

The Julius Albright House  
Cook County  
Glencoe, Illinois

HABS-111.-134

HABS  
ILL,  
16-GLENC,  
1-

*Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District No. 111.1.

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Earl H. Reed, District Officer  
435 North Michigan Ave., Chicago

THE JULIUS ALBRIGHT HOUSE  
Glencoe, Cook County, Illinois

HABS  
ILL,  
16-GLENC,  
1-

Owner:

Date of Erection: 1865 or 1866.

Architect: Julius Albright.

Builder: Julius Albright.

Present Condition: Poor.

Number of Stories: Story and a half.

Materials of Construction: Cobble stone foundation, roof covered with vertical overlapping boarding, or of long shingles some three feet in length, nailed with square, wrought iron nails. Constructed of local clay and chopped rye straw trampled by oxen. Now stuccoed.

Other Existing Records: Photographs.

Additional Data: (See following pages)

THE JULIUS ALBRIGHT HOUSE  
 COOK COUNTY  
 GLENCOE, ILLINOIS

DISTRICT NO. ILL. 1.  
 NORTHERN ILLINOIS

EARL H. REED, JR.  
 DISTRICT OFFICER

Project No. Ill. 134

Albert J. DeLong  
 H. Stewart Leonard

SOURCE

Mr. Jacob  
 Hohlfelder

In 1865 or 1866 Julius Albright built this small one and a half story house of clay and chopped straw with the assistance of August Hohlfelder. Both of these men were of German descent and the first generation in this country. Jacob Hohlfelder, the son of the builder, said that this method of building was common in the northern part of Germany where there was a shortage of stone and that it was used by those with highly limited resources.

Local clay and chopped rye straw were mixed together by oxen trampling over the mixture. When well mixed it was shovelled on the cobble stone foundation and trimmed down with a sort of wooden trowel made with a long board and two pegs for handles. After the walls had been completed and had dried, the window and door openings were cut and the sash inserted. The roof had a moderately steep pitch with wide overhanging eaves, which protected the exposed and unfinished clay wall. The interior was, according to the vague testimony of the same informant, whitewashed.

Edward and  
 Jacob  
 Hohlfelder

Later changes were made by successive owners. It has been impossible to determine the author or date of these changes. A new roof replaced the older roof and since the walls were given a coat of stucco, the eaves were trimmed down. At present the roof is covered with modern shingles. Originally it was covered with vertical overlapping boarding, or of long shingles some three feet in length, which had been nailed with the familiar square, wrought iron nails.

Mr. Albright built another such house in Glencoe which was torn down some ten years ago and there was another house of similar construction at Deerfield.

The following men have owned this house: Julius Albright, the builder; John Stipe; Pagel; Chas. Hohlfelder; K.R. Clavey; Compton, and; James P. McGregor. At present the house is not inhabited.

This type of construction, together with pise de terre, mud and adobe, is as old as the history of architecture. Its employment here under these circumstances illustrates two factors that have always influenced architectural practice. First, reduced circumstances tend to bring about the simpler and more rudimentary forms of building, and second; building on the frontier shows a tendency to revert to the more primitive types of construction, a factor which is always associated with the frontier. Analogous examples are to be found in the caves <sup>built</sup> in river banks built by the Swedes in New Delaware in 1638, the huts of withes and daubed clay built by the pioneers in New England; the first church built by John Smith; to say nothing of the sod houses of Nebraska and this clay and straw house of Glencoe.

By Albert J. Long

Approved Earl C. Reed