



## WARD WELLINGTON WARD

By Arlene Vanderlinde

**W**ard Wellington Ward (1875-1932) was a gifted and prolific architect whose "Arts and Crafts" designs for Tudoresque houses dot Brighton, particularly in the Houston Barnard Tract. Ward practiced architecture in Syracuse, NY from 1908 to 1926 and while two-thirds of the more than 250 houses which he designed during that period are found in the Syracuse area, a surprising number (38) were for locations in Brighton, Pittsford, and Rochester.

In the early 1920s, developer Houston Barnard of Rochester opened up the Ambassador/ Sandringham and Grosvenor/Pelham (between East and Highland) areas.

Ward was noted for his large output of pen and watercolor sketches that presented his ideas of "the small house made into art." Today, these houses would not be considered "small." One of Barnard's enterprising salesmen, Irving Hames, used Ward's quick renderings to win commissions for the Syracuse architect.

Ward houses eventually built in this area include

Nos. 42, 75, 168, and 191 Grosvenor Road and Nos. 40, 110, 115, 125, 150, 155, and 165 Pelham Road in Brighton. Also attributed are 26 and 39 Sandringham Drive, 30 Trevor Court, and 50 and 165 Ambassador Drive, all in Brighton.

The earliest known Ward house in the Rochester area is far removed from those in Brighton. The 1916 Rodenbeck residence stands at 310 Maplewood Drive off Seneca Parkway, nestled in a deep woody lot. This house is modeled after Ward's own home, LeMoyne Manor, located in the Syracuse suburb of Liverpool. LeMoyne Manor has been partially demolished but remnants exist as part of a motel-restaurant complex of the same name. There are Ward-designed houses at 40 Douglas Road and 310 Seneca Parkway in Rochester, and at 22 and 26 San Raphael Drive, as well as 2351 and 3977 East Avenue in Pittsford.

Ward's last known design, dated 1926, was for Dr. F. K. Holzworth in Rochester. In that year his career ended abruptly. He became ill and was hospitalized for six years before he died at the age of 57 in 1932.





## WARD HOUSES ARE BRIGHTON TREASURES

Homes designed by Ward Wellington Ward express the spirit of an ideal of the Arts and Crafts movement: "The small house made into art." Ward achieved the small-house look by various design illusions, notably the use of a low overhanging roof and a minimum of gables and dormers in the front elevation. Because of this, the size of a Ward house and his skill at handling masses is more evident in the rear elevation.

Ward thought it important to bring his clients into the planning process and thus came up with functional plans that spoke to their needs, habits, tastes and lifestyle. These dictated exterior forms such as the size and placement of windows and doors, but even these elements were placed irregularly. Ward's genius for creating balance without resorting to symmetry prevailed.

Ward interiors feature built-in details: inglenooks with tiled hearths and fireside benches, breakfast nooks, pantry cupboards, tiled vestibules with motifs that continued in geometric borders along a hall, linen closets of dressers, French doors leading to a sun room or porch, and alcoves and bays that break the four-square symmetry. Leaded glass medallions are found in cabinet doors and windows. Moravian tiles decorate fireplace facings and pavings. The focus of the living room becomes this handcrafted inglenook, a showplace for built-in crafts.



Ward employed the use of craftsmen with reputations far greater than his at the time. Henry Chapman Mercer (1856-1930), a tilemaker enamored with lost Pennsylvania Dutch pottery processes, founded the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works in Doylestown, PA in 1898. Mercer's company hand-stamped red clay tiles with motifs based on medieval designs and glazed them with bright colors revealing some of the red clay underbody. Ward used more Moravian tiles than any other architect: more than 200 installations are found in central and western New York State residences.

German-born Henry Keck (1873-1956) was a Tiffany-trained glass designer who joined Pike Stained Glass Studio in Rochester in 1909. Ward began commissioning glass works from Pike at that time and continued with Keck after he opened a studio in Syracuse in 1913. Keck's Studio primarily did church windows but had a small "house business" on the side. Keck glass featured bright and opalescent compositions of naturalistic figures, trees and other details arranged in mosaic patterns and stylized by thick black lead outlines. In 1920, there were 200 glass studios in the country, an indication of the widespread popularity of the Arts and Crafts tradition.

