FORM 10-300

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

Norburn Terrace

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

216 Lafayette Street

CITY, TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

037

COUNTY

Wake

CODE

183

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OBJECT

PROPERTY

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

PRIVATE

STRUCTURE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

BEING CONSIDERED

IN PROCESS

STATUS

X OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES RESTRICTED

YES UNRESTRICTED

NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PRIVATE

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

PRIVATE

OTHER

STATE

North Carolina 27602

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Elizabeth Lassiter

STREET & NUMBER

308 Mulberry

CITY, TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE

Wake County Courthouse

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

STREET & NUMBER

Fayetteville Street Hall

CITY, TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

27601

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Raleigh Inventory

DATE

1978

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

City of Raleigh Planning Department

CITY, TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina 27602
Norburn Terrace is an imposing, towered brick house, surrounded by 1.3 acres of terrace land and overgrown plantings. It is a basically conservative T-shaped dwelling given a bolder more ambitious character by a dominant tower and elaborate porch.

The conservative form of the house is enlivened by an octagonal tower that rises as a central pavilion on the main facade entrance and culminates in a wooden, octagonal stage with steeply peaked roof. The tower is clad in imbricated shingles and weatherboard, and is lit by round-arched windows above the broached base. The spire roof is adorned with louvered gablets.

Most typically Victorian is the decorative porch composed of a spindle frieze and turned balusters, which has two tiers at the entrance and one story across the front and north side. The south section of the front porch has been enclosed. A bay window extends from the gable end. The entire composition is capped by a complex gabled and hipped roof with pedimented dormers, and crowned by a balustrade. Two brick interior chimneys with corbelled caps penetrate this roof. Modillions underline the eaves and raking cornices, and a corbel table appears directly beneath the eave line.

The fenestration found on Norburn Terrace is varied. Although most windows are typically two over two sash located within segmentally-arched surrounds, the first story also contains a number of one over one Queen Anne type windows consisting of one large light, surrounded by small colored lights, which are particularly beautiful when viewed from the interior.

A rear kitchen wing is attached to the eastern end of the building. This simple gabled brick building was originally connected by a breezeway to the main house. This practice of separating kitchen and house was very common in the South. Originally, cooking was done over a wood stove; however, the kitchen has since been remodeled, ca. 1930.

The interior of Norburn Terrace is simple, symmetrical, and generously proportioned. Large double entrance doors open onto a wide central hall. The plan has a central hall two rooms deep with the front ones larger. The first floor originally contained a library, law offices, bedroom, parlor/living room, a pantry and detached kitchen, while the second floor contained four bedrooms, and a bathroom added c. 1910. Although the house was built to accommodate electricity, each room was heated by its own coal fireplace.

The first floor contains many rich details including four neo-classical mantels complete with mirrors, tiles, Ionic columns, and choice hardwoods. There is also stained and leaded glass, and graceful arched doorways. The second floor is reached by a centrally located rear stairway. The original newel post and balusters remain and are of typical mass-produced Victorian design. The four bedrooms contain nearly identical mantels, which are much simpler than the ones on the first floor. The second story porch can be reached from this floor, as can the small tower room. All floors are wood, approximately 3" wide,
and the average ceiling height is about thirteen feet.

The romantic impact of the house is also achieved by its extensive grounds, which contain meandering walks, willows, and cedars, a variety of shrubs and a small winding stream. Various outbuildings still remain, including the wash house, wood house, well and servants' quarters, to which the original smokehouse was added in the forties to make a rental unit. A kitchen garden was usually planted behind this small dwelling which originally housed two servants, a cook and a yardman. Although the property was never farmed for a cash crop, there was a barn which contained farm equipment and animals as well as a chicken coop.29

Today Norburn Terrace's original acreage is considerably diminished and its once cherished landscaping is no longer intact, however, it still remains an unforgettable Raleigh landmark, and a memorial to Herbert Norris who helped create so many Raleigh institutions we take for granted today.
Significance

Period
PREHISTORIC
1400-1499
1500-1599
1600-1699
1700-1799
1800-1899
1900

Areas of Significance
ARCHEOLOGY PREHISTORIC
ARCHEOLOGY HISTORIC
AGRICULTURE
ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCIAL
COMMUNICATIONS
COMMUNITY PLANNING
CONSERVATION
ECONOMICS
EDUCATION
ENGINEERING
EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
INDUSTRY
INVENTION
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
LAW
LITERATURE
MILITARY
MUSIC
PHILOSOPHY
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
RELIGION
SCIENCE
SOCIETY/HUMANITARIAN
THEATER
TRANSPORTATION

Specific Dates
ca. 1898

Builder/Architect
A. G. Bauer

Statement of Significance
Norburn Terrace, c. 1898, was commissioned by Herbert E. Norris, prominent Wake County politician, attorney, judge, and humanitarian. Family tradition states that the handsome late Victorian home was designed by Adolph Gustavus Bauer, best known for his work on the North Carolina Governor's Mansion.

Architecturally, Norburn Terrace represents the Victorian concept of a suburban estate. It is a decorative, yet conservative combination of eclectic Victorian elements with traditional southern symmetry, on both its interior and exterior. The large brick house is intimately integrated with its original terraced landscape and is one of the few real suburban estates remaining in Wake County. A distinguished local landmark, the house itself is remarkably little changed from its original construction.

Criteria Assessment
B. Associated with Herbert E. Norris, an important figure in Wake County history. A prominent attorney, Norris also served in the North Carolina House of Representatives, as well as serving as the judicial solicitor in the Sixth and Seventh Districts. While serving in the state legislature, he was one of five members who drafted the General Assembly bill creating the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Raleigh, now North Carolina State University. Later, he started a movement for the founding of the Home for the Aged and Infirm and lent support to this institution until his own death in 1923. Associated by tradition with Adolph Gustavus Bauer, a prominent architect in the late 1800s in Raleigh.

C. Norburn Terrace is one of the few remaining examples of the suburban estate in Raleigh. A sophisticated late Victorian brick house, Norburn Terrace is intimately related to its unusual terraced landscape. Its elegant eclectic detailing is still intact on both its interior and exterior, and today presents a uniquely whole vision of turn-of-the century architecture and lifestyles.
In 1892 Thomas Argo conveyed approximately fifteen acres of land on the east side of Louisburg Road in Raleigh to Herbert E. Norris, a prominent Raleigh attorney. According to tradition the tract at that time contained an unfinished house which Argo had begun ten years earlier but never completed because of his wife Kate's death in 1886. The unfinished structure had been called Argo's Folly, and evidently it was demolished or removed by Norris.\(^1\)

In 1899 Norris completed the construction of a Victorian-styled house on Louisburg Road. He commissioned architect Adolphus Gustavus Bauer to design the house and to landscape the extensive grounds. Bauer had come from Philadelphia to Raleigh in 1883 to assist Samuel Sloan in the planning and construction of the state Executive Mansion. In Raleigh he also designed the Baptist Female University (destroyed) and the Old Raleigh High School (destroyed).\(^2\)

Norris named the new house and grounds Norburn Terrace, a name from the first syllable of Norris and his wife's maiden name, Burns. With its terraced lawns, pools, winding walks, and a variety of plants, Norburn Terrace reflected the Victorian tastes in architecture and landscape.\(^3\)

Like his new home Herbert E. Norris was a distinguished part of the community and the holder of a state-wide reputation. Born in 1859 on a farm in Wake County, he was educated at county subscription schools and graduated from Trinity College in Randolph County in 1879. He then read law under George V. Strong of Raleigh and was admitted to the bar in 1881. At that time he lived at Apex where he farmed as well as practiced law. He also served as attorney to Durham and Southern Railway Company and played a valuable role in bringing the railroad to Apex, a step which greatly improved the town's economy.\(^4\)

Norris was elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives in 1885.\(^5\) There he was one of a committee of five selected by the State Farmer's Convention who drafted and pushed through the General Assembly the bill creating the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Raleigh (now North Carolina State University) which opened in 1889. He married Emma Burns in 1890, and two years later he ran for the North Carolina House again but was defeated. He and his wife moved to Norburn Terrace in 1900.\(^6\) Norris was elected to the North Carolina Senate in 1903.\(^7\) In the following year he was in a movement to change the financial management of county affairs and worked for the construction of a new Wake County courthouse which was completed in 1915. He also started a movement for the founding of the Home for the Aged and Infirm in the county and continued to lend his support to the institution. In 1910 he was elected solicitor of the Sixth Judicial District and was elected to the Seventh District in 1914. "His home," wrote a biographer in 1919, "is one of the most attractive in Raleigh surrounded by a large picturesque lawn and landscape and there he and his family enjoy the advantages of country and city combined."\(^8\)
Norris died in 1923 intestate, and three years later his wife was allotted one-third of his property "including the dwelling house lately occupied as his last residence."\(^9\) In 1929 Mrs. Norris sold a portion of the estate "exclusive of Emma B. Norris's dower estate on which she and her son and family lived" to J. Crawford Biggs and M. Allen for $12,400. When she died in 1940 the entire estate passed to Biggs and Allen as set forth in the 1929 agreement.\(^10\) They conveyed portions of the tract, including the house, to E. V. Benton and C. W. York and Son, 1940-1941.\(^11\)

Benton and York and Son then sold the property to W. D. Orr and his wife Addie in 1941.\(^12\) Orr died in 1962, but by this time the house was in his wife's name.\(^13\) Mrs. Orr died in January, 1977, and the house passed to Paul, one of her thirteen children.\(^14\) Paul Orr also died the following December so the house passed to his six surviving siblings.\(^15\)
FOOTNOTES


6. Connor and others, North Carolina Biography, IV, 94.


8. Connor and others, North Carolina Biography, IV, 94.

9. Wake County Estate Records, Herbert E. Norris, 1923, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.


15. Wake County Estate Records, Paul Orr, 77-E-1266.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A
ZONE
EASTING
NORTHING
217
114
210
39
63
47
0
B
ZONE
EASTING
NORTHING
C
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The house and lots are currently associated. See attached.

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Janet Silber, Consultant; Joe Mobley, Researcher
Linda Harris, Private Preservation Consultant

ORGANIZATION
Survey and Planning Branch
Division of Archives and History

DATE 10/9/79

STREET & NUMBER 109 East Jones Street

TELEPHONE 733/6545

CITY OR TOWN Raleigh

STATE North Carolina

CODE 27611

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

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE November 1, 1979

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

GPO 892-453
Harris, Linda. "Norburn Terrace", an unpublished manuscript. Raleigh: City Planning Department, date (?)


Miscellaneous newspaper clippings from file of Elizabeth Norris, copies can be found in the files of Norburn Terrace.


Tract 1

BEGINNING at a stake on the south side of Lafayette Road extended to a width of 50 feet (see book of maps 1938, page 70 of Wake County) at the northeast corner of the lot conveyed to E. V. Denton by deed of J. Crawford Biggs and wife and Murray Allen and wife, dated October 2, 1940, and recorded in Book 851, page 325 in the office of the Register of Deeds of Wake County (Said lot heretofore conveyed to said Denton being herein called the Denton lot); thence is an easterly direction 60 feet along the south side of Lafayette Road to a stake; thence 175 feet in a southerly direction parallel with the eastern line of the said Denton lot to a stake; thence in an easterly direction 5 feet at a right angle with the last line to a stake; thence 40 feet in a southerly direction at a right angle with the last line to a stake in the southern line of the H. E. Norris home place to a stake at the southern corner of the said Denton lot; thence in a northerly direction along the eastern line of the said Denton lot 228 feet to the point of BEGINNING, being a part of the land conveyed to J. Crawford Biggs and Murray Allen by Thomas H. Calvert and H. R. N. Simms, Commissioner, by deed dated February 3, 1929, and recorded in Book 568, page 374 of Wake County, and being the same property conveyed to E. V. Denton by J. Crawford Biggs et als by deed dated November 30, 1940, and recorded in Book 856, page 69 of said Register.

Tract 2

BEGINNING at the northeastern corner of the lot conveyed to P. G. Fox by deed of the parties of the first part of even date herewith, said corner being 255 feet east of Wake Forest Road and on the south side of Lafayette Road widened 50 feet, as shown on the plat of Lafayette Subdivision recorded in Book of Maps 1938, page 70 of Wake County; running thence southwardly along the eastern line of the Fox lot 228 feet to a stake on the line of the Herbert E. Norris home place, making an angle with said road of 88 deg. 40 min.; thence northwardly 228 feet to an iron stake on the south side of Lafayette Road, parallel with the first line; thence westwardly along the south side of Lafayette Road 151.5 feet to the point of BEGINNING.

This is a part of the dower tract of the late Emma Burns Norris . . . .
Norburn Terrace
216 Lafayette Street
Wake County, NC Raleigh vic.

Zone 17

Northing 3963470
Easting 714210