

Henry H. Hill House
Clifton Townsite
231 Coronado Boulevard
Clifton
Greenlee County
Arizona

HABS No. AZ-199

HABS
ARIZ
6-CLIFT,
27-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HENRY H. HILL HOUSE

HABS No. AZ-199

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27-

Location:

Clifton Townsite, 231 Coronado Boulevard, Clifton, Greenlee County, Arizona

Significance:

Associated with prominent Clifton resident Henry H. Hill, and with the development of Clifton.

Description:

The Henry Hill House lies among an intact row of historic homes along south Coronado Boulevard (Arizona Highway 666). The lot has mature landscaping, dominated by a pine tree on the south side. A circular concrete planter sits in the front yard of the property, and low sandstone wall is located at the front property line.

The house is of the Neo-classical style. Roughly rectangular in plan, the brick house has a hipped roof and a veranda porch. The roof has hip dormers at the east front and the north side. The roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles. The east front is dominated by an insensitive addition, which has reduced the size of the front veranda to a smaller entry porch. The original entrance is intact and is centrally located, with a secondary entrance and window to one side. The original porch posts have been replaced with modern wrought iron columns. A wrought iron guardrail now encloses the porch. An early, sensitive addition was made to the rear of the house. The walls of the early addition are brick, matching the house, and the large gable end is sheathed with plywood. A less-sensitive change has been made by enclosing the addition's side porch.

History:

This brick house was constructed in 1901 on Lots 6 and 7 of Hill's Addition to Clifton for Henry B. Hill, prominent Clifton resident and subdividar of Hill's Addition. Hill designed his home as a showplace and an advertisement for his real estate subdivision. It was the first house constructed in Hill's Addition. In November of 1900 Hill had an architect draw the plans for his residence. By March of 1901, the stone foundation had been laid and the brick work had commenced. Hill and his family moved into the home in the first week of September in 1901.¹

Henry Hill was born in Ireland in 1849 and grew up as an apprentice in the hatter's trade. He came to the United States in 1865 and settled in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where he practiced his trade for four years. In 1869 Hill traveled west to San Francisco where he continued to practice his trade for three more years. In 1873, at the age of 24, Hill joined the Army and served in the Sixth Cavalry stationed at Fort Apache. Discharged in 1878, Hill made his way to Clifton. In 1880, he married Rosie Trumble, an Illinois native.²

Hill actively pursued his business interests in Clifton. By 1883 he was the proprietor of the Coronado Chop House, a restaurant that catered to miners. In 1885 he opened his United States Hotel in Clifton. In 1886 Hill received the contract to carry the US mail between Clifton and Moranci,

starting him on a career as a freight contractor. During this period when Hill was expanding his business enterprises he began to dabble in real estate and soon realized that good returns could be made on the investment of his spare capital. A staunch Republican, Hill took office as deputy road overseer in 1887 and Graham County Supervisor in 1894. These political connections put him in good stead with the Arizona Copper Company and with other Clifton businessmen who were predominantly Republican, as opposed to the miners who followed the Democratic party.³

In 1899 Hill embarked on his most ambitious business venture yet. He had acquired the old homestead of Gellus Metz, patented in 1883, on lands east of the San Francisco River and south of Clifton proper. In late 1899, he contracted with surveyor E.R. Stafford to subdivide a portion of the land and establish street and lot lines. Lots were 50 feet wide and 130 feet deep, with alleys to the rear. Hill called his subdivision "Henry Hill's Addition to Clifton" and recorded the plat map with the Graham County Recorder in 1901. Hill then acquired the old railroad bridge across the San Francisco River, sold by the Arizona and New Mexico Railway when it expanded its line to standard gauge, and converted it into a wagon bridge to his subdivision.⁴

The advantage of Hill's Addition as a residential area was that it was flat, not hemmed in by bluffs like other residential areas in Clifton, and it was removed from the smelter smoke that plagued residents of central Clifton and Chase Creek. Hill devoted considerable energy into making his subdivision an attractive place to live. He sunk a well to provide a clean water supply for the residents. When this proved inadequate, he laid a ten-inch water main down Railroad Avenue and across his wagon bridge to provide additional water. To demonstrate his belief in his enterprise, Hill constructed his own home on two lots in the subdivision as a type of model home. It was described at the time as "one of the finest and most comfortable homes in Arizona."⁵

Hill's Addition quickly became a prime location for residential development in Clifton. Hill had the advantage of good timing, as the expansion of the railroad to standard gauge led to increased availability of building materials at reduced cost. Hill's Addition became home to Clifton's small business owners and the middle-managers of the Arizona Copper Company's many enterprises. Over the next few years its lots blossomed with the homes of Clifton's more solid citizens. Hill encouraged its development by constructing homes on speculation for rentals and for resale, in addition to building homes for his two daughters Margaret and Rosie (See HABS No. AZ-198 and No. AZ-200). Others also purchased lots and built rental houses and houses for resale.⁶

The success of Hill's Addition led Hill to subdivide a second portion of the old Metz Homestead in 1905. He contracted with surveyor Lamer Cobb to lay out a new subdivision on the other side of the railroad tracks from Hill's Addition. Appropriately named "Hill's New Addition," this residential area featured lots 50 feet wide by 115 feet deep. Hill assured the prominence of his New Addition by donating lots for the construction of the Greenlee County Courthouse within his subdivision.⁷

By 1916 Hill began to slow down and decided to retire. He purchased the Indian Hot Springs near Pima as a location to soothe his ailments. The W.B. Foote family moved into the Hill House. In later years the property was the home of Elaine A. Baker, and the location of Elaine's Flower Shop.⁸

Sources (endnotes):

1. Copper Era November 24, 1900 (l, 4: 1); March 14, 1901 (l, 3: 1); September 12, 1901 (l, 3: 1).
2. Portrait and Biographical Record of Arizona (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1901), p. 701.
3. Clifton Clarion August 1, 1883 (l, 3: 1); January 11, 1885 (l, 3_4); September 15, 1886 (l, 3: 1); September 28, 1887 (l, 3: 1); Portrait and Biographical Record of Arizona (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1901), p. 701.
4. For the Gallus Metz homestead, see Homestead Entry Patent No. 39, on file with the Arizona State Office of the Bureau of Land Management, Phoenix. For the subdivision of Hill's Addition, see the Copper Era September 7, 1899 (l, 3: 1-2).
5. Copper Era September 27, 1900 (l, 5: 1); November 1, 1900 (l, 2: 4); January 17, 1901 (l, 3: 5).
6. Copper Era May 30, 1901 (l, 3: 1); June 27, 1901 (l, 3: 1); December 12, 1901 (l, 3: 1); August 14, 1902 (l, 3: 2); February 19, 1903 (l, 3: 1); March 19, 1903 (l, 3: 1); April 9, 1903 (l, 3: 1); June 4, 1903 (l, 3: 1); October 8, 1903 (l, 2: 4); December 24, 1903 (l, 1: 1); March 3, 1904 (l, 3: 1).
7. Copper Era June 30, 1904 (l, 3: 5); March 30, 1905 (l, 3: 1).
8. Copper Era December 8, 1916 (l, 5: 2); title information provided by William J. Acton, Tucson.

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