

John and Rose Steinbrecker and the House at Lincoln Corner



This 2.5 storey balloon-framed and wood-sided house dates back to 1906, which makes it one of the oldest houses in Crescent Heights.

The home was once known as Lincoln Corner, a nod to the 1910 sidewalk stamp "Lincoln Avenue" out front. On the house's title is a 1904 building restriction prohibiting the operation of "bawdy" houses and "public" houses on the site, which the current owner discovered when reviewing a title search on the property.

The story of one of its residents gives us an intriguing perspective on the pre-WW1 real estate boom in Calgary.

Before WW1, realtor John Steinbrecker and his family lived here. He was a prominent Calgarian who founded the German-American Colonization Company in 1906, with the intent of bringing Germans from the USA to Canada. One of Steinbrecker's plans was also to establish new Calgary subdivisions for "Germans moving out of Bridgeland and Riverside". These new areas included Balmoral,

Avondale, Belfast, La Grange, Highland Park and Pullman, some of which only ever existed for a short while in our city's history.

When the census-taker came to call in 1911, John Steinbrecker, his wife Rose, and five children lived at Lincoln Corner. His oldest son Arthur (32) assisted John with sales, while daughters Minnie (21) and Sarah (19) were stenographers for the firm. Sadly, the end of Calgary's real estate boom spelled an end to their dreams of prosperity in Canada, and for German residents here, WW1 itself made a comeback unlikely.

Following the family's departure, William Nettleton- an assistant manager at Birks- lived in the house until 1926. In 1931, Mrs. Eva McDonald moved in. Eva operated the Crescent Road Miniature Golf Club at the time.

By 1950, the house had become a triplex, and the oversized lot was subdivided to allow for the construction of a bungalow on the southern half of the lot.

Recent years have seen the home receive some much-needed TLC, and it's once again a single-family dwelling. But since it's located on a view lot, it's at risk of some day being demolished and replaced by a "McMansion", as has been the fate of so many similar homes in the Crescent Road area.

From the 1911 booster publication called "Calgary, Sunny Alberta", comes the below article on Steinbrecker and the German-American Colonization Company. The second picture is of his proposed residence in La Grange, and comes from a 1914 Henderson's Directory.

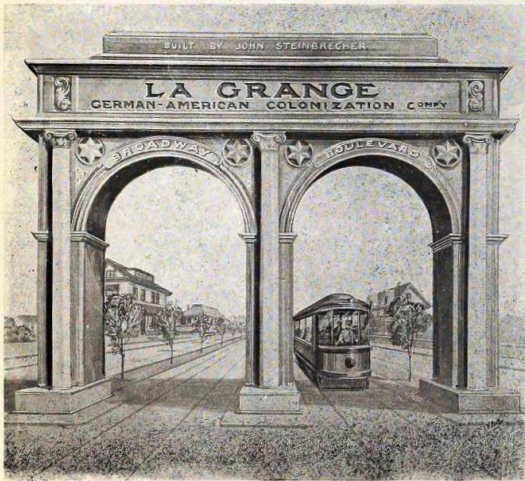


JOHN STEINBRECKER

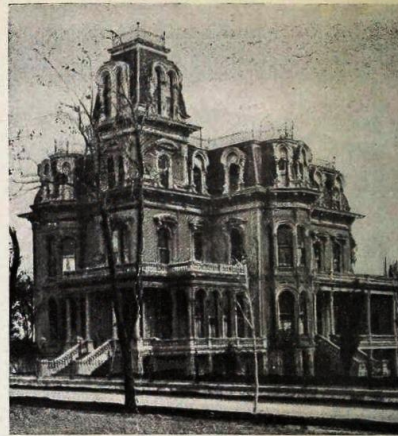
GERMAN-AMERICAN COLONIZATION CO., LIMITED

THE above firm is one of the largest and most substantial real estate concerns in Western Canada. It is composed of John Steinbrecker, president and senior member, and A. Steinbrecker, secretary-treasurer. Their offices occupy a neat one-story building at 118 Ninth Avenue West, directly opposite the new C. P. R. Hotel.

This company was established and incorporated in 1906, and since then have sold 100,000 acres of land, and handled \$1,000,000



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PROPOSED RESIDENCE OF JOHN STEINBRECKER.

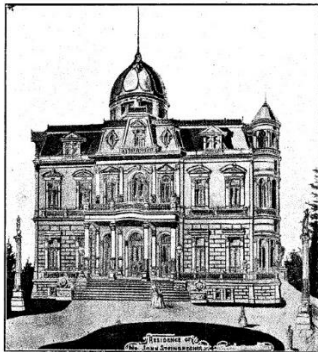
worth of city property. They are members of the Calgary Real Estate Exchange, agents for C. P. R. lands, and many thousand acres of the best winter wheat land in Alberta. They are owners of LaGrange, Pullman and Highland Park, high-class residential subdivisions, consisting of about 1,300 acres, three miles north of the postoffice, and of Belfast subdivision adjoining the site of the proposed Morris packing plant. They have recently graded and built a boulevard 110 feet wide, extending two miles east and west through LaGrange, Highland Park and LaHoyt to the C. P. R. tracks, and have under construction two handsome arches and are planting ornamental trees at a total cost of \$25,000.

Aside from real estate, the firm is largely interested in brick manufacturing, coal mining and sandstone.

FINANCIAL, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE. 49

La Grange

Is now recognized as an excellent View Point, but with the Baptist College in Pullman adjoining it, and the style of buildings now under construction, as well as the class of Residences that will be erected by the owners of Lots there, it promises to be the most beautiful Residential Suburb of our City.



For Prices and Terms on LA GRANGE, also HIGHLAND PARK, PULLMAN and BELFAST, write or call.

Phone M. 6389

The German-American Colonization Company, Limited

342 Seventh Avenue West - - Calgary

It appears that the arches and boulevard mentioned were actually built in La Grange, although we have no confirmation that the mansion shown above was ever completed. Even as late as 1952, remnants of the boulevard (known as "Broadway") could be seen on an airphoto.



There's evidence that John Steinbrecker was encountering financial difficulties with his various real estate projects even before WW1. And with the collapse of the real estate market in Calgary beginning in 1913, he wasn't alone. But as mentioned previously, marketing real estate to *Germans* became an untenable

proposition once the war had begun, and the Steinbreckers moved out of Lincoln Corner not long after.

One final picture. This view looks east over McHugh Bluff, with Sunnyside on the far right. It well illustrates how the Steinbrecker home was positioned relative to some of the other homes in the vicinity of Crescent Road and 1st Street NW.

