



Shedd Mausoleum

History

Freeman Ballard Shedd was born in Lowell in 1844. As a teenager, he worked at Staniel's Drugstore at the corner of Gorham and Middlesex streets (current site of Washington Savings Bank's parking lot). At Staniel's, he befriended a co-worker, Eli Hoyt. In 1861, 17-year-old Shedd joined the army and served as a hospital steward throughout the Civil War.

After his discharge from the army, Shedd returned to Lowell and became a partner with his friend Eli Hoyt, a manufacturer of men's cologne. Shedd handled marketing for the company, changing the name of the product from Hoyt's Cologne to Hoyt's Famous German Cologne to give it a more exotic name (even though it had no connection to Germany). Shedd took advantage of inexpensive color printing and created the first-known scented advertising card by soaking colored trading cards in cologne, letting them dry, and then distributing them to potential customers.

The company was successful and Shedd and Hoyt became wealthy. They built matching homes on adjacent lots on Andover Street. Hoyt died of tuberculosis in his 40s. Shedd continued on with the company but also became a generous supporter of many Lowell institutions, donating money to Lowell General Hospital for the establishment of the tuberculosis clinic in memory of Hoyt. Shedd also gave a giant Japanese vase to the city of Lowell that is on display in the Pollard Memorial Library. In his will, he left 50 acres and \$1000,00 to the city to create a park. Shedd Park, adjacent to the Lowell Cemetery, continues to this day to provide recreational enjoyment to Lowell citizens of all ages. Shedd died in 1913 at age 69 and is buried in the family mausoleum.

Art and Architecture

The structure, a simple geometric form with substantial walls and a pitched roofline, has a stepped ceremonial entrance. There are 16 patterned pavers after a series of three steps. Two large urns at one time marked the entrance to the mausoleum.

The double bronze doors are decorative, with the cross-pattern of the pavers repeated on the bronze door and on the back of the structure. Bronze rosettes outline each door. The rosette design is repeated in carved stone on the lintel above. Decorative festoons (a garland that lies loosely between two tacked spots) act as a balance for the carved wreath above the door. The wreath appears with a ribbon on the front and back of the mausoleum. The festoons and wreaths signify honor and victory over death.

A design element called a Greek key surrounds the door. The design is also referred to as meander, a linear pattern. The design is composed of a long, continuous line that repeatedly folds back on itself, mimicking the many twists and turns of a river. Above the meander design and incorporated with the rosettes are open and closed lotus leaves. The lotus flower closes its petals at night and opens them in the morning, a perfect symbol for life after death. This design is also used in a bronze plaque on the wall of the Receiving Tomb.

Buried in the Shedd mausoleum are:

Freeman B. Shedd – age 69 – buried Mar 15, 1913

Eli Hoyt Shedd – (son) age 8 – buried Jan 27, 1885

Shedd (stillborn) – removal from lot 980

Mary Belle Shedd – (daughter) age – buried Oct 28, 1921

Amy F. Shedd – (spouse) age 76 – buried August 7, 1924