

## DEAN ALBERT ALVORD, REAL ESTATE VISIONARY

From the late 1800s to the early 1900s, Dean Alvord was a prominent and innovative real estate developer in New York and Florida. Areas and buildings that he developed are on the National Historic Register, and residents still treasure them.

In the 1900 census Dean Alvord's family resided on Albermale Road in Brooklyn; the family consisted of Dean 43, "Millie" 39, Donald 8, Evelyn 7 and sister Octarva Holman 29. Dean Alvord is listed on pages 520 and 644-645 in Samuel Morgan Alvord's *A Genealogy of the Descendants of ALEXANDER ALVORD An Early Settler of Windsor, Conn. and Northampton, Mass.* (Webster, NY: A.D. Andrews, Printer, 1908). At the time of publication, Dean and his family were still living in Brooklyn. The following information, unless otherwise noted, is from that book.

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Dean Albert<sup>9</sup> Alvord was born 4 Dec 1856 in Syracuse, NY, the son of James Dwight<sup>8</sup> Alvord (James Wadsworth<sup>7</sup>, Thomas Gould<sup>6</sup>, Thomas Gould<sup>5</sup>, Asahel<sup>4</sup>, Thomas<sup>3</sup>, Thomas<sup>2</sup>, Alexander<sup>1</sup>) and Caroline Louise Edwards.

He married Nellie Barnum, daughter of Abijah and Abigail (Bryant) Barnum on 11 March 1885. She was born in Ovid, NY, 15 July 1863.

Dean graduated from Syracuse University in 1882. For eight years he was general secretary of the Y.M.C.A. at Rochester, NY. He then moved to Brooklyn and was devoted to the development of real estate. His interest in the civic improvement was evidenced by the character of the real estate developments with which he was connected. He gained a reputation in the matter of beautification of city streets and stimulated interest in suburban improvement by offering prizes for the best kept yards, most beautiful window gardens, etc. He was president of Dean Alvord Company and a member of the Municipal Art Society, the Municipal Club, the Hardware Club and the Lawyers Club of New York City.

Children: (all born in Rochester, NY, except the last one, who was born in Brooklyn, NY)

1. Harry Alvord, born 12 June 1886 and died 9 Dec 1886.
2. Donald Alvord, born 27 Feb 1892. The Social Security Death Index reports his death in August 1977 in St. Petersburg, Pinellas Co., FL.
3. Evelyn Alvord, born 24 Apr 1893.
4. Mildred Alvord, born 18 Apr 1897 and died 7 May 1898
5. Eric Alvord, born 29 Sept 1903. The Social Security Death Index reports his death in May 1979; the zip codes given for his residence, 33942, and last benefit, 33940, do not exist. Perhaps they should be 33742/0, which are for St. Petersburg, FL, where Eric's brother Donald also lived.

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Sometime after 1910, Dean moved his family to Clearwater, FL. (We have not located the family on the 1910 census.)

In 1920 the family was at #315 Harbor Oaks Street in Clearwater. They were enumerated: Dean 63, Nellie B. 56, Donald 27, Evelyn 26 and Eric 13—all born in NY.

A death date has not been found for Dean or his wife. They do not appear in the SSDI.

The following references to Dean Alvord's real estate developments appear on the Internet:

## **NEW YORK**

<http://www.brooklyn-usa.org/neighborhoods/flatbush.htm>

### **Flatbush and Prospect Park South**

The Prospect Park South Historic District, designated in 1979 and bounded by Coney Island Avenue, Church Avenue, East 18th Street and Beverly Road, is the most architecturally significant in Flatbush. Approximately 50 acres of land, mostly belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church and the Bergen family, were purchased in 1899 by real estate developer Dean Alvord, who hoped that "Prospect Park South would illustrate how much of rural beauty can be incorporated within the rectangular limits of the conventional city block."

<http://www.tbrnewspapers.com/comguides/pjcomguide/history/localvillages.html>

### **Belle Terre—Port Jefferson Area, NY**

The 1,300 acres of land and bluffs that now constitute Belle Terre became an exclusive development when Dean Alvord of New York City purchased the land in 1906. Alvord collaborated with his friend, Ralph Peters, who owned the Long Island Rail Road, to attract well-to-do residents of New York City. At its peak, the stylish community had a private dock where residents could tie up after sailing out from New York City.

## **CLEARWATER, PINELLAS CO., FLORIDA**

<http://www.clearwater-fl.com/cpl/chsphoto.html>

### **Harbor Oaks**

"Harbor Oaks was established in 1912-14 by Dean Alvord, a New York developer who used subdivision planning methods far ahead of the time for Florida. It was Clearwater's first exclusive neighborhood and became home to such prominent figures as Donald Roebing (amphibious tank), Charles Ebbett (Brooklyn Dodgers), Robert Ingersoll (Ingersoll-Rand), and Studebaker (automobiles)."



Photographer unknown.

<http://www.clearwater-fl.com/cpl/htdc.html>

### **Harbor Oaks Historical District**

Harbor Oaks was Clearwater's first planned residential development. Dean Alvord from New York brought modern planning concepts to Pinellas County such as underground utilities, paved streets, curbs and sidewalks, a sewer system and tree-lined parkways. Deed restrictions ensured a rich architectural mixture of stately two story homes along with an occasional bungalows more suitable to the Florida climate.

<http://www.geocities.com/yosemite/rapids/8428/hikeplans/clearwater/planclearwtr.html>

### **Alvord House, 313 Magnolia Dr.**

This Mediterranean style home was built in 1925 by Dean Alvord. The Harbor Oaks Subdivision, a National Register Historic District, was designed and built with sewers, roads, landscaping, street lights and other amenities, which was advanced for land development of its period.