

MUNICIPAL REFERENCE LIBRARY

300 CITY HALL

CITY OFFICIALS

NAME McAleer, Owen

PUBLIC OFFICES HELD

(DATE)

CITY:

Board of Engineers 1901-1902
City Council (1st Ward) 1902-1904
Mayor Dec. 8, 1904 - Dec. 13, 1906

~~COUNTY:~~

Board of Public Works Commission 1916-1920

STATE

FEDERAL:

CIVIC ACTIVITIES:

BUSINESS OR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Boiler Manufacturer

PORTRAIT:

ATTACHED OR ENCLOSED IN ENVELOPE: Attached

PORTRAITS APPEARING ELSEWHERE (DATES)

Press Reference Library Vol. 1, p 454

La Reina--Los Angeles in Three Centuries 1929,
p 145

ANECDOTES AND PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS:

Mr. McAleer is credited with having made the first boiler ever manufactured in Los Angeles.

During the years he served in public office he always fought for the rights of the people as a whole and refused to be swayed by the desires of a few, consequently he met with constant opposition. "He has always retained the title 'Honest Owen McAleer' and would make any sacrifice to keep his word." Thus did his quiet little wife speak of him with pride. Mr. McAleer himself is proud to give credit to her for inspiration and help, and always refers to his term of office as "Our Administration." His health has failed of late, but she is still his constant companion, keeping his alert mind cognizant of current events, as she reads him the newspapers of the city they have seen grown from infancy.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

BOOKS:

Spalding, Wm. A. History of Los Angeles City and
County, 1931, Vol. 1, pp 339, 342, 346
Press Reference Library, 1913, Vol.1, p454

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS:

Local newspapers

PERSONAL INTERVIEW:

INTERVIEWED BY: Karel Lynn

DATE OF INTERVIEW May 22, 1935
Rewritten by James Boucher

The Los Angeles Public Library
Local History Collection
Biography

NAME McAleer, Owen

Occupation Boiler Manufacturer

Address 3817 S. Main Street, Los Angeles

Birth (Date and Place) February 3, 1858

Liscard, Canada

FATHER Owen McAleer

Birth (Date and Place) About 1830, Ireland

If Deceased, When About 1865, Ohio

MOTHER Mary Miller

Birth (Date and Place) 1830, Carlisle, England

If Deceased, When 1908

IF MARRIED, TO WHOM Gertrude E. Mullally

Birth of Same (Date and Place) June 28, 1869, Covington, Ky.

If Deceased, When

When Married April 5, 1898, Los Angeles

CHILDREN (Married Names of Daughters)

TITLES OF BOOKS, ARTICLES, MUSIC, OR OTHER CREATIVE WORK

(In the case of printed matter, please give date and publisher; of periodical publications also name of magazine and date.)

REVIEWS, CRITICISMS, AND OTHER BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

(Please note printed matter concerning yourself or your work. We would appreciate any such material you may send, clippings, reviews, portrait.)

Press Reference Library, Vol. 1, p 454

Spalding's History of L.A. City and County

Vol. 1

ANCESTORS OF DISTINCTION OR LOCAL INTEREST

(Please include names of local interest as "forty-niners," or any one connected with the affairs or development of the state or city, as officials, professional men, merchants, etc.)

Mr. McAleer's mother was the daughter of a Scotch nobleman and his father was descended from a fine Irish family. This probably accounts for their son's ability to fight for the principles he deemed right and just with unswerving tenacity.

EDUCATION (Schools, Colleges, Degrees, Etc.)

Public Schools of Youngstown, Ohio

CLUBS, LEARNED SOCIETIES, ETC.

B.P.O.E. and was a member of the Union League and Sierra Madre clubs while they were in existence

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION Baptist

POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS Republican

RESIDENCE IN CALIFORNIA SINCE February 1888

SKETCH

(Please make this as full as possible, giving business affiliations, positions of honor or trust with dates if possible.)

Owen McAleer was born in 1858 in Liscard, Canada from where his family moved to Ohio in 1863. His father who had long been in ill health, died a few years later (1865) leaving his young wife with eight children the youngest being only six months old. There was no money for schooling and Owen began his business career as a small boy in the boiler works of W.B. Pollock. He remained at this work becoming proprietor of his own establishment, until he disposed of it to come to California in 1888, where he became employed at the Baker Iron Works as superintendent. Later he formed a partnership with Nat Wilshire and established the Republic Iron and Steel Company.

His first public office was on the Examining Board of Engineers in 1901-1902. Next he served as a Councilman from the first ward where "he made an excellent record. A large deficit faced the Council when he took office but at the close of his term, due to his thrifty Scotch sense, there was a splendid balance with all current debts paid."* In 1905 he was elected mayor upon this record, by the largest majority of votes ever polled up to that date.

During his administration the "Owen River project" was actually launched, and the first Board of Public Works was appointed amid rather stormy circumstances.

After his Mayoralty (1904-06) he devoted his time to private enterprises, retiring in 1914 when the Republic Iron and Steel Company dissolved.

In 1916 he was called from retirement to become a member of the Board of Public Works and he retained that position until 1920, when he went into permanent retirement.

HOBBIES: He was a great lover of horses and possessed some beautiful animals, together with carriage equipment, right up until, and even after automobiles became so numerous.

* Press Reference Library, 1913, Vol.1, page 454

