

There were no immediate plans to rebuild it.

Then a young man with lots of vision and plenty of energy came to town. The romance of his story includes a new Kenilworth Inn, the exclusive resort town of Kenilworth, and the great real estate boom of the 1920s, which incidentally wasn't really as wild as it's played up to be.

The period of the "roaring 20s" was necessary to take care of the tremendous population explosion and the awesome movement from the farm to the city which took place all over America. It was the crash that followed that gave us the headache. It was caused by poor business management. We hadn't learned yet to do business on a huge scale and we hadn't learned how to handle inflation. The real estate boom was actually the building of Asheville.

The story of the Kenilworth residential area of Asheville and the big structure that is now called Appalachian Hall is also the story of a man named James M. "Jake" Chiles, who was born on a farm in South Carolina and made a fortune in furniture factories in High Point and Lenoir.

James Madison Chiles came to Asheville in 1908 and fell in love with the city. He also fell in love with a beautiful young society girl named Leah Arcouet, the daughter of a famous French sculptor who had come to the United States when he was sixteen years old. She was a talented artist who kept a studio in Chicago's Auditorium Towers. Jake brought her home to Asheville to become one of the city's social leaders and then he began the construction of his dream town. They had two sons - John M. and Richard. In 1912 Chiles purchased most of the land now known as Kenilworth. He also purchased property in Azalea and sold it to the Veterans Administration for the Oteen Hospital.

In 1916 he formed the Kenilworth Inn Company and floated bonds to build a new hotel on the site of the old Inn. The Inn Company was separate from