

ONCE UPON A TIME IN NORTH PARK

Edward F. Bryans

By Donald Covington

In the decade of the first World War, North Park was one of the fastest growing suburban areas in San Diego. Many of the city's leading architects and builders lived and/or worked here during those years. Among them were Eugene Hoffman, William Wheeler, Alexander Schreiber, James Blaine Draper, David Owen Dryden, and Edward F. Bryans.

E.F. Bryans (1881-1973), building contractor, moved to San Diego from Minnesota in 1911 when he was thirty years old. In 1913, he and his wife Myrtle moved into a little California bungalow which he built at 3544 Oregon Street (now Pershing Avenue). Between 1913 and 1920, Bryans built nine other houses on Pershing, all of them bungalows in the California Craftsman style. (#3420, #3512, #3520, #3530, #3536, #3554, #3607, #3619, and #3652)

The house at 3652 Pershing Avenue was built for Camille Lory, proprietor and manager of the Parisian French Laundry in Hillcrest. Mr. Lory moved into the house with his wife and children in 1917 and lived there for over fifty years.

In 1919, Bryans built a Craftsman style bungalow at 3406 Granada for Samuel and Dora Loeffler. The Loefflers owned and operated a clothing store on Fifth Avenue a few doors down from San Diego Hardware. They subsequently moved the shop to the southeast corner of University and 30th Street where it remained as a vital part of the North Park shopping center throughout the 1920's. The Loeffler house and the house at 3520 28th Street (built in 1918) are two of Bryans' houses which have recently been appropriately restored by current owners.

Edward Bryans moved out of North Park in the 1920's as his contracting business expanded. He went on to build larger homes and apartment houses such as those along Park Boulevard, as well as small commercial buildings in various parts of town. Bryans retired from the contracting business in the 1950's and died on August 12, 1973.