

Albert W. Henn



Gertrude Bruce Henn



The Albert W. Henn Family

Albert W. Henn was born at New Britain, Connecticut, January 26, 1865. His parents were Francis A. and Barbara Wilhelmy Henn. His father was born at BadenBaden, Germany, April 1, 1825, came to America a political refugee in 1859. He was a gunsmith by trade and after coming to New Britain found employment in some of the big hardware manufacturing houses, notably the firm of Russell & Erwin and Landers, Frary & Clark. Albert W. Henn went to school until he was thirteen years of age completing the eighth grade. The boy went into the factory of Landers, Frary & Clark, covering a period of four years. At the age of nineteen he came to Cleveland and here secured a position as entry clerk with the wholesale dry goods house of Root & McBride, where he remained for thirteen years. During this period he had, apparently, little use for the mechanical knowledge he had secured in his boyhood, but when the opportunity came he found himself thoroughly interested and quite able to apply it

Mr. Henn was married in Cleveland, April 17, 1889, to Miss Gertrude Jeannette Bruce, and they had six children, their first two sons, Jesse

and William died in infancy leaving three sons and one daughter surviving. Edwin C., a graduate of Cornell University; Howard R. a graduate of Yale University, Jeannette, a graduate of Vassar College; and Robert B a graduate of Cornell University.

Mr. Henn and his brother E. C. Henn patented the Multiple Spindle Lathe, (EC's invention) which revolutionized the machine tool industry. Then they organized the Acme Machine Screw Company, with E. C. Henn as president and Albert W. Henn as secretary and treasurer. In 1902 they merged their enterprise with the National Manufacturing Company of Cleveland and changed their caption to the National-Acme Manufacturing Company. Mr. Henn became Secretary of the concern at that time (1908), became treasurer, and was elected president in 1918. He was also treasurer and a director of the Maynard H. Murch Company, investments; president of the Goodhold Farm Company, vice president of the Ohio Muck Farm Company, and a director in the Lincoln Electric Company and the Winton Hotel Company.

Albert bought eighteen acres of farm land in Euclid, Ohio along Lake Shore Blvd. in 1910. The land was very fertile and was good for growing grapes. Ice was cut from the lake in winter, held over and used to ship the grapes on the railroad. Eventually he built four houses on the property; one being the Albert W. Henn mansion. The Mansion was designed and built in 1923 by Architect Earl Andrews at a cost of \$120,000.00 Replacement costs are estimated at over \$1,500,000. There are 23 rooms in the 9,200 square foot house.

Depression came to Euclid, Ohio and the market for all products was terribly small. Both the firms and City lacked funds. Taxes could not be paid. The municipality accrued a great deal of property (as it had before in the wake of the grape blight). The city found it necessary to issue its own money; a scrip paid to employees and welfare recipients under the authority of the County Auditor. New Deal, federally aided works were necessary in Euclid as everywhere. The WPA, Works Projects Administration built the old Euclid City Hall in 1938 along with Euclid Park Clubhouse.

Albert Henn ran for mayor of Euclid in 1926, but lost to Charles Ely. Later, in 1938 he introduced Ken Sims, our longtime mayor (1938-1970) to politics from the mansion.

The depression of the 1930's, a blight on the grape crop, and advanced age brought economic ruin to Mr. Henn. Unable to pay his taxes, he agreed to a city settlement to let him live on the land until his death. The city then acquired the land. It was used for extra school classrooms and our Board of Education offices, then as the Recreation Department headquarters. Except for police and fire training, it stood empty in 1989 when the new city hall was built and all departments were consolidated.

“In all that pertains to good citizenship and particularly all that give encouragement to progress and civic reform at Cleveland Mr. Henn stands in the front rank, but he is not affiliated with any political party. He has advanced far in Masonry, having taken both the Scottish and York rite degrees and is a Shriner. Genial and friendly by nature, Mr. Henn has numerous pleasant social connections and his membership is valued in such well known organizations as the Union, the Willowick Country Club, and the Cleveland Athletic and Colonial clubs.”
(Quoted from an early article in the Cleveland Press)

Gertrude, Albert's wife lived in the mansion only 8 years before dying from complications of heart trouble and diabetes. Albert was a widower for 16 years. He never remarried. Mr. Henn died of cancer on May 4, 1947 at the age of 82, and is buried at Lakeview Cemetery.

Death information from the Cleveland Public Library Necrology File

Name: Henn, Gertrude Bruce

Date: Mar 21 1931

Source: Source unknown; Cleveland Necrology File, Reel #036.

Notes: Henn: Gertrude Bruce, beloved wife of Albert W., mother of Edwin C., Howard R., Mrs. Kenneth Akers and Robert B., sister of Mrs. Jessie Bell and Miss Zula Bruce, Wednesday, March 18. Services at residence, 23131 Lake Shore Blvd., Saturday, March 21, at 2:30 p. m. Burial private.

Name: Henn, Albert W.

Date: May 15 1947

Source: Plain Dealer; Cleveland Necrology File, Reel #036.

Notes: Henn, Albert W., husband of the late Gertrude B.; father of Mrs. Kenneth W. Akers, Edwin C., Howard R., and Robert B. Henn; grandfather of 12 and great-grandfather; May 14. Services from the Fairhill Home of the Millard Son & Raper Co., Fairhill at East Blvd., Friday, May 16, at 3 p. m



Contact us:

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The Architect - Earl Andrews

We do have a little information on Mr. Andrews provided by Carol Poe Miller who drafted the Henn Mansion application for the National Register.

The Henn mansion is vaguely Tudor Revival in style with Bungalow/Craftsman overtones, the Henn house was built to the design of Cleveland architect Earl J. Andrews, who designed and built more than one hundred large houses in the city and its inner-ring suburbs during the first three decades of the twentieth century. The Albert W. Henn house is the only known example of the architect's work in Euclid.

Andrews a Cleveland architect and builder, was born in Wilmington, Ohio. He was educated in the public schools there and graduated from Ohio State University in 1904. During summer vacations, Andrews served as an apprentice carpenter in Cleveland. Following college, he took technical courses at the New York Technical School and worked briefly in the New York offices of Andrews & White. According to Avery's History of Cleveland and Its Environs (Vol 2, p. 363) The "Andrews" of Andrews and White was a cousin of Earl J. Andrews, while "the junior member of the firm" was Stanford White. This information has not been corroborated.

In 1905 Andrews opened an office in Cleveland. He marketed himself as the only architect in Cleveland who also did his own building. "Mr. Andrews as both architect and builder employs his own labor, furnishes material, and makes himself responsible for every detail of any given building plan and contract.", Avery notes. By 1918, he had designed and built 136 houses in Cleveland, 100 of which are located in the Wade Park section of the city. Many of these have been identified as part of the Magnolia-Wade Park National Register Historic District. Other Andrews-designed houses have been identified in the East Boulevard National Register Historic District (where two apartment houses are also attributed to him), and in Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights. Notable are two houses Andrews designed and built for himself: 11201 Wade Park Blvd. (1914) in Cleveland; and 2170 South Overlook road (ca. 1917) in Cleveland Hts.

Andrews designs are characterized by the eclecticism of the period, with elements of Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, Georgian Revival, English Medieval, and Bungalow/Craftsman styles. Between 1908 and 1934, Cleveland city directories list him variously as a carpenter - contractor, general contractor, architect, and architect and builder. Despite his great output, Andrews does not appear anywhere in the architectural -historical literature of Cleveland.

Death information from the Cleveland Public Library Necrology File:

Name: Andrews, Earl J.

Date: Jan 12 1938

Source: Cemetery record; Cleveland Necrology File, Reel #002.

Notes: Andrews: Earl J. beloved husband of Clara B., brother of Clifford, of Cincinnati; residence. 1878 E. 90th st. Friends received at the De Vand Funeral Home, 11130 Euclid ave. Services Wednesday at 3 p. m. 1881 - 1938. Acacia Park Cemetery Mayfield Hts., Ohio.