

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Oakwood, an intact twenty-block residential section located on the edge of Raleigh's inner city, is a quiet Victorian neighborhood composed of free-standing dwellings, both cottages and imposing residences, with steep slate-covered roofs, spacious verandas, small front yards and narrow streets. The dwellings, set so densely that minute differences in architectural detail are significant, include examples of late Greek Revival, Second Empire, Queen Anne, sawnwork and bracketed vernacular Victorian, and Neo-Classical Revival styles.

The historic district is bounded on the east by Oakwood Cemetery, a large Victorian cemetery carefully landscaped in the picturesque park tradition and enhanced by ostentatious tombstones, small memorial chapels, and a gazebo. Many of the ancient oaks which remain pre-date the cemetery. Oakwood Cemetery contains one of the largest collections of late nineteenth century funerary art in North Carolina, and is one of Raleigh's most significant open spaces.

By 1872 approximately eleven houses had been constructed in the Oakwood historic district, and four of these are known to survive. The W. H. Hicks House (415 North Bloodworth Street), is a one-story frame hip roof house with a shed facade porch with paneled Doric posts. The Cameron-Gatling House (504 East Jones Street) is also a one-story frame house with a hip roof, but the facade porch has been removed. Stylistic evidence indicates that both houses were built after the Civil War. The Hoke-Broughton House (426 North Person Street), and the Strong-Stronach House (411 North Bloodworth Street), both built about 1871, are two-story frame houses with stylistic pretension. The Hoke-Broughton House, a T-shaped structure with pointed-arched windows ornamenting the gable end and an Eastlake porch, is a rare example of the Gothic Revival style in Raleigh domestic architecture. The original appearance is largely disguised by stone sheathing applied in the twentieth century. The Strong-Stronach House is a less pretentious version of the bracketed Italianate Victorian mode seen in the Andrews-Duncan House (NR) on nearby Blount Street; both were built by Thomas H. Briggs, a local contractor. The Strong-Stronach House features a bracketed gable roof with a cross-gable ornamenting each elevation, heavy paneled chimneys, a side bay window and an Eastlake porch.

By 1881, when the city limits were extended to North Boundary Street on the north and Swain Street on the east, thus encompassing the entire present historic district, the neighborhood had undergone considerable development. Among the houses built during this period are the Ellen Mordecai House (318 North Boundary Street), the three Heck Houses (NR) (504 and 511 East Jones and 304 North East streets), the Marcellus A. Parker House (304 Oakwood Avenue), the W. C. Stronach House (515 North Bloodworth Street), the John C. Winder House (504 North Person Street), the Fort House (315 North Boundary Street), and the John Upchurch House (414 North Bloodworth Street). These houses are characterized by picturesque yet restrained High Victorian styles, featuring bracketed eaves, turrets, projecting bays, wide halls with double front doors, and spacious verandas which extend across the front and around the side elevations. The classical refinement of the Ellen Mordecai House, constructed about 1875, sets it

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Wake	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7A

stylistically apart from this group. It is a symmetrical two-story frame Neo-Classical Revival house with an entrance framed by an elliptical fanlight and sidelights and a one-story facade porch with fine fluted Ionic columns. The second-story facade windows are floor-length, indicating that the porch roof may have had a railing.

The Heck Houses (NR), built between 1872 and 1875, a nearly identical trio of one-and-one-half story Second Empire style frame houses with turrets, have considerable architectural distinction. Closely related to these triplets is the Marcellus A. Parker House, a two-story frame residence with a central bracketed mansard turret, segmental-arched windows and an Eastlake porch. The W. C. Stronach House, christened "Geranium Valley" by the original owner, was built by Briggs in the early 1870s. The simple Queen Anne-style two-story frame house enlivened by cross gables with kingpost accents, segmental-arched sash windows and bracketed porches, is set on a wooded hill--the largest house site in Oakwood. The J. C. Winder House is a two-story frame bracketed Victorian house with decorative details very similar to the Strong-Stronach House. The Fort House is a charming one-story dormered frame cottage, with a steep gabled roof with bracketed eaves, a facade bay window, and French doors opening onto the front porch.

Examples of the Queen Anne and vernacular Victorian styles constructed in Oakwood during the last two decades of the nineteenth century reflect the Late Victorian flamboyance found generally in America during this period. Houses such as the Frank Stronach House (414 North Bloodworth Street), the J. D. Boushel House (401 East Jones Street), the Charles Hart House, (412 Oakwood Avenue), the H. J. Heilig House (504 North East Street), the Clark House (325 Polk Street), and the Charles Wesley Young House (515 Polk Street), reflect this era in Oakwood. The Frank Stronach House, called "Horsenose Villa" because Stronach operated a livery stable, is the only residence in Oakwood for which the original architectural plans exist. The unsigned elevations and floor plans, which are in the owner's possession, represent the complete remodeling of the existing two-story frame house built by John Upchurch in the 1870s. The design, characterized by a naive juxtaposition of picturesque features, was probably drawn by a local amateur architect soon after 1886 when Stronach acquired the house. The most striking architectural features are the dining room, which projects from the north side elevation as a large bay, the twin turrets of the facade porch which frame the entrance, and the rosette window with colored glass above the main facade entrance. Because of the almost perfect preservation of house and grounds, the Frank Stronach House has retained its Victorian ambiance to a greater degree than any other house in Oakwood.

The J. D. Boushel House, built between 1888 and 1891, is a more articulated version of the Frank Stronach House and must have been designed by the same architect. The Hart House, another large Queen Anne-style residence, was built between 1897 and 1906, and represents a more sophisticated stage in the

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Wake	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7B

development of this style in Oakwood, the design probably taken from a published plan book. The house features exposed paneled chimneys, turrets, a bracketed overhang, decorative lancet windows, and a facade gable accented with bargeboards. The Clark House, built between 1895 and 1903, is a large two-story frame house with Queen Anne detail. The H. J. Heilig House, a frame cottage, is perhaps the most successful of the Queen Anne-style houses. Built soon after 1897, the house is capped by a steep hip roof from which rises a polygonal cupola with windows. A large facade cross-gable with sawn-work bargeboard accentuates the playful character of the unique structure, which resembles Victorian coastal cottages in New England. The C. W. Young House, a charming example of the cottage group in Oakwood with cross-gabled facades, French doors and bracketed porches, was constructed by T. H. Briggs between 1883 and 1886.

The most closely related group of houses in Oakwood, and the only large-scale building effort by an individual, is the cluster of brick houses on Elm Street known as "Pullentown" after R. S. Pullen, the builder. These one and two-story houses were built between 1881 and 1891; some have bare brick walls, and some were stuccoed at the time of construction and coursed and painted in imitation of brick in best Victorian sham tradition (probably because of inferior brick). These eight houses--519 Oakwood Avenue and 401, 404, 408, 410, 415, and 416 Elm Street (and probably 308 North East Street)--are so closely related in construction and style that it is likely that the same designer and builder were responsible for the entire group. The severity of the masonry houses is softened by sprightly sawnwork porches with bracketed eaves, flat-paneled ornament in the gable ends and facade cross gables, and French doors opening onto the front porches. The stylistic simplicity and warmth of the red brick and gray slate roofs of these buildings creates the most cohesive and striking streetscape in the entire district.

By 1903 the Carey J. Hunter House at 400 North Person Street, the first and finest example of the Neo-Classical Revival in Oakwood, had been built. It is distinguished by an octagonal cupola with oval windows, an Ionic porch, and extremely fine woodwork. Between 1909 and 1914, a small building boom occurred on three blocks of Polk Street. Existing houses were either demolished or remodeled to create large residences in the popular return to classical models. The Douglas House (425 North Bloodworth Street), the Ward House (400 Polk Street), the Moser House (409 Polk Street), the Heilig House (501 Polk Street), and the J. L. O'Quinn House (614 Polk Street), form this noteworthy group of Neo-Classical Revival houses. Common features of these two-story frame houses are pedimented cross gables with lunette windows, pedimented dormers, ornate entrances with leaded glass transoms and sidelights, wrap-around classical porches, and piano bays with small stained glass windows. The few remaining gaps in the streetscape of the Oakwood neighborhood were filled in the 1920s and 1930s by bungalows.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☒ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Oakwood, a twenty-block area representing the only intact nineteenth century neighborhood remaining in Raleigh, is composed predominantly of Victorian houses built between the Civil War and 1914. Its depressed economic state during most of the twentieth century preserved the neighborhood until 1971, when individuals began its revitalization. The great variety of Victorian architectural styles represented by the houses reflects the primarily middle-class tastes of the business and political leaders of Raleigh for whom they were built, as well as the skill of local architects and builders. Oakwood is a valuable physical document of Southern suburban life during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The Raleigh City Directory of 1881, in noting the post-war boom of the city, observed that

The growth of the city, though great in all parts, has been mainly in the eastern and northern portions. Since 1870 the progress made in those portions is really wonderful. Shady streets and rows of elegant houses stand where, but a short time past, were but bare fields or woods.

The northeastern portion of Raleigh--a neighborhood which came to be known as Oakwood because of the proximity of Oakwood Cemetery, established in 1869 on the eastern boundary of the area--is the only intact area referred to in the above passage still in existence. The more pretentious post-Civil War neighborhood centering on Blount Street has been all but destroyed by state government expansion, and most of the "elegant houses" centering on New Bern Avenue in East Raleigh are gone.

The dense woods of northeast Raleigh, known since Moses Mordecai's purchase of the tract in 1819 as "Mordecai Grove," was sold off in parcels after the Civil War. A large portion of this section was set aside as a cemetery. In 1867 Henry Mordecai donated several acres on what is now Oakwood Avenue as a Confederate cemetery. According to one account, the first interments were emergency re-burials of Confederate dead (February 22, 1867), when citizens transferred remains from the former Confederate cemetery, which had been claimed by the Federal government as a Union cemetery. The Raleigh Cemetery Association purchased twenty-two acres surrounding the Confederate cemetery from Mordecai and established "Oakwood Cemetery, Sleeping Place among the Oaks." From its dedication in

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Wake	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

3A

1869 the cemetery has been the resting place of Raleigh citizens, including such notables as governors Aycock, Bragg, Fowle, Holden, Swain, and Worth; the famous nineteenth century jurists Richmond Pearson and Barthlomew F. Moore, and World War I secretary of the Navy and noted editor, Josephus Daniels. Adjoining the Confederate section is the Jewish section, containing the graves of Raleigh's nineteenth century Jewish citizens whose stones bear Hebrew inscriptions. Beginning in 1868, the majority of the remaining land was bought by developers who in turn subdivided it into building lots. The two major developers in Oakwood were Colonel Jonathan McGee Heck, an enterprising Raleigh businessman with interests in iron manufacturing, and Richard Stanhope Pullen, an entrepreneur best remembered for his donation of land in West Raleigh for North Carolina's first land-grant college and of a large wooded tract as the first public city park. W. C. and A. B. Stronach, James McKee, and Thomas H. Briggs were also important speculators.

T. H. Briggs operated a hardware store, a sash and blind factory and general wood shop, and a construction company. The 1866-1867 North Carolina Business Directory lists "Briggs, Dodd & Hicks, Architects & Builders." Briggs not only developed property himself; he also worked closely with other businessmen in developing Oakwood. The "journals" and "building books" which Briggs kept from 1847 to his death in 1886, all of which are extant, record his role as contractor for the construction of a number of Oakwood houses. The entries reveal that Briggs employed a large team of carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers, and painters, and that he supplied from his wood-working factory and through his hardware firm nearly all of the materials needed in the construction. Although occasionally an account entry indicated the importation of architectural features, as, for example, "boxes of glass from Philadelphia," advertisements for the woodworking factory indicate that sash, mantels, newels, molding and millwork of all descriptions were produced by Briggs himself. The ledgers are a treasury of building methods and vocabulary. The 1871 construction accounts of the W. C. Stronach House give the anatomy of the mantels (typical of the standard Oakwood mantel from c. 1870 to 1890), consisting of chamfered pilasters supporting a chamfered frieze, molded cornice, and curved shelf. The ingredients of the three Stronach mantels were: 72 feet of varying sizes of double dressed lumber, 6 feet of scotia, 18 feet of bed molding, 5 pounds of nails, and 2½ days time. According to family tradition, the imitation marble slate mantels found in several of the Briggs-built houses are the result of a trip which Briggs made to New York. The designs for the houses which Briggs built were probably occasionally provided by him and occasionally by other local architect-builders such as William Percival (before the Civil War), G. S. W. Appleget, and W. J. Hicks, all of whom appear frequently in the Briggs account books. The Briggs-built houses in Oakwood are modest but pleasing examples of High Victorian domestic architecture. The use of French doors and floor-length windows opening from the front rooms onto spacious piazzas and latticed rear service porches represents the architectural adaptation to the North Carolina climate of the Second Empire, Italianate, and Eastlake styles. Briggs's sons continued these enterprises following his death.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Wake	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)
8B

The new suburb of Oakwood was settled in large part by business and political leaders who were involved in Raleigh's recovery and progress following the Civil War. Among the most prominent Oakwood residents during the 1870s were George V. Strong, General Robert F. Hoke, Major John C. Winder, W. C. Stronach, and Marcellus A. Parker. Strong, the original owner of 411 North Bloodworth Street, one of the four earliest houses remaining in Oakwood, had distinguished himself as a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1861 and as district attorney for the Confederacy. In 1874-1875, soon after moving to Oakwood, he served as a state legislator. Major General Robert F. Hoke, the builder of 426 North Person Street, another of the four oldest buildings extant in the neighborhood, had brilliant careers as soldier and industrialist. His military record under General Robert E. Lee earned him the title "most distinguished soldier of North Carolina." During his presidency of the North Carolina Car Works, he is credited with an important role in the completion of the Georgia and Carolina railroad, giving a through line on the Seaboard system to Atlanta. Major John C. Winder, who built 504 North Person Street beside General Hoke's residence, was also a railroad builder. As general manager of the Seaboard Air Line, Winder was instrumental in the building of the Raleigh and Augusta Air-Line to Hamlet, with connections to Charlotte, Cheraw, etc. W. C. Stronach, who built the house at 515 North Bloodworth Street, was a prominent merchant and in 1896 president of the Raleigh Savings Bank. Stronach was active in civic affairs and was primarily responsible for establishing the Civil War Veterans' Home in Raleigh in 1890. Marcellus Parker, who built the first house on Oakwood Avenue (number 304) as his residence, was a wealthy cotton and tobacco broker.

Later notable residents were Needham Broughton, Frank Stronach, C. J. Hunter, J. Y. Joyner, and J. M. Kennedy. Needham Broughton, brother of Governor J. M. Broughton, lived at 426 North Person Street, the former Hoke House, from 1883 to 1900. Broughton was a state legislator and was active in religious and educational endeavors, serving as a trustee of both Meredith College and North Carolina State University. James Yadkin Joyner, who resided at 304 East Jones Street from 1905 to 1932, was state superintendent of public instruction from 1902 to 1919, when the state system of public high schools was created. Carey J. Hunter, builder and lifetime resident of the house at 400 North Person Street, was a trustee of Meredith College for many years. James M. Kennedy, an important early twentieth century Raleigh architect, lived at 612 Polk Street during his first years in Raleigh.

Following World War I, as the auto came into general use and fashionable neighborhoods developed on Raleigh's outskirts, second generation Oakwood residents moved away, and the large residences became boarding or apartment houses. By 1970 the area appeared destined for urban renewal. In 1970-1971 however, the purchase and rehabilitation of several houses sparked a general neighborhood revitalization. Approximately twenty-five houses are now in various stages of renovation, and Oakwood has become one of Raleigh's tourist attractions. The physical charm and remarkable state of preservation of Oakwood and the presence of strong citizens' neighborhood association insure

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Wake	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8C

it a secure position in downtown Raleigh. A proposed north-south freeway would bisect the neighborhood, but it is hoped that the strengthening of the neighborhood plus the use of Person and Blount streets for access to the proposed southern section of the Raleigh beltline, may prevent its construction. (See enclosed newspaper article.)