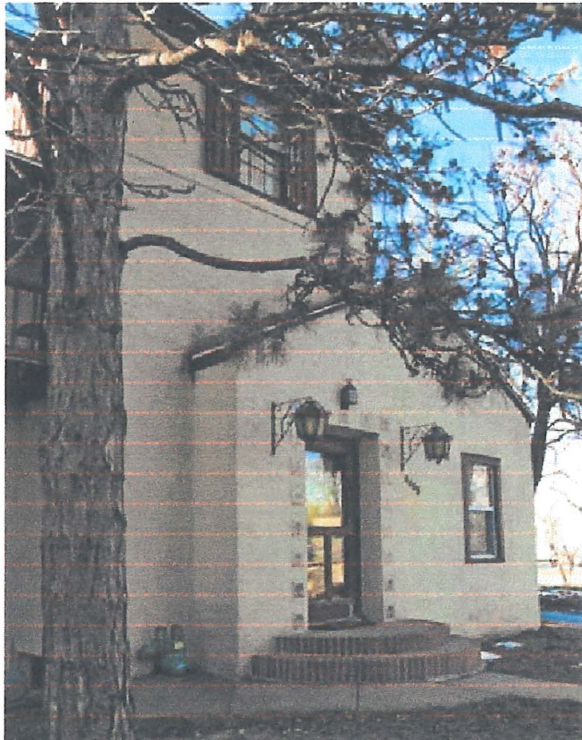


Architecturally POSITIVE ADDITION

THE LEGACY OF A PIONEERING DEVELOPER, THE COUNTRY CLUB ADDITION FEATURES SOME OF THE CITY'S MOST DIVERSE AND UNUSUAL ARCHITECTURE



Unbeknownst to most Topekans, an architectural treasure trove lies behind the Quinton Heights area in the heart of the city. The Country Club Addition neighborhood, nestled in the hills overlooking the Capitol, features a diverse range of house styles: French and Spanish Eclectic, Georgian and Colonial Revival, Tudor and International. Among the city's wide range of residential styles, this small neighborhood represents some of the most diverse and interesting home architecture.

Developed in the 1920s and 1930s by Ruth McClintock Mohler, the Country Club Addition is bordered on the north by 25th Street, on the south by 27th Street, on the east by Kansas Avenue and on the west by Western Avenue. Mohler, who also acted as general contractor on many of these homes, worked in conjunction with architects W. E. Glover and Ted Geist and builder Clyde Smalley. It is no coincidence that parts of the Country Club Addition resemble Westboro, where the Glover/Smalley team was also hard at work during the same time period.

In fact, the Country Club Addition and Westboro were, to an extent, rivals in the world of architecture and high society. The Country Club Addition fought for the mantle of the elite housing

region and was known among some circles as the "Silk Stocking District" because its influential developer continued wearing expensive silk stockings as the city struggled (and the neighborhood flourished) through the tough economic times of the 1930s.

Today, the Country Club Addition neighborhood stands as a comfortable, tree-lined residential area near the heart of Topeka, offering its architectural delights and interests to residents and anyone passing through this almost-forgotten gem.

Developer Ruth Mohler chose the Country Club Addition location because she liked the views, the trees and the rocks, and because the site lent itself to the gentle winding roads and the English Country style architecture that she preferred—but she filled the area with many styles, including this Spanish Eclectic.

The Georgian Revival

Like most Georgian Revival homes in this part of the country, this home is brick. Arched dormer windows, which flank columns supporting a pediment, cover the front entry. Keystones over the windows typify the style.

Unlike the other houses in the neighborhood, this Georgian Revival was not built as a single-family home but as a home for unwed mothers. Designed by Frank Squires and built by L.K. Bowers in 1931, its construction cost \$31,000.



The Southern Colonial Revival

This home was the original farmhouse and sole structure on the Country Club Addition when Mohler bought the property in 1927. At that time, the street running past the home was known as Grant's Road and this was Grant's house. It was remodeled to its present appearance as a Southern Colonial in the 1930s.

Still standing as a romantic Southern Colonial, this painted brick home is only one room wide and features elegant two-story columns, a covered veranda and a fanlight above the front door.

Colonial Revival

Built by Mohler for a railroad executive, this Colonial Revival was featured in several house plan books by the nationally acclaimed Topeka publisher L.F. Garlinghouse. Elegant fieldstone and pediment windows distinguish this home, which has been lovingly maintained.

The interior features a cut stone fireplace, basket-weave tile, Art Deco hardware and many other period details.



Spanish Eclectic

Mohler built this Spanish Eclectic style house for her sister Helen McClintock. This multilevel stucco home's Spanish influence is seen in the tile surrounding the arched front door, a second-story balcony and exposed beam ends. TM



Ruth Mohler, A TOPEKA BUSINESS PIONEER



Ruth McClintock Mohler was one of Topeka's first female property speculators, developers, real estate agents and builders. She began her career in 1923 when she sold three lots at 13th and Fillmore across from her family's home and used the proceeds to build a speculative house in College Hill. The Dutch Colonial led to commission after commission. She was a hit.

In 1925, Mohler bought the 130-lot Sells estate at Huntoon and High streets. She sold 31 of these lots to the Topeka Board of Education, which used the land to build Randolph Elementary School. Another 61 lots were sold to others, and Mohler built houses on the remaining lots.

Mohler began the Country Club Addition in 1927. She chose the hillside location because she liked the views, the trees and the rocks and because the site lent itself to the gentle winding roads and the "English Country" style architecture that she preferred. The first house she built was her own. Merging hospitality with marketing skills, Mohler held an open house for 2,500 when her home was complete. The event marked the beginning of the Country Club Addition's runaway popularity in Topeka.

Ted Geist was the architect for most of Mohler's houses, though W.E. Glover, known for many Westboro houses, did the designs for several of the early models. Mohler herself oversaw the building sites every day, watching the details and making sure that the homes featured amenities she would want in her own residence.

Married to Jacob Mohler (secretary of the Kansas Board of Agriculture from 1914 to 1950) and raising three children, Mohler continued her career as a pioneer businesswoman.

In the 1930s, Mohler developed most of Quinton Heights hill, the adjacent slopes and east of Topeka Boulevard. Though the Great Depression failed to stop her building plans, the transformed war economy did. As building stalled during World War II, the real estate mogul turned home entrepreneur, making and selling clothing from her home. After the war, Mohler picked up where she left off with real estate, building in the Prospect Hills region and leaving her legacy in Topeka.

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