

Little House resources

John Phillips Little was born January 7, 1859, in Richmond County. He moved to Charlotte in 1912 but maintained large farms in Richmond County for many years. He was a member of the Board of Stewards of Charlotte's First Methodist Church, as well as a city commissioner. He died November 27, 1931, at the age of 72. "Funeral Rites Are Held For John P. Little," *Charlotte News*, November 29, 1931, 6A; "Johns Are Now Running Town," *Charlotte News*, April 9, 1920, 20.

When the Little family first moved to Charlotte, they lived on South Boulevard in Dilworth. They moved into the Queens Road house in Myers Park on January 25, 1916. "Society Items," *Charlotte Evening Chronicle*, October 17, 1913, 2; "Mr. and Mrs. Little Have Guest," *Charlotte News*, August 20, 1913, 2; "Move to New Home," *Charlotte News*, January 26, 1916, 2.

News coverage of the Myers Park development during that period suggests that Little's Queens Road house was not constructed prior to 1915. An April 1915 article referencing his recent purchase of the Queens Road property specifically identified the property as one of several "lots" recently purchased in Myers Park. According to that report, "Plans are being drawn for the residences proposed and work will be begun as speedily as possible. "Building Activities Brisk At Myers Park," *Charlotte News*, April 11, 1915, 19. In August 1915, the *Observer* reported that the foundations for the Little House had recently been completed. "Notes About Town," *Charlotte Observer*, August 23, 1915, 5.

However, the Little House does have some significant associative history given that Little's construction firm, John P. Little & Son, served as the general contractors on several notable structures in Charlotte and across North Carolina, including the first Charlotte Speedway in 1924. "Legal Tangle in Trial of Suit," *Charlotte News*, February 1, 1927, 19; "Fraud Charged In Injured Man's Suit, Brands Agreement Result of Delirium," *Charlotte News*, February 1, 1927, 4. The firm was sued by a carpenter employee injured during that construction project in a case that went all the way to the North Carolina Supreme Court. The carpenter claimed that the firm had fraudulently secured a liability release from him. A judgment was entered against the firm for \$4,533.50, but the state supreme court reversed the verdict saying that Sherrill had ratified the agreement by continuing to accept salary payments from the firm for a seven-month period after the release was signed. *Sherrill v. Little*, 193 N.C. 736 (1927); "Contractors Win Appeal," *Charlotte Observer*, May 12, 1927, section 2, page 1. A photo of Charlotte Speedway under construction and naming John P. Little & Son as contractors can be viewed at <https://millicanpictorialhistorymuseum.com/wp-content/uploads/C1372B.jpg>

Other notable structures by the firm in North Carolina included Charlotte's First A.R.P. Church, the Chapel of Hope Episcopalian Church in North Charlotte, the Tryon Street Methodist Church, the Builders' Building at 312 W. Trade Street, the Richmond County courthouse, Cool Springs High School in Forest City, Shelby's Central United Methodist Church and Masonic Temple, Concord's First Presbyterian Church, and the hospital building at the North Carolina School for the Deaf in Morganton. "Laborer Seeks to Recover Damages," *Charlotte News*, July 29, 1927, 18; "Cornerstone Will Be Laid For Chapel," *Charlotte News*, August 29, 1921, 2; "Charlotte Firm Wins Contract For Half Million Dollar Tryon St. Church," *Charlotte Observer*, July 30, 1926, 2; "Proposed Home of Construction Industry in City," *Charlotte News*, September 1, 1926, 17; "Another Forward Step," *Charlotte Sunday Observer*, July 17, 1927, section 3, page 11; "Courthouse Contract is Let in Richmond," *Charlotte Observer*, May 4, 1922, 1; "Chester Considering New School Building," *Charlotte Observer*, December 1, 1922, 2; National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Cool Springs High School, accessed October 30, 2023,

<https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/RF0315.pdf>; National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Richmond County Courthouse, accessed October 30, 2023, <https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/RH0003.pdf>; National Park Service, "Shelby, North Carolina: A National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary," accessed October 30, 2023, <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/shelby/text.htm>; National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Masonic Temple Building, Shelby, North Carolina, accessed October 30, 2023, <https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/CL0010.pdf>; "Concord Presbyterians Plan a New Structure," *Charlotte Observer*, April 8, 1926, 16; "Improve Two State Plants," *Charlotte Observer*, August 20, 1927, 2.

The firm collaborated with several of North Carolina's most significant architects of that era in creating these notable buildings. Both First A.R.P. (a James Mackson McMichael design) and Builders' Building (a M.R. Marsh design) are local historic landmarks. The Richmond County courthouse (a Charles C. Hook design) the Cool Spring High School (a Louis Asbury design), and Masonic Temple building (a Willard G. Rogers design) are all listed on the National Register. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, Survey and Research Reports for First A.R.P. Church and Builders' Building; National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Cool Springs High School; National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Richmond County Courthouse; National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Masonic Temple Building, Shelby, North Carolina. Shelby's Central United Methodist Church (a Louis Asbury design) is identified as a contributing structure in the National Register listing for the town's historic district, and Concord's First Presbyterian Church (designed by New York architect Hobart Upjohn) is listed as a pivotal structure in the National Register listing for the town's North Union Street historic district. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Central Shelby Historic District, accessed October 30, 2023, <https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/CL0011.pdf>; National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for North Union Street Historic District, Concord, North Carolina, accessed October 30, 2023, <https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/CA0611.pdf>.

The firm's fortunes turned with unanticipated business losses on construction projects in Florida. John P. Little & Son declared bankruptcy in August 1930. "Little Co. is Bankrupt," *Charlotte News*, February 2, 1930, 3; "Little Assets Are \$48,150," *Charlotte News*, February 6, 1930, 20; "Notice of Sale of Notes by Trustee in Bankruptcy," *Charlotte News*, September 1, 1930, 15. John and Annie Little concurrently had personal financial difficulties as evidenced by the May 19, 1930, foreclosure sale of property they owned in the Mallard Creek township. "Trustee's Sale of Real Estate," *Charlotte News*, April 21, 1930, 14.

None of the six homes identified in the Historic Landmarks Department's survey of pre-WWI Myers Park Colonial Revival homes (which included the Little House) has been designated a local historic landmark. Only the Little House and the Col. Hamilton Jones House (944 Granville Road; circa 1890?) are on HLC's study list, added on June 10, 2013, and November 9, 2015, respectively.