

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Lynncote Historic DistrictOther names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. LocationStreet & number: 3316-3525 Lynn Road and 39 Wilderness RoadCity or town: Tryon State: NC County: PolkNot For Publication: ☐ N/AVicinity: ☒ X**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A X B X C D**Signature of certifying official/Title:****Date**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:**Date****Title :****State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government**

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☒

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☐

District

☒

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

5

5

buildings

0

0

sites

1

4

structures

0

0

objects

6

9

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 4

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

LANDSCAPE

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

LADNSCAPE

VACANT/Not in use

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVAL MOVEMENTS: Tudor Revival

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVAL MOVEMENTS: Craftsman

OTHER: Rustic Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Stone

Brick

Walls: Stone

Wood/weatherboards

Wood/shingle

Wood/log

Roof: Asphalt

Terra Cotta

Metal/tin

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Lynncote Historic District encompasses a collection of resources just north of the town of Tryon, North Carolina, associated with, and developed by, Emma Payne Erskine Corwin in the 1910s and early 1920s, as well as Lynncote (NR, 2010), a Tudor Revival mansion completed in 1928. Charles and Emma Payne Erskine built the original Lynncote estate in the 1890s as seasonal residents of Tryon before making it their year-round home. The small district includes the residual Lynncote estate and its associated resources on the west side of Lynn Road (NC 108), along with four additional residences located on the east side of the road. The district boundary encircles the wooded topography of the Lynncote grounds across Lynn Road, which was originally built by Charles Erskine as an estate road with gates at either end of his property.

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The county made Erskine's estate road part of the public road from Tryon to Lynn around 1904. Apart from Lynncote, the four residences within the district were developed by Emma Erskine following the death of her husband in 1908, as a means to raise income and sustain herself in widowhood; she married Cecil S. Corwin in 1916. Rendered in the Craftsman and Rustic Revival styles, the modest dwellings were occupied by members of the Erskine family, sold, or held as rental property. After the first Lynncote was destroyed by fire in 1916, Emma Corwin primarily resided at Wren's Nest, one of the dwellings she built in the district.

Narrative Description

The Lynncote Historic District encompasses a small group of residential properties associated with Emma Payne Erskine Corwin (1854-1924), a noted author, artist, social activist, and real estate developer, just outside the town limits of Tryon, North Carolina. The district includes the residual acreage of the Lynncote estate built by Charles and Emma Erskine of Racine, Wisconsin, as a seasonal residence in the 1890s. Lynncote stands approximately three-fourths of a mile north of Tryon and approximately one mile southwest of the rural community of Lynn. While much of the acreage in the district belongs to Lynncote, the estate Ms. Corwin built with her first husband, Charles Erskine (1847-1908), the Lynncote Historic District primarily contains resources built after the first house burned in 1916 and she married Cecil S. Corwin of New York, an architect. Emma Corwin was deeply involved in the cultural life of Tryon—painting and writing, giving talks to the Lanier Club, and providing land and raising funds for the construction of a new library building. She managed the estate following the death of Charles Erskine, developed portions of the property to support herself, and expanded into other areas of real estate development.

Around the time the first Lynncote burned, Ms. Corwin's estate encompassed more than 600 acres extending primarily to the east and west of the main house. Prior to the fire, Corwin began developing rental properties around Tryon, often in tandem with William F. Smith, a designer and builder who moved to Tryon in 1907. Beginning around 1915, Erskine conceived plans to develop a subdivision, Holly Hills, and build a golf course on land to the southwest of her home. Although the subdivision stalled, she gave land and hired Donald Ross of Pinehurst, North Carolina, to design the nine-hole golf course, which opened in 1917 as the Tryon Country Club (NR, 2013).¹ Corwin worked with Smith to build several cottages in Tryon and on the east side of Lynn Road, including the Craftsman-influenced Over The Way and Wren's Nest around

¹ Clay Griffith and Jane Templeton, "Tryon Country Club" National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Acme Preservation Services, Asheville, NC, 2012.

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1915. She built a rustic gambrel-roof, pole-log cottage in 1922 and sold a lot to the Uchtmann sisters of Chicago for a Rustic Revival style log dwelling in 1923. The row of four houses oriented toward Lynn Road opposite Lynncote comprise a cohesive collection of modest dwellings that Corwin developed to help provide income and accommodate family and guests; Wren's Nest became Corwin's primary residence in the final years of her life.

NC Highway 108 (Lynn Road) roughly bisects the Lynncote Historic District as it passes between Ms. Corwin's Lynncote property on the west side and several of her rental cottages on the northeast side of the winding road. Originally built to serve the estate, Charles Erskine laid out the road in the late 1890s in a sweeping serpentine alignment from north to south following the natural contours of the property. The county assumed control of the estate road in 1904 as part of a new route between Tryon and Lynn, approximately two miles distant. The present alignment of Lynn Road continues to follow the route of Erskine's estate road and has become the principal thoroughfare connecting Tryon with the community of Lynn and the county seat of Columbus, roughly four miles to the northeast.

The district consists of six contributing (five buildings and one structure) and nine non-contributing (five buildings and four structures) resources with an additional four contributing resources previously listed in the National Register in 2010. The six contributing resources include all of the primary buildings, while the non-contributing resources are all secondary structures and ancillary buildings. The previously listed resources include three contributing buildings, one contributing site, and two non-contributing structures. A contributing building, site, structure, or object adds to the historic associations, historic architectural qualities, or archaeological values for which the property is significant. Contributing resources add to the property's significance because they were present during the period of significance, relate to its documented historic significance, and possess historic integrity. A non-contributing building, site, structure, or object does not add to the historic associations, historic architectural qualities, or archaeological values for which the property is significant. Non-contributing resources do not add to the property's significance because they were not present during the period of significance, do not relate to its documented historic significance, or no longer possess historic integrity due to alterations, disturbances, or other changes. Alterations to a building's overall form, massing, and scale; changing or obscuring the majority of exterior materials; or the removal of character-defining stylistic elements negatively affect the historic integrity of the property's resources. The inventory of the historic district begins with Lynncote and summarizes the resources on the west side of Lynn Road, which were previously listed in the National Register. The inventory continues with an entry for the old estate road, which later became part of the public road between Tryon and Lynn, followed by the resources on the

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northeast side of Lynn Road that were built by Emma Corwin after the death of Charles Erskine, beginning at north and moving south.

1. Lynncote, 3318 Lynn Road, 1927-1928

Contributing building (NR)

Lynncote² is a well-crafted Tudor Revival-style dwelling located at 3318 Lynn Road (NC Highway 108) just outside the incorporated limits of Tryon. Sited on a promontory overlooking the Pacolet River and Harmon Field, Tryon's historic recreation ground, to the north, the house occupies a heavily wooded 20-acre site and stands in a small clearing at the apex of the site, which slopes away severely on the north, east, and west sides. A Y-shaped driveway marked by a modest wooden sign bearing the name "Lynncote" enters the property from Lynn Road and winds around the west and north sides of the house before terminating on its east side. The Pacolet River borders the northern edge of the property, and Erskine Road and neighboring residential properties roughly define the southern boundary. A deep ravine separates the Lynncote property from the adjacent Tryon Presbyterian Church, built in 1958, and other residential properties on the west side.

The present Lynncote is the second house to occupy the property, which was purchased by Charles and Emma Erskine in 1892. The first house, completed around 1896, burned in 1916, leaving only a ruinous shell. The Erskines' daughter, Susan, and her husband, Carroll P. Rogers, rebuilt Lynncote in 1927 on the foundations of the first house and integrated the site's existing landscape features, including stone retaining walls dating from the 1890s, into the overall design of the property.³

The main house is a picturesque two-story, Tudor Revival-style dwelling that was built up from the surviving first-story stone walls of the original Lynncote. The present home was designed by prominent Hendersonville architect Erle Stillwell with input from the Rogers, and Mrs. Rogers' brother, Harold Erskine, an architect and renowned sculptor.

The house has been little altered since it was listed on the National Register in 2010. The primary change has been the repair and replacement of the Ludovici roof tiles around 2015.

² The following descriptions of Lynncote and its associated resources provide a brief overview of the property using text from the original nomination prepared by the author. The descriptive entries have been updated where changes have occurred. See Clay Griffith, "Lynncote" National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Acme Preservation Services, Asheville, NC, 2010.

³ Susan Erskine Rogers documented her family history and numerous specific details about the house in her memoir, *My Family Remembered* (Tryon, NC: Published by author, 1976), 33-38. The Rogers's original plans, specifications, and contracts for the construction of the house from the private collection of R. Anderson and Linda Haynes, Tryon, NC.

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The roof tiles were typically removed, numbered, and reinstalled following repair work on the roof structure and deck and upgrades to the underlayment. Replacement Ludovici tiles were installed as needed.⁴

The other alteration of note at Lynncote since its listing is the ca. 2015 renovation of the two-bay garage, a reinforced concrete structure built into the terraced slope at the north end of the house. The stone-veneer façade has been rebuilt with uncoursed masonry in keeping with the original stonework of the property. The flat parapet has been raised slightly and capped with a stone coping. Double-leaf glazed-and-paneled wooden garage doors have been installed in the two bays.⁵ A stone archway spanning the driveway at the front of the house physically and visually separates the main façade from the remodeled garage, which does not detract from the overall character and primary elevations of the house.

Landscape, 1890s, ca. 1925, 1953

Contributing site (NR)

Charles Erskine purchased the Lynncote property in 1892 during a trip to Tryon, when Mr. and Mrs. Erskine, along with their son Harold ("Hal"), stayed at the nearby McAboy Inn. The Erskines favored this hilltop site near the inn for its commanding panorama of the valley and mountains despite the fact that it was not as high as the hills to the east and west. Distant mountain views from the property diminished in later years as the wooded site has grown and matured, but the character of the wooded hilltop site remains clearly evident.

The original house was located near the top of the hill, with terraces built around the house in order to have a garden. Charles Erskine laid out the curving driveway that enters the property from Lynn Road and winds around the west and north sides of the house before terminating on the east side. He planned the pathways, stairs, and terraces around the property in the 1890s and oversaw the construction of the extensive network of rock walls that define the landscape. In addition to the stone walls, a stone archway projecting at the north end of the house formed a gateway that framed a visitor's first full view of the house façade. Two cottages were originally located on the property, including a coachman's cottage, known as "The Wayside," near the public road (Lynn Road) and a servant's cottage located on the west side of the driveway near the present-day Lodge. Both cottages no longer stand although remnants of their stone foundations are visible. In the early years a tennis court (now removed) southeast of the house was one of very few courts in Tryon and

⁴ Linda Haynes, personal communication, May 7, 2019.

⁵ Ibid.

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often used by the Erskine children and visitors to Tryon. Charles Erskine also built a road through his property, which was appropriated by the county around 1904 for public use (present-day NC Highway 108).

In the spring of 1925, Susan Erskine Rogers employed a trained French gardener and his wife, Andre and Clotilde Thuillier, to help out with the Lynncote property, which had become overgrown by that time. The couple lived in Wayside, the coachman's cottage near the property entrance. Andre Thuillier helped to reclaim and restore the landscaping, including the tennis court, and Clotilde later worked as the cook. In 1932, the Thuilliers returned to France.



The Little Room, photograph from *Sky-Land* (January 1915), p. 732

The Little Room, ca. 1910, ca. 1928

Contributing building (NR)

Since Lynncote was listed in the National Register, new information has been discovered regarding the most significant of the property's outbuildings. Built in first decade of the twentieth century, the building referred to as the **workshop** in the National Register

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nomination, was known as “the Little Room,” which served as Emma Payne Erskine’s writing studio during the 1910s. In a 1915 interview for *Sky-Land* magazine, Ms. Erskine was asked where she worked and replied: “In the Little Room. It’s a room I had built to work in—apart from the house. I go there after breakfast, before seeing anyone, and write until I automatically stop.”⁶ Erskine, following the death of her husband, wrote her most popular and well-known novels at Lynncote, including *The Mountain Girl* (1912), *The Eye of Dread* (1913), and *A Girl of the Blue Ridge* (1915).

Located alongside the driveway to the north of the house, the Little Room is a one-story, one-room frame building covered with stucco and capped by an asphalt-shingle gable-on-hip roof. The building was originally sheathed with German siding and was likely covered with stucco at the time the Rogers rebuilt Lynncote in 1927-1928. In the 2010s, the rotted sills of the building were replaced, but no other significant changes to the building have occurred.⁷

Swimming Pool, 1953

Non-contributing structure

An in-ground swimming pool was installed in 1953 to the northwest of the house at the top of the knoll. A flagstone deck surrounds the rectangular pool with a walkway leading to the enclosed porch on the north side of the house. The yard area around the pool is graded, terraced, and bordered by stone retaining walls.

Cabana, ca. 1953

Non-contributing structure

Erected to the west of the pool at approximately the same time, the cabana is a rustic one-story, open-air shelter with timber corner posts resting on stone knee walls, diagonal corner braces, exposed rafter ends, and vertical wood siding in the gable ends. The side gable roof is covered with the same Ludowici clay roof tiles as the main house.

The Lodge, 3316 Lynn Road, 1925-1926, 1980s

Contributing building (NR)

Carroll and Susan Rogers built the Lynncote Lodge in 1925-1926 as a winter home on the site of Emma Payne Erskine’s studio, which burned in 1920.⁸ Mrs. Rogers’ brother, Hal

⁶ Quoted by Hilliard Booth in “A Visit to the Home of Payne Erskine,” *Sky-Land* (January 1915), 733.

⁷ Haynes, personal communication.

⁸ “Tryon,” *The Polk County News*, January 9, 1920, 5.

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Erskine, visited the couple in the fall of 1925 and drew a rough sketch of the Lodge. As Carroll Rogers was unusually busy with the expansion of two businesses, Susan Rogers oversaw the construction of the house.

The Lodge is a tall one-story, side-gable, stuccoed frame dwelling resting on a stone foundation that extends upward to form informal stone quoins and one bay at the southwest corner that originally served as a open porch. The porch was enclosed with groups of modern one-over-one windows in the 1980s. Three garage bays are located on the lower level and accessed through openings in the stone foundation wall facing the driveway on the west side. In the west gable end, a shed-roof stuccoed bay, lit by a group of large metal-frame casements, cantilevers over the center garage bay. A cutaway corner at the northwest accentuates the single-leaf entrance, which is sheltered by a polygonal roof canopy supported on triangular brackets.

An expansive wood deck was added around 1982 to the rear (south) of the Lodge. In the mid-1980s, the Lodge was further enlarged with a one-story, gable-roof, stuccoed addition to the east side, which included a one-bay carport and small storage rooms. At the same time as the exterior alterations were made, the interior was remodeled with the installation of a dropped ceiling that obscures the original cathedral ceiling and loft.

2. Lynn Road (NC 108), ca. 1896, 1904

Contributing structure

North Carolina Highway 108 (Lynn Road) as it passes through the Lynncote Historic District traces a sweeping serpentine alignment along the natural contours of the land. The heavily shaded highway is bordered by densely wooded and rolling topography. While the Lynncote residence occupies a promontory set back and barely visible from the road, the four modest residences developed by Emma Payne Erskine Corwin stand closer to the highway with stone retaining walls and flowering shrubs and trees providing visual interest and variation. Charles Erskine originally built the road through his Lynncote property around 1896 and placed gates at either end, which no longer exist. The route generally extended from the circular town limits of Tryon north to intersections with Harmon Field and Howard Gap roads. The county assumed control of Erskine's road in 1904 and the route through the Lynncote property became the principal route between Tryon and Lynn.

Prior to 1904, the path from Tryon to the community of Lynn passed near the Mimosa Inn, located at 65 Mimosa Inn Drive, to the east of Lynncote and approached Tryon along present-day Wilderness Road, southeast of the historic district. The area where the present Lynn, Erskine, Wilderness, and Screven roads, along with McFarland Drive, intersect was known as

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the "Five Forks." Just south of the Five Forks intersection, Charles Erskine erected a stone bridge over a small creek and built a dam to form a pond and small park. Legal entanglements with a downstream property owner caused Charles Erskine to destroy the dam, which his son, Ralph, rebuilt around 1910 to supply water power to his new business enterprise, the Tryon Chair Factory.⁹ Both Erskine Bridge and Erskine Pond, as they are commonly known, remain standing.¹⁰

The Tryon township highway commissioners estimated that the cost to create the Tryon-Lynn Road was approximately \$1,500. A jury awarded nearly \$700 in damages to three "aggrieved" property owners, including \$310 to Charles Erskine.¹¹ Mrs. C. P. Thomas received \$250 in the settlement, and W. H. Stearns received \$112.50. In 1907, the highway commissioners awarded a contract for grading and macadamizing the road to Maj. W. E. Strong.¹² The road's popularity was noted by a local newspaper, which wrote, "That fine 3½ mile stretch of macadam from Tryon to Lynn...has demonstrated its value as an attraction to the town's many visitors, who use it daily for motoring, driving and riding."¹³

3. Over The Way, 3357 Lynn Road, ca. 1915

Contributing building

The one-story Craftsman-influenced frame dwelling known as "Over the Way" was built by William F. Smith for Emma Payne Erskine around 1915. The southwest-facing house perches atop an elevated site overlooking Lynn Road with three-tiered rock retaining walls descending the steep slope located along the road frontage. Mature deciduous trees, rhododendron, azaleas, other shrubs, and ivy cover the bank and help screen the house from view along the highway. Stone steps are cut into the slope and rise in a straight run from the road to the front porch. The rock walls are rounded at the north end and turn to form a single-level retaining wall along the driveway to the house. A stone sidewalk on the north side of the house leading from the driveway to the front entrance displays brick steps and cheek walls, as well as metal railings with decorative bracing. A looping driveway enters the property from the west and is divided by a grass swale and several mature trees. Lamp posts on stone piers are positioned along the

⁹ Rogers, 13 and 23.

¹⁰ Erskine Bridge and the pond lie just outside the boundaries of the district due to the construction of a funeral home at the Five Forks intersection in 1962 and subsequent buildings that separate the bridge and pond from the other resources associated with Lynncote.

¹¹ "A Newsy Letter From Lynn," *The Polk County News*, January 12, 1905, 3.

¹² "Tryon News," *The Polk County News*, October 24, 1907, 3.

¹³ "Tryon Is Busy," *Western North Carolina Times*, January 19, 1912, 1.

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inner loop of the driveway, while the southern portion of the driveway approaching Over The Way is bordered by a tall, stone retaining wall.

Resting on a stuccoed brick foundation and basement that is exposed at the rear, the main house is capped by a hip roof of pressed tin shingles with deep overhanging eaves. Low shed dormers on the north and south roof slopes have exposed rafter tails and louvered wooden vents. Two interior brick chimneys have been covered with a thin layer of stucco. The house is covered with wood shingle siding and the singled walls flare slightly above the concrete foundation. The windows are typically original paired eight-light wood frame casements with some smaller casements and transoms. A picture window on the northwest elevation of the basement appears to be a later replacement.

An inset full-width porch dominates the southwest-facing façade and is carried on four Tuscan columns with a replacement metal railing. The porch shelters mid-century replacement double-leaf entry doors with jalousie windows, three pairs of wood casement windows, and a horizontal band of four single-light wood-sash windows that illuminate the kitchen. The façade is organized with the large bank of casement windows at the center and the entrance set at the west end. A secondary entrance on the south elevation contains a late-twentieth-century replacement single-leaf door and is accessed from an uncovered concrete stoop that connects to steps descending along the side of the house to a single-leaf basement entry door with jalousie windows. The north elevation exhibits several window groups including two pairs of casements flanking a blind bay and topped by continuous transoms. The rear (east) elevation is composed of five bays defined by basement pilasters. Mid-century replacement double-leaf entry doors with jalousie windows are located in the center bay at the basement level. An exterior metal fire stair is attached to the rear elevation and rises to a landing and replacement single-leaf entry door on the upper level. The door contains jalousie windows and abuts a pair of casement windows.

Though vacant, the interior appears to retain a good degree of integrity with a large brick chimney; built-in cabinets and shelves; plaster walls; baseboard, cornice, and picture moldings; and two-panel doors. The front room is divided into two sections by paired square posts resting on a paneled knee wall. Exposed wooden beams remain intact on the ceiling of the front room. The interior doors appear to be primarily two-panel single-leaf doors topped by two-light transom, although multi-light double-leaf doors open into a small side room from the front room.

Among the numerous properties that Emma Payne Erskine Corwin developed over the years, Over The Way stood in closest proximity to Lynncote, although beyond the coachman's cottage (no longer standing) and across the road, which possibly inspired its name. The

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residence was built around 1915 by William Frank Smith, who collaborated with Corwin on a number of rental and speculative houses, which Corwin used to provide income in the period following the death of Charles Erskine. She leased Over The Way to seasonal visitors such as Mr. and Mrs. Julius Sawyer for the fall 1918 and Mrs. Sanford Crapo sometime earlier.¹⁴ Col. E. S. Wigel and his daughter, Mrs. W. L. McGregor, rented the house in February 1918, while Mrs. McGregor's husband served on the front in France during World War I. In September 1919, Emma Corwin sold Over the Way to Tryon residents W. B. and Maude Weigel.¹⁵ After his wife died in 1929, the widowed W. B. Weigel continued to reside in the house with a housekeeper until 1940, when the property was sold to William and Mary Knight (DB 73:315). A succession of owners followed until Earl and Betty Tipton purchased the property in 1964 (DB 133:4). The Tiptons used the property as a nursing care facility in later years. They remain the owners of record although the property is vacant and deteriorating.

Shed, ca. 2010

Non-contributing building

A one-story frame shed with a metal-clad shed roof, plywood sheathing, and exposed rafters rests on concrete blocks southeast of the house. A single-leaf plywood door is located on the north elevation, along with two 6-light fixed sash windows.

Chicken coop, ca. 2010

Non-contributing structure

A single-pen chicken coop stands directly behind the shed. The coop is constructed of concrete block with open frame walls and a gable roof structure above enclosed with chicken wire. The asphalt-shingle roof has exposed rafters, and a single-leaf plywood door is located on the west elevation.

Guest House, ca. 1936

Non-contributing building

The guest house sits on an elevated site northeast of the main house. Resting on a brick foundation and facing northwest, the house presents a one-story front-gable form with an exterior brick chimney on the southwest elevation, polygonal bay window on the façade, and an added front wing with a low-pitched gable roof. The house has an asphalt-shingle roof, wood shingle siding, enclosed eaves, and typically eight-light wood-sash casement windows. The projecting wing helps frame an entrance terrace at the front of the house,

¹⁴ *The Polk County News*, September 6, 1918, 5, and September 26, 1919, 7.

¹⁵ *The Polk County News*, September 19, 1919, 5.

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which is covered with broken tile. The central, single-leaf multi-light entry door is sheltered by an attached aluminum awning. The polygonal bay window with eight-light wood casements is positioned to the west and a replacement two-over-two double-hung wood-sash window with horizontal muntins is located to the east. The wing, which is covered with wood shingles, is entered through sliding glass doors flanked by replacement double-hung windows. The front rooms of the guest house are rustic in finish with dark wood paneling and built-in shelves and cabinets. A lengthy wood handicap-accessible ramp rises to the west of the house before connecting on the rear elevation. A concrete block retaining wall frames a landing at the single-leaf rear entry door.

Gazebo, ca. 2000

Non-contributing structure

Situated between the main house and guest house, the gazebo is a pyramidal-roof frame structure with stout wooden posts at the corners, diagonal brackets, cross-braced wood railing, and wood deck flooring.

4. Wren's Nest, 39 Wilderness Road, ca. 1915, ca. 1950

Contributing building

Wren's Nest is a one-story hip-roof frame dwelling constructed by William F. Smith as a rental property for Emma Corwin. The house occupies a heavily wooded lot and sits atop a steep slope overlooking Lynn Road to the south. The overgrown bank between the house and highway is shaded by mature deciduous trees and is largely covered with ivy. Evidence of a terrace in front of the house and access to the original façade is mostly lost beneath the vegetation. The wooded lot screens the house from view of the highway for much of the year. The sloping property offers no access between the road and the house, which may have been originally accessed from the twin lanes serving Over The Way. At present the dwelling is approached from an access road, or alley, that connects with Wilderness Road to the southeast, and the house is entered at the rear. The cleared area on the northeast (rear) side of the house contains the several outbuildings associated with the property. A fieldstone walkway connects to the rear deck that serves as an entry porch.

Resting on a stone foundation, the house presents a long façade with a projecting hip-roof window bay, an interior brick chimney, exposed rafter tails, and small gabled vents on the hip-roof slopes. The windows are typically replacement one-over-one sash. The window bay on the west elevation contains six single-leaf windows. A south wing addition features an inset porch with a solid balustrade, but the porch roof is partially collapsed. A projecting shed-roof bay on the east elevation contains the principal entrance at present, which consists of a replacement

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single-leaf entry door. An attached wooden deck at the rear is bordered by a thin metal fencing. A hip-roof extension that wraps around the north, east, and west sides of the house is carried on stone piers foundation walls. An exterior brick chimney is located on the north elevation and the eaves display exposed rafter tails. The extension is illuminated by banks of large six-light sliding-sash windows. Two sets of these three-part wood-sash windows are located on the west elevation, while two others three-part windows and two pairs are located on the north elevation. The east side of the extension has replacement double-leaf glazed doors.

Smith built Wren's Nest for Emma Corwin around 1915, and it was one of the earliest rental cottages she built on land adjacent to Lynncote. She apparently favored Wren's Nest and resided there in later years after the main house at Lynncote burned in 1916. After Ms. Corwin's death in 1924, the house returned to use as a rental property. In 1934, her sister, Bertha Newell, acquired Wren's Nest from Corwin's estate (DB 65:304). Ms. Newell sold the property to James D. Ames in 1944 (DB 80:295).

Carport, ca. 1950

Non-contributing structure

A one-bay frame carport is capped by an asphalt-shingle front-gable roof. The roof structure, which is supported by bracketed square wooden posts, has vertical wood siding in the gable ends. The structure is currently used for general storage, but the rear of the carport is enclosed with a frame wall.

Storage building, ca. 2010

Non-contributing building

A prefabricated metal-frame storage building stands to the southeast of the house. It has a front-gable roof, metal siding, and a metal roll-up door on the façade.

Playhouse, ca. 2010

Non-contributing building

A one-story frame playhouse (or garden shed) is capped by a metal front-gable roof and covered with half-log siding. A single-leaf aluminum storm door provides access to the interior and is surmounted by a four-light window in the upper gable end. Paired double-hung windows are located on the side elevations. The building is currently used for general storage.

Shed, ca. 2010

Non-contributing structure

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A one-story open-frame shed located in the side yard has a metal-clad shed roof supported by square wooden posts with an attached pent roof on the front. One bay at the west end is partially enclosed with half-log siding, horizontal boards, and vertical wood slats. The shed is currently used for general storage.

5. Uchtmann-Landrum House, 3465 Lynn Road, ca. 1923, ca. 1980s, ca. 2017

Contributing building

The Uchtmann-Landrum House occupies a partially wooded site set back from Lynn Road, which passes to the southwest with a low, decorative stone wall extending across the front of the property at the highway. A grass lawn slopes upward toward the house, while a paved driveway entering the property from the south terminates in front of the garage on the southeast side of the house. The lawn in front of the house is punctuated by a variety of deciduous trees with two towering mature trees shading the façade. A fieldstone patio and stone retaining wall wrap around the rear of the house. A wooden privacy fence extends along the rear of the property where it abuts an access road.

The two-story log-and-frame house was built around 1923 and occupied for many years by sisters Katherine and Lillian Uchtmann of Chicago. The Rustic Revival-style house rests on a stone foundation with a partial basement and is built of saddle-notched pole-log construction. The single-pile second story is covered with weatherboards and is capped by an asphalt-shingle triple-A roof. A tall gable roof at the rear forms a half-story that appears to have been added or remodeled in the 1980s above the original log portions of the house. Gabled dormers with exposed rafter tails and louvered vents are located on either side of the rear roof gable. The house has an interior brick chimney and diamond-paned multi-light windows in the upper gable ends at the front and rear of the house. Windows throughout the house are typically replacement six-over-six double-hung sash, likely installed in the 1980s or later. On the northwest side elevation, an original window group composed of two pairs of three-light metal-frame casements illuminates the kitchen on the interior.

On the façade, the original shed-roof porch supported on stone piers has been partially enclosed with board-and-batten siding and a projecting center bay. The enclosed portion of the porch has a large picture window composed of four single-pane sliding sash and a round-arch multi-light window. A single-leaf entry door on the west side of the projecting bay serves as the primary entrance to the house. Since December 2017, a second shed-roof porch has been attached to the house, sheltering the enclosed sections of the original porch. The new porch displays turned wooden posts, a wood picket railing, and plywood sheathing that encloses the foundation.

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At the rear of the house, a one-story entrance vestibule, or sunroom, has been added with a low-pitched gable roof, single-leaf multi-light doors, and floor-to-ceiling windows. The sunroom projects from the rear elevation composed of the log first story and broad gable end of the rear half-story addition. The sunroom addition appears to have been made in the 1980s, possibly at the same time the rear half-story was added or remodeled. The interior of the house has been remodeled and updated but appears to retain some original wood paneled walls, beaded board wainscoting, built-in shelving, and a first-floor mantel.

It is unclear whether the log house was constructed for the Uchtmann sisters or built by Emma Corwin as a speculative development, which they purchased in 1923 (DB 30:280).¹⁶ The two women spent the summer 1924 in their "Swiss Log house" before returning to Chicago in September.¹⁷ Both women were teachers, who had resided in Jane Addams' Hull House at one point in their lives. Following their return for the academic year, the Uchtmanns leased the house to Lucy Peet of Chicago, who had purchased property near the Mimosa Inn in the spring of 1924 and was waiting for her own house, Dogwood, to be completed.¹⁸ Lillian Uchtmann died in 1937, but Katherine Uchtmann continued to occupy the house, at least part time, until she retired from teaching. She died in Tryon in 1952.¹⁹

After Katherine Uchtmann's death, the property passed to John G. Landrum, Jr., who owned the property with his wife until 1983. Earl and Betty Tipton, owners of Over The Way, purchased the house in 1983, and later transferred it to their daughter, Lori Tipton Manness (DB 182:1253 and 213:2772). The Tiptons operated the house as Twin Lanes, a home health care facility, until sometime around 2008, when the property went into foreclosure (DB 369:812). The present owners purchased the property in 2017 (DB 426:1342) and acquired an adjacent vacant lot (PIN P48-298) at the same time.

Garage, ca. 1940, 2018

Located to the east of the house and set into slope of the site, a one-story carport was substantially remodeled into an enclosed garage in 2018. The original open frame structure displayed a partial-height concrete block retaining wall, rough-hewn logs, and round posts

Non-contributing building

¹⁶ The Uchtmann sisters purchased the house and its one-third-acre lot for \$5,500 in October 1923. The following year, following the death of Emma Corwin, they purchased an adjacent, undeveloped lot of similar size for \$500 from her estate (DB 44:442).

¹⁷ "Additional Local Items," *The Polk County News*, September 4, 1924, 8.

¹⁸ "Will Build Winter Home Here," *The Polk County News*, March 6, 1924, 1; *The Polk County News*, June 12, 1924, 5.

¹⁹ "Miss Uchtmann Passes at 84," *Asheville Citizen*, April 23, 1952, 2.

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supporting a front-gable roof structure with horizontal wood siding in the gable ends. In 2018, the front and side elevations were enclosed with wood siding and an attached pent roof on triangular brackets was added to the façade. The pent roof shelters a single-leaf multi-light door and a horizontal window band composed of five 6-light wood sash windows.

6. Corwin Log House, 3525 Lynn Road, ca. 1922, ca. 1950s, ca. 2018 Contributing building

Located just north of the Five Forks intersection, where Lynn Road (NC 108) intersects with Erskine, Wilderness, and Screven roads, the Corwin Log House occupies a wooded site overlooking the road to the southwest. A low, decorative stone wall along the edge of the property at Lynn Road was repaired and built-up during the rehabilitation of the property in 2018, while the area in front of the house is terraced with an irregularly coursed stone wall pierced by stone steps at the center. A paved loop driveway enters the property on the east side of the house, circles around the rear, and returns to the road on the west side of the residence. A short spur driveway on the east side approaches the detached garage located northeast of the house. A cluster of mature trees behind the low stone wall at the front of the property helps screen the house from the highway.

The one-and-a-half-story Rustic Revival-style log dwelling rests on a foundation of irregularly coursed stone and is constructed of saddle-notched pole logs with a recessed central entrance bay on the façade and a projecting central bay on the rear. An asphalt-shingle side-gambrel roof caps the residence and displays front and rear shed dormers and two interior brick chimneys. The gambrel ends were originally covered with wood shingle siding that was replaced by paneled and battened wood sheathing in the 1950s; new wood shingles were installed in the gambrel ends and on the dormers in 2018. The windows are typically paired two-light wood-frame casements, with four-light wood-frame casements in the dormers and gambrel ends.

Central wood steps flanked by stone cheek walls rise to the inset front porch, which shelters a single-leaf multi-light entry door flanked on either side by paired two-light wood-frame casement windows. The porch ceiling is battened plywood panels. At the north end of the façade, a paneled wood planting box on a stone base was added in the 1950s. The wood-paneled planting box extends beneath the three sets of paired casement windows on the northwest end of the façade.

On the rear elevation, the projecting central bay contains a single-leaf entry door flanked on either side by paired two-light wood-frame casement windows. The door is composed with

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Craftsman-type vertical lights over three horizontal panels. Stone veneer has been added at the corners and below the window sills on the rear elevation. While not original, the stone veneer probably dates to the second half of the twentieth century. A fieldstone terrace bordered by a stone retaining wall lies at the rear of the house.

The northwest side elevation contains two large window groups on the first story, each composed of two sets of paired two-light wood-frame casement windows with a wide central mullion. A central pair of casement windows in the gambrel end is flanked by smaller four-light windows and surmounted by a louvered vent. The southeast side elevation is similarly composed with two pairs of casements on the first story and a three-part opening in the gambrel end. Glazed double-leaf entry doors, however, fill the center portion of the gambrel end opening. An exterior wood stair is attached to the south elevation and rises to a landing at the second story. The doors and windows in the gambrel end of the southeast side elevation appear to be original although the exterior wooden stairs are clearly a late-twentieth-century replacement or addition.

The interior of the house is arranged around a large central hall that extends the full depth of the house. A brick fireplace is located on the south side of the hall with two entry doors accessing two rooms and a shared bathroom in the south end of the house. Each of the two rooms contains a narrow, brick corner fireplace. Three doors located on the north side of the hall access the two rooms in the north end of the house as well as enclosed stairs to the second story.

The log house appears to have been built around 1922 for Emma Corwin. A brief item in the *Asheville Citizen* on October 11, 1922, noted that "Mrs. C. S. Corwin has nearly completed a cottage built of stone, capped by logs, not far from Wren's Nest." In 1924, a local newspaper item noted that "Mr. and Mrs. Perkins have taken the Corwin Log Cabin for the remainder of the season."²⁰

The disposition of the log house immediately after Mrs. Corwin's death is unclear at this time. The property appears to have passed through several intermediate owners before it was acquired by the McFarland family in the early 1950s. The McFarlands acquired additional property near Lynncote and erected a funeral home at the Five Forks intersection in 1962. The log house remained with the McFarlands until the late 1990s, when it again passed through a succession of owners. The current owners acquired the house in 2014 (DB 407:1727) and christened it Beowulf Hall, in keeping with its rustic character.

²⁰ "Locals," *The Polk County News and Tryon Bee*, January 24, 1924, 7.

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Garage, ca. 1922, 2019

Contributing building

The detached one-story front-gable garage rises from a concrete slab base and is constructed of brick laid in American bond. The metal-clad roof is supported by exposed rafters and purlins with vertical wood sheathing in the gable ends. The two garage bays are accessed through replacement double-leaf glazed-and-paneled wood doors. The original double-leaf wooden doors were replaced in 2019 due to deterioration.

Integrity Statement

The Lynncote Historic District retains a high degree of integrity through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The resources within the district include Lynncote, a property individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and its associated resources, as well as additional dwellings built for Emma Corwin as rental and speculative properties. The historic district is closely associated with the productive literary, social, and philanthropic life of Emma Payne Erskine Corwin and illustrates her entrepreneurial development of the Lynncote property to support herself financially following the death of her first husband in 1908. Built in the 1910s and early 1920s, the dwellings and outbuildings are typically rendered in the popular Craftsman and Rustic Revival styles with weatherboard, wood shingle, and log siding. The integrity of design, materials, and workmanship of individual resources has been diminished to some degree with additions, remodelings, and replacement materials, in particular at Wren's Nest and the Uchtmann-Landrum House. Both properties have been altered and enlarged, but the original form, style, and materials remains evident. The small Wren's Nest cottage, which was Emma Corwin's primary residence in her final years, retains its low hip-roof form, weatherboard exterior, and large porch nestled on a wooded site. The loss of access from Lynn Road has shifted the primary approach to the rear of the house with renovations on that elevation of the dwelling. The Uchtmann-Landrum House has been altered with replacement windows in the 1980s and a remodeled porch around 2017. The rustic log architecture and vertical front block of the Uchtmann-Landrum House, however, remains crucial to the visual character of the residence, which has been enlarged with a gabled half-story and sunroom to the rear in the 1980s. While the alterations to Wren's Nest and the Uchtmann-Landrum House diminish their individual integrity, these changes do not detract from the overall architectural character of the resources within the context of the district or their strong association with the productive life of Emma Corwin.

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Statement of Archaeological Potential

The Lynncote Historic District is closely related to the surrounding environment and landscape. Archaeological deposits and remnant landscape features such as paths, retaining walls, and fence lines, debris that accumulated from domestic and property maintenance activities, subsurface features associated with former outbuildings such as filled-in privies and wells, and other structural remains which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the property. Outbuildings associated with the first Lynncote destroyed by fire in 1916 may be present, and stone foundations of the former servant's and coachman's cottages are apparent on the ground surface. Information concerning the character of daily life during the different phases of Emma Payne Erskine Corwin's life and work on the property, as well as structural details and landscape use, can be obtained from the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the property. At this time no investigation has been undertaken to systematically document these existing and potential remains, which should be considered in any future development within the district.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Literature

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1896 – 1928

Significant Dates

1910 – construction of writing studio

ca. 1915 – construction of first rental house

1916 – first Lynncote burns

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Corwin, Emma Payne Erskine

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Smith, William F., builder

Stillwell, Erle G. - architect

Gaines, Wright J. - builder

Arthur, Frank - craftsman

Erskine, Harold - architect

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Lynncote Historic District is a small residential district near Tryon, North Carolina, encompassing Lynncote (NR, 2010), a property individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places and four additional resources associated with, and developed by, Emma Payne Erskine Corwin (1852-1924), who originally developed the Lynncote estate with her first husband, Charles Erskine, beginning in the 1890s. Emma Erskine, who married Cecil S. Corwin after the death of Charles Erskine in 1908, was a socially active artist and writer who contributed greatly to the cultural life of Tryon in the early twentieth century. Erskine's popular novels of the 1910s, including *The Mountain Girl* (1912), *The Eye of Dread* (1913), and *A Girl of the Blue Ridge* (1915), were written in a small, detached writing studio at Lynncote called "the Little Room." Erskine's influence in Tryon included supporting the Lanier Club and library, organizing the Tryon Country Club and golf course, and developing a number of investment properties in Tryon. Four Craftsman and Rustic Revival dwellings primarily built as rental houses stand on the northeast side of NC 108 (Lynn Road) opposite the second house known as Lynncote. One of the cottages, Wren's Nest, became Corwin's principal residence after fire destroyed the first Lynncote in 1916 and her studio in 1920. The surviving collection of resources in the Lynncote Historic District represent the full, productive life of Emma Payne Erskine Corwin by reflecting the many aspects of her influence in Tryon.

The original house called Lynncote, completed in 1896, was built by Charles and Emma Erskine of Racine, Wisconsin, who purchased the Tryon property in 1892. The Lynncote estate included extensive landscaping executed by Charles Erskine, an estate road through the property, and a writing studio where Emma Erskine produced her best-known works. The Erskines frequently hosted guests and social events at Lynncote. The original house burned in 1916, leaving only portions of the first story stone walls that were incorporated into a new house constructed between 1927 and 1928 by the Erskines' daughter Susan and her husband Carroll P. Rogers. The house, also called Lynncote, is a picturesque Tudor Revival-style house designed by prominent regional architect Erle G. Stillwell. The second Lynncote was listed in the National Register for its local significance in the area of architecture.

The Lynncote Historic District is locally significant and meets Criterion B for the significant contributions of Emma Payne Erskine Corwin in the areas of social history and literature and as the resources most closely associated with her productive life at Lynncote in the early twentieth century. The historic district meets Criterion C for the complementary

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collection of locally significant architecture including Craftsman and Rustic Revival-style rental houses Corwin built with William F. Smith adjacent to Lynncote in the 1910s and 1920s. One of the cottages, Wren's Nest, became Corwin's primary residence in the final years of her life. The period of significance begins in ca. 1896, with the construction of the first Lynncote mansion, and ends in 1928, with completion of the second Lynncote by Charles and Emma Erskine's daughter and son-in-law, Susan and Carroll P. Rogers. Earlier remnants of the Erskines' estate can be found in the landscape, estate road (present-day Lynn Road), and writing studio ("the Little Room") built for Emma Payne Erskine.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historical Background, Social History, and Literature Context

The small mountain town of Tryon, North Carolina, lies in the far southern section of Polk County, just north of the North Carolina/South Carolina state line. Located approximately four miles southwest of Columbus, the county seat founded in 1855, Tryon remained a modest settlement for much of the nineteenth century. The town began to take shape following the arrival of the Asheville-Spartanburg Railroad in 1877. Built with the intention of connecting South Carolina ports and markets with people and resources in North Carolina, Tennessee, and the Ohio Valley, the railroad had a dramatic impact on the economic and social development of Tryon in the late nineteenth century by improving access to the town, which became known for its temperate climate and the scenic beauty of the surrounding countryside.²¹

In order to accommodate the new influx of visitors and travelers, several boarding houses were erected in close proximity to the railroad depot, as well as Tryon's first hotel: the Tryon City Hotel. Built in 1882 by T. T. Ballenger and his father-in-law, William Garrison, the Tryon City Hotel was the town's most elaborate structure at the time, and featured Italianate and Queen Anne-style ornamentation. The hotel hosted a variety of famous visitors as Tryon

²¹ D. William Bennett, ed., *Polk County, North Carolina, History* (Tryon, NC: Polk County Historical Association, Inc., 1983), 5; Bill Sharpe, *A New Geography of North Carolina*, Vol. III (Raleigh, NC: Sharpe Publishing Company, 1961), 1536-1538.

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gained a reputation among social and cultural elites drawn to the area's restful charm and natural beauty.²²

Tryon's reputation in artistic and intellectual circles was influenced early on by renowned poet Sidney Lanier (1842-1881), who spent the last days of his life in Lynn, a community halfway between Tryon and Columbus. In 1889, three sisters from Minnesota, the LeDucs, new residents to Tryon, and two friends, Mrs. Amelia Spencer and Mrs. Thomas Knott, solicited interest among residents and visitors alike about forming a library. A group of 38 women met and organized the Lanier Club to promote intellectual and cultural stimulation within the community and create a library named in honor of the poet. Sidney Lanier's widow gave two volumes of his poetry to the nascent Lanier Library, which opened to the public in 1890.²³

Early visitors to Tryon were also served by the McAboy House, a popular inn located north of town near Lynn. Dr. L. R. McAboy, a Presbyterian minister from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, purchased the Dr. Columbus Mills House in the 1870s, added a third story, and converted it into an inn that was a favorite of guests from the north. Visitors to Tryon often became enchanted with the community's salubrious climate and decided to buy property for seasonal or year-round use. Many of these new residents, including artists, writers, and industrialists, came from the North or upper Midwest regions of the country and helped to solidify and spread Tryon's reputation as a first-class resort town in the early twentieth century.²⁴

One influential family visiting Tryon in the late nineteenth century was the Erskines of Racine, Wisconsin, who first traveled to western North Carolina in 1885. Charles Edwin Erskine (1846-1908) and Emma Payne Erskine (1852-1924) initially came to Tryon after finding Asheville crowded with consumptives and other health-seekers. Married in 1872, Charles and Emma Erskine had six children: Alfred, Harold (Hal), Ralph, Violet, Malcolm, and Susan. Charles Erskine worked as treasurer for the Case Machinery Company, an important manufacturer of farm equipment, but he detested the harsh Wisconsin winters. The Erskines maintained a second residence in Pasadena, California, but the distance between Wisconsin and California—coupled

²² The Tryon City Hotel was later known as Oak Hall and remained a local landmark until its demolition in 1979. Diane E. Lea and Claudia Roberts, *An Architectural and Historical Survey of Tryon, North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1979), 1-5, 9-13; Catherine W. Bishir, Michael T. Southern, and Jennifer F. Martin, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 186-188, 191-192.

²³ Lea and Roberts, 4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 2-7. The present-day Greenlife Inn at the Mimosa, built in the early 1900s, stands on the site of the McAboy House.

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with Emma Erskine's dislike of Pasadena's formal social milieu—eventually led the family on an extended trip through the southeast that culminated with a stay at the McAboy Inn in 1892. Captivated by the Pacolet River valley around Tryon and Lynn, the Erskines began purchasing land in the area and planning for a hilltop home, which was completed in 1896. The Erskines spent their first winter at "Lynncote" in 1897.²⁵

Lynncote remained a seasonal residence for a number of years, but increasingly became the Erskine family's permanent home as their involvement in the social and cultural life of Tryon expanded into local philanthropy. In the late 1890s, the Erskines helped organize a school at the village of Lynn, which had grown rapidly due to the formation of the Wilcox Hosiery Mill earlier in the decade. Charles Erskine solicited the support of the Northern Congregational Board of Missions to supply two teachers, and the family bought land and built a schoolhouse and teacher's cottage for the community.²⁶ They donated to the construction of a permanent library building for the Lanier Club's 700-book collection, after its temporary home burned in 1904. The Lanier Library opened in 1905 on a lot at the corner of Melrose Avenue and Chestnut Street that the Erskines sold to the club in 1901 (DB 17:24). The family commissioned a new Gothic Revival-style building of local uncoursed stone for the Congregational Church in Tryon, which was designed by Hal Erskine in 1908. The church, where the family was active, still stands at 210 Melrose Avenue.²⁷ Charles Erskine constructed a road through his property, which was then located well outside of town, and placed gates at either end. The road included a stone bridge spanning a stream that, in turn, fed a small lake created on the Erskines' property. In 1904, county officials appropriated the Erskines' estate road for public use (present day Lynn Road).

Charles Erskine died in 1908, and his cash assets were divided equally among his heirs, including his wife and six children. Emma Erskine also received title to all of his land. The family's Racine house was sold and Lynncote became her primary residence. During her time in the southern community, Emma Payne Erskine significantly influenced the growth of Tryon as a cultural center of broad renown. The daughter of Alfred Payne, a professional artist from Chicago, Illinois, Emma Erskine grew up surrounded by people who valued the arts and cultivated creative pursuits. From an early age, she displayed interests in storytelling, working with her hands, and assisting others less fortunate than her. Erskine actively supported the

²⁵ Rogers, 11-13.

²⁶ Ibid., 16.

²⁷ Hal Erskine (1877-1951), one of Charles and Emma Erskine's four sons, studied architecture at Columbia University and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Although he joined the architectural firm of Hagar, Erskine and Blagdon in New York, he is best remembered as a sculptor. Entry for "Harold Perry Erskine" in Michael J. McCue, *Tryon Artists, 1892-1942* (Columbus, NC: Condar Press, 2001), n.p.; Rogers, 19, 24 and 28.

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General Federation of Women's Clubs and the movement for women's suffrage. As the family became permanent residents of Tryon, Emma Erskine deepened her involvement in the cultural life of the town—painting and writing, giving talks to the Lanier Club, and raising funds for the new library, which was constructed in 1905.²⁸ She entertained the Lanier Club at Lynncote and befriended Rachel L. Oliver (1866-1950) of Massachusetts, who spent time visiting at Lynncote in the early 1900s and later became the librarian at the Lanier Library, serving from 1915 until the late 1920s.²⁹

Well-known in social circles and among the cultural elite of Racine and Chicago, Emma Erskine's influence extended to her adopted home of Tryon. With the area's reputation as an informal colony of artists and writers spreading among through the upper Midwest and Northeast, Emma Erskine became one of the early promoters of the region in general and Tryon in particular. Biologist and writer Margaret Warner Morley (1858-1923) visited Tryon regularly in the 1890s before becoming a resident in the early twentieth century and publishing a spirited account of her travels and observations in *The Carolina Mountains* (1913). Morley's rhapsodic prose described "the lovely Pacolet Valley at the foot of Tryon Mountain" and "the wonderful light filling it to the brim, with the exquisite colors that in the early morning and towards night, and at certain times even at midday, seem to convert the solid substance of the earth into an enchanting dream fabric...."³⁰ In her effusive depictions of Tryon, Morley cited the Congregational Church as "the gift of one who lived here and loved the place."³¹

In the wake of her husband's death, Emma Erskine, who had previously written fiction and poetry, avidly resumed writing novels. In the first decade of the twentieth century, she had a small, detached, writing studio built at Lynncote, which she called "the Little Room." Her first novel set in North Carolina, *When the Gates Lift Up Their Heads*, published in 1901, failed to earn much acclaim. The timing of her story of race relations during the Reconstruction period likely hindered its reception in the segregated south. As she resumed writing earnestly under the name Payne Erskine, her story *The Mountain Girl* captured an authentic portrayal of local

²⁸ Entry for "Emma Payne Erskine" in McCue, n.p.

²⁹ "Short Local Items," *The Polk County News*, March 26, 1903, 5; "Short Polk County Items," *The Polk County News*, June 18, 1903, 5; Winfred Morton, "The Tryon Bee Department," *The Polk County News and the Tryon Bee*, December 24, 1915, 1; "Miss Rachel Oliver," *Tryon Daily Bulletin*, January 16, 1950, 1.

³⁰ Margaret W. Morley, *The Carolina Mountains* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913), 41. The cover illustration and frontispiece of Morley's book featured watercolors from her friend and noted painter Amelia M. Watson. Actor and playwright William Gillette (1853-1937), another influential nineteenth-century literary figure connected with Tryon, began a lifelong friendship with Watson in the late 1890s, when he began collecting her sketchbooks and watercolors. William F. Smith built a house and studio for Watson on Melrose Circle in Tryon in 1912.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

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culture and became widely popular. The book was published by Little, Brown & Co. in 1912 and serialized in *Ladies' Home Journal*. The novel went through thirteen printings and was followed by two other popular books, *The Eye of Dread* (1913), and *A Girl of the Blue Ridge* (1915). Emma Erskine wrote these stories in the Little Room at Lynncote.³²

Noted author Margaret Culkin Banning, who moved to Tryon in the 1930s and resided half the year at Friendly Hills (NR, 1998), recounted how "Someone once said that in Tryon, it isn't blood that flows in the veins but ink."³³ A number of notable writers visited or spent time in Tryon in the early twentieth century, working and relaxing, perpetuating the literary reputation of the town.³⁴ In 1905, Mrs. George E. Morton wrote a lengthy account for the Lanier Club of Tryon's many famous or notable guests and mentioned that "our own Mrs. Charles Erskine is known to the public at large as 'Payne Erskine' both as a graceful niter of prose and poetry and also as an artist and she brings around her at her winter home in Tryon many gifted friends."³⁵ At a Western District meeting of the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs in 1916, Emma Erskine read "an interesting paper on 'Wild Flowers in Western North Carolina,' written by Miss Margaret Morley."³⁶ Erskine can be credited, at least partially, with influencing the arrival of Robert and Elia Peattie of Chicago, who retired to Tryon after World War I. Emma Erskine and Elia Peattie (1862-1935) met at a Federation of Women's Clubs meeting in Racine in 1898 and soon became close friends. Elia Peattie served as literary editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, while her husband was associated with the *New York Times*. The relationship between the two families deepened when Ralph Erskine married the Peattie's daughter, Barbara, in 1905. The Peatties adopted active roles in Tryon, establishing a community theater group and organizing the purchase of Pearson's Falls by the Tryon Garden Club.³⁷

In addition to her artistic and literary pursuits in the opening decades of the twentieth century, Emma Erskine capitalized on growing interest in Tryon real estate as a means of augmenting her income. She enlisted William F. Smith, a local designer and builder, to erect rental and speculative houses on portions of her estate or on lots sold off from the Lynncote property. In 1908, Smith served as contractor for the Congregational Church given, in large part,

³² Booth, 733; McCue, n.p.

³³ "Carole Currie, "Margaret Culkin Banning: Indomitable Story Writer," *Asheville Citizen-Times*, April 9, 1972, 1C.

³⁴ F. Scott Fitzgerald made several visits to Tryon in the late 1930s.

³⁵ Mrs. George E. Morton, "Some of Tryon's Noted Guests," *The Polk County News*, January 12, 1905, 1.

³⁶ "The North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs to be Largely Attended," *The Charlotte News*, April 30, 1916, 9.

³⁷ Rogers, 16-17; Richard Walser, "Peattie, Elia (Maria Cahill) W.," *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, William S. Powell, ed., 1994, web: <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/peattie-elia>; accessed June 9, 2021.

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by the Erskines and designed by Hal Erskine. Smith built the first two houses for Emma Erskine in 1912, including Mostly Hall situated above Lynn Road at 66 Fox Trot Lane and the refined Villa Barbara at 115 Villa Barbara Lane for Ralph Erskine and his wife, Barbara Peattie.³⁸ By the mid-1910s Erskine's land holdings covered approximately 600 acres, and she had Smith build the first of several cottages—Over The Way and Wren's Nest—across Lynn Road from Lynncote for rental properties.³⁹

Fire gutted the original Lynncote in 1916, leaving only remnants of the first story stone walls of the house. That same year Emma Erskine married an old family friend, Cecil S. Corwin (1860-1941), an architect with poor business skills. Erskine married, in part, for companionship and with hopes that Corwin, who had been a close friend and associate of Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago, would bring success to her development plans, designing and building houses on her Tryon property. Although the financial prosperity of their real estate endeavors did not materialize, the couple was happily married and enjoyed each other's company despite leading often independent lives in Tryon and New York.⁴⁰

One of the larger properties Emma Corwin sought to develop was an old dairy farm on Little Creek to the west of Lynncote. She planned to convert the farm into a golf course and to sell the surrounding property as building lots, creating the first golf course community in Tryon. She asked William Smith to design six or seven houses for the residential section, which she called Holly Hills. Lot sales were slow and the subdivision did not develop as hoped, but Corwin proceeded with her plans for the golf course. She hired preeminent golf course designer Donald Ross of Pinehurst, North Carolina, to lay out a course for the newly organized Tryon Country Club. Corwin served on the club's board of directors and deeded 54 acres for the golf course as her pledge to the club. The golf course opened in 1917 as the Tryon Country Club.⁴¹

Emma Corwin suffered a stroke in 1918, prompting her children to encourage the placement of her property into a trust on August 31st of that year (DB 38:262). The grouping together of all her property, more than 60 tracts, has subsequently complicated title searches for individual parcels developed prior to consolidation in her trust. George H. Holmes, a

³⁸ These two properties, Mostly Hall and Villa Barbara, remain standing in relatively close proximity to the Lynncote district, but are physically and visually separated by wooded topography and newer construction that is not associated with Emma Corwin.

³⁹ Rogers, 27-28; William Francis Smith, *Tryon, North Carolina Memories* (Bethesda, MD: published by author, 1985), 63-64, 89-90.

⁴⁰ Rogers, 29-30; McCue, n.p.

⁴¹ Rogers, 27; Griffith and Templeton. Her obituary noted that "The beautiful golf course was her gift to the town...." See "Emma Payne Erskine, Noted Artist and Author, Mourned in Tryon, Which She Loved," *Asheville Citizen*, March 8, 1924, 8.

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prominent local banker with the Peoples Bank & Trust Company, served as agent for the trust, and at times Corwin dismayed over his handling of her property and her lack of control. Her husband and children, however, all held Holmes in high esteem, so it was possibly her loss of independence that most annoyed Corwin.⁴²

Emma Corwin lived at "Wren's Nest" following her stroke with a succession of companions in her final years.⁴³ For financial reasons, Cecil Corwin returned to New York to work and visited Tryon as often as he could manage. Emma Corwin overcame the physical limitations cause by her stroke and continued to paint until her death in 1924. She also continued developing some of her real estate despite her frustration with the trust arrangement. Two of her last projects appear to have been the construction of the two log houses on Lynn Road—the Corwin Log House and the Uchtmann-Landrum House. A newspaper notice in October 1922 stated that the log and stone cottage not far from Wren's Nest was nearing completion.⁴⁴ The following year, sisters Katherine and Lillian Uchtmann of Chicago purchased the "Swiss Log house."⁴⁵ Before Emma Corwin's death, "when her finances were at a low ebb," her daughter, Susan, and son-in-law, Carroll P. Rogers, purchased the ruinous Lynncote and ten acres in 1922 to keep the property from going out of the family.⁴⁶

At her passing, Emma Payne Erskine Corwin was remembered for her multifaceted artistic life, wide-ranging influence, and deep love of Tryon. She was described as one of Tryon's "best and most loyal citizens," a gracious host, and a boundlessly creative spirit. Her obituary recounts Lynncote as the center of social and artistic life in Tryon during the early decades of the twentieth century—a house full of "music, flowers, literature, art, and all lovely things."⁴⁷ Emma Corwin's influence in Tryon continued to be felt for many years through the organizations she sponsored, the individuals she inspired with her painting and writing, and her children and descendants, who remained active and invested in the community.

While Susan and Carroll Rogers purchased and revived Lynncote in the late 1920s, much of Emma Corwin's remaining property was slowly sold off in subsequent years. Just prior to her

⁴² Emma Payne Erskine Corwin, letter to Ralph Erskine, February 5, 1923 (Collection of R. Anderson and Linda Haynes, Tryon, NC).

⁴³ It is unclear where Emma Corwin resided between 1916, when fire destroyed the original Lynncote, and 1918, when she suffered her stroke. She spent time in Connecticut helping her son Ralph, whose wife Barbara died in 1915, with his three young children. She likely resided part-time in the Studio at Lynncote, which was subsequently destroyed by fire in 1920, as well as Wren's Nest.

⁴⁴ "Tryon," *Asheville Citizen*, October 11, 1922, 12.

⁴⁵ "Additional Local Items," *The Polk County News*, September 4, 1924, 8.

⁴⁶ Rogers, 31, 33; *Asheville Citizen*, October 11, 1922; Polk County Deeds 38:317 (June 19, 1918) and 41:492 (November 14, 1922).

⁴⁷ "Funeral Service for Mrs. Corwin Held Today," *The Polk County News*, March 6, 1924, 1.

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death, Corwin sold a prominent tract between Lynncote and the Tryon Country Club to Andrew Law of Spartanburg, South Carolina, where he erected a substantial Tudor Revival-style house in 1924 known as Friendly Hills.⁴⁸ A number of building lots around the Tryon Country Club golf course were sold, including Golf Hill, an approximately eight-acre tract overlooking the first two greens of the course. A subdivision was platted on approximately 20 acres on the south side of Erskine Road in 1926 (PB 2:133). The 170-acre Gold Mine Farm on Skyuka Creek was offered for sale from Corwin's estate in 1938.⁴⁹ The four houses situated near Lynncote on the opposite side of the road, including Wren's Nest, have survived as complements to the main house. Ownership has passed out of the family, but the properties remain as a reminder of Emma Corwin's real estate ventures and the ambitious and creative ways she utilized her resources.

Architecture Context

According to the Erskines' daughter, Susan Erskine Rogers, Charles Erskine consulted on the house design of Lynncote in the 1890s with "a young architect" who had worked with George Vanderbilt at Biltmore, outside of Asheville. The young architect was likely Richard Sharp Smith, who established his private practice in the 1890s following the completion of Biltmore, where he had served as supervising architect for Richard Morris Hunt of New York. Rogers noted that the architect helped with the planning of the house, but many of the ideas were her father's including the use of rough stone taken from the property as the primary exterior material. In addition to the house, Erskine had a two-room studio (site of the present Lodge) built for his wife, an accomplished artist and writer, and laid out the extensive network of terraces and stone retaining walls that would allow for his gardens.⁵⁰

The Erskines' Lynncote burned in 1916, leaving only the ruinous stone walls of the first story. In 1926, Susan Rogers, youngest child of Charles and Emma Erskine, and her husband, Carroll Rogers, hired Erle Stillwell of Hendersonville to design a new house on the surviving foundations of Lynncote. The second Lynncote, completed in 1927, is a rare example of fully realized Tudor Revival architecture in Tryon. The Tudor Revival style became popular across the country in the early twentieth century and appealed to homeowners in North Carolina's neighborhoods and suburbs for its romantic charm and versatility. Although the name alludes to sixteenth-century Tudor England, the style derives primarily from late-medieval English prototypes, mixed with eclectic American expressions and materials. Tudor Revival style houses are generally united by an emphasis on steeply pitched front-facing gables, and typically

⁴⁸ Laura A. W. Phillips, "Friendly Hills" National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Winston-Salem, NC, 1998.

⁴⁹ *Tryon Daily Bulletin*, January 31, 1938.

⁵⁰ Rogers, 11-13.

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incorporate decorative half-timbering, grouped multi-pane windows, prominent chimneys, and stucco, masonry, or masonry-veneered walls. In western North Carolina the use of picturesque and rustic designs and natural materials complemented mountain settings, earning favor for Tudor Revival style elements in residential and resort architecture.⁵¹ The design of Lynncote combines irregular massing and a multi-gable roof with natural materials including uncoursed stone, brick, terra cotta tile, and timber. The meticulous display of decorative half-timbering in the gable ends, projecting bays and recessed openings, leaded glass windows, and carved woodwork make Lynncote an excellent local example of the Tudor Revival style.

Unlike the picturesque Tudor Revival, the Colonial Revival style gained tremendous popularity in the first half of the twentieth century by offering ordered, classically influenced dwellings that emphasized symmetry, proportion, and restraint. Despite looking to Colonial-era architecture for precedents, early proponents of the style rarely offered historically copies of the early antecedents, but instead freely interpreted details and proportions applied to a range of house types and forms. The broad application and interpretation of classically inspired design elements and ornament helped make the Colonial Revival the most popular domestic architectural style of the early twentieth century. Characterized by rectangular footprints, Colonial Revival-style houses typically exhibit gable or hip roofs, symmetrically arranged facades, center hall plans, and multi-paned double-hung windows. The common forms and stately proportions were frequently embellished with details including columned porches, Palladian windows, dentil cornices, and pedimented entrance surrounds with pilasters, fanlights, and sidelights. Dissemination of published sources in the 1910s and 1920s encouraged greater historical detail, but the economic depression of the 1930s, among other factors, led to a simplification of the style in the mid-twentieth century.⁵²

The formality of the Colonial Revival style often felt at odds with the romanticized concepts of mountain living that pervaded the resort areas of western North Carolina. As a result, Shingle, Craftsman, and Rustic Revival styles enjoyed broad popularity in mountain towns and communities like Tryon. These styles often drew inspiration from resort architecture and directly responding to the mountainous landscape of the region. Growing out of the Arts and Crafts movement, which spread from England to the United States in the late nineteenth century, the Craftsman style became one of the most popular architectural styles during the early twentieth century. Gustav Stickley's *The Craftsman* magazine (1901-1916) became the chief disseminator of Arts and Crafts beliefs in the United States, and his company, Craftsman

⁵¹ Griffith.

⁵² Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 263-268; Catherine Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 417-420.

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workshops, produced furniture that promoted design unity of both house and furnishings. Craftsman houses represented the Arts and Crafts ideal of vernacular revival, honest expression of structure, responsiveness to site, and the use of local materials for comfortable domestic architecture. In residential architecture, the Craftsman style often employed wood or shingle siding (frequently in combination), open eave overhangs with exposed roof rafters, decorative beams or braces in the gable ends, and square or tapered porch posts supported by piers extending above the porch floor to ground level without a break. Doors and windows typically displayed a distinctive glazing pattern with multi-pane areas across the top or multiple lights over a single pane in double-hung sash.⁵³

The Rustic Revival style, which also enjoyed a period of popularity in the region during the 1920s and 1930s, fit even more comfortably within the mountainous surroundings of the region and was frequently associated with the tourism industry in western North Carolina. The Rustic Revival style in the early twentieth century drew upon traditional building methods and practices in tandem with the use of natural materials found in the area. The extensive forests and numerous creeks and rivers provided an abundance of wood and rock for building materials, which were utilized to complement their surroundings. The Rustic Revival style was commonly used for private houses in the region, especially seasonal residences that would allow the owners a sense of escape to the mountains without completely forgoing modern conveniences. The Rustic Revival style's combination of traditional building methods and natural materials found widespread acceptance in the forested and mountainous region around Asheville and the tourist-driven economies of small towns along the Blue Ridge.⁵⁴

Following the death of her husband in 1908, Emma Erskine began developing portions of the Lynncote estate, which totaled more than 600 acres, to supplement her income. In these pursuits, she began a working partnership with designer and builder William F. Smith, who came to Tryon around 1905. Born in New York City, William Frank Smith (1868-1924) spent in his childhood in New Jersey and lower Manhattan, where the family had a home while Smith's father worked as a shipbuilder. As a teenager, the younger Smith learned about architectural design and construction working for his father, and in the 1890s worked as a home builder in Plainfield, New Jersey. Although he was not formally trained as an architect, Smith capably prepared architectural designs and construction drawings. In 1905, Edmund Embury, a childhood friend from New Jersey, invited Smith to build houses for him and his sister Lucy in the healthier climate of Tryon. Smith returned to Tryon from New Jersey in 1907 and brought along his construction foreman, C. N. Sayre. Smith served as the contractor for Congregational

⁵³ Elizabeth Cumming and Wendy Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, World of Art Series (New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1991), 107, 122-124, 141-142; Bishir, et al, 59-60, 69-73.

⁵⁴ William O. Moore, "Resort Asheville," *North Carolina Architect*, Vol. 25, Issue 4 (July/August 1978), 20-25.

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Church commissioned by the Erskines and designed by Hal Erskine. The project likely introduced Emma Erskine to the work of W. F. Smith.⁵⁵

In addition to working as a building contractor, Smith dabbled in real estate speculation. He bought town lots and small parcels of land, built houses, and sold them after completion. The Smith family frequently resided in the newly completed houses before they were sold. In 1985, Smith's son compiled a list of at least thirty buildings designed and built by W. F. Smith, although the list is likely not exhaustive. Smith worked in the popular styles of the day, including the Shingle, Craftsman, and Rustic Revival styles. He assembled a team of craftsmen and artisans to execute his designs, and in many houses used native materials such as hand-hewn cedar shingles and local stone.⁵⁶

In tandem with Emma Corwin, Smith worked on a number of speculative and rental properties. The nature of their partnership, and roles within it, are uncertain, but Corwin and Smith are regarded as having a harmonious working relationship. It is believed that Emma Corwin may have designed, or helped design, some of the houses built for her by Smith. She was, after all, married to an architect and had a son who practiced architecture, so discussions of architecture and building were certainly familiar to her. Susan Rogers recalled that her father, Charles Erskine, had a strong sense of style and made all decisions regarding house decoration and furnishing, and Emma gladly deferred to him on these matters. It is generally acknowledged that Ms. Corwin, at the very least, brought photographs and contributed suggestions of style and architectural elements for the houses, which Smith often incorporated into the designs.⁵⁷

For one of their early collaborations Emma Corwin engaged Smith to build a rental house known as Mostly Hall along Lynn Road south of Erskine Bridge in 1912. The two-story frame house occupies an elevated, wooded site within the town limits and overlooking Lynn Road. The site is terraced with irregularly coursed stone retaining walls, walkways, and steps throughout the property. The house rests on a stucco-covered stone foundation and is covered with weatherboards. The rectangular form of the eclectic house is capped by a side-gable roof with three gabled front dormers, interior brick chimneys, and exposed sawn rafter tails. The recessed central entrance bay is sheltered by an attached one-story shed-roof porch supported on square wooden posts. A majority of the windows are ten-light wood-frame casement windows. Blending the form and massing of Colonial Revival style dwellings with more rustic

⁵⁵ Smith, 60-61 and 89.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 65.

⁵⁷ Rogers, 8; McCue, n.p.; Smith, 64-65. Susan Rogers wrote to the author Smith in 1979: "I don't think she [Emma Corwin] was a very practical house planner but she and your father worked harmoniously together and he used some of her ideas" (90).

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exterior materials, some of the design elements and architectural features found on Mostly Hall are repeated at the four houses Corwin had built near Lynncote beginning in 1915.

In 1914, Emma Corwin formed the Holly Hill Company with the intention of developing a residential golf course community on an old dairy farm she had acquired west of Lynncote. She subdivided the land and, according to Smith's son, hired Smith to build six or seven houses. There is no indication that these houses were built, but Corwin did proceed with organizing the Tryon Country Club and building a golf course.⁵⁸

Beginning around 1915, Corwin engaged Smith to design two houses on the east side of Lynn Road opposite Lynncote. Known as Over The Way and Wren's Nest, the two dwellings combined elements of the Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles. The simple form of Over The Way is clad with wood shingles and capped by a pyramidal roof with wide overhanging eaves. The façade, however, is dominated by a full-width inset porch carried on Tuscan columns. The interior of Over The Way features restrained Colonial Revival elements similar to those at Mostly Hall including a beamed ceiling, rich moldings, and column screens on paneled knee walls. Wren's Nest is more modest with a hip roof, weatherboards, and projecting window bay on the façade. The shed-roof extension that wraps around the north end of the house with groups of sliding windows allows for ample ventilation and natural light that gives the cottage a more rustic character.

The two remaining houses built on Ms. Corwin's land near Lynncote drew inspiration from the popular Rustic Revival Style. Built in the early 1920s, the Uchtmann-Landrum House and Corwin Log House both feature saddle-notched pole-log construction typical of the Rustic Revival, which enjoyed an extended period of popularity in the early-to-mid twentieth century in the mountains of western North Carolina. The Uchtmann-Landrum House, with its frame second story, also suggests Chalet Style architecture and was described as the Uchtmann sisters' "Swiss log house."⁵⁹ The Corwin Log House is more typically Rustic Revival with strong horizontal lines, log and wood shingle siding, and large window openings. It was constructed around the same time as several other Rustic Revival log buildings in Tryon including the 1922 clubhouse for the Tryon Country Club. In the late 1920s, Sunnydale (NR, 2011) and the Lake Lanier Tea House opened as popular restaurants and entertainment venues in Rustic Revival-style log buildings.

The four houses adjoining Lynncote are representative examples of popular styles found throughout the region and are similar to other houses built by Emma Corwin and W. F. Smith around Tryon. The houses adjacent to Lynncote, however, provide the most direct links to Corwin and her real estate development projects. The Lynncote Historic District offers

⁵⁸ Smith, 90; Rogers; 27; Griffith and Templeton.

⁵⁹ *The Polk County News*, September 4, 1924, 8.

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contiguous, physical examples of her activities in Tryon, encompassing her home, her writing, and her business ventures. While her influence is also seen and felt in other Tryon buildings and institutions, the resources of the Lynncote Historic District paint the most complete picture of her significant life in Tryon.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other

Name of repository: Polk County Historical Museum, Columbus, NC

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): PL0312

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 25.82 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

A. Latitude: 35.224970 Longitude: -82.242427

B. Latitude: 35.224458 Longitude: -82.241743

C. Latitude: 35.220864 Longitude: -82.240082

D. Latitude: 35.220093 Longitude: -82.240410

E. Latitude: 35.220178 Longitude: -82.241386

F. Latitude: 35.221357 Longitude: -82.245624

G. Latitude: 35.221474 Longitude: -82.245656

H. Latitude: 35.223685 Longitude: -82.245265

I. Latitude: 35.224266 Longitude: -82.244915

J. Latitude: 35.224575 Longitude: -82.244503

K. Latitude: 35.224747 Longitude: -82.243821

L. Latitude: 35.224934 Longitude: -82.243155

M. Latitude: 35.224995 Longitude: -82.242650

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The eligible boundary for the historic district is shown by a dashed line on the accompanying Polk County GIS aerial map. The seven tax parcels comprising the historic district are P48-89, P48-90, P48-91, P48-92, P48-110, P48-181, and P48-298. The boundary follows the property lines of six of the seven tax parcels. One of the parcels [PIN P48-181] is entirely circumscribed by the parcel containing Lynncote [PIN P48-110.]

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The eligible boundary for the Lynncote Historic District encompasses the residual property associated with the Lynncote estate and four contiguous resources on the northeast side of Lynn Road (NC 108) associated with productive life of Emma Payne Erskine Corwin, who

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developed portions of her estate in the 1910s and 1920s to supplement her income. Other properties associated with Corwin near Lynncote are physically and visually separated from the district by wooded topography and newer construction; most of the properties immediately surrounding the district were developed following her death. The resources within the boundary embody the contributions of Emma Corwin to the cultural life of Tryon and retain historic integrity.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Clay Griffith

organization: Acme Preservation Services, LLC

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city or town: Asheville state: NC zip code: 28801

e-mail: cgriffith.acme@gmail.com

telephone: 828-281-3852

date: April 26, 2022

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs

The following information pertains to each of the photographs:

Name of Property: Lynncote Historic District
Location: Lynn Road, Tryon vic., North Carolina
County: Polk
Name of Photographer: Clay Griffith / Acme Preservation Services
Date of Photographs: March 22 and May 7, 2019
Location of Digital Master: Historic Preservation Office
North Carolina Division of Archives and History
109 E. Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2807

Photographs:

1. Lynncote, façade, oblique view to northwest
2. Lynncote, The Little Room, façade, view to north
3. Lynncote, The Lodge, oblique front view to southeast
4. Lynncote, entrance drive, view to north
5. Wren's Nest, façade, view northeast from Lynn Road
6. Wren's Nest, oblique rear view to west
7. Uchtmann-Landrum House, oblique front view to northwest
8. Corwin Log House, façade, view to northwest
9. Corwin Log House, east elevation, oblique view to west
10. Over The Way, façade, view to northeast
11. Over The Way, guest house, oblique view to southeast – Non-contributing resource
12. NC 108 (Lynn Road), view to southeast with stone wall at Over The Way
13. NC 108 (Lynn Road), view to northwest

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.