

Flannagan, Eric Goodyear ^[1]

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by Clara H. Flannagan, 1986

18 July 1892–15 Apr. 1970

Eric Goodyear Flannagan, architect and engineer, was born in Albemarle County, Va., of Irish, Dutch, and English ancestry. His father was Broadus Flannagan, son of Benjamin Collins and Ann Virginia Timberlake Flannagan; his mother was Lottie Goodyear Flannagan, daughter of George C. and Elizabeth Van Antwerp Briscoe Flannagan. Young Eric grew up in Lynchburg and Charlottesville, and at age fifteen entered the Miller Manual Training School in Albemarle County where he became proficient in mechanical drawing. His father died in 1910 leaving him without family support; needing additional credits for graduation, he became a part-time teacher of drawing for two years. He was graduated in 1912 as president of his class and subsequently served two years as head teacher in the school's Mechanical Drawing Department.

Flannagan's summer work experiences in 1912 and 1913 as one of two hundred draftsmen at the American Locomotive Works, Schenectady, N.Y., and as a maker of Patent Office drawings for a Washington, D.C., patent attorney led to his employment as resident engineer with the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company (Westvaco Corporation) in Covington, Va. Remaining with the firm eight years, he later became superintendent of construction and head of the engineering department and at times had as many as four engineers and a thousand construction workers working under him. In 1922 he moved with his wife and young family to Henderson, N.C., to set up his own business as a consulting engineer. In 1926 he established an architectural and engineering firm, having by this time obtained licenses to practice in both fields in Virginia as well as in North Carolina after additional private study through the International Correspondence School.

An active member and officeholder in the North Carolina chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Flannagan had been one of the leaders of the parent organization who worked for the national charter. In 1951 he was appointed a member of the State Board of Architectural Examination and Registration by Governor W. Kerr Scott ^[2]; he served until 1956 and as vice-president from 1955 to 1956. During his years of practice, his office was recommended by the Department of Architectural Engineering at North Carolina State College ^[3] as one that would provide the experience necessary to obtain a license and registration certificate to practice in the state.

For the most part Flannagan's architectural commissions consisted of institutional buildings in the health and education fields, although he also designed churches and commercial and residential buildings. For the periods stated he was the architect for all or most of the construction at North Carolina Sanatorium, McCain (1925–50); Caswell Training School, Kinston (1938–51); and East Carolina College, Greenville (1938–64), where his structures included the Flanagan Building (named for Edward G. Flanagan ^[4], chairman of the college trustees), Joyner Library ^[5], and dormitories totaling 2,064 beds (Slay, Umstead, Jones, Scott, and Aycock). He was also the architect for buildings at Asheboro, including Asheboro High School, Randolph Hospital, Acme-McCrary Recreation Building; hospitals at Sanford, Concord, Lenoir, Graham, Siler City, Dunn, Oxford, Burlington, Roanoke Rapids, and Henderson; school buildings in ten counties—Halifax, Northampton, Lee, Granville, Edgecombe, Pitt, Craven, Martin, Randolph, and Vance, where the Henderson High School ^[6] built in 1934 received statewide attention; three dozen residences in the eastern part of the state; and churches in Williamston, Hamilton, Oxford, and Henderson. Two distinctive stone structures in Henderson are the Gothic-style First Methodist Church and the colonial-style Stonewall Apartments. In 1965 Flannagan retired from full-time practice and served until his death as a consultant to the architect-engineer partnership of his two sons.

Flannagan was a Mason ^[7], Rotarian (past president), and member of the Henderson Chamber of Commerce. At the Holy Innocents Episcopal Church he served as a vestry member, church school superintendent, and men's Bible class president. On 26 June 1915 he married Beryl Morris, and they were the parents of three children: Eric, Jr. ^[8], Stephen, and Effie Louise (Mrs. Robert Dortch Baskervill). His wife died in 1968, and on 5 Sept. 1969 he married Clara Hamlett Robertson ^[9], the widow of one of his Miller School contemporaries. He was buried in Elmwood Cemetery, Henderson, Vance County ^[10].

References:

Documents and letters of Eric G. Flannagan, Sr. (on file in the office of Eric G. Flannagan and Sons, Architects-Engineers, Henderson).

Henderson Daily Dispatch, 16 Apr. 1970.

Additional Resources:

Eric G. Flannagan Papers, MC 87, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University Libraries, Raleigh, N.C. <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/findingaids/mc00087/> ^[11] (accessed March 4, 2014).

Eric G. Flannagan & Sons Records (#1148), East Carolina Manuscript Collection, J. Y. Joyner Library, East Carolina University. <http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/special/ead/view.aspx?id=1148> ^[12] (accessed March 4, 2014).

"Eric Goodyear Flannagan (1892-1970)." The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects. The American Institute of Architects. <http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/ahd1013997.aspx> ^[13] (accessed March 4, 2014).

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"Eric Goodyear Flannagan." 36. *North Carolina Architect* 17, no. 5 & 6. (May-June 1970). <http://www.ncmodernist.org/NCARCHITECT/1970-05-06.pdf> ^[15] (accessed March 4, 2014).

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