

MONDAY, JUNE 20, 2005

Famous Quakers from Southwest Ohio ~ Eli Harvey, Sculptor

September 23rd, 1860 (Near [Springfield Monthly Meeting ~ Adams Township, Clinton County, Ohio ~ Todd's Fork Road](#)) ~ February 10, 1957 (Alhambra, California)

As a young man living on his father's farm in a tight knit Quaker community, **Eli Harvey** taught himself to draw through his intense and loving observation of nature. He was surprised to find out that his father, **William Penn Harvey**, a Quaker minister and himself a poet, did not object to his becoming a professional artist. Indeed, the artistic temperament seemed to run in the family of **William Harvey** (**Eli's** great grandfather), with two poets and an artist as descendents. However, **William Penn Harvey** could not afford to send his son to art school or to Europe where he could get the necessary training. He worked odd jobs to earn money and began painting portraits to earn the money to go to school in Cincinnati. Two of his earliest portraits were of his grandparents, **Eli** and **Ruth Fisher Harvey**, **Eli's** second wife.

Young **Eli Harvey** attended *McMicken University*, the Art Department, in Cincinnati. In Cincinnati he studied under Noble and Rebisso, in Paris at the *Academies Julian* and *Delecluse* under Lefebvre, Constant, and Doucet; and animal sculpture under Fremet at the *Jardin des Plantes*. He concentrated on painting until the early 1900s, when he turned his attention to sculpture. Returning to the U.S. at the turn of the century Harvey lived and worked in New York City until he moved to Alhambra, California in the late 1920's. He lived in an area populated by a large artists' colony called "*Artists Alley*" and was a good friend of **Norman Rockwell**.

In 1893 **Eli** returned to the United States from Europe and married his fiancée and first wife, **Mary Anna Baker** (d. 1919) in Glen Loch, Pennsylvania. His second wife was **Grace Harvey**, the daughter of **Aaron Harvey** of Clinton Co., Ohio. She was an artist herself, a professional photographer. **Grace** died April 11th, 1925. **Eli** then married **Edith James** of Montclair, N. J., a graduate of Vassar and a musician.

Some of his best-known works is the lion sculptures at the *Bronx Zoo*, [the famous symbol of the Benevolent Order of ELks, the Elk bronze](#), and the bear mascot for *Brown University*. More information about Eli Harvey, artist and sculptor can be found at:

- <http://www.clintoncountyhistory.org/museum.html> (Clinton Co., Ohio Museum, Wilmington, Ohio)
- <http://www.bronze-gallery.com/sculptors/artist.cfm?sculptorID=71> (The Bronze Gallery)

- <http://www.wildlifeart.org/Collections/ArtistBio.cfm?tArtistid=368&tUrl=ArtistBioMain.cfm&UrlName=Artist%20Biographies> (National Museum of Wildlife Art)
- <http://fq.quaker.org/pastartists.html> (Some Quaker Writers and Artist of the Past: A Brief List)

Eli's third wife, **Edith James Harvey**, produced a biography about him: *Eli Harvey: Quaker Sculptor from Ohio* (Copyright 1966 by Edith Jams Harvey). Another good resource is: *Marcus Mote and Eli Harvey, Two Quaker Artists from Southwest Ohio* (Warren and Clinton County Historical Societies, 1992).