

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Stillwell, Erle, House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1300 Pinecrest Drive not for publication

city or town Hendersonville vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Henderson code 089 zip code 28739

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey Cross SHPO 12/22/00
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Stillwell, Erle, House

Name of Property

Henderson, North Carolina

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- xx private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

- building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Contributing Noncontributing
1 0 buildings
sites
structures
objects
1 0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Tudor Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Architectural Practice

Period of Significance

1926 - 1931

Significant Dates

1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Stillwell, Erle

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Stillwell, Erle

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

western office, Archives & History

Stillwell, Erle, House
Name of Property

Henderson, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .88 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	7	3	6	5	6	0	0	3	9	0	9	1	1	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

3

Zone	Easting				Northing									

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sybil Argintar Bowers, Preservation Planning Consultant

organization Bowers Southeastern Preservation date March 22, 2000

street & number 166 Pearson Drive telephone (828) 253-1392

city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28801

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name William and Miller Medina

street & number 1300 Pinecrest Drive telephone (828) 697-4256

city or town Hendersonville state NC zip code 28739

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

Erle Stillwell House
Henderson County, N. C.

Section number 7 Page 1

Description

Set on a hill above Blythe Street, the Tudor Revival/Normanesque style Erle Stillwell House is located just west of downtown Hendersonville, in an area, which developed during the 1910s and 1920s. The nominated property consists of the 1926 house and an extensively landscaped garden, occupying the northern half of a lot which runs from Pinecrest Drive on the north to Iowa Street on the south. It is bordered by Blythe Street on the east and Wetmur Street and large undeveloped lots to the west. The nominated tract is .88 of an acre, and consists of the northern portion of the original lot which Erle Stillwell purchased in 1920. The northern portion of the lot and the nominated house was lost in the Depression, but Stillwell retained ownership of the southern portion and later built a second residence ca. 1935. An original stone retaining wall and slate footpaths wind through the garden that surrounds the house on the east, south, and west sides.

Facing south, this two-story Tudor Revival/Normanesque style brick house is an L-plan with the main entry located at the juncture of the two wings of the building. Although the entry faces southeast towards Blythe Street, the entrance to the property is from the drive at the northeast corner which fronts onto Pinecrest Drive.¹ The house was built almost exactly as shown in the architectural plans drawn by Stillwell.² Tudor Revival elements of the house include the single, double, or triple multi-light casement windows, all of which are leaded glass with built-in screens. Windows on the first floor have fixed transom lights. The brick walls still display some evidence of parging, a technique used by Stillwell in many of his brick structures.³ The current multi-gable and hip roof with flared gable ends is covered by asphalt shingles, but the original drawings called for tile.⁴ Two brick chimneys with chimney pots were also built as shown on the original drawings.⁵ A ribbed copper roof covers the front and rear entries and the sun porch to the south. The only apparent changes to the exterior of the building since its construction is the enclosure of the sun porch on the south side by French doors, and the replacement of the rear entry door. The drawings show the sun porch as an open porch framed by an arched lattice.⁶

¹For many years, according to Hendersonville city directories, the address of this house was 600 Blythe Street. It has had the address of 1300 Pinecrest Drive in more recent years.

²See original drawings in working file. A ca. 1934 photo, also in the working file, shows that the original roof material was tile or perhaps slate. An earlier rendering, a copy of which is also in the working file, indicates that early plans for the house were to be one and one-half stories, with dormer style casement windows.

³Parging the brick is a technique which applies a very thin coating of a stucco-like material to a brick surface. The outline of the brick is still visible beneath. This gives the building a lighter color and also gives it the appearance of being older. It is likely that Stillwell studied this technique on his extensive travels in Europe. William O'Cain, Jr. (Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 27 July 1999) mentioned that Stillwell used this on a lot of his buildings. The ca. 1934 photo in the working file shows that Stillwell used this technique on his own house.

⁴See Exhibit A, drawing titled "South side elevation". The ca. 1934 photo appears to be either tile or perhaps slate.

⁵See architectural plans drawn by Stillwell in working file.

⁶Ibid, drawings of south, east, and west elevations.

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The garden that surrounds the house on the east, south, and west sides retains many of the original landscape elements. One of the main features is the approximately four-foot-high retaining wall which runs along the eastern edge of the property above the sidewalk on Blythe Street. A second five-foot-high retaining wall, shown on the original plot plans drawn for the property, is set back from this east boundary of the lot. This wall wraps around to the south side of the drive and forms the boundary for the driveway and part of the garden, and turns north towards the house near the front entry and stops at the southeastern edge of the front terrace. This level terrace area above the retaining wall was originally a more formal garden, which was a "bow tie" shape.⁷ The area to the south below the driveway and terrace continues at a lower elevation and opens into a large side garden on the west side of the house, including a sitting area at the northwest corner of the property, several curvilinear planting beds, and a rose garden, added by the current owners. Many large trees remain on the property, including a spectacular collection of cedars, Carolina spruce, and hemlocks. The current owners have followed as closely as possible the original location of pathways, and have restored them in place with slate walkways. The current owners also added the granite piers framing the entrance to the driveway. A privacy fence was added along the south boundary of the property in the 1990s, dividing this house from the later Stillwell house to the south. The original driveway was gravel, but was converted to concrete at a later time.

Inside, the house has an irregular floor plan which is consistent with the overall L-plan of the exterior. Interior rooms consist of a living room/dining room/bedroom wing which runs north-south, and a garage/kitchen/bedroom wing which runs east-west.⁸ There is also a finished attic space and a full basement.⁹ In the basement, the fireproof masonry construction of the building is evident in the concrete walls and floors. Granite bedrock forms a portion of the foundation. In the basement, the boiler room and remainder of the original trash incinerator are still evident as shown on the drawings.¹⁰ All doors in the house are eight-panel cherry, except for the former maid's room, which contains single panel doors. Much original hardware remains in the house, including many wall sconces, brass and glass doorknobs, and brass switchplates. The walls are all metal lath covered with plaster. Closets are all cedar-lined, and floors throughout are oak.

On the first floor, a small entry foyer opens into a large living room to the west and into a narrow stair hall to the east. Set at an angle to the house, the front door within the entry foyer is v-board, with multi-light leaded glass above. Small, narrow leaded glass windows flank the entry. The living room walls are covered with cherry paneling. The ceiling is rough plaster, and the fireplace is carved limestone. French doors lead from the south wall of the living room to the sun porch. The floor of the sun porch is slate, with windows and doors added after the original construction to enclose the room. To the north side of the living room is

⁷The current owner, Miller Medina, has a photo of the house ca. 1934 which shows this bow-tie garden was built as shown on the plans. A copy of this photo is in the working file, along with copies of landscape and topography sketches.

⁸See architectural plans in working file.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid, "Basement Floor Plan".

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Erle Stillwell House
Henderson County, N. C.

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the dining room, with a decorative crown molding. Maid call buttons are still located on the floor. To the east of the dining room is the kitchen, which originally consisted of a butler's pantry and a cooking area.¹¹ Renovated in the early 1990s to create one space, the kitchen retains some original cabinetry. The downstairs bath, located just off the stair hall, retains its original tile floor and walls. The stairs have simple balusters with concave sides and an applied scroll pattern up the sidewall. Upstairs, there are three bedrooms, a former maid's room, back service stairs, and a sewing/ironing room, all built as shown on drawings.¹² Baths appear to have their original wall tile.

¹¹Ibid, "First Floor Plan".

¹²Ibid, "Second Floor Plan--As Built".

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1Erle Stillwell House
Henderson County, N. C.Summary

The house at 1300 Pinecrest Drive was built in 1926 as the residence of Erle Stillwell, prolific Hendersonville architect. It is significant for its association with Stillwell at a time when he designed some of the most architecturally sophisticated buildings in Hendersonville. Stillwell was a well-educated architect with the ability to design in many different styles from the Neoclassical Revival to Art Deco. More thoroughly represented in Hendersonville's built environment than any other architect, Stillwell made an immense contribution to the town's architectural fabric, and many of his buildings remain today as a legacy that defines much of Hendersonville's historic appearance. The nominated property is a highly intact example of his work, showcasing the use of top quality materials and design elements. It is one of two residences designed and built by Erle Stillwell for his own home, and is representative of an extremely productive period early in his career. The Erle Stillwell House is eligible for listing under National Register Criterion B for its association during the late 1920s and early 1930s with a prominent Hendersonville. Pending a critical analysis of Stillwell's domestic oeuvre, additional documentation may be provided to establish significance under Criterion C in the area of architecture for the Normanesque design of the house.

Historic Background

Erle Gulick Stillwell was born in Hannibal, Missouri on August 29, 1885, the son of Amos John Stillwell and Frances Anderson Stillwell. He attended the U. S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, and then studied at the University of North Carolina, Cornell University, and the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to his academic studies, Stillwell traveled extensively in England, Scotland, France, Italy, and Greece. He visited Hendersonville in 1905, and decided to stay.¹³ In 1907, in Hendersonville, he married Eva Douglas Smith.¹⁴ Eva Smith was the daughter of William A. Smith, the developer of Laurel Park, just outside the city limits of Hendersonville.¹⁵ In 1916 Stillwell opened an architecture practice. He became a member of the American Institute of Architects in 1916, and served as Treasurer/Secretary of the North Carolina Chapter from 1917 to 1921, and again from 1934 to 1937. Stillwell also served as president of the North Carolina Chapter from 1922 to 1923 and again from 1942 to 1944.¹⁶ In 1942, he became a Fellow in the American Institute of Architects.¹⁷ Stillwell continued in private practice until 1942, when he became a founding partner in the Asheville-based firm, Six Associates. Only the larger firms were being granted government work at the time, so Stillwell joined with Charles E. Waddell, a civil engineer, and architects Henry Irven Gaines, Anthony Lord, William W. Dodge, and Stewart Rogers to form the company. The company was, and still is, located near Biltmore, between Asheville and Hendersonville on Highway 25. Stillwell continued for thirty years as part of Six Associates, retiring in 1971. In addition to his architecture practice, Stillwell was an active member of St. James Episcopal Church in Hendersonville, along with several clubs including the Masonic

¹³"North Carolina's Fellows of the AIA", Southern Architect, November 1957, p. 16.

¹⁴Henderson County marriage records.

¹⁵Stillwell biography, Henderson County files, Archives & History western office.

¹⁶Jackson, C. David and Brown, Charlotte V. History of the North Carolina Chapter of The American Institute of Architects 1913-1998. Raleigh, North Carolina: The American Institute of Architects, 1998, p. 195.

¹⁷"North Carolina's Fellows of the AIA".

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lodge, the country club, and the Kiwanis Club.¹⁸ Eva Stillwell died on November 12, 1971 and Erle Stillwell died on October 22, 1978.¹⁹

When Stillwell came to Hendersonville in 1905, the town was in the midst of the greatest real estate boom in its history. Until the railroad arrived in Hendersonville on July 4, 1879, the town had seen little growth since its founding in 1840, and served primarily as one of the stopping points along the Buncombe Turnpike which connected Greeneville, Tennessee with Greenville, South Carolina.²⁰ The town also served as a farming trade center in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.²¹ When the railroad arrived, it spurred an influx of tourists, developers, and entrepreneurs into the small town. Hendersonville, from 1879 until the late 1920s, saw the greatest land speculation and growth it would ever witness.²² In 1886, the rail connected Hendersonville and Asheville, opening Hendersonville up to markets farther to the west.²³ In the late 1890s, Hendersonville was a major produce shipping center and also supported many new and ongoing industries including brick manufacturing, furniture manufacturing, apple harvesting, and livestock production.²⁴ From 1902 to 1906, Hendersonville's year-round population increased from 1200 to 3000.²⁵ Summer tourist visitation in Hendersonville by 1914 reached as many as 50,000 visitors annually.²⁶

In the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, as more nationally popular building styles began to become more readily available and materials for constructing these homes could be easily obtained with the rail access, Hendersonville began to expand. Downtown experienced a period of growth with the construction of many new brick and limestone buildings along Main Street. Some of these included the new courthouse (1904-1905), People's National Bank (1910), and the public library (1914).²⁷ Schools were needed and many were built in the 1910s, including Rosa Edwards School, Sixth Avenue School, and private academies such as the Blue Ridge School for Boys (1913-1920s) and Fassifern School for Girls (1911).²⁸ In addition, residential areas such as Laurel Park (1905) and areas closer in, just west of downtown, began to

¹⁸Stillwell biography.

¹⁹Henderson County death records.

²⁰Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc., "History and Architecture of Hendersonville, North Carolina", December 16, 1996, p. 5.

²¹Ibid, p. 8.

²²Ibid, pp 9-10.

²³Ibid, p. 8.

²⁴Ibid, p. 9.

²⁵French Broad Hustler. 5 April 1906.

²⁶"History and Architecture of Hendersonville, North Carolina", p. 9.

²⁷Ibid, p. 11. The courthouse and People's National Bank were designed by prominent Asheville architect Richard Sharp Smith, but Smith was nearing the end of his career by the 1920s, when Stillwell was working on some of his largest commissions.

²⁸Ibid.

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develop.²⁹ Other communities which began to spring up included Osceola Lake, Mountain Home, and Grimesdale.³⁰

As the automobile became more prevalent in the 1920s, suburban communities began to develop north of town, including Druid Hills and Hyman Heights, located off of Highway 25, the former route of the Buncombe Turnpike.³¹ The real estate "frenzy" in Hendersonville continued into the 1920s. Lots were often bought for as little as \$5,000 and then sold a year later for \$81,000, a 700% profit.³² In 1924 there were eighty-nine real estate offices listed in city directories, with 800 brokers.³³ There were 403 licensed real estate salesmen, and as many as twenty new subdivisions opened within a one-month period.³⁴ The population in Hendersonville by 1926 was 10,000 with a summer population of 40,000.³⁵ In addition to local land speculators, many wealthy Florida investors were involved in development in Hendersonville in the 1910s and 1920s. Florida began to experience a slow-down in its growth in 1925, and this directly affected Hendersonville. Beginning in 1926, Hendersonville spiraled downward economically as the speculation slowed.³⁶

The 1930s in Hendersonville was very different from the previous decade, and the Depression years were difficult ones. The 1930 population of the town dwindled to 4,898, all three banks had failed, tourism slowed, and many inns closed. Federal relief programs in the 1930s, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps program, helped to keep some employed. With the beginning of World War II the economy began to turn around, with most of the growth occurring in agriculture and light industry.³⁷

Erle Stillwell practiced architecture at one of the most economically rich times in the history of Hendersonville. Among his clients were some of the most prominent businessmen and women in the city, including E. W. Ewbank, president of Citizen's National Bank and an attorney with Ewbank, Whitmire, & Weeks; Brownlow Jackson, vice-president of Citizen's Bank and president of Jackson-Morris Company, Inc., a real estate and life insurance company; Mrs. Mary A. Brown, widow of James Brown of the Brown Jordan Corporation real estate company; Francis S. Wetmur, vice-president of First Bank & Trust Company; Mrs. R. P. Freeze, wife of R. Preston Freeze of Freeze & Sherard real estate; Dr. J. L. Egerton; and Mrs. A. Kantrowitz, owner of a shoe store in downtown.³⁸ During the 1910s and 1920s in Hendersonville and the surrounding area, Stillwell completed thirteen residential commissions and designs for ten commercial

²⁹Ibid, p. 13.

³⁰Ibid, p. 18.

³¹Ibid, p. 15.

³²Gaines, Henry Irvn. King's Maelum. New York: Vantage Press, 1972, p. 21.

³³"History and Architecture of Hendersonville, North Carolina", p. 17.

³⁴King's Maelum, p. 21.

³⁵"History and Architecture of Hendersonville, North Carolina", p. 18.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid, pp. 22-23.

³⁸Hendersonville city directory 1926-27.

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buildings, nine schools, three churches, a golf club, and Hendersonville City Hall (see Exhibit).³⁹ Stillwell worked in other western North Carolina towns as well, including Chimney Rock, Brevard, and Biltmore Forest. He also designed over ninety movie theaters all across the state of North Carolina, many in the Art Deco style.⁴⁰

In addition to the myriad Hendersonville buildings that he designed, Stillwell was involved in local real estate speculations of his own. According to Henderson County deed records, Stillwell bought and sold no less than sixty lots within the city limits from 1905 to 1948. Most of these were bought and sold during through the 1920s.⁴¹ Stillwell's speculative real estate ventures included the development in 1925 of the Pinecrest subdivision on the west side of town, along Blythe Street, as well as development of other individual lots along Blythe Street.⁴²

Stillwell purchased one of the largest lots in the Pinecrest subdivision from A. Yates Arledge on December 8, 1920, pre-dating the plat of the Pinecrest subdivision by five years.⁴³ This large lot, bounded by Pinecrest Drive on the north and Iowa Street on the south, was where Stillwell built his 1926 home (the nominated property), and later, ca. 1935, a second home on the south portion of the same lot. Stillwell built the first of his homes by September 15, 1926.⁴⁴ He apparently lost the northern half of the lot and this house on January 13, 1931, and sold the property to the Imperial Mortgage Company of North Carolina, with the stipulation that "...the grantors [Stillwells] have the right to remove from the dwelling...all personal property and furniture...books, pictures, hangings, curtains, kitchen range, steel cabinets...electric refrigerator, ventilator fan, iron fireman and oil water heater..."⁴⁵ Imperial Mortgage defaulted on the property on May 1, 1932 and the property was taken over by the Insured Mortgage Bond Corporation of North Carolina (High Point).⁴⁶

³⁹Partial list of drawings prepared by John Horton, Archives & History, of the Stillwell drawings at ENG/6A (Six Associates formerly). Follow-up to this list and research of these and additional drawings by Sybil Bowers, at ENG/6A.

⁴⁰"Hendersonville's Boom-Time Architect," undated newspaper article from Hendersonville Public Library clipping files.

⁴¹Henderson County grantor and grantee deed indexes, 1838 - 1948.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Henderson County Deed Book 118, p. 115 and Plat Records, Book 2, p. 147. A. Yates Arledge was also heavily involved in real estate speculation in Hendersonville. From 1919 through the 1930s he bought and sold many properties, a great deal of which were in the Druid Hills, Mount Royal, and Laurel Park developments. Arledge appears in deed indexes by 1919, but is not in the 1915 city directory. In the 1926-27 Hendersonville city directory, he is listed as an attorney with offices in the Jackson Building, Arledge, Taylor, and Crowell. He was also Vice-President of the Fleetwood of Hendersonville Hotel Corporation (one of the major companies to go under in the 1920s) and secretary of Laurel Park Estates. By the 1937-38 city directory neither Arledge or the legal firm are listed, although he did sell some lots in the 1940s, according to grant indexes.

⁴⁴Henderson County Deed of Trust Book 120, p. 77. This deed of trust describes "...that certain piece, parcel, or lot of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon..." and notes there were to be seven notes due to pay off a principal amount of \$15,000 plus 6% annual interest. The last note was to be due September 15, 1931.

⁴⁵Henderson County Deed Book 196, p. 74. According to Hendersonville city directories, apparently Stillwell lived in a house on Washington Street before the 1926 house was completed.

⁴⁶Henderson County Deed of Trust Book 130, p. 208.

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The Gunagrey Corporation of Virginia bought the property at auction from the Insured Mortgage Bond Corporation on October 2, 1934 for \$11,000.⁴⁷ James P. Grey of Bristol, Virginia, founder of the Grey Hosiery Mill in Hendersonville, bought the property from the Gunagrey Corporation on April 27, 1935 for his sister, Mary Grey Sabine, "...with the buildings and improvements there-on".⁴⁸ On May 24, 1935, James P. Grey granted a life estate on the property to his sister, retaining a half interest in the property.⁴⁹ James P. Grey apparently never lived in the house, but Mrs. Sabine lived there until the late 1940s, at which time a series of renters began occupying the property until it was sold on March 20 and 28, 1975 to Helen A. Cox and Lloyd Cox, owners of Lloyd Cox Company bookstore in Hendersonville.⁵⁰ The property was bought from the estate of Helen A. Cox on August 2, 1989 by Lawrence A. Hogan and John D. Bell.⁵¹ Hogan and Bell sold the property to Virgil R. Hooper and Ronnie M. Gobel on June 18, 1990.⁵² Hooper and Gobel sold the property to the current owners, Miller and William Medina, on March 27, 1995.⁵³

Stillwell managed to retain ownership of most of the southern half of the lot he had purchased in 1920. In 1935, as the economy was beginning to improve, he built a second home on this southern portion, at the corner of Blythe Street and Iowa Street.⁵⁴ This house, a one-story brick linear plan building with a prominent wing on the east side, is also Tudor Revival, with some Craftsman bungalow and Classical elements. The building has a multi-gable roof, multi-light casement windows, brick quoins and a prominent recessed entry porch with a series of heavy-timbered arches projecting to the front. While also an intact example of Stillwell's residential designs, the building has been slightly altered on the interior and is representative of the second half of Stillwell's career as he and the Hendersonville economy began to recover from the effects of the Depression. During the late 1930s into the early 1940s, Stillwell bought several lots in the Pinecrest subdivision, most of which had not sold when the area was laid out in 1925.⁵⁵ Many of these were then sold

⁴⁷Henderson County Deed Book 207, p. 413.

⁴⁸Henderson County Deed Book 209, p. 180. The Grey Hosiery Mill was begun in Hendersonville in 1915, and manufactured children's hosiery. It expanded in 1919, 1929, and 1947 and continued to produce hosiery through the Depression years.

⁴⁹Henderson County Deed Book 209, p. 196.

⁵⁰Henderson County Deed Book 530, p. 463 (under the will of James P. Grey, half interest) and 530, p. 493 (half interest of Mary Grey Sabine).

⁵¹Henderson County Deed Book 742, p. 133.

⁵²Henderson County Deed Book 758, p. 805.

⁵³Henderson County Deed Book 866, p. 455.

⁵⁴Henderson County Deed of Trust Book 112, p. 139. Deed of Trust was to Tryon Bank & Trust Company, for \$7,000 at 6% per year interest, except "...that portion previously sold, being 150' on Blythe Street, lying north of the above property".

⁵⁵Interview with Maryanne Ewbank Campbell, grand-daughter of Frank A. Ewbank, who was a friend, business associate, and client of Stillwell, by Sybil A. Bowers 29 July 1999. Mrs. Campbell stated that most of the Pinecrest Subdivision did not develop as planned, evidenced by the roads that dead end and sparse location of houses in the area. Grantor and grantee indexes, Henderson County, list Stillwell's land transactions in the 1920s-1940s.

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by Stillwell in the 1940s.⁵⁶ The Stillwells lived in this house from 1935 until Erle Stillwell's death in 1978. The property was then willed to a niece, Helen G. Rake.⁵⁷

Architectural Practice Context

While there were a few smaller firms in existence in Hendersonville in the 1920s, Erle Stillwell was by far the preeminent architect in the city, with all of the major public building commissions being awarded to him.⁵⁸ Stillwell, perhaps more than any other architect in Hendersonville and Henderson County, changed the appearance of the community through his versatility in the use of many different styles, including the Neoclassical Revival, Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival, Tudor Revival, Art Deco, and Craftsman Bungalow. Having studied in Europe, and based upon his own collections of books (including many by McKim, Mead, and White), he was well versed in the Classical Revival styles.⁵⁹ During the time he lived in the house at 1300 Pinecrest Drive, from 1926 to 1931, Stillwell designed some of the most prominent, architecturally outstanding buildings in the landscape of Hendersonville, many of which are extant. These include the Neoclassical Revival Hendersonville City Hall, an outstanding example of the style with a monumental portico, Corinthian columns and pilasters, a pedimented doorway, carved limestone garlands, and a grand entry staircase; Hendersonville High School, another fine example with a monumental limestone portico and Classic entablatures; and the First Bank and Trust Company building.

The 1922 First Bank and Trust Company building on Main street remains as one of the best examples of Stillwell's use of the Neoclassical Revival style. This monumental building, while designed by Stillwell before he lived on Pinecrest Drive, is important for its association with him. Still in existence at 401 North Main Street, this building was the location of Stillwell's architectural practice from ca. 1922 until the late 1940s. From the late 1930s, Stillwell's practice in Hendersonville was much less active, and by the late 1940s the majority of his practice was with Six Associates in Asheville.⁶⁰ This prominent brown brick

⁵⁶Henderson County grantor and grantee index, 1838-1948.

⁵⁷In addition to the house, Stillwell willed his "...automobile, jewelry, silver, and china, and all of the remainder of my household furniture, fixtures and equipment in my home at the time of my death." to his niece. He willed all of his books to the public library and his secretary and large couch to Jack Smith (Henderson County Estate Records 78 E 359). Mrs. Rake never lived in the house, but sold it immediately to Jennifer F. McConnachie on December 20, 1978 (Deed Book 572, p. 160). The McConnachie family sold it on June 1, 1979 to William H. and Joan L. Bell (Deed Book 576, p. 921). The Bells sold the property on November 15, 1982 to Patrick L. McNutt (Deed Book 620, p. 295). McNutt sold the property to the current owners, David S. and Julie A. Cowan on June 26, 1986 (Deed Book 679, p. 489).

⁵⁸In the 1911 North Carolina Yearbook, W. F. Edwards, Joe McCrary, and J. H. Jordan are listed as contractors and builders in Hendersonville. No architects are listed. The 1915 Hendersonville city directory also has no listing for architects. The next available directory, from 1926, lists A. L. Gurley, Mr. R. Marsh, and M. R. Nippell as architects in town, in addition to Stillwell. From the 1930s until the 1950s, Erle Stillwell is the only architect listed, although he did have several apprentices working with him in his firm.

⁵⁹Stillwell willed his collection of books to the Hendersonville Public Library. Contained in the collection are many books by McKim, Mead, and White, along with many others on the use of Classical elements in design.

⁶⁰Hendersonville City Directories 1915, 1926 to 1950. Also, interviews with William O'Cain, Jr., son of William O'Cain, who worked with Erle Stillwell, and Lib Finger, wife of William O'Cain, Sr., by Sybil A. Bowers 27 July

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Erle Stillwell House
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building wraps the corner from Main Street to Fourth Avenue, with details including monumental brick pilasters, an elaborate cornice with dentil blocks, and decorative limestone elements.

Other buildings designed during the period Stillwell lived on Pinecrest Drive (1926 to 1931) include Citizen's National Bank (no longer extant); the proposed Art Deco Chamber of Commerce building, which, if built, would have been a monumental eleven-story building in the Hendersonville streetscape; and the proposed Brown Hotel building. He also designed many residences, including Craftsman bungalows for F. S. Wetmur and A. A. McCall and the Colonial Revival R. P. Freeze House.⁶¹

Stillwell displayed his in-depth knowledge of the neoclassical styles in many commissions of the 1910s and early 1920s, including Blue Ridge School for Boys, the addition to the Rosa Edwards School, Etowah Grade School, and Citizen's National Bank. He used the Neoclassical Revival style in his design of the First Baptist Church, State Trust and Citizen's Bank, Queen Theater, and the Ewbank and Ewbank office building (although private buildings, these all fronted on Main Street and were therefore in prominent locations). Stillwell's buildings along Main Street, with their refinement of design and materials, clearly stand out from the surrounding two and three-story typical brick commercial structures of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Generally, Stillwell exhibited a greater versatility of style in his residential, ecclesiastical, and certain of his smaller commercial work. He designed in the Tudor Revival style (his own houses at 1300 Pinecrest and later at 541 Blythe Street), the Frank A. Ewbank house, Villa Montana (on Blythe Street), the Gillican House, and the Hafford Jones House. He also designed several smaller Craftsman bungalows, including the Kantrowitz bungalow, the J. L. Egerton bungalow, and the A. Patterson residence. The Michael Schenk and E. W. Ewbank residences were designed in the Colonial Revival style, while Stillwell used the Neoclassical style in the design of the W. M. Sherard residence. St. James Episcopal Church is an example of Stillwell's use of the Gothic Revival. Most of his movie theaters across the state were Art Deco. Some of his commercial structures such as the Hendersonville Brick Company building and the store for Ewbank Brothers were simple commercial brick buildings, while the Brownlow Jackson Building with its tile roof was reminiscent of the Mission Revival.

1999. According to William O'Cain, Jr., his father worked for Stillwell from 1938 to 1941 in his Hendersonville office as a draftsman along with many other young draftsman architects working towards their licensing requirements.

⁶¹Drawings of most of these buildings are in the Stillwell drawings collection housed at ENG/6A architects in Asheville, North Carolina.

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Section 8 Addendum

The work of Erle Stillwell can be divided into two very distinct phases. The first phase of his career, which focused primarily upon his work in Hendersonville and Henderson County during the 1910s and 1920s, is represented by his house built in 1926. Previous to 1926, Stillwell lived in a house on Washington Street in Hendersonville, but no address is known, and there is no record that he designed it. While not documented at the present time, it is unlikely this house still stands due to the numerous modern infill buildings which currently exist along Washington Street. While the First Bank and Trust Company building in Hendersonville where Stillwell had his architectural office from ca. 1922 to the 1940s is still extant, the office where he worked has been renovated many times through the years and it no longer has any integrity from the time of his occupancy. Therefore, the 1926 house is the only intact property directly associated with Stillwell during the early years of his career when he designed in a wide range of styles, resulting in numerous high style residential, civic, religious, commercial, and educational buildings in Hendersonville. Almost all of the major buildings in or near downtown Hendersonville were designed by Stillwell in this first phase of his career, comprising some of the largest commissions of his career and having an impact on the appearance of the town that no other architect would ever exceed. These buildings, as compared to his later commissions, are representative of a time in his career where it appears he was free to design in the classical styles he most preferred, with buildings which represent, through their detailing and craftsmanship, the early twentieth century period of economic abundance in Hendersonville.

The house which Stillwell built ca. 1935 on the south part of the same lot has recently been placed on the North Carolina Study List and will be nominated only under Criterion C local architectural significance. The later phase of his career, beginning in the early 1930s, was less focused upon his work in Hendersonville, and more upon his work in other parts of the state. Much of his work in the 1930s and 1940s in particular focused upon the design of numerous Art Deco and Art Moderne theaters, along with designs for many residences and schools in Henderson, Jackson, Buncombe, Transylvania, Polk and Mecklenburg Counties. His association with the firm Six Associates, Inc., beginning as a founding partner in 1942, accounted for a major portion of his work from the 1940s until his retirement in 1971. While the firm was organized in 1942, all of the founding partners remained in private practice, in addition to their work with the larger firm, throughout most of the 1940s. When the Six Associates building was constructed in 1950 on Hendersonville Road in Asheville, the partners began work as the corporate entity on a more full-time basis, designing numerous schools, health care, and industrial buildings. This office building is still intact and in use as an architectural office. It has a direct association with Stillwell as an architect from its construction in 1950 and would be the more appropriate property to nominate under Criterion B for the second phase of Stillwell's career.

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Major Bibliographical References

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Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, North Carolina. Vertical files on Six Associates.

Schnyder, Mrs. John. Long-time resident of Blythe Street area. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 25 July 1999.

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Boundary Description

The boundaries for this property are indicated by PIN No. 9568.06-28-5831, Henderson County Tax Map. The scale is 1 in = 100 ft.

Boundary Justification

Boundaries included are a portion of the lot originally purchased by Earl Stillwell in 1920 for construction of his own home. The nominated tract (.88 acre) includes the house that Stillwell built as his own residence in 1926.

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Erle Stillwell House Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs, except where noted.

Name of Property: Erle Stillwell House
1300 Pinecrest Drive
Hendersonville
Henderson
North Carolina

Photographer: Sybil Argintar Bowers
Date of photos: June 1999
Location of original negatives: Division of Archives and History
One Village Lane
Asheville, North Carolina 28803

1. front of house, view northwest
2. sun porch, view north
February 2000
3. side and rear elevations, view southeast
February 2000
4. retaining wall and garden, view west
February 2000
5. living room, view west
6. stair hall, view east
7. master bedroom, view southwest

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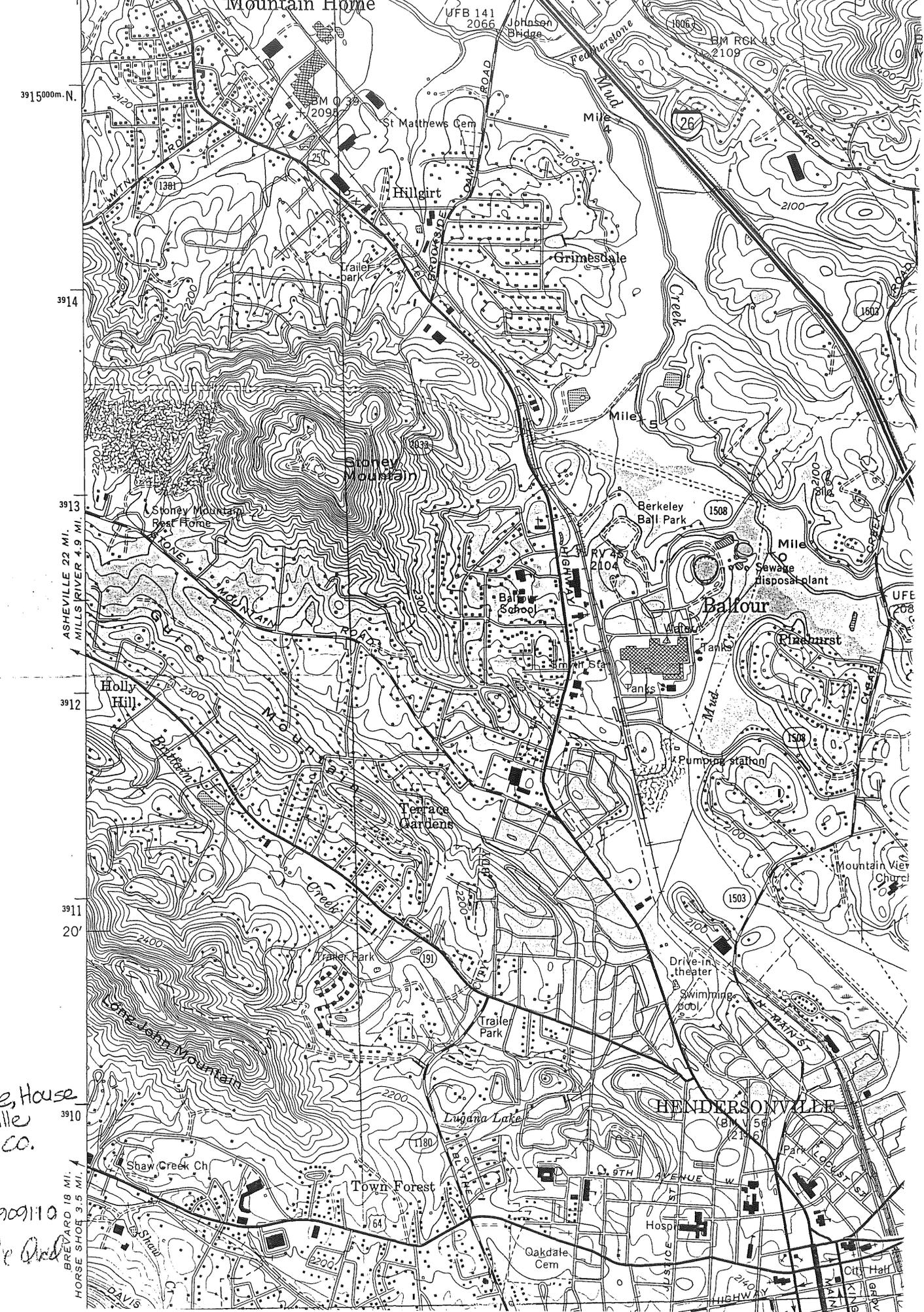
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Erle Stillwell House
Henderson County, N. C.

Exhibit

The following list of commissions in Hendersonville and the surrounding area by Erle Stillwell was compiled by John Horton, restoration specialist with the N. C. State Historic Preservation Office, and consultant Sybil Bowers, based upon their research in the archives of ENG/64 (formerly Six Associates). Precisely dated projects are presented chronologically, followed by projects with less specific or unknown dates.

Michael Schenk House (ca. 1910)
Addition to Rosa Edwards School (1912)
Queen Theater (1915)
Dr. J. L. Egerton House (bungalow) (1917)
Kantrowitz House (bungalow) (1917)
St. James Episcopal Church (ca. 1917-1919)
Gillican House (1919)
F. A. Ewbank House (1920)
Brownlow Jackson Building (ca. 1920; 1926)
Apartment Building in Hendersonville (1921; proposed only)
First Bank and Trust Company (1922)
State Trust and Citizen's Bank (1923)
First Baptist Church (1923)
Hendersonville High School (1926)
Blue Ridge School for Boys (1926)
A. Patterson House (1926)
A. A. McCall House (1926)
Alterations to the R. P. Freeze House (1926)
F. S. Wetmur House (1926)
Chamber of Commerce Building (12926, proposed only)
Brown Hotel (1926, proposed only)
Hendersonville City Hall (1927)
Etowah Grade School (1927)
Citizen's National Bank (1928)
Edneyville Grade School (1920s)
Flat Rock School (1920s)
Fletcher Elementary School (1920s)
Mills River District Public School (1920s)
Tuxedo School (1920s)
W. M. Sherard House (1920s)
Laurel Park Golf Club (1920s, proposed only)
Hafford Jones House (date unknown)
Showroom and Service station for Hendersonville Brick Company (date unknown)
Ewbank & Ewbank Office Building (date unknown)
Ewbank Brothers Store (date unknown)
E. W. Ewbank House (date unknown)



Stillwell, Erle, House
Hendersonville
Henderson Co.
UTM's
① 305600 3909110
Hendersonville Quad

ASHEVILLE 22 MI.
MILLS RIVER 4.9 MI.
BREVARD 18 MI.
HORSE SHOE 3.5 MI.

