

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUN 3 1986

date entered JUL 3 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Boone House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 601 Fifth Ave. North

___ not for publication

city, town St. Petersburg

___ vicinity of

state Florida

code 12

county Pinellas

code 103

3. Classification

Category

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object

Ownership

- public
 - private
 - both
- Public Acquisition**
- in process
 - being considered

Status

- occupied
 - unoccupied
 - work in progress
- Accessible**
- yes: restricted
 - yes: unrestricted
 - no

Present Use

- agriculture
 - commercial
 - educational
 - entertainment
 - government
 - industrial
 - military
- museum
 - park
 - private residence
 - religious
 - scientific
 - transportation
 - other:

4. Owner of Property

name Al and Anet Willingham

street & number 601 Fifth Ave. North

city, town St. Petersburg

___ vicinity of

state Florida

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Pinellas County Courthouse

street & number 315 Court Street

city, town Clearwater

state Florida

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title St. Petersburg Historic Resources Survey has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date 1982 ___ federal ___ state ___ county local

depository for survey records Bureau of Historic Preservations
DAHRM, Florida Master Site File

city, town Tallahassee

state Florida

7. Description

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | date _____ |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Boone House is a Colonial Revival Style, single family, detached house built on a corner lot. Although modest in scale, 2256 sq. ft., it achieves monumental scale with an imposing entrance portico of four ionic columns. The house is square in plan, with a center hall. The roof is hipped and the entrance portico has a pediment. A two-story frame and block garage-apartment was built behind the house in 1920. The exterior is restored to its original appearance, except for a rear porch. The only interior alterations occur in the kitchen and two second-floor bedrooms.

The area of St. Petersburg between Fourth Avenue, to the south, Ninth Avenue to the north, Fourth Street to the east, and Ninth Street to the west, forms a cohesive neighborhood with uniform appearance and common history of development. Prior to 1910, the area was undeveloped land on the northwest edge of town. The Revised Original Plat of St. Petersburg (1890) extended to Fifth Avenue and Fifth Streets. The area to the northwest was laid out on paper by the Safford Plat of 1892, but experienced little real development. The replats of various developers, filed when actual subdivision occurred, date from 1910 to 1915.

The majority of buildings in this neighborhood are of frame construction, but several apartment buildings and houses are masonry. Maximum building height is three stories, but most buildings are only two. Most of the construction in this area occurred between 1910 and 1930. Common building styles included Frame Vernacular, Prairie, Colonial Revival and Shingle style. The Bungalow style is predominant, and Mediterranean Revival buildings were rare. This neighborhood is a product of the city's first construction "Boom" of 1912-1917 and the architectural styles reflect this era.

The neighborhood today (1986) remains residential with little commercial intrusion. Elderly seasonal renters are the primary residents. The area has deteriorated slowly, physically as well as economically. Very few buildings have been seriously altered, and almost none have been demolished for new construction or parking lots. Severe damage to the neighborhood took place with the construction of the I-275 north access ramp in 1976-1978. This destroyed all of the structures between Fourth and Fifth Avenues North, from Seventh Street to Sixteenth Street. In addition, development pressure from the Central business district will soon reach this area.

The Boone House is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Sixth Street and Fifth Avenue North. Fifth Avenue is a 100 ft. right of way, major east-west traffic artery. Sixth Street is a 50 ft. right of way, brick paved side street that jogs 50 ft. to the west, south of the intersection with Fifth. This places the Boone House portico dead center on the central axis of the 400 block of Sixth Street. (See Photo No. 1.) From this strategic corner, the house visually dominates the surrounding neighborhood. This was evidently the intention of Ben Boone when he built the first house in this area.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates 1910-1920 **Builder/Architect** N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Boone House is an important early example of masonry construction and Colonial Revival Style architecture in St. Petersburg. It is significant for its association with the developer of the neighborhood who also played a role in the city's first construction boom. This pre-World War I boom period was crucial to the economy and development history of St. Petersburg.¹ /

The Boone House is an important early example of St. Petersburg's residential architecture. It is one of the oldest surviving masonry houses: the City Historical Survey lists only 26 other houses built in 1910 or earlier. Of these, only the Veillard House (1910) is masonry. This is not of solid masonry walls, but a balloon frame structure with concrete block and stucco veneer. A study of early photographs of St. Petersburg shows that almost all of the pre-World War I houses were of frame construction. The only other masonry Colonial Revival house of this era is at 600 11th Ave. South, the Bradshaw Residence.

The skilled use of classically correct proportions suggests the work of a trained architect. In 1910, only three architects, George Stewart, Edgar Ferdon, and Henry Dupont, were practising in the city. The work of all three shows Beaux Arts training. Stewart, however, has the most sophisticated use of classical vocabulary. This is especially apparent in his 1917 Open Air Post Office. However, building permit records are not available for the period before 1918, so proving the architect is impossible. Obituaries of Ferdon, Dupont, and Stewart make no reference to the house.

The land the Boone House stands on was part of a large tract purchased by Anson Safford in 1888.² He subdivided the land and filed a plat in 1891, the year of his death. Anson Safford (1835-1891) was a major figure in the growth of Tarpon Springs, but speculated in land throughout the county.³ In 1910, Benjamin T. Boone purchased two blocks of the Safford Plat, and two blocks to the west from James D. Crouse.⁴ This land extended from Fifth Ave. North to Seventh Ave., and Sixth Street to Grove Street. These four blocks were low swampy ground with a small lake in the center. Boone spent the next few years draining and filling the site.⁵ In 1915, he filed a revised plat of this area, and placed the lots for sale with the Hall Real Estate Company.⁶

The Pinellas County Tax Appraiser's Office records lists a construction date of 1910 for the Boone House.⁷ The property deeds, of course, shed no light on the house's date, but a sale in 1920 for \$8,500 by Boone to Pierce is recorded. This indicates a house on the lot, since real estate ads in the St. Petersburg Times (1916) list lots in this subdivision priced from \$500 to \$1,000.⁸ The first entry on the Building Permit Files for the lot is 1920, "permit #3618, 2/27/20 to D. Pierce, for a 2 stry gar. (24x26) \$2,000."⁹

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Text

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one.

Quadrangle name St. Petersburg

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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|------|---------|----------|
| 17 | 3338220 | 3073445 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

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| Zone | Easting | Northing |

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 12 in Block B of Boone's Resub of Blocks 12 and 13, Safford's Addition to Revised Plat of St. Petersburg.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Howard Hansen and Diana Primelles

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation

date April, 1986

street & number Bureau of Historic Preservation
DAHLM, The Capitol

telephone 904-487-2333

city or town Tallahassee,

state Florida

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 5/29/86

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Entered in the
National Register

date 7-3-86


Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7

Page 1

The foundation is a continuous footing of masonry four feet high. Several rectangular ventilators are centered under major windows, and a plain string course defines the first floor level. All surfaces are concrete stucco matching the other exterior wall surfaces. The exterior walls are all load bearing masonry. They are made of crude early concrete block with occasional brick infill; the surface is covered with a concrete stucco in a sand finish. There is one exterior chimney on the east facade. A cyma recta moulding under a flat band caps the chimney.

The windows are frame, single-hung sash, of varying sizes. The sash treatment includes: 8 light over 1 light, 6 over 1, and 4 over 1. A frame double French door on the south facade is 8 lights per door. The window sills are plain, with a slight projection, and are stuccoed to match the walls.

The roof is hipped with projecting eaves. The soffits are wood and decorated with carved brackets which resemble beam ends. The fascia is narrow and completely covered by gutters. The original roof material is unknown, all traces of it were removed in 1951 and replaced with asbestos shingle.

The south facade is the main entrance to the house and faces Fifth Avenue. It is divided into three bays, with a pedimented portico occupying the central bay. Six steps flanked by four foot walls lead to the portico. The floor is paved with square yellow and green patterned tile. Four ionic columns of cast concrete rise from the portico floor and support the pedimented roof. A plain wooden cornice rests on the columns, and continues around the exterior of the house. The pediment projects like the main roof, and its soffits have the same decorative beam end treatment. A keystone fanlight fills the center of the pediment.

The front door of the Boone House leads from the portico to a central stair hall. The single light French door is flanked by one light sidelights. A wooden balcony railing is made of square balusters and posts. A double French door leads from the balcony to the second floor hall. On either side of the portico are two five-foot windows, centered over each other, on each floor. They are all 8/1 light, single-hung sash windows.

The east side of the house faces Sixth Street, and has a scheme of three bays. Two large windows on each floor flank a plain stuccoed chimney. The northern bay is a small, 9' 6" wide, recessed porch on each floor.

On the north and west sides the rhythm of three bays is maintained, in spite of the windows of varying size and their asymmetrical placement. These elevations face away from the streets and were utilitarian in purpose. The main feature of the west facade is a double flight of service stairs that provide access to the laundry porch and kitchen.

The interior of the Boone House contains 1128 sq. ft. on each floor. It has a center hall plan, but the hall does not extend throughout the length of the house.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

Date entered

Continuation sheet 2

Item number 7

Page 2

On the first floor, the hall ends at the seven foot height of the stairs, and a door leads to a service hall. This gives access to the kitchen, storage and laundry areas. On the second floor, a short cross hall at the head of the stairs provides entry to bedrooms, bathrooms, and connects to the center hall which runs along the east side of the stairwell to the front of the house. Directly over the main stairs is a closed, straight run flight of stairs to the floored attic.

Both floors of the Boone House are of two inch strip pine installed over a pine subflooring which rests on sills or beams. The kitchen, pantry, and laundry room floors are square green and yellow concrete tile. The bathrooms have small hexagonal, white ceramic tile floors.

The interior partitions are 2" x 4" stud walls with wood lathe and smooth plaster finish. Ceiling height on the first floor is nine foot, and the second floor is 8'6". All ceilings are plaster with smooth finish over wood lathe. The living room, dining room, and southwest bedroom have a four-inch plaster cove cornice moulding.

Door and window architraves in the house are uniform throughout. Door jambs are a plain flat surface with a projecting base at the baseboard height. The lintels have a projecting ovolo moulding at the base, and a wider projecting moulding at the top. Window architraves are identical, except they have a plain rounded projecting sill, with a plain apron underneath. The door design is of two vertical panels, with a vertical center stile. Panels are slightly recessed with a concave moulding. Hardware is brass of plain design. Baseboards are six inches high with a cyma moulding at the top and an ovolo shoe moulding at the base.

The first floor hall is eight foot wide and 18 feet long. The stairs are 3'6" wide, with a mahogany handrail, and square balusters. The railing terminates in a spiral return. A double French door of 15 lights per door, with an adjacent sidelight of 10 lights leads to the living room. At the foot of the stairs are identical doors that lead to the dining room. Next to the doors are recessed wooden panels with a ventilation grille at the top which matches the stair railing.

The Boone House living room is 21'8" x 12'8". The main feature is a painted colonial revival style mantel, of free-standing tuscan columns, and beveled mirror over mantel. The room has a plaster cove cornice. A brass five light electrolier with art glass shades, hangs from the ceiling.

The Boone House has suffered only minor exterior alterations. The house from April to June 1985 was restored by Wiblingham and Associates, Architects, as their offices. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation were used for the restoration. Inappropriate new features such as burglar bars, new light fixtures, handrails, etc., were removed. Several 1974 windows were removed and replaced with ones that match the originals. The only exterior alteration which was not reversed was the enclosure of a rear sleeping porch, on the northeast corner. Sealed windows on the north side of the house were reopened and restored.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 3

Item number 7

Page 3

The interior of the house has been altered in two areas. The northeast quadrant of the house on both floors has suffered the moving of partitions. In 1922, David Pierce built a staircase in this area, and enclosed part of the second floor hall. In 1974, Edgar Buren, M. D., removed the stairs, and rearranged the partitions in this area. At the same time, he enclosed the adjacent sleeping porches for use as bathrooms. In the 1985 restoration, Willingham and Associates chose these altered areas for retrofitting their needs. In this way, the unaltered parts of the house could be left intact.

In 1920, David Pierce built a frame and block two-story garage and apartment of 660 sq. ft. per floor. The first floor is rusticated concrete block, the second floor is of frame construction with a composition shingle sheathing. The roof is hipped with projecting eaves. The windows are single hung sash with 4/1 lights. There is a single, central brick chimney. The first floor has two garages and stairs to the second floor apartment. The second floor apartment contains a living room, one bedroom, one bath, kitchen and pantry. Alterations to the structure have been minimal. In 1952, the garage was resheathed with asbestos shingle, and in 1954 the roof was replaced with asbestos shingle. In the 1985 restoration, a window on the south side was converted to a door, and a wooden deck was built to link the garage to the house. This alteration is not visible from the street.

Contributing Resources: Two buildings.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 4

Item number 8

Page 1

Benjamin T. Boone was born at Mills Springs, Polk County, North Carolina in 1865, the son of Albert C. and Anna Maud Brackett Boone. After schooling, he worked in the mercantile business in Landrum, South Carolina. In 1906, he moved to St. Petersburg, and devoted himself to real estate development. His obituary states, "He was for many years a large St. Petersburg property owner and real estate developer... Included among his property holdings, at one time, property at the southeast corner of Ninth St. and Central. Many years ago he purchased a lake located between Fifth and Sixth Avebues No. and Sixth and Grove Streets. He filled it in and converted it into a subdivision, which is now the site of many of the city's finest homes."¹⁰ Boone served on the City Planning Board from 1910 to 1914.¹¹ He was part of the group of early developers that formed a cartel to create the city's first real estate "Boom."¹²

In 1910, St. Petersburg had a population of 7,186.¹³ The city limits extended from Fifth Avenue South to Fifth Avenue North, and from Tampa Bay (First Street) to Ninth Street, or 90 square blocks.¹⁴ By 1920, the population had doubled to 14,237.¹⁵ In 1914, the city limits were extended to 22nd Avenue North, 13th Avenue South and from Tampa Bay to Boca Ciega Bay (82nd Street, or about 1,000 square blocks.¹⁶ From 1910 till 1917, 40 miles of brick streets were paved, \$91,000 worth of water lines were laid, \$35,000 was spent for park land, and \$179,000 was spent by the city to acquire the waterfront park system. These statistics give some indication of what happened, but why it happened is more complex.

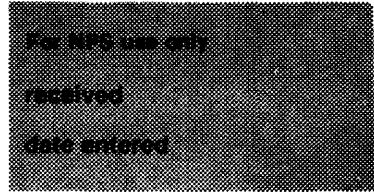
The 1911-1917 Boom in St. Petersburg can be viewed as a dress rehearsal for the 1920's Boom that occurred throughout the State. Local businessmen banded together to create vast real estate ventures, which were financed at taxpayer expense. Among the major figures in this cartel were Perry Snell, Charles Hall, the Gandy family, Charles Roser, the Fullers, John Harvey, and Ben Boone. It was easy for them to gain control of City Hall, and influence policy. The most important feat of this cartel was a new City Charter in 1913. This charter created an easy method of financing General Obligation Bonds for street and utility construction. The city limits were then extended to include raw land which was owned by the cartel. Under city laws, if 70% of the property owners in a neighborhood petitioned for street and utility improvements, it would be granted. This was easily done since there was usually only one owner, the developer.

In 1914, the developers had everything under their control, except the politics in the Balkans. The Boom gradually lost steam as investors worried about the Great War. In 1917, when the U. S. entered the war, the city and half of the cartel were on the brink of bankruptcy.¹⁷

Ben Boone stayed in real estate after World War I.¹⁸ He remained a Director of the Ninth Street Bank, until its failure in 1930.¹⁹ On August 20, 1930, it was reorganized as the Union Trust Bank, with new directors. It is today part of the Landmark Banks system.²⁰ In 1932, Boone returned to his hometown of Landrum, S. C. He died there July 29, 1936 at the age of 61. He never married, and was survived by two sisters.²¹

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet 5

Item number 8

Page 2

Ben Boone sold his house January 15, 1920 to David and Flora Fenderson Pierce.²² They were retirees who wintered in the house. David Pierce died in 1928, and the house passed to his heirs, Mrs. Catherine B. Thompson, Elizabeth and Richard Hess, and Nellie and Martin Sleffer. They rented the property from 1929 till 1941.²³ In 1941, Catherine Thompson sold the house to Henry I. and Helen Rhoades. The Rhoades continued to use the house as rental property.

The most significant tenant of this era was Alfred Lowther Forrest, who lived here from 1943 to 1949.²⁴ Alfred Forrest AIA was an English architect who moved to St. Petersburg in 1935. His most important commission was the new City Hall of 1937. Forrest kept his office on the first floor of the house.²⁵

In 1949, Henry and Helen Rhoades moved to St. Petersburg permanently, and lived in the garage apartment. John H. Green, President of the Florida National Bank, rented the main house from 1949 till 1951.²⁶ The Rhoades then moved into the main house, and used the garage apartment as a rental. Henry Rhoades died in 1958 and his widow remained in the house until her death in 1972.²⁷

The heirs of Helen Rhoades left the house vacant until its sale to Edgar Buren, M. D., in 1974. He made alterations to the property for use as his offices. In 1976, he bought the one-story bungalow to the west of the Boone House and demolished it for parking.²⁸ Dr. Buren sold his office in March, 1985 to Al and Anet Willingham.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

Footnotes

1. Fuller, Walter, This was St. Petersburg's Boom.
2. Straub, William, History of Pinellas, p. 112.
3. St. Petersburg Times, article on A. Safford, 4/20/80.
4. Hillsborough County, Deed Book 165, p. 627.
5. St. Petersburg revised original plat map.
6. St. Petersburg Times, Hall Real Estate Co. advertisement, 1/8/16.
7. Pinellas County Tax Assessors Office property file, 601 5th Ave. N.
8. Pinellas County Deed Book 549, p. 136; Op.cit. #6 ..
9. City of St. Petersburg, Dept. of Licensing and Permits, property card, 601 5th Ave, N.
10. St. Petersburg Times, Obituary of Ben T. Boone, 8/2/36.
11. City of St. Petersburg, Minutes of the City Planning Board, Vol.1.
12. Fuller, Walter, St.Petersburg and Its People, p. 136.
13. U.S. Census, 1910.
14. Op.cit. #12 , p. 132.
15. U.S. Census, 1920.
16. Op.cit.#12, p. 132.
17. Ibid., p. 133, 136, 138-139.
18. St. Petersburg City Directory, 1918-1926.
19. Op.cit.#10.
20. Op.cit.#12, p. 22.
21. Op.cit.#10.
22. Op.cit.#8.
23. Op.cit#18.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

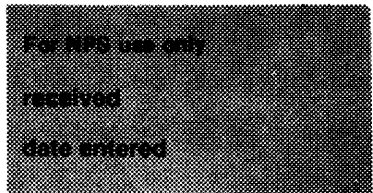
Item number 8

Page 4

24. St. Petersburg City Directory, 1942-1950.
25. Interview with Alfred Forrest Jr.
26. Op.cit.#24.
27. Death Certificate of Henry Rhoades, 5/7/58; Death Certificate of Helen Rhoades, 8/23/72.
28. Interview with Edgar Buren.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

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- Fuller, Walter, St. Petersburg and Its People.
- Fuller, Walter, This was St. Petersburg's Boom, 1954.
- Grismer, Karl, St. Petersburg, a History, 1949.
- Interview with Alfred L. Forrest Jr., by Howard Hansen, 3/15/85.
- Interview with Edgar Buren by Howard Hansen, 4/21/85.
- Hillsborough County, Deed Book 165.
- National Register Nomination, The Veillard House, 1982.
- Pinellas County, Death Certificate of Helen Rhoades, 8/23/72.
- Pinellas County, Death Certificate of Henry Rhoades, 5/7/58.
- Pinellas County, Deed Book 549.
- Pinellas County, Tax Assessor's Office, property file for 601 5th Ave. North.
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- St. Petersburg Times, articles on Dupont, 3/31/41; Stewart, 3/13/37; Ferdon, 8/24/35; Hall Real Estate Co. advertisement, 1/8/16; Obituary of Ben T. Boone, 8/2/36; article on Anson Safford, 4/20/80.
- Straub, William, History of Pinellas, 1929.