

## Gimghoul Castle <sup>[1]</sup>

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See also: [Dromgoole, Peter Pelham](#) <sup>[2]</sup>



Gimghoul Castle. Photograph by the Wootten-Moulton Studio. North Carolina Collection,

by Jerry Leath Mills, 2006 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Library.

Gimghoul Castle in Chapel Hill is a large stone building constructed in the style of a medieval castle or fort, situated on Point Prospect (sometimes known as Piney Prospect) in [Battle Park](#) <sup>[3]</sup>. It is the lodge and headquarters of the [Order of Gimghoul](#) <sup>[4]</sup>, a student society of secret and exclusive membership at the [University of North Carolina](#) <sup>[5]</sup>. Founded in 1889 and initially occupying a lodge at the corner of Boundary and East Rosemary Streets, the Order of Gimghoul organized around the imaginative speculations of Wray Martin, a student who received his law degree in 1891. Strongly influenced by [Sir Thomas Malory](#) <sup>[6]</sup> and other medieval chroniclers of the [Arthurian](#) <sup>[7]</sup> legends, Martin enjoyed retiring at night to Point Prospect to write his private mythology. Martin created a "City of the Gimghoul," surrounded by a great, island-dotted sea and defended by a castle or fortress on the spot where he indulged in his reveries. The story of [Peter Dromgoole](#) <sup>[8]</sup> inspired him to use the name "Gimghoul." Dromgoole, a student at the university in the 1830s, supposedly fought a duel on the same promontory over the affections of a girl named Fanny, leaving his own or his opponent's blood indelibly splattered on a rock at the site.

In 1915 the Order of Gimghoul began a complicated series of land transactions to acquire Point Prospect and its environs, employing a group of stonemasons from [Valdese](#) <sup>[9]</sup> (descended from the medieval [Waldensians](#) <sup>[10]</sup> of southern France and Italy) to build the castle. Completed in 1926, it retains its aura of mystery and romance while functioning as the social and fraternal center of the order.

### References:

Phillips Russell, *These Old Stone Walls* (1972).

Louis Round Wilson, *Historical Sketches* (1976).

### Subjects:

[Societies, clubs, and organizations](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

[UNC Press](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

### Authors:

[Mills, Jerry Leath](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

### Origin - location:

[University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

### From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

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- [3] <http://ncbg.unc.edu/battle-park/>
- [4] <http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/uars/ead/40262.html>
- [5] <https://www.ncpedia.org/university-north-carolina-chapel-hi>
- [6] <http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/malory.htm>
- [7] <http://www.kingarthursknights.com/>
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