

304 N. Canyon Boulevard



A few months after the Monrovia Tract was placed on the market in May of 1886, the first addition to the tract was made. The map of the addition was recorded on July 28, 1886 at the request of J. D. Bicknell, suggesting that Bicknell, one of Monrovia's founders, may have owned lots 72 and 73 of the Santa Anita Tract and subdivided them to create the addition. Lot G in Block 22 of Addition No. 1 to the Monrovia Tract was a corner lot of

2.42 acres. For over twenty years it remained vacant.

Dr. Charles E. Winslow was born August 19, 1855 in Sugar Grove, Kane County, Illinois. He was a graduate of Oberlin College and the Rush Medical College in Chicago and had been practicing medicine in Los Angeles before he came to Monrovia in April of 1906. Earlier in his career he practiced in Aurora, Illinois and Albuquerque, New Mexico. It is not clear if Dr. Winslow practiced medicine in Monrovia, or if he came here for his health.

Dr. Winslow married the former Louise M. Tracy of Mansfield, Ohio about 1883. She was born June 8, 1858 in Zanesville, Ohio. Charles and Louise Winslow were the parents of two children. Only their daughter, Mercelia Anna Winslow, survived childhood. She was born July 17, 1884 in Aurora, Illinois.

Dr. Winslow preceded his wife and daughter in coming to California. When the United States Federal Census of 1900 was enumerated, he was working as a hotel physician in Lake County, California. Louise and Mercelia Winslow were living with Louise's parents, Frederick E. Tracy and Anna Lord Tracy, in Mansfield, Ohio. They were reunited when Dr. Winslow began practicing medicine in Los Angeles.

After the death of Frederick Tracy, Anna Tracy moved to Monrovia and purchased the large corner lot in Addition No. 1. She retained the services of Frank O. Eager to design a new house where she could live with her daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter. The imposing Craftsman mansion that stands on the corner today was the result. It was completed in 1908, as the family is listed as living there in the Monrovia City Directory for 1908-1909. The new house contained an elevator, since Dr. Winslow was in poor health and climbing stairs was difficult for him.

While Dr. Winslow was in poor health, he was active none-the-less. The Monrovia City Directory for 1908-1909 shows that Dr. Winslow was proprietor of the Red Feather Poultry Yards, located on the large corner lot. "Winslow's Reds" were

advertised as “the greatest winter layers”, and visitors were always welcome. By 1911 Dr. Winslow had retired from the poultry business as his health had continued to deteriorate. Dr. Winslow passed away in his home on June 19, 1914 and his funeral services were held at the house.

A happy note from the earlier period of the Winslow residency was the marriage of Mercelia Anna Winslow to Scott L. Boyd of the Boyd Lumber Company in Monrovia. After their honeymoon they took up residence in a fine new Craftsman house on Ivy Avenue in Monrovia. By 1916 Scott and Mercelia Boyd were living in Santa Barbara, where they spent the rest of their lives. Mercelia Winslow Boyd died February 10, 1951 and is buried in the Santa Barbara Cemetery.

Anna Tracy and Louise Winslow continued to live in the house for several years after Dr. Winslow’s death. By 1919, the residents of the house were John and Mary O’Day and their family. Louise Winslow was still living in Monrovia, boarding with Mrs. W. G. Davison on Myrtle Avenue. Anna Tracy disappears from the local scene. According to information passed on to subsequent owners of the house, a dispute arose after the death of one of the Winslow family members and the house was abandoned with articles of furniture and personal belongings left behind. It may be that it was Anna Tracy whose death resulted in a family dispute.

After 1922, Louise Winslow joined her daughter and son-in-law in Santa Barbara, where she spent the rest of her life. She died December 30, 1939 and is also buried in the Santa Barbara Cemetery.

John O’Day was born in England in June of 1856, but was brought to the United States as an infant. He married the former Mary Stillwell, who was born in Grand Rapids, Wisconsin April 7, 1860. John and Mary O’Day were the parents of four children: Ethel, Pearle, Guy William, and Leslie John. Ethel, Guy and John came with their parents to Monrovia from Merrill, Wisconsin and lived in the house. The O’Day ownership was for several years only. The family apparently moved on to Reedley, California, selling the house to William H. Pier in 1921. Three generations of the Pier family occupied the house for the next twenty three years.

William Henry Pier was born December 6, 1842. He served in the 15th Ohio Infantry during the Civil War. His first wife was Lucy M. Hoyt, who was born December 6, 1846 and died January 19, 1890. William and Lucy were the parents of seven children, three of whom, William F. Pier, Arthur Verne Pier, and Edson Keith Pier, lived to maturity. William Pier’s second wife was Mary Jane Mc Kay, who was born January 5, 1856 and died June 30, 1899 as a result of childbirth. Their son, Harry McKay Pier, was born June 29, 1899. William F. Pier was living in Pasadena in 1900, no doubt the reason that William, Edson and Harry relocated to the San Gabriel Valley as well.

Edson Keith Pier was born May 30, 1881 in Richland Center, Wisconsin, a surviving twin. His first wife was the former Winifred L. Murphy. They were the parents of two sons, Kenneth Murphy Pier, who was born February 4, 1906 in Richland

Center, and Everett Harry Pier, who was born in 1909, also in Richland Center. Winifred L. Pier died in 1909, possibly from the complications of childbirth, and is buried in the Richland Center Cemetery. On December 31, Edson married his second wife, the former Kathryn Edna Spiegel. Edson and Kathryn were the parents of two daughters, Mary Lu Pier and Anna Kathryn Pier, both born in Richland Center. Mary Lu Pier was born November 13, 1911 and Anna Kathryn Pier was born December 2, 1912.

William H. Pier was still living in Richland Center with his son Harry when the 1920 United States Federal Census was enumerated. The following year William Pier came to California and purchased this house where he lived with his son Harry, who received his education at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and the University of Chicago. William Pier died on March 3, 1924, and his body was returned to Wisconsin for interment in the Richland Center Cemetery.

Following his father's death, Harry Pier married Elizabeth Adele Clark in Lawrence County, South Dakota on August 18, 1924. The newly-weds returned to California, where Harry continued to operate the Home Hardware Company in Arcadia while living in Los Angeles. Harry and Elizabeth were the parents of two sons, McKay Pier, who was born in South Dakota, and Alan Clark Pier, who was born in Illinois. Harry and Elizabeth Pier later lived in the San Francisco Bay area. Harry Pier died August 13, 1993 in Oakland, California.

Following William Pier's death, Edson Keith Pier and his family took up residency in the house with their family. Edson Pier became quite active in the life of his adopted community. He was elected to the Monrovia City Council in 1928, and served for four years. In the 1930's he was a member of the Monrovia Planning Commission. The Pier family sold the house in 1944, but Edson and Kathryn Pier remained in Monrovia for the rest of their lives. Edson Pier died February 4, 1955, and Kathryn Pier died August 6, 1974.

Kenneth Pier did not remain in Monrovia, nor did his brother Everett. Kenneth served in the United States Navy during World War II. He married Mary Margaret Stanford and died November 11, 1970 on the island of Guam. Everett graduated from Cal Tech in Pasadena with a degree in Electrical Engineering. He was living in Madera, California with his wife Grace when the 1940 United States Federal Census was enumerated. Everett died in 1952.

Mary and Anna Pier, on the other hand, remained in Monrovia for the rest of their lives. Mary stayed single, and for many years was on the staff of the Monrovia Public Library. Anna married Stewart Downs, who for many years was employed by Hendricks Furs in Monrovia. Stewart and Anna were the parents of two sons, both now deceased. Mary Lu Pier July 18, 1998 and Anna Downs died January 18, 2004. in Monrovia.

Edson, Kathryn, Everett, Mary, and Anna are all buried at Live Oak Cemetery in Monrovia.

In 1944 the house became a guest home for the elderly, and continued in that role for over forty years before it returned to single family use. The former owners undertook the restoration of the house after its years of institutional use, and the current owner, who purchased the property in 1998, has continued the process of restoration and upgrading.