

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, JF, T did part 188 of the first 188 hereunto set their hand and seal on the day and year first above written.

Stored, sealed and delivered in presence of us:

Chas R Hall (SEAL)  
Emma M Hall (SEAL)

State of Florida

County of PINELLAS

I HEREBY CERTIFY, That on this day personally appeared before me, an officer duly authorized to administer oaths and take acknowledgments, CHAS. R. HALL and EMMA M. HALL, his wife, to me well known to be the person described in and who executed the foregoing deed, and severally acknowledged before me that they executed the same freely and voluntarily for the purposes therein expressed.

AND I FURTHER CERTIFY, That the said EMMA M. HALL, known to me to be the wife of the said CHAS. R. HALL,

on a separate and private examination taken and made by and before me, separately and apart from her said husband, did acknowledge that she made herself a part of said deed for the purpose of renouncing, relinquishing and conveying all her right, title and interest, whether of dower, homestead or of separate property, statutory or equitable, in and to the lands described therein, and that she executed the said deed freely and voluntarily and without any compulsion, constraint, apprehension or fear of or from her said husband.

Witness my hand and official seal at St. Petersburg, County of Pinellas, and State of Florida, this third day of February, A. D., 1914.

Anna Moore Williams  
Notary Public State at Large,  
My Commission expires July 22, 1916.

WARRANTY DEED

From CHAS. R. HALL and EMMA M. HALL  
To CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG.

Dated 3rd day of February, A. D., 1914.

STATE OF FLORIDA  
County of Pinellas

Clerk of the Circuit Court in and for said County hereby certify that the foregoing deed has this day been duly recorded in the public records of said County, in Book 25 Pages 383.

Witness my hand and seal this FEB 19 1914 A. D., 1914  
C. W. Wierking

By C. W. Wierking Clerk Circuit Court.  
HERMAN MERRELL  
ATTORNEY AT LAW  
ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.

# Know All Men By These Presents:

Whereas, Charles R. Hall and Emma M. Hall, his wife,  
 by Indenture of Mortgage bearing date the 24th day of January,  
 A. D. 1913, and recorded in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court in and for the County of  
 Pinellas, State of Florida, in Mortgage Book 4,

Page 260, granted and conveyed unto Elizabeth McDevitt & Wilhelmina Nugent  
 their heirs  
 and assigns, the premises therein particularly described, to secure the payment of the sum of  
 Twenty-eight Thousand Two Hundred Ten and 33/100 (\$28210.33) dollars,  
 with interest as therein mentioned:

AND WHEREAS THE SAID mortgagees  
 requested the said mortgagees to release the premises  
 hereinafter described, being part of said mortgaged premises, from the lien and operation of said  
 Mortgage:

NOW, THEREFORE, KNOW YE, That the said mortgagees,  
 as well in consideration of the premises as of the sum of ONE DOLLAR AND OTHER VAL-  
 uable consideration, have agreed to them  
 in hand paid by the said Charles R. Hall and Emma M. Hall,  
 at the time of the execution hereof, the receipt whereof is hereby  
 acknowledged, do remise, release, quit-claim, exonerate and discharge from the lien and operation  
 of said mortgage unto the said Charles R. Hall and Emma M. Hall,  
 their heirs and assigns, all that piece, parcel or tract of land, being a part of the premises  
 conveyed by said mortgage, to-wit: All of Block numbered eleven (11) or  
 "SEMINOLE PARK", of Hall's Central Avenue Subdivision Number Two  
 (2), as shown and designated upon the plat of said subdivision re-  
 corded in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Pinellas  
 County, Florida, in Plat Book No. 3, on page 39.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, with the appurtenances, unto the said  
 Charles R. Hall and Emma M. Hall, their heirs and assigns forever, freed,  
 exonerated and discharged of and from the lien of said mortgage, and every part thereof; Provided,  
 always, nevertheless, that nothing therein contained shall in anywise impair, alter or diminish the  
 effect, lien or incumbrance of the aforesaid Mortgage on the remaining part of said mortgaged  
 premises, not hereby released therefrom, or any of the rights and remedies of the holder thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said Mortgagees have hereunto set their hands and seals  
 this thirty-first day of January, 1914.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of:  
 Mabel Keider

Elizabeth McDevitt (SEAL)  
 Wilhelmina Nugent (SEAL)  
 Charles R. Hall (SEAL)  
 Emma M. Hall (SEAL)

This Indenture, Made this third day of February, A. D., 1914,

between CHAS. R. HALL and EMMA M. HALL, his wife, of the Borough of Ayclon

of the County of Cape May, in the State of New Jersey, parties of the first part, and CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, a municipal corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Florida, of the County of Pinellas, in the State of Florida, part Y of the second part,

WITNESSETH, That the said parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of ONE DOLLAR AND OTHER VALUABLE CONSIDERATION,

to them in hand paid by the said part Y of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have granted, bargained and sold to the said part Y of the second part,

and its successors, the following described land, situate, lying and being in the County of Pinellas,

State of Florida, to-wit:

Block numbered eleven (11) of Hall's Central Avenue Subdivision No. Two (2) of the East half (E $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of the Northwest quarter (NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ) of Section twenty-three (23) in Township thirty-one (31) South, of Range sixteen (16) East, as shown and designated upon the plat of said subdivision recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Pinellas County, Florida, in Plat Book No. 3, page 39; this conveyance is made subject, however, to the following reservations, restrictions and conditions, which shall run with the land and are part of the consideration therefor, and the acceptance of this conveyance by the said City of St. Petersburg and the taking of possession of said land by it shall be taken and held as an agreement on its part to all of the conditions hereof, as fully as if its corporate name and seal were affixed hereto, to-wit:

1.- That said property shall be used by said City as a public park only, to be called "Seminole Park".

2.- That the said City will improve said park in an attractive manner and at all times maintain the same in good order and condition as such.

3.- Should the City violate either of the foregoing conditions or abandon the use of the said property, or any part thereof, as a public park, or use, or allow the use of the same or any part thereof, for any other purpose than as such park, then the title to and right of possession of said land, together with all improvements that may be made thereon by the said City or its successors, shall, after ninety days' notice in writing to the said City, and the failure on its part within such time to correct and remedy any such violation of said restrictions, reservations and conditions, immediately revert to and re-vest in the parties of the first part, their heirs and assigns, as fully and completely as if this conveyance had never been made; and all rights of the said City or of the public in and to said land, and any and all rights of purchasers of property in said subdivision to have the same used and maintained as a public park, shall thereupon cease and be forever determined.

And the said parties of the first part do hereby fully warrant the title to said land, and will defend the same against the lawful claims of all persons whomsoever, except as to the above-mentioned reservations, restrictions and conditions, and taxes for the year 1914.

*[Handwritten signature]*



# Early developer gambled and left his mark on city

■ Charles Richard Hall built Kenwood and Lakewood Estates and gave Seminole Park to St. Petersburg.

By SCOTT TAYLOR HARTZELL  
Times Correspondent

ST. PETERSBURG — Charles Richard Hall once walked with giants through the city's undeveloped areas.

"Giants, yes: giants in vision, courage and performance," historian Walter Fuller called the great developers of the early 1920s. "They wrote . . . their lives in the sand and brick and buildings of the city."

Hall built Kenwood and Lakewood Estates. He owned property east of Lake Maggiore and on 34th Street S, north of the Skyway Bridge. He gave the city a park.

He was "among the gamblers . . . the biggest plungers," wrote historian Karl Grismer, and had "unbounded faith in St. Petersburg."

He was "one of the biggest developers in the city's boom time era," the *St. Petersburg Times* reported.

Hall, born in Detroit in 1869, moved with his mother to Philadelphia several years after his father's death in 1872. After the fifth grade, Hall started working in the retail business and sold women's hats.

He married Emma May Blanchette in 1897, and they had five children. In 1908, Charles Hall developed New Jersey seashore property. One year later, St. Petersburg entrepreneur F.A. Davis coaxed Hall here, Grismer wrote. Fuller said his father, H. Walter Fuller, was the persuader.

H. Walter Fuller sold Hall 80 acres at Central Avenue and 25th Street in 1912 for \$16,000. Hall stretched his early Kenwood holdings to 28th Street after buying 80 adjoining acres one year later for \$40,000.

He slashed his prices in half, usually \$100 to \$1,500 per lot, and ignited a price war.

Scenic postcards and huge ads promoted Hall's property. "Your last chance to buy close in West Central Avenue lots and houses at your own price and very easy terms," read one plug.

In 1913, Hall helped finance the St. Petersburg-Tampa Airboat Line, the nation's first commercial airboat service. That same year, he gave the city Seminole Park, 8 acres between Second and Third avenues N and 29th and 30th streets. "He needs to be recog-



Photo courtesy of Mary Richmond

A photograph from the early 1900s shows Charles Hall, arrow, at the ceremonial laying of bricks on Central Avenue. "He was the first complete developer. Selling the lot, building the house and installing brick streets," says Dennis Rhodes, a Museum of History volunteer.



Charles Richard Hall's grandson says: "My grandfather developed for the middle class."

nized," said Laura Labadie, Hall's great granddaughter. "My mission is to have the Hall name included in the park's."

In 1914, Hall sparked the formation of the St. Petersburg Country Club in the Jungle area west of Tyrone. He had a home near there and later had a mansion at 5030 Sunrise Drive S. "I heard his (mansion's) pool was one of the first (residential ones) in town," said Mary Richmond, 73, Hall's granddaughter. "He was generous with others to use it."

Hall helped establish the St. Petersburg Yacht Club in 1916.

By 1917, Hall owned "over 2,500 acres of beautiful rolling lands in Lakewood," Grismer said. Serious development began there in the early 1920s.

Nine-foot-tall stone urns graced several entrances. Many lots faced Hall's 18-hole golf course, designed in the shape of butterfly wings. "He was the first complete developer," said Dennis Rhodes, 62, a volunteer with the St. Petersburg Museum of History. "Selling the lot, building the house and installing brick streets."

In 1927, Hall announced a \$1-million project to construct 400 Lakewood homes. Priced from

\$6,500 to \$9,500, the two-story, stucco-finished homes had Spanish clay tile roofs. They featured open fireplaces, fire-proof garages, high-ceiling living rooms and Spanish tile flooring.

"(C. Perry) Snell developed for the rich," Richmond said. "My grandfather developed for the middle class."

People want "the modest home," Hall said then. "That is what we are going to give them."

Few of the homes were built, however, and Lakewood Estates and other Hall holdings faltered for several reasons:

■ Hall's properties south of Central Avenue suffered from racial prejudice directed toward the area, which "took another generation to overcome," Fuller wrote.

■ Lake Maggiore created dead ends throughout Hall's holdings, stunting their growth.

■ Florida's economic collapse forced Hall into bankruptcy.

While returning to Florida from New Jersey and New York in 1934, Hall died in Stroudsburg, Pa. He is honored at Pioneer Park, between Central and First Avenue N and Beach Drive and Bayshore drives.

After finding in 1991 that Hall's grave in Royal Palm Cemetery was unmarked, Labadie acquired and engraved a 2-foot octagonal piece of sidewalk from old Kenwood.

The stone, placed during a family ceremony that year, reads: "Charles R. Hall — A preserver and creator of beauty."

— Scott Taylor Hartzell can be reached at [Hartzel@gate.net](mailto:Hartzel@gate.net).