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 Cicero Francis Lowe House  
and or common C. F. Lowe House

2. Location

street & number 204 Cascade Avenue  

state North Carolina  

city, town Winston-Salem  

3. Classification

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4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Brown, Jr.

street & number 204 Cascade Avenue  

state North Carolina

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Forsyth County Hall of Justice, Register of Deeds  

street & number Main Street  

state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

From Frontier To Factory, An Architectural History Of Forsyth County  

has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date 1981  

state North Carolina  

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

state North Carolina
The Cicero F. Lowe House is a two story, frame, Colonial Revival house built in 1911 in Washington Park, one of the most prestigious turn-of-the-century neighborhoods in Winston-Salem. It stands on one of the highest elevations in the city at the intersection of Broad Street and Cascade Avenue, a residential boulevard lined with the homes of some of Winston and Salem’s prominent industrialists. The house is said to have been designed by Willard C. Northup, a well-known architect in North Carolina in the early twentieth century.

The Colonial Revival, a style of architecture which recalled elements of the classicism of ancient architecture and a nostalgia for colonial America, was in part a reaction to the excesses of Victorian architecture. The Colonial Revival was popular in the early 20th century in Winston-Salem and reflected the wealth and success of some of the city's foremost businessmen. Most of Winston-Salem's early 20th century Colonial Revival houses represented a transition between the massing of the earlier Queen Anne style and the symmetry and balance of neo-classicism. For example, the Lowe house features high chimneys with decorative caps, a high hipped roof and an interior free-flowing plan which are reminiscent of the Queen Anne style, but the strong classical entrance with Ionic columns is evidence of the neo-classical influence. The strong modillioned cornice under the eaves and the Palladian-influenced front door emphasize the nostalgia for the architecture of colonial America.

The Cicero Lowe House features an imposing entrance bay with a projecting semi-circular porch on the first level and a second story porch with Ionic columns, a pedimented gable and an oval window in the center of the gable. The front door recalls a Palladian, three-part design with the sidelights flanked by Ionic pilasters and capped by a modillioned hood and an arched transom above the double-leaf front door. Both the sidelights and the arched transom are leaded glass etched with geometric patterns. Fenestration in the house consists of large, single-pane, sash windows with the exception of the window over the stair landing on the east side of the house, and the gabled dormers on the roof which feature arched windows with shaped muntins.

The east elevation of the house features a projecting bay with three windows for both the dining room on the first floor and the master bedroom on the second floor. Next to this bay is the window over the stair landing with its triangular muntin pattern. The south, or rear, elevation presents a projecting ell which contains the kitchen...
rear hall, and butler's pantry on the first floor, and the sleeping porch on the second floor. The present owners have added a deck to this elevation. The west elevation contains a projecting bay window in the library on the first floor which features a three-part window with diamond-patterned muntins.

On the interior of the Lowe House, the woodwork is typical of the fine Colonial Revival houses built in Winston-Salem at the turn of the century. A large entrance hall features high paneled oak wainscoting and a fireplace with interlocking Gothic arches carved on the surround. The front entrance carries the same Palladian treatment and Ionic pilasters on the interior as it does on the exterior. The staircase with its paneled wainscoting is adjacent to a side hall at the rear of the entrance hall and is not a focal point of the entrance. The plan of the house is free-flowing and the parlor, library, dining room and family room all open into the entrance hall. The floors throughout the first floor of the Lowe House are exceptionally fine and are oak bordered with an inlay of walnut which forms a geometric pattern in each corner.

The parlor is on the left and the library is on the right as one enters the front door, and both rooms are accessible through large entrances with pocket doors. The parlor fireplace opening is surrounded by tiles and the mantelpiece features Ionic columns which support a molded shelf. The library has a corner fireplace with Doric-style columns and the room also features high paneled wainscoting. Behind the library is a room originally used as a family room or children's area which also features a corner fireplace.

The rear of the entrance hall opens through pocket doors into a large dining room which features high paneled wainscoting and a fireplace with a Classical surround. The dining room also has a projecting bay with three sash windows on the east side of the house. Immediately behind the dining room is a kitchen area which originally included a butler's pantry. The kitchen and butler's pantry opened onto a rear service stair and rear hall.

The main staircase to the second floor of the Lowe House climbs to a landing which features a large, three-part window with an alternating, triangular muntin pattern. From the landing the staircase returns and leads to a spacious second floor hall which opens into four large bedrooms and a bath. The interior finish of each bedroom includes a fireplace and the south
side of the house featured a sleeping porch which has been enclosed. The fireplace in the master bedroom features a neo-classical surround, while the other bedroom mantels contain simple pilasters which support modillioned mantel shelves.

With the exception of updating the kitchen and bathrooms, building some closets and enclosing the sleeping porch, the Cicero Lowe House has remained intact and is undergoing sensitive rehabilitation under the present ownership.
Architectural Footnotes

1Author's interview with Mrs. Wilmot C. Rawlings (Janet Lowe Rawlings), Winston-Salem, North Carolina, July 18, 1984.
8. Significance

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Specific dates 1911

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Cicero Francis Lowe House

The Cicero Francis Lowe House, one of Winston-Salem's finest surviving Colonial Revival residences, stands on a prominent elevation at the intersection of Broad Street and Cascade Avenue in the Washington Park neighborhood. It was built in 1911 for Cicero Lowe, secretary of the Brown-Rogers Hardware Company, and it is thought to have been designed by Willard C. Northup, a prominent North Carolina architect. The Washington Park neighborhood was developed by the Winston-Salem Land and Investment Company in 1892 and by 1910 many prominent industrialists and businessmen listed a Cascade Avenue address. The Lowe House is a residence of pivotal importance to Washington Park and Cascade Avenue, and it stands as a reminder of the exuberance and prosperity which Salem and Winston enjoyed in the early twentieth century.
A. The Cicero F. Lowe House is associated with the early twentieth century period in Winston-Salem when the tremendous wealth and optimism generated by the burgeoning tobacco and textile industries spawned a building boom which developed new residential areas of the city and populated prestigious neighborhoods such as Washington Park.

B. The house is associated with Cicero Francis Lowe, a prominent citizen of Winston-Salem who became vice-president of one of the most successful hardware businesses in the south, the Brown-Rogers Company, now known as Brown-Rogers-Dixson.

C. The Cicero F. Lowe House is attributed to the work of Willard C. Northup, one of North Carolina's most prominent early twentieth century architects. It is also one of the few outstanding Colonial Revival style residences which remain in Winston-Salem's turn of the century neighborhoods.

Cicero Francis Lowe was born in Lexington, North Carolina on August 23, 1868 to Cicero Francis and Mary Thompson Lowe. He attended the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill from 1885 to 1887. On December 3, 1897 Lowe married Margaret Robbins, also from Lexington, and shortly thereafter they moved to Monroe, North Carolina, where C. F. Lowe was employed by the Heath Hardware Company. In 1908 Cicero and Margaret Lowe and their children, Frank and Margaret, moved to Winston-Salem, and Lowe became a salesman for the Brown-Rogers Hardware Company. The Lowes lived at 408 West Fourth Street, near Marshall Street, in Winston.

The Brown-Rogers Hardware Company was organized in Winston in 1880 by T. J. Brown and J. M. Rogers. The company operated its retail store at the northwest corner of Fourth and Main Streets in Winston, and it also quickly became one of the leading wholesale distributors in the region as well. By 1888, Dr. D. P. Robbins described
The building is 90 feet deep and the outlay in all lines of hardware is complete, the business having been greatly extended under Mr. Roger's management. Rogers later recalled that the early success of the company happened because it "did not hold to the traditional concept of the hardware store of its day. If our customers wanted it and we could get it in our store, we sold it." Brown-Rogers' booming business in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was due in part to the general atmosphere of growth and success in which Winston and Salem basked during this period. By 1896 Branson's North Carolina Business Directory listed no less than seven "development" companies for Winston and Salem, though their combined populations were fewer than 20,000. West of Winston, a tract of land on a steep ridge was developed by the West End Hotel and Land Company, which had the stated goal of promoting Winston as a healthful and beautiful resort city. The West End became an exclusive residential area during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. To the east of Winston, Dr. Simon Green Atkins purchased two lots from the Inside Land and Development Company and started an area known as Columbian Heights. It was the first neighborhood in Winston developed for black professionals and prominent citizens and was one of the few neighborhoods of its kind in North Carolina. To the south of Salem the Sunnyside Land Company opened up to development land which had once been E. A. Vogler's farm, "Sunnyside." With paved streets, electric lights, and street car connections, the area attracted both residential and commercial development. Also south of Salem, Jacob Lott Ludlow, one of North Carolina's first civil engineers, laid out the Washington Park area for the Winston-Salem Land and Investment Company in 1892. The land had originally belonged to the Moravians who apparently felt that it was too steep for development so they used it for hunting. The park itself included 17 acres of land, and Cascade Avenue, which led to the park, became a residential boulevard of elegant houses owned by prominent industrialists and businessmen. Cicero F. Lowe decided to build his new house on Cascade Avenue, and in 1909 he purchased a lot on the southwest corner of Broad and Cascade for $3,000.00. The Lowe family, which now consisted of four children, moved into their new house in 1912. Janet Wilson Lowe and Julian L. Lowe had been born since the family moved to Winston in 1908. The Lowes were joined on Cascade Avenue by Henry E. Fries, president of the Winston-Salem Southbound Railway and Mayor of Salem, and by Frederick Fries Bahnson, one of the founders of the Normalair Company which produced centrifugal humidifiers for industrial use. John Worth McAlister, a real estate and insurance broker, Charles Siewers, president of the Forsyth Chair Company and the Forsyth Dining Room Company, and A. H. Eller, a prominent attorney, also built residences on Cascade in the early 1900s.
According to Cicero Lowe's daughter, Janet, the family's house on Cascade Avenue was designed by Willard C. Northup, one of Winston-Salem's most noted architects, and was constructed by Fogle Brothers Lumber Company of Winston. Northup (1882-1942) was a native of Hancock, Michigan who moved to Asheville, North Carolina as a child. He attended Drexel University, and he received his architectural degree from the University of Pennsylvania. Northup came to Winston around 1907, and in 1913 was joined by architect Leet O'Brien in his architectural practice. The name of the firm became Northup and O'Brien in 1925. Northup served as president of the North Carolina State Board of Architectural Examiners and became a fellow in the American Institute of Architects. Among the many buildings which Northup and O'Brien designed in Winston-Salem are the City Hall, the County Courthouse and a large body of residential work. Fogle Brothers Lumber Company, the building contractor for Cicero Lowe's house, was responsible for much of the building in both Winston and Salem in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Fogle Brothers was founded in 1871 and by 1888 was described as having built "many of the best business buildings and private residences of the Twin City."  

After the Lowes moved to Cascade Avenue in 1912, C. F. Lowe's career with Brown-Rogers continued to prosper, and in 1913 Lowe became secretary of the hardware company. Brown-Rogers moved its store to 500 North Liberty Street in 1913 after a fire destroyed the Fourth Street building. In 1915 W. N. Dixson moved to Winston-Salem from Norfolk, Virginia, to become the vice-president and general manager of Brown-Rogers. He purchased Brown's and Rogers' shares of the business and became president of the company upon Rogers' death in 1924, at which time the name of the company changed to Brown-Rogers-Dixson. C. F. Lowe left Brown-Rogers-Dixson as its vice-president in 1925, and he went to work for the Binswanger Company, another hardware concern.

When the stock market crashed in 1929, Cicero F. Lowe's financial security went with it. On May 10, 1928, the Lowe's had conveyed a deed of trust to Citizens Bank of Norfolk, Virginia upon which they defaulted, and on December 12, 1931, the grand house on Cascade Avenue was sold to the Imperial Mortgage Company for $5,000.00. On May 1, 1932, W. S. Lindsay and his wife, Sethelle, purchased the property.

Cicero F. Lowe moved his family to the Gray Court Apartments on Broad Street, and he died at the age of 65 in 1933. Lowe's obituary stated that "he had been a prominent citizen here many years" and his pallbearers included other prominent citizens such as James A. Gray, president of Wachovia Bank, Charles R. Fogle, president of Orinoco Building Supply Company, A. H. Eller, an attorney, Burton Craig, an attorney, and Charles Creech, president of Unique Furniture Company. Lowe's wife, Margaret, continued to live in the Gray Court Apartments until her health began
to fail in the late 1950s. Mrs. Lowe died on January 22, 1966 at the age of 97. 28

The Cicero F. Lowe House was sold in 1946 to Robert V. Brawley and Emeline Thorne Brawley who owned it until 1981. 29 Robert V. Brawley, a prominent attorney in Winston-Salem, is the nephew of Mrs. Burton Craige (Jane Boyden). Burton Craige had served as one of C. F. Lowe's pallbearers and apparently was one of his close associates. Robert and Emeline Brawley lived in the house until 1971 when they moved to 134 Cascade Avenue, the former Burton Craige House, and they later leased the C. F. Lowe House. In 1982 Emeline Thorne Brawley sold the Lowe House to F. M. Brown and his wife, Karen, the present owners. 30
Significance Statement Footnotes

1Winston-Salem City Directory, 1911 and 1912, hereinafter cited as City Directory, with appropriate date; Author's interview with Mrs. Wilmot C. Rawlings, daughter of C. F. Lowe, July 18, 1984, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, hereinafter cited as Rawlings interview; Author's Note - The file records of Northup and O'Brien are undated, but they do not include a reference to a house for C. F. Lowe. Northup came to Winston in 1906 and O'Brien did not join him until 1913. Building permit records in Forsyth County are not available before 1930 and therefore the Lowe House architect cannot be verified through these documents.


4City Directory, 1908; Rawlings interview.

5The Sentinel (Winston-Salem, N.C.), "No. 1 Family in Merchandising," September 6, 1980, hereinafter cited as Sentinel, "No. 1 Family."


7Sentinel, "No. 1 Family."


9West End Planning Group, "West End Neighborhood Plan" (Winston-Salem: privately printed by the City of Winston-Salem, 1978), 5.

11 Adelaide Fries, Stuart Thurmond Wright, J. Edwin Hendricks, Forsyth, the History of a County on the March (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 205.


13 Forsyth County, Register of Deeds, Book 96, page 420.

14 City Directory, 1912; Rawlings interview.

15 Rawlings interview.


17 Rawlings interview.


19 Taylor, Frontier to Factory, 36-37.

20 City Directory, 1912.

21 Sentinel, "No. 1 Family."

22 Sentinel, "No. 1 Family."

23 City Directories, 1925, 1926; Rawlings interview.

24 Forsyth County, Register of Deeds, Deed of Trust, Book 240, p. 114, Deed Book 348, p. 182.

25 Forsyth County Register of Deeds, Deed Book 348, p. 272.


Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 8


29 Forsyth County, Register of Deeds, Deed Book 549, p. 300.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Sheets)

10. Geographical Data

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Tax Block 675, Lot 104

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gwynne S. Taylor
organization Preservation Consultant
date August 1, 1984

street & number 827 Westover Avenue
city or town Winston-Salem
state North Carolina

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

National  [ ] State  [ ] Local  [ ]

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:  

Chief of Registration
Bibliography

Cicero F. Lowe House


Forsyth County, Register of Deeds. Books 40, 96, 240 (Deed of Trust), 348.


"Lowe Rites Will Be Held Monday." Twin City Sentinel. 10 September 1933.


"Mrs. Lowe Dies Here; Ill 10 Years." Sentinel. 22 January 1966.

"No. 1 Family in Merchandising." Sentinel. 6 September 1980.


Ludlow, Jacob L. "Plan of the Property of the Winston-Salem Land and Investment Company." 29 March 1892.


Winston-Salem City Directories. 1908-1930.

Cicero Francis Lowe House
Winston-Salem East, N. C.
Zone 17  Scale 1:24 000

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