

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

Joseph Franklin Bland House

Local Historic Landmark #91

1809 Virginia Rd., Winston-Salem

Construction Date: c.1930

Landmark Designation Date: 11/15/93

Joseph Franklin (Frank) Bland was born in Cleveland County in 1888 to J.F. and Elizabeth Burrus Bland. For a brief time the family lived in Asheville, but in 1896, they relocated to Elizabeth Bland's home town of Rockford, in Surry County. The Blands became a prominent family in the small town. Frank's father was an accomplished musician and sold pianos and organs throughout the county. He instructed his children in music and three of the five pursued careers in the field.

When Frank Bland turned 14, he went to Salem to study music at Salem College. At the same time, he became the organist at First Presbyterian Church. Several years later, Bland moved to Washington, D.C., for additional music study. Upon his return to Winston-Salem, Bland became the organist at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. He was a highly accomplished musician who could also repair, build, and play musical instruments. Bland married Mozelle Dugan in 1917 at St. Paul's. The two enjoyed many similar interests, such as music and art.

Sometime around 1913, Bland established the Bland Piano Company at 212 N. Main Street. By 1923, the business had moved to 220 N. Main Street, where it remained until 1971. Ultimately the Bland Piano company closed, yet it is still considered the oldest music company in Winston-Salem.

During the last ten years of his life, Bland became nearly obsessed with the planning and building of his stone house. He not only planned the house, but supervised its construction and did much of the work himself. The Joseph Franklin Bland House is an impressive two-story, stone Chateausque style house, referred to as "The Castle." The house is beautifully situated on a wooded lot in the Buena Vista neighborhood. The asymmetrical massing of the house includes 1½- and 2-story sections, front, side, and rear wings, a circular stair tower with a steep conical roof, irregularly placed stone chimneys, and multiple roof gables. With massive fieldstone



Photographs courtesy of Heather Fearnbach

walls and roofs of slate tiles, the house yields a fortress-like appearance above a deep ravine. Accompanying the house are an original iron fence and remains of the original stone swimming pool and bridge.

Today the Joseph Franklin Bland House is privately occupied.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Joseph Franklin Bland House
National Register Nomination

<http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/FY1056.pdf>



This information is also available
at the Forsyth County
Historic Resources Commission's web site:
<http://www.ForsythCountyHRC.org>