the request, however, as the real estate interests skillfully used their

power. "Money Talked in Battle Over Rezoning," headlined a lengthy *Charlotte Observer* article tracing the circumstances behind the vote. ¹⁴¹

In turn, the Homeowners stepped up their pressure. When the petition came before Council again in 1976 after a mandatory two year wait, the Association won a partial victory. ¹⁴² Henley, Bromley, Hermitage, Moravian, and Dartmouth were to revert to single family, along with some parts of Queens Road.

The rezoning helped stabilize the neighborhood, and even increased property values, as families began buying and renovating the old houses. Today the future of the neighborhood is far from secure, however. Much of Queens Road in the heart of Myers Park remains zoned for high density redevelopment. The city zoning board has also been willing to alter zoning for developers who want to demolish houses on large lots elsewhere in the neighborhood. This possibility has encouraged a few sellers to request unrealistically high prices for their houses, confident that when no single-family buyer can be found, they will be allowed to sell to a high-density builder. Since this survey was begun in 1981, Myers Park has lost its largest estate, the R. Horace Johnston mansion on Queens Road West, plus a half dozen houses on Queens Road and some of the suburb's earliest Bungalows along Amherst Place.

It is important that this demolition stop if Myers Park is to retain its historic significance. John Nolen and Earle Draper's unified suburban design was apparently the first such carefully detailed plan to be carried out south of Maryland, and it was widely copied throughout the region. Myers Park is an area that has, against the odds, remained a desirable residential area, a fact due largely to the quality of its design. The fine houses and grounds, set back from the street under the spreading trees, were as much a part of the planners' "unified design" as were the streets and parks. Replacing even a few residences, whether mansion-or bungalow, with bigger condominiums surrounded by parking lots and small lawns destroys this unity. Myers Park's beauty is a much-loved part of Charlotte, and its planning is of wide historic significance. It is a neighborhood worth preserving.

Notes

¹ John Nolen, *New Towns for Old: Achievements in Civic Improvement in Some American Small Towns and Neighborhoods* (Boston: Marshall Jones, 1927), pp. 100-110.

² John L. Hancock, *John Nolen: a Bibliographical Record of Achievement* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, Program in Urban and Regional Studies, 1969), pp. 13-17.

³ Earle Sumner Draper, interview with Earle Sumner Draper, Jr., on behalf of the Myers Park Homeowners Association, at Vero Beach, Florida, June, 1971. Transcript in the collection of the archives of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina. *Who's Who in the South and Southwest*, V. 2 (Chicago: A. N. Marquis Company, 1950), p. 271.

⁴ *Ibid.* See also Kay Haire Huggins, "Town Planning in the New South: the Work of Earle S. Draper, 1915-1933," an unpublished paper presented at The Citadel conference on The New South, Charleston, South Carolina, 1978.

⁵ Katherine Wooten Springs, *The Squires of Springfield* (Charlotte: William Loftin, 1965), p. 85.

⁶ Mary Myers Dwelle, *William Raeford Myers* (Charlotte: privately published, 1971). Inez Moore Parker, *The Biddle-Johnson C. Smith University Story* (Charlotte: Charlotte Publishing, 1975), p. 5.

⁷ Springs, pp. 22-23.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17. "Adam Alexander Springs" vertical file in the Carolina Room, Charlotte Public Library.

⁹ Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office, book 11, p. 13. Title search of Myers property courtesy of Mrs. Doris Briscoe of Charlotte.

¹⁰ Newspaper articles in "Myers Park" vertical file in the Carolina Room, Charlotte Public Library. "By direct descent (the) plantation became the property of Mr. J. S. Myers. In 1870 he built the old house facing the park. Many of the old landmarks of "Befo' De War" are still standing. The rows of whitewashed cabins remain as silent witnesses of bygone days," 11/3/1911. This old "Myers Quarter", near present-day Hermitage Road, was demolished shortly after the article appeared.

¹¹ "Myers Park" vertical file.

¹² Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office, Book 6, p. 573; Book 7, p. 633; Book 9, p. 54; Book 10, pp. 71-72; Book 13, pp. 200, 285; Book 18, p. 57; Book 37, p. 256; Book 48, p. 1; Book 77, pp. 144, 168; Book 132, p. 112; Book 140, p. 213. Information courtesy of Doris Briscoe.

¹³ Butler and Spratt, Map of Charlotte Township..... 1892. Copies are in the collections of the Mint Museum of History and the City of Charlotte Historic District Commission.

¹⁴ The long narrow tenant plots are delineated on the Butler and Spratt map, on both sides of Providence Road. According to research by UNCC student Philip Starnes in 1981, some people still remember the farmers: "Adolf Carl (Thies) built the house at 619 Moravian Lane. Before the house was built an old tenant house was located on the site. A black family named Stitt last occupied the tenant house. Mrs. Ernestine Thies Wall recalled that the house was wall-papered with news and funny papers." The long narrow shape of the plots undoubtedly influenced the straight streets and long blocks of Moravian Lane, Altondale Avenue, Fenton Place, Middleton Drive, Perrin Place, and Huntley Place. Comparison of old maps indicates that each occupies one or two former tenant farms.

¹⁵ *Charlotte Observer*, December 15, 1943.

¹⁶ *Charlotte News*, June 11, 1904, p. 6.

¹⁷ "Myers Park" vertical file. "The house was on a spot now used as a garage on the premises of A. J. Draper (originally the George Stephens House, 821 Harvard Place) directly behind the residence of H. M. Wade."

¹⁸ "Myers Park" vertical file. Myers donated the property January 15, 1919. 1983 tax records show that the park is still owned by the Myers Park Civic Commission.

¹⁹ Butler and Spratt.

²⁰ Ibid. United States Geological Survey, 1905, 1:62,500 series, North Carolina-South Carolina: . Charlotte Quadrangle. The USGS map is in the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

²¹ *Charlotte Observer*, December 15, 1943.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid. F. C. Abbott, "Fifty Years in Charlotte Real Estate, 1897-1947" (Charlotte: privately published. 1947?). p. 8.

²⁵ Abbott, p. 9. W. R. Myers' roughly triangular tract may be seen on the Butler and Spratt map dated 1892. The current oddly-angled Street pattern, including Louise and Jackson, was obviously drawn to follow Myers' property lines.

²⁶ *Charlotte News*, February 2, 1904; March 8, 1904. See also Dan L. Morrill, "Independence Park: Survey and Research Report" (Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 1977).

²⁷ Morrill, "Independence Park. . ."

²⁸ Ibid. "Draft of Preliminary Finding Guide: Papers of John Nolen, Sr., 1869-1937," collection #2903, Cornell University Department of Manuscripts and Archives, Ithaca, New York. The "Finding Guide" includes a copy of Nolen's "Job list" showing all his projects in chronological order. John L. Hancock, "John Nolen and the American City Planning Movement: a History of Culture Change and Community Response, 1900-1940" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1964), p. 42. Hancock writes that Charlotte represented Nolen's "first real breakthrough to civic work, for thanks to the recommendation of (Harvard) President Eliot and several professors he was made advisor to Charlotte's Park and Tree Commission. . . . Nolen was allowed to forego his final exams in order to begin the Charlotte work, but he hurried home in late June to receive his Masters of Arts degree from Harvard, at a commencement attended by President Theodore Roosevelt."

²⁹ Hancock, "John Nolen and the American City Planning Movement. p. 42. For a list of Stephens-sponsored projects see the section in the current essay on "Charlotte's Neighborhood Planning Tradition."

³⁰ *Charlotte Observer*, December 15, 1943.

³¹ Ibid. Abbott, pp. 10-12, 15. The American Trust skyscraper burned in 1922.

³² *Charlotte Observer*, December 15, 1943.

³³ D. R. Reynolds, "Business, Finance and Industry," in D. R. Reynolds, Ed., *Charlotte Remembers* (Charlotte: Community Publishing Company, 1972), p. 153. ". . . in 1957 the American Trust Company merged with Commercial National Bank to form the American Commercial Bank. American Commercial Bank merged with Security National Bank of Greensboro In 1960 to become NCNB."

³⁴ Dan. L. Morrill and Nancy B. Thomas, "[Myers Park](#)," in the New South Neighborhoods brochure series (Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 1981).

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office, Records of Corporations, Book 3, pp. 215,333. See also Book 4, p. 407; Book 7, p. 310; Book 10, p. 152; Book 12, p. 495, Book 18, p. 591; Book 4, p. 205.

³⁷ *Charlotte Observer*, December, 15, 1943.

³⁸ Ibid. LeGette Blythe and Charles R. Brockman, *Hornets' Nest: the Story of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County* (Charlotte: McNally of Charlotte, 1961), p. 251.

³⁹ Blythe and Brockman, pp. 306, 308.

⁴⁰ Earle Sumner Draper, interview with Earle Sumner Draper, Jr., based on questions written by Thomas W. Hanchett, at Vero Beach, Florida, March, 1982. Also, Earle Sumner Draper, interview with Thomas W. Hanchett, at Vero Beach, Florida, August, 1982.

⁴¹ Joe Maynor, *Duke Power: the First Seventy-Five Years* (Charlotte: Duke Power Company, 1979), p. 27. Lee's grandson is Duke Power president today.

⁴² *Charlotte News*, June 10, 1911, p. 1.

⁴³ The transaction took place November 28, 1911. Information courtesy of UNCC student John Luddy, "Research Project: 239 Colonial Avenue, Charlotte, NC" a paper presented to Dr. Dan Morrill, History 349, Winter 1981. The tract was only one of Watkins' holdings. It may be seen on the Butler and Spratt Map of Charlotte Township..... 1892.

⁴⁴ Nolen, *New Towns for Old. . .*, p. 100.

⁴⁵ *Manufacturers Record*, July 4, 1912.

⁴⁶ *Manufacturers Record*, November 3, 1921. This writer was E. S. Draper, but the previous assessment was by a presumably unbiased correspondent named Louis Spencer.

⁴⁷ Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office, Book 465, p. 444; Book 402, p. 57. Information courtesy of UNCC students Cindy Patricia Lawler and Becky Coon.

Luddy's paper on 239 Colonial Avenue, mentioned above, indicates that the minimum house cost for that street earlier in the decade was \$2,000.

⁴⁸ "Revised Sketch of Stores Group," March 1912, in map case at the Nolen collection, Cornell University. *Manufacturers Record*, July 4, 1912. Mildred Morse McEwen, *Queens College Yesterday and Today* (Charlotte: Queens College Alumnae Association, 1980), p. 86.

⁴⁹ McEwen, p. 83. Presbyterian College for Women changed its name to Queens College on February 24, 1913. The name was chosen to honor the college's colonial predecessor, The Queens Museum. The decision was made to avoid confusion with other Presbyterian schools, and "to disarm prejudice."

⁵⁰ For pre-existing roads see the Butler and Spratt map.

⁵¹ Nolen, *New Towns for Old. . .*, p. 101.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁵³ Cynthia Zaitzevsky, *Frederick Law Olmsted and the Boston Park System* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 109-116.

⁵⁴ *Charlotte News*, February 5, 1982; March 12, 1982.

⁵⁵ See Nolen's 1911 map of the suburb, in Nolen, *New Towns for Old. . .*, p. 102. The map is reprinted in the Morrill and Thomas "Myers Park" brochure. Draper mentioned the playground in his interview with Draper, Jr., June, 1971.

⁵⁶ See Nolen's 1911 plan. Hope for implementation was alive as late as 1921 when Draper wrote of the suburb, "Natural features such as ravines and borders of streams are reserved as parkways and planted for future development as part of the park system of Charlotte," *Manufacturers Record*, November 3, 1921.

⁵⁷ John Nolen, "Civic Survey, Charlotte, North Carolina: Report to the Chamber of Commerce" (Cambridge, Massachusetts; typescript, 1917). The only known surviving copy is in John Nolen's papers at Cornell University.

⁵⁸ Nolen's 1911 plan shows pre-existing tree clusters.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Nolen, *New Towns for Old. . .*, pp. 103-104.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ "Planting Plan for Parking Strips on Queens Road E. and W., Myers Park, Charlotte, November 1916," plan #7-3, map case, Nolen collection, Cornell.

⁶⁴ *Charlotte Observer*, August 29, 1912, quoted in Dan L. Morrill, "Myers Park Streetcar Waiting Stations: Survey and Research Report" (Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 1980). The *Charlotte Observer* gave great attention to the creation of Myers Park, in part because Stephens and Wood owned a major interest in the paper from 1912 through 1916; *Charlotte Observer*, December 15, 1943.

⁶⁵ Morrill, "Myers Park Streetcar Waiting Stations. . .". See also Nolen, *New Towns for Old. . .*, p. 109.

⁶⁶ *Charlotte Observer*, October 10, 1912. *Manufacturers Record*, July 4, 1912. "Historic Properties in Charlotte-Mecklenburg" brochure (Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 1982).

⁶⁷ "Draft of Preliminary Finding Guide. . ." A number of the drawings have been copied and are in the collection of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission. Included are the estates of Hunter Marshall (1916), E. C. Marshall (1916), H. M. McAden (1916), Isac Hardeman (1916), C. H. Gover (1916), V. J. Guthrie (1916), Charles Moody (1914), H. C. Sherrill/F. M. Simmons (1916, on Queens Road), Locke Sloop (191?), H. M. Wade (191?), A. V. Harrill (191?), John Little/E. O. Anderson/Jerimiah Goff (1915), Walter Lambeth (1917), Mrs. J. M. Jamison (191?).

⁶⁸ Nolen, *New Towns for Old. . .*, p. 107.

⁶⁹ *Manufacturers Record*, July 4, 1912. See also Morrill, "Myers Park Streetcar Waiting Stations. . ."

⁷⁰ Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office, map book 230.

⁷¹ *Manufacturers Record*, July 4, 1912.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Manufacturers Record*, November 3, 1921.

⁷⁵ Data on individual houses in this essay were developed by inventorying structures extant in 1982, then determining their date of construction through city water permit records (for structures built before the mid-1920s) and city directories (for structures from the mid-1920s onward). Dates are accurate to within two years: water permits were taken out as construction was beginning, while directories did not include a house usually until it was already occupied. Only one house is known to have had a well, delaying hook-up, but it is possible that one or two other dates could be incorrect on this account. Biographical information comes from the directories, the vertical files of the Carolina Room of the Charlotte Public Library, Blythe and Brockman's *Hornets' Nest*. . ., and the files of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, except as noted. Properties for which the Commission has prepared "Survey and Research Reports" are footnoted.

⁷⁶ William H. Huffman, "[The John Jamison House: Survey and Research Report](#)" (Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 1981).

⁷⁷ William H. Huffman, "The Howard Madison Wade House: Survey and Research Report" (Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 1983).

⁷⁸ William H. Peeps, A. I. A., *Architect*, Charlotte, NC, 1928 (Charlotte: News Printing House, 1928).

⁷⁹ William H. Huffman, "The Charles Moody House: Survey and Research Report" (Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 1981).

⁸⁰ Maynor, pp. 93, 120.

⁸¹ Dan L. Morrill, "Lynnwood, the James B. Duke Mansion: Survey and Research Report" (Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 1977).

⁸² *Charlotte Observer*, April 11, 1983.

⁸³ Thomas R. Neukom, "The McAden House," a paper presented to Dr. Dan Morrill, UNCC, 1981.

⁸⁴ See the section of this report entitled "Charlotte's Neighborhood Planning Tradition."

⁸⁵ Draper, interview with Draper, Jr., June, 1971.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ *Southern Architect*, July 1924.

⁹² For a contemporary article on the project see *The Garden Magazine*, November 1919.

⁹³ Draper, interview with Draper, Jr., June 1971.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Former Myers Park construction hand Elva Alexander is now 80 years old, in good memory, and still employed by the Harkey Nursery according to nursery clerk Miriam Parker, telephone interview with Thomas W. Hanchett, June, 1983.

⁹⁶ Draper, interview with Draper, Jr., June 1971.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ "Tree Cost Sheet," box 23, Nolen Collection, Cornell University.

⁹⁹ *The Garden Magazine*, November 1919.

¹⁰⁰ Nolen, *New Towns for Old*. . . , p. 105.

¹⁰¹ Draper, interview with Draper, Jr., June 1971.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Draper, interview with Hanchett, August 1982.

¹⁰⁴ My understanding of the development sequence of Myers Park is based on plat maps filed at the Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office, supported by interviews with Draper and Mrs. A. V. Blankenship. Nolen's 1911 plan, and a map published by the Myers Park Homes Company entitled "Proposed General Plan of

Myers Park, Charlotte, N.C., The Stephens Company Owner, June 1921," in the collection of the Myers Park Homeowners Association.

¹⁰⁵ Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office, map book 7, p. 79; map book 8, page 207.

¹⁰⁶ Draper, interview with Draper, Jr., June 1971.

¹⁰⁷ "Proposed General Plan of Myers Park . . . 1921."

¹⁰⁸ Draper, interview with Hanchett, August 1982.

¹⁰⁹ *Charlotte Observer*, July 2, 1922.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Charlotte News*, February 24, 1924. Blythe and Brockman, p. 299.

¹¹² *Charlotte Observer*, July 2, 1922.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* See also city directories.

¹¹⁴ Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office, map book 332, p. 492, November 1926, is the first of many plats under Smith's name.

¹¹⁵ Earle Sumner Draper, Jr., interview with Thomas W. Hanchett, at Charlotte, North Carolina, June 1982.

¹¹⁶ *Who's Who in the South and Southwest*, v. 1. (Chicago: Larkin, Roosevelt and Larkin, Ltd., 1947), p. 564.

¹¹⁷ Davyd Foard Hood, telephone Interview with Thomas W. Hanchett, June 1983. Hood is Survey Specialist with the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. Lindeberg, incidentally, designed ex-governor Cameron Morrison's [Morrocroft](#) estate near the city at about the same time.

¹¹⁸ *Fortune Magazine*, 107:7 (May 1983), pp. 226-254.

¹¹⁹ When he returned to Charlotte he sold the Queens Road mansion and built the rambling rural estate of Morrocroft. See Dan L. Morrill, "Morrocroft: Survey and Research Report" (Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 1979).

¹²⁰ *Charlotte Observer*, April 7, 1977.

¹²¹ Robert Templar, interviewed by Thomas W. Hanchett, at Charlotte, North Carolina, January 1982. Templar is assistant general manager of the Myers Park Country Club.

¹²² Robert A. M. Stern, ed., *The Anglo-American Suburb*, in the *Architectural Design Profile* series (London: Architectural Design, 1981), p. 39.

¹²³ Kermit B. Marsh, ed., *The American Institute of Architects Guide to Atlanta* (Atlanta, Atlanta Chapter of the A.I.A., 1975), pp. 15-16, 105-109.

¹²⁴ Nolen, *New Towns for Old*. . . , p. 100.

¹²⁵ Stern's list of notable pre-1911 suburbs includes: Llewellyn Park, West Orange, New Jersey, 1853; Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, 1854; Lake Forest, Chicago, 1856; Riverside, Chicago, 1869; Garden City, New York, 1869; Short Hills, New Jersey, 1874; Rochelle Park, New York, 1885; Bronxville, New York, 1892; Prospect Park, Brooklyn, 1899.

¹²⁶ Some titles of publications spotlighting Myers Park and ideas developed there include: E. S. Draper, "High Type of Suburban Development Carried Out at Charlotte," *Manufacturers Record*, November 1921; E. S. Draper, "Developing Land for Residential Use - What to Do and What Not to Do," *Realty*, December 1917; E. S. Draper, "Transplanting Big Trees," *The Garden Magazine*, November 1919; "A Landscape Artist a Concept of Subdivisions," *National Real Estate Journal*, January 1926; E. S. Draper, "A Garden for the Country House of the South," *Southern Architect*, October, 1924; Alfred Muller, "Myers Park, Charlotte, N.C., Southern Suburb of Character - The Stephens Company," *The Wildwood Magazine*, Spring 1915; John Nolen et al., "Town Planning Actualities: Some Recently Executed Improvement Schemes in American Small Towns," *Review of Reviews*, December 1920; John Nolen, *New Towns for Old*. . . , 1927; J. L. Spencer, "A Unique Suburban Development," *Manufacturers Record*, July 1912.

¹²⁷ Draper, interview with Hanchett, August 1982.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ For more on Draper's career see the section of this report entitled "Charlotte's Neighborhood Planning Tradition."

¹³⁰ *Ibid.* for more on Nolen's career.

¹³¹ "Davidson College Campus Plan: General Plan of Campus and New Quadrangle" in the "negative list" in box 1 of the Nolen collection at Cornell. See also Davidson folder in box 72.

¹³² Hancock, *John Nolan: a Bibliographical Record*. . ., p. 20.

¹³³ Todd and E. C. Griffith, Jr., interview with Thomas W. Hanchett, Charlotte, NC, August 1983.

¹³⁴ The first Myers Park plat map filed with Blankenship's name at the Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office is in Map Book 4, p. 89. See also Mrs. A. V. Blankenship, interview with Thomas W. Hanchett, at Charlotte, North Carolina, June 1982.

¹³⁵ Mrs. Blankenship, interview with Hanchett, June 1982.

¹³⁶ *Charlotte News*, March 14, 1945; March 17, 1945.

¹³⁷ Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Office, map book 7, p. 79.

¹³⁸ *Mecklenburg Times*, January 15, 1953.

¹³⁹ Charlotte's first zoning map was drawn in 1947 and an updated one appeared in 1954. In 1962 a new map was created which governed policy for nearly twenty years, and it strongly encouraged redevelopment of Myers Park and other early areas. All are on file at the Charlotte Planning Commission.

¹⁴⁰ Bill Hodges, telephone interview with Thomas W. Hanchett, May 1983. Hodges is 1983 president of the Myers Park Homeowners Association.

¹⁴¹ *Charlotte Observer*, March 24, 1974.

¹⁴² *Charlotte News*, April 11, 1980.

MYERS PARK

Significant Structures and Sites

| |
|--------------------------|
| DAVID OVENS HOUSE |
|--------------------------|

| |
|-------------|
| 1916 |
|-------------|

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|-------------------------|
| 825 Ardsley Road |
|-------------------------|

David Ovens was president of the Iveys department store chain. He was also a major civic booster for whom Ovens Auditorium is named. The house is in the straightforward Rectilinear style. The original landscaping was by Earle Sumner Draper for the John Nolen firm.

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| <u>E. B. GRESHAM HOUSE</u> |
|-----------------------------------|

| |
|-------------|
| 1926 |
|-------------|

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|--------------------------|
| 724 Edgehill Road |
|--------------------------|



Edwin and Nettie Gresham owned a cafe and their son E. B., Jr., was a lawyer. Their stone house is an excellent example of the Bungalow style with bevelled glass windows and a curving roof that was meant to imitate thatch.

| |
|----------------------------------|
| <u>H. M. McADEN HOUSE</u> |
|----------------------------------|

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|-------------|
| 1917 |
|-------------|

| |
|---------------------------|
| 920 Granville Road |
|---------------------------|



Henry McAden was president of Charlotte's First National Bank. Later owners included members of the Belk and Ivey department store families. The present owner is David McConnell, former U. S. Ambassador to the United Nations Social and Economic Council.

The imposing design is by M.I.T.-trained architect Louis Asbury of Charlotte. It features neoclassical columns on the exterior, while inside there are massive carved stone mantels and a sweeping Colonial Revival grand stair. The Italian gardens to the rear are well preserved, one of Earle Sumner Draper's best early designs.

| |
|-------------------------------------|
| <u>LAMBETH-GOSSETT HOUSE</u> |
|-------------------------------------|

| |
|-------------|
| 1916 |
|-------------|

| |
|---------------------------|
| 923 Granville Road |
|---------------------------|



Real estate speculator A. D. Glascock, an active early Myers Park developer, evidently had this house built for resale. The first owner-occupant was another real estate man, Charles Lambeth, who later served as Charlotte mayor. In 1921 textile and banking leader Benjamin B. Gossett purchased the mansion. He headed Charlotte's Chadwick-Hoskins Mills and was vice-president of George Stephens' American Trust Company. He was also president of half a dozen South Carolina textile concerns and served as president of the Southern Yarn Spinners Association and the American Cotton Manufacturers Association. He lived in this house until his death in the 1950's, when his will indicated he was worth nearly a million dollars.

The large, rambling house is a rustic mix of Shingle Style and Bungalow influences. Note the wide, bracketed eaves.

| |
|---------------------------|
| NORMAN COCKE HOUSE |
|---------------------------|

| |
|-------------|
| 1914 |
|-------------|

| |
|--------------------------|
| 816 Harvard Place |
|--------------------------|

Norman Cocke was president of Mill Power Supply when he moved from the Elizabeth neighborhood into this fine house. Cocke was the first of the electric utility executives to come to Myers Park. He later served as vice-president of Duke Power, and today Lake Norman, north of the city, is named for him. His wood-shingled house is a good example of the rustic Bungalow style.

| |
|------------------------------|
| GEORGE STEPHENS HOUSE |
|------------------------------|

| |
|-------------|
| 1915 |
|-------------|

| |
|--------------------------|
| 821 Harvard Place |
|--------------------------|



Stephens was the developer of Myers Park, co-founder of what is now NCNB, owner of newspapers in Charlotte and Asheville, and one of the state's most active business and civic leaders. Later owners of his residence included A. J. Draper, inventor of the Draper loom used in many U. S. cotton mills, and Duke Power leader William States Lee.

The mansion is a mix of Colonial Revival and Bungalow style influences. Its backyard is likely of archeological interest, for it was the site of the now-demolished 1867 J. S. Myers country home.

| |
|------------------------------|
| D. HEATH NESBIT HOUSE |
|------------------------------|

| |
|-------------|
| 1921 |
|-------------|

| |
|----------------------------|
| 522 Hermitage Court |
|----------------------------|

D. Heath Nesbit was a Charlotte physician who hired architect Martin Boyer to design this dwelling in 1921. Boyer chose the Tudor Revival style, based on English and French peasant influences. The house looks centuries-old with its mismatched slate roof, small-paned windows, and stuccoed walls set at odd angles. It proved such a

good example of the newly-popular style that it was featured nationally in *Architecture* magazine.

| |
|----------------------------|
| F. M. SIMMONS HOUSE |
| 1913 |
| 625 Hermitage Court |



Frank Simmons was a major Charlotte contractor who developed Hermitage Court. His Colonial Revival residence is one of the neighborhood's earliest. Note its grand semi-circular portico with the two-story columns.

| |
|---------------------------|
| DAVID CLARK HOUSE |
| 1914 |
| 100 Hermitage Road |

Clark was a Charlotte publisher who produced the *Southern Textile Bulletin*, a widely-read trade periodical that was one of the factors in Charlotte's leadership in the Piedmont textile region. Like many of his neighbors in Myers Park, Clark was an important civic leader, and he is remembered today for his efforts on behalf of the Charlotte Coliseum.

His house is an excellent example of the Rectilinear style with its wide eaves and plainly-trimmed stucco walls.

| |
|---------------------------------|
| S. W. CRAMER, JR., HOUSE |
| 1928 |
| 200 Hermitage Road |



Stuart Cramer, Jr., was heir to Stuart Cramer, Sr., pioneer inventor of mill machinery whose papers are now at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D. C. Stuart Cramer, Jr., ran the family's mills at Cramerton for many years until they were purchased by Burlington Industries.

The house is another excellent Tudor Revival design by Charlotte's premier revivalist architect, Martin Boyer. Note the "half-timbering" on the upper story.

| |
|---|
| <u>J. B. DUKE MANSION (WHITE OAKS)</u> |
| 1915 |
| <="" road="" hermitage=""> |



This residence was originally erected for Z. V. Taylor, a Southern Power executive. In 1919 tobacco and utility tycoon James Buchanan Duke bought it. He hired Charlotte's C.C.-Hook, designer of the original structure, to more than triple it in size. Grounds by Draper included a large fountain, no longer extant. The mansion was only one of several Duke maintained around the country. Later owners included the Cannon and Lineberger textile families.

Today the white-columned Colonial house on its knoll overlooking Edgehill Park is still the neighborhood's architectural centerpiece. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

| |
|---------------------------------|
| CHARLES E. LAMBETH HOUSE |
|---------------------------------|

| |
|-------------|
| 1927 |
|-------------|

| |
|---------------------------|
| 435 Hermitage Road |
|---------------------------|



Lambeth was a prominent real estate developer and a symbol of the profession's power in city government. He served as Charlotte's mayor from 1931 through 1933. Lambeth's wife was the only daughter of the founder of Cannon Mills. Lambeth's white stucco mansion, facing J.S. Myers Park, is in the French Renaissance style. Its design is the work of nationally known Philadelphia architect Charles Barton Keen, and its distinctive green tile roof is a Keen trademark.

| |
|-----------------------------|
| E. C. MARSHALL HOUSE |
|-----------------------------|

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|-------------|
| 1915 |
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| |
|---------------------------|
| 500 Hermitage Road |
|---------------------------|



Marshall was president of Southern Power when he followed fellow utility executive Norman Cocks out to Myers Park. He continued to be a leader of Duke Power for many years, and today a power plant is named in his honor.

Marshall's residence was designed by Charlotte architect Franklin Gordon in the Tudor Revival style with half-timbered walls. It is the earliest known Charlotte example of this style, which did not become widely popular until WWI exposed many Americans to European architecture.

| |
|-------------------------|
| H. M. WADE HOUSE |
|-------------------------|

| |
|----------------|
| 1928-31 |
|----------------|

| |
|---------------------------|
| 530 Hermitage Road |
|---------------------------|



Howard Madison Wade was a leading Charlotte manufacturer whose factory on Graham Street produced custom woodwork and store fixtures for the region. He built his first house on this site in 1912, and demolished it in 1928 to build this grander one.

The design is by noted Philadelphian Charles Barton Keen, one of two surviving mansions by him in the city. It is in the Colonial Revival style with fine interior appointments, and elegant grounds by Earle Sumner Draper.

| |
|-----------------------------|
| OSCAR J. THIES HOUSE |
|-----------------------------|

| |
|-------------|
| 1898 |
|-------------|

| |
|----------------------------|
| 544 Providence Road |
|----------------------------|



The Thies family were German immigrants drawn to Charlotte by the opportunities in gold mining. They built this "country house" outside of the city in 1898, and when Myers Park had grown up around it in the late 1910's, remodeled it to its present stuccoed Colonial Revival appearance. Oscar Thies was an active force in Charlotte real estate development. His Thies-Smith Realty Company built many of Myers Park's mansions. The Thies family still lives in the house today, which is one of the last residences in this section of once-grand Providence Road.

J. M. JAMISON HOUSE

1912

802 Providence Road



John Jamison owned the Stonewall Hotel in the heart of Charlotte, and had other hotel interests around the state. His fine Rectilinear style stone residence is the oldest in Myers Park, after the Thies house. The Jamison mansion was designed by Louis Asbury. The grounds with the sweeping semi-circular drive were by John Nolen and featured in books he wrote. The residence has recently been carefully remodeled as a Mutual Savings and Loan branch bank, a good example of adaptive reuse.

CHARLES MOODY HOUSE

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| 1913 |
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| 830 Providence Road |
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Moody was the City's leading grain and feed merchant. The grain elevators of his Interstate Milling Company still tower picturesquely over Fourth Ward in uptown Charlotte. The red brick house was by Asbury with grounds by Nolen. It is one of six 1913 houses surviving in Myers Park.

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| APARTMENT QUADRAPLEX |
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| 1951 |
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| 227 Queens Road |
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This small four-unit apartment building is an excellent example of the Art Moderne architectural style. Note its "porthole" doors, slender columns, and metal-frame windows. It is the only example of the style in the neighborhood, and is perhaps the finest residential application of the Art Moderne in Charlotte.

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| <u>EARLE SUMNER DRAPER HOUSE</u> |
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| 1923 |
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| 1621 Queens Road |
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Draper was the leading planner in the southeastern United States in the period, with offices in Washington, Atlanta, and New York in addition to Charlotte. He began his career as Nolen's field supervisor in Myers Park. In private practice from 1917 through 1933 he planned over 150 mill villages and village extensions and nearly 100 suburbs including Charlotte's Eastover. Later he was first chief of planning for the Tennessee Valley Authority and a top official in the Federal Housing Administration.

To design his house he chose Charlotte architect Franklin Gordon, who had earlier introduced the Tudor Revival to the city. The Draper residence is one of the city's finest large Tudor houses. The grounds, with their terrace, fountain, and fine trees, are of course by Draper himself.

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| <u>C. G. McMANAWAY HOUSE</u> |
| 1874 |
| 1700 Queens Road |



The lure of Myers Park proved so great that one downtown resident simply moved his house out to the suburb. This dwelling originally stood on West Trade Street, and was the home of Jacob Rintels, a leading Jewish merchant in Charlotte. In 1916 a subsequent owner, Dr. C. G. McManaway, had it moved to Myers Park.

The two story house is in the Italianate Style, a rare survivor from Charlotte's early days. Note the bracketed cornice along the edge of the roof, the tall arched windows, and the heavy double doors.

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| HUNTER S. MARSHALL HOUSE |
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| 1919 |
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| 1728 Queens Road |
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Annexation of new suburbs into the city is not a new issue in Charlotte. From 1919 to 1924 Myers Park was incorporated as a village, separate from the city. Hunter Marshall served as Myers Park's second mayor. The community finally voted to join with the city in order to benefit from Charlotte's police and fire coverage. Marshall's wood frame Colonial Revival house occupies a prominent lot at the corner of Queens Road and Sherwood Road. The tall trees that shade it today are part of a landscape design provided by the Nolen office.

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| CAMERON MORRISON HOUSE |
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| 1919 |
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| 1830 Queens Road |
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When this residence was constructed "Cam" Morrison was president of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce. In 1921 he was elected governor of North Carolina, serving until 1925. He was known as the state's "Good Roads Governor" who pushed a program of paved highways that made North Carolina a leader in transportation in the South. Not surprisingly, a good number of the newly paved roads led to Charlotte, aiding the city's growth as a major distribution center. When Morrison returned from Raleigh he sold this Colonial Revival residence and built a rambling rural estate south of town which he called Morrocroft.

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| J. L. SNYDER HOUSE |
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| 1920 |
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| 1901 Queens Road |
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Snyder was Charlotte's Coca-Cola bottler, evidently a quite lucrative calling. This grand mansion by Charlotte's skilled revivalist Martin Boyer features a wealth of careful detailing. Earle Sumner Draper remembers the large lot as being one of his best Charlotte landscape designs. In recent years nearby Queens College has used the house, as a dormitory - Carol Hall. The residence and its grounds continue to be an important visual element in the neighborhood today.

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| LEROY SPRINGS HOUSE |
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| 1929 |
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| 1242 Queens Road West |
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LeRoy Springs was among the region's richest textile magnates, head of Springs mills which is today one of the country's largest corporations. The Springs family had deep roots in Myers Park, for John Springs Myers had inherited part of his farm from the family of LeRoy's uncle, Adam Alexander Springs, who farmed the land in the early 19th century. Colonel Springs' red brick Georgian Revival residence sits back from the street on a large, heavily landscaped lot.

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| MARY P. LETHCO HOUSE |
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| 1928 |
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| 2038 Roswell Avenue |
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Mary Lethco and her husband Frank ran the Lethco's Linen Supply and the Charlotte Laundry. Their fantastic Tudor Revival mansion is by Charlotte architect William H. Peeps, who was also responsible for the Latta Arcade uptown. A native of England, he undoubtedly remembered the Tudor architecture of his homeland when he designed this rambling mansion. It is a skillful combination of rustic textures from brick and stucco to rough stone and hand hewn timbers.

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| QUEENS COLLEGE ORIGINAL BUILDINGS |
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| 1916 |
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|---------------------------|
| 1900 Selwyn Avenue |
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Queens College had been located on College Street in downtown Charlotte before George Stephens lured it out to Myers Park to be the cultural centerpiece of the suburb. The first five buildings, today known as Burwell, Albright, Jernigan, McEwen and Watkins Halls, were designed by C.C. Hook.

The most significant aspect of the original campus was its site plan by John Nolen. By arranging the buildings in an "H" he formed two quadrangles, which may still be seen. He later used this double quadrangle idea in other campus designs, including that of UNC-Chapel Hill.

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| JOSEPH B. EFIRD HOUSE |
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| 1937 Selwyn Avenue |
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In 1902 the Efird family opened "The Bee Hive", a dry goods store at the corner of East Trade and College streets. By the 1950's Efird's Department Stores were a major Carolinas chain with 58 stores. Efird's was absorbed by Belks in 1956.

J. B. Efird, president of the chain for many years, lived in this fine Colonial Revival residence. It is said that this is the third site of the Efird House. it was originally built downtown, then moved to the corner of Queens and Selwyn in newly fashionable Myers Park. The structure was moved again to its present site to allow construction of Myers Park Baptist Church. Note the home's delicate arched entry and the sparkling bevelled glass in the front windows.

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| FRANK H. ROSS HOUSE |
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| 1925 |
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| 2001 Sherwood Road |
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Shortly after East Boulevard was extended from Dilworth to provide another major entrance to Myers Park, manufacturers' agent Frank Ross had this cottage built on the slight rise overlooking the intersection. The dwelling is perhaps Charlotte's best small Tudor Revival example. Its whimsical design by Martin Boyer incorporates stuccoed walls arranged at haphazard angles, a steep-gabled entrance with a round-arched doorway, tiny windows, and a thatched roof. If Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs moved to Charlotte they would surely choose this house as their own.

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| GLADYS TILLET HOUSE |
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| 1932 |
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| 2200 Sherwood Road |
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Wife of prominent Charlotte attorney Charles Tillett, Gladys Tillett was a longtime political leader and rights activist in the region. Her work began with the successful drive in the 1910's to give women the right to vote. She became an important Democratic Party member, serving as vice-chairperson of the national party from 1940 through 1950. President John Kennedy appointed her as U. S. representative to the United Nations Status of Women Commission. The Tillett's gracious Colonial Revival residence is a highlight of Sherwood Road.

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| OSMOND BARRINGER HOUSE |
| 1928 |
| 2232 Sherwood Road |

Osmond Barringer was a Charlotte entrepreneur who racked up a colorful string of "firsts" in his lifetime. While a student at Davidson he and some fellow students broke into a lab and made what is said to have been the world's first X-ray photograph. He sold the first automobile in Charlotte, and delighted in dreaming up stunts to call attention to the newfangled contraption. He was promoter of the original Charlotte Speedway, and a real estate developer who donated land for Revolution Park and Barringer School.

For all his promotional flair, he lived in a surprisingly unassuming house. The Colonial Revival design is by William Peeps, and the grounds were originally laid out by Philadelphia landscape architect, J. Franklin Meehan.

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| D. G. DAVIDSON HOUSE |
| 1955 |
| 2300 Sherwood Road |

Davidson, a Charlotte physician, commissioned Martin Boyer to design this house. Boyer, known for his skillful work in historic styles, here showed he could be equally adept at the most modern architecture. The Davidson house, with its curving roof and hidden entry, is done in the style of the great American architectural innovator, Frank Lloyd Wright. The house appears to be inspired by Wright's "solar hemicycle" designs done in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

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| MYERS PARK GATES |
| 1912 |
| Queens Road & 4th Street |



John Nolen's Myers Park design specified a combination gateway and trolley stop to mark the entrance to the exclusive suburb. The central stone arch of this gate was demolished in recent years to provide turn lanes for Queens Road, but the two smaller sidewalk gates remain. The stone is Carolina granite brought from nearby Winnsboro, S. C.

STREETCAR WAITING STATION

c. 1912

Queens and Hermitage Roads



This granite shelter was part of Nolen's original Myers Park design, and matches the entrance gate a few blocks north. Early accounts indicate there were several other waiting stations along Queens Road. Only this one exists today.

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| HERMITAGE COURT GATES |
| c. 1912 |
| Hermitage Court |

These stone pillars are believed to have been designed by John Nolen. They mark the two ends of Hermitage Court, part of the original Myers Park plan but carried out by subdeveloper F. M. Simmons. Craftsmen from Aberdeen, Scotland, constructed the gates, which were patterned after the entrance to President Andrew Jackson's "Hermitage" estate near Nashville, Tennessee.

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| STREETCAR POLES |
| c. 1912 |
| Queens Road median, from 3rd Street to Sharon Road |

These elegant iron poles once carried the wires of Myers Park's electric street car, and today still carry power lines. They mark the route of the trolley and along with the streetcar waiting station, are the best tangible reminder of the mass-transit network that allowed suburban development.

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| J. S. MYERS PARK |
| 1890s |
| Providence, Ardsley, and Hermitage Roads |

In 1867 J. S. Myers built his country house facing Providence Road between present-day Hermitage Road and Harvard Place. Over the years he planted trees along Providence and set out flowers and shrubs in his front yard until it became known as Myers Park. John Nolen incorporated the space in his 1911 plan.

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| EDGEHILL ROAD PARK |
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| c. 1912 |
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| Between Edgehill Road North and South |
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Nolen envisioned a system of parks in his suburb. Edgehill was to be the first of the "greenway" parks along stream beds. The rest of the proposed parkland was unfortunately sold off for house lots in later years. The twin roadways of Edgehill Drive, flanking the landscaped creek banks, remain one of Charlotte's most beautiful streets.