

## Early Twentieth Century Multi-family Dwellings in Montgomery County

Flying over lower Montgomery County in the 1920s, one would see signs of great activity: land being cleared, roads laid out, foundations dug, and buildings going up all over the southern portion of the County. Almost all of this building was to produce single houses for individual families. In terms of structural square footage, little was devoted to commercial uses, and even less was for apartments or duplexes. It took a major financial depression, a second world war, and a great deal of political pressure to open this suburban county to multi-family development.

The reasons for this are, for the most part, fairly obvious. First of all, land in Montgomery County was less expensive than city property in Washington; builders could afford to be generous, placing houses well back from the street and providing side as well as rear yards. Second, especially in the early years of the suburban boom (1880-1920), a major attraction was the spaciousness and beautiful landscape of this rural county. Constructing row houses or apartment buildings here would have been inappropriate and financially illadvised. Upper-middle class home buyers were looking for a home that was less hemmed in than their city townhouses. They bought large lots, or two or three lots, and constructed spacious, free-standing houses surrounded by large lawns. Those farther down the social and economic scale were seeking relief from cramped living in city flats (as apartments were called at the turn of the century). They found the fulfillment of their wishes in the modest bungalows built on fairly small lots. Ownership of a piece of land was at the heart of the suburban dream. No matter how small the lot or tiny the house (and some of the bungalows in Takoma Park, East Silver Spring, and Cabin John were very small), they were individually owned. Occasionally, families rented houses from others, but this was more the exception than the norm. Typically, the only suburban residents who would resort to living in a building with other families were those whose financial circumstances allowed them little other choice. The statistics bear this out. According to the 1920 census, there were 7,464 houses in Montgomery County. The first building permit for a multi-family dwelling was not granted until 1935. (As will be seen, there were a small number of multi-family structures already in existence by this time.)<sup>1</sup> By 1940 there were a total of 23,555 dwelling units in the County; only 2,100 of these units, less than 9%, were apartments.<sup>2</sup>

The first buildings specifically designed to be occupied by more than

one family were built in Takoma Park. The earliest documented multi-family dwelling is the Ford house at #7137-39 Maple Avenue. This large, elaborate, frame double house was built in 1885 by brothers Byron and Seth Ford for themselves and their families. It was not for reasons of economy that they built a double house, but rather a desire to live in close proximity to one another. (This was not uncommon among Victorian families at that time. The first genuine apartment house to be built in Takoma Park (D.C.), the Watkins Apartments built in 1908, was constructed by a father to house his six daughters.)<sup>3</sup>

A decade or more was to pass, however, before any other multi-family dwellings were to appear in Montgomery County. In 1907 three buildings of flats were built in Takoma Park. These buildings still stand at #7102-04, #7106-08 Maple Avenue, and #7103-05 Cedar Avenue. They are built of brick and have flat roofs fronted by a mock mansard. The party wall projects through the mansard portion. They have wooden two-story porches on both front and rear. Window and door openings on the first floor are segmentally arched; on the second floor they are round headed. Each building has two doorways at the center of the main elevation. These contain glazed double doors with a transom above. The buildings have the exterior appearance of double houses, but their interiors were divided into four units - two apartments on each floor. Each flat extended the length of the house. The two front doors opened onto vestibules which contained a doorway to the first floor apartment and a stairway leading up to the second floor apartment. At the rear of the buildings a staircase gave access to the ground from the second floor porch. The cellar was available for storage and each half was divided front and rear. The family who occupied the first floor apartment could enter their cellar storeroom via a door beneath the interior staircase. The second floor tenants used a door at the rear of the building beneath the porch. The apartments were not railroad flats, for they had hallways running from the front door to the rear of the apartment with doorways into the front parlor, the dining room, the kitchen and the bedrooms.<sup>4</sup> Except for the fact that all rooms were on the same floor, this plan was very similar to row houses of the era.

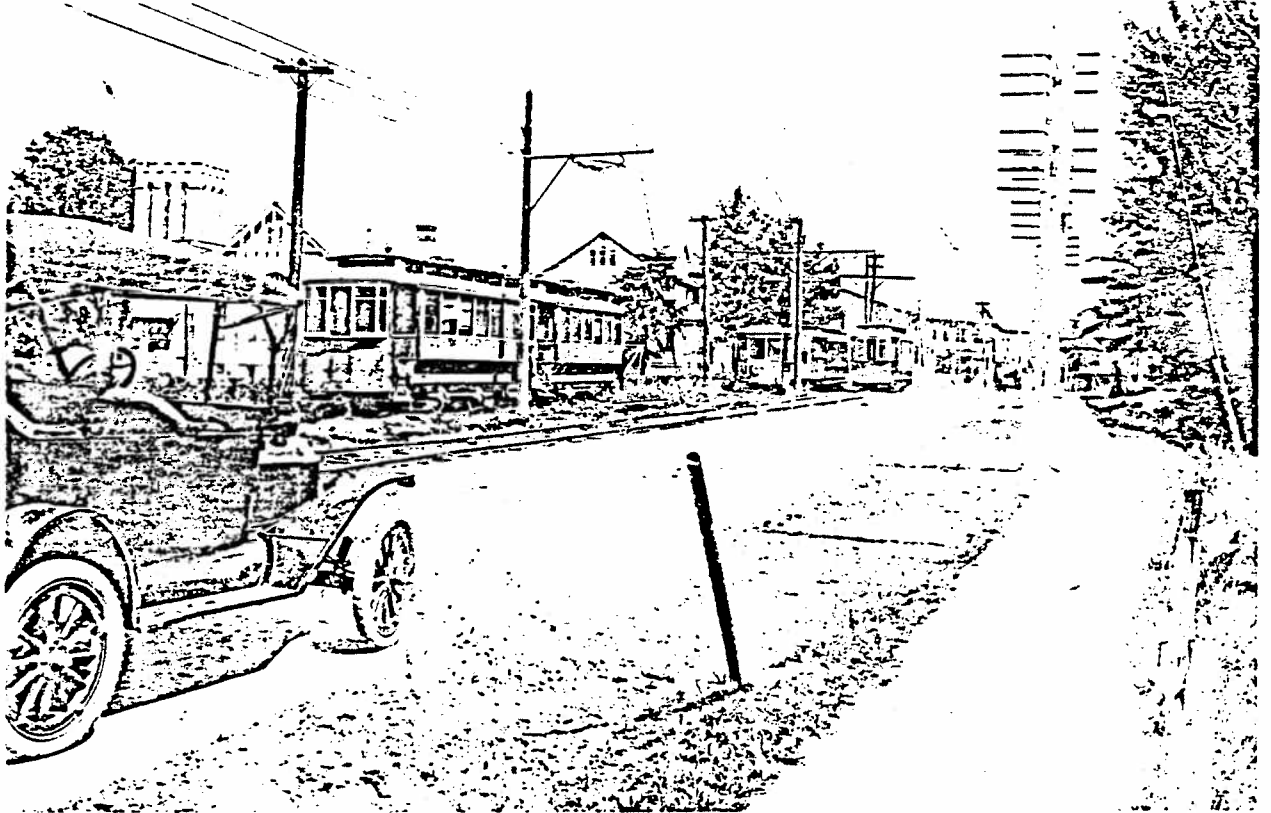
These apartment buildings were first mentioned in 1907-08 when the Takoma newspaper noted that "The new Lamond flats on Maple Avenue have recently been completed."<sup>5</sup> In the 1914 Nelson's Directory the two buildings on Maple Avenue are listed as "The Bruce" and "The Wallace." According to one of its owners, the building on Cedar Avenue was also built in 1907, although no mention of it was found in the directories or elsewhere.<sup>6</sup> This, however, does not mean that it did not exist; very few apartments were listed and some dropped out of the listings for a few years.

Another trio of apartment buildings of approximately the same era were built on Carroll Avenue at the foot of Westmoreland Avenue. These still



From photograph in the files of Historic Takoma.  
Back of photo is labeled "Carroll near Laurel"  
"Colburn" Undated, but probably taken about  
the same time as c. 1915 photograph.

Courtesy: Richard Singer.



*The "dinky line" at Laurel Avenue near Carroll. The old Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist church is at left.*

From Takoma Park, Portrait of a Victorian Suburb 1883-1983, p. 61,  
by Ellen Marsh. Although the photo is undated, the  
church at left was built in 1913, the automobile is  
probably a c. 1915 Model T Ford, and the dress of the  
woman at right is c. 1915.

stand and are designated #7012-7026 Carroll Avenue. Research in the County land and tax records failed to pinpoint their date of construction, but their styling, and their presence in two undated but early photographs indicate that they were built between 1910 and 1920. One of the photographs shows the apartment houses clearly. Two of them have low-pitched side-gabled roofs with a wide overhang on the front elevation supported by elaborate knee braces. All three have segmentally arched windows on the front and two-story wooden porches with round columns. This photograph shows their neighbors to the right, two large Foursquare houses that were built as single-family homes. It is clear to see that the apartment houses were designed to look as much like single-family houses as possible. The plan of these apartment houses was similar to the buildings on Maple and Cedar Avenues, with a door for each side of the building serving two apartments via a vestibule and staircase.

During the period from 1900 to 1920, several double houses were built in Takoma Park. Nearly all of them were frame and had the characteristic two front doors, typically centered on the front facade. They were usually differentiated from apartments on the Sanborn Map of 1927 and the Klinge Atlases of 1931 and 1935 by a dotted line which was drawn lengthwise through the center of the building. By contrast, apartment buildings were labeled "Apartments," "Flats," or merely "F." One of these double houses stands opposite the two apartment houses on Maple Avenue, and today is numbered 7123-25 Maple Avenue. For the addresses of the others, see the list at the end of this chapter.

In 1915 an unusual building was being completed in Forest Glen. This structure, known in the 1920s as the Glen Castle Apartments, began its life sometime in the late 19th century as a simple building containing a general merchandise store on the first floor and a flat on the second floor.<sup>7</sup> Wolfe and Miller purchased the store in 1900.<sup>8</sup> In 1907 George M. Wolfe bought out his partner and continued to operate the store until 1912.<sup>9</sup> In this year he entered into a partnership with John A. I. Cassedy, owner of the National Park Seminary in Forest Glen. Cassedy and Wolfe formed the Forest Glen Trading Company, and in 1915 sold their individually owned lots in Forest Glen to this corporation.<sup>10</sup> In 1915 or early 1916 they completely renovated the original store building, quadrupling its size and giving it a Spanish appearance with an eight-bay arcade on the front elevation and a clay-tiled, hip roof.<sup>11</sup> The ground floor contained a grocery store, a post office, an ice cream shop, and two apartments (including one behind the grocery store). The second floor contained four apartments.<sup>12</sup> Thus, this building might be termed the first large (as opposed to single store with flat above) multi-use structure to be built in Montgomery County.

The building was fully occupied when, during the night of April 24, 1922, a spectacular fire broke out. The next morning the *Washington Star*

covered the story with an article that began, "Aroused from sleep shortly after midnight this morning by revolver shots, eight families living in the business block of the Forest Glen Trading Company at Forest Glen, Md., . . . barely escaped with their lives from a fire which nearly destroyed the property, causing \$65,000 damage."<sup>13</sup>

This article provides valuable information on the occupants of this apartment house. Israel Linhart, who ran the grocery store, lived with his wife and two children on the ground floor behind the store. Also living on the ground floor in her own apartment was 84-year-old Mrs. Lavinia Davis. The apartments on the second floor were occupied by the Postmaster, C. M. Miles, and his wife and child; Albert Kramer and his wife and child; E. A. Sherman, an associate forester working for the Department of Agriculture, and his wife; and H. H. Bopst and his wife and child. Mr. Bopst had a chemical research lab in the building, and the newspaper reported that his "collection of valuable scientific instruments is a total loss . . ."<sup>14</sup> Thus we have a rare glimpse of the kind of people who were occupying apartment houses in Montgomery County in the first quarter of the 20th century. For the most part these were young families with small children. Here in Forest Glen the fathers were of the merchant class, were government workers, or had a profession. This building was located right across the street from the Forest Glen station on the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad. It would have been convenient for these men to commute by train to their jobs in Washington.

The building had changed hands shortly before the fire, and its new owners, Thomas Miller and Harry Wardman, quickly sold it to Joseph Trees and James Ament in May of 1922.<sup>15</sup> Ament had bought the National Park Seminary from Casedy and was making improvements and constructing some very fanciful buildings there. He lavished the same attention on the Glen Castle Apartments, across the tracks from his school, by rebuilding them with battlements and turrets of granite, and walling in a small triangular park in front of the building. This work was completed by 1926 when the tax assessment for the property jumped from \$35,000 to \$50,000.

The Polk Directory for 1927-28 listed six families living in the Glen Castle Apartments once again.<sup>16</sup> This time they included a woman Treasury Department clerk, an architect and his wife, a salesman and his wife, an auto mechanic, a student, and a widow. In later years, after the Depression, the building was converted to a hotel, and local residents recall that it housed some legally questionable social activities during this period of its life. However, during its tenure as an apartment house it sheltered respectable young families and young professionals. This may have been the first, but it was not the last commercial block to be built with apartments on the second floor above the stores. The Montgomery Hills Shopping Center, described in detail in the chapter on neighborhood shopping facilities, was built in the early 1930s and contained six apartments over the stores. Many other commercial

buildings had one or more apartments on their second floors.

Back in Takoma Park, two apartment buildings of a different apartment design were being built by Morris Bien on his property at Elm and Westmoreland Avenues. Their construction date is unknown, but former County Park Historian, Mark Walston, believes they may have been built as early as 1915.<sup>17</sup> They are shown and labeled "garden apartments" on the 1931 Klinge Atlas, though they possess none of the features of a true garden apartment complex such as careful siting on a large landscaped lot, separation of pedestrian from vehicular traffic, and recreational or community facilities. In fact, they are simply two small frame buildings containing flats, but they are a clear departure from the double house or row house design previously built in Takoma Park and neighboring Washington. The buildings have side-gabled roofs and are sheathed in wood shingles. Although they have no chimneys or porches, they do have Colonial Revival details such as fan lights over the front doors and round-headed windows at the center of the second floor elevation and in the gable ends lighting the attics. Each building has a single front door. This may seem like a minor point, but the single door, combined with the other domestic features, makes the apartment houses appear very much like single-family homes. By the 1920s, this was important to the residents of suburban neighborhoods:

This architectural blending, as Randolph Sexton of the *American Architect* noted in 1926, is essential to the design of the suburban apartment. "It must suggest, as far as possible, a private country house." As opposed to the tall, urban "elevator" apartment, the suburban apartment, because of a two or three story height...could easily retain the gabled roofs, bays and dormers characteristic of the private house, and thus present a suburban atmosphere of domesticity.<sup>18</sup>

The Elm Avenue apartments were not prototypical, however. In the 1920s a few other apartment buildings were constructed, all of them in Takoma Park, and these followed the form of the double house. At #6815 Eastern Avenue (current address), a wood-shingled, Craftsman-style building containing four apartments, was built with two-story front porches as clear design elements. The gable-roofed porches stand separate from one another and project out a good distance from the front wall of the building. Four separate doorways give access to the apartments. The doorways, each containing eight lights in the upper quarter of their paneled wood doors, stand next to each other at the center of the front elevation. This apartment house was built sometime between 1920 and 1930, because the lot on which it sits was created in a resubdivision of existing lots plated in April of 1920.<sup>19</sup>

Another similar apartment house was built c. 1925 in Takoma Park by Fred L. Glaize. Located today at #250 Carroll Manor Circle, it was not listed in the 1923 Nelson's Directory, but did appear in Polk's 1927-28 Directory as

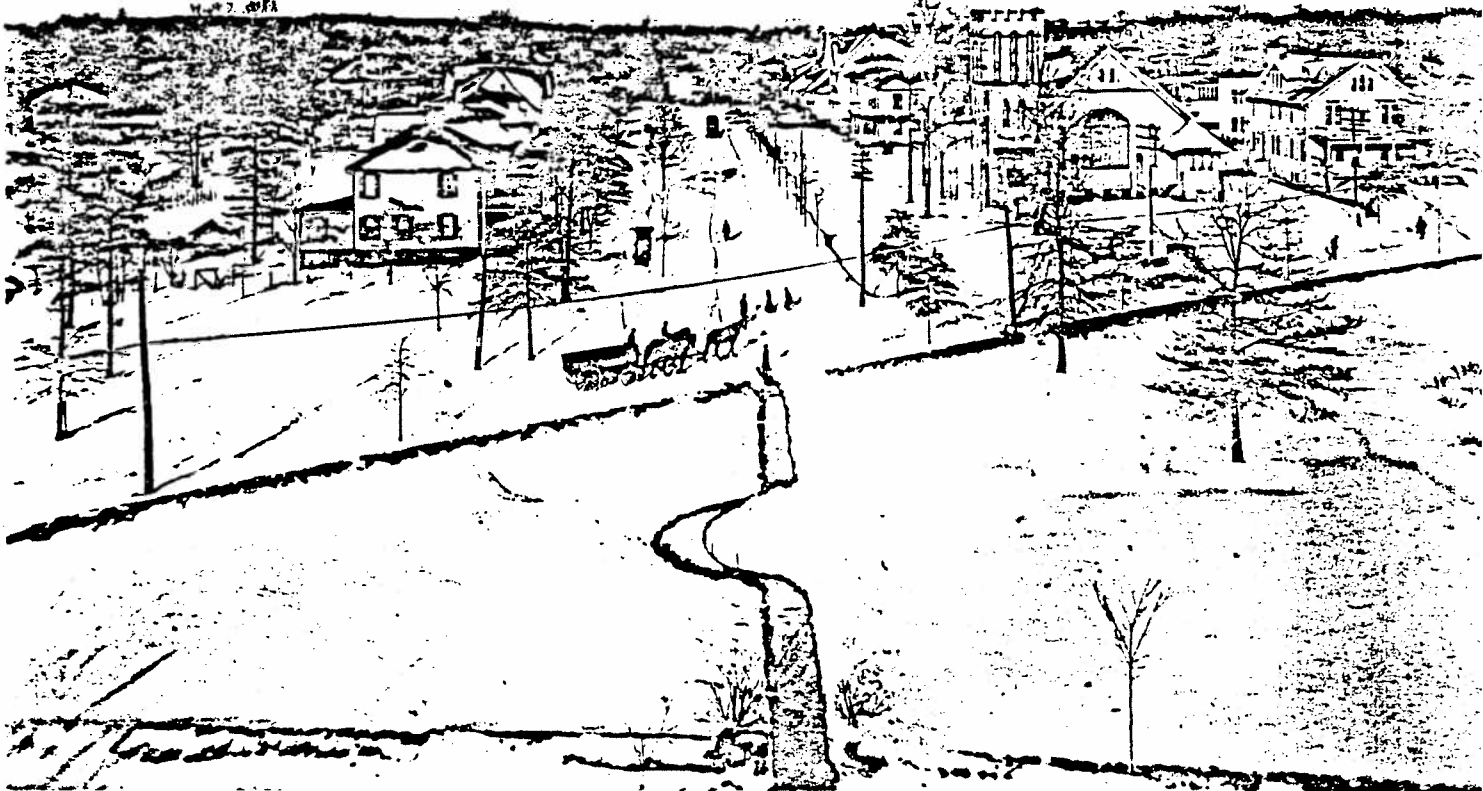
"Carroll Manor Apts." Fred Glaize platted this portion of his land in 1920.<sup>20</sup> The building has the appearance of a large, stuccoed Foursquare house with big dormer windows on its hip roof. Its two-story, gable-roofed porches, projecting separately from each half of the house, reveal its true use, however. Each second floor apartment has a door onto its own porch. This building, like its shingled relative on Elm Avenue, has only one front door. In this case, it is sheltered by a gabled hood supported by knee braces. These two apartment buildings, along with that at #256 North Manor Circle, followed a form very typical in eastern American cities for apartment houses built in residential neighborhoods during the 1920s. In some regions such as New England, the flats were stacked three high and were called triple-deckers. Apartments in these triple-deckers were often commodious, containing several rooms and a good deal of sunlight and fresh air. With their porches, they contained nearly as many amenities as a typical single-family house of the era.

One other apartment building was built in Takoma Park in the 1920s. This was "The Takoma," located at what was #310 Tulip Avenue. The building has been replaced by the Fellowship Hall of the Presbyterian Church next door, but it is clearly labeled "Apts." on the 1927 Sanborn Map, and was listed as The Takoma at that address under "Apartment Houses" in the Polk Directories of 1927-28 and 1930-31.<sup>21</sup> A photograph in the archives of Historic Takoma shows this building in the background at the left. The photo is marked "Taken January 30, 1922. Photo by Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D.C." In it, The Takoma appears as a large, two-story, hip-roofed structure with a projecting central tower. The plan of the building on the Sanborn Map confirms this configuration.<sup>22</sup> At this writing, little is known about this apartment building. It appears to be a link in the evolution of apartment buildings in the County because it is the first one to appear not as an outsized single-family house, but as a sophisticated urban apartment building. Not until 1937, when Morris Miller built the 53-unit Blair Park Apartments at #7719-23 Eastern Avenue, was there another true urban-type apartment building in the County. In approximately 1939 another one was built at #935 Bonifant Street. These buildings had three or four stories, were built of brick, and had a single center entrance, from which one traveled down hallways to reach individual apartment doors. This had been the norm in Washington for years, but was new and continued to be rare in Montgomery County. Not until after World War II when the boom in apartment building included many high-rises, was this type of multi-family design used.

Far more typical were the garden apartments built in the mid-1930s up to the beginning of World War II.<sup>23</sup> The first of these was the Falkland Apartments at Sixteenth Street, East-West Highway, and Colesville Road in Silver Spring. Prior to World War II, this was the largest and most complete garden apartment complex ever built in the County. Located on a large site, its designer Louis Justement capitalized on the topography and existing



The Takoma



From photograph in the files of Historic Takoma. Marked  
"Taken January 30, 1922. Photo by Review & Herald  
Publishing Association, Washington, D.C."

vegetation in arranging groups of town houses (called duplexes at that time) and blocks of apartments to give maximum privacy, views, sunlight, natural ventilation, and separation of pedestrian from vehicular traffic. A community room was provided in one of the buildings, and several playgrounds for children were located around the grounds. Next to the complex was built a small shopping center which contained at various times a dry cleaner, laundry, real estate office, barber shop, grocery store and delicatessen. Construction on the first section of 178 units began in the fall of 1936 and was fully rented when opened for occupancy in the spring of 1937. Construction on the second section was begun in August of 1937 and these 301 apartments (there were no townhouses in the second section) were occupied by spring of 1938.

Falkland contained the first townhouse units to be built in Montgomery County. Strictly speaking, they were not genuine townhouses, since they lacked party walls, but they were attached, two-story units with living room, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor, and two or three bedrooms and bath on the second floor. In addition, they had sheltered front entryways, rear porches, and private rear yards. This model for townhouses has been followed time and again throughout the developing portions of the County in the decades after World War II.

The second group of townhouses built in the County was a row of nine two-story, brick houses fronting the east side of Dixon Avenue between Wayne Avenue and Bonifant Street in downtown Silver Spring. These were probably built in 1939, since that block was replatted in December of 1936 by its owner, the Capital Building Company, Inc.<sup>24</sup> They have recently been torn down for the construction of a new high-rise office building.

A third group of townhouses was built in 1940 at #6901-21 Strathmore Street in Bethesda. Called the Bradley Terrace Apartments, the plan of their units is almost identical to those in Falkland. They have exceptionally fine Colonial Revival detailing and craftsmanship, and the terraced bank on which the buildings sit is nicely landscaped. This is the only green space available to the residents, as their rear doors open onto a commercial alley that services stores located on Wisconsin Avenue.

The remaining apartment buildings built before World War II fall into three groups, (1) those that are brick versions of the Elm Avenue apartments, that is, they are four-unit blocks disguised to appear as single-family houses (The Avondale Apartments in Bethesda, 1937-40; and the Schrider Street Apartments in Silver Spring, 1939); (2) those that are linear strips of apartments (Piney Branch Apartments in Silver Spring, 1939-40; the Bonifant Street apartments at #937-43, Silver Spring, c. 1939, which look like townhouses but are actually groups of four units per building; and the Hampden Hall and Hampden Lane Apartments in Bethesda, 1940); and (3) those that used the buildings as elements to create courtyards and vistas either informally (Blair Park Gardens in Takoma Park, 1938; and the Wayne

Avenue apartments in Silver Spring, 1939) or formally (Spring Gardens, 1941; Montgomery Arms, c. 1941; and the St. Charles, c. 1942; all in Silver Spring).<sup>25</sup>

Two other brick apartment buildings appear for the first time on the 1941 Klinge Atlas for Bethesda: one small building on Elm Street and one large building on Edgemoor Lane. Both of these have now been demolished.

The apartment buildings of the 1930s were characterized by increased size, the use of brick (actually brick veneer on terra cotta tiles in most cases) to provide increased fire protection, and Colonial Revival styling. Most buildings were little more than brick boxes on which were superimposed such "Colonial" elements as shutters, pediments, cupolas, columned entry porches, Palladian windows, and the brick equivalent of quoins. Some had flat roofs, some had gabled roofs, and the larger complexes favored a combination of both, often painting alternating sections white versus natural brick, in an effort to make the buildings appear less monolithic. Generally they succeeded, especially where attention and care were lavished on landscaping. These early garden apartments were vastly superior to their counterparts after the War, where courtyards became parking lots, and a fondness for the International Style (not to mention the saving of money) banished decorative elements from the facades.

Spring Garden Apartments, started before the outbreak of World War II, deserves special mention because of its styling.<sup>26</sup> Historian Mark Walston calls it "moderne," yet according to the description and illustrations given in Lester Walker's *Encyclopedia*,<sup>27</sup> it is actually more Art Deco with its walls of flat planes stepping back in numerous setbacks, decorated with low-relief brick and carved limestone ornamental panels, corner windows, and round-windowed entry doors complete with door handles consisting of a half circle pierced by a horizontal bar, both of nonferrous metal. Whether Deco or Moderne, it is definitely not Colonial Revival, and its styling began a trend which only the Montgomery Arms Apartments on Colesville Road at Fenton Street, Silver Spring, followed.

The St. Charles Apartments on Cameron Street in Silver Spring were possibly the last of the garden apartments to be built before the outbreak of World War II began to slow construction activity. These were built in the typical Colonial Revival style around a formal interior courtyard. What is interesting to note about this complex is that the land, originally owned by the Wilson family, was platted by them on November 13, 1939, as a small street with five single-family houses on each side. By January 20, 1942, Charles and Fannie Scheffres had bought the parcel and submitted their own plat for the single large lot on which the St. Charles was built.<sup>28</sup> Thus, in a few short years the character of the neighborhood had changed and the market for moderate-income rental properties had increased to the point where it made more sense to build apartments.

This switch in plat plans, and the increase in density it represents,

summarize what was happening in the County during the late 1930s. In 1920 the County had 34,921 inhabitants. By 1940 this number had increased 140% to 83,912. The demand for housing, strong before the War, was overwhelming in the years right after the War. The citizens of Montgomery County, however, vigorously protested anything that threatened to alter the character of their largely single-family, residential county. The author of the *Takoma Park Booster*, published by the Takoma Park Chamber of Commerce in 1938, could have been speaking for much of the County when he said:

Takoma Park is essentially a residential community....In addition, Takoma Park is notable for the absence of heavy industries which destroy the peace of a happy home community. Commercial establishments are limited to those which contribute to the needs and enjoyment of a home-owning, home-loving, and home-building citizenry. In fact, Takoma Park enjoys all the conveniences of a modern city in surroundings which befit the spacious estates of the wealthy. Without being prodigal of its land area, the city is delightfully free from that congestion which seems to rob one of privacy.<sup>29</sup>

Concern for privacy, lack of congestion, and the "right" type of development had been among the major reasons for creating the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission in 1927. "When the MNCPPC was created and the first zoning ordinance adopted, zoning and planning meant protecting expensive one-family residential construction. Self-protectively, the civic associations wanted to discourage any other type of development."<sup>30</sup> Citizens fought so hard against rezoning applications for apartment buildings that in June of 1941 the County commissioners announced a zoning moratorium. So strong was the tide of public sentiment in the County that it finally swept out of office the Democratic political machine that had run the County for many decades. These Democrats, headed by E. Brooke Lee, were strongly pro-development; they were voted out of office by 1946. The following year builders complained that "Community after community of single family house residents have organized and passed resolutions and signed petitions against apartment zoning."<sup>31</sup>

Such opposition, however, was difficult to maintain perpetually, especially against the pressure of powerful developers. In 1947 the first high-rise apartment complex, the Pook's Hill Apartments, was granted its zoning variance, and though delayed for two years, finally began construction in 1949. The 1950s and 1960s saw a tremendous increase in the construction of multi-family dwellings, including many more high-rise apartment buildings. Thus the County was finally brought to the point where it was providing housing for those who could not afford or did not care to purchase single-family homes. The Takoma Park Boosters might not have been pleased to see the huge high-rises and sprawling townhouse complexes which have brought with them "that congestion which seems to rob one of privacy," but

this has become the reality of the twentieth century.

## REFERENCES

1. Richard K. MacMaster and Ray E. Hiebert, *A Grateful Remembrance: The Story of Montgomery County, Maryland* (Rockville: Montgomery Co. Government, 1976), p. 265 and p. 302. At the time this book was researched, the building permits for Montgomery County were still in existence. Unfortunately, this is no longer true.
2. Mark Walston, "Falkland Apartments in Relation to the Pre-World War II Suburban Apartment Movement in Montgomery County" (Montgomery County: Department of Parks, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1983), p. 21, and MacMaster, p. 359.
3. Interview with Caroline Alderson, November 18, 1987.
4. Interview with Karen Fishman, owner of #7103 Cedar Avenue and President of Historic Takoma, November 19, 1987.
5. *The Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Founding of Takoma Park, MD - D.C., Official Program and History* (Takoma Park, D.C.: The Pioneer Press, 1933), quoting excerpts from the *Monthly Record & The Pioneer* of 1907-08, p. 41.
6. *Nelson's Washington Suburban Directory of Maryland and Virginia Towns Adjacent to the District of Columbia*, 1914. Interview with Karen Fishman. Ellen Marsh, in an interview on November 18, 1987, called these Cedar Avenue apartments the Brainard Flats.
7. Interview with Frances Wolfe, daughter of George M. Wolfe, September 11, 1987.
8. Deed T.D. 16/181, recorded November 8, 1900.
9. Deed 196/157, recorded November 6, 1907.
10. Deeds 248/479 and 248/481, both recorded April 2, 1915.
11. Tax Assessment records for 1916 show an increase in the value of improvements from \$2,500 to \$15,000.
12. Interview with Frances Wolfe.
13. *Washington Star*, April 24, 1922, p. 1.
14. Ibid.
15. Deed 314/223, recorded April 17, 1922 but made January 27, 1922; Deed 318/90, recorded May 31, 1922; and Deed 318/92, recorded May 31, 1922.
16. *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory of Maryland and Virginia Towns Adjacent to the District of Columbia*, 1927-28.
17. Walston, p. 18.
18. Ibid.

19. Plat 5/204, recorded April 14, 1920.
20. Plat 3/219, recorded March 19, 1920.
21. *Polk Directories* 1927-28 and 1930-31.
22. Ellen Marsh, on page 113 of her book, *Takoma Park, Portrait of a Victorian Suburb 1883-1983* (Takoma Park, MD: Historic Takoma, Inc., 1984), publishes this photo and identifies this building as the "enlarged Takoma Park Elementary School." According to other material in her book, however, a new Takoma Elementary School was opened in 1901 in the D.C. portion of Takoma Park. In 1923 another new elementary school was built on Philadelphia Avenue. Hence, it seems highly unlikely that this building is the school. Evidence from the directories, the Sanborn Map and the Klinge Atlas of 1931 all indicate that this building was an apartment house.
23. Much of the following material in this section is based on the excellent survey of existing garden apartments written by Mark Walston, cited above. The reader is referred to this paper for photographs and more complete descriptions of garden apartments built after 1935.
24. Plat 11/757, recorded December 16, 1936.
25. Dates taken either from Mark Walston's paper or from plat information at MNCPPC and the Courthouse in Rockville. See list at end of chapter for details.
26. The MNCPPC Plat 22/1368, recorded March 12, 1941 has penciled on it "app. 2/27/41," which means the building permit was probably granted in February of 1941.
27. Lester Walker, *American Shelter, An Illustrated Encyclopedia of the American Home* (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1981), p. 220.
28. Plat 24/1502, recorded January 20, 1942.
29. *The Takoma Park Booster* (Takoma Park: Takoma Park Chamber of Commerce, 1938), p. 13.
30. MacMaster, p. 315.
31. MacMaster, p. 335.

List of Early Twentieth Century Multi-family Dwellings  
in Montgomery County

The following list was compiled from many sources, including telephone directories, business directories, the Klinge Atlases, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, newspapers, books and archival material on Takoma Park, interviews, plats, deeds and tax records for the County. The research paper on garden apartments written by Mark Walston in 1983 for the MNCPPC was the source for most of the information on the larger apartment complexes built just prior to World War II.

No apartment houses were listed in Montgomery County in the 1904 C&P Telephone Directory. The 1912 directory lists 2-1/2 columns of apartments but all are in the city of Washington. Between 1916 and 1927 the telephone company combined the suburban listings with those for DC. Not until the May 13, 1927 book were suburban towns separated again, but there is no separate suburban business section. The 1939-40 Telephone Directory does contain such a section; it lists only Falkland Apartments in Montgomery County.

- 1885      Byron & Seth Ford double house. Now #7137-39 Maple Ave., **Takoma Park**. Formerly numbered 129-31.
- 1907      Maple Avenue apartments - The Bruce (now #7106-08; formerly #116-118) & The Wallace (now #7102-04; formerly #112-114), **Takoma Park**. Called by these names in the 1914 Nelson's Directory.
- 1907      Cedar Avenue flats. Now #7103-05; formerly #103-105, **Takoma Park**. (Called Brainard Flats by Ellen Marsh in interview, November 18, 1987).
- c. 1910      Carroll Avenue flats - 3 buildings. Now #7012-7026; formerly #23 [sic], 24, 26, **Takoma Park**. (Plat 1/46 recorded June 17, 1902)
- 1915      Glen Castle Apartments, #10 Post Office Road, **Silver Spring**. (Forest Glen Trading Co. was listed in 1915 telephone directory)
- c. 1920      Flats on Eastern Ave. in **Takoma Park**. Now #6815; formerly #6735.

- c. 1921 The Takoma, #310 Tulip Ave., **Takoma Park**. Now the site of the Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall. (Plat A/36, undated but from the period of 1906-07, is a resubdivision of lots platted in 1888. 1927-28 Polk Directory and 1927 Sanborn map show this apartment building; first Takoma Park public school built on this site in 1888 [Marsh, p. 133]; new Takoma Elementary School opened in DC in 1901; Phila. Ave. Elem. School built 1923.
- c. 1925 Carroll Manor Apartments. Now #250, and also #256 Carroll Manor Circle; originally #47A, **Takoma Park**.
- 1915-30\* Elm Avenue flats by Morris Bien. #50 & 54, **Takoma Park**.
- 1936-38 Falkland Apartments, 16th St., Colesville Road, & East-West Highway, **Silver Spring**.
- c. 1937 Dixon Avenue townhouses, between Wayne Avenue and Bonifant Street, **Silver Spring**. (Plat 11/757 recorded December 16, 1936. Owner: Capital Building Co., Inc. Recently torn down for new development.)
- 1937-38\* Blair Park Apartments & Blair Park Gardens, #7719-7723 Eastern Avenue, and #7700 Blair Road, respectively, in **Takoma Park**.
- 1937-40\* Avondale Apartments, Avondale Street, **Bethesda**.
- c. 1938 Pershing Drive apartments, **Silver Spring**.
- 1939 Wayne Avenue apartments, between Georgia Avenue and Fenton Street, **Silver Spring**. (Plat 11/767 recorded January 12, 1937. Owners: Thomas E. & Edna G. Shaw, & Takoma Construction Co. Inc. G. Albert Gude, President, Joseph Abrahams, Secretary. Penciled on the plat at MNCPPC is the date "3/4/39.")

\* date and address taken from "Falkland Apartments in Relation to the Pre-World War II Suburban Apartment Movement in Montgomery County," by Mark Walston, Park Historian, MNCPPC, 1983.



- c. 1939 Bonifant Street apartments. #935 - 3-story building, **Silver Spring**. (Plat 11/767 recorded January 12, 1937.)
- c. 1939 Bonifant Street apartments, #937-943, **Silver Spring**. (Plat 11/767-recorded January 12, 1937.)
- 1939\* Schrider Street Apartments, Schrider Street and Silver Spring Avenue, **Silver Spring**.
- 1939-40\* Piney Branch Apartments, Piney Branch Road and Manchester Road, **Silver Spring**.
- 1940\* Hampden Hall & Hampden Lane Apartments, #4807, 4905, and 4909 Hampden Lane, **Bethesda**.
- 1940\* Bradley Terrace Apartments, #6901-6921 Strathmore Street, **Bethesda**.
- 1941 Spring Gardens Apartments, #8001-8031 Eastern Avenue, **Silver Spring**. (Plat 22/1368 recorded March 12, 1941, has penciled on the MNCPPC plat "app. 2/27/41" for all three lots on which the apartments were built. Owner: North Washington Housing Corp.)
- c. 1941 Montgomery Arms Apartments, Colesville Road, **Silver Spring**. (Plat 22/1385 recorded April 15, 1941. Owner: H. B. L. Properties, Inc.)
- 1935-41 Elm Street Apartments, **Bethesda**. Now gone.
- 1935-41 Edgemoor Lane Apartments, **Bethesda**. Now gone.
- c. 1942 St. Charles Apartments on Cameron Street, **Silver Spring**.

\* date and address taken from "Falkland Apartments in Relation to the Pre-World War II Suburban Apartment Movement in Montgomery County," by Mark Walston, Park Historian, MNCPPC, 1983.

In addition to the above buildings which were clearly labeled as apartments or flats on maps or atlases, the following were indicated on the 1931 Klinge Atlas as double houses (i.e. they were drawn with a dotted line down the middle of the building). The addresses shown are those given on the 1931 Atlas. They are all located in **Takoma Park**:

- #7123-25 Maple Avenue (frame structure )
- #31 Carroll Avenue (brick)
- #310 Carroll Avenue, corner of Sherman Avenue (frame)
- # ? Carroll Avenue, corner of Tulip Avenue (frame)
- #105 Elm Avenue (frame)
- #4 & 6 Allegheny Street (frame)
- #12-14 Baltimore Avenue (frame)

**Montgomery County  
in the  
Early Twentieth Century**

**A Study of Historical and  
Architectural Themes**

**Completed for the  
Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission  
and the  
Maryland Historical Trust**

**by**

**Andrea Rebeck**

**Silver Spring, Maryland  
December, 1987**