



Walks Through History
Mont Nord Historic District, Fayetteville
March 10, 2018

Good morning. I'm Mark Christ of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, and welcome to our first 2018 Walks Through History Tour. Today we will visit the Mont Nord Historic District, which while small features some of Fayetteville's finest homes.

I want to thank the Washington County Historical Society for co-sponsoring today's tour, in particular Tess Kidd and my friend Maylon Rice. And thanks to the Arkansas Humanities Council for co-sponsoring all of our Walks Through History tours. I also want to thank my friend Rachel Silva

Patton for writing an outstanding *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* article that provides the basis for most of today's tour. If the information I provide is accurate, thank Rachel; if not, it came from me. Thanks also to Sonya Jones and Gary Coover for providing some excellent supplemental information and photographs. The American Institute of Architects offers two HSW continuing education learning unit credits for members who attend a "Walks Through History" tour. If you are interested, please see me after the tour.

Background

Much of Fayetteville had been burned during the Civil War, but the city recovered fairly rapidly after hostilities ended in 1865. Among the highlights:

- In 1871 Washington County proposed a \$100,000 bond issue, with Fayetteville voters approving an additional \$30,000, for the construction of a state college. This bid secured the location of the Arkansas Industrial University, which held its first classes in Fayetteville on January 22, 1872. In 1899 the school's name was formally changed to the University of Arkansas.
- The St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad completed its route through Fayetteville in the early 1880s, which improved the local economy by providing a reliable means of transportation and an easier method of

shipping goods to larger markets. The first passenger train arrived in Fayetteville on June 8, 1881, and was seen by 10,000 people.

- In 1886 the Washington County Telephone Company was formed, and two years later the Fayetteville Electric Light and Power Company provided residents with electricity. The population of Fayetteville doubled between 1880 and 1900, increasing from 1,788 to 4,061. The population boom spurred residential development beyond the Original City of Fayetteville.

While many additions were platted in Fayetteville at the turn of the twentieth century, the Mont Nord Addition was designed to be a “restricted residential section” bounded by Lafayette Street, Forest Avenue, Maple Street, and Mock Avenue. Mont Nord quickly became “the showplace of the most impressive residences in northwest Arkansas.” The addition was aptly named Mont Nord, which is the French spelling of “North Mountain,” because it was located on a hill near what was then the northern end of Fayetteville.

Washington County land records show that the Mont Nord Addition was platted by 1908, and the City of Fayetteville passed Ordinance No. 238 on August 7, 1908, making Mock, Mont Nord, and Forest avenues public streets. While the 1908 Sanborn map does not include the Mont Nord Addition, a page from the 1908 Atlas of Washington County shows three houses built on Block 1 of the Mont

Nord Addition (#1 Mt. Nord, #2 Mt. Nord, and #3 Mt. Nord). However, a 1908 photograph in Kent R. Brown's *Fayetteville: A Pictorial History* shows houses on lots 1, 2, 3, and 5. The house at #4 Mt. Nord was not built until about 1925.

The Mont Nord Addition also included the northwestern quadrant of Block 4, County Court Addition. This land was immediately west of Mock Avenue and south of Maple Street. The parcel was divided into four lots owned by Fayetteville businessman and real estate investor Artemus F. Wolf.



Wolf purchased the Arkansas Building, which was originally constructed in 1904 in St. Louis for exhibition at the World's Fair, and hired A. M. Byrnes to disassemble the building, number the pieces, and ship them back to Fayetteville by

train. The Classical Revival-style building was reassembled in 1905 on Wolf's land at the western terminus of Mt. Nord Avenue and served as a highly visible landmark in Fayetteville until its demolition in 1939. I have been told that one of the doors from that building is located in another Fayetteville building, and the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History in Springdale holds a small window from the building within its collections.

The Mont Nord Historic District is made up of Block 1 of the Mont Nord Addition. The block is divided into five lots, each measuring 102 x 270 feet, with large homes situated in the center of each lot. The houses are oriented toward the south with an excellent view of downtown Fayetteville. Because the lots are sloped and the streets cut down at a lower grade, limestone retaining walls were constructed around the block, giving the residences an even more imposing character. The Mont Nord Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on September 16, 1982, making it one of the earliest Arkansas properties listed on the register.

Bentonville banker James M. Bohart became president of the Washington County Bank and Trust Company in Fayetteville in 1900. He quickly invested in real estate and built the first house in the Mont Nord Addition. Bohart also persuaded local businessmen E. C. Pritchard, F. O. Gulley, W. L. Stuckey, and J. E. Mock to purchase lots in the exclusive neighborhood. Bohart died in 1904,

leaving Mock to serve as trustee for himself and the other investors. According to a warranty deed from November 1905, E. C. Pritchard purchased Lot 1, Block 1 in the Mont Nord Addition; J. M. Bohart's widow, Ada, and other heirs, Lot 2; F. O. Gulley and his wife, Allie, Lot 3; W. L. Stuckey and his wife, Josie, Lot 4; and J. E. Mock and his wife, Amanda, Lot 5.

The initial investors were prominent residents involved in banking, farming, and industry. James M. Bohart, mentioned above, was well-known in the banking world. James E. Mock was a farmer and raised livestock on a substantial amount of acreage in Washington County. In 1899 the Crescent White Lime Company was incorporated with W. L. Stuckey, president; F. O. Gulley, vice president; E. C. Pritchard, secretary; H. K. Wade, treasurer; and E. A. Gillette, plant superintendent. The company's main plant was located on Clear Creek about two miles west of Johnson in Washington County.

In 1902 the company's name was changed to the Ozark White Lime Company, and F. O. Gulley became president and general manager. The company had "the highest grade lime rock deposit in the United States, and one of the most spectacular and interesting industries in all north Arkansas."



#5 Mont Nord

We're going to speak about the houses in the Mont Nord Historic District in numerically ascending order today, beginning with the Mock-Fulbright House at #5, which was built by J. E. Mock about 1908. Mock let a \$6,400 contract to A.M. Byrnes in September 1908 for a building the Fayetteville Democrat stated "is to be constructed of red brick and Eureka stone, and will be one of the handsomest homes ever built in this section of the state." Albert M. Byrnes, who was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1849, moved to Fayetteville in 1866 after his father died of yellow fever in New Orleans. He became an incredibly prolific builder,

constructing more than three hundred buildings in Fayetteville, including Old Main at the University of Arkansas, the Washington County Jail, and the Ozark Theater.

Jay Fulbright, a prominent banker, purchased the home around 1920. Jay and Roberta Fulbright moved to Fayetteville in 1906, and Jay immediately moved into banking, acquiring a significant stake in the Washington County Bank, which in June 1907 was nationalized and its name changed to Arkansas National Bank.

Jay Fulbright became an officer, and in January 1909 was elected bank president. Fulbright was pragmatic in his business dealings, purchasing businesses with financial problems, fixing them, and selling off a portion of the stock to regain his investment. His assets included the *Fayetteville Democrat*, the local Coca-Cola franchise, the Crystal Ice Company (later the Fayetteville Ice Company), and the J. H. Phipps Lumber Company. Fulbright died unexpectedly in 1923, leaving his wife, Roberta, to manage the family's business affairs.

Roberta Fulbright had been a civic-minded stay-at-home mother, and despite facing challenges from her husband's former business associates proved herself "a dynamic influence on Fayetteville's commercial, financial, and political life," serving as owner and publisher of the *Fayetteville Daily Democrat* (which became the *Northwest Arkansas Times* in 1937) and president of Citizens' Bank, the

Fulbright Investment Company, the Fayetteville Ice Company, and Phipps Lumber Company.

The Fulbright family also operated the Fayetteville Coca-Cola Bottling Company at 200 W. Dickson Street. Her youngest son, James William Fulbright, was a law instructor and later president of the University of Arkansas before being elected to the United States Senate, where he served for thirty years, from 1945 to 1975. Senator Fulbright was known for advocating tolerance and international cooperation, and in 1981 the University of Arkansas College of Arts and Sciences was named after him.

J. William Fulbright lived with his mother at #5 Mt. Nord until the early 1940s and by 1951 Roberta Fulbright lived in the house with her son-in-law, Hal C. Douglas, the vice president of First National Bank in Fayetteville. Roberta Fulbright died on January 11, 1953, in this house. Hal Douglas lived there until about 1960. By 1965 Dr. Joe B. Hall and his wife, Patsy, purchased the house. In 1957 Dr. Hall founded the Fayetteville Diagnostic Clinic, which today employs more than twenty-four physicians and is one of the largest medical clinics in the state. Hall also served as Chief of Staff at Washington Regional Medical Center and Fayetteville City Hospital.

The Mock-Fulbright House was designed in the Classical Revival style, but also reflects elements of the Colonial Revival. The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago had renewed interest in the classical vocabularies of architecture, and Classical Revival borrowed heavily from the earlier Greek Revival style. Common features on Classical Revival buildings are massive columns topped by Corinthian, Doric, or Ionic capitals and the triangular pediments seen in Greek Revival. Classical Revival buildings are generally very symmetrical in their arrangement of windows and doors.

While Classical Revival is most commonly seen used on such buildings as courthouses, banks, schools and churches, it is also seen in large-scale mansions such as the Mock-Fulbright House. The Arkansas Building in the 1904 World's Fair was designed in the Classical Revival style and may have served as an inspiration for this building's design, as you can see from Photo 1.

The Colonial Revival had its roots in the earlier 1876 Philadelphia Centennial, which sparked interest in America's colonial past. Common features are a symmetrical façade, rectangular massing, a centered entrance with columns, pilasters or pediments, quoins at the corners, dentil courses and Palladian windows.

The Mock-Fulbright House features a two-story front porch topped by a triangular pediment and supported by four Ionic columns and two Ionic pilasters.

The front door is accentuated with a fanlight transom and sidelights, and Palladian windows flank the central portico on the first floor and in the Greek Revival-style pediment, revealing evidence of the Colonial Revival style, as do the dentiled cornice, quoins, and rusticated brick.



#4 Mt. Nord

Charles Mortimer Lawson, president of the Campbell-Bell Dry Goods Company at 9-13 S. Block on the west side of the town square, built the Dutch Colonial Revival-style house at #4 Mt. Nord around 1925, and it is the newest house in the district. W. L. Stuckey, president of the Crescent White Lime

Company, initially bought Lot 4 it was bought in 1918 by Jay Fulbright for back taxes. The lot remained vacant until the mid-1920s when Lawson purchased the property. By 1939 Charles J. Fichtner, Dean of the College of Business Administration at the University of Arkansas, was listed at the address. By 1947 Mr. and Mrs. Roy W. Wood occupied the home. Wood was Lawson's son-in-law and became president of Campbell-Bell, which a 1947 advertisement called "Northwest Arkansas' Largest Department Store. Ladies' and Misses' Ready-to-Wear, Millinery and Shoes, Mens' and Boys' Furnishings, Dry Goods, Kelvinator Electric Refrigerators. Home of Nationally Advertised Brands." Wood lived at #4 Mt. Nord until at least 1970.

The Dutch Colonial Revival is one of the rarer and, in my opinion, more interesting building styles in Arkansas. It is a subtype of the Colonial Revival and shares a lot of the same features: symmetry and similar siding, windows and entrances. What sets it aside is its gambrel roof, which on this building is most evident at both ends. It hit its heyday during the 1920s, so the Lawson House was constructed at the peak of the style's popularity. One of the reasons it was popular was that it allowed a construction of a complete second story at little cost, but another and perhaps more practical one is that gambrel-roofed houses were taxed as one-story buildings.



#3 Mont Nord

The F. O. Gulley House at #3 Mt. Nord was built about 1905. F.O. Gulley was the president and general manager of the Ozark White Lime Company. The Gulley House has had several occupants over the years, including John N. Robinson, a University of Arkansas professor; Thorgny Cedric Carlson, Vice President for Business Affairs at the University of Arkansas, 1946-1958; Robert Bogart, manager of Magnolia Petroleum Company, and his wife, Elizabeth, vice president of Ozark Beverage Company; physicians David L. Walker and Jack A. Wood; Lee Priest, president of Showcase Florist; and Dr. William F. Harrison, co-

founder of the Fayetteville Women's Clinic and well-known abortion-rights activist.

Gulley hired architect Oscar Gates to design his house at #3 Mont Nord. Gates was born in Fayetteville in 1875, the son of Noah P. Gates, the University of Arkansas's first president. He graduated from UA with a degree in architecture in 1897. He practiced architecture in North Carolina for several years before returning to Fayetteville with his wife, Edna, in 1904. A.F. Wolf hired him to assist in moving the Arkansas Building to the Mont Nord site. Gates established a partnership with prolific Little Rock architect in 1905 and they together designed three buildings for the University of Arkansas, including Carnall Hall. Poor health led Gates to move to Texas in 1907, and he died there on May 10 of that year at age 31. His obituary in the Fayetteville Democrat state that "after a most heroic fight for live, he finally surrendered to the Grim Monster, who early or late will claim every son of Adam's race." He is buried in Evergreen Cemetery.



The home is characterized as a “Free Classic” Queen Anne because it blends elements of both the Colonial Revival and Queen Anne styles, which is not uncommon since the Queen Anne was on its way out and the Colonial Revival was on its way in when this building was constructed. For instance, it features a one-story porch supported by brick piers on stone bases, a prominent dentil course, and roofline balustrades, which are all Colonial Revival characteristics.

The front façade is dominated by a two-story turret with a flat roof and balustrade, which is derived from the Queen Anne. As you can see from Photo X, the front porch was enclosed after a 1970 fire.

We discussed the Colonial Revival at #5, so a little background on the Queen Anne. The style was made popular in England by architect Richard Norman Shaw and was at its peak between 1880 and 1900. Many Americans were first exposed to the Queen Anne style at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial when the British government constructed several houses in the style. The Queen Anne is seen almost exclusively in residential architecture and most examples are constructed of wood, allowing ample latitude in use of the patterns and textures that define the style. But as you can see here, the Queen Anne style can also be executed in brick.



#2 Mt. Nord

The Bohart-Huntington House at #2 Mt. Nord was built about 1901 and is the oldest house in the district. James M. Bohart became president of the Washington County Bank and Trust Company in 1900 and was “the first to build a pretentious home on Mt. Nord.” Bohart died in 1904, leaving his wife, Ada, and children with the property.

By 1939 Robert H. Huntington lived in the house. Huntington was an eye, ear, nose, and throat doctor with an office in the Cravens Building at 17-19 E. Center in Fayetteville. Huntington died in the late 1950s, and his widow, Kathleen,

occupied the house until at least 1970. Kathleen Huntington worked as secretary and office manager for Dr. Morriss M. Henry, an ophthalmologist, lawyer, and state legislator. Mrs. Huntington rented the upstairs to college students during the 1970s and some of them remembered her having the bed in which Rudolf Valentino died stored in her attic and plates owned by Napoleon downstairs. She was friends with Dr. Ben Kimpel, the beloved chairman of the UA English Department, with whom she and a friend would go on dining vacations to France. One renter described her as “a regal Christian lady,” another “a petite, long-widowed lady of great grace and courtliness.” Both remembered her telling them that she knew the date and hour of her death. Only she knows if that was true.

Don Marr bought the house around 2000 and during an extensive renovation discovered hidden pocket doors inside. The porch you see on the left side of the building was added during the renovation, and the front dormer, triangular pediment above the front stairs and gazebo on the left were removed during the project, though the gazebo was replicated on the additional porch. You can see those original elements in the photos below. Sonya Jones and Mike Yates bought the house in 2003.





Sonya Jones mentioned that there is a hole in the glass of the front door that local legend maintained was the result of a shot fired by Buck Barrow of Bonnie and Clyde's gang during a robbery in Fayetteville. However, when descendants of Dr. Huntington visited the house they revealed it was actually fired by a local kid whom they had somehow angered.

The house combines elements of the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. The Bohart-Huntington House displays the Queen Anne style with its asymmetrical façade, second-story chamfered bay, decorative brackets under the

eaves, and pyramid-roofed gazebo. The Colonial Revival is evident in the one-story wrap-around porch supported by Doric columns, and the Palladian window with keystone in the upper pediment.



#1 Mont Nord

The E. C. Pritchard House at #1 Mt. Nord was constructed about 1907 and is probably the most visually impressive property within the district. The house was built by E. C. Pritchard, secretary for the Ozark White Lime Company and

principal owner of the Northwest Arkansas Lumber Company, the largest wholesale and retail lumber company in northwest Arkansas.

By 1939 the house was occupied by Daniel T. Gray, who was dean of the College of Agriculture at the University of Arkansas from 1924 to 1939. After Gray's death, his widow, Lillian, remained in the house until about 1950, when Herbert Hatfield purchased it. Hatfield owned and operated the Hatfield Pontiac-Cadillac dealership at 22-24 E. Meadow in Fayetteville. By 1959 Hatfield expanded his business holdings to include an insurance agency and rental car company. The Hatfield family remained at this address until at least 1982, and a son mentioned that they owned it for 47 years.



DESIGN No. 1.

A MOST BEAUTIFUL HOME OF THE GEORGIAN TYPE—(CLASSIC COLONIAL)
COST (HANDSOMELY FINISHED) \$30,000 TO \$40,000

Geo. F. Barber & Co., Arcts.

According to Gary Coover, “1 Mt. Nord is from George Barber’s “Modern Dwellings” book published in 1901 (**see photo above**). Some have said the house was from a kit but this is incorrect since two-story kit homes didn’t appear until much later and certainly not in that style (and Barber didn’t do kits, only plan books). There are at least two other houses in the US very similar to 1 Mt. Nord.”

Barber worked out of Knoxville, Tennessee, and published his first design book in 1888. By the time he retired in 1908, had sold more than 20,000 buildings plans. Barber’s design books sold widely, and examples of his buildings can be found in all 50 states and several foreign countries. More than four dozen of his buildings are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and dozens of others are listed within historic districts, including the Pritchard House.

The Pritchard House features a monumental, two-story front porch supported by six fluted Ionic columns, nearly circular one-story porches with smaller Ionic columns on either side of the central portico, and widely overhanging eaves with decorative brackets. As you can see it is very symmetrical in its layout. You can also see reflections of the concurrently popular Colonial Revival style at the very top of the building, where there is a broken pediment encapsulating a half-circle fanlight.

This concludes our tour of the Mont Nord Historic District. Please feel free to join us next month on the other half of the state when the April 14 Walks Through History Tour visits Columbia Street in Helena.