

The Albuquerque Press Club

201 Highland Park Circle SE
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87102-3632

505.243.8476
www.abqpressclub.com



The Whittlesey House was designed by architect Charles Whittlesey and built as his family residence in 1903 on the western edge of the Highland east of Albuquerque. It is a three-story frame structure designed after a Norwegian villa. Low-pitch roofs with exposed log fronting, rough log-cut facades and a wide porch, which surrounds its eastern rooms, characterize the house.

For the Whittlesey family this rustic and rough-texture structure was, no doubt, a change in lifestyle from their previous Chicago residence. It stood, at that time, virtually alone on the Highland — the town not having grown in that direction. There was no vegetation or trees in the area. The view east to the Sandias and west to the town, river, and volcanoes was unobstructed.

The following is an excerpt from correspondence with Enid Whittlesey (Charles Whittlesey's daughter). It provides some insight into the family lifestyle.

THE RATTLESNAKE

"I came from San Francisco with a French governess soon after you (Enid) had your accident, and returned before June 1904. It was while I was there in Albuquerque that Austin (Whittlesey's son) shot the snake. You were living in the big log house on the edge of the mesa. The living room was sixty feet (actual size) long with an immense fireplace with log stumps on the hearth where we used to crack nuts in the evening, or make candy and tell stories.

There were great many large easy chairs, Indian rugs, huge baskets and pottery, making it cozy although it was so large. Surrounding this room on three sides was a ten-foot veranda. It was all very beautiful with a marvelous view.

I saw a huge rattlesnake lying across the beams, head raised, mouth wide open with a forked tongue lashing in and out, and the poor little bird, not a foot away, trying to keep it from her nest. I immediately called the family. Edie (Whittlesey) was down sewing, and Austin had just come in and still had his cowboy hat on. He couldn't have been much past eleven, if he was even that, but he had manly ways, and felt his responsibilities, his

father being away from home a great deal. He naturally took the lead, got his gun and shot the snake at the first aim; then he skinned it and found four of the bird's eggs inside.

The Xmas before (1903) my horse jumped over the fence opposite the University, I grabbed the saddle went over and I was dragged a block with my foot in the stirrup. Dad on a fast horse met us near the big bar (a stable Whittlesey built below the house structure.). He started carrying me up the hill. I am all right, I can walk.'

For a while the plumbing was not in and my mother had to dump the buckets on the cobblestones away from the house.

"Here they will live royally as becometh jolly bachelorhood and the fellow who may be their guest of an evening may consider himself a lucky dog."

— THE ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL, 1902

Nothing grew around the house — no trees. Below the hill toward the University was a tiny park — green."

— ENID WHITTLESEY

In 1908 the Whittleseys sold to Theodore S. Woolsey, Jr., who owned the house for the next twelve years. Of Woolsey, nothing is known except that for part of these years, he was Assistant District Forest Ranger USFS. Early photos suggest that he added the addition to the south side of the house and framed out the northwest corner of the main porch. Records show that in 1916 he leased the house to Mr. Andros, President of Whitney Hardware, and in 1917 to Mr. Reynolds, President of the First National Bank.

The Albuquerque Press Club

201 Highland Park Circle SE
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87102-3632

505.243.8476
www.abqpressclub.com

Albuquerque was known nationwide at this time for its good climate, conducive to the treatment of certain diseases. Located on the Highland near the house were two sanitariums. Indications are that Woolsey leased the house, with its wide porches and open areas to many people who came to this city for convalescent reasons.

One particular nurse who came West with a patient and stayed on to become head nurse at the Albuquerque Sanitarium, passed the house each day on her way to work. She informed a suitor that if he bought the log house she would marry him. Arthur B. Hall bought the house from Woolsey in 1920 and the nurse married him. Clifford Hall, A.B.'s wife, lived in and eventually owned the house for the next forty years. It was home to her more than to any family prior to or after her ownership.



CLARA "CLIFFORD" MYRICK MCCALLUM

She brought the house through periods of extensive remodeling and interior style changes.

During the twenties the Halls were owners and proprietors of Hall's Royal Pharmacy, on the corner of Gold and Second. They kept the interior of the house predominantly southwestern – much as Whittlesey had done.

Navajo rugs covered the rough wood floors; the shelves lined with pottery by Maria, Tonita, and Santa; Mexican furniture was common and wrought iron lights were used when gas was added. Early New Mexico artists, such as Hogner, Redin and Van Hesler were welcomed to the house, often painting and working on the wide porch. The Halls also collected Chinese furniture, some pieces having been left in the house by earlier lessees. Much of the Chinese and American Indian furniture is still in the family today.

In 1930 Clifford was divorced from A.B. Hall. By 1935, she was remarried to Herbert McCallum, but this too would end in divorce in 1938. As a source of income during these years, she would rent out portions of the house. The south porch was framed out and part of the first level was sealed off to make a separate apartment. The original stable was renovated and added to, making it an apartment complex. An additional apartment was built adjacent to it. As new building materials were introduced, Clifford resurfaced the interior walls of the house. Whittlesey's rough wood and burlap surfaces were covered by celutex, plaster, and wood planking.

By the mid-forties Clifford McCallum was working for Vanlandingham Studios, first as a seamstress and eventually, owner. During these years the rough wood floors were resurfaced with oak strip flooring. Knotty pine siding was introduced to some wall surfaces. An earlier color scheme of gold and red was accentuated through new furniture and draperies. Marble-topped European furniture pieces filled the main room. This, of all the rooms in the house, was the visually richest. The immense lava rock fireplace, the filled bookshelves



CLARA "CLIFFORD" MYRICK MCCALLUM, ALSO LOVINGLY REFERRED TO AS MRS. M

lining the walls, and the rustic bark wall surfaces were complimented by the golds and reds of the floor, furniture, draperies, and incidentals.

The Highland Park 'log house' was a show place during the thirties, forties, and fifties. Clifford McCallum spent a great deal of her time, money and energy in maintaining the house and its surroundings. She opened her home to many people, among them William Lovelace, who brought his international guests to view the house. The Mayo brothers, whose clinic is known worldwide, were frequent visitors. William Keleher, Clyde Tingley and even Clinton Anderson, in his early political years, were friends and visitors to the house.

In 1960 Clifford McCallum sold the house. Her increasing age, the extensive upkeep on the structure and numerous other reasons contributed to her decision. Zeta Mu Zeta House Corp. of Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity purchased the house.

There are many a story about the ghost of Mrs. M haunting Albuquerque Press Club's halls; but we like to think of her as a motherly force that watches over our patrons. We have a photo of her hanging in the hall between the bar entrance and the steps to the pool & dart room - go over and thank her for giving The Albuquerque Press Club the wonderful spirit it has. **apc**

