

Cleveland Architects

James William Thomas

Birth/Established: November 8, 1876 **Death/Dissolved:** June 18, 1973

Affiliation: Howell & Thomas

Biography: J. William Thomas was born in West Pittston, Pennsylvania. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Architecture where he was a roommate with Carl Howell. After graduation he went to work in the New York office of Cass Gilbert. In 1908 he formed the partnership with Carl Howell in Columbus. Thomas continued in practice under his own name following the death of Howell in 1930. Thomas originally lived in Shaker Heights, moving to Hudson in 1941. He was a member of the Greater Cleveland Growth Association and a president of the Cleveland chapter of the American Institute of Architects. He was listed as a registered architect in the November 1940 Ohio Architect with offices at 3868 Carnegie Avenue. He retired in 1955. In a 1964 interview with Richard Campen, he said that the new buildings in Cleveland - the Erievue Tower, the East Ohio Building and the Illuminating Building, were engineering, not architecture, and that they disturbed him. He predicted that they would be obsolete in ten years.

Sources:

Campen, Richard It's Engineering, Not Architecture : J. William Thomas Reminisces and Questions Modern Design Plain Dealer 15 November

Cleveland Necrology file

Obituary J. William Thomas, 96, Dies: was architect Plain Dealer June 20, 1973