



April 2012

History of the A.K. Smiley Public Library Heritage Room

Dr. Larry Burgess and Don McCue, Speakers
 Monday, April 23, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
 Assembly Room, A.K. Smiley Public Library
 125 Vine Street, Redlands



Forty years ago a corner of the reference room at A.K. Smiley Public Library was sectioned off into the beginnings of the archives of the Heritage Room. Dr. Larry Burgess was hired as its first archivist. Since that time the room and its collection has grown into the community treasure that it is today.

The Historical Society celebrates its long standing partnership with the Heritage Room and its staff this month. Dr. Burgess and the current archivist, Don McCue will discuss the operation of the collection, where it's been, and where it is going.

The Heritage Room has an extensive collection on the history of Redlands and Southern California. There is the California Collection, the Carnegie Indian Collection, A.K. Smiley Family Collection, Gerald A. Smith Indian Collection, Nordhoff-Morrison-Stillman Collection, the Citrus Industry Collection and many more.

We have asked to see examples of the collection that aren't on display. Join us in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Heritage Room.



Old House Group

Wednesday, April 25, 2012, 6:30 p.m.

Ashbaker Residence
 837 W. Palm Avenue

The April meeting of the Old House Group will be held at the home of Betty and Jeff Ashbaker. The view of this home from the street is deceptive because it presents as a fairly recent style ranch house but surprises await the visitor because this house is actually an adobe.

Jeff is a local musician and the home is full of his musical memorabilia but equally impressive is the artistic style of the décor and the back gardens which are Bette's forté. Visitors to the home will be impressed with the warmth and the style of this Redlands treasure.

The home is lovingly cared for and in excellent condition. Betty and Jeff are frequent entertainers and have added outdoor living space and whimsical gardens. Several additions to the house have added space and bode well for continued care and use of the home.

Research into the building permits on file at the city of Redlands, indicate the first record of work on the property in June of 1947.



Ashbaker Adobe
 837 West Palm Avenue

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A Letter from your President...

With the spring season upon us, I would like to urge each member whose home is one of the many Redlands historic resources to think about doing a project that will help restore, maintain or beautify your home. If you are part of the very fortunate group that has already completed all your projects, then sit down and admire your fine work and enjoy the season. As a historical home owner you know that it is matter of short time before it is time to tackle that next project.

On Monday, March 26th we held another outstanding General Membership Meeting, featuring **Marsha Gebara** who presented the history of the Redlands Bowl and the Redlands Music Association. Marsha currently serves as the Program Director for the Redlands Community Music Association and today is the driving force of the Redlands Bowl Summer Music Festival, which was founded by Grace Stewart Mullen 89 years ago. Redlands enjoys the distinction as the host of oldest continuous music festival in the United States that does not charge admission. On behalf of the Redlands Area Historical Society (“Society”) I would like to thank you for your informative presentation and all that you do for our community.

On Wednesday, March 28th the Old House Group had an opportunity to spend an evening at the 1904, Frank Gates Residence which today serves as the business of **Drs. Gorden & Munson**. Their business is located at 754 East Citrus Avenue is a model for adaptive reuse. *The “Society” would like thank you for preserving a Redlands Treasure and serving as a role model for other businesses to follow.*

In the coming months ahead we will be hosting another two part series of historical walking tours that will serve as a fundraiser for the “Society”. The tours will feature Highland Avenue and are tentatively scheduled for **June 16th and June 23rd**. The first tour will be from Cajon Street to Center Street and the second tour will be from Center Street to Cedar Point. Each tour will cost \$10.00 per person. We are also in the planning stages of our **Annual Ice Cream Social and Heritage Awards Program** which will be held on **Monday, June 11th at the Burrage Mansion**. Finally, if you would like to be more involved in the Redlands Area Historical Society there will be future opportunities to serve on our Board of Directors. Please indicate to me if you have a desire to serve. On behalf of our entire Board of Directors I want to thank you for your continued support of the Society’s mission of education and preservation of Redlands historic resources.

Bill Blankenship

BURRAGE MANSION, PART III

- by Tom Atchley

1931

Arthur Gregory now owned the mansion. He allowed the Catechist Sisters to live there rent free. They remained at the home until 1974. Vandalism to the reception area took place in the 1930's when the mansion was vacant. The living room was used as a chapel by the nuns. The Olympic-size swimming pool was enclosed in glass and empty from 1931 to 1972. A hardware platform covered the pool, transforming the glass enclosed pool into a ballroom.

The Missionary Sisters came to Redlands in 1931 and lived at 102 W. Lugonia Ave.. This order was founded in 1922 by Father John Joseph Sigstein, a young Chicago priest. He dreamed of children living in the southwest desert, knowing the fullness of Christ. Catechist Sisters became teachers, nurses and year round Santa Claus' in New Mexico. The carriage house was converted into a chaplain's cottage for Father Patrick Mimnaugh, who served as chaplain to the Missionary Sisters and the Loma Linda University Hospital.

1939

700 spectators are drawn to Burrage Field for a horse show.



Burrage Field

1940

Bishop John F. Noll of Fort Wayne purchased the mansion for the Catechist Sisters, reportedly for \$15,000.

1951

The Mansion symbolizes glamour in early Redlands — Redlands Breakfast Club's tour of the mansion Nov. 15. Thirteen Missionary Sisters live on the estate.

1963

Stately Mansions of Another Era—Thirty-Six room palace covers 17,300 sq. feet. Anthony Hubbard, Henry Fisher, Kimberly Crest, David and Sarah Morey, J. S. Edwards homes are included.

1972

Home of Catholic Sisterhood Once a Mansion

Queen of the Missions Convent in Redlands Home was owned by Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters. Woodland setting with giant trees, chattering squirrels, trailing vines. Towering eucalyptus encircle what was once the tennis court and is now barren ground.

The 17-acre estate is like no other in Redlands, with winding paths, rose arbors, orange trees, deciduous fruit trees, fern dells, wandering hedges. It is an arboretum filled with rare and exotic tropical plants. At the height of glory the Burrages entertained on a lavish scale. Eighteen full time gardeners were employed.

The first train carrying the family brought 47 trunks of clothing, a staff of servants, polo ponies, in a private Pullman car. Terrazzo floors



are in the Pompeiian reception room.

Redlands YWCA Yule homes: Trio of homes on the tour include Burrage, Morey and Dr. Gordon homes.

1974

Catechist Sisters sell the mansion and bring to a close their 43 years of living here.

Professor Buys Burrage Mansion.

Dr. Cyril D. Blaine, an assistant professor of medicine at the Loma Linda University Medical Center, bought the mansion for a reported \$175,000. Realtor Joe Lengel sold the mansion with his partner Joe P. Buoye (my uncle.)

After more than 30 years of gracious living Sister Mary Matilda bids goodbye to the home. She is part of the Victory Noll Sisters that teach and do home mission projects. The estate was 26 acres under Burrage with croquet, clay tennis courts and a polo field. Seventeen acres remain with the home. Patterned after the Santa Barbara Mission, the mansion contains a Pompeiian reception hall, Italian marble pillars and indoor terrazzo courtyard, 13 fireplaces and the earliest indoor swimming pool in

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the area. As many as 25-30 sisters used the pool in the summer. They are affiliated with Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

The Burrages stayed away for nine years and then staged a comeback party in 1916, one of three times the family returned to the home after 1910. It was sold to Edgar Pratt, a Los Angeles attorney, in July 1924.



A Party at the Burrage Estate

1977

Multi-million dollar Burrage Estate Development Proposed.

William Matteson, a Beverly Hills real estate investor, to build 9 other homes on the estate. The Redlands Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission was excited about this idea. Russ Wilmot, chairman, thought the plan could save the mansion. New Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission considered the recommendation. Matteson wants to retain the mansion and build nine other \$250,000 to \$300,000 homes on the property he intends to buy from Dr. Cyril D. Blaine.

1978

Jim and Maribeth Lotito, prospective purchasers of the Burrage Estate live in San Dimas with four children. Maribeth graduated from Redlands High. They plan a bed and breakfast inn with guests arriving on Friday and leaving on Sunday. Private parties, teas, weddings and receptions, fund-raisers and community meetings are part of their plan.

1982

Monte Vista Syndicate Hotel Scheme With a Grain of Salt by Frank Moore

The construction became a wonder of Redlands for four and a half months of building. At one time 18 horse and wagon teams were preparing the site. Tourists visiting Smiley Heights for the next decade marveled at the Mission Style home on Redlands Heights called Monte Vista. This postcard view cemented eastern tourists of the life style of orange growers in Southern California. The Facts obituary on Burrage was short in July 1931. 'The house has long been empty, its bare halls echoing occasionally to the steps of the caretaker, but otherwise undisturbed under dust of nearly a generation.'

In 1931 the property was owned by the Monte Vista Syndicate. They hoped to have a Tourist Hotel. Arthur Gregory led this group with his Redlands Security Company, the Gregory Corporation. Stuck with a "white elephant" Gregory permitted the Catechist Sisters to occupy it, rent free, for several years. In 1940 Bishop John F. Knoll of Fort Wayne purchased the mansion for them. The nun population varied seasonally, and during the years, from 7 to 27 in residence. They nuns opened the mansion for the YWCA home tours several times. They sold oranges to anyone that visited them. In 1974, the convent period of the house came to a close.

Possible Mansion Buyers Promote Weekend Lodge.

One of many hotel schemes according to Frank Moore of the Redlands Daily Facts. Lotito wants a restaurant, restoration site and residence. Lotito is seeking neighborhood and city support for his idea. Lotito wants a gourmet, reservation-only restaurant to operate Friday through Sunday.

1983

Preservation Issue with partners Jim Graus And Jim Lotito in front of the 16 acre Burrage Mansion, Article called "Locking the door on Redlands" A bedroom community argues over the hows of historic preservation.

Burrage Mansion featured YWCA 16th Annual Home Tour

1985

Burrage Studies don't Answer all questions. Bed and Breakfast for Lotito home or not? A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California by Prof. Robert Winter of Occidental College and Prof. David Gebhard of UC Santa Barbara. "There were few California Mission Revival houses which ever reached the scale of this residence." "The main façade is that of a mission church, paired towers and all." In 1984 Virginia and Lee McAlester brought out "A field Guide to American Houses" an authoritative book on American houses. "This landmark house is a full scale copy of a Spanish mission, complete with bell towers and arched side wings." California's Mission Revival by Karen J. Weitze.

Germans were analyzing changes to houses by the Portland cement industry. In 1910, Rudolph Vogel, in 'Das Amerikanische Haus' discussed the evolution of concrete design. (The mansion was built with brick and not concrete.) Burrage, a Napa boy, may have visited the Sonoma Mission for ideas. The California Mission house was designed by a Bostonian, Charles Bingham.

1987

Burrage Mansion Returns to Days of Glory by Nelda Stuck

Jim and Sharon Fishback began in February 1986 with painting of the towers and exterior renovation. They hope to complete the project by this summer. They have renovated several upstairs bedrooms with white carpeting. All the glass has been removed from the iron frame covering the swimming pool. They have plans to replace the roof glass and leave the pool sides open. Work on the formal entrance has been a month of scraping, sanding, recaulking and painting the entrance foyer reticulated upper colonade, using scaffolding.

Sharon Fishback, an interior decorator, has plans for every room of the home. Up to two months ago, 23 men worked sandblasting and texturizing the entire exterior of the mansion. Nine painters spent the summer painting the upper story trim a distinctive bright salmon color.

The Fishbacks bought the house Feb. 2, 1987. They installed irrigation throughout the property with five timer stations. What was there hadn't worked for years They removed 100 dead citrus trees

and found the remaining 100 in poor shape needing water and fertilizer. They hauled out 160 28-foot truckloads of rubbish and brush.

Renovation included added telephone lines, new electrical systems, television wiring, six full size heating and air conditioning units, clay tunnel walkways under the mansion wings. Pool is without heating and filter system. Fishback plans a breezeway solarium area adjacent to the pool. Three downstairs bedrooms in the west wing have been converted into a game room. The new room will be a showroom with a white 1968 Jaguar convertible roadster. Barn doors have been constructed through the brick wall at the south end of

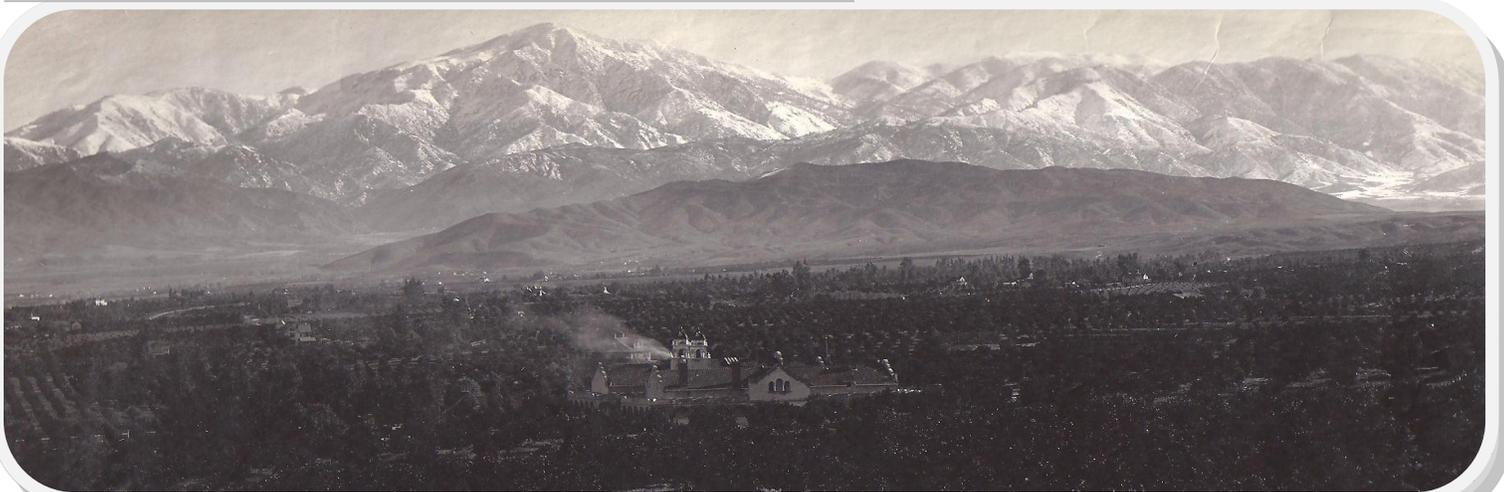
the game room. East wing will have a formal living room. Plans call for red damask on the walls, a chandelier, and everything red and green in the room including velvet chairs. Billiard Room will become the TV room.

Kitchen renovation will include a working island, two refrigerators, two trash compactors, two dishwashers, two ovens, two disposals, a six burner stove and three sinks.

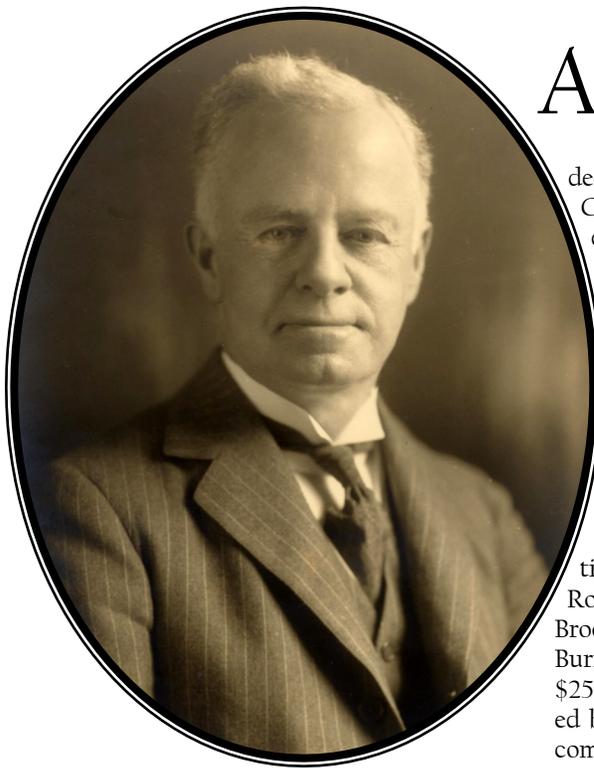
The west wing includes a bathroom featuring bordered wallpaper, crown molding, and a sink brought down from upstairs and equipped with new golden brass faucets. All the brass in the house - knobs, lamps - are being polished. Burrage's

study will be made into a little library. The master bedroom is really part of the master west wing upstairs. The Fishbacks took out two adjoining closets and a bath for more space. Next adjacent bedroom is being turned into a bath with the tub located in front of the fireplace. The tub came from England. Marble is to surround the tub.

Jim Fishback owns Ontario Air Parts, Inc., in Fontana, which deals in foreign, commercial and military sales of parts for fighters and bombers. He is a member of Good Guys Motorcycle Club. They both belong to the Redlands Country Club.



Albert Cameron Burrage



Born: Ashburnham, Mass. Nov. 21, 1859, died June 28, 1931 at his summer estate, *Seahome*.

He was survived by his wife, Alice and children Albert Jr., Russell and Elizabeth (Mrs. Harold L. Chalifoux). His parents were George S. and Aurelia Chamberlin Burrage, descendants of old New England families. Educated in California, he graduated from Harvard in 1883 with A.B. degree. He married Alice Hathaway Haskell in 1885. The couple had four children.

Burrage grew up in Napa, California and for a while was a Western Union messenger boy. He worked at a general merchandise store in Napa as a clerk. He attended the private school known as the Oak Mound School and then transferred to Harvard for college. Perhaps his youthful years in California influenced the Mission style home built in 1901.

In 1884 Burrage was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar and began his career as a lawyer. After marriage in 1885, Burrage struggled financially. His name appears several times in the poor debtors court where he had three cases of default judgements against him.

During these financial struggling years, Burrage had a stroke of opportunity knock from the simple reading of newspapers. Living in Boston he was aware of the high cost of street lighting and heating. In 1891, Henry H. Rogers and Edward Addicks were sparing over conflicting gas interests in the city of Boston. Addicks had a virtual monopoly and charged the city and residential customers accordingly. Burrage, a newly minted lawyer, read of their battle and

decided to research the Brookline Gas Company, owned by Rogers. Burrage discovered the charter that Brookline received from the legislature of Massachusetts, allowed an open opportunity to extend gas pipe lines to Boston. Burrage informed Rogers of his discovery and was rewarded with a directorate position on the Brookline Gas Company board. He was named counsel for the Brookline Gas Light Company in 1892.

Burrage was able to parlay this position into direct discussions with John D. Rockefeller and the Standard Oil Company. Brookline was sold to Standard Oil and Burrage was rumored to receive from \$250,000 to \$800,000 fee, since he represented both companies in the sale process. The commission was considered the largest ever awarded in the history of the United States.

Following the gas light, Burrage became president of the Boston, South Boston, Roxbury, and Dorchester Gas Light Companies and the Bay State Gas Company. In 1898, he resigned these positions because cities began to switch to electricity for lighting.

Connections with the Standard Oil Company led to copper mining on a large scale. He was one organizer of the Amalgamated Copper Company and was a founder of the Chile Exploration Company and of the Chile Copper Company. In these directorate positions Burrage represented New England interests. He researched and pursued processes to treat low-grade copper ores.

By 1900, Burrage had major roles in both Amalgamated Copper and Standard Oil. Amalgamated Copper was dissolved under the trust-busting era of Teddy Roosevelt and the Clayton Anti-Trust Act that passed during the Progressive Period.

Burrage was active in Boston's civic, political and social circles. In Redlands, his wife doanted \$20,000 for the Fern Avenue Episcopal Church and he donated to the University Club House construction. He served on the Boston Common School Council in 1892 and he worked on the "Burrage Ordinance" prohibiting public employees from political activities in their own cities. Much of his efforts led to an end of the "Boss System" in Boston. He was a member of the Boston Transit Commission that built the Boston subway. He was a Republican and proudly loaned his surrey and matched horses for the McKinley visit to Redlands.

He enjoyed membership in many clubs. He joined the Harvard, Union, Algonquin, Boston Art, Country and Eastern Club. In New York he joined the Bankers Club and New York Yacht Club. In Redlands, he was a member of the University Men's Club.

As a philanthropist, he followed the advice of Andrew Carnegie and the Gospel of Wealth. He built the Burrage Hospital for Crippled Children in Boston. The hospital project followed his own family tragedy and this led to real concern for disabled youth. During World War I, he loaned his 260 foot, steam powered yacht and other personal assets, to the Navy to assist in the war.

The yacht "Aztec" was damaged by the Navy and Burrage claimed \$325,000 for repairs. His attorney, William Gibbs McAdoo, won \$300,000 in the civil suit against the government.

Aztec was 221 feet long with paneled cabins and inlaid wood. Burrage had a elaborate library in a big circular cabin on the main deck. Interior of the cabin was designed by Charles Brigham. It carried a crew of 55 in home waters and 60 when cruising offshore. The pay was \$30 a month for able seamen which was considered good. Captain Studley helped to supervise the building of the yacht in 1902.

In 1899, Burrage had his imposing mansion at 314 Commonwealth Avenue in the Back Bay section of Boston constructed. Charles Brigham was the architect for both the Redlands home and Boston mansion. The Boston home followed the Vanderbilt style and was inspired by the French chateau Chenonceaux in the Loire Valley.

Burrage wanted his Redlands residence completed by January 1, 1901. Work followed a fever pitch but was unable to meet the new-year deadline. He moved into this home the second week of February at 1205 West Crescent Avenue. Workers were dismissed for the family arrival and returned months later to complete the home. The 28 room mansion was the largest residence of Redlands. He occupied this winter residence for only two months a year for several years. He entertained much in this western locale. The glass-covered heated pool and polo ponies could be used extensively in the winter. A wood dance floor was used to cover the pool for formal balls.

Owning a private Pullman car Burrage guests were treated to tours of Redlands and the Kite-Shaped Santa Fe track. His matched four-white horse surrey

(Old House Group, continued from page 1)

This record describes the home as “Dobe” construction with an estimated value of \$8000.00. Dan Knickerbocker is listed as the owner on the first two permits, however, LuLu Knickerbocker signed as owner, two months later, in August, on the electrical permit. LuLu, born in Iowa, and Carl D. Knickerbocker II, born in Wisconsin, had 2 children, Hugh and Roy and came to Redlands from Los Angeles, where Carl had been a wholesale furniture salesman. When they first moved to Redlands they lived in a house at 125 E. Pioneer and Carl listed his occupation as “rancher”

Records for the street address are a bit confusing because the city files show the address as originally 737 West Palm, and then altered the old records to show 837, however on at least the oldest permit, the address was originally written as 747 West Palm.

By 1936 the Redlands City Directory, shows LuLu as a widow, living in a house at 105 Center Street. No other Knickerbockers are listed in Redlands that year and there is also no listing for a home at 837 or 737 or 747 West Palm, for that matter.

Eleven years later, the Redlands City Directory shows Lulu as teacher (San Bernardino Valley College), lodging at 225 Fern, with Charles A. Beottger and son Hugh, both shown as students. At that same time, Roy is listed as a student living at 707 South Buena Vista with Mary, presumably his wife. LuLu lived until 1965 when she was buried at Hillside Cemetery.

The next building permit is pulled by a Dan Brown, in 1954. Dan appears to have enlarged the house substantially by adding on 2 bedrooms and a bath. This was followed by a Louis Fox, formerly of Mountain Avenue in San Bernardino, living in the home and providing improvements around 1975. This Louis Fox may be the same Fox who was at one time an assistant teacher at the University of Redlands. By 1984 Gary Kastler shows as owner and finally in that same year, the Ashbakers appear in the record.

Please join us to tour this adobe and to congratulate the Ashbakers on their care and consideration of the charming home.

For questions or comments please contact – Leslie Irish (951) 201-5742.



Newsletter Deadline

All RAHS members are encouraged to submit articles for the *Redlands Chronicles* to Marie Reynolds at sccmarie@yahoo.com by the 1st of each month.

carried President McKinley on his May 1901 visit to Redlands. Everitt photographs reveal the Burrage team on Orange Street, Smiley Heights, Prospect Park and Smiley Library.

Further entertainment for guests and children of the Burrage family included the swimming pool, billiards, clay tennis court, and croquet. As the Burrage children matured the family found trips to Redlands less attractive. Albert Burrage became attached to his yacht “Aztec.” Burrage also loved his horticultural endeavors in Boston. The Redlands residence was somewhat depressed after the 1913 Great Freeze. Many Redlands millionaires moved to other seaside locales such as Santa Barbara.

In 1916 Burrage started the Atlantic Dyestuff Company in Hanson, Massachusetts. The Dyestuff Company was one of several chemical companies that Burrage owned under the Drugs and Dyestuffs Corporation of New York. In 1925, Dupont acquired much of this industry and began to produce synthetic ammonia.

Burrage was an avid horticulturist and especially well known for his tropical orchids. He was president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the first president of the American Orchid Society in 1921. He wrote the book “*Burrage on Vegetables.*”

In 1921, Burrage purchased an estate in Manchester-by-the-Sea near Boston’s North Shore. This Georgian mansion was built in 1880. Burrage called it “Seahome.” The home boasted views of the Atlantic Ocean, a greenhouse, topiary garden, deepwater dock, oceanfront swimming pool and a sandy beach.

The Burrage wealth proved elusive after his death in 1931. Guggenheim contested the estate because Burrage had debts to settle in the Chile venture. The estate was actually \$1.8 million in the red.

Albert Cameron Burrage built several homes in his lifetime. His first was a modest home built in 1885 for his new bride. The second is the Commonwealth Avenue four-story home in Boston completed in 1898. His summer residence at Cohasset is an Italian Villa and his third project. His last building project was the Mission Revival Mansion in Redlands 1901. He purchased “Seahome” on the Atlantic coast and another home in Roxbury later.



“Seahome” (left) and *The Aztec* (above)