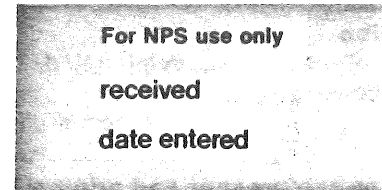


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic William Jennings Bryan House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 107 Evelyn Place not for publication

city, town Asheville vicinity of congressional district

state North Carolina code 037 county Buncombe code 021

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. Barbara Molloy

street & number 107 Evelyn Place

city, town Asheville vicinity of state North Carolina 28804

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Buncombe County Register of Deeds

street & number Buncombe County Courthouse

city, town Asheville state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Buncombe Historic Properties Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 and 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Survey and Planning Branch
N. C. Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh state N. C.

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The William Jennings Bryan House is a two-story Colonial Revival dwelling designed by the architectural firm of Smith and Carrier in 1917 and constructed shortly thereafter in the Grove Park section of Asheville. Grove Park is a quality early twentieth century "residential park" occupying several hundred acres at the foot of Sunset Mountain approximately one mile north of downtown Asheville. The imposing tile-roofed Grove Park Inn (National Register, 1972) is sited on Sunset Mountain overlooking the residence park. The Grove Park Inn golf course (formerly Asheville Country Club) claims several dozens of rolling green acres between the inn and the neighborhood's principal streets.

The Bryan House is sited prominently on the northeast corner of the intersection of tree-lined Edwin and Evelyn places facing south. The intersection is skewed so that the house actually faces into the intersection and presents its full facade to the traffic on Edwin Place, a major thoroughway to the neighborhoods to the north. All the homes in the immediate vicinity of the Bryan House date from the same 1910-1925 period and represent the conservative taste of Asheville's relatively prosperous boom-time middle class. Colonial Revival structures, shingled versions of the classic box, and a few notable bungalows rest comfortably beneath the canopy created by mature sycamores and maples dating from the development period. Mature stands of hemlock and other evergreens bound several lawns and drives and add year-round verdure to the well-kept scene.

Smith and Carrier's principal elevation for the Bryan "cottage" (so labeled on the construction drawings) is a classic bilaterally symmetrical five-bay Colonial Revival composition. One can imagine Bryan, the Great Commoner, directing English-born, Beaux-Arts-influenced R. S. Smith, who usually designed in an old English vocabulary, to give him a solidly traditional, solidly American home for his retirement years.

The house rises two full stories beneath a simple gable roof on its streetside facade. Exterior brick chimneys crowned with lightly corbeled caps and modest chimney pots frame the facade at its ends. Regularly placed green-shuttered windows display six over one sash, a slight accommodation to the contemporary treatment.

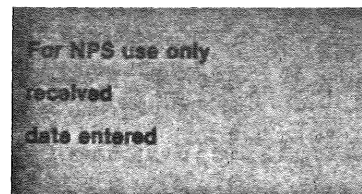
Entrance is made beneath a quietly detailed single-bay, single-story portico supported by paired boxed columns. The front door, a broad, six-panel composition with heavy brass knocker, is surmounted by a transom featuring interlaced semicircular muntins. Small wooden benches, components of the original design, flank the entrance on either side of the stoop.

Except for the delicate tracery in the entrance transom and a dentil row beneath the eave, the facade is quite plain. The building is sheathed in novelty siding with unusually deep rustication, which would add significantly to the interest of its skin; unfortunately, however, it has been covered with aluminum siding since the sixties. The present owner intends to remove the artificial siding, which also obscures the entrance transom.

As seen from the busy street in front of it, the house rests on a low uncoursed stone foundation across a flat lawn approximately forty feet deep. The difference between this prospect and the side and rear elevations is dramatic, for the lawn drops away precipitously behind a tall stone retaining wall to either side of the facade, and the foundation follows this plunge to become a full story-and-a-half on the building's back side, or north elevation. A narrow alley runs parallel to Evelyn Place behind the house and provides access to a two-car garage at the foundation's lowest level.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet DESCRIPTION Item number 7 Page one

When viewed from the rear--and as revealed by construction documents--the building appears practically as two distinct structures: (1) the garage, laundry, servants' quarters, and Mr. Bryan's office all occupying the stone and concrete basement, or foundation level, the structure of which extends to form the retaining walls which contain the earth filled-in between the street and the house; and (2) the frame and wood veneer upper portion which sits on a concrete slab that caps the elaborate foundation structure.

On the interior of the upper portion, rooms are laid out on an informal plan. One enters directly into the living room which extends across the full depth of the main body of the house on its west side. To the front on the east side is the dining room, to the rear, a pantry and kitchen, now somewhat remodeled from the original. A porch that originally extended across the rear of the house has been enclosed as a study off of the living room and as a utility space off the kitchen. The stairway to the second floor descends into the living room at the center of the house and is also accessible from the kitchen by way of a secondary run which descends from an intermediate landing. From the rear of the house stairs descend to Mr. Bryan's office and to the servants' quarters and garage. The second story contains four bedrooms, two full baths, and another porch, also enclosed.

The "American Traditional" design motif was carried through to the interior of the Bryan House to an unusual extent: most doors display traditional thumb-latch hardware and simulated wrought-iron escutcheons; principal interior doors are vertical two-panel compositions (generally associated with the later Greek Revival period in North Carolina); several secondary doors, especially in the area of Bryan's office, are more "authentic" vertical board compositions with chamfered perimeter frames. Bryan's office also features, besides a wall of built-in bookcases, a high vertical board wainscotting; the living room and dining room both feature exposed boxed-in ceiling beams; and mantels in these major spaces are incongruously formal, if authentically Early American, Georgian designs. A definite attempt was made to render the home "Colonial" throughout. An original "antiqued" shellac or varnish finish, intended, one assumes, to give the pine woodwork a crowning patina, survives unpainted through much of the house.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1917 **Builder/Architect** Smith and Carrier

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The William Jennings Bryan House is located at 107 Evelyn Place in Asheville's exclusive Grove Park section, a residential park developed during the second decade of the twentieth century by pharmaceutical magnate and leading Asheville real estate developer, E. W. Grove. Grove Park, like all of Grove's projects, came to fruition during a period of rapid growth and prosperity in Asheville. Smith and Carrier's design for the Bryan House is a thoroughgoing attempt to produce an authentic early American image. The house stands out as a rare, if not unique, exception to English-born R. S. Smith's usual "Old English" or Tudoresque domestic design vocabulary, as if the Great Commoner had required a thoroughly American home for his retirement years. When the house was designed and constructed for Bryan, late in 1917, he was nearing the end of his public career, having three times run for the presidency of the United States and having served as Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson. Bryan had come to Asheville as early as 1896 during the course of his first presidential campaign, and he visited the city on several subsequent occasions prior to establishing a residence there. He lived in Asheville for approximately two years, leaving sometime in 1919 because of his wife's failing health. He sold the house in 1920, five years prior to the Scopes Trial and his ensuing demise. For the past sixty-two years his house has served as a family residence for various owners.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- B. The Bryan House was built in 1917 as an Asheville, N. C., residence for the Populist politician, William Jennings Bryan.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 1

The William Jennings Bryan House is located at 107 Evelyn Place in Asheville's exclusive Grove Park residential section. When it was designed and constructed for Bryan, late in 1917, the Great Commoner was already nearing the end of his long career as a politician, journalist, and lecturer. Yet, the building of the house was a significant event both for Bryan and for the City of Asheville, which was caught up in its most dynamic and celebrated period of growth at the time.

William Jennings Bryan was born in Salem, Illinois on 19 March 1860, the son of Silas Lilliard and Mariah Elizabeth (Jennings) Bryan. He graduated from Illinois College in 1881, and for the next two years read law at the Union College of Law in Chicago. He began his legal practice in Jacksonville, Illinois in 1883, and during the following year married Mary Baird.¹ Their marriage of forty-one years would produce three children: Ruth Baird Bryan (born 2 October 1885), William Jennings Bryan, Jr. (born 24 June 1889), and Grace Dexter Bryan (born 17 February 1891).² In 1887 Bryan moved with his wife and first child to Lincoln, Nebraska, which was to remain his official place of residence until 1922. Here he continued the practice of law and launched his political career. In 1890 and 1892 he was elected to the United States House of Representatives, and in 1894 waged an unsuccessful campaign for the Senate. Following his defeat, he became editor-in-chief of the Omaha World Herald and increased his activities as a public speaker and lecturer on the Chautauqua circuit.³

In 1896 Bryan rose quickly to national prominence in the Democratic Party as an enthusiastic advocate for the free coinage of silver. At the Chicago convention of that year, his celebrated "Cross of Gold" speech carried him to the presidential nomination, despite the fact that he was only thirty-six years of age. During the course of the ensuing campaign, Bryan traveled more than 18,000 miles, everywhere enthraling his audiences through the power of his rhetoric. His defeat at the hands of Republican William McKinley was seen by some as the end of his public career; in 1900, however, he again emerged as the Democrats' candidate for president. In this second contest against McKinley, Bryan was defeated somewhat more decisively than before, with his support confined almost exclusively to certain western states and the South. Once more, in 1908, Bryan was put forward for the presidency for the third and final time. In this last bid for the White House, Bryan was defeated overwhelmingly by William Howard Taft.⁴

Despite his three losses as a presidential candidate, Bryan remained a powerful and influential figure in Democratic politics. It was largely due to his support that Woodrow Wilson was chosen as the party's candidate for the presidency in 1912. In the election which followed, Wilson emerged victorious over both Taft and Theodore Roosevelt.⁵

Wilson's victory soon resulted in Bryan's appointment to the Cabinet as Secretary of State. His actual term of office extended from 4 March 1913 to 9 June 1915, at which time fundamental policy differences regarding World War I compelled him to resign as a matter of principle. Once out of office, however, Bryan refused to criticise Wilson publicly, even after America's entry into the war.⁶

Bryan had visited Asheville as early as 1896, during the course of his first campaign for the presidency. On 16 September of that year, "Bryan Day," he delivered a stirring speech at Riverside Park to what was reported to be the "largest crowd ever to hear a speaker in Western Carolina."⁷ On 18 December 1912 Bryan again came to Asheville, where he addressed an audience of about 2,000 people in City Auditorium.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 2

Prior to his speech, Bryan toured the city by automobile, visited the unfinished Grove Park Inn, and posed with a group of local luminaries atop Sunset Mountain, at the base of which he was to construct his house five years later.⁸ On 1 July 1913 Bryan was the guest of honor and principal speaker at the gala opening of the Grove Park Inn, the magnificent resort hotel erected on the western slope of Sunset Mountain by pharmaceutical magnate and Asheville real estate developer, E. W. Grove.⁹

Between his participation in the opening of the Grove Park Inn and his resignation as Secretary of State in July of 1915, Bryan apparently visited Asheville on several occasions for rest and relaxation.¹⁰ On 6 August 1914, with World War I scarcely a week old, Mary Bryan made the following entry in her journal:

We had planned for some weeks to go to Asheville on August 2, last Monday. Mr. Bryan has worked faithfully to get his twenty peace treaties through the Senate. Our house in Asheville was ready, but as usual something happened to delay us. It seems we are fore-ordained (if there is such a thing) to spend the rest of our lives in Washington. War has been declared in Europe.¹¹

By 19 September 1914 the Bryans had finally reached Asheville, for it was on that day that Bryan wrote a lengthy letter to President Wilson from there concerning his hopeful plan for American mediation to bring peace in Europe.¹²

The house referred to by Mrs. Bryan in 1914 as "our house in Asheville" was the "Blue Briar," a rented house on the west side of Sunset Mountain, very near the Grove Park Inn and the site of the Bryans' future home in Grove Park. Due to the press of events, however, the Bryans stayed primarily in the Grove Park Inn during the late summer of 1914, rather than take up residence in the "Blue Briar" as planned.¹³ During the summer of 1915 Bryan and his wife were again briefly in Asheville at perhaps the most difficult and trying time of his political career. On 21 June Mrs. Bryan recorded in her journal:

Mr. Bryan resigned his office two weeks ago and I take this occasion to record the details while they are fresh in my mind.

We have come here to Asheville, N.C., for two days of rest, being worn out by the strain of the last four or five weeks.¹⁴

It was evidently through his association with E. W. Grove and Groves's son-in-law, Fred W. Seely, who designed and managed the Grove Park Inn, that Bryan began to give serious consideration to the construction of his house in Asheville. This association may also have involved Bryan in a modest amount of speculation in Asheville real estate. As early as the fall of 1914, Grove and his wife had conveyed to Bryan a ten-acre tract of land "in the Gap of Sunset . . . Mountain."¹⁵ During the spring and summer of 1917, prior to his acquisition of the Grove Park property, Bryan purchased a total of thirty-two acres in Chunn's Cove, on the opposite side of Sunset Mountain.¹⁶

In any event, it is clear that Bryan was considering a move to Asheville well before he purchased the Grove Park land where he built his home. In Thomas Wolfe's Look Homeward Angel, the great autobiographical novel of Wolfe's youth in Asheville, Bryan's prospective move the Asheville is presented as a subject of lively speculation by local townspeople. As he appears in the novel, however, Bryan was not yet willing to commit himself:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 3

Perhaps I shall come back to this beautiful region, and take up my life among my good friends here as one who, having fought the good fight, deserves to spend the declining years of his life not only within sight but within the actual boundaries of the happy land of Canaan.¹⁷

Indeed, there is an intimation in Look Homeward Angel that E. W. Grove induced Bryan to settle in Asheville by offering to give him a house and lot in the fledgling Grove Park development.¹⁸

E. W. Grove had come to Asheville around 1900, having made a fortune in St. Louis, Missouri as owner of the firm which manufactured Bromo Quinine and Grove's Tasteless Chill Tonic. As early as 1905 he had begun planning the Grove Park development at the base of Sunset Mountain where Bryan would subsequently build his home. Grove Park and nearby Grove Park Inn were but two of the many development schemes which Grove conceived and carried out in Asheville prior to his death in 1927. Grove Park, like all of his projects, came to fruition during a period of rapid growth and prosperity in Asheville.¹⁹

On 1 November 1917 E. W. Grove and wife A. G. Grove conveyed to William Jennings Bryan, of Lincoln, Nebraska, a large parcel of residential lots in Grove Park at and near the intersection of Evelyn Place and Murdock Avenue, including six whole lots and part of a seventh. The amount of money paid for this property was not specifically stated.²⁰ In connection with this transaction, the former Secretary of State also entered into a contract with Grove in which he agreed to abide by specific building restrictions.²¹ On this same day Bryan also acquired additional contiguous property from the Asheville Country Club; and on 19 July 1918 and 2 February 1920, he increased the size of his Grove Park property still further through additional purchases from Grove.²²

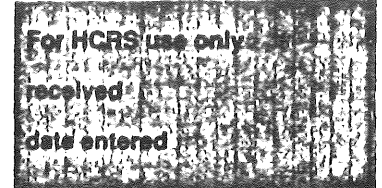
Once acquiring his property in Grove Park, Bryan wasted little time in having his house constructed. Indeed, the prominent Asheville architectural firm of Smith and Carrier had already prepared detailed blueprints of "A cottage for Hon. Wm. J. Bryan" in September.²³ Richard Sharp Smith, the Smith of this partnership, was an English-born architect who had been brought to Asheville by George W. Vanderbilt and served as supervising architect on the Biltmore House. Following the completion of the Biltmore House, Smith remained in Asheville, where he was the city's foremost architect during the first quarter of the twentieth century. He designed Biltmore Village and numerous commercial buildings and private residences in Asheville, many while in partnership with Ralph and A. Heath Carrier.²⁴ By the end of November, 1917, the William Jennings Bryan House was either completed or well on the way to completion.²⁵

It is uncertain how much time Bryan spent in his Asheville home during the three years that he owned it; but there are indications that he had initially intended it as a permanent or at least semi-permanent home. When he sold the house, in September of 1920, the Asheville Citizen carried the following account of what had been his original intentions:

Col. Bryan bought several acres of ground, on the edge of the residential park, several years ago and built a home there, which he publicly declared to be the last he and Mrs. Bryan would have, a place to which they would retire for the evening days of their lives. He brought a magnificent library here, many volumes of which came from his Lincoln /Nebraska/ home.²⁶

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 4

As events unfolded, Bryan seems to have spent the better part of two years in his Asheville home, from the fall of 1917 to sometime in 1919. While living in Asheville he was frequently seen in public and taught a Sunday school class at the First Presbyterian Church.²⁷ He is also reported to have written for several magazines and newspapers while an Asheville resident.²⁸ It was during the period of his residence in Asheville that Bryan saw the ratification of the Eighteenth (Prohibition) Amendment, a measure for which he had worked tirelessly for more than a decade.²⁹ Despite the considerable time spent in Asheville, however, the Bryans still maintained their old residence in Lincoln, Nebraska, in the home they called "Fairview." Bryan's official residence, for voting purposes, remained in Lincoln until 1922, when it was transferred permanently to Florida.³⁰

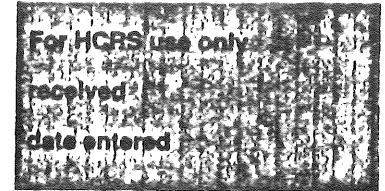
In 1919, after two years in Asheville, it was found that the rigors of the mountain climate were deleterious to Mary Bryan's health. Reluctantly, Bryan came to the decision that the residence at 107 Evelyn Place must be sold and that he and his wife should make their home in Florida. The Bryans continued to visit their Asheville home from time to time after leaving it in 1919, but in September of the following year the house was placed on the market and purchased for \$30,000 by the Canton lawyer and real estate developer, J. T. Horney.³¹ During that month the local newspaper reported that the Bryans had come to their Asheville home for the last time, to prepare for the move to Florida:

Colonel and Mrs. William Jennings Bryan are in Asheville for a visit of several days, at their home in Grove Park. The Bryans recently sold their home to a Canton man, but he will not get possession for several days and in the meantime, the Bryans, with their son and his family, will pack up and ship their household furnishings.³²

During the last few years of his life, after leaving Asheville, William Jennings Bryan continued his long career as a speaker, crusader, and politician. His final political battle occurred during the Democratic national convention in New York in 1924; but a much more celebrated battle occurred during the following year, when Bryan served as counsel for the prosecution in the trial of biology teacher, John T. Scopes, in Dayton, Tennessee. Bryan survived the conclusion of the Scopes trial for only five days, dying in his sleep on the afternoon of 26 July 1925.³³ The news of Bryan's death came as a severe shock to Asheville. The front page of the local newspaper was devoted almost entirely to his passing, and the fire bell tolled sixty-five times, sending "its mournful message pealing forth over the city."³⁴

J. T. Horney took possession of the former home of William Jennings Bryan on 1 October 1920; but he owned and lived in the house for only two years after moving from Canton. On 26 August 1922 Horney and his wife Madeline sold the house and property to Allison C. Clough of Asheville.³⁵ Like Horney, Clough was a real estate man, active during the booming "Grove era" of Asheville's development. Clough and his wife Ellen resided at 107 Evelyn Place for at least four of the next five years.³⁶

On 24 January 1927 Allison and Ellen Clough conveyed ownership of the house to Asheville lawyer Robert R. Williams and his wife Margaret.³⁷ For the next quarter century Mr. and Mrs. Williams maintained their residence there. On 4 September 1951 they sold the house to their son, Robert R. Williams, Jr., who for several years had been associated with his father in the law firm of Williams and Cocke, with offices in

United States Department of the Interior
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Inventory—Nomination Form

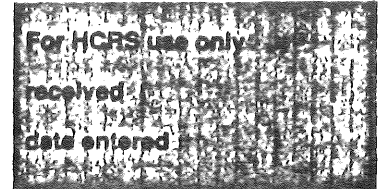
Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 5

the Jackson Building on Pack Square. They later formed the partnership of Williams and Williams.³⁸

Robert R. Williams Jr. and wife Betty owned and lived in the house for more than ten years, selling it on 19 April 1962 to Conrad Hurst and wife Gertrude.³⁹ At the time of this sale, Conrad Hurst was director of a business college in Asheville, but subsequently joined with his wife in the management of a local clothing firm.⁴⁰ In the summer of 1972 it was reported that the Hursts were "remodeling and redecorating" the house.⁴¹ The former home of William Jennings Bryan, one of the most distinguished men ever to live in Asheville, continued to serve as the Hursts' residence through the late 1970s. The house was recently purchased from the Hursts by its present owner, Mrs. Barbara A. Molloy.⁴²

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 6

FOOTNOTES

¹ Allen Johnson, Dumas Malone, and others, editors, Dictionary of American Biography, 20 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), III, 191. Hereinafter cited as DAB.

² William Jennings Bryan and Mary Baird Bryan, The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan (Chicago: John C. Winston, 1925), 190.

³ DAB, 191.

⁴ DAB, 192-194.

⁵ DAB, 194-195.

⁶ DAB, 196. For a copy of Bryan's letter of resignation, see Bryan, Memoirs, 406-407.

⁷ Asheville Citizen, 29 July 1925; and Joan Langley and Wright Langley, Yesterday's Asheville (Miami: E. E. Seeman Publishing Co., 1975), 53. See also Asheville Citizen, 21 August 1972.

⁸ Asheville Citizen, 26 March 1950 and 21 August 1972. The earlier of these two issues contains a photograph of the group on Sunset Mountain and identifies many of those shown with Bryan.

⁹ Asheville Citizen, 27 July 1925; and Douglas Swaim, editor, Cabins and Castles: The History and Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina (Asheville: Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County, 1981), 88.

¹⁰ Asheville Citizen, 27 July 1925.

¹¹ Bryan, Memoirs, 415. War had been officially declared on 28 July 1914.

¹² For a copy of this letter, see Bryan, Memoirs, 388-392.

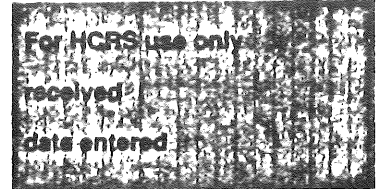
¹³ For an account of the Bryans' stay in Asheville during the late summer of 1914, see Bryan, Memoirs, 416-417. In the Raleigh News and Observer of 26 July 1914 there appeared a photograph of the "Blue Briar" (or "Blue Brier"), together with the following caption:

Here's 'Blue Brier,' the charming summer home near Asheville, N.C. of Secretary of State W. J. Bryan. It is located on Sunset Mountain, 2,850 feet above sea level. The front porch commands a fine view to the west, looking across the golf course of the Asheville Country Club, the French Broad River valley, the plateau, and, in the distance, range upon range of mountains. . . .

¹⁴ Bryan, Memoirs, 419.

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 7

¹⁵Buncombe County Deeds, Book 196, 563-565.

¹⁶Buncombe County Deeds, Book 212, p. 512; and Book 213, p. 532.

¹⁷Thomas Wolfe, Look Homeward Angel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), 341.

¹⁸Wolfe, Look Homeward Angel, 337. Bryan also appears as a character in a short story by Wolfe, in which he is depicted as an acquaintance of Wolfe's mother and a fellow dabbler with her in Asheville real estate ventures. See "The Web of Earth," in From Death to Morning (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), 275-276.

¹⁹Swaim, Cabins and Castles, 87-93 and 201; and Langley, Yesterday's Asheville, 73.

²⁰Buncombe County Deeds, Book 215, pp. 531-534. The lots conveyed were numbers 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and part of 19. For a detailed plat of Grove Park, as surveyed and laid out by H. L. Parker in February of 1913, see Buncombe County Plat Book, No. 154, p. 171. A copy of this plat is also contained in the William Jennings Bryan House file, Survey Branch, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

As early as 1 October 1917 Bryan had purchased nearby land on Murdock Avenue from E. C. Dickenson and wife. See Buncombe County Deeds, Book 215, pp. 379-381.

²¹Buncombe County Deeds, Book 257, pp. 203-204.

²²Buncombe County Deeds, Book 218, pp. 82-83; Book 224, p. 76; and Book 235, p. 400. In the last two of these three transactions, Bryan acquired from Grove lot 17 and the remaining portion of lot 19.

²³Copy of these blueprints supplied by the current owner of the house, Barbara A. Molloy. William Jennings Bryan House file, Survey Branch, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

²⁴For further information on Richard Sharp Smith and the firm of Smith and Carrier, see Swaim, Cabins and Castles, 42, 52, 82-84, 92, 172-173, 184, and 207.

²⁵See Sanborn Insurance Maps (Asheville), 1919.

²⁶Undated article from the Asheville Citizen from September of 1920.

²⁷Asheville Citizen, 27 July 1925. Bryan was listed as the resident of 107 Evelyn Place in the Asheville City Directory of 1918 (p. 6). The Asheville City Directory of 1919 was not available to this researcher. For a photograph of Bryan and friends during a 1918 automobile excursion to Mount Pisgah, see Langley, Yesterday's Asheville, 89.

²⁸Asheville Citizen, 26 March 1950.

²⁹The Eighteenth Amendment was passed by the United States Senate in August of 1917 and by the House in December of 1917. It was ratified by the required three-fourths of of the states in January of 1919, to become effective in January of 1920. See Bryan, Memoirs, 293-294.

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Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 8

³⁰ Bryan, Memoirs, 475. For a picture of "Fairview," see Memoirs, facing page 222. Unfortunately, the Asheville house is not so much as mentioned in the Memoirs.

³¹ Buncombe County Deeds, Book 240, pp. 188-189; and undated article from the Asheville Citizen from September, 1920.

³² Undated article from the Asheville Citizen from September, 1920. For a period of time just prior to relinquishing the house to Horney, it was occupied by the Bryans' son, William Jennings Bryan Jr., of Tucson, Arizona.

³³ For additional information on the Scopes Trial and on Bryan's religious convictions, see DAB, 196-197.

³⁴ Asheville Citizen, 27 July 1925. One of the last letters ever written by Bryan was received in Asheville on 26 July by Holmes Bryson, president of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce. Bryson had invited Bryan to visit Asheville in order to recuperate from the rigors of the Scopes Trial. In this brief letter, Bryan expressed regret that "it does not now seem possible to come to Asheville." Letter is printed in the Asheville Citizen of 28 July 1925.

³⁵ Buncombe County Deeds, Book 261, p. 127. For information on Horney's subsequent activities as a real estate developer in the mid-1920s, see the Asheville Citizen of 26 July 1925. See also, Thomas Wolfe, You Can't Go Home Again (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940), 110-111.

³⁶ The Asheville City Directory of 1924 indicates that H. A. Page Jr., an Asheville banker, was residing in the house (pp. 444 and 730). Clough was not listed as an Asheville resident during that year (p. 196). On 21 April 1923 E. W. Grove and wife granted to Allison Clough a deed of release from previous restrictions regarding the subdivision of lots 14, 15, 16, and 18 in Grove Park, all which Clough owned. See Buncombe County Deeds, Book 270, pp. 164-165.

³⁷ Buncombe County Deeds, Book 368, p. 80.

³⁸ Buncombe County Deeds, Book 711, pp. 261-262. For further information on Robert R. Williams and son, see, for example, the Asheville City Directory for 1940 (p. 516), 1951 (p. 360), and 1962 (p. 88 of street section and p. 606).

³⁹ Buncombe County Deeds, Book 861, p. 5.

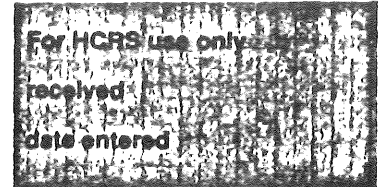
⁴⁰ For further information on the Hursts, see, for example, the Asheville City Directory for 1963 (p. 257), 1972 (p. 187), and 1979 (p. 184).

⁴¹ Asheville Citizen, 21 August 1972.

⁴² Letter of 26 September 1982 from Barbara A. Molloy to Catharine W. Bishir. William Jennings Bryan House file, Survey Branch, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

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Continuation sheet

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Item number 9

Page 1

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