

Elizabethtown College 125th Anniversary  
National Historic Preservation Trust This Place Matters Campaign & Campus Historic Building Survey  
Based on the National Parks Service Historic American Building Survey  
2024 Summer Creative Arts and Research Program SCARP  
Ava Barton Class of 2027  
Jean-Paul Benowitz, Director of Prestigious Scholarships and Fellowships and Public Heritage Studies



## John Alfred Hamme (1897-1965)

John Alfred Hamme was born on August 13, 1897, in York County, Pennsylvania. He died on October 19, 1965, at age 68 in York County, Pennsylvania and was buried in Prospect Hill Cemetery in York County.<sup>1</sup> His parents were John Bentz Hamme (1862-1954) and Minnie Ameda (Kohler) Hamme (1868-1950). John A. Hamme married Hannah Helen (O'Boyle) Hamme (1896-1985). Together they had two children, John Reese Hamme (1927-1927) and Kathryn Louise (Hamme) Keesey (1930-1995).<sup>2</sup>

J. Alfred Hamme attended York High school and then Gettysburg college where he graduated in 1918 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. After serving in World War I, he attended University of Pennsylvania where he received a Bachelor of Architecture in 1925. Later he would be awarded a doctorate in fine arts from Elizabethtown College in 1960.<sup>3</sup>

Hamme Associates was opened in the City of York, Pennsylvania in 1900. It was located at 123 East Philadelphia Street.<sup>4</sup> J. Alfred Hamme was the son of York Architect John B. Hamme and was a partner of the firm. John Bentz Hamme graduated from Cornell University in 1888. He belonged to the American Institute of Architects which he joined in 1909.<sup>5</sup> J. Alfred Hamme would

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<sup>1</sup> Shannon Clark, "John A. Hamme," (Landmarks and Legends Essay, Elizabethtown College, 2017) 1.

<sup>2</sup> Jean-Paul Benowitz, Peter J. DePuydt, "Elizabethtown College" (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 20, 22, 24, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Find a Grave, 2024, [https://images.findagrave.com/photos/2022/24/100160385\\_80c267b8-85f7-4ae5-acd7-e9faad470937.jpeg](https://images.findagrave.com/photos/2022/24/100160385_80c267b8-85f7-4ae5-acd7-e9faad470937.jpeg).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "Hamme, John Bentz," Philadelphia Buildings.org, accessed June 17, 2024. [https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar\\_display.cfm/22557](https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/22557).

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inherit his father's architecture firm after his retirement in 1945. He would remain the sole proprietor of the business until 1963 when the business was reorganized to have multiple other associates. At this time, the firm was known as "J. Alfred Hamme and Associates." The majority of commissions by the office of Hamme Associates have been churches, schools, and institutions of higher learning.<sup>6</sup>

Shortly after Elizabethtown was accredited by the Middle States Association, "the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education stipulated that the College erect a library building in the very near future." On February 21, 1949, J.

Alfred Hamme was hired as an architect to supervise the construction of the library until its completion. This building would be the Zug Memorial Library and it was built at a total cost of \$160,000.<sup>7</sup>

With an increasing enrollment, the science hall was beginning to grow crowded. J. Alfred Hamme was also hired to complete blueprints and plans for a West Wing of the Gible Science Hall which is now the Steinman Center.<sup>8</sup>

The Housing and Finance Agency agreed to finance a Student Union Building. The initial recommendation was to remodel the Student-Alumni Gymnasium. Architect J. Alfred Hamme proposed "surrounding the old gymnasium with the new structure at a cost of \$450,000. This plan was given priority in construction and accordingly a request for a loan of \$1,000,000 was sent in to the Housing and Finance Agency to cover the cost of the Student Union Building and a new women's dormitory."<sup>9</sup>

"He was a member of St. Matthew Lutheran church and Sunday school; Calumet club; Lafayette club; Lake Club of Spring Grove; Gettysburg College Alumni Association; University of Pennsylvania Alumni Association York Kiwanis club, of which he was a past president; Conservation society of York County; Society of Architectural Historians, and the Guild for Church Architecture. Mr. Hamme was a past president of the central Pennsylvania chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of Architects. A vice president of York County Tuberculosis and Health society, he was also a board



<sup>6</sup> "The History of Hamme Associates Architects," Hamme Associates, accessed June 17, 2024.  
<https://hammeassociates.com/history.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Ralph Schlosser, *History of Elizabethtown College 1899 - 1970*. (Lebanon, PA: Sowers Printing Company, 1971), 195.

<sup>8</sup> Schlosser, 197.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.

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member of the Pennsylvania Tuberculosis and Health society. Masonic organizations to which he belonged were York Lodge 266, Free and Accepted Masons; York Forest 30, Tall Cedar of Lebanon, Harrisburg consistory and Zembo Temple.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Find a Grave, 2024, [https://images.findagrave.com/photos/2022/24/100160385\\_80c267b8-85f7-4ae5-acd7-e9faad470937.jpeg](https://images.findagrave.com/photos/2022/24/100160385_80c267b8-85f7-4ae5-acd7-e9faad470937.jpeg)

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