

# OAKWOOD TO OAKWOOD II

*Bruce Miller*

707



ALBERT BARDEN  
TUNBRIDGE — WELLS  
KENT — ENGLAND  
OCT. 21, 1888  
OCT. 2, 1953

*More lives and homes of people who lived in or  
developed Raleigh's Historic Oakwood — and stayed.*



OAKWOOD CEMETERY

FUTURE  
HISTORIC OAKWOOD  
DISTRICT

*Detail from Drie's "Bird's Eye View of the City of Raleigh" (1872)*

OAKWOOD  
TO  
OAKWOOD  
II



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*More lives and homes of people who lived in or developed  
Raleigh's Historic Oakwood – and stayed.*

*by  
Bruce Miller*

# DEDICATION

Dedicated to the people of Oakwood – District and Cemetery, past and present – who for a century and a half have built, maintained and cherished these several hundred acres of the Capital City. The future of this special place may be uncertain in 2017, but its past is carved in stone and in the hearts of those who have worked to preserve its historic character.

# COVER PHOTO

The family of photographer Albert Barden at 707 North Bloodworth Street in Oakwood (*ca* 1917); Albert shown front row, right (see page 58).

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## BIOGRAPHIES

*As in Volume I, the biographical sketches listed below are in a sequence one might follow on a (meandering!) Walking Tour of Oakwood Cemetery, beginning inside the Main Gate. Burial Sections for each individual are listed in the essay headings; the dots on the Cemetery map locate approximate gravesites within each Section. For more detail, use the "Search" feature on the Oakwood Cemetery website, <http://historicoakwoodcemetery.org>. A "Street Guide" in the back of this book offers page references for Oakwood District addresses mentioned in the essays. Please note: This book is not primarily intended as a guide; anyone using it while touring the Cemetery or the District will find brochures – available for each – very useful.*

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# FOREWORD

Raleigh's Oakwood District is more than a "neighborhood" – it is an irreplaceable urban resource, a downtown jewel of a place that once benefited from its geography but now, in 2017, may be threatened by it.

Five years ago an architecture historian found the residential district's salient quality to be its "intactness"; it is, she noted, an unusually large "collection of homes...so thoroughly preserved," not isolated structures as in many such neighborhoods in North Carolina and beyond. Today, some 600 contributing Victorians reflect the "period of significance," 1870-1938, of Raleigh's first local Historic District. Even if that were all there was to it, most American cities would be thrilled to have these soaring Queen Annes, Second Empires and classic bungalows as a downtown venue – but there is more...

The preserved homes of the Historic District abut Oakwood Cemetery, another repository of the Capital City's past. Founded in 1867 by the women of Raleigh, a Confederate graveyard northeast of town honored soldiers not welcome in National Cemeteries; two years later city fathers, prompted by William Edward Anderson, expanded that burial ground by chartering the private Raleigh Cemetery Association, dba "Oakwood". Over the past century and a half, hundreds who lived in those neighboring Victorian homes have chosen to be buried in that Cemetery. The houses and the burial ground were conjoined in a National Register Historic District in 1974, creating a remarkable memorial to countless Tar Heels who helped build Raleigh and the state.

Those "countless Tar Heels" who lived and died here were a mixed lot. The towering, "signed" obelisk memorial to Carey Hunter, for instance, complements the man's striking home in the District; together they represent wealth, business success and social status. Hunter's neighbor, Marcellus Parker, paid for a magnificent house and an imposing, black granite tombstone that reflect the same confidence and prestige. Yet, a block away stands the residence of George Partin, a one-armed veteran, post-Civil War janitor and contemporary of Hunter and Parker whose tombstone is difficult to find, much less read. Also hard to find is the small, lichen-covered grave marker of Thomas Tillinghast, a dedicated teacher of the exceptional; yet his home, gone now, stood across Bloodworth Street from that of William Douglass, a prominent attorney and contemporary whose gravestone proudly locates his family in the Beechwood Section. Not far from Douglass is the plot of locomotive engineer Frederick Farmer, with no monument at all; Farmer and Douglass were neighbors for a time at Polk and Bloodworth, both houses extant. Just inside the Cemetery's Main Gate is the family plot of wealthy developer Stanhope Pullen; Manuel Arnaiz, a young stonemason recently arrived from Spain, learned to market

tombstones in the 1920s just outside that gate. Now the Pullen and Arnaiz families lie side-by-side.

In fact, Oakwood today takes pride that its first 150 years are marked by the diversity of both its populace and its Victorian-era architecture. To be sure, the families who bought the initial \$100 shares of the Raleigh Cemetery Association, plots in the new burial ground and, often, homes in Oakwood were of a post-Civil War upper crust. Decades later, as many “respectable” families moved to new, upscale suburbs to the north and west of downtown – *eg*, Hayes Barton, Cameron Park – their Oakwood homes became apartments and boarding houses for workers who “rolled up their sleeves” on the job. Among a random survey of nearly 100 men and women made by the Cemetery’s Charlene Stell in 2016 were some 70 individuals who lived and died in the District during the period *ca* 1925-1950 and were buried in Oakwood; they showed a broad range of occupations – carpenters and clerks, railroad men and merchants, *et al* (the occupations of nearly all females were either unlisted or “housewife”). Largely missing from this group were “professionals,” the doctors, attorneys, bank officers, and business executives who had moved on.

Through it all the Cemetery prospered and the homes survived, modest Craftsman bungalows alongside imposing Neoclassicals and their sisters. In the 1970s a small group of “pioneers,” respectful of the lives that had passed this way and the structures they left behind, created the Society for the Preservation of Historic Oakwood, fought off a threatened expressway through the heart of the District and laid the groundwork for an era of restoration. The District and the Cemetery soon gained their “historic” designations, and Oakwood again became a place not only socially desirable but also convenient to a booming downtown led by those pushing growth to the limit.

Ah, but there’s the rub. Whereas preservationists once did battle with a city expressway and absentee landlords, in the twenty-first century they recognize that the threat to the District’s historic “intactness” comes from new and unexpected sources: area architects, uneasy around Victorian styles; some realtors, claiming this vital and vibrant District ought to “evolve”; a minority of residents within the District perhaps unfamiliar with the *sturm und drang* of the past. Some of these have actually urged the city to approve modern architecture in heretofore Historic Districts, this despite the absence of any Modernist-style structure in Oakwood through nearly 150 years of its existence. Raleigh’s historic areas are not immune to the damage brought to San Francisco and other downtown areas by the prosperity of the moment. It will take vigorous effort by those who know and cherish the heritage of Oakwood – its people, its homes, its burial ground – to maintain the District’s special character, its unique “spirit of place.”

# A NOTE ON THE ESSAYS

Many of the biographical sketches here appeared first in Oakwood's award-winning newsletter, *The Oakwood News*, since 2015; others may yet appear there. Those that have already been published have been reviewed, revised as necessary, and illustrated anew for this volume.

Within each essay, “**HOC**” appears after a name if that person, along with the featured subject of the piece, is interred in Historic Oakwood Cemetery. The text may note others buried there, also. **CSA**: Confederate States of America.

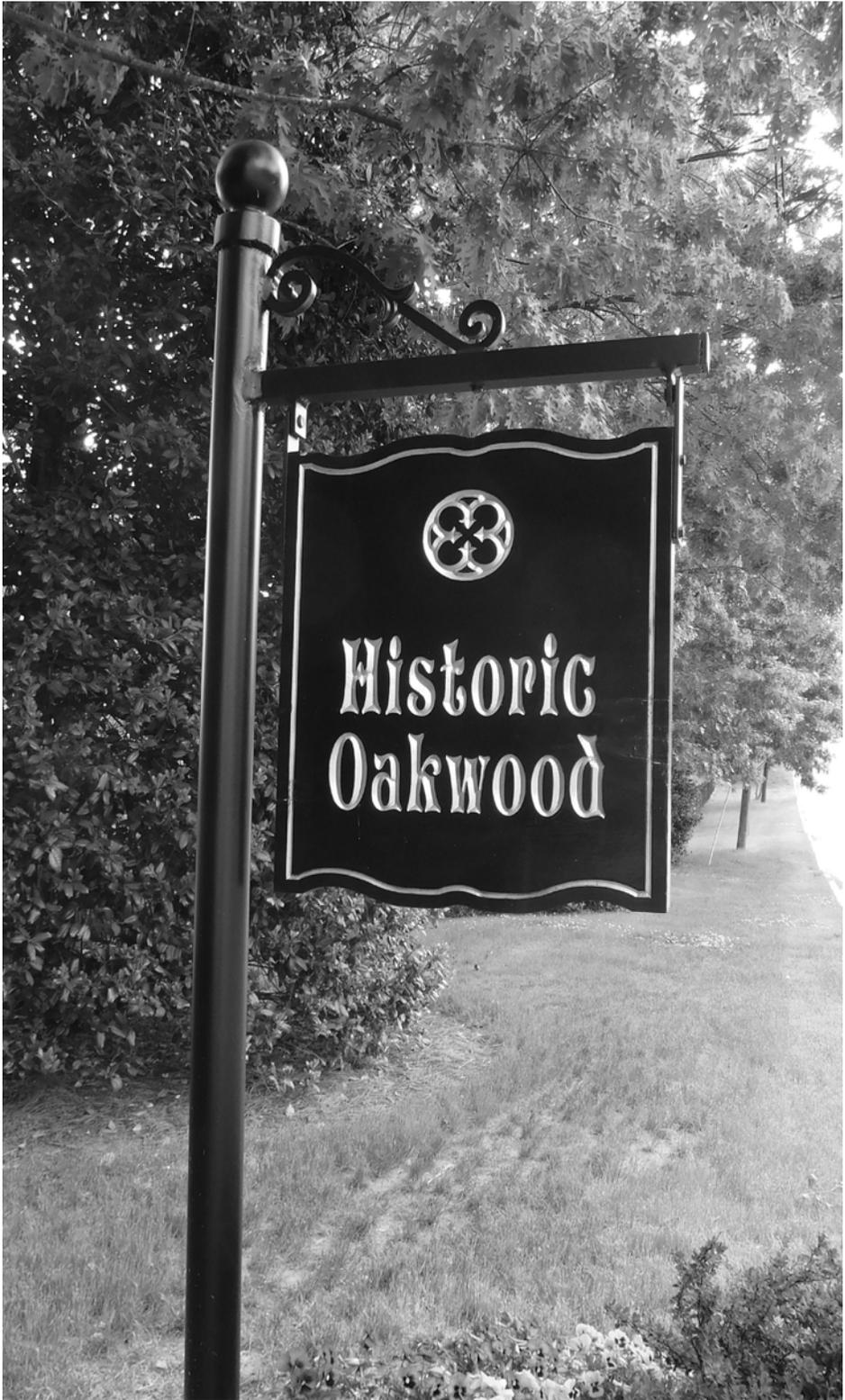
I have used the capitalized term “District” to refer to the residential Historic District of Oakwood, exclusive of the Cemetery; it is the first local Raleigh Historic District, so designated in 1975. Both the District and the Cemetery are included together in the National Register Historic District (1974).

## PHOTO CREDITS

- Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina: Barden family (cover); Wynne (p 5); Poe (p 8); Union Station (p 11); Tyree car/float (p 21); White/White's plant (p 26); Riddick (p 30); Cowper (p 35); Alderson (p 37); Broughton (p 50); Watson (sketch, p 56); Barden (p 58); Barden (p 59); Ball (p 66); Patton (p 73); Wolfe shop (p 102)
- *Raleigh Times*, Rizo (p 45)
- Goodwin, *Who's Who in Raleigh...* (1916), Sketches: Hunter (p 16); Parker (p 16); Douglass (p 23) .
- “From Days Gone By,” Find a Grave: Tyree (p 20)
- Augusta Bernadette Turner: Turner (p 98)
- Sandy Scherer, *The Oakwood News*: Miller (p 112)
- Contemporary house and monument photos are by the author.

## COVER & BOOK DESIGN

- Rex Michael, Cybergraph Advertising, Inc.



# THANKS

While there is one writer's name on the book cover, this second *Oakwood to Oakwood*, like the first, has been a group project, and sincere thanks go to the many people who are part of that group.

The Oakwood Cemetery staff led by Executive Director Robin Simonton helped with every aspect of the book: Charlene Stell's research provided the names of many who met the basic criteria for inclusion here – a residency (even a brief one) in the Oakwood District, a longer one in the Cemetery. Jorja Frazier supplemented such information, while Sam Smith and Charles “Wink” Batts assisted with photography on the grounds. Robin offered invaluable information, advice and encouragement throughout.

This writer spent many hours in the State Library because the resources there are so vast and the assistance so good; thanks to staffers Steve Case, Kay Tillotson, Beth Hayden, Erin Bradford, Rebecca Hyman and the others whose names I've missed. Archivists Ian Dunn and Kim Anderson are always wonderfully helpful with photos and Karl Larson with information on just about any aspect of Raleigh history.

Research help also came from Charlie Blunt IV with his compilations of Christ Church registers and the map records of CL Mann; Barbara Freedman, with information on Raleigh's Jewish families; Anne Fleming Hunter, with memories of old Oakwood; Gary and Doris Jurkiewicz and their Stronach file; Bernadette Turner with memories of her parents; Joy Weeber, an Oakwood stalwart and partner of Ron Mace; Mary Lu Wooten and Robbie Wooten; the Riddle family, who introduced us to policeman Alderson; Eagle White, Ann Lawrance and Mary Barham; the Farmer family, descendants of engineer Frederick; Holden, Michelle and Ed Richards for material on the Dughis; my brother Thom Miller, an extraordinary researcher of online records; Darrow Johnson for Harvey Bumgardner anecdotes and information on sundry topics; and Matthew Brown, Oakwood historian, preservationist, and walking reference library.

A special thanks to former English teacher Sharon Beineke, whose proofreading of most of the essays here taught me to write for others, not for myself. Thanks, too, to “old timers” Chuck Gooch, Joe Freed and Bill Hutchins, whose research into and familiarity with many in Oakwood Cemetery add a personal touch to a number of these essays.

I am grateful, too, to Rex Michael and Ray Stephens of Cybergraph for their creativity and patience as they helped pull this book together.

Finally, to City Council members Russ Stephenson, David Cox and Kay Crowder who, like many earlier Councilmen but alone among those of 2017, understand the point of a City-designated “historic district.”



OAKWOOD  
TO  
OAKWOOD  
II

# MANUEL GOMEZ ARNAIZ

(1890-1949)

*Stonecutter*

314 LINDEN AVENUE TO  
602 EAST LANE STREET TO  
HOC, PULLEN SECTION, PLOT 4A



His work has been on public display for decades. An easy stroll through Capitol Square can give one a sense of the range of his creations, from the two mammoth blocks (each over seven tons, shown) that comprise the memorial to Samuel Ashe **HOC** on the NW lawn to the simple “second cornerstone” he carved in 1933 for the Centennial Celebration of the Capitol’s dedication. Ironically, both “patriotic” markers were crafted by a man who had been in the country a short time but who would quickly become an exemplar of the grand “melting pot” that was America before “diversity” became chic...

Manuel Arnaiz came to the USA from the city of his birth, Santander, Spain, in 1908. It is likely that one of his first stops was Barre, Vermont, the self-proclaimed “Granite Center of the World,” with a population that had soared in the late 1800s-early 1900s with European immigrants, including Arnaizes, eager to work the giant quarries. There Manuel gained experience with stone carving and design from Italian craftsmen before coming to Carolina. He first received notice in Raleigh *ca* 1915, boarding with the Patrick Jones family on E Davie Street; in 1918 he married Jessie Jones (1898-1985, **HOC**), and the young couple continued to live in her home. Manuel soon began work with Cooper Monuments, crafting cemetery markers for display in Oakwood and other area cemeteries. By the mid-‘20s he was working for another stonecutter, Paul Campbell, and that job brought him to the Oakwood District as a resident.

From a family of stonecutters, Paul Campbell **HOC** went his own way in the late ‘20s and set up shop at 314 Linden Avenue, strategically placed directly opposite the Main Gate of Oakwood Cemetery. Today the corner is the Henderson Memorial Park, but in Arnaiz’s day a house filled much of that space; a Sanborn map from 1950 locates an auto repair area on the east side of the property that probably was once the marble yard. City Directories for 1930

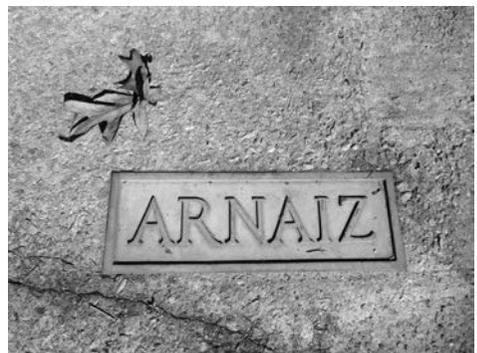
and '31 show Arnaiz living in this home, perhaps as a convenience, perhaps as security for the business; in 1932 he briefly lived a block away at 602 E Lane before moving his family to E Martin Street. He is known to have made “barrels” of wine (Spanish?) in the '30s with John Fleming **HOC** in the basement of the latter’s home, extant at 304 N Person Street on the corner with E Lane Street.

Perhaps it was the frustration of seeing his firm’s name instead of his own on the tombstones he created that drove Arnaiz in 1937 to open his own shop at the corner of Seawell Avenue and E Lane Street, close by the Oakwood District. He took over that business from a fellow Spaniard, upgraded it with modern equipment, and ran it until his dying day. By that time everyone sentient in town must have known his name, for he ran a major marketing campaign for years based on large-scale newspaper advertising, some of it perhaps “hard-nosed” (eg, at Christmas, 1937: “Don’t Forget Your Loved Ones Who Are Dead”). Many ads promoted tombstone “specials,” but all made no secret of the pride Arnaiz took in his work.

Despite his business success and reputation as an artist, when Manuel Arnaiz died of cancer in 1949, the city remembered him as much for his good works as his carved works. A Mason/Shriner and an Odd Fellow, he was regularly involved in lodge activities, from food drives to parades and picnics; he was active, too, in both the downtown Baptist and Presbyterian Churches, often serving as a pallbearer for fellow citizens. His three children clearly had no problem “naturalizing”: Daughter Mildred **HOC** was a regular part of social and music scenes; Manuel, Jr. **HOC** carried the nickname “Pete” as an all-star baseball/softball player and a gunner in B-24s during WWII; and Everette became a highway patrolman “down east”.

Yet as quickly and completely as Manuel Arnaiz and his family had blended into the “melting pot,” he never lost his sense of heritage. Some of his comedy skits at picnics or fund-raisers were in Spanish, and the Raleigh police could call on him to serve as translator when needed. Just weeks before he died, Arnaiz donated the cornerstone for a new synagogue at St. Mary’s and Johnson Streets and gave a brief talk at the dedication. Spanish or Jewish, he said, “We are all children of God.”

The Arnaiz plot, with his name prominently displayed, greets visitors entering Oakwood’s Main Gate, steps from where he once plied his craft.



# WILLIAM ANDREW WYNNE

(1869-1951)

*Athlete; Innovator; Entrepreneur*

404 ELM STREET To HOC, PULLEN SECTION, PLOT 5



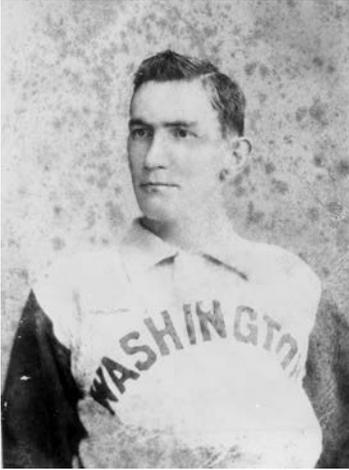
Richard Stanhope Pullen (1822-1895) was a generous man. It was said that, if he approved the cause, “his hand went unhesitatingly into his pockets and came out with generous donations” (*N&O*). Community “causes” he approved, from Peace Institute (now William Peace University) to a 70-acre public park for the city, are still with us – they, plus

anonymous donations to the needy, were Pullen’s way of giving “happiness and rest to his fellow citizens.”

This real estate developer was generous, too, with his own extended family, to whom, at death, he left his substantial estate. Pullen’s will details the 34 properties bequeathed to his heirs, almost all in Wake County and all sold off by 1899 for \$55,797 (\$1.7M in 2017), to be divided six ways. These properties included some nine plots in Oakwood’s Elm Street neighborhood, most with homes on them; they encompassed the entire west side of the block between Polk Street and Oakwood Avenue and several lots on the east side – all part of what is known today as “Pullentown.” The bequeathal did not include three homes at 404, 408 and 410 Elm Street, built for Pullen in the late 1880s and given to three of his nieces.

The large house at 404 Elm, on the corner of Oakwood Avenue, serves as something of a visual anchor for the rest of Pullentown. Built *ca* 1888 and remodeled a bit over the years, the then 10-room home is of stuccoed brick, as were Pullen’s other constructions on Elm; unlike most of the others, stucco remains on 404. The home was Pullen’s gift to niece Lucy E. Culbreth (1838-1907), the daughter of Emeline L. Pullen, Stanhope’s sister. Emeline married Daniel Culbreth, a preacher who, in true Methodist fashion, had accepted appointments to at least 33 different parishes over his 48-year career. Perhaps it was Daniel’s itinerant life, perhaps Emeline’s health (she died young in 1854) that had Lucy living for a time with her uncle Stanhope’s family outside Raleigh.

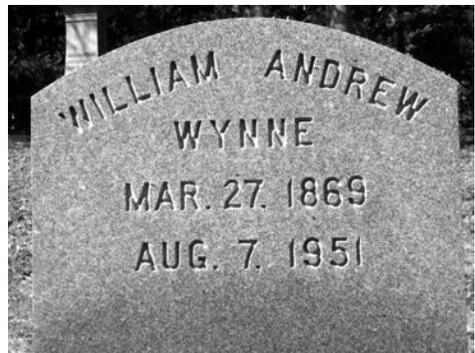
In 1865 Lucy married farmer William W. Wynne, a union that produced what must be one of the most “legendary” (*N&O*) personalities in the history of



the Capital City, one that has earned an extended profile in the prestigious *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*. As a young man, William Andrew “Will” Wynne was an extraordinary athlete: a national champion biker (he is said to have pedaled from Raleigh to Portland, ME, in 12 days in 1891, this before paved roads and titanium bike frames); a college baseball pitcher when one needn’t be enrolled to play (he apparently never attended college; Wake Forest records do not support a suggestion that he enrolled there); and an early Tar Heel in the majors (Senators, pitched one [losing] game, 31 August 1894, ERA 6.75).

Wynne’s energy as an entrepreneur reflected his glory days as an athlete. A telegrapher, later an innovator in an era of technological change, his Raleigh Telephone Company, eventually part of Southern Bell, serviced the first phones in the city. This venture may have prompted him to create what is said to be one of the first trucks in Carolina: A photo in State Archives shows the contraption hauling a massive telephone pole, *ca* 1903. He left the phone business in favor of radio, a technology new to Raleigh in the early 1920s. Wynne ran not only a radio store on South Salisbury Street but also the city’s first commercial radio station, broadcasting as WWRC (Wynne Radio Company) in 1924, later under new owners as WPTF, still on AM in 2017.

The house at 404 Elm eventually became Will’s through inheritance. He likely spent little time there: City Directories have him living in several other locations through the years, at the turn of the century at an unnumbered address on Oakwood Avenue that could have been this house. As an owner with Oakwood Avenue frontage, he signed a petition to pave that street in 1915. Although he married Mary Avera in 1896 and fathered three children, he hardly seems the sort to be interested in homes – they neither spark nor move fast enough. It is likely Will simply enjoyed the rental income from Lucy’s house, eventually settling for many years at the more upscale 323 Hillsboro Street; he and Mary sold 404 Elm in 1920. At death they parted, he to Oakwood’s Pullen-Wynne-Culbreth extended family plot, she (d. 1970) to the Avera family plot in Magnolia Hill.



# WILLIAM THOMAS ARTHUR

(1911-2001)

*State Bureaucrat; Property Owner*

401 NORTH PERSON STREET TO  
HOC, BEECHWOOD SECTION, DIVISION T, PLOT 23



A “character” is one whose quirks often become the stuff of amusing stories after death. Raleigh has had its share of characters, with Tommy Arthur another likely candidate.

Although he would spend his productive years in North Carolina, William Thomas Arthur was born in Virginia, with all the geography associated with his youth – Nansemond, Somerton, Whaleysville – now absorbed by the city of Suffolk. He spent four years at Elon College, where he graduated in 1933 with a degree in business; his yearbook quote reads, “A jolly unselfish personality is the greatest gift of all.” Arthur settled in Raleigh soon after graduation, and by the late ’30s he had taken a job as a clerk with the state’s Unemployment Compensation Commission (UCC). He must have been one of that agency’s first hires: Created by the legislature in the Depression year 1936, the UCC wrote its first unemployment benefit check in January, 1938. Tommy Arthur was still there well past the UCC name change in 1947 to the Employment Security Commission, as we know it today.

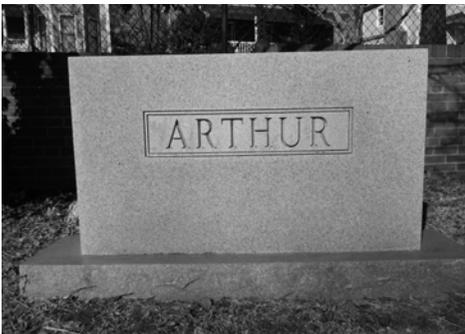
Within just a few years of his arrival in the capital, Arthur made two major additions to his life: In 1939 he bought the house on the edge of Oakwood at 401 N Person Street and, in November, 1942, took a wife, Eleanor Finch, to share it. Their marriage may have been hastened by World War II, for six months earlier Arthur, all 5’7”, 118 pounds of him, had enlisted in the US Army. Eleanor (1917-1999), with her husband in the service and two years of college training as a bookkeeper, also went to work for the UCC, the beginning of a 45-year career with the agency. Upon release from the Army in December 1945, Sergeant Tommy Arthur himself returned to the UCC.

Arthur filled his spare time supplementing his income with property deals in and around Wake County, including the Oakwood District. In the early ‘40s he obtained the commercial building (at the time three separate stores) at 223-225 N Bloodworth Street, addresses that over the years included a variety of businesses, from cafes and drug stores to a Piggly Wiggly. In the late ‘40s Arthur built the small frame shop (a furniture business, later an antique store

and beauty parlor) on East Lane behind the corner store and the two-story, brick-fronted building next door, with an apartment upstairs, shops below. Mary Lucretia Wooten purchased the corner with its commercial structures in 1985 and expanded her popular Side Street restaurant to include the entire Bloodworth Street building.

Many in Raleigh today who knew Tommy Arthur may have an opinion as to whether he lived up to the implications of his yearbook quotation. He was often seen chewing on an unlit cigar (doctor's orders) as he drove through town, for a time in an Edsel. To some he was a warm conversationalist and he and Eleanor a "sweet couple," she lining the yard with flowers; but a one-time boarder at 401 remembers that he used to "spy" on her and a suitor as they sat on his porch swing. Love him or not, Arthur's salient characteristic seems to have been his parsimony – he knew how to squeeze a nickel, perhaps a result of the day during the Depression when (he told a colleague) he "sat down on the curb and cried" after his bank failed. He rarely spent money on his home, generally shared with multiple boarders. A renter in one of his business properties tells of his whitewashing the building with a solution so diluted it ran off the walls and over the windows in the first rain. Dealing with such problems and a big house became more difficult as Tommy and Eleanor grew older, both spending their final years in nursing homes. When Eleanor died she had a modest obituary; when Tommy passed away a year-and-a-half later in Bailey, NC, Eleanor's hometown, he had a mere death notice. Their Oakwood plot has a simple family marker; Eleanor's headstone has no date of death inscribed, he has no headstone – in death, perhaps, as in life...

The house left by the Arthurs at Person and North has its own intriguing history. The large, two-story Queen Anne was built in 1896 for Alethea Hawkins Lamar with an inheritance from her wealthy father, Raleigh & Gaston Railroad President Dr. William Joseph Hawkins HOC, whose mansion stood at the other end of the North Street block behind 401 (now a parking lot). The house passed through several hands before Arthur's '39 purchase; sixty years later he, in turn, sold it to the State of North Carolina. In 2003 the legislature authorized the sale of many historic homes in the Blount Street area, including 401, a plan delayed



by recession and false starts. Oakwood historian and preservationist Matthew Brown bought the Arthur home in 2015, a deal that became something of a cause celebre as bureaucratic red tape slowed the transfer of the property. A long-awaited closing in August of 2016 cleared the way for the restoration work denied the house for many decades.

# JAMES WILLIAM DENMARK

(1847-1922)

*Book Seller; Publisher; Bookkeeper*

404 EAST STREET, *ET AL*

TO HOC, BEECHWOOD SECTION, DIVISION H, PLOT 3A

# CLARENCE HAMILTON POE

(1881-1964)

*Editor; Publisher; Civic Leader*

404 EAST STREET, *ET AL* TO HOC, BEECHWOOD SECTION, DIV E, PLOT 2

James Denmark and Clarence Poe were both Carolina farm boys who traded the plow for the printed word; their paths crossed in Oakwood, and their state – indeed, the American South – was the better for it.

James was the first to come to Raleigh. Raised near Mount Olive in Wayne County, he was just old enough to fight for the Confederacy but not hefty enough to carry a weapon, so he found a place in the Junior Reserves as a drummer. After the War he went to Wake Forest College and became something of a bibliophile, later working for Lippincott publishers and, in 1883, opening a bookstore



Clarence Hamilton Poe

on Raleigh’s Fayetteville Street, for a time associated with publishers Edwards, Broughton & Co. However, his skill with numbers matched his passion for the word, and he eventually made his name where he could utilize both...

It was in 1886 that Leonidas L. Polk, a CSA veteran and the state’s first Commissioner of Agriculture, founded *The Progressive Farmer*, a newspaper offering farmers both advice on “best practices” and a voice in the halls of government. Polk used the paper to develop farm and labor organizations – “radical” for their day – while he made himself known as a campaigner for reform causes, including what would become the North Carolina College of Agriculture & Mechanic Arts (NCSC). Polk moved the paper from Winston (-Salem) to Hargett Street in Raleigh in 1887, where James Denmark (who earlier had married Polk’s daughter, Juanita) hired on as Business Manager.

All this fit well with Denmark’s own politics: In the 1890s he became chair of the vociferous Wake County “People’s Party,” an officer in the local Farmers Alliance, and eventually Chief Clerk of the State Treasury under Governor Dan Russell, a Republican and an avowed enemy of conservative “Bourbon” Democrats. With his detailed knowledge of state finance, Denmark – not shy with his opinions – wrote in 1898 a lengthy open letter to “Charley”

Aycock (Denmark's sarcasm!), accusing the future Democratic "machine" candidate for governor of "misrepresentation and deceit."

Into this political tumult stepped Clarence Poe, 16 years old and fresh from rural Chatham County, hired as a largely self-schooled writer for *The Progressive Farmer*; he did so well that he would become editor-in-chief in 1899. These were years of transition for the paper, too: Mrs. Polk had assumed leadership after her husband's death in 1892, and James Denmark himself bought *The Progressive Farmer* upon her passing in 1901. In 1903 (as Poe tells us in his autobiography, *My First 80 Years*) young Clarence with several stockholders used all of his savings to buy the paper (in all \$6200 went to Denmark). Poe guided *The 'Poe-gressive' Farmer* until his death, watching circulation grow from a few thousand in 1903 to nearly 1.5 million. Under Poe's leadership the paper became more apolitical than in Polk's day; in fact, Clarence would marry Alice Aycock (1886-1963), daughter of the very governor Denmark had castigated in print in 1898. Over time an increasingly regional emphasis pulled many periodical functions to Birmingham, AL, and it was from there that *Southern Living* magazine was spun off in 1966.

Save Governor Russell, all those named in this piece are buried in Oakwood Cemetery, and most lived in the District at some time. James Denmark purchased the property at 404 N East Street in 1899 (not extant; the new home on that lot faces Oakwood Avenue, #501). When Clarence Poe arrived in Raleigh, the Denmarks invited him to room with them, and he did for several years; the census of 1900 shows Poe a boarder at 404 with James Sr., still with the State Treasury, his wife, and three Denmark children. By 1901 all would move, presumably as renters, to 504 Oakwood Avenue and, by 1903, to the brick home at 519. This apparently was the end of their cohabitation: By 1905 the Denmarks had moved to a permanent home at 565 N Person Street just outside Oakwood; James left the employ of Poe's paper to work as a bookkeeper.

Clarence Poe lived at various addresses in Raleigh before he and Alice moved to "Longview" (ca 1925), a 700-acre estate east of the capital; from there he would ride his horse "Sunny Jim" to work downtown. Much of their acreage became the Longview subdivision, which, along with Poe Hall at NCSU and the Alice Aycock Poe Health Center, is just a fraction of the legacy of this remarkable man.



# WILLIAM OLIVER (WO) WOLF(E)

(1851-1922)

Stonecutter

NEW BERN AVE TO MORGAN (MORSON) & EAST STREETS TO  
RIVERSIDE CEMETERY, ASHEVILLE, NC

*NOTE: Wolf[e]'s "Oakwood to Oakwood" bio, originally published in The Oakwood News for October 2015, was a distilled version of a longer draft, "A Strange, Wild Form: Raleigh's Wolf," done earlier. That original essay is reproduced here in a slightly abridged form (some unusually graphic courtroom testimony has been removed).*

William Oliver Wolf's years in Raleigh present us with something of a "name game": He went by "WO," and few today could tell you his given names, often ignored even on legal documents in his day (and there were many); he altered the spelling of the family name forever while in Raleigh (some locals call it Wolfe's "Ral-e"), perhaps an act of personal



6 North Bloodworth Street

aggrandizement or atonement, perhaps mere whimsy; he is featured in American literature under a fictitious name he never lived to hear; and he is memorialized by the names he carved in stone, his own and those of others, during his decade in North Carolina's capital – a city renamed "Sydney" by his son, Thomas.

Born on April 10, 1851, in Pennsylvania Dutch country near Gettysburg, "WO" served in the Union Army as a stable boy, then drifted south after the War. In Baltimore a stonecutter's apprentice, in Columbia, South Carolina a worker on the statehouse, he moved on to Raleigh in 1870 where jobs could be had at the new State Penitentiary. The census of that year shows him, 20 years old, a boarder at the home of Mary Broughton, the widowed mother of a man for whom a high school would be named and grandmother of a future governor. It was in the capital that Wolf would spend the next ten years, some of the stormiest of a turbulent life.

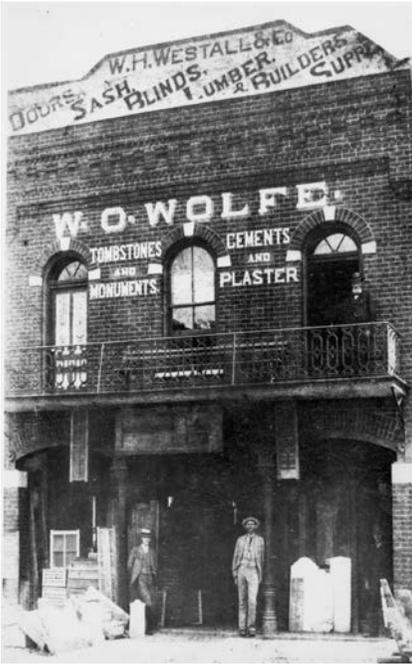
Don't go South, his family had pleaded, "those terrible rebels, those frightful people...they will kill you, my boy!" – words that clearly made little impression on this willful young man. To the contrary, he must have liked what he saw when he came into Raleigh. During the War the city had been occupied but not fought over, so unlike Columbia and Atlanta, "Reconstruction" in Raleigh was a political issue, not a thing of impoverishment and devastation. Indeed, progress was in the air: The City soon could boast of three nationally chartered

banks; development and “go-aheaditiveness” were synonymous with names like Pullen, Briggs and Heck (all **HOC**), the latter building the first of the Blount Street mansions the very year Wolf arrived. But what surely must have caught the eye of the young stonecutter was the new Oakwood Cemetery, “Sleeping Place among the Oaks,” on the northeast shoulder of town, its charter only months old, its shaded grounds already receiving interments needing names – carved names.

It is an atmosphere in which a young man with skilled hands and a business instinct might prosper, and Wolf’s early years in Raleigh are promising, financially and personally. He meets and partners with John Cayton to form a marble works specializing in tombstones, their shop on the southeast corner of Morgan and Blount Streets. Nearby, living with her family on New Bern Avenue between Bloodworth and East Streets (a house now moved to 6 North Bloodworth), is Hattie Watson, daughter of a respected photographer and, some said, the prettiest girl in town. After a brief courtship – “a neighborhood affair,” notes Wolfe scholar Richard Walser – Hattie marries WO Wolfe in her home on October 9, 1873. The young couple live in a house owned by WO, shown clearly on the Camille Drie’s *Birds Eye View of Raleigh* at the SW corner of Morgan (now Morson) and East Streets (a new house is there now), across from City Cemetery and well placed for a stonecutter.

Yet many times Hattie must rue her hasty decision to marry, for hers is not a happy home. WO – surely an intimidating figure as his son portrayed him, “a strange wild form of six feet four with cold, uneasy eyes,” with powerful hands that toil with stone and cold steel – proves ill fit for matrimony but fond of alcohol and roughing up his wife. A “spree drinker,” it is later said by his family that he would “go through a brick wall to get [a drink] when one of those spells came on.” In legal papers filed in April, 1875, Hattie contends that, within two months of their marriage, WO began to treat her with “brutal violence,” the particulars described in lurid phrases: “...called her...strumpet and whore”; “..lash her sharply with his horsewhip, until she was striped therewith,” “...thump her head against the wall”; “...placed his foot upon her neck, thereby choking her”; “drew a loaded pistol and presented [it] at her head, swearing that he would kill her if she opened her mouth...” All of which we might dismiss as contrivances of a young, regretful newlywed were her tales not so similar to those from WO’s later years with Julia, his third wife.

Alas, more than drunken violence plague this marriage, for both WO and Hattie trade legal complaints – shocking even in our day of few surprises – that the other lacks the physical capacity to consummate the marriage. Charges leaving little to the imagination fly back and forth, with both sides lawyered up with impressive legal talent: WO with Busbee & Busbee of a politically well-connected Raleigh family **HOC**, Hattie with Daniel Fowle **HOC et al**, he later governor of the state. Such talent is expensive: WO sells his house at East and Morgan to the Busbees, presumably to cover lawyer fees, while Hattie routinely



implores the Court to ensure funding from WO for her legal expenses.

Hattie finally has her day in a crowded courtroom on October 7 and 8, 1875, where WO appears on charges of assault and battery. Hattie testifies, she faints under questioning, the trial moves to day two, WO pleads guilty, the Judge defers sentencing... She has been out of WO's house for nearly a year, under the protection of her father, when, on January 14, 1876, the Court finally grants Hattie an annulment on the grounds that WO is "naturally and incurably impotent," a charge supported by respected Raleigh physician Dr. Edmund Burke Haywood HOC; she is awarded alimony of \$500 and the right to sue WO if the funds are not forthcoming. WO's

prodigious family output later in life suggests Hattie's grounds (like Wolfe's?) are fabricated as a rationale for annulment; she, in a subsequent marriage, would give birth to several children.

If a poor husband with, as it turned out, a life-long problem with drink, WO was surely a skilled stonecutter – his work on the South Carolina Statehouse columnar friezes is admired to this day. He could carve letters and flowers "freehand," boasted a daughter, "the dove, the lamb, the smooth joined hands of death..." said the son; newspapers often carried ads promoting his creations, including "gilt-edged prayer books." His work, his wife claimed, brought him some \$1200 per year. Yet, as with Hattie, his relations with his business partner were strained, as during a very public dispute over design credit for a Thomas Briggs memorial. It may have been a combination of business and domestic disputes that pulled Cayton & Wolfe apart in 1874, after which the two worked alone, with others or sometimes together. Their shops were side-by-side at Morgan and Blount for a time, and later WO had a business on Fayetteville Street; but by the end of the decade the former partners were together again.

Through the decade Cayton & Wolfe "signed" a number of stones in Oakwood Cemetery, markings often difficult to spot; WO's name on later Oakwood stones, *ie*, after the Fall of 1872, carry an 'e'. That may have been an effort to atone, to "start afresh," but if so it obviously failed over time. Knowing the man's erratic personality, however, the spelling change might have been an impulse, even a marketing ploy



inspired by ads running regularly in the Raleigh *Sentinel* at this very time for an alcoholic beverage, Wolfe's Schiedam Schnapps, "good for dyspepsia." These ads may have suggested to WO that simply adding a letter could dignify a name otherwise associated with erratic behavior.

After Hattie, WO apparently tried to change his ways. Although he never could shake alcohol, he did establish himself as a respected businessman. His name appeared often on Wake court dockets, and while the cases often involved his home life, they also included property and collection suits, some of which he won. In March of 1879 he remarried, but Cynthia Hill, with her flaming red hair, was as different from Hattie as granite is from softer marble. Nine years older than WO and tubercular, she herself was in business in Raleigh as a milliner (she sold her entire stock "at cost" a week after her marriage) and had assumed the mortgage of her family home on New Bern Avenue (today it would be in the courtyard of downtown's Terry Sanford Federal Building, at the edge of Oakwood). This woman of modest means and strong personality was able to bring some order and decorum to the tempestuous life of her husband. By 1880 they had moved to Asheville, perhaps as a hoped-for curative for her tuberculosis, perhaps to ensure a fresh start for WO.

Cynthia's mother, Martha Allen, went to the mountains with them but returned to Raleigh, died here on January 26, 1897, and rests in Oakwood Cemetery, WO's name carved boldly into her stone (probably cut in Asheville). Needham Broughton was one of her pallbearers, perhaps hearkening back nearly three decades to the days when WO lived at his mother's house.



Wolfe set up a marble shop in downtown Asheville on Court (now Pack) Square (shown opposite page) and built a house for Cynthia on Woodfin Street (his son made it famous, but it has been demolished in favor of a freeway). After Cynthia's death in 1884 WO married a third time, and over the years, between his drunken "sprees", Julia Wolfe presented him with his seven (surviving) children. WO saw special promise in his youngest: He gave the boy love and warmth, an introduction to classical poetry (WO recited it) and an education at Chapel Hill. In return, after WO's death from cancer on June 20, 1922, in Baltimore, author Thomas Wolfe gave his father immortality as "W.O. Gant" in a series of books beginning with *Look Homeward, Angel* – the "Angel" a stone symbol of WO's work outside his Asheville marble shop.

In a final irony of names, the family claims that the "symbol" was purchased, not carved by WO... "letters [carved] fair and fine" wrote Thomas Wolfe, "– but not the angel"...



# SOURCES

As with Volume I, the biographies here are based for the most part on secondary and tertiary source material; Volume II makes more use of increasingly thorough and user-friendly electronic resources than Volume I.

Criteria for inclusion in these volumes has been a residence of any duration in or at the edge of the Oakwood Historic District, burial in Oakwood Cemetery, and a personal story of some interest. When a possibility presents him or herself – perhaps through Matthew Brown’s *National Register Inventory*, records from the Cemetery, family lore, or other sources – the first stop (to confirm residence status) is Raleigh City Directories, 1870s to present, hard copy or online at *WakeCountyNCGenWeb*; then to newspaper obituaries, if available; then to *Ancestry.com* for family and census information, death certificates, etc.; then to *Newspapers.com*, especially (but not exclusively) for past issues of the *Raleigh News & Observer* and *Raleigh Times* (after 1922 these are available only on microfilm or through *Newsbank.com*). Online editions of *The Biblical Recorder*, *The Daily Tar Heel* and newspapers from around the state are helpful for particular topics. A basic biographical dossier compiled for each individual often suggests additional resources (eg, archival records, books, periodicals, personal contacts, etc.).

Despite efforts to confirm information through multiple sources and to minimize guesses and assumptions, there will be errors and omissions here, and I apologize for those. For additional sources on Oakwood see Volume I.

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#### NOTE

*The long essay on WO Wolfe is a slightly abridged version of an annotated study by this author with source material too voluminous to include here. For anyone interested, these volumes would be helpful for Wolfe's Raleigh years:*

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# STREET GUIDE

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[ ] = Not extant





# Historic Oakwood District

## Raleigh, North Carolina



Design: Cybergraph  
 Map Data: Wake County iMaps  
 District Outlines: RHDC & National Register

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