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  Charles H. Ireland House  

2 LOCATION  
STREET & NUMBER  602 West Friendly Avenue  
CITY, TOWN  Greensboro  
STATE  North Carolina  

3 CLASSIFICATION  
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4 OWNER OF PROPERTY  
NAME  Mr. and Mrs. Randel Roberts  
STREET & NUMBER  419 North Cedar Street  
CITY, TOWN  Greensboro  
STATE  North Carolina  

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION  
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Guilford County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN  Greensboro  
STATE  North Carolina  

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS  
TITLE  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN  
STATE  

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL
The Ireland House was built by Charles H. Ireland in 1904 at the corner of Spring Street and Gaston (now Friendly) Avenue in Greensboro. Once a fashionable residential section, the area is now commercial, with the house a lone survivor; it is one of the few surviving houses in inner Greensboro, a city whose rapid growth has destroyed most of its downtown neighborhoods. The house is an unusual blend of several architectural styles which were either established styles but losing their popularity or which were only then coming into vogue. Displaying a variety of building materials, textures, design elements, and massing, the combination reflects the transitional period in which the Ireland House was built.

A large, two-and-one-half story residence, the Ireland House utilizes three basic materials in its exterior construction: random granite on the first story, yellow glazed brick on the second, and shingles on the dormers and tympanum. The three-bay facade is distinguished by a pedimented two-story portico with Ionic columns. A Palladian window is set within the oversize, shingled gambrel-shaped pediment. Sheltered by the portico is a bowed first floor porch featuring a flat roof; a balustrade between the columns creates a second level central gallery. The porch roof is carried upon both plain and fluted Ionic columns which rise from granite bases as do the portico columns. The porch extends across the east elevation to a side entrance sheltered by a flat roof carried on plain Ionic columns resting on a random granite wall. The cornice treatment varies from a rather heavy bracketed vernacular entablature on the facade to a simple box cornice on other elevations.

The steeply pitched gambrel roof, covered with slate, is pierced by four corbeled brick end chimneys which feature arched panels. The fenestration pattern is irregular, consisting of one-over-one sash windows set in molded surrounds with granite sills and lintels. Flanking the tympanum are two hip-roofed dormers, also with one-over-one sash. Of particular note is the semi-elliptical stained glass window on the first floor facade, of which there were at one time several in the house.

The entrance consists of a flat, single leaf door dominated by an oval pane of glass set within a rectangular molding with applied wreaths at the corners. The transom is of beveled-edge, leaded glass as were the sidelights which have been replaced by plain panes of glass. Beyond the outer door is a small foyer, flanked by bench seats, and an inner door of similar design without the wreaths leading to the wide central hall.

The interior of the Ireland House is constructed on a center hall plan. Much of the interior is essentially intact including the original wallpaper in the foyer, main hall, and stair hall, a deep brown embossed type resembling tooled leather which covers approximately the lower third of the wall in the central hall with a molding separating it from the plaster above. The woodwork on the first floor is of dark stained woods, lavishly applied and featuring ornately carved mantels with colonnettes and deeply molded shelves. The large public rooms of the first floor are separated by paneled sliding doors and feature symmetrically molded door and window surrounds with roundel corner blocks. Although it is not currently evident, the enclosed stair, with heavy square newelposts and ornate, turned balusters, once rose from the right side of the central hall. The stair has been walled off from the hall and can be reached either through the dining room or from the side porch entrance. At the left rear of the
first floor is a small, one-story frame wing which is said to have been used by the Ireland family as a winter kitchen.

The upper two floors, each containing seven rooms surrounding a central hall, retain the original woodwork, with symmetrically molded surrounds, roundel corner blocks, and richly carved, but smaller mantels. Most of the upstairs woodwork has been painted, unlike the dark stained woods of the first floor rooms. A typically Victorian feature of the house is the number of small rooms in the upper floors, created by the unusual and varying room configuration in the house.

Behind the Ireland House is a small, one-story frame structure on a brick foundation, built as the servant's quarters. The gabled roof of the house is pierced by a corbeled brick chimney. The fenestration consists of four-over-four sash windows and a double entrance.
**PERIOD**

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**SPECIFIC DATES** 1904

**Builder/Architect** said locally to be Andrew L. Schlosser

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Charles H. Ireland House is one of the most flamboyant examples of turn-of-the-century architecture surviving in Greensboro, and is one of the few remaining residential structures in the once fashionable neighborhoods near the downtown area of the city. Displaying a variety of building materials, and several classical porches and porticos, the house is a vigorously eclectic and unusual blend of several architectural styles—Queen Anne, Neo-Classical Revival, Colonial Revival—reflecting the transitional period in which it was constructed. Mr. Ireland, for whom it was built in 1904, distinguished himself as a businessman and religious lay leader in the Greensboro community. Perhaps his most valuable activities were conducted on behalf of the Greensboro Female College, which he served as trustee and benefactor.

**Criteria Assessment:**

B. The Ireland House is significant in the early twentieth century history of Greensboro, as the home of Charles H. Ireland, a prominent local businessman, Methodist lay leader, and educational benefactor important to the history of the economic and educational development of the City of Greensboro.

C. The Ireland House blends a variety of architectural styles—Queen Anne, Neo-Classical Revival, Colonial Revival—reflecting the transitional period in which the house was built. It is one of the last remaining houses in the once fashionable neighborhoods in the area surrounding the central business district of Greensboro.
Charles H. Ireland of Greensboro, merchant, philanthropist, and friend of education, and the man for whom the Ireland House on West Friendly Avenue was built, was born in Lovington, Virginia, on March 12, 1859. He was the only son of James and Henrietta Pointer Ireland. He received an early education in the school of Henry L. Davies, a well known educator and author. In 1877, Ireland took a position as a clerk in a Lynchburg hardware store; thus, he was introduced to the business that was to make him nationally prominent and extremely prosperous. At the age of twenty-three, he moved to Greensboro, North Carolina, to take charge of the hardware department of Odell and Company, a building supply firm founded by James A. Odell, that also specialized in dry goods and notions. Greensboro in the early twentieth century was rapidly developing as a regional commercial city, and ambitious businessmen like Ireland contributed to and benefitted from its growth.

James A. Odell announced his retirement and moved to Durham in 1884. Ireland led a reorganization of the firm which became known as the Odell Hardware Company. Dry goods and notions were discontinued. Ireland became secretary and manager of the reorganized firm and demonstrated such sound business leadership that he was retained in that position when Odell decided to return to the company as its president. James A. Odell permanently retired in 1912, and Ireland succeeded to the position of president and general manager. He retained control of the firm until shortly before his death. Under Ireland's guidance, the Odell Hardware Company rose to a place of eminence in the hardware industry. With capital assets valued in excess of half a million dollars in 1928, it employed 125 people. Ireland's business abilities also earned him a reputation as one of the leading hardware men in the country. The October, 1925 Hardware Dealer's Magazine ran a lengthy story on Odell's store citing his neatness and religious convictions as vital components of his success.

Shortly after the Southern Hardware Jobbers' Association was formed in the 1890s, Ireland applied for membership. He later served two years as president of the organization and was honored with a life membership on the executive committee of the National Hardware Jobbers' Association, and for more than thirty years he held a position on the Hardware Council, which embraced every branch of the hardware trade in the United States.

Ireland combined extensive business interests with participation in community improvement, particularly in the realm of education. When he arrived in Greensboro in 1882, the town of 5,000 had no paved streets, a water system fed by hand pumps, and its public educational facilities consisted primarily of poorly attended log schools. For more than twenty years he served on the county board of education, seventeen as chairman. He was chairman of the city school board for an equal amount of time. During his tenure, the old log schoolhouses gave way to frame and later, brick structures, and a fleet of busses made the schools accessible to all students in the county. The operating budget grew from $15,000 to $600,000 under Ireland's guidance.
Charles Ireland's pet educational project was the Greensboro Female College (now Greensboro College) with which he was directly associated for more than thirty years. His interest in the college dated from his marriage in 1888 to Lavalette Alderman whose father (William Franklin Alderman) was a professor there. When the college ran into financial difficulties in 1903, Ireland, a trustee, led the fund drive, donating $600 as the initial contribution. A year later the college burned and again it was Ireland who led the way for rebuilding by personally breaking ground and by donating building supplies from the Odell Hardware Company. His last contribution to the school came upon his death, when he willed a special trust to the college in the amount of $120,000.

A number of other institutions requested and received Ireland's services: Bennett College (treasurer and trustee), Palmer Memorial Institute (trustee and director), L. Richardson Memorial Hospital (director), Atlantic Bank and Trust Company (director), and Ireland, Brooks, and Wills, Inc. (co-founder). He was also a Mason, a member in good standing of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and a member of the Chamber of Commerce. In addition, he was a devout Methodist and upon his arrival in Greensboro had joined the West Market Street Methodist Church. Ireland had been among the founders of the Lay Activity Movement in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and for many years he was lay reader for the Western North Carolina Conference. He attended thirty-eight annual conferences; was a delegate to six general conferences; and in 1921 was selected to attend the Ecumenical Conference of Methodists in London. The church showed appreciation for his service by naming in his honor the Sunday school class that he taught for forty years.

For the last twenty-eight years of his life, Ireland resided at his home on West Gaston (now Friendly) Avenue. He had purchased a 198' x 200' lot from Sarah Forbis and Amanda Lee in 1886. Construction was not completed, however, until 1904. Until then Ireland and his wife lived in another house on the lot which was apparently taken down when the new house was built. Andrew L. Schlosser, a German immigrant and expert craftsman, is said to have executed the stone and brickwork for the Ireland House as well as for other homes in the Greensboro area. He perhaps designed the house also, as his descendants have claimed, but others believe that Ireland designed his own home. Neither claim can be fully documented; however, available evidence in favor of architectural talent leans towards Schlosser. Undoubtedly Ireland provided many of the building supplies such as oak boarding, mantels, molding, and glass from the mantel department and subsidiary warehouses belonging to the Odell Hardware Company. An eyewitness to the construction of the Ireland House remembered a Mr. Robinette as the man who laid the oak flooring. Of three stained glass windows installed, one was believed to have been a Tiffany original purchased by Ireland at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis.
In September of 1931 Charles H. Ireland suffered a heart attack and died on March 12, 1932, where he had moved in hopes of recovery. Ireland's will left explicit instructions for the continued occupancy of their Greensboro home by his wife, but she chose to remain in Florida.

The chain of title from the Ireland ownership to the present owners is a complex mass of trust, trustee, and fee simple deeds, but for nearly thirty-five years actual control of the house was exercised by James Lawrence Hutton, who with his wife, Hazel Lee Hutton, acquired the lot in 1941. On December 29, 1975, after several years as an apartment house and a period of severe neglect and vandalism, the house and lot were sold to Randel W. and Shirly [Ann] M. Roberts for $50,000. When the property was on the market, its demolition appeared inevitable despite recognition of its historic value.

The Roberts decided to renovate the house and live upstairs while opening the first floor as an antique shop. Renovative efforts included a new roof, new heating system with preservation of the original radiators, rewiring, and new plumbing. According to Mrs. Roberts, the apartment walls have been removed "... to return to the original floor plan as nearly as possible. Painting and papering have been applied, trying to retain similarity with original decor and colorings."

By the time the Roberts purchased the property, the original 198' x 200' lot had been reduced to a 77.52' x 190' lot. A portion along one edge had been sold to the city for the purposes of widening Spring Street. The project, scheduled for 1980, will destroy the stately magnolia in the front corner and bring the street to within a few feet of the steps to the side entrance.

Footnotes


2 Connor, Rebuilding an Ancient Commonwealth, III, 30; and N. C. Christian Advocate.


6 Connor, Rebuilding an Ancient Commonwealth, III, 30; and Hardware Dealers' Magazine (October, 1932), 43, hereinafter cited as Hardware Dealers' Magazine.


8 Connor, Rebuilding an Ancient Commonwealth, III, 30; and N. C. Christian Advocate.

9 Connor, Rebuilding an Ancient Commonwealth, III, 30; and N. C. Christian Advocate.


11 One local story tells of Ireland's efforts to motivate the rebuilding program. Shortly after the decision was made, a lonely mule was observed moving methodically around the campus grounds. Closer inspection revealed that Ireland had hired several black men and their mule to start the ground breaking for new buildings, and he was overseeing the project. The point was made and soon the program was in full swing. Greensboro Daily News, February 20, 1938. See also The Daily Record (Greensboro), "The Gate City' Greensboro," Special Souvenir Number, 1910, hereinafter cited as Daily Record, Special Edition.

12 Guilford County Will Books, Office of the Clerk of Court, Guilford County Courthouse, Greensboro, Will Book L, 98-102, hereinafter cited as Guilford County Will Book.


15 Ann M. Roberts. Letter to [Dr.] Larry Tise, Director of the Division of Archives and History, May 21, 1978, hereinafter cited as Roberts to Tise.

16 Guilford County Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Guilford County Courthouse,
Greensboro, Deed Book 73, p. 185, hereinafter cited as Guilford Deed Book; a photo of the house under construction appeared in *Art Work of Greensboro, North Carolina* (Chicago: Gravure Illustration Company, 1904), unpaginated; and Greensboro City Directories, 1884-1912 (incomplete), Greensboro Public Library, Greensboro.

17 Roberts to Tise. Based on interviews locally.

18 According to Greensboro residents contemporary with the Schlossers, one of Andrew's sons became an architect and was associated with C. E. Hartmann, architect for the Jefferson Standard Building in Greensboro. Roberts to Tise. See also Survey Files, Archeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, Guilford County file: Greensboro--Jefferson Standard Building.

19 *Daily Record*, Special Edition; and Roberts to Tise.

20 Roberts to Tise.


22 Guilford Will Book L. 98-102. DeLavalette died in 1950 and had for many years been a resident of Florida. See Guilford Will Book Z, 273.

23 On December 5, 1929, Ireland placed his home in a deed of trust to B. B. Vinson, representing the Greensboro Bond and Mortgage Company, to cover a $12,000 loan. Ireland died in 1932 before the loan was repaid, but in his will he arranged for payment through proceeds from his estate should his wife wish to live there. DeLavalette chose to remain in Florida, and the house and lot were sold to the New York Life Insurance Company by Eugene Shaw, who had replaced Vinson as representative of the Greensboro Bond and Mortgage Company. The New York Life Insurance Company transferred the property to James Lawrence and Hazel Lee Hutton on November 1, 1941. Guilford County Deed Book 643, p. 45; Deed Book 779, p. 271; Deed Book 781, p. 282; and Deed Book 977, p. 400. Hutton and his wife separated in 1948, and within a few years the Ireland House was converted into eight apartments and rented to tenants. The separation had ended in divorce by August of 1952, and shortly thereafter Hazel Lee Hutton was declared mentally incompetent. The clerk of Superior Court appointed her son, J. Lawrence Hutton, Jr., to handle her interest in the estate. Father and son controlled the house and lot for the next twenty-two years. Upon their separation, the Huttons had placed the Ireland House in a special deed of trust to the Security National Bank (now North Carolina National Bank). Several amendments were later added. J. Lawrence Hutton, Sr. failed to meet his obligations under the deed of separation and the amendments thereto in regard to distribution of rental income from the Ireland House Apartments. When legally required to sell the property, Hutton neglected to do so; consequently, the bank exercised its prerogative in the deed of trust. Guilford County Deed Book 1223, pp. 544,
549; and Roberts to Tise. Guilford County Deed Book 2796, p. 439. See also Deed Book 2798, p. 252 for a summary of the events.

24 Guilford County Deed Book 2798, p. 252.

25 Roberts to Tise.

26 Guilford County Deed Book 2798, p. 252. Compare the description with those in Deed Book 73, p. 185 and Deed Book 977, p. 400.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


GEOPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Greensboro QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

ZONE EASTING NORTHING EASTING NORTHING

A[1,7] 6[0,8] 2,8,0 3,9,2 6,1,0

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The lot on the northwest corner of the intersection of W. Friendly Avenue and N. Spring Street

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

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FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Description prepared by David W. Parham, Survey and Planning Branch Significance prepared by Jerry L. Cross, Research Branch

ORGANIZATION N.C. Division of Archives and History

ADDRESS 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN Raleigh

STATE North Carolina

TELEPHONE (919) 733-4763

DATE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL _ STATE _ LOCAL X

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

DATE March 8, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION
Greensboro City Directories 1884-1912 (incomplete. Greensboro Public Library.


Guilford County Records. Greensboro: Guilford County Courthouse. Subgroups: Deeds
Estate Papers, Wills.

Hardware Dealers' Magazine. October, 1932.


Maps: Gray's New Map of Greensboro, 1882. Map of the City of Greensboro by F. W.
Beers & Co., 1893.


Charles H. Ireland House
602 West Friendly Avenue
Greensboro, North Carolina
Guilford County
Greensboro Quad 1:24000
Less than 1 acre
UTM Reference
17/608280/3992610