

TOO NEAR, TOO FAR: EXPLORING JOHN LINLEY'S IMPACT ON HISTORIC  
PRESEVATION IN GEORGIA

by

WILLIAM AUBREY NEWBY

(Under the Direction of Cari Goetcheus)

ABSTRACT

John W. Linley, is among the most revered architectural historians of Georgia. A graduate of Clemson College and Princeton University, he was a modernist architect in Anderson, South Carolina before joining the faculty of The University of Georgia in 1963. This thesis explores his life and career. Through archival research and interviews, John Linley's work as an author, professor, urbanist and preservationist within the historic preservation movement as it was unfolding in Georgia in the 1960s and 70s, is revealed, articulated and discussed.

INDEX WORDS: John W. Linley Jr., North Anderson South Carolina, Home Realty Construction Company, Oconee Region, Athens Georgia Preservation, Linley and Watkins, Architecture of Middle Georgia, Georgia Architectural History, The Georgia Catalog, Pulaski Street, Urban Athens, Historic American Buildings Survey

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WILLIAM AUBREY NEWBY  
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WILLIAM AUBREY NEWBY

Major Professor:	Cari Goetzeus
Committee:	Wayde Brown
	Steven Berry
	Mark C. McDonald

Electronic Version Approved:

Ron Walcott  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
May 2023

## DEDICATION

To Mom who for forty years indulged my passions for historic sites, museums, and old houses. To Dad, who by his example showed me the value of our built environment, protecting what is important to us and the beauty of an old dirt road. In very different ways they introduced me to architecture, history and historic preservation long before I knew what it meant.

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Throughout this process I was amazed at the number of people who opened their living rooms, hopped in the car for a Linley tour, and responded to emails or phone calls. All were delighted to talk about their friend, colleague, professor, uncle or mentor. A few among the many who aided the process exponentially were: Charlotte Marshall, Corbett Chandler, Peggy Gallis, Amy Andrews, Margie Spaulding, Julian Adams, Greta Covington, Steven Brown, Rinne Allen, Pratt Cassity, Joe Smith, David and Cassie Bryant; and Lee Smith, who shared with me a wonderful afternoon in Linley's former home and garden. In Anderson, George Sands offered great insight into the Linley family. Bob Gamble, Jim Marshall and Glenn Eskew shared their experience with Linley's research and its impact. Thanks to Ennis Willis who offered edits and constructive critiques. Special appreciation to Bill Bragg, my teacher and friend who long ago introduced me to Linley.

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## CHAPTER 1

### FINDING LINLEY

In the May 8, 1996, edition of the Athens, Georgia, magazine *Flagpole*, noted community author Pete McCommons eulogized John Linley, Jr<sup>1</sup>. McCommons described Linley as the personification of the “Southern gentleman of charm, wit and unfailing politeness and consideration...his demeanor like his attire, was always appropriate for the occasion...”<sup>2</sup> It is the description that almost always comes up when discussing John Linley, “he epitomized the Southern gentleman...”<sup>3</sup> By most who knew him, Linley is remembered for his impeccable manners, his linen suits, the Clemson-Georgia parties he hosted at his home on Pulaski Street, and the garden that he carved out of the steeply sloping hillside in the middle of downtown Athens, transforming it into an urban oasis.

To others who never knew the man, he was the revered University of Georgia college professor who was trained as an architect, not a landscape architect, and had the most beautiful garden of anyone in the landscape architecture program. For me personally, and no doubt for many others, he was the author of two of the earliest and most valuable books on the historic architecture of Georgia, *Architecture of Middle Georgia: The Oconee Region*

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<sup>1</sup> “John Linley” or “Linley” will be used in reference to the subject of the thesis. “John Linley Sr.” will always be used when referencing his father.

<sup>2</sup> Pete McCommons, “John Linley Personified A Southern Gentleman.” *Flagpole Magazine*, Vol. 10, No. 19, May 8, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Gamble, Architectural Historian and Author, Interview, July 2022.

and *The Georgia Catalog*. These books were first introduced to me as a middle school student sitting in a required Georgia history class. *The Georgia Catalog*, with its cover featuring the fan lighted entrance of the Gordon-Bowen-Banks House, was a book I knew I had to own. A few years later I encountered his earlier work *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, but it would be several years before the out of print book reached a price point that I, as a young college student could afford to buy. At no time do I ever recall thinking about John Linley. It might have been a few years before it even occurred to me that the two works were by the same author.

In 2022 *Architecture of Middle Georgia* celebrated its fiftieth year of publication. The occasion was mostly unnoticed. There were no articles celebrating Linley or this seminal work. A review of the book content notes the unique approach that Linley took.<sup>4</sup> In a time when Georgia architectural study focused on either very early structures or ‘buildings with columns,’ Linley opted to take notice of the often unexplored, the vernacular, the topography, the climate, the economics and cultural landscapes that were a part of these often unnoticed and undocumented structures. He was doing this nearly a decade before the country began a concerted effort to conduct historic resource surveys, and several decades before the field of historic preservation appreciated/advocated multi-disciplinary methods to understand architecture in place. In studying Linley and his work, an initial idea for this thesis emerged— to explore the seven counties of the Oconee

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<sup>4</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia: The Oconee Area*, Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1972.

region covered by Linley's first book and see what remained of those documented buildings. All were located in rural counties with limited resources, little growth, and in some cases, almost unchanged since Linley first set out to document them more than 50 years ago. What had survived, what had not, and why? As interesting as that seemed, the idea quickly evolved into an exploration of John Linley himself.

Who was the man that personified the ideal of the Southern gentleman? He liked to entertain, was impeccably dressed, delightful in conversation, but as an architect in Anderson, South Carolina, what was his influence on that community? He was a modern architect in a very conservative, traditional community. What made John Linley write his two books? Were they something more than a contracted job or did Linley actually set out to document the architecture of the state? Did those publications have an impact on the emerging preservation movement in Georgia in the 1970s? Is his work still relevant to preservationist today? Linley considered himself an architect, a college professor, a scholar, and an author.<sup>5</sup> Would he have ever thought of himself as a preservationist? This thesis will explore all of these questions and seek to answer the overarching question, "what impact did the work of John Linley have on historic preservation in Georgia?"

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<sup>5</sup> John Linley, "VITA," April 27, 1982, Linley Papers UA99-162, University Archives, University of Georgia 2:5.

## Methodology

This thesis will use several methods and resources to answer the research question, including archival research, site visits and oral history interviews.

Following Linley's death in 1996, the contents of his office were donated to The University of Georgia Archives held at the Hargrett Library. Since that time, those files that originally totaled more than thirty boxes, have sat uncatalogued.<sup>6</sup> There will be a detailed examination of those personal records that include correspondence from scholars, former students, friends and family. For more than fifteen years Linley was an architect in Anderson, South Carolina, hence the collection also includes many of his early architectural drawings from that period. Further, there are early proposals for the preservation of historic houses in Athens prior to the creation of the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation in 1967. Large quantities of his collection relate to his two published works and his unpublished guide to architecture.

In addition to the items held by the University Archives, The College of Environment and Design holds a collection of Linley's papers, that includes architectural drawings for his private work in both Anderson and Athens. This collection also contains additional correspondence, class lecture notes and additional photos documenting Linley's career. As the resident architect in the school, his class notes and syllabi which are found in his papers, are important in understanding what he was teaching. These may help to answer

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<sup>6</sup> Steven Armour, University of Georgia, University Archivist, email April 7, 2022.

the questions of, what influenced his career? and What did he find important not only in architecture and design, but historic preservation?

Following the study of the collections held by the university, a detailed examination of Linley's two published works will hopefully provide great insight into how Linley viewed the importance of vernacular architecture. This will help to understand why Linley wrote the two books, what was his motivation and the original intent for the publications. An examination of contemporary reviews of the two works and personal correspondence in the Linley collections will help understand how the books were received and if the books remain relevant to the work of historic preservation and architectural history today.

From 1963 until 1985 Linley was a professor in the School of Environmental Design.<sup>7</sup> In those two decades that Linley served on the faculty of The University of Georgia, he influenced the lives of countless students and faculty. As such, it will be critical to conduct interviews with former colleagues, and students. These interviews will offer a glimpse into what Linley was teaching in the classroom, if he ever offered insight into his ideas about preservation and what impact his teaching had on their careers. There will also be scheduled interviews with preservationist, architects and scholars many who knew Linley personally and just as many who did not but have been influenced by his work.

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<sup>7</sup> Today this is known as The College of Environment and Design, but that did not occur until after Linley's death. Originally the landscape architecture program was a part of at various times the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Agriculture. In 1969 The School of Environmental Design was formed and in 2001 it became the College of Environment and Design.

In order to understand anyone's life one must inevitably start at the beginning. For Linley that would mean understanding his youth and early career in Anderson South Carolina. This was done through organized interviews with family, former clients, and a visit to Anderson. Research will also involve the use of the archives held by the Anderson County Museum, including local papers, early plats and detailed history of the Linley family's business and development interest. The majority of Linley's architectural work and perhaps early influences can all be found in Anderson.

### Organization of Thesis

This chapter established the research question. Through the study of Linley's papers, published texts, interviews, and site visits, the question will be answered. Chapter two will focus on Linley's early youth, family influences, and connections that led to his pursuit of an architectural career. Chapter three addresses Linley as an architect, his professional career working on both commercial and residential projects, and his desire to be a modern architect in conservative Anderson, South Carolina.

Chapter Four discusses Linley's eventual move to Athens, the factors that lead to that decision, and the early days of his career at The University of Georgia. This was a changing time for the School of Environmental Design as well as the city of Athens. Hence, the chapter also explores the early historic preservation movement in Athens and Linley's work in urban revitalization. Chapter Five dives into Linley's survey work for the Oconee Regional Development Commission and the research and publication of his two books.

Chapter Six examines the end of Linley's academic career, the last of his architectural work and the mythical figure that is so well remembered in Athens. Chapter Seven analyzes the breadth of collected information and discusses the impact that Linley's publications have had on preservation and architectural history in Georgia. This chapter will also look at the generation of preservationists he influenced, the impact he had on urban planning in the Pulaski Heights neighborhood. This chapter will answer the research question "What was John Linley's impact on historic preservation in Georgia?" Chapter Eight then summarizes the research conclusions, reflects on what can still be learned from Linley and his work, and future research needs.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE FAMILY BUSINESS

#### Anderson, South Carolina

Located in South Carolina's northwestern corner, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Anderson, South Carolina is the county seat of Anderson County. Established in 1826 and named for Revolutionary War General Robert Anderson, the area originally dependent upon the plantation cotton economy, — became a center for industrial growth in the years following the Civil War. In 1893, *The Charleston News and Courier* dubbed Anderson “The Electric City” because of the early electrical developments made there by William Whitner. Whitner, a local engineer, had been tasked by city leaders with building a dam and powerhouse at nearby High Shoals to generate electricity for the town. Eventually the local presses, the mattress factory, and the machinery for Anderson Mills were all running off the hydroelectric power generated by the dam.<sup>8</sup>

By 1900, the area was home to seven mills, twine, and apparel factories. The county population had grown by more than 12,000 between 1890 and 1900. During the next decade, Anderson added a telephone system, electric trolley, four public schools, and a Carnegie Library.<sup>9</sup> This rapidly

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<sup>8</sup> Judy Bainbridge, “How Anderson Became the Electric City,” *The Greenville News*, September 30, 2018. Accessed February 2023, <https://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/life/2018/09/30/bainbridge-how-anderson-became-electric-city/1456281002/>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

growing city was pushing the bounds of the city limits. The downtown businesses were reportedly spilling over into the residential areas. Industry, economics, and development were booming in Anderson, South Carolina.

It was in 1900 that John W. Linley, Sr, a recent graduate from the Citadel in Charleston, arrived in Anderson. He had come to complete his obligation to the state teacher's scholarship that required him to teach school for a set number of years after graduation. Within a few years of his arrival, he married Anne Farmer, who descended from some of the earliest settlers in the area. John Linley, Sr. quickly emerged as one of the most spirited leaders in the Anderson community.<sup>10</sup> By 1907, John Linley, Sr. had completed his obligations to the scholarship program and had settled comfortably in an office in downtown Anderson handling insurance and real estate. A few years later, as the area continued to grow, he saw an opportunity in unused farmland he owned just north of downtown Anderson.

### North Anderson

Begun in 1913, North Anderson, the first residential development outside of downtown Anderson, was the vision of John Linley, Sr. Linley was elected as President and Treasurer of the North Anderson Development Company, with four other investors. The planned development consisted of 206 lots which faced 13 streets, some of which were 70 to 80 feet wide, to

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<sup>10</sup> Rich Otter, "The Life and Legacy of John Linley in Anderson," *The Electric City News*, April 11, 2019, Accessed February 2023, <https://www.theelectriccitynews.com/post/the-life-and-legacy-of-john-linley-in-anderson>.

allow for parks and a wide pedestrian area.<sup>11</sup> There were electric trolleys which took residents into town. At night, the trolleys were stored in a building in the back of the Linley, Sr. residence.<sup>12</sup> Linley, Sr. ran ads in *The Anderson*

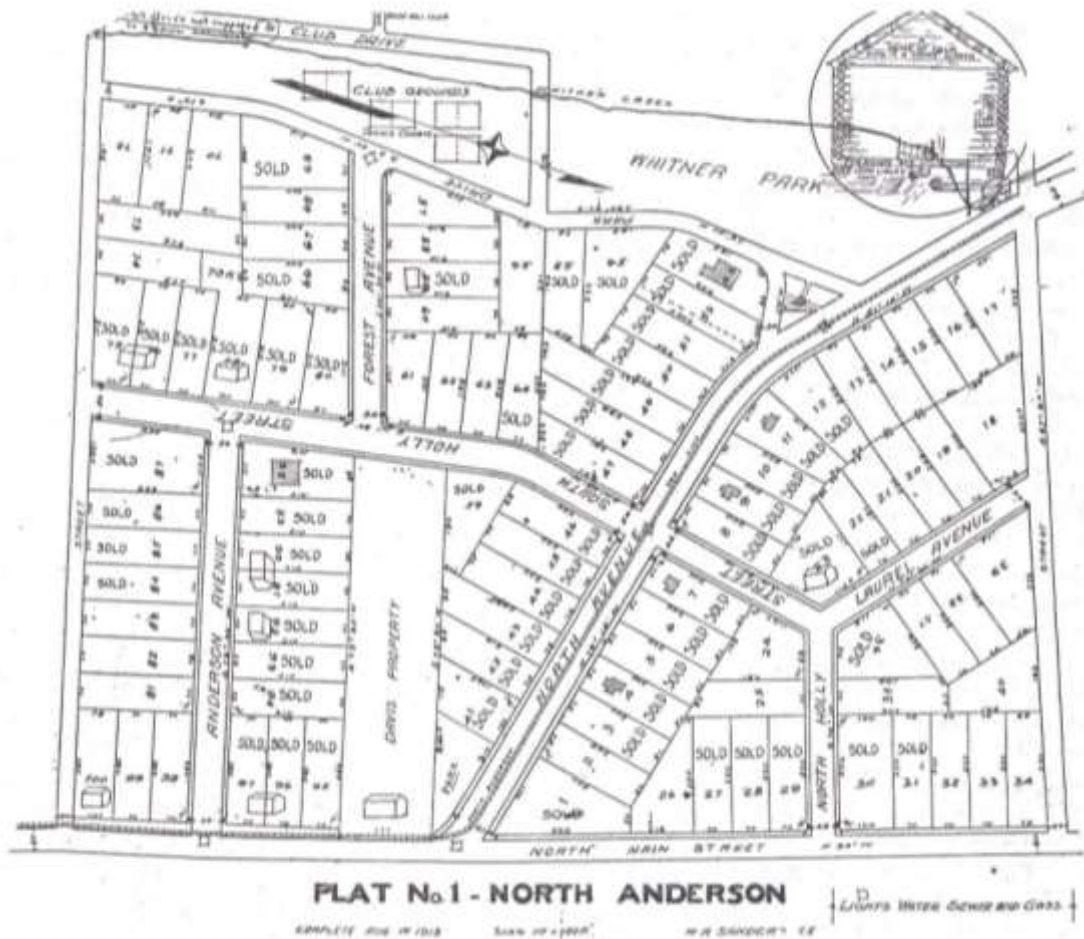


Figure 1: A portion of the original 1914 plat for J.W. Linley, Sr.'s North Anderson development. This became, and remains today an eclectic blend of architectural styles representing nearly all trends from about 1910 until well into the 1950s. (Anderson County Museum)

*Daily Intelligencer*, promoting the new development with slogans such as “A home of your own is a home indeed,” and “It has given the young men of

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Otter, “John Linley in Anderson.”

Anderson an opportunity, of owning homes in a most desirable neighborhood at a modest cost.”<sup>13</sup> Just a year after the area’s first development, it was being described by some as “one of the prettiest residence sections in the upper part of the state.”<sup>14</sup> The houses in the development reflected the Colonial, Tudor, and Neo-Classical Revival styles so popular in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with an occasional Craftsman or bungalow.<sup>15</sup>

It was in those prosperous times, full of promise and opportunity for this ambitious man and his family, as well as the entire town of Anderson, that John William Linley, Jr. was born on June 23, 1916. He was born in his parents’ Colonial Revival home, built high upon a hill in North Anderson, overlooking what is today known as Linley Park.<sup>16</sup> The fifth child of seven, and the only boy, John Linley, “June Bug,” or simply “June,” as he was known to his family and close friends in Anderson, spent the first decade of his life in the palatial family home in North Anderson. A simple walk through his neighborhood would have given young John Linley lessons in architectural styles, community planning and suburban development.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *The Anderson Daily Intelligencer*, (Anderson, SC) August 1, 1914, 1.

<sup>14</sup> *The Anderson Daily Intelligencer*, April 24, 1914, 1.

<sup>15</sup> Christa A. Smith, “North Anderson Historic District National Register Nomination,” June 12, 2008, Accessed February 2023  
<http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/anderson/S10817704021/S10817704021.pdf> .

<sup>16</sup> George Sands Jr., Linley Nephew, Interview, October 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Smith, “North Anderson, National Register of Historic Places Nomination.”



*Figure 2: The John W. Linley, Sr. Residence on West North Avenue in Anderson, South Carolina in about 1920. Designed by the architectural firm Fant and Fant and completed about 1913, it was here that John W. Linley, Jr. was born in 1916. (Anderson County Museum)*

In the years following World War I, the boll weevil slowly began making its way across the Southeastern United States, plummeting much of the area into an economic depression several years before the rest of the country. George Sands, John W. Linley, Jr's nephew, recalls the family saying, "things were already so bad, we didn't even know when the depression hit."<sup>18</sup> As a result of the downturn, what had once been a lucrative development in North Anderson became a liability, as few people could afford to buy a lot and build a house in the still newly developed area. This forced the family to leave their home in North Anderson and move to an old Victorian on West Market

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<sup>18</sup> George Sands Jr., Interview, October 2022.

Street near downtown Anderson.<sup>19</sup> North Anderson would continue to develop under Linley, Sr's., influence in the years following World War II and representations of nearly every architectural style from 1900 to 1950 can be found along it's winding streets.<sup>20</sup>

### Clemson College

In 1933, John Linley, Jr. graduated from the boys' high school in Anderson and the following year enrolled at nearby Clemson College in the architectural program.<sup>21</sup> The previous year, another Anderson native—Rudolph E. Lee—had become the head of Clemson's Department of Architecture.<sup>22</sup> Lee was in the first graduating class at Clemson in 1896, earning a B.S. in Engineering. He went on to earn a Master's in Architecture from Clemson as well, but also studied at The University of Pennsylvania and Cornell University. It is unclear what influence Lee, or the Clemson program, had on Linley's work. Lee and four other professors led the program: R.L. Anderson, S.W. Little, W.F.D. Hodge, and T.K. Fitzpatrick. The program, begun in 1913, was intended to meet “an increasing demand in the South for men trained in architectural design, building construction and allied subjects.”<sup>23</sup> Two of the earliest classes introduced in the 1922-23 curriculum, that would remain a part of the program for the next three decades, were “Descriptive Geometry” and “Elements of Architecture.” These courses were

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<sup>19</sup> George Sands Jr., Interview, October 2022.

<sup>20</sup> Smith, “North Anderson National Register of Historic Places Nomination.”

<sup>21</sup> John Linley, “VITA,” Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 2:5.

<sup>22</sup> Rudolph Edward Lee Papers, MSS 41, “Collection Description,” Clemson University.

<sup>23</sup> *Catalogue of Clemson Agricultural College of South Carolina: 1913-1914* (Clemson, SC: Clemson College Print, 1914), 70.

intended to introduce the students to drawing techniques and the essential five orders of architecture.<sup>24</sup> Much of the early program, and what Linley would have experienced, reflected the Beaux-Arts influence that Rudolph Lee and other faculty experienced in their training at their northeastern schools.<sup>25</sup> The Ecole des Beaux-Arts stressed classical proportions, scale, balance, beauty and an understanding of classical architectural principles. Much of Linley's early work in Anderson would reflect these ideals.



*Figure 3: John W. Linley, Jr, photo from the 1936 edition of TAPS, the Clemson College annual. At Clemson Linley was not only an architecture student, but was enrolled in the Army Reserve Corps. Despite this training, due to an injured knee, Linley would be unable to serve during World War II. (Ancestry.com, "U.S. School Yearbooks, 1880-2012")*

While there were as many as nineteen enrolled in the program in the years that Linley was a student, there were sometimes as few as one or three graduating from the program. In 1938, when Linley completed his studies,

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<sup>24</sup> *Clemson Agricultural College of South Carolina Annual Catalogue: 1922–23* (Clemson, SC: Clemson College Print, 1924), 55, 119.

<sup>25</sup> Peter Lurence, "Southern Roots to Distant Horizons" in *100 Years of Clemson Architecture: Southern Roots + Global Reach Proceedings*, ed. Efuk Ersoy; Dana Anderson; and Kate Schwennsen, (2015) [https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/cudp\\_environment/7](https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/cudp_environment/7).

there were six graduates in his class.<sup>26</sup> Linley never referenced Lee or the Clemson program in any of his writings. *The Tiger*, the Clemson school paper, documents some of Linley's experiences and successes. He won multiple awards during his four years there, including the freshman design for "Corinthian Pediment," and in his senior year, first place for "A Travel Bureau for a World's Fair."<sup>27</sup> There is one interesting article during Linley's senior year titled "Architects Locate Sites of Mansion Buildings." Under the direction of Professor R.E. Lee, students had completed excavation work to uncover, what they believed to have been the foundations of slave housing on the college's campus.<sup>28</sup>

What Clemson did offer him was hands on experience working on designs for Table Rock State Park in Pickens, South Carolina. Evidence suggests that students from the architecture program at Clemson helped in some of the design of Table Rock State Park, which began construction in 1935. The park did not open until April of 1938, and following Linley's graduation in 1938 with a Bachelor of Science in Architecture, he spent the next year working at Table Rock.<sup>29</sup> During that time, he and Fred Ledbetter, another Anderson architect "were responsible for helping design all of the park's structures."<sup>30</sup> Linley's preliminary drawings for the Caretaker's Cottage.

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<sup>26</sup> Clemson University, "President's Report to Board of Trustees, 1938," *President's Reports to the Board of Trustees*, 45. <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/pres.reports>.

<sup>27</sup> Clemson University, *Tiger*, January 17, 1935; *Tiger*, April 14, 1938.

<sup>28</sup> Clemson University, *Tiger*, February 24, 1938.

<sup>29</sup> John Linley, "Application to National Council of Architects," Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 1:2.

<sup>30</sup> Thomas Simms and Julie Turner, "National Register Nomination Form for Table Rock State Park," South Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1989, 7, Accessed February 2023, <http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/pickens/S10817739021/S10817739021.pdf>.

Those plans reveal a standard design often referred to as “parkitecture.” The National Park Service defines this as “Infused with native materials, natural whole logs, and build by hand (or meant to look as if it was.)”<sup>31</sup> The details call for stonework, large windows, gabled dormers, and board and batten siding under portions of the porch.<sup>32</sup> Since these are labeled “Preliminary,” Linley’s plan does not appear to have ever been constructed.<sup>33</sup> Linley did design the plans for both the Bath House and the Concessions Building, which were both built and remain in the park today.<sup>34</sup> Linley himself viewed the buildings as utilitarian in design and felt that his vision was compromised and the design was not original. He considered the work inferior and was perplexed in later years, when the buildings were listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as he did not think the buildings were historic or remarkable.<sup>35</sup> Knowing that, it is interesting to consider how he must have viewed the next stage of his career that would take him back to Anderson and to the offices of his father’s business—Home Realty Construction Company.

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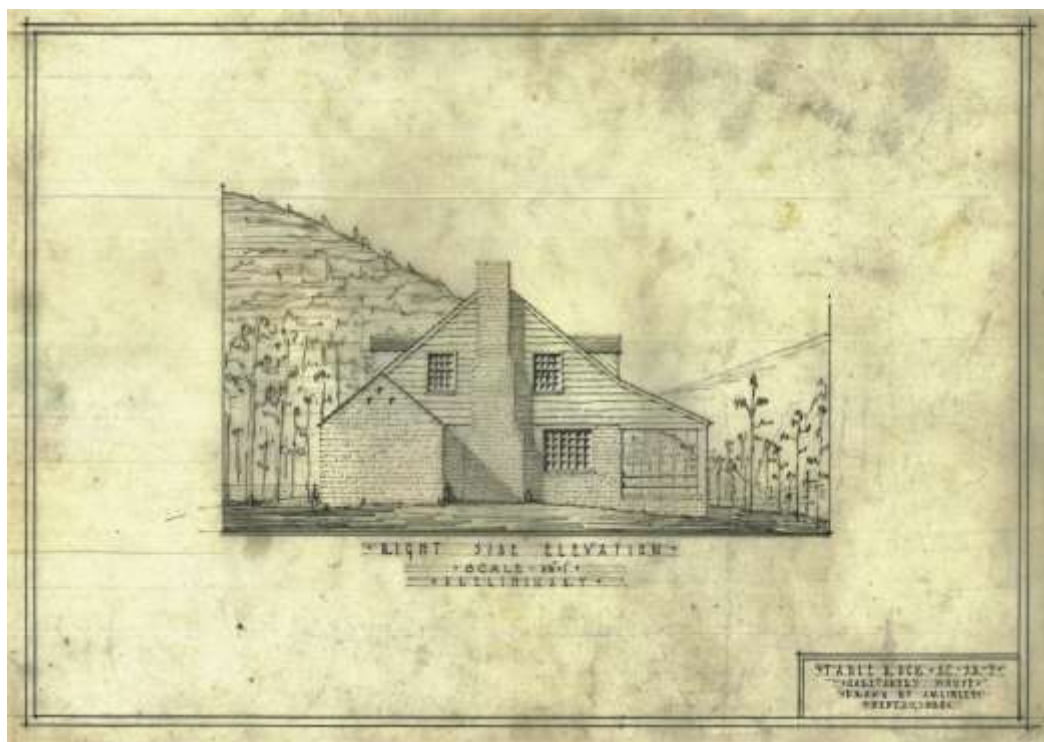
<sup>31</sup> National Park Service, Architecture and Buildings, “Parkitecture, The NPS Rustic Style.” Accessed February 2023, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/architecture/parkitecture.htm>.

<sup>32</sup> John Linley, “Preliminary Plan for Caretaker’s Cottage, Table Rock State Park,” September 20, 1938, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>33</sup> Email with Bart Joy, Table Rock State Park Assistant Manager, February 23, 2023.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Pratt Cassity, “A Southern Gentleman’s Vision of Design: John Linley, AIA,” (Athens, University of Georgia) 1998. This is a limited publication exhibition guide.



*Figure 4: Earliest known Linley architectural drawing. Proposal for "Caretakers House" at Table Rock State Park, South Carolina. The building was never constructed. (Linley Collection, UGA, CED Archives)*

### Return to Anderson and the Family Business

In the time since the Linley family had moved to downtown Anderson from the development in North Anderson, the economy of the area had improved, and slowly new construction was happening again throughout the city. During this time, John Linley, Sr. continued his real estate developments in Anderson. With his Home Realty Company, he could not only develop the land, but help design the houses that would be built there.<sup>36</sup> His recently graduated architecturally trained son fit perfectly into his development plans.

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<sup>36</sup> Otter, "John Linley in Anderson."

According to Linley, Jr.'s own records, he was employed for the first time by the Home Realty Company in 1939 and worked there until 1941.<sup>37</sup>

Linley, Sr. had, by that time, developed or begun development of several neighborhoods in Anderson. All of the projects being developed by the Home Realty Company would feature the same wide streets with tree canopied medians which had been seen in the earlier North Anderson development. Much like North Anderson, these new neighborhoods were built around parks and other community spaces. In his father's employment, Linley, Jr. spent the next few years designing new offices and a lumber mill for the company, as well as model houses and small single family houses for clients in the new developments.<sup>38</sup> These plans are representative of what was being built in most suburban middle-class neighborhoods in any city in America at the time, especially the Minimal Traditional style popular during that period. These houses are often embellished with classical details, a small portico, a fan lighted door, or classical columns, with simple overall lines.<sup>39</sup> This was the perfect home for an area recovering from the boll weevil, the great depression, and on the verge of a second World War. There is nothing in these early designs that speaks to the creativity and more modern influences

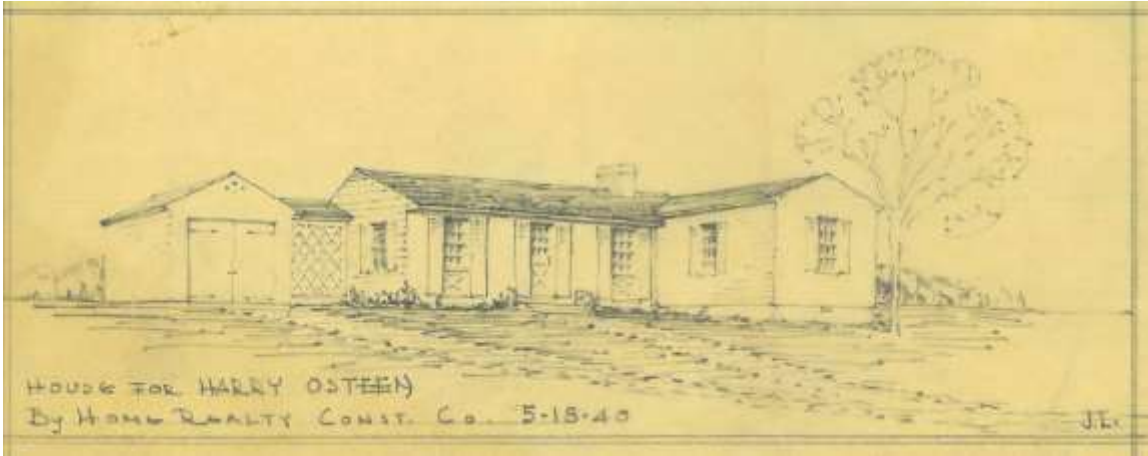
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<sup>37</sup> John Linley, "National Council of Architects Application," Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 1:2.

<sup>38</sup> John Linley, "VITA," Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 2:5.

<sup>39</sup> John Linley Drawings, "Anderson File," University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

that would be seen in Linley's later works.



*Figure 5: 1941 Drawing by Linley for a house to be constructed by Home Realty Construction Company. A typical Linley's design for this period, the houses reflect the traditional style and market for Anderson, South Carolina. (Linley Collection, UGA, CED Archives)*

In 1941, while still employed by his father's company, Linley gained his first experience as a college instructor when he returned to Clemson College to teach courses in architecture. It is about this same time that Linley begins his quest to serve his country in the armed forces. Linley had been a member of the ROTC program while a student at Clemson, and eventually enlisted in the Officer's Reserve Corps. Due to difficulty with what Linley, Jr., described as a "trick knee," however, he was honorably discharged from the Officer's Reserve Corps, but would make multiple attempts from 1941 through 1942 to enlist in the Naval Reserve, and for civilian pilot training. As late as May of 1942, the War Department had offered him a position with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, but he was later deemed not physically qualified.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> John Linley, "Army Papers," John Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 1:2.

According to family, this would always serve as a source of embarrassment for Linley, Jr.<sup>41</sup> In May 1942, Linley was officially discharged from service. This would not end his quest to serve, and he would continue to attempt to enlist and offer his services, though unsuccessfully, in various forms for more than a decade.<sup>42</sup>

It is easy to imagine a twenty-seven-year-old Linley, frustrated with what he perceived as failed attempts to serve his country, and the realization that Anderson and the Home Realty Company were never going to be the place for much more than traditional house design. Perhaps a spark had been ignited while teaching at Clemson that led him on the path to Princeton University, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in architecture. It would have been easy for Linley to remain in Anderson and continue to work in the family's real estate development company. The move to Princeton may indicate Linley was searching for more than just an advancement of his architectural skill and credentials. Perhaps there was an interest in understanding new and more modern architectural philosophy. It may have been an intellectual curiosity that led him to academia.

### Princeton University

As early as 1832, Princeton University has offered courses in architecture. It would not be until 1915 that a School of Architecture was discussed. That school officially opened in 1919, following a delay caused by

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<sup>41</sup> George Sands Jr., Interview, October, 2022.

<sup>42</sup> John Linley, "Army Papers," John Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 1:2.

World War I. By the time Linley arrived in 1943, the program was solidly established as one of the best architecture programs in the country.<sup>43</sup> Classes were arranged with a liberal arts approach, believing that an architect should “approach their profession primarily as an art; understand and appreciate the other arts in relation to architecture; and be taught the science of building construction as a part of their training in design rather than as an end in itself.”<sup>44</sup> While the program was a successful one, the timing of Linley’s arrival was less than ideal. Enrollment in the program the year before Linley arrived had been 19, with 7 of those earning their Master of Fine Arts in architecture that year.<sup>45</sup> When Linley enrolled, in the fall of 1942, there were just two students enrolled in the program. The annual report from the President of Princeton began with the following statement,

“The character of enrollment in the Graduate School for 1942-43 was determined by the Selective Service...the only students who could be enrolled were those classified as unqualified for military service, or aliens on student visas...”<sup>46</sup>

In the same report, Sheryl Morgan, director of the School of Architecture, wrote that the school had transitioned from “...normal functioning to a complete war status.”<sup>47</sup> Linley, due to his discharge from the Army Reserves

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<sup>43</sup> Princeton School of Architecture, “History of School,” <https://soa.princeton.edu/content/history-school#:~:text=The%20study%20of%20architecture%20at,Smithsonian%20Institution%20in%20Washington%2C%20DC>.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Princeton University, “Annual Reports to the President 1941-42,” 61.

<sup>46</sup> Princeton University, “Annual Reports to the President 1942-43,” 76.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 186.

in 1942, would have regrettably been among those “unqualified for military service.”<sup>48</sup>

In that first year, Linley was introduced to Sheryl Morgan, director of the program. Morgan, a graduate of Princeton and Columbia Universities, was a practicing architect before leading the program at Princeton.<sup>49</sup> Jean Labatut, often credited with the success of Princeton’s program, was also teaching having begun his career there in 1928 straight from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.<sup>50</sup> In 1939, he had served as a consultant to the Board of Design for the New York World’s Fair. In that role, he designed the water, light, and sound displays, that were described by the *New York Times* as being “fanciful, almost magical patterns of color, light, water and flame, synchronized with stirring music and vivid burst of fireworks...nothing like it ever before has been conceived...”<sup>51</sup> While at Princeton, Labatut spent his summers during peaceful times serving as the director of the American School of Fine Arts at Fontainebleau in France.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Princeton “Annual Report 42-43,” 186.

<sup>50</sup> “Jean Labatut is Dead: Taught at Princeton,” *New York Times*, (New York, NY) Nov 29, 1986, Section 1, 36.

<sup>51</sup> “Spirit of George Washington to be Portrayed in Giant Fireworks,” *New York Times*, (New York, NY) July 4, 1939, 1.

<sup>52</sup> *The Princeton Herald*, (Princeton, New Jersey) Sept. 26, 1947, 1.



*Figure 6: While enrolled at Princeton University, Linley was a student of Jean Labatut. Labatut is responsible for the design of the fountain at the 1939 World's Fair. (Labatut Papers, Princeton University)*

Labatut has been described as “the teacher of teachers.”<sup>53</sup> He abhorred the imitation of old architectural styles but believed that “the past is not a refuge, but a great stimulant,” and it was the architect’s task to “rework permanent values.”<sup>54</sup> Those permanent values had worked and existed in architectural form for centuries, and the modern architect should take those same principles and apply them in new means to modern architecture. He believed that one should “assimilate, forget and create.”<sup>55</sup> The assimilation

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<sup>53</sup> Jorge Otero-Pailos, “Eucharist Architecture, Jean Labatut and the Search for Pure Sensation,” *Architectures Historical Turn*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, Chapter 2, 25.

<sup>54</sup> Samuel O’ Connor Perks, Rajesh Heynickx and Stephane Symoms, “From Inertia to the Absolute: On Visuality and Religion in Jean Labatut,” *Architectural Theory Review*, 2020, 24:1, 5.

<sup>55</sup> Jean Labatut, “An Approach to Architectural Composition,” *Journal of Architectural Education*, Summer 1956, 34.

occurred by studying and understanding why a building was considered beautiful, and to do this, one must experience the building. But once assimilated, the architect should forget and not “succumb to the abnormal temptation...of doing what everybody else does...this approach, this philosophy has never produced a good architectural composition and never will.”<sup>56</sup> It was only after completing these steps that one should create.

In Linley’s notes are copious files and even a small publication he wrote entitled “Sun and Form,” a method to study how light was used in design in both buildings and landscape.<sup>57</sup> In his work *An Approach to Architectural Composition*, Labatut expounds on these ideas in his description of twenty-four hour architecture:

“A man’s day no longer stops at sunset...Are we modern, are we of our time, if we shape our buildings and our landscapes thinking only of natural light as our ancestors...No we are not modern, we are only poor composers...We are just as bad if we think only of manufactured light, forgetting natural light. A modern solution and composition cannot be complete without the control of both diurnal and nocturnal illumination.”<sup>58</sup>

Labatut concluded his direction on architectural composition by stating.

“We should not forget that according to the power of reception of the observer, the radiance of an architectural composition will reach his intellect, his spirit, or his stomach or will not reach him at all. The result will be an expression of enthusiasm, approval, disapproval or even horror.”<sup>59</sup>

While Linley would later reach out to former professors, offering them copies of his published works, it would only be Labatut who would grace the

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<sup>56</sup>Labatut, “Architectural Composition,” 34.

<sup>57</sup> John Linley and Mike Wahl, *Sun and Form*, (Athens, Georgia, University of Georgia Bookstore,) Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 2:33.

<sup>58</sup> Labatut, “Architectural Composition,” 37.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

acknowledgment page of Linley's *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, where he wrote, "...to Professor Jean Labatut, who long ago taught me to search for ageless principles which are basic in all good architecture."<sup>60</sup> During the unusual circumstances of war, limited enrollment, abruptness of working studio space that Linley faced during those years, Princeton and Labatut would leave a lasting impression, evidenced not only in the acknowledgement, but in Linley's later designs as well.

For the entirety of Linley's time at Princeton, much of the space allotted to the architectural program had been turned over to the Navy. This included the studio space, which in Linley's second year was being used for "Navy Pre-radar Use."<sup>61</sup> That year, there was one additional student in the program. In addition to the military presence on much of the Princeton campus, the curriculum had changed as well. It can be assumed that the architectural history courses remained, as well as the usual design and drafting courses, but there were also courses in Structural Drafting and a Marines in Camouflage laboratory.<sup>62</sup> These were in addition to a course taught by Labatut, that was described as "a war emergency course in the design and practice of camouflage..."<sup>63</sup> Labatut had been part of the French Army Corps of Engineers who had worked to camouflage the Grand Canal of Versailles during World War I. Labatut believed that one of the first lessons in

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<sup>60</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia: Oconee Area*, Athens, Georgia, The University of Georgia Press, 1972, Acknowledgments.

<sup>61</sup> Princeton University, "Annual Reports 42-43," 198.

<sup>62</sup> Princeton University, "Annual Reports to the President 1943-44," 199.

<sup>63</sup> "Princeton Students are Trained to Recognize the Use of Camouflage," *The Princeton Herald*, (Princeton, New Jersey) March 5, 1943, 2.

architecture should be learning how to make a building disappear. He viewed this as a means of teaching about visual principles of existing buildings before venturing into design.<sup>64</sup>



*Figure 7: Linley's time at Princeton was an unusual time as the country had recently entered World War II. Much of Princeton was taken over by military training. Among the courses Labatut was teaching was the practice of camouflage and how buildings and people could better blend with the landscape. (Labatut Papers, Princeton University).*

The Princeton School of Architecture had long been noted for its guest lectures and visiting architects, who at times included Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier. During war times, there was no visiting architect and the lecture program was greatly reduced to just three guest speakers.

Architectural critic, S. Gideon, presented on two topics one of which was "The Changing Aspect of Comfort." Another presenter spoke on "Interior

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<sup>64</sup> Otero-Pailos, *Architecture's Historical Turn*, 26-27.

Decoration for Modern Living in Sweden.” Eric Mendelson, the German-born architect famous for his Einstein Tower, who had fled the Nazi movement in 1942, presented “Architecture in a Rebuilt World.”<sup>65</sup>

Of the three students enrolled during Linley’s last year at Princeton, two would earn awards from the New York Beaux Arts Institute of Design. For the entire three years Linley was enrolled students had received accolades and awards from competitions. David J. Anderson received an award for his “Elementary School” and James S. Sadler, for his design of a “Military Highway Transport Station.”<sup>66</sup> Finally, in 1945, Linley was “awarded a medal in the competition.” The note in the report does not indicate what exactly the medal was recognizing.<sup>67</sup> Linley and Sadler would be the only two graduates of the program in 1945.<sup>68</sup> Sadler went on to become a noted architect in the Denver area, designing the Church of the Risen Christ, and collaborating on the Denver Art Museum’s North Building.<sup>69</sup> Following graduation from Princeton in June 1945, Linley returned to Anderson. As World War II still raged, the future was no doubt uncertain. However, he would soon realize the promise Sheryl Morgan had delivered in his annual report on the architecture program at Princeton: “The architectural profession is enjoying an almost unprecedented demand...every office is crowded with work; draftsmen are a

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<sup>65</sup> Princeton University, “Annual Reports 44-45,” 166.

<sup>66</sup> Princeton University, “Annual Reports 43-44,” 198.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 165.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Thedenvereye, “Church of the Risen Christ,” <http://www.thedenvereye.com/church-of-the-risen-christ/>.

premium...The long-postponed construction needs of the nation can no longer be denied.”<sup>70</sup>

By the time that John Linley was thirty years old, he was well educated, and due to his family’s well-placed business interest, on his way to a successful career as an architect in Anderson. While time would show his leaning to a more modern style of architecture, his training had been based on the what he later called the “ageless principles which were basic in all good architecture.” The four main principles for Linley were that the building should 1) relate to its site and surroundings 2) be guided by and express the materials and methods of construction 3) guided by its function and 4) the form must be guided by the climate of the area.<sup>71</sup> These ideals Linley would appropriate not only to his own designs but also to the historic architecture he would later study. These observations, insight and training prepared him well not only for the architect, but also the architectural historian he would become.

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<sup>70</sup> Princeton University, “Annual Reports 44-45,” 164.

<sup>71</sup> John Linley, *Basics of Architectural Design Part 1*, 3, 1985, Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 2:42.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE MODERN ARCHITECT

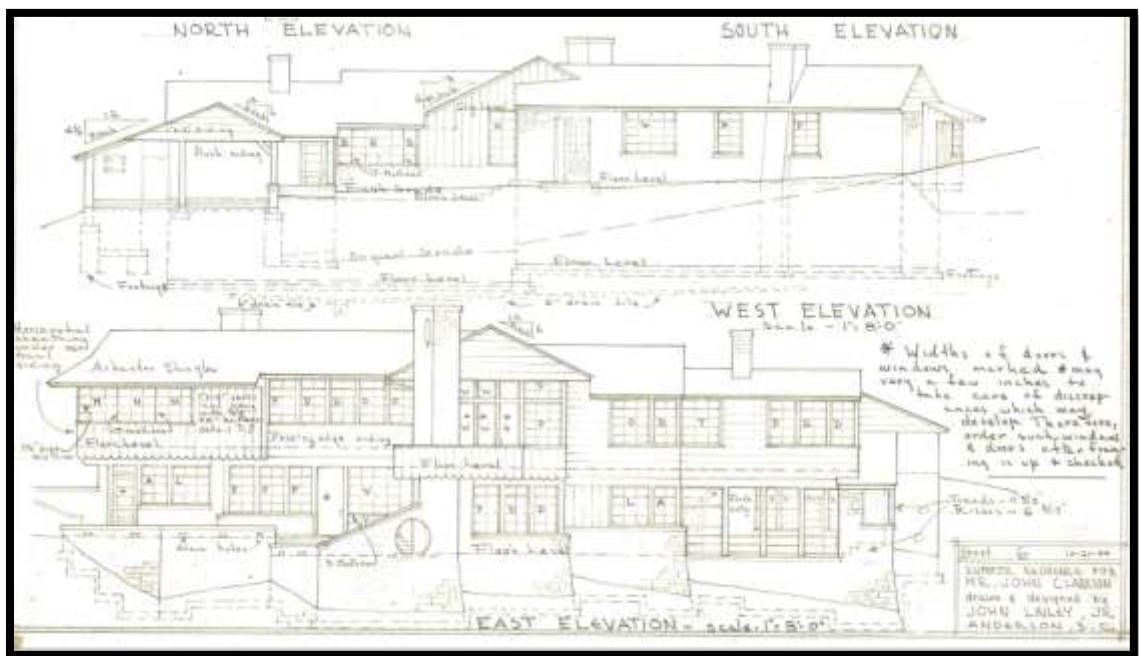
Returning to Anderson must have required some adjustment for Linley—particularly his vision for architectural design. At Princeton Linley was challenged to create something more than the standard simplistic spec houses commonly found in Anderson at the time. Harlan McClure, architect, and later Dean of Clemson College of Architecture, said that he had been impressed with Linley’s “fortitude and determination to practice architecture in an objective and contemporary manner when that was not easy in Anderson, South Carolina.”<sup>72</sup> Even before his return to Anderson, Linley had done some design work for local residents.

Among the files discovered in the College of Environment and Design Archive are 17 sheets of drawings for the “Summer Residence for John Clarkston” dated October 1944. Clarkston was an attorney in Newberry, South Carolina. The plan was for a four-bedroom single-story house with a lower level that contained a dining room, playroom, kitchen, maids’ quarters, and access to the lower patio area. The plans called for traditional doors, stonework on the stairs and linoleum floors. It is unknown if the plan was ever constructed. The elevation was a cross-gabled ranch design composed of brick, vertical and horizontal siding, and large multi-pane picture windows,

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<sup>72</sup> Harlan McClure to Bob Nicholls, November 7, 1973, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

particularly across the rear elevation, which likely took in views of a lake or mountain feature. While the plans are exacting in their details, Linley never listed the project on any of his later lists of references. Efforts to confirm its construction have not been successful.



*Figure 8: One of John Linley, Jr's early architectural drawings for a "Summer Residence" for the Clarkson family. The plan begins to show variation from his early work in Anderson, likely due to a broader influence from his studies at Princeton. Note the use of the moon gate in the wall on the East elevation. (UGA, CED Archives, Linley Collection)*

While Linley was still minimally connected to projects while away from Anderson, at his return, he took back his place in his father's business as the company's lead architect.<sup>73</sup> By the late 1940s, the Home Realty Company had grown to include the development of several residential neighborhoods, a

<sup>73</sup> George Sands Jr., Interview, October 2022; Lamar Bailes, Linley Nephew Interview, February 2023.

lumber company and the addition of George Sands, Sr., the husband of Linley's sister, as head of construction for the company.<sup>74</sup> The College of Environment and Design Archive collection of Linley's flat files are filled with sketches for numerous proposed houses in Anderson, most of the minimal traditional style. Occasionally there are detailed drawings for a mantle, door, or particular area, but most are simple plans that would have sufficed for basic construction drawings. There are also some plans for landscapes, including one for "Terraces and Fountains of Dr. John Rainey, 1945." This is the first evidence of Linley's work in landscape design, but later drawings often include landscape proposals and detailed plans incorporating the topography and the landscape as part of the entire design.<sup>75</sup> Later in his unpublished *Basics of Architectural Design*, Linley devotes an entire chapter to the importance of the buildings design in relation to the site's surroundings. In a homage to Frank Lloyd Wright he states: "In the best of Frank Lloyd Wright's work, the unity of building and site is so harmonious that it is difficult to imagine one without the other."<sup>76</sup>

There are assorted five and seven room floor plan options. These allowed for basic house construction, which could be built upon any of the lots in the new developments being created by the Home Realty Construction Company. The design plans for Ed Hill, dated July 1946, appear to be Linley's first foray into the design for a client that shows the process, the changes to

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<sup>74</sup> George Sands Interview.

<sup>75</sup> John Linley, Landscape Plans, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>76</sup> John Linley, *Basic of Architecture Design Part 1*, 1985, 7, John Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 2:42.

the plan, and the details of the final plans, which would be altered greatly from Linley's original vision. What Linley originally proposed was a board and batten-sided two-story house with covered porches. The final plans reveal more of an English Tudor style home with a low stone wall and very formal façade—two gabled dormers on the steeply pitched roof, a prominent chimney on the front, and multi-paned picture windows. The rear elevation does show more of what Linley's original plan had been with screened porches, flush siding under the porch, and board and batten on the rear upper story.<sup>77</sup> The changes show Linley's efforts to compromise, while still bringing new design ideas to Anderson. He would soon have the opportunity to design with unrestricted creativity for a client he knew well.

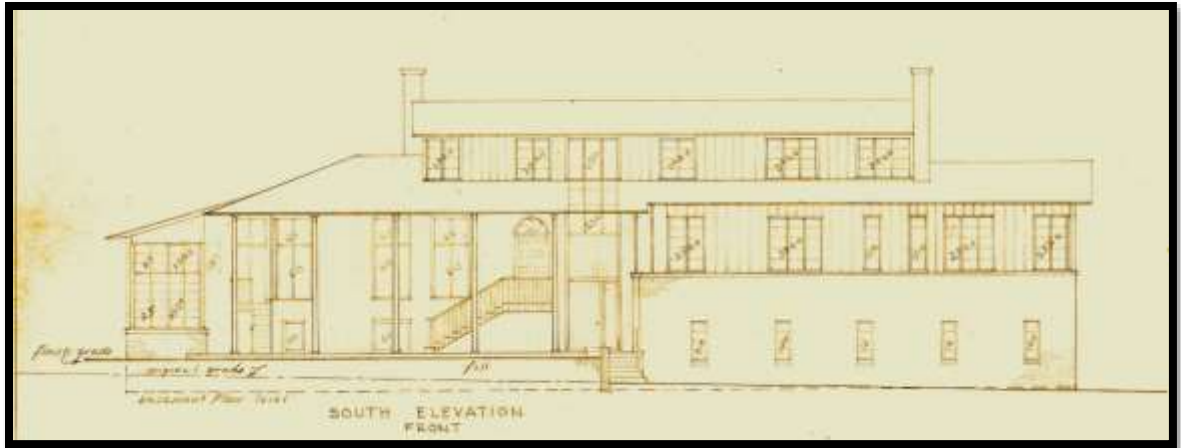
### Moultrie Square

Just a little more than a year after his graduation from Princeton, he would be given free rein in the design of a new home for John Linley, Sr., in his new residential development on Moultrie Square in Anderson. By December 1946, the first set of plans for apartment and residence revealed a two-story, 4-bedroom house with approximately 3,500 square feet over a fully finished raised basement that included a three-car garage and one-bedroom apartment. The plans, which included arched garage doors on the basement, are very similar to the original plans he had executed for the Hill residence in the summer of 1946.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> John Linley "Plans for Ed Hill House," July 10, 1946 and February 24, 1947, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.



*Figure 9: The John Linley, Sr. home on Moultrie Square designed in 1947, by John Linley, Jr. (UGA, Linley Collection, CED Archives).*

The style, more than any of the other homes Linley had designed in Anderson up to that point, reflects the training and education he received at Princeton. The design shows his skill beyond just a spec house designed for the Home Realty Company. While there are elements of Frank Lloyd Wright and his Prairie style, it reflects more of what might be considered Regionalism, which was a softer, gentler form of modernism that uses the values and nuances of local tradition. Linley's designs might be called Southern Regionalism.<sup>79</sup> While there are vertical elements, the house has a horizontal form that seems to stretch out. In perhaps an acknowledgment of his father's Charleston roots, there is a two-story porch with white, slender pole columns and an elevated stairway that is reminiscent of the piazza so common in the Charleston Single House. The front elevation of the house has a low sloped roof over a porch. The exterior finishes are a mixture of board

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<sup>79</sup> Mark Reinberger, Architectural Historian and Colleague of Linley, Interview, January 2023.

and batten siding, stucco and brick. The steps with a decorative handrail lead up from the ground level porch to the main floor through a fan-lighted, almost Federal inspired doorway. The arch of the door is repeated in the attic venting found on the chimney of the house. The reception room and living room are separated by a large center fireplace, while the dining room looks out onto the rear of the property, again in a room surrounded by windows and flooded with natural light. The house also features the corner window, that Wright had begun using in the 1920s to create more expansive views.<sup>80</sup> The corner window would show up in most of Linley's Anderson designs.



*Figure 10: The John Linley, Sr. home on Moultrie Square as seen in October 2022. (Newby)*

Today the house retains many of the same design elements that were part of the original construction, as well as the changes made later in 1958 under Linley's direction, following the death of his father. Most notable is the

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<sup>80</sup> Mark Reinberger Interview, January 2023.

addition of the brick wall in front, which conceals much of what had once been a front garden area and wisteria covered arbor from the street. This is a design idea that Linley would repeat in some variation in his own Athens residence two decades later. The emergence of new business and growth in Anderson following World War II, would open up far more opportunity for Linley to design the homes and commercial buildings he had long envisioned.

### Linley and Watkins

As early as 1949, in the design plans for a residence for Dr. L.D. Huff, John Linley appears to have taken on a design partner—David P. Watkins. Like Linley, Watkins was a native of Anderson, had attended Clemson College, where he had been a student of Linley's, and had completed his architectural degree before returning to Anderson.<sup>81</sup> Among Linley's early drawings is a plan for a small one-bedroom home recorded as "Residence for Mr. and Mrs. D.P. Watkins." While there is no date on the plan, it likely dates to before the birth of the Watkins' son in about 1947.<sup>82</sup>

Linley first records himself as the senior partner in Linley and Watkins Architects in 1951. The two had known one another for at least a decade, and there had been some collaboration before the partnership was created. The evidence of this is a set of plans in the College of Environment and Design

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<sup>81</sup> David P. Watkins Jr., Son of David P. Watkins Sr., Partner in Linley and Watkins, Interview, January 2023.

<sup>82</sup> 1950 Census Anderson, SC.

Archive Linley Collection for the Home Realty Construction Company which attributes Watkins as having been the architect.<sup>83</sup>

In an undated five-page document in the Linley manuscript collection in the University Archives, is a list of the advantages and disadvantages to various employment options, which included work for Army Corps of Engineers that Linley notes as “already decided.” The other options included practicing alone, forming a partnership, or working within a larger firm. Linley expounds on the range of his concerns, including: the workload, personal time off, opportunities to work for a broader range of clients, sharing design ideas and creativity, and how to properly set up a partnership or as a small architectural office or a larger firm.<sup>84</sup>



*Figure 11: John Linley standing top left and David P. Watkins Sr. third from left back row, with members of the Jail Commission for Anderson County, South Carolina. (David P. Watkins, Jr.)*

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<sup>83</sup> John Linley, “Anderson,” Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>84</sup> John Linley, “Partnership Papers,” Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 1:34.



*Figure 12(upper) and Figure 13 (lower): Linley designed houses throughout much of Anderson in the neighborhoods Linley, Sr. was developing. Among those are Figure 11, on Jackson Square and Figure 12 on Moultrie Square. As of 2023 both houses are intact, with some modifications. (Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives).*

From 1951 until 1963, Linley and Watkins were one of the premier architectural firm for Anderson, South Carolina. Suddenly, Linley was no longer working under the constraints of his father's realty business, but found himself designing the county jail, doctor's offices, a downtown record store, a

school auditorium, and some of the most modern home designs that Anderson, South Carolina had seen at that time. In conversations with Anderson residents and the families of both men, it appears that Linley was the design portion of the firm and Watkins more of the engineering side. Watkins son, David Watkins, Jr. recalls that while his father was largely the draftsman, his other role was in “holding back Mr. Linley’s ideas for the more conservative population of Anderson.”<sup>85</sup> Even with the conservative restraints of Anderson, it would be the most architecturally productive time in Linley’s career.

#### Hehn Residence, Anderson, South Carolina

In 1952, John and Sibyl Hehn hired Linley and Watkins to design a home for them in the newly developed neighborhood of Hammett Acres in Anderson. John Hehn, originally from New Jersey, moved with his wife Sibyl to her hometown of Anderson. In Anderson, Hehn took over management of the Anderson Weavers Textile Mill, owned by his wife’s family.<sup>86</sup> Sibyl Hehn’s mother and father Mr. and Mrs. Ed Hill, had hired Linley to design their home in Anderson just a few years earlier. The house that Linley and Watkins designed for the Hehn’s was an approximately 3,000 square foot, three-bedroom, multi-story house, built over a partial basement. Brick construction with board and batten accents and large picture windows, the end of the house features a large projection, that overhangs a covered outdoor area,

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<sup>85</sup> David Watkins, Jr. Interview January 2023.

<sup>86</sup> Marc Hehn son of John and Sybil Hehn, Interview, January 2022.

enclosed by a curved brick wall. The interior of the house was built entirely of wormy chestnut a feature found in many of Linley's houses.<sup>87</sup>

While the original plans for the house have not been located, the completed house was well documented in professional photos that Linley kept with handwritten notes on their back. The house clearly shows the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright on the work of Linley and Watkins. The pipe columns, half gables, and board and batten over the brick lower portion, all of which Linley had used before, are nods to some of Wright's work.



*Figure 14: Residence for Mr. and Mrs. John Hehn, Hammet Acres, Anderson, South Carolina, 1952. (UGA, John Linley Collection, CED Archives).*

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

## The Children's Clinic, Anderson, South Carolina

Drs. Henry Hearn III and Colquitt Sims contracted with Linley and Watkins for the design of a new building—The Children's Clinic, a pediatric office located on North Fant Street at Highland Avenue in Anderson.<sup>88</sup> This was a complete design project for Linley and Watkins. The firm was hired to design not only the building, but the landscape plan, and even some of the decorative elements of the space. The building is a modern design with perhaps some elements of New Formalism, which was beginning to emerge about this time. New Formalism used the scaling and proportion of classically designed buildings but often included modern highly stylized colonnades and entablatures.<sup>89</sup> There is a broad roof, side gables, and deep overhanging eaves that extend well beyond the body of the building. Large picture windows, as well as clerestory windows along the side, flood the interior space with light. Inside, the clinical exam rooms line the perimeter of the building, while the center space serves as offices and reception areas. The plan incorporated a covered drive as well, using steel and reinforced concrete inverted tapered columns that create almost a colonnade. The building is a great example of an architecturally-designed modern commercial space of the period.

In the Linley files in the College of Environment and Design Archives, are multiple sheets of drawings for the mural that framed the main entrance door to the clinic. The scene depicted classic children's storybook characters, birds, bunnies, a boy jumping rope, and a girl in a swing. The figures were to

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<sup>88</sup> John Linley, "VITA," Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 2:5.

<sup>89</sup> Mark Reinberger Interview January 2023.

be cut out of ¼” plywood and painted by two local artists in Anderson, Mrs. Stewart and Mrs. Lyons.<sup>90</sup> The juxtaposition of this very pointed and linear design of the building of straight lines and walls of glass and decorative brick are suddenly broken by the colorful entryway, reminding the visitor of the building’s purpose and who it was intended to serve. The risers on the stairs are shorter to make it easier for a small child to ascend, while the colorful entryway must have served as a distraction for the dreaded trip to the doctor. It is a rare glimpse into an understanding that Linley had for the purpose beyond just the building’s design. Even though he never had children of his own, he was surrounded by nieces and nephews, and seemed to inherently understand the importance of the space and the connection it needed to have to children. It is in many ways it is similar to the work that he had already done in 1956 on the addition to the North Fant School.



*Figures 15 (left) and 16 (right): The Children’s Clinic, North Fant Street, Anderson, South Carolina. The original entrance mural as designed by Linley on the left. The building as first designed and completed by Linley and Watkins, on the right, before later alterations. (Linley Manuscript Collection, UGA)*

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<sup>90</sup> John Linley, “Hern and Sims Building,” Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.



*Figures 17 (left) and 18 (right): The Children's Clinic, North Fant Street, Anderson, South Carolina, in October 2022. The current building reflects changes made during renovations. (Newby).*

#### North Fant School Railing, Anderson, South Carolina

As some of the leading architects in Anderson, Linley and Watkins were often called on for community projects, including the design for the Anderson County Jail, and in 1956, the addition to the North Fant School building. There are few photographs and no plans that document the design for the North Fant School addition in the Linley Manuscript Collection in the University Archives or the College of Environment and Design Archives. What was perhaps the most interesting aspect of the design again reveals Linley's attention to detail and the intended use of the building as an elementary school. As a nod to this use, Linley and Watkins designed and patented a railing for the outside of the building that replicated the look of paperchain boys and girls locking arms.



*Figure 19: The North Fant Street School Railing, Anderson, South Carolina. Linley and Watkins applied for and were granted a patent for the design in May of 1959. (Linley Manuscript Collection, UGA)*

Designed in July of 1956, Linley and Watkins promptly applied for a patent for the design, which was issued by the United States Patent Office on May 19, 1959.<sup>91</sup> Evidence exists that Linley and Watkins attempted to offer the design for production through several catalogs and manufacturing companies with no success.<sup>92</sup> According to the patent papers, the design was shared equally between John Linley and David P. Watkins.<sup>93</sup>

#### Perry and Young Doctor's Building, Anderson, South Carolina

In 1960, Linley and Watkins were hired by Drs. Claud Perry and James R. Young, general surgeons, to design a new office building on East Greenville

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<sup>91</sup> John Linley, "Railing," Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 1:41.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

Street at Boulevard in Anderson. What Linley designed stands out today, on one of Anderson's most heavily traveled streets, as an excellent example of its time. The building reflects Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian style. In November 1953, Wright described the Usonian house for an exhibition at the Guggenheim in New York as his having "...took hold of the house as it was, took off the attic and the porch, pulled out the basement, and made a single spacious, harmonious unit...with appropriate entry conveniences...the whole place is flooded with sunlight."<sup>94</sup> Linley and Watkin's design for the office reflects these ideas.

The building is approximately 6,000 square feet of brick construction, a flat roofed design with wide eaves. It sits low to the ground, with a long horizontal form. Large banks of picture windows look out onto the large lot.



*Figure 20: The Young and Perry Doctors Building in Anderson, designed by Linley and Watkins and completed in 1960. The design uses the Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian influence in a commercial building (Newby).*

Linley and Watkins' design also incorporates the use of the corner window, again allowing for more expansive views. There are elements of other Linley

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<sup>94</sup> Frank Lloyd Wright, *The Usonian House*, Guggenheim Museum, November 12, 1963.

buildings also seen in the design, including the use of pipe columns, the brick lattice screens, and the clerestory windows. The style is unusual for a commercial building, with Wright intending the style for residential design.

The interior remains almost unchanged from Linley and Watkins original design. The original flagstone floor is found throughout as well as the paneled walls, reception areas and half brick walls with glass partitions above. The clerestory windows and pierced brick walls allow natural light to flood the clinical areas and still offer privacy. The waiting room takes full advantage of the corner windows. The exterior walls are of a modern brick while the interior spaces use a tumbled brick which merges the modern design of the building with aesthetics giving nod to the area's Southern heritage.

This is only a small sampling of the more than fifty documented buildings in Anderson which are attributed to Linley and Watkins. The 1950s and early 1960s would be a very creative time in Linley's life. Those who remember him in Anderson recall his many social activities, the clubs, friends and visiting guests such as architect, engineer and philosopher Buckminster Fuller, who he brought to a meeting of the Moultrie Squares.<sup>95</sup> He had managed during that time, to separate himself from some of the standard design work of his father's company and establish himself as a more modern architect. Together with engineer David Watkins, they created and marketed patented products and estimation books for contractors. They helped shape the look of Anderson in many ways, from suburban neighborhoods to school

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<sup>95</sup> Katie Link, Facebook Post, North Fant School Group, January, 2023. Research confirms that Fuller was in the area working on the design for a park in Greenville, South Carolina.

buildings, residential, and commercial design. It is almost impossible to drive through any neighborhood in Anderson developed between 1940 and 1960 and not spot a Linley or Linley and Watkins designed home. While this had been a prolific time in the careers of both Linley and Watkins, David Watkins desired more stability for his growing family. Watkins desire for more financial stability and the death of John Linley Sr., offered John Linley Jr., perhaps his first opportunity to look at a life beyond Anderson.<sup>96</sup>



*Figure 21: John W. Linley Jr. standing behind the table with fellow members of the Anderson County Historical Society in 1956. (Anderson County Museum).*

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<sup>96</sup> George Sands Interview October 2022; David P. Watkins Jr. Interview, January 2023.

In 1957, John Linley, Sr. passed away, leaving his only son as the executor of the estate. It was a large estate that consisted not only of personal property and real estate, but of business investments that included commercial real estate, and a number of unsold lots in developments throughout Anderson. It would take John Linley, Jr. several years to settle the estate and management of the trust, that he would continue to manage for another two decades.<sup>97</sup> As Linley's nephew recalled, his uncle had finally been "set free." For his entire life, Linley, Jr. had felt a strong obligation and sense of responsibility to return to Anderson, as the only son to help manage his father's business. While family, which remained important to Linley all his life, was still there, he was finally able to turn his attention away from Anderson, perhaps for the first time in his life.<sup>98</sup>

This had been a transformational time in Linley's life. After his return to Anderson from his studies at Princeton, he was no longer relegated to the conservative Anderson subdivision architecture. He was being hired by private clients based on his own merits. In this time, Linley's creativity was allowed to flourish. In those suburban neighborhoods around Anderson, are examples of both Linley's creative flair for modern design as well as his appreciation for a more traditional approach to architecture. They remain a testament to his understanding of modern architecture as well as his

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<sup>97</sup> John Linley, "John Linley Sr. Estate Papers," John Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 2:11-17.

<sup>98</sup> George Sands Jr., Interview, October, 2022.

appreciation for the classical details. In much of his work Linley managed to merge them both. One scholar wrote that Linley's work had a "...dichotomous attachment to the ornamented, rich details of the past and the clean lines of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century..."<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Pratt Cassity, *A Southern Gentleman's Vision of Design: John Linley, AIA*, University of Georgia, 1998.

## CHAPTER 4

### A LIFE OF HIS OWN

Following the death of his father in 1957 until sometime in early 1963, John Linley would spend much of his time handling his father's vast estate and managing the remaining projects for Linley and Watkins.<sup>100</sup> The partnership continued to take on a number of commissions, including the Young and Perry Doctors Building, The Tri-County Technical Education Center, and a few remodeling jobs for close family friends.<sup>101</sup> David P. Watkins, Jr., whose father had been Linley's partner at Linley and Watkins, recalls that at the time, there were four sizeable architectural firms in Anderson. While Linley and Watkins had remained steady with new clients and commissions, it was not the stability that his father desired.<sup>102</sup> Sometime in the early 1960s, Watkins took a position as Buildings and Grounds Superintendent for the Anderson Board of Education. It is not known if the two had already agreed to dissolve the partnership, or in what order the events took place, but presumably it was during this time that Linley begins exploring opportunities in academia.

According to his family, Linley had long expressed an interest in becoming a college professor.<sup>103</sup> Early in his career he served as an instructor

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<sup>100</sup> Linley's papers indicate he managed portions of the estate for the remainder of his life.

<sup>101</sup> John Linley, "VITA", Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 2:5

<sup>102</sup> David P. Watkins Jr. Interview, January 2023. Among the firms that Watkins recalled in addition to Linley and Watkins were Fant and Fant, Ledbetter and Earle, and John Lambert.

<sup>103</sup> George Sands Jr., Interview, October 2022.

at Clemson College, teaching architectural courses. At the time of his father's death and the subsequent career change, because of Anderson's proximity and his close personal connections to Clemson, it was assumed by many that he would find his home in academia there. In truth, letters found in the Linley papers reveal that he had been looking at possible opportunities not only at Clemson, but also Georgia Tech and The University of Georgia.<sup>104</sup> In 1973, Paul M. Heffernan, then Director of the School of Architecture at Georgia Tech, recalled in a letter that it was he who had recommended Linley to Hubert Owens, then head of the landscape architecture program at The University of Georgia. Heffernan said that budgetary restrictions at Georgia Tech, "at the time prevented our considering him as a faculty candidate."<sup>105</sup>



*Figure 22: John W. Linley Jr. circa 1960. Just a few years before joining the faculty at The University of Georgia. (John Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives).*

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<sup>104</sup> "Letters of Recommendation," John Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>105</sup> Heffernan to Robert P. Nicholls, November 15, 1973. Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

## Landscape Architecture and The University of Georgia

In 1928, under the direction of Hubert Bond Owens, a recent University of Georgia graduate, the Landscape Architecture program was developed. For the first nine years of the program's history, Owens served as its only professor.<sup>106</sup> In the beginning, Owens continued his own education as the program expanded under the umbrella of the College of Agriculture.<sup>107</sup> For more than forty years, Owens led the program as it moved from the College of Agriculture to College of Arts and Sciences, then back to Agriculture until finally becoming its own school in 1969, with Owens named as the first dean of the School of Environmental Design, which in 2002 became the College of Environment and Design.<sup>108</sup>

When examining the landscape architecture program during the early 1960s, there is a substantial shift in the types of hires that were being made, and in the quality of the program. A review of university catalogs reveals a revolving door of assistant professors and numerous "Temporary Assistant Professors" teaching within the program; most of those only taught for a year or two.<sup>109</sup> In the mid-1960s, as an interest in environmental awareness emerges, the program, which had up to that point largely focused on garden design, begins to shift. With the founding of the School of Environmental

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<sup>106</sup> Hubert Bond Owens, The Cultural Landscape Foundation, [Hubert Bond Owens | The Cultural Landscape Foundation \(tclf.org\)](https://www.tclf.org/hubert-bond-owens).

<sup>107</sup> "Larger Quarters Needed to House Added Students," UGA Red and Black, October 18, 1929, 5.

<sup>108</sup> Hubert Bond Owens, The Cultural Landscape Foundation, [Hubert Bond Owens | The Cultural Landscape Foundation \(tclf.org\)](https://www.tclf.org/hubert-bond-owens).

<sup>109</sup> University of Georgia Catalogs, <https://archive.org/details/universityofgeorgia>.

Design, Owens envisioned: “an opportunity to develop greater breadth and depth in the landscape architecture program...offering concentrations in the graduate program in Urban Design, Recreational Planning, City and Regional Planning and Historic Preservation.”<sup>110</sup> Linley’s career shift aligned well with not only what was happening at the University of Georgia, but also a greater interest in historic architecture, regional planning and historic preservation that would impact the trajectory of his career, and for what he would most be remembered.

On July 6, 1963, Linley accepted a position from Hubert Owens, Head of the Landscape Architecture Department at The University of Georgia as an Assistant Professor with a salary of \$10,000.00 per year.<sup>111</sup> Over the next several weeks, there would be a number of letters exchanged coordinating housing arrangements, scheduled meetings, and understanding “the full responsibilities that will be delegated to you as a member of the staff of this department.”<sup>112</sup> In that same time, Linley was wrapping up his affairs in Anderson and making preparations for the move to Athens. The decision to go to Athens had surprised many, including Linley’s family. George Sands, Jr., remembers asking his uncle why he had made the decision of Athens over Clemson and recalled that Linley later told him, “I just wanted to do something different.”<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> “Snapshots 50 Years College of Environment and Design.” University of Georgia, [snapshots-circlegallery/exhibit-CED50YEARS-September2019/optimized.pdf \(uga.edu\)](https://www.uga.edu/snapshots-circlegallery/exhibit-CED50YEARS-September2019/optimized.pdf) .

<sup>111</sup> Owens to Linley, July 6, 1963, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> George Sands, Jr., Interview, October, 2022.

## Something Different

Clemson would have offered Linley the comfort of familiarity. He had attended school and later lectured there. Less than 20 miles from Anderson, aside from a change in career, his life might have gone relatively unchanged. Linley's family recalls that he was already spending nearly every weekend at the Clemson House.<sup>114</sup> Built in 1950, the Clemson House was a hotel with a restaurant and ballroom that hosted faculty and the community for dance clubs and other social gatherings.<sup>115</sup> Regardless of why Linley chose Athens over Clemson, it was a move he quickly embraced and set about building a life of his own in Athens.

The year 1963 for Athens, Georgia, like much of the country, was a time of great change. There were radical changes in human rights, the threat of a war with Vietnam was emerging, and much of the country was on the verge of a sexual revolution. The year that Linley arrived in Athens was the same year that Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter graduated from The University of Georgia, two years after their court ordered admission desegregated the university.<sup>116</sup> It was also the same year Louise McBee arrived on campus as the Dean of Women. The *Red and Black* from the week of Linley's first week are filled with editorials and articles related to McBee's appointment and the hope that she would bring liberation to rules regarding coeds enrolled at the university.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> George Sands Interview, October, 2022.

<sup>115</sup> Polly Goss, "History of the Clemson House- Creative Inquiry," Accessed March 26, 2023, <https://ci.clemson.edu/blogs/blog/2019/11/history-of-the-clemson-house/>.

<sup>116</sup> Larry Jones, "Holmes Bemoans Uncordiality Here" *Red and Black*, March 21, 1963, 4.

<sup>117</sup> Pat Taylor, "McBee Takes Office," *Red and Black*, August 1, 1963, 1.

At 47, Linley was- aside from Hubert Owens- the oldest faculty member of the Landscape Architecture program.<sup>118</sup> He was also the only bachelor among the group. Shortly after Linley accepted the position, Owens wrote to him inquiring about Linley's desire for a roommate and told Linley he was the only "unattached man" in the program.<sup>119</sup> A few days later, Linley replied that he had lived by himself for so long, he had become "set in my ways..."<sup>120</sup> In several interviews, friends and family participants recalled that Linley had remarked that growing up with seven sisters had been enough for him to realize he never wanted to be married.<sup>121</sup> Linley would remain a bachelor for the rest of his life. Linley never wrote or commented on that choice, but much like his decision to attend Princeton, and later to move to Athens, it was likely a deliberate and purposeful choice he made. By the end of August, Linley, the perpetual bachelor, had moved into an apartment on Milledge Avenue in Athens.<sup>122</sup>

In 1963, the Landscape Architecture program was moving from the house in the Founders Memorial Garden to Denmark Hall, and Linley was tasked with overseeing the removal of the dining "Co-Op" that had occupied the basement of the building since the early 1950s, as well as redesigning

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<sup>118</sup> A review of the UGA Catalog from 1963, and comparison of obituary and census records for faculty.

<sup>119</sup> Owens to Linley, July 22, 1963, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>120</sup> Linley to Owens, July 25, 1963, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>121</sup> Interviews with George Sands, Alan Stovall and Robert Nicholls all report the same story of Linley.

<sup>122</sup> John Linley "Certificate and Vaccination," Linley Papers, University of Georgia, University Archives, 1:10

some spaces to accommodate a dark room in the basement.<sup>123</sup> It is impossible to tell exactly what courses Linley taught in that first year at the university, since he does not appear in the university catalog for 1963-64. Based on the curriculum and absences in later staff listings, it appears that Linley's arrival in Athens was to replace David Dobereiner, an assistant professor and architect who had been teaching in the program.<sup>124</sup> The 1964-65 catalog lists Linley as teaching; History of Architecture, Landscape Design Studio, Advanced Landscape Design Studio, and City Planning. Dean Robert P. Nicholls recalled that during those early years in the program, when both he and Linley were teaching, that "part of the curriculum included three distinct courses in architecture. The concept was that to be successful, the landscape architect ought to know how an architect worked and how an architect thinks..."<sup>125</sup> These courses, with some variation, would remain the bulk of Linley's annual course load for the remainder of his career.<sup>126</sup>

### Professor Linley

Among Linley's papers in the University Archives are copies of syllabi for the many courses he taught. In the College of Environment and Design's archives, there are not only extensive copies of the syllabi, but also class rosters, Linley's typed lecture notes, often with additions or subtractions handwritten on them, questions he might pose to the class for discussion, and

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<sup>123</sup> Owens to Linley, August 16, 1963. Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>124</sup> University of Georgia Catalog, 1963-64, <https://archive.org/details/universityofgeorgia>.

<sup>125</sup> Robert P. Nicholls Interview, October 2022.

<sup>126</sup> University of Georgia Catalog, 1964-65, <https://archive.org/details/universityofgeorgia>.

references to the readings which were to accompany each class. These all offer a glimpse, not only into what was being taught at the university at the time, but also some of Linley's own ideas about architecture, that no doubt, found their way into his class lectures.<sup>127</sup>

There is evidence in his teaching materials, not only of his particular interest, but also of how those interests shaped his teaching. In Linley's course, "History and Theory of Architecture," he began the course with basic structural systems and then moved directly into Modern Organic Architecture. Twenty percent of the course, more than any other single period in architectural history, was devoted to modern architecture. Once Modern and Post-Modern Architecture were covered, the course material then shifted back to Prehistoric, Primitive, and Indigenous, then progressing in chronological order.<sup>128</sup> This same approach is more clearly outlined and reasoned in the "Teaching Manual: School of Environmental Design, University of Georgia," which explains: "Chronological order of Western Architecture is followed with one major exception. Modern architecture is taught first, concurrently with indigenous and primitive architecture." It goes on to explain in detail the reasons for this approach, which includes the perception that students are more interested in modern architecture, which sustains the interest. It further explains that if interruptions cause an inadequacy in the lecture material, it will not be within the area of modern

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<sup>127</sup> John Linley, "Class Notes," Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>128</sup> John Linley, "LAR 373 History of Architecture Course Outline" Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 12:11.

design. References are made to Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier and the term “modern organic architecture.”<sup>129</sup> While this might have been an approach sometimes talked about, there is indication that this was an approach largely based on and driven by Linley’s love of Modern Organic Architecture.<sup>130</sup>

In other courses, Linley describes organic architecture, a popular approach advocated by Frank Lloyd Wright. Where the “solution evolves naturally from demands of function, circulation, site, climate, structure etc.”<sup>131</sup> The course description for the Architectural Design Studio explains that students would not have the opportunity to “express themselves.” Instead, Linley believed that first, the fundamentals must be mastered. “The objective is to learn the basic principles of sound architectural design, which will be considered more important than so-called originality or novelty.”<sup>132</sup> Advanced Architectural Design would offer the student the opportunity for more design, but avoid following “the too common practice of decorator type architects who adapt ideas worked out by genuine creative designers and form these into a stylistic collage.”<sup>133</sup>

Those fortunate enough to have sat in Linley’s classes recall him as a methodical teacher with his own reasons and rationale. Julian Adams, one of Linley’s students, remembers that Linley gave him “an incredible foundation

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<sup>129</sup> “Teaching Manual School of Environmental Design,” UGA, 1970, revised 1972, 14, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>130</sup> Mark Reinberger, Interview, January 2023.

<sup>131</sup> “Teaching Manual,” 36.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 39.

in architecture... It gave us all the tools. The basis of all of those tools is knowing what you are looking at, a time period, a style, or material, a climate adaptation...he did all of that.”<sup>134</sup> In a letter recommending Linley for promotion in 1973, another student wrote that “if teaching effectiveness is measured by your students ability to use the material you taught in a practical situation, then you are the most effective teacher I have ever had.”<sup>135</sup>

While Professor Linley is remembered with warm regard and his gentle nature, he was also firm in his principles and his standards. In a letter written for his promotion in 1973, Kirk Stone, Professor of Behavioral Research at The University of Georgia, wrote:

“It has amazed me how much John accomplishes. And with such humility. A soft-spoken word or question I have seen nudge a student or colleague to a new thought or line of action...He persuades gently rather than hammers loudly, sets an example by quietly doing and without boasting, he deals with people in humane and charitable ways. But for all his gentlemanly ways he is one by which shoddy work cannot be slipped.”<sup>136</sup>

This quote calls to mind a story shared by emeritus professor Allen Stovall. Stovall and Linley shared an office on campus for several years. There was a favored student of both Linley and Stovall, one who would go on to his own accomplished career in academia, who turned in a project to Linley just before the Christmas break. The high achieving student was embarrassed when he received a “B” on the assignment and set about to restore his honorable grade. The following January he returned with an updated project which delighted

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<sup>134</sup> Julian Adams Interview, October 2022.

<sup>135</sup> Jon M. Davis to John Linley, November 7, 1973, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>136</sup> Kirk Stone to Nicholls, Letters of Recommendation, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

Linley in its quality and completeness. However, unwavering, Linley refused to change the grade and advised the young aspiring Landscape Architect that if he had produced that quality before, he would have received the “A” he had sought.<sup>137</sup>

In 1967, Linley was promoted to Associate Professor. Later, Hubert Owens, while Dean of the School of Environmental Design, first attempted to have Linley promoted to full Professor in 1973, the year before Owens’ retirement.<sup>138</sup> Despite the numerous letters of recommendation and the recent publication of Linley’s first book, the promotion was denied. The following year, newly appointed Dean Robert Nicholls recommended the promotion again. Nicholls explained in an interview with this author the difficult process of academic advancement in University system, where the School of Environmental Design faculty credentials were based on ‘creative’ work on projects, not published works as was common in most colleges across campus. As such, professional recognition of creative work was a system that most other departments did not understand. It was Nicholls who pushed for Linley’s promotion advocating for a better understanding of the “art” of landscape design, which included design and planning of cities, highways, parkways, campuses, national parks, historic sites, community developments, and private residences.<sup>139</sup> Linley was promoted to Full Professor in 1973. He was one of three architects serving the instructional staff of the school, and

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<sup>137</sup> Allen Stovall Interview, October 2022.

<sup>138</sup> “Recommendation for Promotion” November 15, 1973, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid. 2.

the senior staff member in charge of architectural courses. In addition to the work he did within the School of Environmental Design, in that nine-year period he had already begun to leave an impressionable mark on the city of Athens.

### The Historic Preservation Movement in Athens

Linley's arrival in Athens coincided with an uprising in the preservation movement nationally and in Athens. The late 1950s and early 1960s brought the demolition of numerous significant homes along both Prince and Milledge avenues. In 1959, just a few years before Linley's arrival in Athens, the Athens Historical Society and The Society of the Preservation of Old Athens had both been formed in response to the demolition of several historic structures in Athens. However, despite some early successes, which included saving the magnolia trees along Milledge Avenue where The Varsity was built, by the mid-1960s, interest in the Society for the Preservation of Old Athens had waned. More demolition and the start of Urban Renewal Project #51 led a small, organized group to try and save historic structures in the area; this would eventually lead to the formation of the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation in 1967.<sup>140</sup>

The formation of the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation followed a pattern that was happening across Georgia, beginning with the establishment of the Historic Savannah Foundation in 1955. Augusta, Macon, and Columbus, as well as numerous other smaller cities, were all organizing local

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<sup>140</sup> John Waters, "History of Athens Clarke Heritage Foundation.  
<https://www.athenswelcomecenter.com/aboutus> .

preservation responses to threats to local historic houses or landmarks. What happened in Georgia followed much of the same movement that happened across the country in the 1950s and 60s, that ultimately led to the federal Historic Preservation Act of 1966.<sup>141</sup>

While historic preservation had been important for specialized groups and certain communities in the United State dating back to the 1850's, it was not until the years following World War II that the idea became more of a national movement. Urban renewal was sweeping the country to replace outdated structures in cities with new, more modern buildings while using this renewal to eradicate entire neighborhoods considered less desirable at the time. In 1965, President L.B. Johnson authorized a special committee to report on historic preservation in the country. That report discovered that of the 12,000 buildings documented by the Historic American Buildings Survey thirty years prior, more than half had either been demolished or were no longer able to be saved.<sup>142</sup> The following year, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 was passed, that required individual states to establish an office of historic preservation in order to receive federal funds and take responsibility for documenting their own historic places. The bill also created the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>143</sup> While it would take years for many of the programs to take effect and have a visible impact on

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<sup>141</sup> Elizabeth A. Lyon, "From Landmarks to Community: The History of Georgia's Historic Preservation Movement," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Spring 1999, Vol 83, No. 1, 78-80.

<sup>142</sup> National Park Service, Historic Preservation, "National Historic Preservation Act," Accessed March 26, 2023, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/national-historic-preservation-act.htm>.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid. 80.

communities, places like Athens, having already begun to mobilize with zoning laws and preservation organizations, seized the moment to begin in earnest to save the historic buildings and neighborhoods they felt were threatened.

### Linley and Athens Historic Preservation

Linley was, no doubt, aware of what was going on in Athens and around the country. His training as an architect, and his understanding of historic structures, would have made him an asset to early preservation movement in Athens. In 1965, Linley was hired by a local group that does not appear directly related to any specific organization, to inspect four of the houses in Urban Renewal #51 in Athens. This would be Linley's first foray into community work, and the earliest glimpse of his ideas about preservation and adaptive reuse.<sup>144</sup>

Urban Renewal Project #51 included an area that was bounded roughly by the Seaboard Railroad, the Southern Railroad, Hancock Street and the Oconee River.<sup>145</sup> The \$5.5-million-dollar project included more than 310 parcels and 350 structures. This project threatened a number of historic structures in Athens, including the Church-Waddell-Brumby House, Athens City Hall, and a large African-American neighborhood known as "Licksillet."<sup>146</sup> The *Athens Daily News* proclaimed "If progress can be

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<sup>144</sup> John Linley, "Urban Renewal," John Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 1:65.

<sup>145</sup> Frances Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens and Clarke County*, Athens, The University of Georgia Press, 1992, 211.

<sup>146</sup> Frances Thomas, *Historic Athens and Clarke County*, 213.

measured in what is torn down, then Athens ambitious urban renewal program is well on its way to complete success.”<sup>147</sup>

In his report to the group dated July 16, 1966, Linley details his inspections of the four houses and makes notes and recommendations on each. The recommendations include things such as “...fine woodwork and definitely worthy of restoration,” “this is a sound house, not exciting, but with good simple lines,” “House appears to be in an advanced state of decay...could be restored to a charming house, but at considerable expense.” It is most telling that Linley was keenly aware of the project’s intent, but also the cost



*Figures 23 (left) and 24 (right): Left, the Church-Waddell-Brumby House and right the Anson (Hoyt) House both were in the Athens Urban Renewal Area #51 and were part of a study completed by Linley in 1966, for what would become Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation. Both buildings were moved during the project. (Linley Owens Photo Collection)*

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<sup>147</sup> *Athens Daily News*, Feb 26, 1967.



*Figures 25 (left) and 26 (right): Two of the four properties surveyed by Linley in the Athens Urban Renewal Area #51; both were demolished. (Athens City Papers, Hargrett Library)*

associated with saving these houses. In offering suggestions, he follows with recommendations that include “Cost of properly restoring and of installing suitable modern equipment and fittings would probably equal or exceed the cost of a new house...” In another description, while referring to the Church-Waddell-Brumby House, he suggests, “This house is the only one listed herein which would be adaptable to use as an office building/museum.” In his conclusion, he deemed in his “offhand opinion,” that all of the houses, aside from Brumby, were too domestic in character for conversion to office type space.<sup>148</sup> Linley’s final report to the group ultimately concluded the Church-Waddell-Brumby House as the only one viable for the plan the group envisioned. In closing, he did offer the suggestion that the other houses “might well be moved to another site and form the nucleus for a development which could consist of such restored houses...as a means of saving many more

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<sup>148</sup> John Linley, “Athens Urban Renewal,” John Linley Papers, University of Georgia Archives, 1:65.

which would otherwise be destroyed...”<sup>149</sup> Two of the four houses would be saved in the coming years, although both moved from their original sites and adapted to serve new purposes, one, as an office and welcome center, and the other as a hotel and restaurant, the center of a new historic development known as “The Foundry”. The work evaluating historic structures in Urban Renewal #51 was Linley’s first documented effort of historic preservation in Athens and adaptive reuse. That work coincides almost precisely with his own efforts at assessing and rehabilitating his own house.

### 530 Pulaski Street

During his first few years in Athens, Linley lived in several places before settling at 530 Pulaski Street, for which he is so well known. He first took an apartment at what was then called Colonial Apartments at 480 South Milledge Avenue.<sup>150</sup> Later he lived in a “wonderful studio apartment” in the Cobbham neighborhood that had originally been the artist studio of Lucy Mae Stanton.<sup>151</sup> By 1966, Linley was yet again in search of a home. It is unclear what led him to Pulaski Street. The neighborhood was not a typical one where professors took up residence. One local recalled that it was a depressed area, filled with mill houses and not an area that anyone, including herself, would have ventured into in 1960s Athens.<sup>152</sup> But there, in the summer of 1966, Linley began a project that would not only shape much of his legacy, but also change the look for an entire neighborhood. Peggy Galis recalls one day in the

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> John Linley, “Certificate and Vaccination,” Linley Papers, University of Georgia, University Archives, 1:10.

<sup>151</sup> Robert Nicholls Interview, November, 2022.

<sup>152</sup> Charlotte Thomas Marshall Interview, January 2023.

summer of 1966, Hubert Owens picked her up and said, “let me take you to Pulaski Street, to show you what your friend John Linley has bought.” She recalls that the houses seemed to be up on stilts, the area was seedy, and it was hard to imagine what potential Linley had seen in this neighborhood.<sup>153</sup>



*Figures 27 (left) and 28(right): Left, 530 Pulaski, Athens Ga, about the time Linley purchased the property in 1966. Right: 530 Pulaski in about 1970, after Linley’s extensive renovations to the property, including the addition of the block wall in front creating a private courtyard area. (Linley-Owens Photograph Collection, Owens Library, UGA).*

The neighborhood had originally housed a diverse group of residents that included clerks, craftsmen, and mill workers. The houses were mostly small single-story homes built sometime around 1900, simplistic in design, little to no ornamentation, situated right on the street or on a steep embankment well above the street. By the 1960s, Linley himself considered the area blighted, but unlike those who had never ventured down Pulaski Street, he saw potential there. Situated within a half mile of the center of downtown, the house was an easy commute on bike or on foot from downtown or the North Campus. For Linley, who biked to campus nearly

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<sup>153</sup> Peggy Galis Interview, November, 2022.

every day, it was all about location. “In the 1960s, Athens was already dealing with housing issues that were forcing people into the suburban areas surrounding downtown. Linley believed that there were others like himself who did not want to be totally reliant on a car. On Pulaski Street, he saw the potential of an affordable neighborhood, with a few houses that could be renovated, and lots that could be had cheaply. What it lacked in architectural integrity, it made up for in natural beauty and affordability.<sup>154</sup> In 1968, while writing to Cason Callaway, Jr. of Callaway Gardens, Linley noted that while the area did not have the elegant homes found in Charleston or Savannah, “...that is more than compensated for by the size and slope of the lots, and the magnificent trees which lend themselves to an even more imaginative development.”<sup>155</sup>

While the location was ideal for those more interested in urban renewal than fleeing to the suburbs, the project did offer challenges. Aside from the neighborhood, the property had a steeply sloping lot, and the house was positioned right on the sidewalk. The house was not all that remarkable, and Linley later told his nephew, “I should have just torn the house down and started over, but I really wanted to save it in the beginning.”<sup>156</sup> This would be a sentiment Linley would echo in some of his later descriptions of the neighborhood, when he described most of the houses as “not worth restoring or remodeling, and should be torn down; most, however, can be obtained at

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<sup>154</sup> “A Trend Setter,” Elaine Hayden, *Athens Banner Herald and Daily News*, March 17, 1968, 8-C.

<sup>155</sup> John Linley to Callaway June 12, 1968, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>156</sup> George Sands Jr. Interview, October 2022.

prices which would make this reasonable.”<sup>157</sup> In 1972, he demolished the neighboring house at 528 Pulaski Street when efforts to save it failed and it was deemed to be in code violation by the City of Athens.<sup>158</sup>

By the summer of 1966, Linley already had plans to update the house at 530 Pulaski for modern living. A few months ahead of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, this was a house that no one would have considered historic.<sup>159</sup> Linley took down walls and opened the floor plan. He added bathrooms and closets, a basement, and a private outdoor courtyard in front of the house shielded from the sidewalk by a wall. By creating this courtyard space Linley was repeating a design element that had already begun to appear more than a decade before in his father’s house in Anderson on Moultrie Square. It was an adaptive reuse approach to the house which took advantage of an existing structure and lot, yet made it essentially a modern home conducive to living in the 1960s. Linley likely viewed this as an example of recycling the built environment, as opposed to historic preservation. In his papers are notes regarding the historical reuse of buildings, for example “Historically, buildings and building materials have been used and reused until worn out; then the parts salvaged and again used and reused.”<sup>160</sup> Linley’s friend Robert Gamble recalled when first seeing the Pulaski Street house, it was in wretched condition, but that Linley transformed the house “to meet the

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<sup>157</sup> John Linley to Callaway, *ibid*.

<sup>158</sup> City of Athens to Linley, February 10, 1972, Linley Papers, University Archives, 1:37.

<sup>159</sup> Even with the passing of the HP Act of 1966, the focus largely remained on large, architecturally designed or historically significant houses. It would be several decades before the preservation community at large took notice of the vernacular houses of the most common residents.

<sup>160</sup> James M. Fitch, “Pine Isle Conference,” Linley Papers, University Archives, 1:61

needs of the present day. It was not the last antebellum home in Athens...” and he adapted the house to his lifestyle needs while “preserving the essential character of the house.”<sup>161</sup> [C1][C2]



*Figures 29 (left) and 30 (right): The interior of 530 Pulaski in 2022. As evidenced from the photo on left the reconfiguration of windows and the enlargement of the fireplace with exposed brick. Photo right shows the removal of the original walls in the entry, living room and new kitchen area to create a more open, modern floorplan. (Courtesy Lee Smith, 2022).*

Once the interior spaces were opened, Linley finished with plywood paneling on some walls and redwood siding for wainscoting on others. The bricks from the original double fireplace were salvaged to create an even larger one in the living room. Large windows flood the space with natural light. The ceilings were finished with rough boards laid in a geometric pattern. To complete the look, he added bamboo shades and white paper Japanese lanterns. It was not the house he would have built from scratch, but “there is something I like about rebuilding an old house,” he said, “it is fun and work both, an awful lot

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<sup>161</sup> Robert Gamble Interview, June 2022.

of work. But in the end, it is worth it.” He closed by adding “and the view is going to be wonderful.”<sup>162</sup>

### Linley’s Garden

“He was an architect in the Landscape Architecture program, with no training in landscape design and he had the most beautiful garden of anyone in the program.”<sup>163</sup> These are the words of Dean Robert Nicholls, but it was a sentiment shared by most anyone who knew Linley and his garden on Pulaski Street. Linley had first created a courtyard by building the block walls, which he described as “being higher than eye-level” to form the small space that was entered from the carport. This created an outdoor living space that also served as an entrance to the house, which could be enjoyed in favorable weather. The steeply sloping lot was terraced with steps and walkways, leading to a level lawn below. These walkways were created using cobblestones saved from street resurfacing in Athens in the 1960s. Several colleagues and former students recall Linley one day seeing the stones being tossed aside, inquired, and was told he could get as many as he wanted. The story goes that he returned to campus, canceled classes for the day, and recruited several students to help him load the stones into his car and carry them to Pulaski Street. Always one for a small car, or better still—a bicycle—it took several trips and the rest of the day, but the stones were saved, and the beautiful pathways created.

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<sup>162</sup> Hayden, “A Trend Setter”.

<sup>163</sup> Robert Nicholls Interview, November 2022.

Because the lot dropped a total of 200 feet, the lawn still felt elevated even with its placement well below the street. The shapes of the lawn, landings, and steps all followed a geometric pattern that reflected the rectilinear shape of the house itself. The garden continued to terrace down to a small stream, that Linley cleared, and exposing a rock outcropping, creating another beautiful gathering space and final destination through the garden.<sup>164</sup>



*Figure 31: Stone pathway in John Linley's garden on Pulaski Street. When Linley noticed crews removing stones from the streets in Athens, he was given permission to collect them. The story is told that Linley canceled classes and recruited students to haul the stone to his garden on Pulaski Street. (Courtesy Rinne Allen).*

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<sup>164</sup> John Linley, "The Yard of John Linley," John Linley Papers, University Archives, 2:52.

In *Gardens of Georgia*, published in 1983, Linley wrote: “As much as possible, I let climate, surroundings, existing house, drainage requirements and natural features guide me in the design...There are sitting areas, restful retreats, inspirational views, and the therapy of working in the garden.”<sup>165</sup>

Linley’s work on Pulaski Street and the beauty of his garden were gifts to his Athens community. In much the same way that John Linley Sr. had created wide curvilinear streets with parks and ponds, Linley, Jr. had envisioned what could be done to transform this forgotten area of town. As early as the 1970s, Linley advocated for the area to be included in the Model Cities program, believing that the area’s inclusion would help to promote the “beautification and environmental protection,” of the area. In 1972, Linley advocated for the widening of Pulaski Street in some areas to include parking, better sidewalks, and the planting of additional trees. When there was some opposition to the idea from city engineers, Linley wrote “As an engineer, he can only see straight streets, with an arbitrary uniform width of 30ft. which would permit parking the entire length.”<sup>166</sup> Two years later, he would go so far as to draw a plan himself showing the areas where the street might be widened. In a letter to the Mayor and City Council which included his proposed plan he wrote:

“The drawing indicated ways in which the street could be widened without losing its residential character and without encroaching on existing houses; it also suggest a way in which the landscape and tree planting programs for downtown Athens

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<sup>165</sup> William Mitchell, *Gardens of Georgia*, Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, LTD.1989, 70.

<sup>166</sup> John Linley to Lloyd Florence July 27, 1972, Linley Papers, University Archives, 1:66.

could be coordinated with a revitalization plan for the shabby areas between the central business district and the suburbs.”<sup>167</sup>

Linley was not easily deterred. He had grown up seeing the beauty of wide streets, pedestrian friendly areas, parks, and tree lined developments. When the city and other government agencies did not respond, Linley himself set about to make beautiful what he could.

When he demolished the house at 528 Pulaski, he kept what remained of the foundation and created an overlook with benches and a gravel path, allowing those who walked down Pulaski to look over into his garden. In areas where there was no sidewalk, he created one.<sup>168</sup> Once he finished his own side of the street, he turned his attention to the embankment across Pulaski, and set about to transform it as well. Shortly before his death, when he realized that he would not be in Athens to see the project completed, he asked his friend, fellow colleague, and sometimes business partner, Allen Stovall, to make sure that the city maintained the work that he had done on the embankment across from his house.<sup>169</sup>

In 1998, two years after Linley’s death, Pratt Cassity, his colleague and friend wrote: “If broadening the minds of his students was his vocation, then broadening the minds of Athenians regarding community design was his avocation...He was the tireless advocate for quality urban space and never shied away from being the sole voice for both urban revitalization and open

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<sup>167</sup> John Linley to Mayor and Council Dec 16, 1974, Linley Papers, University Archives, 1:66.

<sup>168</sup> Lee Smith Interview, November 2022.

<sup>169</sup> Allan Stovall Interview, October 2022.

space protection.”<sup>170</sup> Linley’s work on Pulaski Street left an impression on the Athens community that continues to be felt. While he was laboring away in his garden and working to improve his community in the late 1960s and 70s, he was also hard at work on one of his lasting legacies to the architectural history of Georgia.

Linley’s hire by The University of Georgia was one of several moves made by Hubert Owens in the expansion and development of the Landscape Architecture program that later led to the founding of the School of Environmental Design. The career change for Linley from that of a private architect to college professor was one that offered him the opportunity to explore the academic side of architecture. He was then able to take the principles and practices he had not only learned at Princeton but used in his own practice and teach them to a new generation.

It was a time of great change at both the University and Athens. In 1963, the historic preservation movement in Georgia and throughout much of the country was just beginning. The country was still three years away from passing the Historic Preservation Act. Early in his arrival in Athens, Linley took on an active role in the early preservation movement and renewal efforts in Athens. In his Pulaski Street home, Linley was demonstrating adaptive reuse of an old mill house while others were fleeing urban Athens for the suburbs. While others were skeptical or perhaps even amused at his efforts

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<sup>170</sup> Pratt Cassity, and Renee Shoemaker “A Southern Gentleman’s Vision of Design: John Linley AIA,” May 1997.

Linley became the champion of intown neighborhoods and reimagined urban areas. He was a man well ahead of his time.

## CHAPTER 5

### A PERMANENT RECORD

#### The Oconee Region

Georgia Act 358 of 1957 established the enabling framework that led to the development of multi-county planning and development commissions; today, these are known as Regional Development Commissions. The overall purpose of these commissions was to “direct and coordinate the utilization of natural and human resources toward...physical, economic, and social development of the area...” and “to implement plans and programs designed to accomplish efficient and effective improvement in the area and its component communities.”<sup>171</sup>

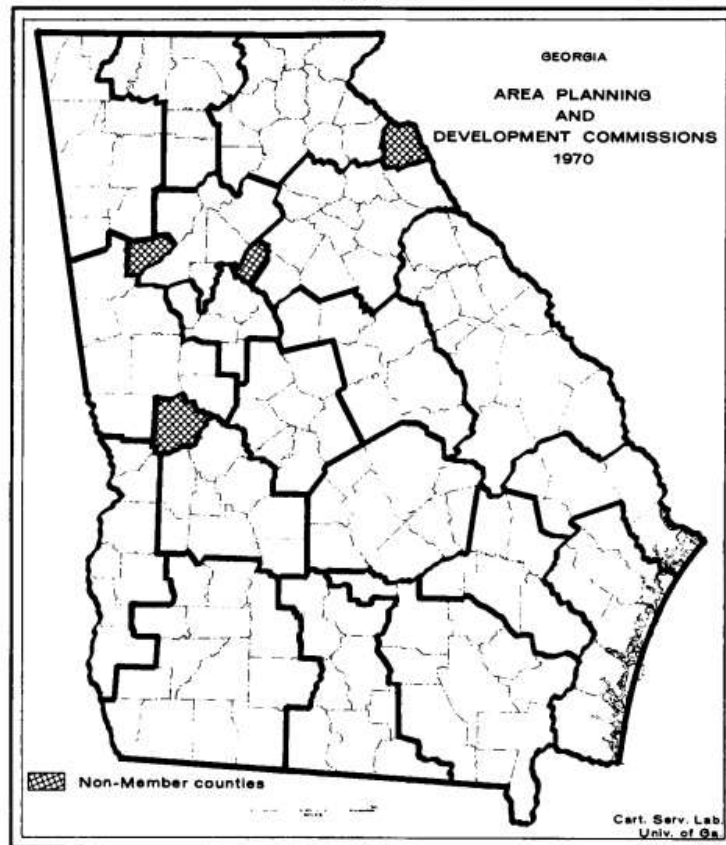
Among the many areas that these commissions focused on were fact finding and research, project development, coordination, public information, technical assistance, and problem and opportunity identification.<sup>172</sup> Arranged geographically throughout the state, the regions were generally formed based on natural features influenced by physical or geographic areas, trade, and service areas situated around common urban centers, or sometimes a combination of these factors.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Earnest E. Melvin, “The Multi-County Regional Commission in Georgia,” *Journal of Community Development Society*, 17.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid 19.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid. 23



*Figure 32: The Regional Planning Commission areas in Georgia in 1972 (Melvin, The Multicounty Regional Commission in Georgia).*

In the 1960s, likely in response to several events culminating in a short period of time, which included growing interest in historic preservation, threats to historic structures in urban areas, and the Centennial of the American Civil War, a number of the regional commissions began to focus on tourism opportunities and historic resources, which could be used to promote the area's history in a larger way. As it was a desire to document historic sites that might be used for local tourism, the Oconee Regional Commission hired John Linley to document the historic architectural resources in a seven-

county region in middle Georgia.<sup>174</sup> The Oconee Region consisted of seven counties: Jasper, Wilkinson, Washington, Hancock, Baldwin, Putnam, and Johnson, which are bordered in part by the Oconee River, except for Jasper County, which is bordered on its west by the Ocmulgee River. The two rivers ultimately merge to form the Altamaha River. The cities and industries in the area were historically dependent upon the water sources. In 1965, J. MacDonald Wray, who was then executive director of the Oconee Area Planning and Development Commission, contacted the University of Georgia's Institute of Community and Area Development and The School of Environmental Design to see how a survey of the region's resources might be accomplished.<sup>175</sup>

### *Architecture of Middle Georgia*

In June of 1965, Wray, Linley, and Robert J. Hill, then an Assistant Professor in the School of Landscape Architecture, met to discuss a historic-architectural survey of the Oconee area to be used for tourism. Within a few days of the meeting, Linley had prepared a proposal for how the research might take place and Hill was proclaiming "...John will do an excellent job and is perhaps more qualified to do this study than anyone else in the state."<sup>176</sup> In the proposal, which accompanied the letter, Linley outlined in detail the steps that would be included in completing the project and how the

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<sup>174</sup> E Melvin to Nicholls November 1973, Linley Collection, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>175</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Acknowledgements.

<sup>176</sup> Hill to Wary June 22, 1965 Linley Papers, University Archives, 6:15.

work might come together. The project would include establishing a list of historic sites of interest in each area and “ride to each place listed, being on the lookout for other significant landmarks which may be in the area, and appraise their architectural worth.”<sup>177</sup> The plan was to work with local historians in the area to compose a history of each place, take snapshots of the sites, and document “with emphasis on the reasons for its significance.”<sup>178</sup>

It was acknowledged in that same letter that there was a real lack of definition of the study area and the number of sites that would be involved. Over the next several years, Linley, a team of local historians, photographers, and two directors of the Oconee Regional Commission would compile and document sites.<sup>179</sup> Ultimately more than two hundred sites were included in the finished work. The identified sites ranged from those Linley considered of exceptional importance, such as the Rock Eagle Mounds, to sites of local significance and sites of industry, commerce, cemeteries, and natural resources. The publication also reached beyond the means of what had generally been considered “architecture” at that time to include vernacular, Victorian, early-twentieth century buildings, and even Mid-Century Modern works.<sup>180</sup>

It is important to understand that up to this point, only two books had been published that documented the historic architecture of Georgia, outside of specifically isolated cities or neighborhoods. In 1952, Medora Field

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<sup>177</sup> Hill to Wray, Linley Papers, University Archives, 6:15.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> John Linley, “Oconee Architecture Information Requests,” Linley Papers, University Archives, 6:10-13.

<sup>180</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Introduction.

Perkerson wrote *White Columns in Georgia*, which highlighted the stories and families associated with the historic homes of Georgia. As the title indicates, most of the houses included were of the white columned grandeur variety. A 1953 review of the work by Rexford Newcomb, in *The Journal of American History*, proclaims “This is not a book about Georgia architecture as its title might indicate. Rather it is a storybook about the state’s white columned antebellum homes...the authoress does not quibble between fact and fable.”<sup>181</sup> Not considered a scholarly work, the book was still well received and continues to be a source for early architectural works in Georgia, and the stories—both real and imagined—that go along with them.

In 1957, Frederick D. Nichols, history professor at The University of Virginia, completed the first scholarly effort at documenting the state’s rich architectural history in *The Early Architecture of Georgia*. Using the photographs of Frances Benjamin Johnston, the book traces the architectural history of Georgia from colonial times through the 1850’s, stopping just before the firing on Fort Sumter. In his review of the work, Marcus Whiffen of Colonial Williamsburg wrote “...it is the neoclassical architecture of the first four decades of the nineteenth century that steals the show...the beautifully planned houses of William Jay at Savannah may today be regarded as the state’s most precious group of buildings.”<sup>182</sup> What Linley set out to do in the

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<sup>181</sup> Rexford Newcomb, Book Review *White Columns in Georgia*, by Medora Field Perkerson, *Journal of American History*, 39:4, March 1953, 764-765.

<sup>182</sup> Marcus Whiffen, “Book Review: The Early Architecture of Georgia by Frederick Doveton Nichols,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 15:2, 1958.

work for the Oconee Regional Commission was something altogether different.

Originally called *Oconee Architecture – Whence, Why, Whither*, Linley set out to document the region as a whole. Understanding that the architecture of the area was not created in a vacuum, he believed it was important to understand the climate, topography, natural resources, local industries, and native mores, which all played a role in the architecture of the region. While other architectural research in the state had focused on high style, Linley sought to document examples of the architecturally-trained and the lay-person vernacular buildings. Nearly ten years after the publication of Linley's work, architectural historian Dell Upton, reflecting on this interest in the study of architecture, wrote that scholars were "attracted to vernacular architecture studies by a shared desire to assess the everyday lives and cultural values of that vast majority of Americans who did not and do not create great monuments or leave lengthy written analyses of their thoughts and actions."<sup>183</sup> In the questionnaire that went out to local historians in each county, Linley asked for "...log cabins, water mills, old churches, schools...any 18th or very early (before 1820) 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings...Antebellum barns, slave quarters...Mid and late-Victorian buildings of unusual beauty or of extreme character which lend interest if not beauty to the building."<sup>184</sup> The list went on to include cotton mills, landforms "erected for early agricultural

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<sup>183</sup> Dell Upton "Ordinary Buildings," *American Studies International*, Winter 1981 19:2, 58.

<sup>184</sup> Questionnaire, Information Sheet for Architecture of Middle Georgia, Linley Papers, University Archives.

processes,” and finally concluded with “Powerful or very unusual modern buildings.”<sup>185</sup>

Photographs indicate that the project began in earnest by the end of the summer in 1965. The negative photo strips found in the Linley-Owens collection follow the journey in each county through towns, and down backroads documenting unplanned stops along the way. Most would make it into the book, though many would not. The questionnaires, sent to local residents and owners of historic properties, were often returned with lots of information. Others were often never returned, and letters in the Linley papers indicate that some required multiple attempts to collect information. In some cases, the information was returned with notes, such as a Wrightsville historic church, which was building a new sanctuary, that asked the new building be photographed as opposed to the old one which had not been kept up. Clearly, in such cases, the mission of the project had been lost on the recipient of the letter. Architectural survey work in Georgia had first begun in the 1930s with the Historic American Buildings Survey. The work was limited, and most focused on known historic sites and larger urban areas. The seven-county area covered by the Oconee region where Linley was doing his work had a total of just twenty-five sites included in the HABS work—of those fifteen were located in Baldwin County.<sup>186</sup>

Robert Gamble, architectural historian and preservationist who first met Linley while he was doing HABS survey work, recalls much as Robert Hill

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<sup>185</sup> John Linley Papers, University Archives, 6:15.

<sup>186</sup> John Linley, *The Georgia Catalog*, Athens, The University of Georgia Press, 1982, Appendix.

had suggested earlier, that Linley was the perfect candidate for this research. Gamble noted Linley “had the capacity to discern and access buildings for historical value and tangible aesthetics. As a trained architect he had a rigorous way of looking at buildings, he was the combination of so many skills.”<sup>187</sup> Gamble recalls that Linley could identify characteristics of a building’s construction technique and connect it to the origins of the early settlers in a particular area. When riding the roads, he often spotted the unique characteristics of a building that to others, appeared to be little more than a shack.



*Figure 33: The “Anonymous Cottage” above was found in Wilkinson County and detailed in “Architecture of Middle Georgia.” This photo is different than the one featured in the publication and appears to have been taken on a different day. It highlights the vernacular and unusual work Linley was capturing as well as a glimpse into the lives of rural Georgia in the 1960s. The photo is also an indication of the importance of the Linley Papers which have barely been researched. (The Linley Papers, University Archives, The University of Georgia).*

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<sup>187</sup> Robert Gamble Interview, July 2022.

One such example was found in Wilkinson County, just outside of Gordon. Based on photos, Linley visited the house on at least two separate occasions. What he observed in the “Anonymous Cottage” were “features which point both backward and forward in the evolution of architecture and architectural styles.” He goes on to describe the chimney brick work, which was “reminiscent...of the seventeenth and very early eighteenth century in this country.” The brick patterns would disappear during the Greek Revival Period yet return in Victorian times. “The cavalier placing of the off-center door and the windows...lent a delightful sense of informality to a style which could become boring by too close conformity to classic precedent.” In closing he adds: “It could hardly be claimed that this cottage is a thing of beauty. It is more like an awkward adolescent, clumsy and probably a little ridiculous, but displaying possibilities of beauty when developed.”<sup>188</sup> Thankfully, Linley documented the house because today, no trace of it remains. His ability to appreciate the often unappreciated was something Gamble found unique among the antiquarians he had generally encountered in preservation work at the time.<sup>189</sup>

In addition to documenting the houses with photographs, general history, and basic sketches of floorplans, Linley also used a system to rank the importance of each structure. Linley wrote that “much valuable architecture has been saved by being evaluated.”<sup>190</sup> The system used five categories that included: Nationally Important, Valuable to the Area, Valuable, Notable, and

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<sup>188</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, 52-53.

<sup>189</sup> Robert Gamble Interview, July 2022.

<sup>190</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Preface.

Worthy of Mention. He did not rate work post 1900, in the belief that a “greater lapse of time is necessary for a reasonably unbiased judgement.”<sup>191</sup>

The inclusion of more modern architecture was something that, like the geographical characteristics and mores, had not been done before, but seemed perfectly logical to someone like Linley, a trained architect who had spent much of his career designing, studying, and building homes and commercial buildings from the modern period. He explained the inclusion in the Introduction: “It is often easy to admire the styles of the distant past but difficult to appreciate those of the immediate past.” He continued by explaining the admiration for the work of our grandfathers, but the disdain for that of our fathers. He finally concluded the introduction with the hope that the inclusion of modern architecture would, “lead to an appreciation of work done in an era both too near and too far away to be rightly appreciated today.”<sup>192</sup>

Research for the project appears to have been complete by early 1968. Linley turned his attention to working on revisions and trying to complete remaining research on some of the unknown buildings. The intent of the original project had not been for major publication, but in survey work and in creating driving tours that would be used for promoting the area’s tourism. Important to that effort was mapping the locations, which explains the inclusion of the maps of each area in the finished product. The decision to seek the more refined publication of the book likely had much to do with

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Introduction.

changes that were happening at the University of Georgia at about the same time. There do not appear to be any indications of publishing the work outside of the regional commission in the early stages of research.

In 1969, William Pelletier was appointed as Provost of the university, under President Fred Davison. One of Pelletier's primary goals was in establishing standards for academic excellence and faculty promotion and appointments.<sup>193</sup> Pelletier's tenure was plagued by controversy and upheaval. When he retired in 1976, by most accounts, the majority of the faculty rejoiced at the news. Pelletier found himself at odds with the Deans of multiple schools within the university, including Dean William Tate, one of the most revered members of the university system at the time.<sup>194</sup> Linley had already been promoted to Associate Professor in 1967. With the new rigorous academic standards, any promotion beyond that would almost certainly have required the publication of his research.

The University of Georgia Press was not an immediate choice for the publication of the research. At the time, the university press had not published any books so heavy with photographs, and the cost of the publication, as well as the overall interest the work would have, was of some concern. This was a concern even as late as the Fall of 1972, when the promotion of publications for the upcoming season had been released. That same promotional brochure featured *Architecture of Middle Georgia; The Oconee Region* on its front cover. In a letter to members of the Garden Club of

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<sup>193</sup> Steve Burns, "Resignation No Surprise," *Red and Black*, March 9, 1976, 4.

Georgia, who were promoting the publication of the book, Linley wrote in September that the director of the press was “getting cold feet at the prospect of publishing so expensive a book.” The concern had been over the number of photographs and the cost was expected to far exceed any book published by the press at that time.<sup>195</sup> Publication would take place as planned and soon enough, the critics and those interested in the architectural history of Georgia would respond in an overwhelming way.

By the summer of 1973, newspapers throughout the research area and the state, as well as scholarly journals, had begun to review the book. While there were some who criticized the isolation of the focus area or the ranking system which Linley had chosen to use in evaluating the buildings, most heaped praise upon Linley and the book. Stanley Abercrombie, reviewing the book for *The International Magazine of Architecture* wrote that the book should serve as a national guide to what could be done in a county-by-county survey, which “would be a monumental task...A model for what such a guidebook might be is provided by a handsome new book...” While praising the book Abercrombie does close by saying: “Most regrettable is the unnecessary inclusion of recent work in a chapter called ‘Toward a New Architecture.’ We hope not: it is all excruciatingly banal.”<sup>196</sup> Other reviewers compared it to similar books written for Charleston, South Carolina, and noted the scholarly difference from the previously published *White Columns*

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<sup>195</sup> John Linley to Mrs. Anderson, Sept 7, 1972, Linley Papers, University Archives, 6:19.

<sup>196</sup> Stanley Abercrombie, *International Magazine of Architect.* July 1973, Vol 1, No 6, 71.

*in Georgia*.<sup>197</sup> Within Georgia, the book was considered a boost to both tourism and local preservation movements.



*Figure 34: An example of the promotional material produced for Architecture of Middle Georgia publication. Note it was promoted as “A Touring guide to Georgia’s...” There are many who still use Linley’s book to set out in search of these architectural treasures 50 years later. (Linley Papers, University Archives, The University of Georgia).*

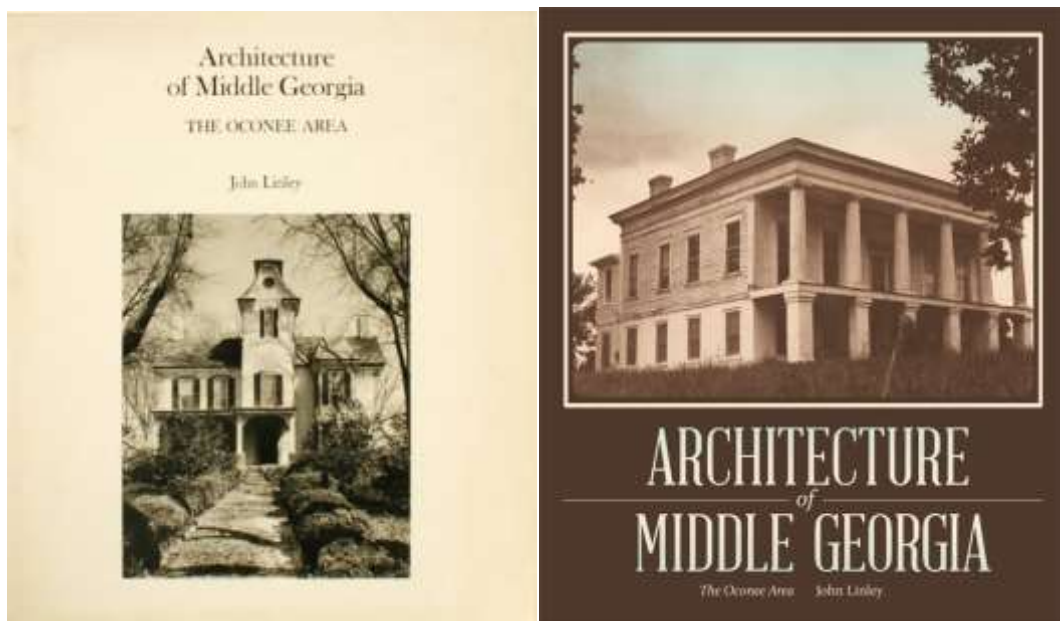
The book was well received and the first printing of 3,000 copies quickly sold out. One year after its publication, the second printing of 8,000 copies was continuing to perform well for the university press.<sup>198</sup> The book

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<sup>197</sup> George C. Rogers, *Journal of Southern History*, 631, Vol 39, No 4, 631.

<sup>198</sup> John Linley “VITA for Promotion,” Linley Collection University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

was again reprinted in a paperback edition in 2014. Following the success of *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, for a brief period, Linley turned his attention to an architectural book he had been working on for at least a decade titled *Organic Architecture: A Common Sense Approach to Uncommon Design*. That research project, and another titled *Basics of Architectural Design*, were both constant projects for Linley, beginning in Anderson and continuing for the rest of his life.<sup>199</sup> The attention and success of *Architecture of Middle Georgia* would allow Linley little time to focus on those projects. By 1974 John Poppeliers, who was then the acting director of the Historic



Figures 35 (left) and 36 (right): Left, cover of the first and second printing of *Architecture of Middle Georgia*. Right, photo of the third printing from 2014, all by The University of Georgia Press. (The University of Georgia Press).

<sup>199</sup> John Linley, *Basic of Architecture Design I, II, III, IV, V*, Linley Papers, University Archives, 5:36-40; Linley, *Organic Architecture A Common Sense Approach to Uncommon Design*, Linley Papers, 5:24.,

American Buildings Survey program under the US Department of Interior, had reached out to Linley in regard to what would become *The Georgia Catalog*.<sup>200</sup>

### *The Georgia Catalog*

In preparation for the celebration of America's bicentennial in 1976, the US Department of the Interior set about to create individual state catalogs for all of the HABS drawings. The intent was that these would be more comprehensive than trying to compile one large catalog for the entire country, which by that time, would have included more than 16,000 structures. Given Linley's recent work and his knowledge of the historic architecture of Georgia, Poppeliers wrote, "we would like very much for you to compile the HABS Georgia Catalog."<sup>201</sup> On March 26, 1974, Linley replied back that he would be interested in the project and in coordination with Allen Chambers, a series of meetings and phone calls were scheduled, with the work to begin the upcoming summer.<sup>202</sup>

Poppeliers included with the original letter to Linley a copy of what he called the "Michigan Catalog." This was likely the 1967 publication titled *Michigan: List of Measured Drawings, Photographs and Documentation in the Survey of 1965, and Complete Listings of Michigan's HABS Records*, which was compiled by Harley J. McKee, professor in the school of architecture at Syracuse University. McKee had also written the Manual of the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1959-64. McKee's book on Michigan

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<sup>200</sup> Poppeliers to Linley, March 8, 1974, Linley Papers, University Archives, 8:73.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Allen Chambers to Linley, Multiple Letters in Linley Papers, University Archives, 8:73.

appears to have totaled 65 pages with 109 entries and 18 photographs. There were approximately 41 pages of text written by McKee on the architecture of the state.<sup>203</sup>

There was little else for Linley to go on in way of a prototype for the work that he was expected to produce for Georgia. Another early challenge of the project was that at the time, while there were about 325 buildings in Georgia which had been documented by HABS, there were entire sections of the state that had almost no representation.<sup>204</sup> In the Linley papers, there is a copy of a contract for Linley to complete HABS studies of Lamar, Meriwether, Muscogee, Spalding, Talbot, and Troup Counties. This was all to be done in preparation for the publication of the HABS book for Georgia.<sup>205</sup> Work continued on the book for the next eight years. During that time, Linley canvassed much of the state, visiting sites which had been documented by HABS. Additionally, Linley felt it important to include works and styles of architecture, that were not yet old enough to have been documented by HABS or the newly formed National Register of Historic Places. As was the case with *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Linley also included modern works of architecture found in the state.

The finished product was not only a listing of the HABS documented buildings in the state, but a listing of the National Register properties as well. The book was a textbook on the history of architecture in the state from the

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<sup>203</sup> US Department of Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, "Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, An Annotated Bibliography," 87, 16.

<sup>204</sup> John Linley to Joseph Kitchens, August 23, 1983, Linley Papers, University Archives, 5:26.

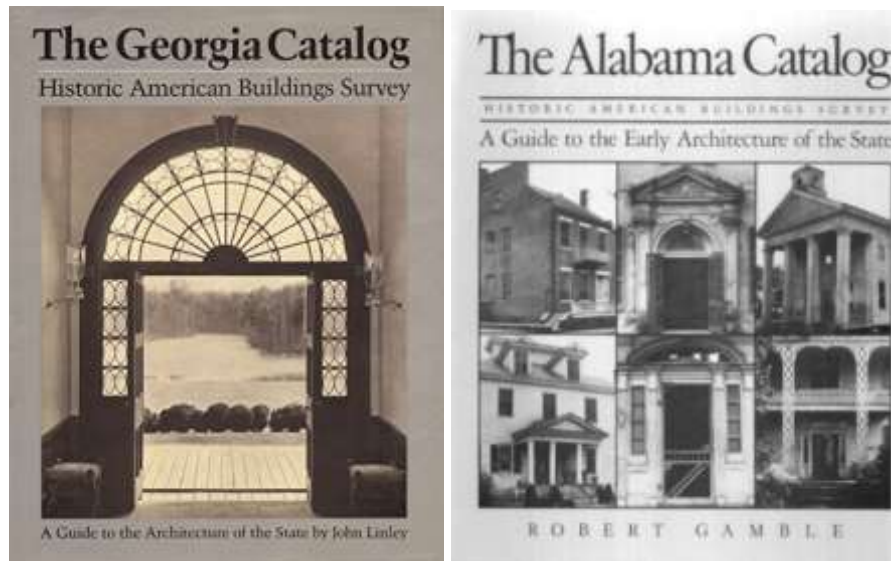
<sup>205</sup> HABS Contract, Linley Papers, University Archives, 8:69.

area's earliest Native American inhabitants to the Fulton County Stadium, built less than a decade before. There was a glossary of architectural terms, maps of the state, and supplemental photos to document areas or periods Linley felt were lacking in the HABS documented structures. By the time the work was published in 1982, the original date of the bicentennial celebration had passed and Georgia was itself celebrating its own 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a colony, and the moment was primed for new works on the state's architecture.

Published by The University of Georgia Press through the Wormsloe Foundation, the book debuted in the Fall of 1982, just in time to make many promotional Christmas lists for new books.<sup>206</sup> The release also coincided with the publication of another of Georgia's most important architectural books, *Landmark Homes of Georgia 1733-1983*, by William Mitchell with photography by Van Jones. The two books could not have been more different. The *Catalog* served as a textbook of instruction on identifying styles, craftsmanship, and architectural periods, while *Landmark Homes* was full of glossy professionally captured photos, the names of architects, and included what was considered to be the highest of styles or examples. As with many of the reviews for *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, reviewers of the

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<sup>206</sup> Mary Margaret Byrne, "Georgia Books Costly but Worth It," *The Columbus Ledger*, December 10, 1982.



*Figures 35 (left) and 36 (right): Left, the cover of the Georgia Catalog by Linley and right, the cover of The Alabama Catalog which Gamble admits to “slavishly” using Linley’s work as a prototype. (The University of Georgia Press and The University of Alabama Press).*

*Catalog* remarked that the book “emphasized the fact that these buildings did not exist in a vacuum. Each was tied to the technology, the social systems, the economy, and the cultural perception of its day.”<sup>207</sup> Joseph Kitchen, the Director of Pebble Hill Foundation in Thomasville, called the book “...without a doubt the best thing yet in the field of Georgia’s architectural history.”<sup>208</sup> It was those who had worked closely with Linley and others on the HABS books who fully understood the magnitude of the work Linley had done. Allen S. Chambers, who had helped to recruit Linley for the project wrote a personal letter to Linley in October 1982: “more than any I have seen, yours shows how

<sup>207</sup> Jonathon Friker, “Reviewed Works: The Georgia Catalog, by John Linley,” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 24:2, 225-227.

<sup>208</sup> Kitchen to Linley, March 28, 1973, Linley Papers, University Archives, 8:73.

it can really be done...All in All, this really is the most complete – and I’m sure most useful – HABS catalog yet. My thanks.”<sup>209</sup>

By the 1980s, several states had begun to produce HABS catalogs. None would ever compare to the work that Linley had accomplished. Unfortunately, many states never completed the task, but those which did would look to Linley for guidance. Robert Gamble who compiled *The Alabama Catalog* not long after the publication of the Georgia edition readily admits that he “slavishly modeled *The Alabama Catalog* after *The Georgia Catalog*...I probably would not have done *The Alabama Catalog* without John’s encouragement and his example to follow.”<sup>210</sup>

Once again, as in his architectural career, his academic career, his neighborhood and garden, Linley had set a standard. In *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, he wrote that the work had “...many objectives...that a permanent record be made of the outstanding architecture of the area...the citizens of this area be directed to their unique architectural heritage...thus saving the best architectural examples.”<sup>211</sup> Linley understood the importance of preserving these historic structures. Uniquely, his work reflected the understanding of studying the building in place. In doing so Linley was able to apply his “ageless principles” of good architecture to the historic structures of the past. These historic structures many which Linley acknowledge would not have been considered “architecture,” were governed by the climate,

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<sup>209</sup> Chambers to Linley, Linley Collection, October 22, 1982, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>210</sup> Robert Gamble Interview, July 2022.

<sup>211</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Preface.

topography, natural resources and native mores.<sup>212</sup> In his closing passage from *The Georgia Catalog*, Linley writes: “The indigenous architecture proposed for the buildings, prototypes for the future, will have features in common with much of Georgia’s earlier architecture...that is architecture is simultaneously pioneering new paths, returning to basics, being born again, revived, rerevived...”<sup>213</sup> Linley saw the tangible link between the preservation of the good architecture of the past and the good architecture of the future.

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid, Introduction.

<sup>213</sup> John Linley, *The Georgia Catalog*, The University of Georgia Press, 1982, 253.

## CHAPTER 6

### A LIFE WELL LIVED

In the years that Linley found himself working on the two books, he continued to teach his courses at the university. There was one leave he was granted while working on *The Georgia Catalog* in 1977. In 1979, for Historic Augusta, he completed a façade survey of the buildings along Broad Street.<sup>214</sup> He continued to practice architecture on a more limited basis in both South Carolina and Georgia. Those projects included the homes of colleagues, a local church addition, condominiums in Atlanta, as well as proposals for upgrades and additions to some of the homes he encountered while researching the architecture of Georgia. Some of these plans were completed, but many were not.<sup>215</sup> In 1971, Linley designed a home for Mr. and Mrs. Charles Martin of Belton, South Carolina. The completed house was a testament to Linley's understanding not only of architecture, but of site placement and landscape design.

#### The Martin House

Linley met Mr. and Mrs. Martin at a neighbor's cocktail party in Belton, and at first declined their invitation to design the house. Later realizing the uniqueness of the hillside site, he liked the challenge that the site

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<sup>214</sup> John Linley, "Evaluations of Facades of Broad Street Buildings Augusta Georgia, 1979," Linley Papers, University Archives, 2:53.

<sup>215</sup> John Linley Collection, Flat Files, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

presented, and accepted the commission. Mrs. Martin recalls the small model Linley created for the project, his exacting detail, and his frustration with their changes to his plan. Linley felt like that house was his and disapproved of the alterations they sometimes proposed and made.<sup>216</sup> This is also evidenced in letters to the Martins' contractor who suggested the addition of a redwood balcony. In a curt letter Linley wrote:

“I am adverse to sticking redwood balconies anywhere just for the sake of having a redwood balcony. Where they grow naturally out of the design they can be very good...I am heartily tired of them; lump them in the category of picture windows and Lake Mansard roofs...trite when used for the sake of a picture window, or because somebody has seen a house with a mansard roof they liked...exposed wood decks just get dilapidated...”<sup>217</sup>

Situated high on a hillside, well above the road in front of the house, even in the winter, the house is almost completely hidden from view. The drive crosses a small bridge and then winds up the hill past towering trees, rhododendron, and stone garden paths. The drive ends at the rear of the home, where a flagstone patio leads to the main entrance. Immediately, there are the brick lattice screens and the arched garage openings, which seem out of place, but a common design in much of Linley's work. There are flagstone patios and terraces but no redwood balconies. The intention was to enter the house from the rear in order to take advantage of the views. He explained to Charles Martin:

“The main reason I like the idea of entering from what is now the rear is the sense of excitement which could be created by entering the house via a comparatively small and tight entrance court, then having the view burst on you when you go into the house... It is a lot more difficult to get the same sense of

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<sup>216</sup> June D. Martin Interview, January 2023.

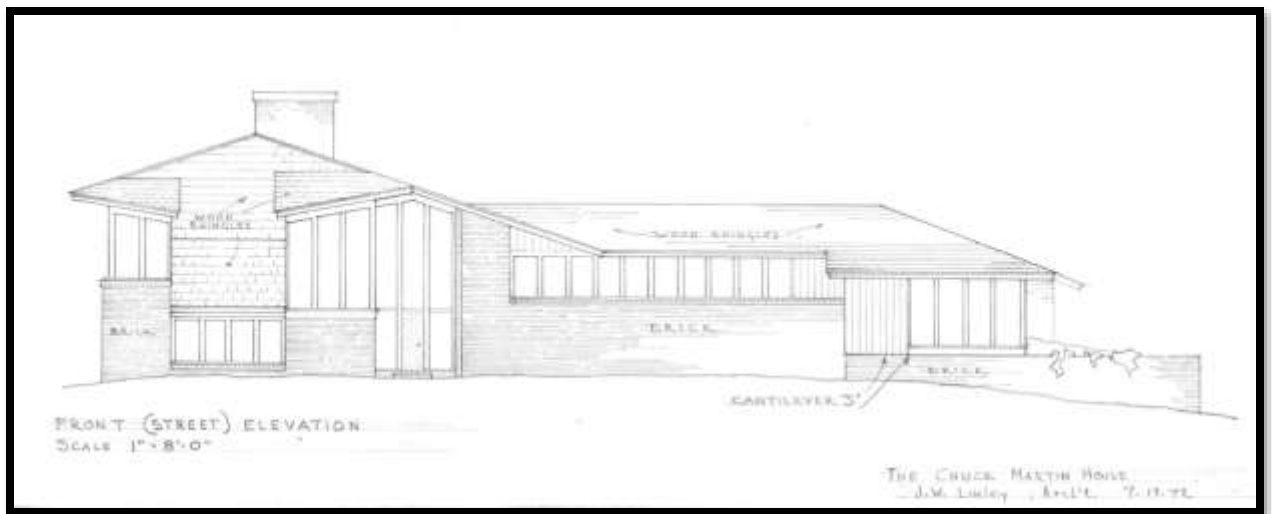
<sup>217</sup> John Linley to Robert Marvin, October 18, 1971, Linley Papers, University Archives, 4:35.

excitement when you see the view, go into the house, and then see it again..."<sup>218</sup>

Reading Linley's comments it is easy to recall the early teachings of his revered professor Jean Labatut who wrote:

"...the power of reception of the observer...must reach his intellect, his spirit or his stomach...The result will be an expression of enthusiasm, approval, disapproval or even horror."<sup>219</sup>

To experience the Martin house is to experience enthusiasm and sheer delight. The house is of brick and wood construction, with a large two-story front gable projection that appears to emerge right out of the hillside. These windows and design in many ways are similar to the work he did on the home for his father in 1947 but treated in a very different way and style. From these windows, the view is of the wooded lot, the small stream, and down into the valley, just as Linley envisioned in his letter to Martin. This was to be Linley's last architectural commission.



*Figure 39: Linley's second elevation drawing for "The Chuck Martin House" in Belton, South Carolina. Dated 1972, this would be Linley's last commissioned job. (The Linley Collection, CED Archives, University of Georgia).*

<sup>218</sup> John Linley to Chuck Martin, June 16, 1971, Linley Papers, University Archives, 4:35.

<sup>219</sup> Labatut, *Architectural Composition*, 37.



*Figure 40: The rear main entrance of the Chuck Martin House in Belton, South Carolina. The Martin family continues to live in the home today. (Newby)*

The years after the publication of *The Georgia Catalog* reminded active ones for Linley in the world of historic buildings, even if he was not actively writing about them. He was called upon to places throughout the state to lecture on historic architecture, contribute opinions on historic register nominations, and offer advice to historic sites including The Georgia Agrirama, The Church-Waddell-Brumby House, and the Clinton Historic District.<sup>220</sup> There were awards from The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, recognition from the Georgia Association Institute of Architecture, in addition to accolades from the university.<sup>221</sup> He continued to try and excite interest in the other two books he had written, with no success.

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<sup>220</sup> John Linley, Assorted Files and Letters, Linley Papers, University Archives Box 1.

<sup>221</sup> John Linley "VITA," Linley Papers, University Archives, 2:5.

In his papers are letters to other architectural professors, publishing companies and even friends who might help to get the works published.<sup>222</sup>

Linley continued to teach full time at The University of Georgia including a preservation course added to the curriculum in the 1970s. In 1981 Linley was the only Full Professor listed as part of the advisory committee for the proposed new Master of Historic Preservation program, set to begin in the fall of that year.<sup>223</sup> The courses for the program included Preservation Advocacy, Rural Landscape Conservation, State and Local History Methodology, Preservation Law, Cultural Resource Assessment, and The Economics of Preservation, among others. There were elective courses offered in Art, Real Estate, Landscape Architecture, Geography, and History.<sup>224</sup> It is the History of Architecture that Linley is most remembered for by later students in the program.

The last years of Linley's time at the University seem to have been fraught with frustration over teaching loads and leadership. In one annual review in which complaints were solicited, Linley simply wrote "In view of previous experience in voicing complaints, I will refrain from this."<sup>225</sup> Linley retired as professor in 1986, but continued, at the request of the university, as Professor Emeritus to teach a number of courses, including the History of

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<sup>222</sup> John Linley, "Publishing Info., 1994," Linley Papers, University Archives, 5:7.

<sup>223</sup> John Waters, "Historic Preservation Program Proposal," John Waters Papers, UA11-079, University Archives, University of Georgia, 1:10.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> John Linley, "1977-78 Faculty Activity Report," Linley Papers, University Archives, 2:20.

Architecture course well into the 1990s. Until his death he maintained an office in Denmark Hall.<sup>226</sup>

### Ahead of His Time

Even in old age, there remained in him, a desire to better the Athens community. He penned many letters to the editors of local papers, weighing in on diverse matters. One of these opined on ways in which the city of Athens might encourage round-trip rail travel from Atlanta to Athens for the 1996 Olympic Games.<sup>227</sup>

He never lost sight of the idea that there was the possibility of a strong urban area in downtown Athens. He was an advocate for residential spaces above businesses. He believed as others would later realize, there was a growing need for the use of such and a market supportive of their creation.<sup>228</sup> In the 1980s Linley even proposed a research project to be conducted by the School of Environmental Design that would explore “Homeownership for the Poor.” The idea proposed the potential of bringing new life to depressed local mill villages: “...they are good places in which to live and the new owners have developed a pride and sense of responsibility...” The project would have explored the advantages of living in a adapted historic home, as opposed to the government-funded demolition of older homes that were to be replaced

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<sup>226</sup> Pratt Cassity Interview, November 2022.

<sup>227</sup> John Linley Letters to the Editor, Linley Papers, University Archives, 1:60, 5:21, 5:22

<sup>228</sup> John Linley to Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, May 30, 1979, Linley Papers, University Archives, 1:8.

with government sponsored rental housing.<sup>229</sup> These must have been novel ideas at the time, proposals that were in some ways thirty years ahead of their time. The project gained no traction and aside from the written document there is no other communication on the idea.

Once a month he hosted the First Thursday Discussion Club, a group of distinguished professors and local residents, an all men's group that met at Linley's home for conversation and bourbon. The discussions ranged from architecture and American Folk Hymns to Risqué Robert E. Lee.<sup>230</sup>



*Figure 41: John Linley on his bicycle in downtown Athens was a common site in Athens from the 1970s through the early 1990s. He was a proponent of urban living and enjoyed walking or riding his bike from his home on Pulaski Street to the university campus. (Linley Papers, University Archives, University of Georgia).*

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<sup>229</sup> John Linley Research Proposal "Home Ownership for the Poor," Linley Papers, University Archives, 12:58.

<sup>230</sup> "Thursday Discussion Club Notes," Linley Papers, University Archives, 1:12.

It is likely during this time that the image of Linley remembered today began to develop. As Professor Emeritus, he maintained a perfectly organized office at Denmark Hall, rode his bike or walked to and from campus on most days, and swam in the Legion pool five days a week.<sup>231</sup> Even those who may not have had him as a professor remember his presence in Denmark Hall. Many Athenians remember him for his impeccable manners and appearance when out in town. If he was working at the university, he wore a coat and tie; and if he was working in his garden or along Pulaski Street, he could be found in matching khaki pants and shirt, a pith helmet and a large knife attached to his belt. He could sometimes be found at O'Malley's bar, still dressed in his garden clothes, visiting with students and faculty.<sup>232</sup>

Former students, from the 1980s and early 90s, remember him for his gentleness, the stately way he carried himself, his exacting words, and a little bit of wit and style. In 1991, when R.E.M. produced its music video for "Shiny Happy People" it came as a surprise to students, as well as family and close friends, that there peddling a stationary bike in a rumpled hat and jacket was Professor Linley. He was the protagonist changing the background mural of the Georgia Theatre, while members of the band and local Athenians danced and sang. Julian Adams, a graduate of the historic preservation program, said "I nearly fell out of my seat when I saw Professor Linley in that video."<sup>233</sup> Greta Terrell Covington, who was enrolled in his class at the time, recalls asking Linley about the experience, and with good humor he replied: "Greta, I

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<sup>231</sup> Pratt Cassity Interview, November 2022.

<sup>232</sup> Glenn Eskew Interview, January 2023.

<sup>233</sup> Julian Adams Interview, October, 2022.

am the only old man they know who can still ride a bicycle.”<sup>234</sup> He seems to have taken the experience in stride not even telling his family about it until after the video’s release. R.E.M. band members would later learn that Linley, who did not even own a television, was asked to participate and agreed without ever having seen or known what a music video was until the filming was complete.<sup>235</sup>



*Figure 42: In 1991, Linley appeared in the music video for the Athens band R.E.M.’s “Shiny Happy People.” Filmed at The Georgia Theatre, Linley peddling a stationary bike, changed the scenery throughout and smoked a pipe in the videos closing sequence. (R.E.M. “Shiny Happy People Video”).*

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<sup>234</sup> Greta T. Covington Interview, November, 2022.

<sup>235</sup> Katherine Dieckmann, “On the Set of Shiny Happy People,” *Entertainment Weekly*, August 23, 1991.

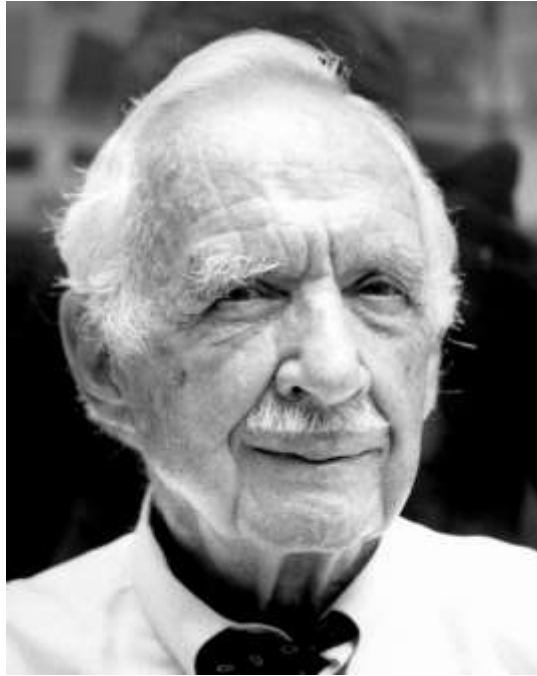
## A Final Return to Anderson

The ensuing years kept Linley active in his garden and continuing to work along Pulaski Street until the early Spring of 1996. Linley's health had begun to decline, although most were not aware, just how quickly or what the private Linley was experiencing. After a fall in April that year, his nephew George Sands arrived in Athens to take Linley back to Anderson. Linley had spent more than thirty years of his life in Athens. It had become his home and he left a mark not only on Pulaski Street, the university, and Athens, but also on the entire architectural history and preservation movement for the state of Georgia. He spent the last month of his life in the care of his family and friends in Anderson.<sup>236</sup> On May 4, 1996, John W. Linley, the architect, professor, urbanist, gardener, and author passed away. He was seventy-nine years old. He was buried in Silver Brook Cemetery in Anderson.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> George Sands Jr. Interview, October 2022.

<sup>237</sup> John Linley Jr. Obituary, *Anderson Independent Mail*, (Anderson, South Carolina,) May 5, 1996, 14.



*Figure 43: In a tribute to Linley following his death in 1996, Athens writer Pete McCommons called him the Southern gentleman personified. McCommons recalled Linley the professor, writer, friend and gardener writing “...those lucky enough to be among his friends and acquaintances are much better for having known John Linley, whose kind, blue-eyed gaze made people grow and blossom too.” (The Flagpole, May 9, 1996).*

## CHAPTER 7

### ANALYSIS

The research question for this thesis is, “What was Linley’s impact on historic preservation in Georgia?” Each of the previous chapters revealed various aspects of his life and activities. The intent of this chapter is to merge those threads to examine Linley’s career, his role as professor, architectural historian, an urbanist in Athens, and how the timing of his arrival in Georgia coincided with an emerging historic preservation movement in the state. Interviews with former students, historians, and preservationists will convey the impact Linley had on their communities and careers. Placing those perspectives in the context of what was happening in preservation—not only in Georgia but in the country at that time—will answer the research question.

#### The Architectural Historian

In 1965 at the onset of research for what became *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Robert J. Hill, noted horticulturist and professor in the Landscape Architecture program at the University of Georgia, wrote to MacDonald Wray, director of The Oconee Regional Planning Commission, saying: “John...is perhaps more qualified to do this study than anyone in the state.”<sup>238</sup> Linley was certainly not the only historian in the state, nor the only architect interested in historic structures. He was not even a native Georgian,

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<sup>238</sup> Letter from Hill to Wray, June 22, 1965, Linley Papers, 6:13. .

but Linley represented the trained scholar, historian, and architect - a trifecta unique to Georgia at the time. As his own architectural work demonstrated he had the capacity to understand the traditional elements of design and place them within the context of indigenous architecture. Linley believed that historic indigenous architecture represented the “ageless principles which are basic to all good architecture.”<sup>239</sup> Repeatedly in both his published and unpublished works he references; site, honest materials, function and climate. These are all characteristics that out of necessity would have been part of the indigenous architecture of Georgia.

While Linley in practice was a modern architect, he believed that common basic architectural principles were prevalent in all good architecture, regardless of the style. In an interview from 1973 related to the publication of *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, he is asked for some of the criteria for judging good architecture and whether the early indigenous architecture was considered good. Linley responded, “Yes they grew out of the natural requirements for the site and of the material they had...it was suitable for the people in the area, particularly for the climate.”<sup>240</sup> As a practicing architect, Linley appreciated and conveyed in his analysis and descriptions important aspects of a buildings design beyond just period and style. This led to an understanding of these historic structures that, at that time, had not been presented in Georgia architectural history.

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<sup>239</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Acknowledgements.

<sup>240</sup> “Middle Georgia Architecture,” Forum, OISD Collection 9549, Brown Media Archives, The University of Georgia, 1972.

Joe Smith, AIA, academic instructor and contributor to an upcoming book on the architecture of the state, offers a perspective on what Linley as a practicing architect contributed. Smith, an architect himself, believes that “architects make really good architectural historians, Linley included is able to make connections, that those who are trained as historians only, may not make. There is a lot of insight to be gained by the architect’s perspective on how you look at form, how you look at building technology...”<sup>241</sup>

When asked about Linley’s impact on preservation, Smith considers Linley along with Frederick Nichols, William Mitchell and Mills Lane as “the pantheon of the historians of the architecture of Georgia...it is not what Linley set out to do in the beginning, but his most significant work was not as an architect but as an architectural historian.”<sup>242</sup>

Carl Lounsbury, architectural historian and adjunct professor at William and Mary, agrees with Smith’s assessment of Linley’s work writing:

“I think of him (Linley) as being in the same generational category of scholars as Freddy Nichols (later at UVA for many years) who introduced the contours of architectural history in Georgia right after World War II... My generation certainly owes a lot to people like Linley and Nichols... who pioneered fieldwork in early American architectural history. Our work builds on what they did, especially because they recorded so many buildings that have now disappeared over the last century.”<sup>243</sup>

When considering Lounsbury’s comments, if one is looking for a tangible record of Linley’s impact as an architectural historian, one can look at his recording of more than 242 sites in *Architecture of Middle Georgia* and

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<sup>241</sup> Joe Smith, AIA, Interview January 2023.

<sup>242</sup> Lee Smith Interview, November 2022.

<sup>243</sup> Email from Carl Lounsbury, June 24, 2022.

the vast documentation found in the John Linley photo collection housed in the University of Georgia, Owens Library School of Environment and Design. That collection credits more than 800 photos to Linley.<sup>244</sup> Those ranged from landmark homes to small antebellum cottages and interesting downtown streetscapes. Of those sites, most that were in reasonably sound condition during the initial survey have survived the fifty plus years since the book's first research and publication.<sup>245</sup> While many of the locations have



*Figure 44: Francis Plantation, Main House, Washington County, Georgia. Documented in the 1960s by Linley has now been completely lost to time. (Linley-Owens Photograph Collection, Owens Library, UGA).*

been greatly altered, Linley's work captured many buildings, places and scenes that would have been completely lost, were it not for his efforts. Two

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<sup>244</sup> Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Maps; The Hubert Bond Owens and John Linley Image Collection, Owens Library, [Creator: Linley, John - Historic Architecture and Landscapes of Georgia: The Hubert Bond Owens and John Linley Image Collections at the Owens Library Collection Items - Digital Library of Georgia \(usg.edu\)](#) .

<sup>245</sup> Using Linley's detailed maps and location descriptions, an effort was made to document all of the existing houses from the survey. Time did not allow the completion of that project.

examples of the more than two dozen now lost, include the Francis Plantation in Washington County, and the Gibson-Sapp House in Wilkinson County. While Linley's survey work is important to the documentation of Georgia's rich architectural heritage his efforts did not stop there. For almost three decades he taught a new generation of landscape architects, designers, and historic preservationist how to study and understand not only architecture, but the unique qualities and characteristics of good historic architecture.

### A Presence in Denmark Hall

By almost all accounts, Linley was an outstanding professor at The University of Georgia. First, in his role as professor in the landscape architecture program and later, through his teaching and interactions with students in The University of Georgia's Historic Preservation program. He is remembered by students in both programs as an exceptional teacher. The Linley Papers in the University Archives, are filled with letters from students spanning more than two decades who wrote back acknowledging the influence that Linley had on their careers. Jon M. Davis, now a private practice landscape architect wrote of Linley in 1973:

"The lessons you taught me concerning architectural design theory have been put to use on many occasions...therefore I would say that if teaching effectiveness is measured by your students' ability to use the material you taught in a practical situation, then you are the most effective teacher I have ever had."<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Jon M. Davis to John Linley, November 7, 1973, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

Jim Tiller another of Linley's students - now a Landscape Architect in Bluffton South Carolina wrote to Linley that:

"I have become more aware of the many points you made in your classes in architectural design. One in particular...the importance of architecture adapted to a particular environment...if practiced today would solve many of our problems involved in the energy crisis. This one point...needs to spread to all design professions...we must know and understand our environment...work with its constraints, and appreciate its true natural beauty..."

Tiller closes with perhaps what is most important to consider regarding Linley and his work as an architectural historian:

"Your constant drilling of points...on architectural history has given me a new and greater respect for much of the architecture of our past. The historical chain of events...gave me a greater insight into the reasons for many of the architectural gems we have today."<sup>247</sup>

In a recent interview Tiller shared many of the same sentiments he had shared with Linley in the 1973 letter but added: "John was just easy to love...It was a unique time in our lives and in that program. We were awakening to our environment."<sup>248</sup>

James Marshall, a student of both Linley and Hubert Owens in the landscape architecture program, acknowledges the tremendous impact that both men had on his career. While having a career in landscape architecture, Marshall would also become active in historic preservation and appreciates the preservation insight and architectural history that Linley taught him. "Linley had an interesting approach to teaching the bigger movements. So much time had been focused on the monumental architecture and Linley

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<sup>247</sup> Jim Tiller to John Linley, November 6, 1973, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>248</sup> Jim Tiller Interview, April, 2023.

spent time explaining the transitional periods of architecture, for example from plain style to Federal. None of us knew anything about historic properties or how you would approach it.”<sup>249</sup>

Julian Adams, a student of Linley’s while in graduate school has had a career working for multiple state preservation organizations throughout the country, and recalls similar details about Linley’s teaching. Linley would divide the Federal period into two sections, Traditional Federal and what he called Rational Federal. Adams recalls that once, he described Demosthenian Hall on the University of Georgia campus as “being so dull.” Linley corrected him saying, “I believe the word you are looking for Mr. Adams is restrained.”<sup>250</sup> Adams also recalls he once questioned John Waters about something Linley had presented in class, Waters quipped “Mr. Adams, Professor Linley has already forgotten more than you will ever know.”<sup>251</sup>

Gretta Terrell Covington, another of Linley’s students from the historic preservation program, recalls Linley as intriguing, and a “stately presence in Denmark Hall,” and considers it a privilege to have been in his class.<sup>252</sup> She believes that Linley, “...elevated preservation, it was more than just a hobby. His background and scholarly work elevated the department as well.” Linley was often unnoticed in his quiet unassuming manner. Kirk H. Stone, professor of Geography had similar ideas and wrote of Linley:

“His quietness is misleading. Rather than meaning lack of attention it signals quiet the reverse. Anyone watching him carefully will see that he does not speak until he has something

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<sup>249</sup> James Marshall Interview, January 2023.

<sup>250</sup> Julian Adams Interview, November 2022.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Julian Adams Interview, November 2022; Greta T. Covington Interview, November 2022.

to say and that when he does it is well worth listening to...a dedicated teacher and scholar.”<sup>253</sup>

Covington in further reflection believes that when compared to others teaching in the program, “Professor Linley was more academic, lofty and very inspiring.”<sup>254</sup> It was this educational foundation that Julian Adams recalled as well.

Adams believes that Linley gave his students “an incredible foundation in architecture, not just a southern view but indeed a national view...I left with a good understanding of what I was looking at...and I believe he gave that to a lot of people coming out of the program.”<sup>255</sup> What Linley did do for Adams and countless others was as Adams states, “create an appreciation and an understanding of historic architecture. Without that good base of knowledge to know what you are looking at...you are starting from nowhere. He gave that to his students and through his books to a larger audience as well.”<sup>256</sup>

Through his books Linley was not just shaping the minds of those in Denmark Hall, but had the ability to reach that wider audience. Charlotte Marshall, noted Athens historian who wrote *Historic Houses of Athens* says that “Linley taught me without ever having set foot in his classroom, because of *The Georgia Catalog*, which became my architectural bible...”<sup>257</sup> Marshall was far from the only one to use Linley’s book as source material, a guide to architectural terms or even in a class room setting.

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<sup>253</sup> Kirk Stone to Bob Nicholls, November 6, 1973, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>254</sup> Greta Covington, Interview, November 2022.

<sup>255</sup> Julian Adams, Interview, October, 2022.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Charlotte Marshall Interview, January 2023.



*Figure 45: Professor Linley seated on left with unidentified students. Dean Robert Nicholls is seated on right. (Linley Collection, UGA, CED Archives).*

### Reaching a Wider Audience

Both of Linley's published books are cited as source material for other books documenting Georgia's architectural heritage including *Ghosts of Grandeur*; *Georgia's Lost Antebellum Homes and Plantations* by Michael W. Kitchens as well as *Madison; A Classic Southern Town* by Linley's friend and fellow architectural historian William R. Mitchell Jr. But Linley's works reach beyond the touch of Georgia's architectural heritage. Both works are listed as "Regional and Local Guides: Southern States" in Virginia Savage McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*; *The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*. What might be surprising

is Linley's inclusion in gardening books such as the 2003 *Garden and Historic Plants of the Antebellum South* by James R. Cochran and the more recent publication *Seeking Eden; A Collection of Georgia's Historical Gardens* by Staci L. Catron and Mary Ann Eaddy.<sup>258</sup> Inclusion in those works harkens back to Linley's understanding and appreciation for the thread connecting Georgia's rich architectural heritage with that of the landscape, the topography, and the climate.

Georgia State University Professor Glenn Eskew uses Linley's *Architecture of Middle Georgia* in a graduate level seminar course on Georgia history. The course is an analysis of several counties in the Middle Georgia area. The objective is to "afford a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the rich culture of Georgia and the South. Consequently, by focusing on one small area, the issues of race, class, and gender will be explored in more detail than would be possible through a general survey..."<sup>259</sup> Eskew enjoys the depth that Linley's books cover - not just the architecture but the environment that produced it as well. Eskew says that "Linley is a key book, and I am really in his debt for providing great illustration...to help the students keep up with the progression of architecture in Georgia...I find Linley's works very beneficial."<sup>260</sup> In the modern era Linley's work has experienced a new growth with the advent of the internet and social media, even more are exposed to his work and its importance.

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<sup>258</sup> Survey of citations, index and source material for these books.

<sup>259</sup> Glenn Eskew, "Graduate Seminar in Georgia History," Georgia State University Syllabus, Accessed March 2023, <https://heritagepreservation.gsu.edu/files/2015/04/8065-ga.pdf>.

<sup>260</sup> Glenn Eskew Interview, February 2023.

The man who did not own a television and copied and pasted his manuscripts using a xerox machine and glue would likely be intrigued that nearly 30 years after his passing, users on social media site Facebook, quote his work and use his photos and his scholarly work as reference. Brian Brown, a photographer who has spent much of his career documenting historic architecture throughout Georgia, also manages the Vanishing Georgia website and writes that Linley's *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, "like any survey, was a snapshot of what existed...it was aspirational because it documented a broad range of styles in a small but architecturally rich, geographic area..." He continues, acknowledging that Linley "must have been aware that much of what he was documenting was endangered" and his work "reached people who had the ability to preserve such places, even in other parts of the state."<sup>261</sup>

While such sites are generally filled with praise for Linley, they can on occasion question his having missed some great historic treasure.<sup>262</sup> Linley's intention was never to document all of the architecture of Georgia or even the Oconee Area. Linley himself acknowledged that *Architecture of Middle Georgia* covered an area of more than three thousand miles and there were no doubt omissions and inaccuracies.<sup>263</sup>

Bud Merritt, an amateur photographer and frequent commenter on many of these social media sites who appreciates both historic architecture and Linley's work writes that: "to this day I will revisit it (*Architecture of Middle Georgia*) and...discover something that I had missed...there are

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<sup>261</sup> Email communication with Brian Brown November 2022.

<sup>262</sup> Bud Merritt Facebook Post September 16, 2021.

<sup>263</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Preface.

interesting structures that for, I would assume a variety of reason were not included...likely because it was very isolated and was abandoned... it might be easy to criticize certain aspects of the book but I refrain from that...although there was earlier research, etc. this was a monumental effort.”<sup>264</sup> In today's world of digital mapping, hand held cameras, and iPhones, it is sometimes hard to grasp the magnitude of the survey work that Linley was doing in 1965 rural Georgia – a year before the Historic Preservation Act was passed.

While Linley's survey work focused on architectural history, it was perhaps urban revitalization that Linley championed the most. During an interview recorded in 1972, Linley talks about *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, the preservation movement, and what he hoped the book would accomplish for those communities. When asked the question about what he hoped would be the outcome, he replied: “That many of these homes will be saved. That people will have an appreciation for not just the houses but for the areas these houses are located in, and prevent what has happened in Athens along Prince Avenue and Milledge.” It becomes clear that for Linley, it was more than about just saving “single houses here or there.” Linley believed that in fact, bringing attention to these houses could “save a community in a lot of ways...the fact that these houses are so beautiful should redouble their efforts to save the whole community...saving them can save whole neighborhoods.”<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Bud Merritt to Newby, Facebook Messenger, February 23, 2023.

<sup>265</sup> John Linley, “Middle Georgia Architecture Video.”

## Neighborhood Revitalization

In the final chapter of *The Georgia Catalog*, Linley addresses how cities, both large and small, throughout the state are combating the problem of “urban decay.” He advocated for residential units above ground floor retail spaces, bike lanes and pedestrian paths that connected residential areas to urban spaces.<sup>266</sup> He also addresses the problem he had witnessed first hand in Athens where “...whites buying up ...areas that had been predominately black were displacing vast numbers of blacks...” Linley believed that “further restoration of blighted areas will provide sufficient housing for the current residents, much of it in restored homes, so that they will not be forced to leave.”<sup>267</sup> In Athens, Linley had witnessed the dislocation of African-American residents in both areas of Urban Renewal. Linley believed that through adaptive reuse and imaginative redesign, the neighborhoods could be saved and many of the residents could remain in place. Linley also acknowledged, however, that these spaces in both neighborhoods and above stores would need to be “equipped with the conveniences expected in modern houses, combined with some of their former elegance before they can be rented successfully or before any but the most enlightened of the suburbanites will risk purchasing them.”<sup>268</sup>

Linley became one of those enlightened suburbanites when he moved to Athens. Linley’s father had built his vast wealth developing the suburban areas of Anderson, South Carolina. Linley had designed many of the modern

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<sup>266</sup> John Linley, *The Georgia Catalog*, 243-253.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid, 246.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid, 250-521.

houses that lined those streets. Now in Athens, he wanted to take the elements that he had learned both as an architect and from his father's developments and put them to work in Pulaski Heights.

Linley had a great belief in the potential for the Pulaski Street neighborhood that he called home. In numerous letters to developers and planners, he compared the area to Georgetown and went on at length about the possible development that could happen there. He invested not only his time and energy, but his money as well, with other professors he purchased a few of the homes to demonstrate to others what could be done with them. He saw the housing crisis in Athens and found the solution in the historic neighborhoods surrounding the urban core. While he chose to save an old mill house and modify it in a way that suited him, he did not believe that every home in the neighborhood could, or should, be saved. He even wrote to a developer that "Many of the houses are not worth restoring or remodeling, and should be torn down..."<sup>269</sup>

Eugene L. Surber, AIA explains in a 1999 essay, the changing role of the architect in the historic preservation movement. Linley would have been a part of the era that Surber describes as trying to fight the urban decay that was being seen in so many cities. While Linley is never mentioned, in Surber's work, he would have certainly been among those architects of the 1960s and 70s who "sought out the bargains in the inner-city neighborhoods." Surber does not believe that they "saw their venture as part of a larger and expanding

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<sup>269</sup> John Linley to Cason Callaway, Jr. June 12, 1968, University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

preservation movement, but rather a pioneering effort toward revitalization of city neighborhoods.”<sup>270</sup> Perhaps unknowingly, the preservation of the Pulaski Heights neighborhood was exactly what Linley was doing.

David Bryant was Linley’s neighbor and friend starting in the late 1970s and recalls Linley as a luminary- “it was a very undesirable neighborhood; people would get beaten up regularly when coming back from downtown...that was how I could afford to rent there and later buy there. The houses were relatively inexpensive, not like now, no one wanted to live downtown...” Bryant goes on to describe Linley as being the “introduction to the neighborhood. He made it look nicer than it really was...”<sup>271</sup> Linley was introducing his own ideas to the neighborhood which had largely been influenced by the developments he had witnessed as a young architect in Anderson. In his unpublished guide to Organic Architecture, Linley wrote, “Among the more promising (neighborhoods) are those designed for pedestrian and bicycle as well as automotive traffic, with common areas for rest and recreation, and with smaller lots, not necessarily polygonal, which blend with jointly owned ecologically planned natural surroundings.”<sup>272</sup> In Pulaski Heights, with the tree lined curvilinear streets, historic architecture, and natural landscape Linley had found his opus.

Linley found the houses there adaptable to his modern vision and the three houses on Pulaski Street he owned or jointly owned are classic examples

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<sup>270</sup> Eugene Surber, “The Architect and Preservation: A Changing Role,” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol 83, No. 1, 1999, 116-119.

<sup>271</sup> David and Cassie Bryant Interview, February 2023.

<sup>272</sup> John Linley, *Organic Architecture*, Chapter 4, 24.

of adaptive reuse.<sup>273</sup> He took these blighted houses and redesigned them “...to be equipped with the conveniences expected in modern houses...”<sup>274</sup> Corbett Chandler, Linley’s longtime friend, and at times, tenant, and later, a fellow Pulaski Street owner, recalls that Linley- unlike others- “was not put off by the surroundings. He did not try to make his neighbors do what he thought should be done. He was willing to help them, but did not lord over them. He was leading by example.”<sup>275</sup> With Linley’s vision, however, came the all expected changes to the neighborhood.

Bryant who until earlier this year still owned a home in the area, says “it became one of the hottest, most desirable neighborhoods in Athens and remains that way today.” Soon there were of course discussions about the area becoming a historic district and Bryant recalls that “Nobody wanted it to become a district, everyone wanted to be like John and do what he had done to his house.” Among those familiar with Linley’s work, it has been mentioned several times that Linley was opposed to historic district zoning and would be pleased that Pulaski Street and the surrounding area has evolved without the interference of being a designated district. Pratt Cassity, retired from The University of Georgia, a colleague and friend of Linley’s called him “the king of Pulaski Street,” who never let Pulaski Heights “become part of the Boulevard District to avoid the preservation regulations. As a result, Pulaski looks very different than Barber, which looks very different than

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<sup>273</sup> John Linley owned his own home and vacant lot as well as jointly owned two other houses with colleague Allen Stovall. Allen Stovall Interview, October 2022.

<sup>274</sup> John Linley, *Georgia Catalog*, 250.

<sup>275</sup> Corbett Chandler Interview,

Boulevard.”<sup>276</sup> Linley would live to see the development of historic districts in the area, including four in 1988 alone in two residential areas, Boulevard and Cobbham, not far from Pulaski Heights.<sup>277</sup>

Rinne Allen, who owned Linley’s home after his passing, recalls the people who would often stop by her home and garden to talk about Linley and the impact he had on the neighborhood. In many ways, he subtly, or not so subtly, impacted those in his neighborhood who were able to be a part of what he was doing there. “He was one of those men who cultivated relationships with people...he had a vision of a wholistic community and that was very much a part of what he was doing on Pulaski...”<sup>278</sup> Cassie Bryant, like her husband David, experienced much of the change in the neighborhood, recalling in later years as the couple would walk from their home on Pulaski Heights to downtown, Linley’s garden sitting area was a welcome spot for neighbors to sit and gather.<sup>279</sup> It was largely Linley’s vision, influence and experience that created the unique, historic, and adapted neighborhood that is Pulaski Heights today.

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<sup>276</sup> Pratt Cassity Interview, November 2022.

<sup>277</sup> Athens-Clarke Historic Districts.

<sup>278</sup> Rinne Allen Interview, November 2022.

<sup>279</sup> Cassie Bryant Interview, February 2023.

## Part of A Movement

Linley's efforts as architectural historian for Georgia's architectural heritage, his design principles on adaptive reuse, and urbanization all coincided with part of the larger preservation movement that was happening throughout Georgia and the country. The timing of Linley's work was such that the connection between the movement and his efforts would be linked, almost from the beginning.

In a 1973 letter of recommendation for Linley's promotion in the School of Environmental Design, Ernest Melvin of the university's Institute of Community and Area Development, praised Linley's book, saying that it was "encouraging the preservation of meritorious and culturally significant architecture." He went on to outline the influence the work had already had on the "building up...of tourist appeal and cultural resources." He also adds that the work served as a precursor to the Heritage Trust Program, an early preservation commission established in Georgia, focused on historic preservation. Established in 1972 by then Governor Jimmy Carter, it was a state-wide effort to "to identify, preserve, and, where appropriate, to more fully develop architectural, historical, and natural phenomena worthy of the investment of public funds for the future enjoyment and education of the people of Georgia."<sup>280</sup>

Among the seven counties featured in *Architecture of Middle Georgia* at the time of publication in 1972, only one of them had an active historical

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<sup>280</sup> Melvin to Nicholls, November 6, 1973, Linley Collection, C.

society dedicated to the preservation of the area's history. Residents of the city of Milledgeville had organized The Old Capitol Historical Society in 1956, and over the next decade managed to purchase and restore a historic home in town, and by the early 1970s was already working to create a historic district.<sup>281</sup> Most of the other counties began organizing historical organizations in the early 1970s—Hancock, Putnam, Johnson, and Washington - all between 1970 and 1977.<sup>282</sup> Wilkinson and Jasper are a little more ambiguous, with no defined date for an organization, but do appear to have been later. All seven counties, with the exception of Johnson and Wilkinson, have current historic preservation ordinances. James Marshall, the former student and preservation advocate from Eatonton, recalls that Linley's book was instrumental in identifying historic structures in the area and "opened a lot of eyes" in the community. Marshall believes the publication of the book, "was the first time that anyone, other than the people who actually owned the properties, had ever paid attention to them."<sup>283</sup>

As exciting as it would be to say that these organizations and preservation movements could be directly connected to Linley's books, the truth is, Linley's efforts were part of the great collective preservation movement happening at the time in Georgia and the country. As noted earlier, when describing the historic preservation movement in Athens in the

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<sup>281</sup> Frank B. Vinson, "The Old Capitol Historical Society," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol 64, No. 4, 1980, 478-483.

<sup>282</sup> Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions, "Georgia Cities and Counties With Historic Preservation Ordinances," <https://gapc.wildapricot.org/Georgia-Cities-and-Counties-with-Historic-Preservation-Ordinances/>.

<sup>283</sup> James Marshall Interview, February 2023.

1960s, cities throughout Georgia had responded to the demolition, or threat of demolition, of some of their historic houses. Momentum had built from the Historic Preservation Act of 1966; states were being encouraged to create funding for the study of historic architecture and resources. Each state was required to appoint a historic preservation officer to apply for federal funding, that historic resources might be inventoried and nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. Linley had the good fortune as he had for much of his life to be slightly ahead of his time.

Mary Gregory Jewett, Georgia's first historic preservation officer, recognized the work of Linley as part of that movement. At the April 1973 meeting of the Georgia Historical Commission, she presented a resolution which read, "The Commission's task is great and its staff limited...*Architecture of Middle Georgia – The Oconee Area...* is a great contribution to the Historic Site Survey being conducted by the Georgia Historical Commission..."<sup>284</sup> What Linley had created in his first publication, as others had already noted, was an excellent example of survey work. It was at this same meeting in Macon, Georgia, that a group of preservation leaders from across the state came together to organize The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation and Jewett would become the organization's first president.<sup>285</sup>

Linley was well recognized for his efforts in all fields. Any single portion of Linley's work would have made him a great contributor to the historic preservation movement in Georgia. When taken together as a whole,

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<sup>284</sup> Mary Gregory Jewett, "A Resolution, Georgia Historical Commission," University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design Archives.

<sup>285</sup> Lyon, 81.

along with the timing that coincided with the national historic preservation movement, his combined work as teacher, researcher, urbanist, and architectural historian, has an even greater impact on historic preservation in Georgia.

He was the reluctant architectural historian of much of Georgia's history. He was an urbanist finding a home in a neighborhood where few others would have dared to go. He was the professor who encouraged and inspired an emerging generation of landscape architects and preservationists. In the past, much like the modern architecture he documented in his works, Linley's efforts in the historic preservation movement for years was both "too near and too far away to be rightly appreciated..."<sup>286</sup> While he was acknowledged for his efforts, did those efforts make Linley a preservationist?

### An Early Preservationist?

Linley was literally a card-carrying member of The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation. He is often credited with being involved in its early organization and he certainly advocated for the advancement of the historic preservation program in the School of Environmental Design.<sup>287</sup> In the Linley Papers in the University Archives, is a memo to Dean Robert Nicholls dated October 16, 1979. In that memo, Linley expresses his belief that "...it was an ideal time to get a nationally recognized landscape architectural historian to

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<sup>286</sup> John Linley, *Architecture of Middle Georgia*, Introduction.

<sup>287</sup> A number of resources cite Linley as having served in leadership roles in The Georgia Trust, that attribution has not been confirmed. Aside from a few general letters, an award and later membership records there is no evidence in the Linley Papers of leadership in The Georgia Trust.

devote full time to implementing our historic preservation program. With such a person...there is no reason that Georgia could not be the leader in this rapidly growing field.”<sup>288</sup>

Former students in the historic preservation program, while appreciative of all that Linley taught them and the value of his work are not so quick to file Linley in the category of historic preservationist. Greta Covington recalls one of the most active moments during her time in the historic preservation program - the demolition of the Hull-Snelling house, to make way for an expansion of the Holiday Inn in downtown Athens. Professor John Waters, as head of the program, encouraged students to write letters and attend meetings in protest to the demolition. She said “I almost don’t think of Linley as a preservationist...he was architectural history...He wasn’t hyped up about the Hull-Snelling house...it was a learning time for us and Professor Linley was not really an element of that part of the program... He was focused on what you were saving, not how you were saving it.”<sup>289</sup> Julian Adams shared some of Covington’s same views and concluded that he “did not get the sense that Linley was a preservationist.”

As times change, so do ideas about preservation, approaches to preservation, and what it means to preserve our history. For as long as ideas about the preservation of buildings has existed, so too have different methods. One needs only to study the writings of Viollet-le Duc and John Ruskin to see the often-wide gaps in these ideas. When John Linley set out to record the

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<sup>288</sup> John Linley, Memo from Linley to Nicholls, Linley Papers, University Archives, 11:2.

<sup>289</sup> Greta T. Covington Interview, November 2022.

historic architecture of the Oconee region in 1965, the preservation movement in America had largely been focused on preserving the architectural sites related to the founding fathers, historical moments, and regionally important events or sites. With the passing of the Historic Preservation Act the following year, multiple disciplines including architects, regional planners, landscape architects, historians, and preservation-minded communities and organizations throughout the country began to determine what historic preservation meant for their discipline and in turn, how they would shape the movement. That process has continued to evolve, as now even architectural movements representative of 1966- the year the act was passed- fall under the purview of historic preservation.

Evidence suggest that he had concerns of what historic districts might do to the evolving nature of a community; his approach to historic preservation was different than that of others like John Waters who led the preservation program at the university. Linley had concerns of gentrification long before it became the preservation catch term it is today.<sup>290</sup> His integration of modern design elements in his rehabilitation plans goes against all design guidelines of 2023. His architectural and family real estate background would have given him a different perspective on the goals and process of historic preservation. He would have been an advocate for the preservation of good architecture - not all architecture. He saw the importance of what preservation could do for a community and, while not one

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<sup>290</sup> John Linley, *The Georgia Catalog*, 246.

for protest or marches to city hall, he found his voice in letters to the editor and his own example. He was a “man of fervent convictions” and focused on action- even if quiet action.<sup>291</sup> By that example and quiet action, Linley was absolutely an advocate for historic preservation.

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<sup>291</sup> Corbett Chandler Interview, November 2022

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION

John W. Linley, was the epitome of everyone's vision of "central casting for a southern gentleman."<sup>292</sup> He was filled with refinement, good manners, delightful conversation, impeccably dressed, well-educated and a delight to all who had the pleasure of being in his presence. Nearly everyone in Athens from the 1960s through the 1990s "knew" John Linley. Despite being so well known, he was a man who kept much of his life to himself. Time and again family and friends were surprised to learn that the man they knew so well, had written a book, taken an unannounced trip to New York or appeared in a music video for a Grammy award winning rock band.<sup>293</sup> He was a man that might be described as easy to know and yet hard to get to know.

This thesis has only begun to peel back the layers to better understand the legendary figure. There is still so much to be discovered about Linley and his work. There are twelve boxes of documents, correspondence, architectural drawings, manuscripts, and lectures in the John Linley Papers in the University Archives. There is another bounty of material found in the College of Environment and Design archives in the basement of Denmark Hall which contains more papers, slides, printed photos and negatives. There in the flat

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<sup>292</sup> Robert Gamble Interview, July 2022.

<sup>293</sup> George Sands Interview, October 2022.

files are hundreds of pages, the largest collection of Linley architectural drawings and landscape plans.

Using those archives other researchers might explore in greater depth Linley the architect - what his modern designs did for Anderson, South Carolina and the influence that both he and his father had on that community. Among the Linley papers are also design plans for his house and garden and he proposals for redesigning Pulaski Street. An entire thesis could be written on the work that he did there. Linley was part of a generation of emerging preservationist and urbanist in the 1960s and 70s that author Will Fellows describes as “restoring and preserving wholeness and design integrity; valuing heritage and identity; nurturing community relationships; fostering continuity in the midst of incessant change...”<sup>294</sup> While time has changed much of what Linley did in the area, the spirit and evidence of his work remains.

A drive through the Pulaski Heights neighborhood, with its interesting blend of modern construction mixed with historic mill houses, tree-lined streets, is a testament to the vision that he had for that neighborhood. His beautiful garden and sidewalk sitting area still beckons to passerby to stop and sit, to enjoy the view, the quiet and the peaceful setting only a quick stroll from downtown Athens. The urban renewal Linley long envisioned has been a reality for more than a decade now. There are still houses to be finished and lots to be cleared, all in quiet homage to the man who most of the residents

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<sup>294</sup> Will Fellows, *A Passion to Preserve; Gay Men as Keepers of Culture*, Wisconsin University Press, 2005, 259.

today never had the privilege of knowing. But all the beauty and uniqueness of that area is a part of the legacy Linley left behind.

Given the opportunity to go back, knowing all that exists now that was uncatalogued and undocumented a year ago, this thesis would have explored in depth the architectural career, designs and writings of Linley. Perhaps focusing on the often-overlooked Jean Labatut at Princeton who had such an impact on Linley's vision. In the spring of 2022, it was not clear if there was even enough information to move forward with a thesis. Today there is a struggle to manage all of the facets to paint a clear picture of the man everyone seemed to know and perhaps never really knew.

Preservation was never the focus of Linley's life. It was not his life's goal or even his original career path, nor was being an architectural historian. However, as one of the paramount architectural historians of Georgia, it is for architectural history and preservation that he is most remembered. It is unlikely that Linley would have viewed any of the work that he was doing as lasting contributions to the historic preservation movement - he was a very unassuming, self-effacing gentleman.<sup>295</sup> A simple query of architectural historians in Georgia - or among those living in the communities he covered - says otherwise and the mere mention of Linley's name generally produces overwhelming adoration for the work that he produced. While both works are of value, *Architecture of Middle Georgia* is the one most people remember.

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<sup>295</sup> Charlotte Marshall used this to describe Linley, and it echoes others description as well.

After spending nearly a year immersed in Linley's life, his work, his impact, and his legacy there is still so much he has left to teach us. He truly was a man ahead of his time. In his architectural designs he brought new and exciting forms and concepts to the American South. Through his first publication, he surveyed much of the vernacular architecture of middle Georgia, while much of the country was still determining how historic preservation would look. In Athens he was a trendsetter, he was an urban dweller when so many others were fleeing downtown. He believed in the power of community spirit and saw the adverse impacts of poorly planned urban renewal. He was indeed the epitome of the southern gentleman, but he was also player in so many movements. He set the pace through his perseverance, his gentle spirit and his quiet action. To spend this time with his papers, his family, his friends, his work and community has created a desire to only know him better. The journey has been both a privilege and an honor.

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## Interviews

*Recorded interviews conducted by the author: no transcripts were made.*

Julian Adams, former Linley student, historic preservation professional, via Zoom, from New York, November 2, 2022.

Rinne Allen, photographer, purchased Linley's Pulaski Street house from Linley estate. Athens, Georgia. November 21, 2022.

Lamar Bailes, nephew of John Linley, phone interview, February 2023.

Brian Brown, photographer, preservation advocate. Phone and email interview and communication, November 2022.

Pratt Cassity, former Linley student and employee of College of Environment and Design, colleague and friend. Athens, Georgia November 21, 2022.

Corbett Chandler, friend and neighbor of Linley. Athens, Georgia, November 16, 2022.

Gretta Terrell Covington, former Linley student, historic preservation advocate. Athens, Georgia, November 14, 2022.

Glenn Eskew, professor Georgia State, former Linley student, preservation advocate. Madison, Georgia, January 25, 2023.

Peggy Gallis, friend of Linley, community leader, preservation advocate. Athens, Georgia, November 21, 2022.

Robert Gamble, architectural historian, author of *Alabama Catalog*, friend of Linley. Phone interview from Atlanta, June, 2022.

Reggie Gibson, AIA, architect from Anderson South Carolina, knowledge of Linley's work. Phone interview from Charleston, South Carolina, January, 25, 2022.

Robbie Hattaway, photographer for *Architecture of Middle Georgia*. Phone interview from Milledgeville, Georgia. June 21, 2022.

Marc Hehn, grew up in Linley designed home, Hammett Acres, Anderson, South Caroling. Phone interview for Highlands, North Carolina, November 2022.

Carl Lounsbery, architectural historian, knowledge of Linley's work. Phone and email from Virginia, June, 2022.

Charlotte Thomas Marshall, local historian, author, preservation advocate. Athens, Georgia, January 3, 2023.

Robert Nicholls, retired Dean of School of Environmental Design, via Skype from Atlanta, Georgia, November 7, 2022.

Mark Reinberger, architectural historian and Professor Emeritus from University of Georgia, worked with Linley, discussed architectural work, and plans. Athens, Georgia, January 18, 2023.

George Sands, nephew of John Linley, and attorney. Anderson, South Carolina, with driving tour on October 25, 2022.

Joe Smith, AIA, architectural historian, instructor, preservation advocate, Athens, Georgia, January 12, 2023.

Lee Smith, lives in Linley home on Pulaski Street. 530, Pulaski Street, Athens, Georgia home and garden, December 7, 2022.

Margie Spaulding, friend of Linley, community leader, preservation advocate. Athens, Georgia, November 9, 2022.

Allen Stovall, retired professor College of Environmental Design. Athens, Georgia, September 6, 2022.

David P Watkins, Jr. is the son of Linley's business partner in Anderson. Phone interview from Anderson, South Carolina, January 5, 2022.