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SAN JOSE RESIDENCES

DATE: 1925-1926
 BUILDER: O. P. Woodcock
 NATIONAL REGISTER SITES

Thirty-one houses were constructed for the San Jose Estates Company from June 1925 to the middle of 1926, all by contractor O. P. Woodcock. Mortgages for the houses were held by the San Jose Estates Company, while Woodcock owned many of the lots on which the houses were built. Until recently, it was believed that all of these houses were designed by architects Marsh and Saxelbye. A September 13, 1925, *Florida Times-Union* article suggests that another architectural firm was also involved in some of the early construction for San Jose Estates: "Mark & Sheftall are working on plans for . . . many new buildings being erected, or to be erected, in San Jose." It is a possibility that other architects, including Mark & Sheftall, designed some of the first thirty-one houses.

Mediterranean Revival architecture is a theme common to all of these residences. Predicting in 1925 that one hundred houses would be constructed within one year, a *Florida Times-Union* reporter gave Marsh & Saxelbye's general description of these homes:

The main characteristics of the houses are strong walls (of) stucco masonry, tinted in various shades, rather flat tile roofs, wooden ceilings, paneled doors of wood, tile floors, and wrought iron grills for windows and other openings. Colors are being used lavishly in the building scheme. Sunshine and light are so brilliant at San Jose that bright colors are not offensive. Rather, they blend

delightfully with the semi-tropical growths and huge trees, according to the architects. All stone work in San Jose dwellings is being carried out in the design and character of that of Spain, it was said. Most of this phase of the construction at the suburb, when completed, will appear to date around the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries which was the best development of the Spanish Renaissance. A number of the houses at San Jose, the architects said, will be built around patios which are characteristics of nearly all true Spanish residences. The patio, it was explained, originated in Spanish cities where homes had to be built close to the property lines, necessitating the placement of beauty spots in the center of dwellings.

With the declining resources of the San Jose Estates Company in January of 1926, construction of these houses came to an end. Some were only partially completed. Few were occupied. Many sat vacant for years, strewn with unused building materials and diminished by exposure to the weather, termites, and vandals. The builder, O. P. Woodcock, took possession of most of the unoccupied houses to satisfy unpaid obligations. Complicated legal entanglements produced years of litigation, however, and Woodcock did not gain clear titles until 1934. Nine of the houses were in such ruin they had to be demolished. At least thirteen of the houses were kept as rental property by Woodcock and were not sold to private owners until the 1940's and 50's.

Twenty-one original San Jose Estates residences remain; most have been restored to excellent condition. Their common origin and similarity of style give all of the houses a collective significance.



SJ-8
7246 SAN CARLOS — A vestibule with paired arches and twisted columns marks the main entrance to this house, purchased by John Athey from O. P. Woodcock in 1946.



SJ-9
7245 SAN JOSE BOULEVARD — Charles Gaines, the secretary of the San Jose Estates Co., was the original owner of this house, which features a fountain in the walkway. During World War II it was purchased by The Bolles School for its founders, Agnes and Roger Painter. Mrs. Painter lived here until her death in 1965.