

(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Forbus, Wiley and Elizabeth, House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 3307 Devon Road

n/a not for publication

city or town Durham

n/a vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Durham code 063 zip code 27707

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Gabe Crow SHPO 3/9/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

"Historic Resources of Durham," 1984

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals

Other: Norman Provincial

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick

roof ceramic tile

other wood

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1933

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is: n/a

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

Significant Dates

1933

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Nelson, G. Murray, Nelson & Cooper Architects
Kane, George W., builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Forbus, Wiley and Elizabeth, House
Name of Property

Durham County, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.3 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>584600</u>	<u>3980560</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cynthia de Miranda
organization Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. date November 3, 2004
street & number Post Office Box 1171 telephone 919/682-2211
city or town Durham state NC zip code 27702

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Brad W. and Michelle M. Brinegar
street & number 3307 Devon Road telephone 919/821-6543
city or town Durham state NC zip code 27707

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Wiley and Elizabeth Forbus House
Durham County, North Carolina

Narrative Description

The Forbus House is a two-story, brick, Norman Provincial-style house in Durham's Hope Valley neighborhood. The house stands on a large parcel bordered on the north by Devon Road and on the south by the Hope Valley Country Club golf course. The immediate vicinity of the Forbus House comprises varied but well-integrated characteristics: the rolling hills, woods with evergreen and deciduous trees, winding streets, manicured lawns, and grassy golf-course greens provide a designed setting that feels naturalistic. The original driveway leads from Devon Road near the west edge of the parcel to the north side of the house. A new circular drive allows traffic to enter the lot from Devon Road at the east end of the parcel's north side, proceed to the front walk of the house, and then exit at the same point of entry. This new drive is an alteration to the landscaped front grounds, which originally consisted of a slightly rolling lawn with widely spaced trees that created a naturalistic, though manicured, setting. Houses occupy the two lots flanking the Forbus House, but the size of the parcels and their topography and wooded areas provide effective screens.

The house faces Devon Road but stands at a deep setback, situated at an angle to the street in a clearing on its partially wooded lot. (While the house faces northeast, this description will assume true cardinal points for the sake of clarity; the facade, for instance, is considered the east elevation.) The house features both the picturesque elements and the Renaissance detailing found in informal and formal versions of the Norman Provincial style: irregular massing, varied roof forms and eave heights, and staggered chimney stacks contrast with brick corner quoins, generally flat wall surfaces, and a denticulated molding at the cornice. The clay tiles of the roof suggest wood shingles, adding to the picturesque quality of the house. A variety of terra cotta pots top the brick chimney stacks. The house is painted white.

Three sections compose the house as it was built: a central hip-roofed block flanked by side-gabled wings. The center section is a two-story, double-pile block with a high hip roof. The brick corner quoins, denticulated cornice molding, and three bay windows provide relief to the otherwise flat wall surfaces of the facade and rear elevation. The gable-roofed south block, which also features the corner quoins and dentil molding, is actually integrated with the southeast corner of the main block. It projects slightly from the facade of the main block and provides the front entry at its north end. A two-story tower with conical roof rises in the main block, situated just right of the main entry, in the recessed corner formed by the juncture of the two sections. The gable-roofed block on the north end is set back from the facade of the main block and lacks the corner quoins and denticulated cornice of the rest of the house. Despite the varied wall planes of the three blocks at the facade, all three read as a single elevation at the back

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of the house; each section is still identifiable, however, by its distinctive roofline. Massive chimneys topped with terra cotta chimney pots rise from each of three sections.

Casement windows of various sizes—and a single, oval, fixed-sash window—pierce the smooth planes of the facade of the main block and its tower. Three narrow casements at staggered locations on the tower reflect the rise of the circular stair within. A brick beltcourse rims the tower at the upper edge of the topmost casement window, which is topped by a recessed round arch in the brick above the beltcourse. To the right of the tower, a single oval window with keystones is centered between stories, illuminating the service stair within. A bay window projects near the north end of the facade, while a pair of casement windows pierce the second-story of the facade.

Throughout the house, windows originally were metal casements with brass screens and fixtures.¹ Wood casements with a slightly altered configuration replaced the originals in the 1980s. The replacement windows had muntins dividing the larger window openings into pairs or trios of tall, narrow casements; the alteration created a more vertical emphasis to the window sash. Similarly, the bay window at the facade, originally a flat-roofed bow window with the metal casements, became a three-panel bay with a copper bellcast roof. The vertical emphasis and the changes to the bay window were preserved in recent renovations, which included the replacement of the wood casements with double-pane casement windows.

The one-story, single-pile, secondary section on the south end of the house assumes the same steep roof slope as the main block so that the north portion of the gable roof integrates with the high hip roof. A shed dormer with a pair of square casement windows interrupts the vast slope of the roof just left of the tower, where the main block and the south secondary block intersect. The corner placement of the side-gabled wing results in a facade that projects beyond that of the main block, providing a nearly centered location for the front door. The door is deeply recessed in a flat-arched doorway that is surrounded by stone quoins. The front door itself is a plank door with rounded corners and a small leaded-glass window at eye level. New brick steps lead to the original flagstone patio at the front door. Projecting from the south gable wall, and centered beneath the peak of the gable, is a copper-roofed bay with full-length windows and French doors that provide access to the new patio that wraps around to the back of the house. This patio

¹ Information regarding the original appearance of the house and previous changes comes from interviews with Wiley and Elizabeth Forbus's three daughters, who all grew up in the house; from photographs on file in the File Room for the Survey and Planning Branch of the State Historic Preservation Office in Raleigh; and from written accounts dating from the 1930s and from the early 1980s survey of Durham.

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replaced the original flagstone patio, which stretched across the south elevation until the larger brick version replaced it.

A flat-roofed sunroom fills the rear ell that resulted from the corner placement of the gable-end south block. A honeycombed brick parapet edges the flat roof of the sunroom, which provides a terrace outside the second-floor master bedroom of the main block. French doors at the sunroom's south elevation provide a second egress from the south elevation of the house to the wraparound patio, and a large bay of casement windows fills the west end of the sunroom's south elevation.

Projecting from the north end of the main block is the one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled block that originally housed a two-car garage with a service apartment in the half-story above. Even on its facade, this section's functional status is indicated by the exclusion of the corner quoins and dentil molding detail seen on the other two sections. For the same reason, the garage section is recessed from the facade of the main portion of the house. A slightly recessed round-arched window on the facade marks the place where a deeply recessed single-leaf door originally provided an additional entrance to the house, between the garage and living space. A pair of clipped-gable dormers break through the cornice, above the first floor casements. On the east-facing gable wall, the garage doors have been replaced by two sets of paired, double-leaf casement windows, as the area within has been converted to living space.

Across the rear elevation, fenestration is more complex and includes several alterations since the 1930s. Originally, the rear elevation had casements across the first floor interrupted by two entrances sheltered beneath metal bellcast roofs supported by squared wood columns; one entrance was from the kitchen, near the center of the elevation and the other was from the garage at its juncture with the main block.

The rear elevation of the garage block has no other fenestration at the first floor, but an exterior set of concrete steps, added sometime in the late 1930s or early 1940s, led to a door installed in the original through-the-cornice eyebrow dormer window on the north end. The second eyebrow dormer remained a window. The flight of stairs has been removed to make way for the 2004 additions.

The second story of the main block features casement windows across the elevation, interrupted at two points by oriel windows. Above the oriel windows are large, through-the-cornice, clipped-gable attic dormers with vents. The oriels and dormers occupy the bays on either side of the back kitchen entryway. At the south end of the main block, a portion of the rear elevation's second

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Wiley and Elizabeth Forbus House
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story slightly overhangs the recessed wall plane of the first floor. The dining room is housed within that first-floor space, and the original casement windows that looked out to the golf course have been replaced with French doors, providing access to the new back patio, still under construction. The recessed portion of the elevation is flush with the rear elevation of the sunroom, which is pierced with a large bay of casement windows.

A small brick hyphen, just added at the location of the removed exterior rear steps, connects the house to a new garage, a brick addition in the final stages of construction. The three-bay, hip-roofed garage addition matches the house in materials, massing, and form, and, like the original garage, opens to the north from a driveway off Devon Road. The garage also features the same clay roof tiles and a large clipped-gable dormer with casement windows. A copper hip roof installed at the facade eave and supported by curved wood brackets shelters the divided entrances to the three garage bays. The west elevation of the garage is a blank brick wall, but a single-leaf door pierces the south side. A low brick wall extends from the middle of the west elevation and wraps around to the back of the garage, acting as a retaining wall and as a screen for utility equipment.

A flat-roofed, single-story room fills the corner formed by the old garage and the new addition at the rear of the house; like the flat-roofed sunroom at the southwest corner, this addition also has a parapet with honeycomb brickwork. The flat-roofed addition also integrates with the hyphen, which features the honeycombed parapet wall as well. A massive chimney with an interior/exterior fireplace dominates the south elevation of the room, which forms one side of the patio behind the house. Single-leaf French doors flank the fireplace, and a wood arbor extends from this facade, providing some shade to a portion of the patio. A bay of five tall casement windows fills the west elevation of the room addition.

The new brick patio wraps from the south side of the house around the back, stretching across the width of the house to the living space addition behind the new garage. The original flagstone terrace matched the patio at the front entry and spanned only the south side of the house, outside the living room and sunroom.

The interior layout is an irregular plan with a transverse hallway. Like the exterior, it is largely intact. The flagstone from the front patio continues inside the house, forming a small front entry. Two steps lead up to the front hall, and the circular stair flows into the space from the right. Wrought-iron rails edge the staircase and the steps from the entry to the front hall, and there is a small niche in the curved wall of the staircase. The original parquet floors in the front hall have been replaced with oak planks, matching the flooring in most of the rooms of the house.

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To the left of the front hall, two steps lead into the sunken living room, edged on its east side by two large bays of window and on the west wall by a centered fireplace with marble surround, flanked by large arched niches. The niche to the right houses shelves and cabinets; to the left, the niche frames doors leading into the sunroom. The bay at the south end of the room provides another niche for the French doors that lead outside to the brick wraparound patio. The living room walls are completely paneled and feature a key detail at the crown molding.

Full-height paneling has been added to the dining room, which is situated on the opposite side of the living room's hearth wall, accessible from the sunroom, the kitchen, or the hallway at the back of the front hall. New French doors lead from the dining room to the new brick patio at the back of the house. A new star pendant light fixture of wrought iron and frosted glass hangs at the center of the dining room. The kitchen, at the back of the house opposite the front entry, has been changed entirely, subsuming the butler's closet and the breakfast room. New cabinets, flooring, appliances, and an island have been installed.

The hallway leads from the dining room on the south end to the original garage space on the north end of the house. A wide arched entry forms the transition from the front hall to the hallway, and a much narrower round-arched doorway at the north end marks the transition into the garage space. On the east side of the hall is the service stair, which, unlike the circular stair, provides access to the partial basement and the storage areas in the attic. A powder room and a room originally used as Dr. Forbus's study are also located on the east side of the hall, north of the service stair. Mrs. Forbus remodeled the study in the late 1930s or early 1940s with hidden fold-away beds so that it could double as a guest room; she renamed it the "Morning Room." Today, the room features built-in bookcases, cabinets, a wrought-iron light fixture, and the original double-leaf, paneled, folding doors.

The original guest room was across the hallway, behind another set of double-leaf, paneled, folding doors. When the study was converted into a guest room, the original guest room was remodeled as a den. The family had a fireplace installed on the north wall, requiring the removal of the original interior stair that led to the rooms above the garage. An exterior stair of concrete was built to preserve a second access to those rooms, which could also be reached from the front bedroom on the second-story. The recent remodeling has removed the exterior stair and installed the new interior back staircase.

Upstairs, the floor plan roughly mirrors that of the first floor, with rooms off a transverse hallway. At the south end of the hall is the master suite, consisting of bedroom, dressing rooms in the attic eaves, a terrace on the sunroom's roof, and a full bath. A second bedroom with a bay

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window and an adjoining bath occupies the west side of the house; a third bedroom is situated in the space north of the service stair on the east side. A third upstairs bathroom forms a link between the front bedroom and the garage bedroom to the north. There is also a large laundry room and closet on the west side of the hallway. Replacement wrought-iron light fixtures hang from the ceiling in most rooms, and the original interior doors of paneled wood remain.

Like the kitchen, all bathrooms have been extensively remodeled with new tile, sinks, toilets, and showers. The new living space provided by the addition is accessible from the den between the kitchen and the original garage and from the new brick patio, through its own pair of French doors.

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Wiley and Elizabeth Forbus House
Durham County, North Carolina

Summary Paragraph

The Forbus House has local significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. It is a well-articulated example of the rare Norman Provincial architectural style in a city with several early twentieth-century suburbs favoring picturesque revival styles. G. Murray Nelson of Raleigh designed the house for Dr. Wiley D. Forbus and Elizabeth Burger Forbus and their daughters. The house, completed in 1931, burned in 1933 and was immediately rebuilt. The asymmetrical massing, steeply pitched and varied roof forms, staggered chimney stacks, masonry walls, and—most importantly—the central round tower with conical roof and vertical windows, express the Norman Provincial style of the house. The Forbus House was one of the first erected in Hope Valley, a suburban development built around a Donald Ross-designed golf course and meant to attract the faculty of a growing university as well as the second generation of successful businessmen in a booming textile and tobacco town. The house remains one of the most notable in the neighborhood and in the city due to the thorough treatment it received in an unusual architectural style. The period of significance is 1933, the year the existing house was completed. The context and property type entitled “Picturesque Revival Styles: Houses” in the MPDF “Historic Resources of Durham” on page 7.18 provides context for establishing the Forbus House's significance under National Register Criterion C in the area of architecture; the MPDF, in fact, specifically mentions the Forbus House. Additional context for the Forbus House is provided herein.

Historical Background

The Forbus House was one of several early residences built in Durham's Hope Valley, a suburban neighborhood laid out on farmland west of town. The new real estate firm of Mebane & Sharpe—a collaboration between a Greensboro car salesman and a Burlington developer—first filed a plat for the neighborhood in 1926. This timing reflects a significant event in Durham: in 1924, James B. Duke created the forty-million-dollar Duke Endowment and gave Durham's Trinity College six million dollars to build a new campus and enable its evolution into Duke University. In his will, Duke also directed that money from the endowment be used to establish a medical school at the new university, along with a hospital and nurses' home. With Hope Valley, Mebane & Sharpe hoped to attract faculty from Durham's new and quickly expanding university—as well as from

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the University of North Carolina in nearby Chapel Hill—and to appeal to the second generation of businessmen and entrepreneurs in the tobacco and textile boomtown.²

One tactic used to attract to the upper class was the social status that Mebane & Sharpe infused in their neighborhood. The developers worked with prominent Durham residents to establish and build membership in the Hope Valley Country Club, and the firm platted Hope Valley around a golf course to be designed by famed course architect Donald Ross.³

In 1929, working as the successor firm of Hope Valley, Inc., the developers refined their plat with the help of landscape architect R. B. Cridland of Philadelphia. They tweaked the name as well: “Hope Valley: Country Club & University Community” explicitly reveals the company’s intended customers. The refined plat shows over 350 house parcels, most one hundred feet wide and two hundred feet deep, laid out on curvilinear streets, with the eighteen-hole golf course inserting open space throughout the irregular grid.⁴

Wiley D. Forbus purchased three lots on Block Z of the development in 1930, the year he moved his family to Durham from Baltimore. Forbus had left the faculty of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine to organize and head the Department of Pathology at Duke University and to be the Chief Pathologist at Duke Hospital. G. Murray Nelson designed a large brick home for the family, working with very specific requests from Elizabeth Forbus. The Forbus family lived in a vacant house in Hope Valley until late 1931, when their house on Devon Road was completed.⁵

On February 24, 1933, a fire began on the second floor of the house. The *Durham Morning Herald* reported the next day that “the entire second story was a mass of flames

² Mena Webb, *The Way We Were: Remembering Durham* (Durham: Historic Preservation Society of Durham, 2003), 225-226; Claudia Roberts [Brown], Diane Lea, and Robert Leary, *The Durham Architectural and Historic Inventory* (Durham: Historic Preservation Society of Durham, 1982), 291.

³ Webb, 226; John L. Moorhead, *Donald Ross and His Total Gem: A Short History of his Hope Valley Country Club Course* (Durham: the author, 2000), 1-3; Wilburt C. Davison, “The Duke University School of Medicine,” in *Medicine in North Carolina*, 2 vols. (Raleigh: The North Carolina Medical Society, 1972), 2:530-532.

⁴ “Hope Valley: Country Club & University Community,” May 1929, Plat Book 9, pages 38-39 and 42-43, on file at the Durham County Courthouse at 200 E. Main Street.

⁵ Hope Valley, Inc., to Wiley D. Forbus, October 28, 1930, Durham County Deed Book 102, pages 217-219; Georg’Ellen Forbus Betts (eldest daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Forbus), telephone interview with the author, May 15, 2004.

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when firemen arrived, and it and the living room on the first floor was gutted." The newspaper noted that the whole roof was "burned off" and maintained that "the brick construction of the lower part of the house saved the first floor from complete destruction." The family moved into another vacant Hope Valley house while their own house was rebuilt. The work was done according to the original plans, slightly tweaked on the interior according to changes requested by Elizabeth Forbus.⁶

The house remained in the Forbus family until 1984, when Elizabeth Forbus, widowed in 1976, sold the house to Joseph and Joan Ruvane. Current owners Brad and Michelle Brinegar purchased the house from Joan Ruvane in 2002.⁷

Historic Context: Picturesque Revival Architecture in Durham

The city of Durham, which grew from a railroad depot established in 1852, was already an established textile and tobacco boomtown by the start of the twentieth century. A central commercial district had formed around the depot, edged on the north and east by the mansions of Durham's earliest successful industrialists. Middle-class neighborhoods continued the modest outward spread. Textile mills and their residential villages dotted outlying areas east and west of downtown.⁸

Coincidental with the start of the twentieth century was the birth of transportation-related suburban development in Durham. After failed attempts, 1901 saw the establishment of a successful streetcar system, enabling the development of the relatively far-flung suburbs of Lakewood, Morehead Hill, and Trinity Park.⁹ Automobile suburbs of the 1920s represent the "second wave" of suburban development in Durham, as they did in many other North Carolina cities. Durham's early car-dependent developments include Duke Park, Forest Hills, Hope Valley, Duke Forest, and College View. The houses in these

⁶ Betts; *Durham Morning Herald*, February 25, 1933.

⁷ Elizabeth B. Forbus to Joseph J. Ruvane, Jr., September 28, 1984, Durham County Deed Book 1177, pages 707-709; and Joan S. Ruvane to Brad W. and Michelle M. Brinegar, May 8, 2002, Durham County Deed Book 3437, pages 866-869. Both on file at the Durham County Courthouse at 200 E. Main Street.

⁸ Roberts, Lea, and Leary, 63-65; Claudia Roberts [Brown], "Holloway Street Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (1984).

⁹ Claudia Roberts [Brown], "Durham's Early Twentieth-Century Suburban Neighborhoods," in *Early Twentieth-Century Suburbs in North Carolina* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1985), 39-42.

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neighborhoods generally stand behind expansive landscaped lawns on sizable parcels lining curvilinear streets. Many houses were designed or modified by architects.¹⁰

As transportation systems evolved, so did architectural style. The predominance of the bungalow form and the Craftsman style so favored in the first two decades of the twentieth century started giving way to picturesque revival styles just as Durham's automobile suburbs started up. The picturesque revival movement had roots predating the turn of the century, when the wealthy began hiring European-trained architects to design impressive houses modeled after those of the Italian Renaissance period, the Beaux Arts style, and the English Medieval building tradition. When the movement re-emerged in the 1920s, it became a popular style, thanks in part to changing building technology: masonry veneers enabled wood-frame houses to take on the appearance of the stone, brick, and half-timbered houses that they emulated.¹¹

Another strong influence fueling the public's interest in picturesque revival styles was the first-hand exposure American servicemen had during World War I to the European buildings that served as precedents for the revival. A 1919 issue of *House Beautiful* reported that the American soldiers' time spent in Europe "awakened [them] to the possibilities and beauties of...the French and English cottages of the 16th century."¹²

Picturesque revivals included several varied styles; those predominant in Durham's suburban neighborhoods of the 1920s through the 1940s are the Tudor Revival and English Cottage. Spanish and Renaissance revival houses—less-common choices—were also built. Colonial Revival styles, based on the early English and Dutch houses built (as the name suggests) during America's colonial times were also very common in Durham's new suburbs. The Norman Provincial style (also called the French Eclectic and Norman Cottage), on the other hand, was rare—in Durham and throughout the country.¹³ As noted in the MPDF "Historic Resources of Durham," on page 7.18, the style appears almost exclusively in Hope Valley. The Forbus House is described as the foremost example of the style in the subdivision.

¹⁰ Brown, "Suburban Neighborhoods," 44.

¹¹ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 2000), 319.

¹² *House Beautiful* 45 (1919), 70, quoted in Thomas W. Hanchett, "Myers Park Historic District," National Register Nomination Form, 1987.

¹³ McAlester, 387-388; Roberts, Lea, and Leary, 283-285.

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George Watts Carr, a prominent Durham architect who had contributed so heavily to the picturesque revival appearance of Forest Hills, designed the first ten houses built in Hope Valley. Eight of the ten were Tudor Revival or English Cottage designs; a Colonial Revival house and a Spanish Revival house rounded out the group. These were all moderately sized houses built in 1927 and 1928, meant to attract the first residents to Hope Valley. By the end of the 1930s, thirty more houses stood in the development, mostly on Chelsea Circle and Devon and Dover Roads. These houses were commissioned by individuals who had purchased lots for their own use; many were professors in the newly established medical school at Duke University. All thirty houses were very correct versions of picturesque revival styles. The Forbus House was one of them.¹⁴

Dr. and Mrs. Forbus hired Raleigh architect G. Murray Nelson of the firm Nelson & Cooper to design their home. Nelson had worked alone and in partnership with J. A. Salter before forming a partnership with Thomas W. Cooper in 1921; Cooper had been chief draftsman for Salter & Nelson for the last years of that partnership. Throughout the 1920s, Nelson & Cooper designed houses in Raleigh's early suburbs, often in the Colonial Revival style. The firm also designed the State Agriculture Building on Capitol Square and buildings on the campus of North Carolina State College.¹⁵

Also throughout the 1920s, Nelson kept an office in his name only in the First National Bank Building at 123 West Main Street in Durham. Nelson lived in Raleigh throughout the 1920s and had a manager run the Durham office, but he continued to list himself and his Durham address in the classified section of the city directory. It is likely that Nelson designed some houses in Durham's burgeoning suburban neighborhoods before he was engaged by the Forbuses to build their new home. As construction began on the Forbus House, another notable Nelson design was underway on Minerva Avenue in Trinity Park: the Kronheimer House is a large, two-story brick house designed in the Renaissance Revival style with Italian or Mediterranean influences and featuring that style's characteristic tiled hip roof, arched windows and door, and deep, bracketed eaves. A recessed corner porch—with arches supported by slender Ionic columns—gives the house a slightly asymmetrical facade, an unusual element in the style. Still, Nelson's Kronheimer House is the city's "foremost example" of the Renaissance Revival style,

¹⁴ Roberts, Lea, and Leary, 291-292.

¹⁵ G. Murray Nelson File, Box MC219.12 of the Charlotte Vestal Brown Collection at North Carolina State University.

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just as the Forbus House is Durham's best representation of the Norman Provincial style.¹⁶

Dr. Forbus made some preliminary trips to Durham before moving his family in 1930 from Baltimore into a vacant house in Hope Valley, a temporary residence while their house on Devon Road was built. While the desire for picturesque revival styles is often attributed to servicemen's European experience, in this case it was apparently Mrs. Forbus's overseas experience that came to bear on Nelson's Norman design for the family. After earning a bachelor's degree from Baltimore's Goucher College, the young Elizabeth Burger spent a year studying French and art at the Sorbonne in Paris. (Wiley Forbus, on the other hand, served in the Air Force during the war and before medical school, but his daughters are unsure of any overseas assignments he may have had.)¹⁷

While there is a lack of written evidence, the Forbus daughters attest to the close working relationship between their mother and Nelson. Mrs. Forbus specifically asked for a house in the "French style" with a spiral stair housed in a round tower, a sunken living room, and a sunroom off the dining room.¹⁸ Nelson delivered, creating a sprawling Norman Provincial design that combined details from the picturesque version of the style with the more formal, Renaissance-based elements. The informal version of the Norman Provincial style revived elements from a vernacular building tradition from the rural provinces of Normandy and Brittany in northwest France. The style had elements in common with the building practices in Medieval England and often displays details also seen in Tudor styles. The high hip roof, however, is a major defining characteristic of the French strain, contrasting with the front-gables common to Tudor designs.¹⁹

The picturesque feeling dominates the exterior of the house: the asymmetry of the massing, the variety in the roofline height, and the subordinated gable-roofed sections are all elements of the informal version of the style. The massive chimneys and casement windows, as well as the overhanging upper story found at the south end of the rear elevation, also contribute to the informal feeling of the house. Contrasting with this overall atmosphere is the decorative detailing associated with the more formal version of

¹⁶ Durham City Directories are on microfilm at the Main Branch of the Durham County Library; Claudia Roberts Brown, "Historic Resources of Durham," Multiple Property Submission (1984).

¹⁷ Elizabeth Forbus Adams (second daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Forbus), interview with the author, May 24, 2004; Betts interview.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ McAlester, 387-388.

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the style: quoins at corners and the arched main entrance, dentil molding at the cornice line, and the keystones in the oval window centered on the facade. Interior finishes continue to combine these elements, balancing varied floor heights and materials in the entry hall with the formally detailed paneled walls of the living room.

Locally prominent builder George W. Kane built the house. Nelson and Kane would team up again in 1934 to design and build the elaborate Tudor Revival Budd House at 903 South Duke Street in Morehead Hill.²⁰

Upon completion of the reconstruction after the fire, the Forbus House was highlighted in a short feature about Hope Valley published in the *Durham Morning Herald* one Sunday in the summer of 1933. The newspaper described in detail many elements of the house, including the “old European hand-finished tile roof...in blended shades ranging from deep red to dark...and the laminated quarter-sawed white oak in block and in Monticello design” that had been laid in the main rooms. The article also noted the brass screens and handles on the steel casement windows, the colored tile wainscot of the bathrooms, and the red rubber tile floors in the kitchen, pantry, and breakfast room. The feature included a rendering of the facade of the house, attributed to “Nelson & Cooper, Durham and Raleigh.” The piece also included another Nelson & Cooper rendering, of the Dr. D. T. Smith house built in 1933 in a “modified Spanish style,” at the corner of Dover and Devon Roads.²¹

The neighborhood features another Norman-styled building, the clubhouse for the Hope Valley Country Club, built in 1928 by New York architect Aymar Embury for Milburn & Heister, a firm that had designed several commercial and institutional buildings in Durham, including the Durham County Courthouse. The clubhouse, however, is a mildly detailed, symmetrical version of the style, described in the Durham Architectural Inventory as an “unadorned rendition.”²² The elegant, sophisticated version of the Norman Provincial style that Nelson employed in Hope Valley, combined with the overall rarity of the Norman Provincial style in Durham, makes the Forbus House a significant local example of this picturesque revival type.

²⁰ Nelson file.

²¹ *Durham Herald Sun*, June 11, 1933.

²² Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 212; Roberts, Lea, and Leary, 291-292.

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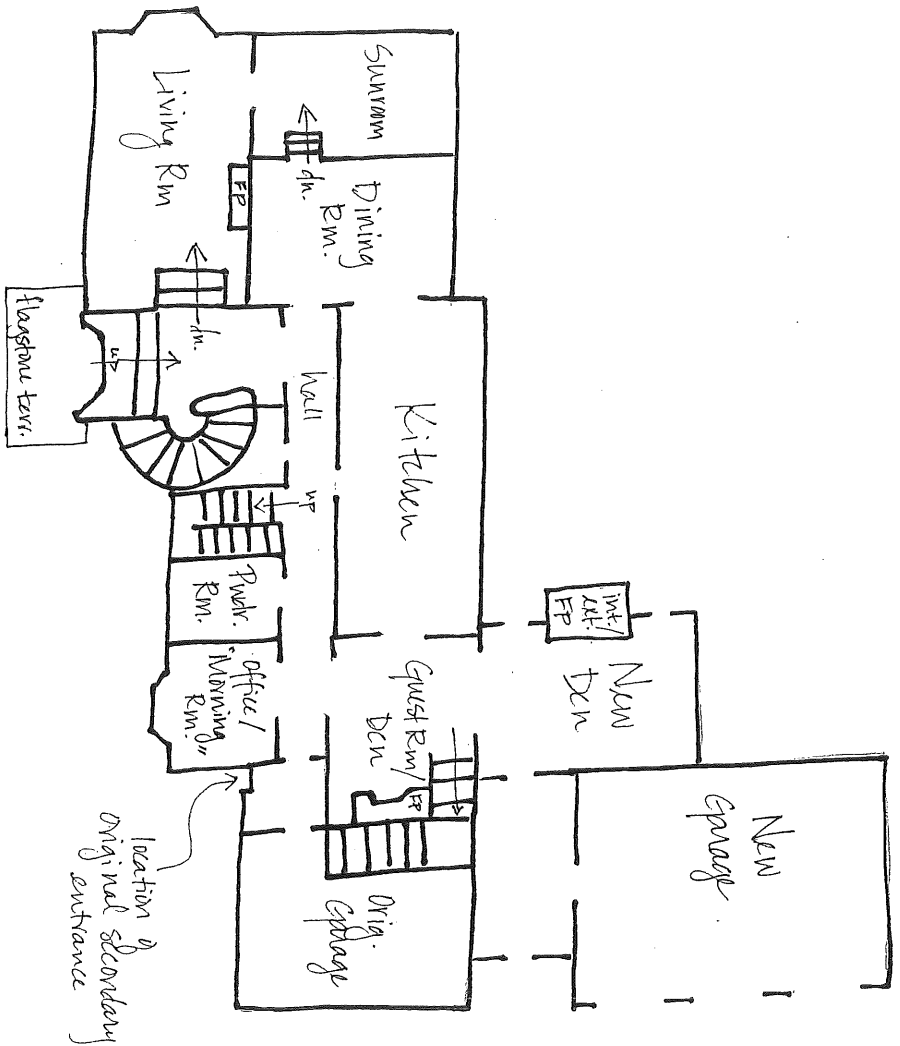
Wiley and Elizabeth Forbus House
Durham County, North Carolina

Verbal Boundary Description

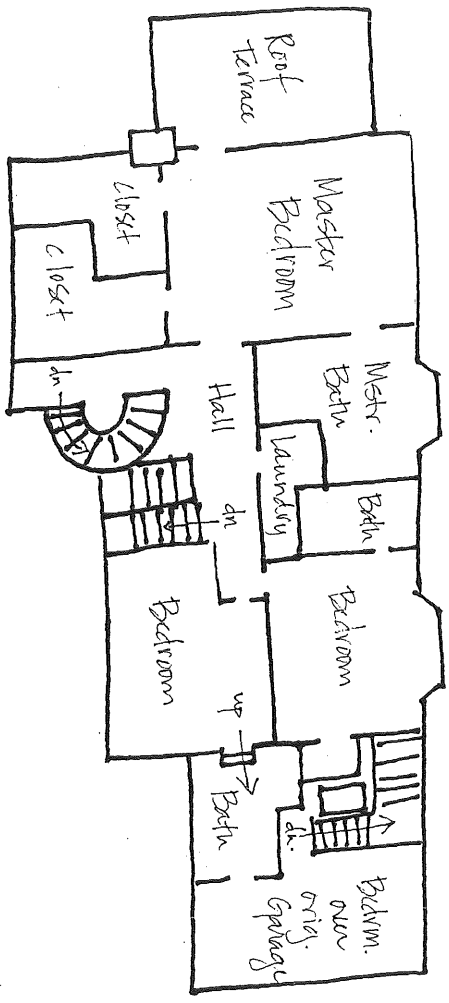
The boundary encompasses the entire legal parcel known as 3307 Devon Road in Durham, Durham County. The tax parcel identification number is 0810-18-31-9440.

Boundary Justification

The boundary represents the parcel historically associated with the Forbus House.



Forbus House: First-floor plan (not to scale).
 Hope Valley, Barnham, Barrham Co.



Forlans House: Second-Floor Plan (not to scale)
 Hope Valley, Durham, Durham County

LOT 15 & PART OF LOTS 4 & 6
 LOT --- SECTION --- BLOCK Z PHASE --- SUBDIVISION HOPE VALLEY

AS RECORDED IN MAP BOOK $\frac{9}{8}$ VOL. --- PAGE $\frac{42}{182}$
 OF THE DURHAM COUNTY REGISTRY. D.B. 1177 PG. 707

LEGEND:

- O = EXISTING IRON PIPE
- = NEW IRON PIPE
- P = PORCH, S = STOOP, SH = SHED
- *-* = FENCE, R = RADIUS
- · - · - = CREEK (APPROX. LOCATION)
- E- = OVERHEAD ELECTRIC LINE
- LP = LIGHT POLE, PP = POWER POLE
- CP = CARPORT, PK = MASONRY NAIL
- PL = PROPERTY LINE, MH = MANHOLE
- PM = PRELIMINARY MAP
- LBS = LOCATION BY SCALE
- CL = CHAINLINK, WD = WOOD
- C = CHIMNEY, ■ = ELECT. TRANSFORMER
- ▭ = RECORDED BUILDING ENVELOPE
- L = ARC LENGTH, CH = CHORD LENGTH
- YI = YARD INLET
- D = DECK, FH = FIRE HYDRANT
- N/F = NOW OR FORMERLY
- DU = DESTINATION UNKNOWN

I declare that this survey complies with the North Carolina Standards of Practice for Surveying (section . 1600) for class A surveys and that the calculated ratio of precision before adjustments is 10,000+. Furthermore, building corners shown are primary control monumentation for the reestablishment of property corners in the absence of grid monuments and other subdivision property corners. This survey is not to be recorded without the written authorization of the surveyor. This map remains the property of the surveyor and is to be used only for conveyance of this lot to the person(s) shown on this map.

Professional Land Surveyor

- Notes: 1) North arrow is referenced to recorded document shown above unless denoted otherwise.
 2) House ties are radial to property lines unless shown otherwise.
 3) Underground pipes not located with this survey.
 4) All areas are computed by coordinates.
 5) Flood plain statement attached separately.

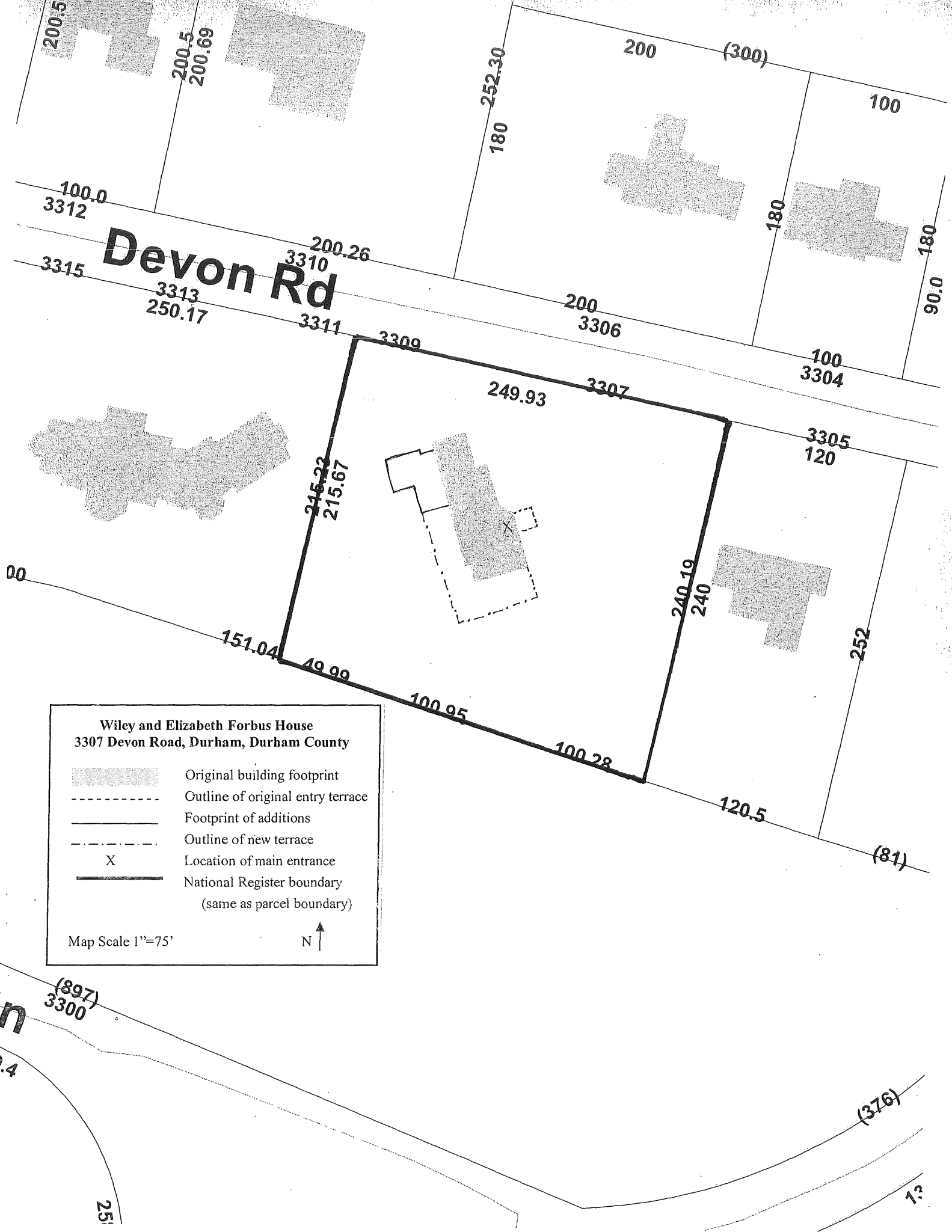


Wiley and Elizabeth Forbus House
 3307 Devon Road
 Durham, Durham County


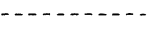

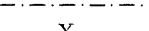


Tax Map showing parcel 0810-18-31-9440

NOTE DIFFERENCE IN DEED AND SURVEY
 OF EXISTING CORNER STAKES.

Devon Rd



Wiley and Elizabeth Forbus House
 3307 Devon Road, Durham, Durham County

-  Original building footprint
-  Outline of original entry terrace
-  Footprint of additions
-  Outline of new terrace
-  Location of main entrance
-  National Register boundary
(same as parcel boundary)

Map Scale 1"=75' N ↑

(897)
 3300
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(376)
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