

University of North Carolina at Asheville

Asheville High School:
A Grand Project Built During Asheville's Population Explosion

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by

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“For a million dollars, perhaps, one is due to get more than a school,” W.C. Proctor stated in 1929, and, that is exactly what the city of Asheville received with the opening of its new senior high school in February of that year.^[1] It is not only an excellent educational institution; it also stands as a symbol of the city in which it was constructed. From the school's fortress-like façade that evokes images of strength and permanence, to its progressive Italian renaissance art-deco design, Asheville High School is a monumental reminder of Asheville during the 1920's.

Western North Carolina historians have completed a multitude of works, ranging from chronological accounts of its history, to studies that focus on specific locations during specific periods. For example, in Ora Blackmun wrote a comprehensive study of the early mountain pioneers in, *Western North Carolina: Its Mountains and Its People to 1880*.^[2] John Preston Arthur performed a scholarly study of Western North Carolina in his book, *Western North Carolina: A History From 1730 to 1913*.^[3] Ina W. and John J. Van Noppen co-authored *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War*.^[4] A more recent study however was written by Richard Dale Starnes. In his dissertation titled, *Creating the Land of the Sky: Tourism and Society in Western North Carolina*, he examines the mountains transition from seasonal migration of southern planters to an economy based on tourism, with Asheville being the center of the economic activity.^[5] All of these historian's books are valuable tools in ascertaining a perspective of the political, social, and economical atmosphere of the Western North Carolina area in their selected periods of study.

Narrowing the field of study to include only Buncombe County, Foster Sondley's, *A History of Buncombe County, North Carolina*, published in 1930, seems to be the authority on the history of Buncombe County, as it is often cited by historians whose works focus on Asheville.^[6] However, as the historical studies become more narrowed to focus on the city of Asheville, there are many more scholarly works that are useful. Usually books written about Asheville include many pictures to illustrate its beauty. Examples of these colorful works are Milton Ready's, *Asheville, Land of the Sky: An Illustrated History*, Mitzi Schaeden Tessier's, *Asheville: A Pictorial History*, Lou Harshaw's, *Asheville: Places of Discovery*, Lisa Bell's, *Asheville: A View From the Top*.^[7]

In depth research on specific issues pertaining to Asheville have been completed as well. Kevan D. Frazier's dissertation, *Big Dreams, Small Cities: John Nolen, the New South, and the City Planning*

Movement in Asheville, Roanoke, and Johnson City, 1907-1937 examines the city's approach to its growth, while David K. Knowles focuses on Asheville during the Great Depression in his thesis titled, *Days When Futures Passed: Confronting the Great Depression In Asheville, North Carolina, 1929-1933*.^[8] W.H. Plemmons focused on education in Asheville in, *A History of the Public School System of Asheville, North Carolina*, as did George Carl Brown in his thesis, *A History of Public Education in the City of Asheville, North Carolina*.^[9] Finally, studies of the architectural history of Asheville have been embarked upon by Catherine Bishir in her book, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina*, Robert S. Brunk's compilation, *May We All Remember Well: A Journal of the History and Cultures of Western North Carolina*, and Douglas Swaim's, *Cabins and Castles: The History of Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina*.^[10] More often than not, these historians make specific references to particular buildings that, to be sure, in their minds illustrate Asheville's grandeur and growth. However, there is one particular structure that is used time and again to the above affect though there has not been a comprehensive study that focuses on the building, itself. That building is now known as Asheville High School.

One example of the school's importance to the area is its presence in Swaim's *Cabins and Castles*, a compilation of Asheville's most historic buildings. Swaim uses Asheville High School as an example of the high quality architecture being developed in the city during the 1920's.^[11] Prominent Asheville historians, Ina and John Van Noppen, also show an interest in the school in their book, *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War*. The Van Noppens esteem the Asheville City Schools as some of the best in the state after the completion of Asheville High School.^[12] Indeed, the Asheville City School system was among the best, if not the best, in the state in the 1920's. This feat becomes amazing when one considers the fact that only about half a century earlier, Asheville was a sleepy mountain town, inaccessible to many, that did not have a public school system.

Though there have been small articles on the construction of Asheville High School, there has not been a chronological account of the school's construction. This project's focus is on the period leading up to construction, through the school's completion. Furthermore, this project is different in that it will detail many of the issues surrounding the school's construction such as the need for the school due to Asheville's large population growth during the 1920's, budgetary matters, and delays in the construction.

From the time of Asheville's incorporation by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1797, until the advent of the railroad in the Spring of 1879, Asheville showed little promise of becoming a metropolitan

area. It took over sixty years before Asheville could boast of having passed the thousand mark with a population of 1,100. However, the level of stagnate growth experienced in Asheville would change drastically as the first trains came across the Blue Ridge Mountains in 1879. After the railroads arrived, the town of Asheville experienced a phenomenal rate of growth and became a legitimate city when it was chartered on March 8, 1883. This first population explosion occurred between 1880 and 1890, and, the city saw its population increase by about 392%, from 2610 to 10,235 in only ten years.^[13] However, Asheville had much more growing to do in the coming years. Thus, this growth only foreshadowed the popularity to which Asheville would become accustomed. A popularity that the city embraced whole-heartedly.

As Asheville became recognized for, among other things, its temperate climate and scenic beauty, the population continued to grow at a quick pace. Furthermore, when placed in comparison to other large Southern cities it becomes clear that Asheville, in the early nineteenth-century, was quite the exception in terms of growth. For example, between the years 1900-1930 Asheville's population had a 341.5% increase, while other large Southern cities did not fare so well.^[14] Cities often used to illustrate growth in the South during this same period do not show near the growth: Atlanta-245.7%, Birmingham-307.2%, Knoxville-188.5%, Memphis-199.5%, Nashville-181.4%, New Orleans-164.3%.^[15] With the population exploding at such a rate, the city soon found that, by the 1920's, many of its public facilities were inadequate. Asheville needed a new courthouse, city building, and, more urgently, a new high school.

As Asheville's population increased at a staggering rate, so too did the Asheville City schools experience a marked increase in student enrollment. When the city schools were established in 1888 there were 900 students using only two buildings.^[16] However, by 1919 the Asheville City Schools had an enrollment of 4943 with nine buildings in use.^[17] It became apparent that Asheville needed more space to educate its children. By 1921, the Asheville City schools had the largest enrollment of any of the public schools in the state besides the University of North Carolina^[18] The city needed more space, and urgent action needed be taken, soon. Luckily the citizens recognized this, too, as a \$550,000 bond issue was overwhelmingly approved on 16 December 1924, for the construction of new schools.^[19] Unfortunately it was too little, too late. As the city embarked on building a new high school (Hall-Fletcher High), the school was already thought to be inadequate even though the other high school, Asheville High School (later renamed David Millard when the Central High School was built), would still be in use. In a letter to the

Bond Committee, the Superintendent of the Asheville City Schools, W.L. Brooker, wrote:

To relieve the crowded conditions, we have three buildings under construction; viz, Hall-Fletcher High...[thus] The new high school will meet the present need only. Next session our high school enrollment will exceed 1600. The normal capacity of two high school buildings... These facts indicate that the building program now being executed, is for the present only.[20]

Brooker also made reference to the feeling of the times when he stated, "Everything points to an unprecedented growth of our city in the near future." [21] Some observers of the growth phenomenon in Asheville had suggested the city would grow from its 28,504 citizens in 1920 to over 100,000 in only ten years.[22] Thus, the city and its citizens were eager to approve the new facilities as each bond issue was introduced. As population speculation continued, so too did plans for a grand central high school for the city of Asheville, as proposed by Brooker.

Brooker's visionary stance, seen in his letter to the board dated 8 February 1926, provides the first mention of a Central Senior High School. In this letter Brooker warned that the present enrollment was about 9,000 students in all the city schools. He continued by speculating that in just two years enrollment would increase to 11,000, and in five years 15,000. He again cautioned that after 1928 the present high school, and the one under construction (Hall-Fletcher) would be badly overcrowded. Brooker urged the board, "We should at once commence a plan for expansion..." [23] His plan included the conversion of the two high schools into junior high facilities, and, stated, "The next step in the High School development of the city should be a large central Senior High School." [24] He urged the Board to, "PROCURE, AT ONCE, A SUITABLE SITE FOR THE CENTRAL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL. Such sites are becoming scarce in our city." [25] Fortunately, the Superintendent of Schools did not have to wait long. After illustrating effectively the need for a Central Senior High School, the steps towards his plan began taking shape.

As early as March, 1926 a special committee was appointed to assess the needs of the school system. Committee members were F.L. Conder, Mrs. E.B. Sullivan, W. Vance Brown, and W. M. Smathers. Together, in a letter dated March 16, they recommended to the school board an election be held in the month of October for the purpose of issuing school bonds in the amount of \$1,500,000 for, among other things, the construction of a new Senior High School. [26] On March 26, another committee was formed for the purpose of locating a suitable site for the construction of the high school. Furthermore, the urgency is illustrated by the committee being asked to not only find a suitable site but also, "...see if some citizen can be

prevailed upon to hold a site until the bonds are issued.”^[27] The Chairman of the Board appointed W.M Smathers, Mrs. E.B. Sullivan, C.H. Bartlett, and R.H. McDuffie to affect the Board's request^[28]. It should be noted that the search for an appropriate site began before the actual passage of the bond issue. This is no doubt due to the optimism of the times combined with the overwhelming passage of previous bond issues by the citizens.

While waiting for an election to approve the monies for a new school, the committee in charge of researching possible sites presented the Board with two possibilities. The first site mentioned was the Schoenhite property, on 11 May 1926. This site consisted of 150 acres at a cost of 5,000 an acre, for a total cost of \$750,00.^[29] As this site was far too expensive, the search continued. On 14 July 1926 the committee presented to the Board a site that consisted of 66 acres off Victoria Road. This site belonged to a syndicate and listed no price for purchase. However, the committee was ordered to investigate further and report its findings to the Board.^[30] Meanwhile, as the acquisition of land became increasingly more imperative, good news arrived from Commissioner F.L. Conder. On 4 August 1926 Conder reported to the Board that the election date for the Bond would have to be moved up due to a law that restricted the implementation of a special election thirty days prior to that of a general election (as one was scheduled for November 1). Thus, it was determined an election would be held on September 28, thereby shortening the delay of a land purchase.^[31]

After the citizens of Asheville approved the bond issue by an astounding margin, the committee in charge of locating a plat of land for the school, made its final recommendation.^[32] The committee submitted a report on November 18, recommending the purchase of the second mentioned site. They identified the property in question as a:

...tract of land [that] lies between Victoria Road and the new McDowell Street. The property is owned by two separate syndicates, the Vanderbilt lands, comprising about 23 acres, and the Dray Development Company's lands, which comprise approximately 25 acres.^[33]

The committee report provided more information, stating the land could be acquired at a cost of \$4,000.00 an acre, and, that the land would make a “most excellent” site for the Senior High School.^[34] Thus, the purchase of the property went to the Board for a vote, and was approved on 18 November 1926, only six weeks after the Bond's approval.^[35]

On 11 January 1927 the School Board met to discuss the selection of an architect. It was ordered that the interested architects present their qualifications, and that the members of the Board get more data before

the final decision. Hence the selection was deferred until January 18. At the next meeting F.L Conder suggested the selection of the architect be carried out via ballot, with the person receiving the lowest votes to drop out each time. Also, the hiring of an expert advisor was suggested by Mr. W.V. Brown only to be tabled until after the selection of an architect. Architects applying for the job were: Warner &McCornack of Cleveland, Ronald Green for John Russell Pope, Douglas D. Ellington, A. Ten Eyck Brown, Northup & O'Brien, Edward & Sayward of Atlanta, and C. Gadsden Sayre. The selection could have almost been decided after the first ballot; Ellington-5, Brown-3, and Sayre-2. After the second ballot, Ellington carried the majority with seven votes in his favor. Thus Ellington was confirmed as the architect for the new Senior High School, and, Mayor Cathey appointed Conder, Brown, and Brooker to, "draw the contract by and between the City of Asheville and Douglas D. Ellington, Architect and submit same to the Board."^[36] The contract was formalized on 3 March 1927.^[37] Furthermore, it was decided by the Board to have Mayor Cathey contact Dr. Nickolaus Louis Englehardt of Columbia University for the purpose of employing him as an advisor to the architect.^[38] Now, with the selection of Ellington as the Architect, and Dr. Englehardt as his educational advisor Asheville High School became associated with greatness.

Ellington's talents and achievements in architecture were known long before his tenure in Asheville. Though he hailed from Clayton, North Carolina, he received his training from the prestigious Drexel Institute and the University of Pennsylvania. He was the first southerner to win the Prix de Paris, an award that provided for study at the more prestigious Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In 1913 Ellington became the first American to be awarded the Prix Rougevin with his measured drawing of the eleventh century Church of St. Trophime at Arles, France, cited by experts as the finest such execution of that structure in existence. Ellington continued winning awards, as he was a first place prize recipient at the Christopher Columbus Memorial Competition, in which more than a thousand architects competed. Finally, before bringing his talents to Asheville he served as professor of architecture at Drexel Institute, Columbia University, and Carnegie Institute of Technology.^[39] Once in Asheville, however, Ellington was able to apply his talents in many civic projects before he was selected to build the school. Some of Ellington's projects that were completed, or near completion, were the First Baptist Church, the Asheville City Building, and the Merrimon Avenue Fire Station. He had also designed additions for the school system, prior to his selection.^[40] The school Board knew well Ellington's work, making the decision that much easier.

Dr. Nickolaus Louis Englehardt's being chosen as an advisor to Ellington was no accident either. Dr

Englehardt of Columbia University had already gained a nationwide reputation for other school building projects. He also co-authored many school housing books and belonged to the national Society for the Study of Scientific Education. More importantly however, and probably the reason he caught the eye of the educators in the growing city, was his authorship of the book, *A School Building Program for Cities*. "The association between Englehardt and Ellington helped to ensure that the new high school would be a model facility in terms of architecture and educational offerings."^[41] However, first, the path towards construction and the realization of this grand school needed to be finalized.

On the same date that Ellington was chosen as the architect and Englehardt selected as his advisor, a communique from the Superintendent of Schools was presented to the Board and ordered filed. The communique spelled out the vision that Brooker had for the development of the school. Brooker wanted the Senior High School to have no less than a 1200 student capacity with expansion plans to accommodate up to 2000. He also outlined his plans for the establishment of a junior college on the same grounds. Furthermore, he recommended that the location of these two facilities should be the educational center of the community ^[42]. It was now up to Ellington and Englehardt to realize Brooker's vision.

At a meeting a few days later, March 5, confusion about the present high school's name (Asheville High School) and the one slated for construction (Asheville Senior High School) was brought to the Board. Mr. W. Vance Brown recommended that the old high school's name be changed to the David Millard School, in honor of the first chairman of the School Board. The motion was passed. As a result, the first name of the new central high school became, Asheville High School (also sometimes referred to as the Central High School, or, Asheville Senior High School) before groundbreaking had occurred.^[43]

The next crucial development in the building of the school was the selection by the School Board of companies to provide service for Ellington's plans when he completed them. Bids for the general construction, plumbing, heating and ventilation, and electrical work were opened and read aloud to the Board on 21 May 1927. After their reading, the bids were referred to Ellington for tabulation.^[44] Each general contracting bid had to present two proposals. One proposal, termed "A-1", was to be configured according to plans and specifications, including addenda, of 14 May 1927. The other figure's basis, termed "A-2," depended on the substitution of brick in the place of granite for construction. Seven construction companies bid for the job, with figures for building the school using granite, ranging from \$738,000 (John

M. Geary Co.) to \$619,450 (Palmer-Spivey Const.). The bids for using brick were significantly less. Again, John M. Geary had the highest bid at \$692,000 as Palmer-Spivey had achieved the second lowest, with a bid of \$598,170.^[45] After Ellington presented his findings, Commissioner Bartlett motioned that the general contract be awarded to Palmer-Spivey on their adjusted bid of \$610,158.25 for the building in granite. His motion was accepted by the Board.^[46]

To finalize plans for the building the Board also approved plumbing, heating and ventilation, and electrical contractors on the same day, 21 May 1927. The plumbing bids ranged from \$41,000, as proposed by Pickard & Company, to \$69,342.87, as bid by Campbell & Vance. The low bid, being unaltered, was accepted by the Board at Ellington's request, thus making Pickard & Company the plumbing contractors for the school. The heating and ventilation bids were as low as \$42,500 (again Pickard & Company) and as high as \$65,121 (R. H. Lowe & Co.). The low bid, receiving support from Ellington, was awarded the contract. The electrical contractor's bids went from \$44,464, as bid by Electric Supply & Const. Co., to \$31,250 as proposed by Sanders and Jackson. However, when Ellington reported Sanders and Jackson as the lowest and best bid, Chairman Cathey motioned that after a thorough investigation he preferred the second lowest bid of \$32,492 by Naiman & Company. Motion was approved.^[47] Seemingly, all steps had been taken to prevent delay in the project.

The building of the school was not without delay or controversy. One possible reason for the delay in construction was the battle between the Western North Carolina Lumbermen and the general contractor, Palmer-Spivey. It started soon after Ellington questioned the Board, 13 December 1927, as to what type of flooring they preferred for the school. Ellington told the Board that if they preferred either maple or gum flooring, there would be an additional cost of \$2800. After some discussion, the determination was made to use maple flooring, as it would be more durable.^[48] From here it seems that the Western North Carolina Lumbermen's Association had heard about the possible use of hard maple for the school, and, thus, put in a request on 27 December 1927 for local lumber to be used. The communique was forwarded to Ellington by the Board with, "instructions to use local flooring if the flooring is equal in every way to foreign material."^[49] At another meeting just a few days later, 10 January 1928, "it was found that the contractor had already placed an order for hard maple flooring, Michigan grown."^[50] As an attorney representing the Lumbermen was present at that meeting, the Board decided to advise the contractor to postpone the present order, and, to have all interested parties meet on January 17, to discuss the matter further.^[51] The meeting produced little

in the way of results. Mr. Palmer was unable to ascertain whether or not his order for Michigan grown maple could be cancelled so further action was deferred until this matter was known.^[52] The Board met again on February 17, and a letter from the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service was entered into the minutes. Also, Ellington reported to the Board that Mr. Spivey had notified him that the order for the maple coming from Michigan could be cancelled, provided that a \$100 penalty be paid. Though no copy of the letter is present in the minutes, it must have stated that the quality of local maple was near that of the Michigan maple as, "it was moved that the Architect secure from Palmer-Spivey Co. the cost of using local hard maple based on specifications."^[53] The issue finally became resolved when, almost two months later, the original order was let to stand citing the higher cost of the local maple.

Possibly due to the complexity of Ellington's design, it appears that Palmer-Spivey did not fulfill their contractual obligation by completing the school on time, thus forcing the construction company to call in sureties to complete the project. As is the case with many public projects funded with public monies, the contractor was required to be bonded by a surety company in order to safeguard the public's money. In effect, the surety company bonded the contractor based on their financial resources and their previous record of successfully completed projects. If some unforeseen occurrence prevented the contractor from completing the project as stipulated in the contract, the surety takes over responsibility for completion. Some instances in which a surety may be called in, are bankruptcy of the contractor, failure to complete the project in the time allotted, or the contractor underbidding the project. In the Palmer-Spivey's project for construction of Asheville High School, no definitive reason is on record. However, in a letter to Mayor Gallatin Roberts dated 25 August 1928, and ordered embodied in the Board minutes on 28 August 1928, from the National Surety Company, it appears as though it was due to Palmer-Spivey's not completing the project on time:

You Have been informed of difficulties encountered by Palmer-Spivey Construction Company in connection with their work for the construction of the new Asheville High School and have likewise learned of their default in the performance of the work which resulted in Palmer-Spivey Construction Company calling upon the sureties to complete the work ^[54]

Also, there is further evidence that Palmer-Spivey did not live up to the time specifications in the contract when the Asheville Citizen quoted Superintendent Brooker in an article on 13 January 1929, "I don't know exactly when we'll be able to move into the new building... We planned to move in last September but there

have been constant delays. The bonding company has not yet completed all of its work...”[55]

Upon completion, however, Douglas Ellington's one of a kind school, and, only fireproof building in the city at the time it was completed, stood out as both a work of art, and an educational masterpiece.[56] Asheville High School truly positioned itself as a unique school that had no equal in the state. Though others have incorporated Classical Revival style in their designs such as Reidsville High, Needham Broughton High, and Jamestown High, “only the Asheville High School incorporates much of the Art Deco in its detailing , seemingly making it unique in the state of the existing high school facilities.”[57]

The exterior features of the school typify much of the Art Deco styling. For example, the use of a central tower as part of the overall form or crowning element. Also, the use of geometric patterns such as chevrons, zigzags, straight lines or curvilinear forms combine for an aesthetically pleasing façade. The exterior walls being of smooth materials ranging from concrete to limestone, with veneers and accents in terra cotta, aluminum or stone, further illustrate the Art Deco design. The roof contains terraces and dramatic spires, with low protective or decorative wall extensions that are placed along roof edges. Furthermore, the building also incorporates ornamental windows in geometric shapes as well as dramatic entryways surrounded by elaborate ornamentation. And, lastly, Ellington integrated ornamental sculptures into the building, usually in the form of low-relief stone panels that feature allegorical figures or contrasting colors and textures.⁵⁸

Dr. Englehardt took great pride in his efforts, too. With the incorporation of his ideas, Asheville High School would become, not only beautiful, but functional. The school had its own library with study halls attached. On the fourth floor, above the administration offices in the center of the school, there was a department for music that contained a large room for orchestra practice, and three smaller studios. The auditorium had a completely equipped stage and all facilities for dramatic presentations in front of a capacity crowd of 2,000. The school also contained two gymnasiums. One of the gymnasiums was for use by the girls, and the other was used by the boys and for interscholastic competition. The gallery in the boys gymnasium had the seating capacity for 1,500 spectators. Besides room for regular academic studies, the school also housed a vocational department in one of its wings. Furthermore, it had a separate building for instruction in the manual arts. This building contained, among other things, a print shop with full presses, electrical laboratories, metal and woodworking shops, and mechanical shops.[58]

With all of the opportunities available to its students, Asheville High School would be a model for

other public high schools. This belief is further illustrated by the vast amount of praise the building received both at the state and national levels. Dr. Englehardt, being a leading authority in the school housing field, was asked to name the best high school erected in the country:

“The Yearbook of the American School,” which is by way of being the authority sine qua non on things scholastic, asked him to select the best school building erected in the country, embodying the most advanced and practical developments in construction, for the year 1928. Dr Englehardt named the local school and Asheville will receive publicity-invaluable publicity... [59]

Also, A.T. Allen, the state superintendent of public instruction, identified Asheville High School as, “The finest school building in the state.” [60]

At the dedication ceremony on 5 February 1929, Asheville High School finally opened its doors. Worthy of being considered the best high schools in the state, some of the keynote speakers were a veritable who's who in North Carolina education. Delivering messages at the dedication were Dr. J Henry Highsmith, the State High School Inspector, Superintendent T. Wingate Andrest, President of the State Teachers Association, Dr. William Preston Few, president of Duke University, and Dr. H.N. Snyder President of Wofford College. [61] With such high-quality speakers, it became apparent that Asheville High was unique in its design and development. It put Asheville on the map as a city concerned for the education of its youth, and, furthermore, taking action on that concern with the development of its Senior High School. This accomplishment came at a high price, but for the citizens, the school was more than an educational facility, it represented their burgeoning growth in importance and culture. Douglas Ellington had this in mind when he planned the school and asserted, “By a proper treatment of grounds and with artistic arrangement of buildings, a beautiful effect symbolic of Asheville and different from anything else in the country can be developed...” [62] Thus, the construction of Asheville High School was for more than educational purposes, Asheville needed a symbol of its up and coming status as a great southern city that served its citizens on every level. Asheville High School may appear to be only a school, but more importantly, as Ellington asserted, it is symbolic of the city in which it was built.

[1] *Asheville Citizen*, 13 January 1929.

[2] Ora Blackmun, *Western North Carolina: Its Mountains and Its People to 1880*. (Boone, N.C.: Appalachian Consortium

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Press, 1977).

[3] John Preston Arthur, *Western North Carolina: A History From 1713 to 1913*. (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1914).

[4] Ina W. and John J. Van Noppen, *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War*. (Boone, N.C.: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1973).

[5] Richard Dale Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky: Tourism and Society in Western North Carolina*. (Ph.D. diss., University of Auburn, 1999).

[6] Foster S. Sondley, *A History of Buncombe County, North Carolina*, vol. 2. (Asheville: Advocate Printing Company, 1930).

[7] Milton Ready, *Asheville, Land of the Sky: An Illustrated History*. (Northridge, CA: Windsor Publications, 1986); Mitzi Schaeden Tessier, *Asheville: A Pictorial History*. (Virginia Beach: The Donning Company, 1982); Lou Harshaw, *Asheville: Places of Discovery*. (Lakemont, GA: Copple House Books, 1980); Lisa Bell, *Asheville: A View From the Top*. Asheville: Community Communications, 1996).

[8] Kevan D. Frazier, *Big Dreams, Small Cities: John Nolen, the New South, and the City Planning Movement in Asheville, Roanoke, and Johnson City, 1907-1937*. (Ph.D. diss., West Virginia University, 2000); David K. Knowles, *Days When Futures Passed: Confronting the Great Depression in Asheville, North Carolina, 1929-1933*. (M.A. Thesis, East Tennessee State University, 1997).

[9] W.H. Plemmons, *A History of the Public School System of Asheville, North Carolina*; George Carl Brown, *A History of Public Education in the City of Asheville, North Carolina*.

[10] Catherine Bishir, et al, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Clay Griffin, "An Inventory of Douglas Ellington's Architectural Work in Asheville, North Carolina," *May We All Remember Well: A Journal of the History and Cultures of Western North Carolina*, vol. 2. Edited by Robert S. Brunk, (Asheville: Robert S. Brunk Auction Services Inc., 2001), pp. 91-119.; Douglas Swaim, ed., *Cabins and Castles: The History of Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina*. (Asheville: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1981).

[11] Douglas Swaim, ed. *Cabins And Castles: The History of Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina*. (Asheville: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1981), 42.

[12] Van Noppen, *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War*. 141-142.

[13] Martha Norburn Allen, *Asheville and Land of the Sky*. (Charlotte: Heritage House, 1960). 55. See also Sybil Argintar Bowers: National Register Nomination for Asheville High School. Asheville, NC, 1995. See also Ora Blackmun, *Western North Carolina: Its Mountains and Its People to 1880*. (Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1977), 288. See also Foster A. Sondley, *A History of Buncombe County, North Carolina*, vol. 2. (Asheville: Advocate Printing Company, 1930), 481. See Also Mitzi Schaeden Tessier, *Asheville: A Pictorial History*. (Virginia Beach: The Donning Company Publishers, 1982), 53

[14] Legislative Reference Library. *North Carolina Manual*, vol. 15. (Charlotte, NC: Observer Printing House, 1931) 404.

[15] Figures derived from using information in Donald J Bogue's, *Population Growth in Standard Metropolitan Areas, 1900-1950: With an Explanatory Analysis of Urbanized Areas*. (Washington, 1953), 61-62, 65-67 as charted and cited by Brownell, Blaine A. *The Urban Ethos in the South, 1920-1930*. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1975), 16.

[16] *The Sunday Citizen*. 6 August 1922.

[17] Asheville Chamber of Commerce. *Facts and Figures*, pamphlet. 1926. Pack Library Vertical Files, Vol. 39, files 42.22-42.27.

[18] *Asheville Citizen*. 30 November 1921.

[19] W. H. Plemmons, *A History of the Public School System of Asheville, North Carolina*, 31.

[20] Asheville City School Archives. *Minutes of the Proceedings of the School Advisory Board*, Book 2, 7. (hereafter referred to as Minutes)

[21] Ibid.

[22] Census Office. *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920, II, Population*. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 1354; and for an account of the population speculation in Asheville see Thomas Wolfe. *You Can't Go Home Again*. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940; reprint, New York: Harper Perennial, 1989), 90-91. Wolfe's account of his return to Asheville gives the impression that the majority of Asheville's citizen were suffering from some sort of shell shock. In the book he states how everyone was expecting to get rich and that they felt the city would grow to 100,000 by 1930.

[23] Minutes, book 2, 8.

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- [24] Ibid.
- [25] Ibid.
- [26] Ibid, 6.
- [27] Ibid., 11.
- [28] Ibid.
- [29] No other information is provided concerning location.
- [30] Minutes, book 2, 23.
- [31] Ibid., 24.
- [32] Of the 2,510 qualified voters, 1955 favored issuing the bonds. See Plemmons, W.H. *A History of the Public School System of Asheville, North Carolina*. 33.
- [33] Minutes, 30. Also, it may be worth noting that the original recommendation stated there belonged to the combined sites 66 acres. As land speculation was rampant during this period it may be of interest to another historian to ascertain the cause of the discrepancy.
- [34] Ibid., 30.
- [35] Ibid., 30.
- [36] Ibid., 36.
- [37] Ibid., 39.
- [38] Ibid., 37.
- [39] Robert S. Brunk, ed. *May We All Remember Well: A Journal of the History and Cultures of Western North Carolina*, vol. 2. (Asheville: Robert S Brunk Auction Services Inc, 2001), 91. See also National Register Nomination, sec. 8. Page 1.
- [40] Clay Griffith, "An Inventory of Douglas Ellington's Architectural Work in Western North Carolina," in *May We All Remember Well: A Journal of the History and Cultures of Western North Carolina*, vol. 2. ed. Robert S. Brunk (Asheville: Robert S. Brunk Auction Services Inc., 2001). Ellington was also very active designing buildings after the school was completed. both in Asheville, and, around the state. He also designed fraternity houses for the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, and residences in Wilmington. Brunk asserts that he was one of the most important architects to practice in the state of North Carolina in the mid-twentieth century.
- [41] National Register Nomination, sec. 8, p. 3.
- [42] Minutes, 37-38.
- [43] Ibid., 42.
- [44] Ibid., 57.
- [45] Ibid., 56. Also, no reference to plans and specifications addenda of 14 May 1927 could be located. It may simply be the last draft of Ellington's plans for the school. Furthermore, there may have been some closed-door bargaining happening while Ellington had the bids. When he returned and presented his findings to the Board, Spivey's bid for constructing in granite had been lowered to \$610, 158.25 and J.A. Jones and Co.'s bid for building in brick had been lowered from \$596,600 to \$587,651. No reason is given for choosing the more expensive materials.
- [46] Ibid., 57.
- [47] Ibid. Also, there is no reason given for not choosing the lowest bidder for the electrical work. Cathey is on record as stating a thorough investigation was conducted but no clues as to what the investigation consisted of, or, any findings.
- [48] Ibid., 84.
- [49] Ibid., 86.
- [50] Ibid.
- [51] Ibid.
- [52] Ibid., 87.
- [53] Ibid.
- [54] Ibid., 118.
- [55] *Asheville Citizen*, 13 January 1929.

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[56] National Register Nomination, sec. 8, 6.

[57] Ibid.

[58] *Asheville High School Elements*, n.d., <http://library.thinkquest.org/jo112120/ahselements.htm>> (25 October 2004).

[58] Douglas D. Ellington, "The New Senior High School of Asheville, North Carolina." *The Architectural Record*. September 1929, pp. 193-204.

[59] *Asheville Citizen*, 13 January 1929.

[60] Ibid.

[61] National Register Nomination, sec. 8, 4.

[62] Ibid., 5.

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