

**Biographical Research of the Moberly Mausoleum**

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Located at the Myosotis plot, Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, the Moberly Mausoleum was built in 1933 by Farrington, Gould & Hoagland Memorial Co.<sup>1</sup> It was commissioned by Edward Everett Moberly in early 1933, twelve years after than the mysterious death of his son, Edward Everett Moberly Jr. Previously his son was buried in a smaller plot at Woodlawn, Moberly Senior made the decision to purchase a bigger place in Woodlawn for the whole family.<sup>2</sup> The Moberly Mausoleum is located at between Myosotis Avenue and Walnut Avenue. Two English yew were planted in front of the mausoleum. A very large oak tree is located at the southwest of the lot. The Moberly mausoleum is designed in Art Deco style which was popular in the 1930s. The exterior and floor were made of light Barre granite, provided by E. L. Smith Co. in Barre, Vermont.<sup>3</sup> The designing of the mausoleum is relatively simple; it is approximately a twelve feet by twelve feet cube. Unlike other mausoleums which commonly built of stone masonry, the Moberly Mausoleum was built of monolithic granite blocks on a one-foot height concrete foundation. The front façade is symmetrical. The door is 3 feet wide and with a one foot depth setback toward to inside. The name Moberly is located around 2 feet above the door and sculptured in art-deco style font. Four vertical lines were carved on the granites each side, that pointed out the art-deco feature. The left and right side of Moberly Mausoleum are asymmetrical. Four bronze vents are located at the four corners of side facades. A stain glass window is located at the back side, around two and half feet wide and four feet tall. The window was made by three layers of glasses, one art glass in the middle and two protected glass beside it. The art glass is very well made and colorful, with a pattern of heavenly river and mountain landscape (figure 12). Although this pattern is commonly appeared on Tiffany glass, the author of this glass is unknown. The interior walls were made of polished Tennessee pink marble, and the doors and the single window frame made of bronze. A marble made chair is located at the end of the hall way inside. The mausoleum is very well maintained and free of any damage both exterior and interior. There are eight catacombs inside, and four people buried in this mausoleum: Edward. E. Moberly, Jennie M. Moberly, and two of their children, Edward E. Moberly Jr. and Edna M. Moberly.

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<sup>1</sup> Woodlawn Cemetery Records, Avery Library

<sup>2</sup> Susan Olsen email correspondence, Oct/7/2022

<sup>3</sup> "Concerning Smith Barre Granite", commercial pamphlet

Edward Everett Moberly Sr. was born in Duquoin, Illinois on October 20, 1859.<sup>4</sup> Both his parents were born locally in Franklin County, Illinois. He was the eldest son of John Hayes Moberly (1836-1910), a grain merchant in Chicago<sup>5</sup> and Hester Jaur Moberly, née Browning (1839-1913).<sup>6</sup> He was educated at public schools in Duquoin and then attended Shurtleff College in Upper Alton, Illinois. After he left college in early 1880, he went to Chicago where he lived at his parent's home, 74 Michigan Avenue, Unit 338, which is near the present day Art Institute of



Figure 2 Edward E. Moberly

Chicago. He worked as a bookkeeper at the lumber firm Street, Chatfield & Keep for ten years until the firm closed their lumber yard at 21<sup>st</sup> street, Chicago. In 1890, he opened his own lumber company, C. H. Blair & Co, with the help of his father-in-law, Charles Hall Blair. He traded in white pine lumber.<sup>7</sup> In 1893, Moberly changed his company's name to E. E. Moberly & Co, and gradually shifted to "yellow pine and more southern products".<sup>8</sup> In 1898, he stepped into the Louisiana lumber market by buying a small local business, Amos Kent Lumber & Brick Company, in Kentwood, Louisiana. He significantly expanded the company from a limited capacity mill to a modern mill plant. In late 1905, he founded Cummings & Moberly Cypress Company with Jesse N. Cummings who was formerly the secretary of the Louisiana Cypress Company.<sup>9</sup> During this time period, he bought his own home at 3652 Michigan Ave, Chicago, living with his wife and children.<sup>10</sup> At an unknown time between 1900 and 1910, they moved



Figure 1 Charles and Cornelia Blair

<sup>4</sup> "Edward Everett Moberly, biography". *American Lumberman*, 1906. pp. 189-192

<sup>5</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1880, Illinois, Chicago

<sup>6</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1900, Illinois, Chicago, Ward 31

<sup>7</sup> "Edward Everett Moberly, biography". *American Lumberman*, 1906. pp. 189-192

<sup>8</sup> "Edward Everett Moberly, biography", 1906. pp. 189-192

<sup>9</sup> "Edward Everett Moberly, biography", 1906. pp. 189-192

<sup>10</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1900, Illinois, Chicago

from Chicago to New York, and lived at 52 East 74<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>11</sup> According to the census, this is believed to be their first home in New York City. Cummings & Moberly Cypress Company purchased Ramos Lumber Company in April of 1911 for \$800,000.<sup>12</sup> However, in June 1914, Moberly and Cummings split the company. As the record shows, this was probably a business strategy to manage their property. After this agreement, Jesse Cummings took control of the original Cummings & Moberly Cypress Company and Edward E Moberly took control of the Ramos Lumber Company.<sup>13</sup> The company owned a sawmill in Ramos, near Morgan City, Louisiana, manufactured cypress lumber and shingle. The company's property also included four miles of lumber railroad, a Lima Shay class-A locomotive and a school for worker's children.<sup>14</sup><sup>15</sup> The company existed until the 1920s, when it was last seen in newspapers as a lumber company in 1924. Lacking a specific record, Edward E. Moberly retired from the company around the 1920s. His former manager T. A. Duffy took over the company, and later because of the decline of the cypress market, he left the lumber business and changed the company name to Ramos Investment Company.<sup>17</sup> In the 1920s, the Moberly family lived at a more luxury apartment, 320 Park Ave, New York City<sup>18</sup>.(figure 10) It's not clear about the later years of Edward E. Moberly. He had several family trips to Britain and France in the 1920s to 1930s<sup>19</sup>. According to a report of *New York Times* 1948 Oct 15<sup>th</sup>, he worked in insurance and banking

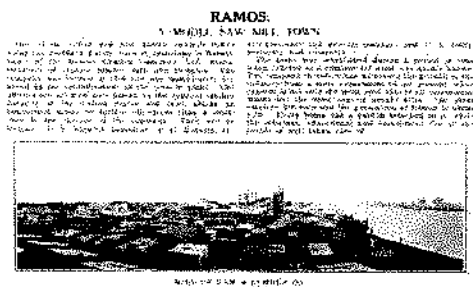


Figure 3 Ramos Lumber Co.

after his retirement from the lumber business. He was formerly the director of United States Fire Insurance Company, North River Fire Insurance Company, Marine Midland Trust Company and Irving Saving Bank<sup>20</sup>. He moved into 620 Park Ave, New York at sometime between 1924 to 1930,

<sup>11</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1910, New York City  
<sup>12</sup> "Gist of the News", *The Times and Democrat*, 1911 Apr 14, New Orleans  
<sup>13</sup> "Crescent City News", *American Lumberman*, 1914 July 4, pp. 51  
<sup>14</sup> "List of Louisiana common carriers", Railroad Commission of Louisiana 1920 Map of the State of Louisiana  
<sup>15</sup> Lima Machine Works DataBase, Shay Locomotives, www.shaylocomotives.com  
<sup>16</sup> "Lumber Companies and schools", *The Times-Democrat*, 1913 Aug 27<sup>th</sup>, New Orleans  
<sup>17</sup> "Duffy", *Morgan City Review*, Dec 20, 1959  
<sup>18</sup> "Died", *New York Herald* 1921 Jan 6<sup>th</sup>  
<sup>19</sup> "Passenger lists, New York", Boston, 1820-1954  
<sup>20</sup> "Edward E. Moberly", *New York Times*, 1948 Oct 15<sup>th</sup>



where was a luxury apartment in an upper-class neighborhood (figure 11). In his last twenty years, he still maintained a luxurious life in Upper East side of New York. He lived with his wife, daughter and three servants in a ten-rooms apartment<sup>21</sup>. Edward E Moberly died at his home in New York, Oct 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948, only six days before his 89 years old birthday.<sup>22</sup>

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1886, Edward E. Moberly married Jennie Maude Blair<sup>23</sup>, the daughter of Charles Hall Blair (1835-1904) who was a contractor and builder in Chicago at that time.<sup>24</sup> He was an immigrant from Nova Scotia, Canada.<sup>25</sup> Jennie M. Moberly was born in Delaware, Wisconsin on Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, 1863. Her mother was Cordelia F Stewart (1836-1893) from New York<sup>26</sup>. She was the oldest daughter in her family. Mr. and Mrs. Moberly had four children, twin Edward Everett Moberly Jr. and Edna Maude Moberly on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1890, Florence Blair Moberly on Oct 30<sup>th</sup> 1892, and Margaret Moberly on Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> 1898.<sup>27</sup> She died in Avon Park, Florida on Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 1946.<sup>28</sup>



Figure 4 Jennie M. Moberly

Born in Chicago, 1890, Edward Everett Moberly Jr. was the only son of this family. According to the census record, he lived in Chicago until the 1900s and moved to New York with his parents around 1910. He went to Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut from 1910 to 1914.<sup>29</sup> There is no record showing his major and study field at the college. In 1913 Oct 18<sup>th</sup>, he married Catherine Ellen

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<sup>21</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1940, New York City

<sup>22</sup> New York Death Index 1948

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Marriages Index, 1871-1920 Cook County Illinois

<sup>24</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1880, Illinois, Chicago

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Passport Applications, roll 285, 1886

<sup>26</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1880, Illinois, Chicago

<sup>27</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1910, New York City

<sup>28</sup> Florida Death Index, 1946

<sup>29</sup> The Ivy, Trinity College Yearbook 1910-1914

Heffelfinger in Minneapolis (1891-1971)<sup>30</sup>, who was the daughter of Alfred Sully Heffelfinger (1864-1921), a shoe retailer from Minneapolis.<sup>31</sup> The story in his marriage is unclear but the following 1920 census shows that Catherine E. Moberly was already divorced and lived alone in Minneapolis as an insurance agent<sup>32</sup>. A newspaper report shows the couple may have gone to California to settle down right after their wedding in 1913.<sup>33</sup> Shown on multiple sources, however, Edward E. Moberly Jr.



Figure 5 Edward E. Moberly Jr.

moved to Ramos, Louisiana and worked in his father's company as vice-president and general manager.<sup>34</sup> Mrs. Moberly followed her husband to Louisiana in Sept 1917. She worked as the director of the Women Bureau New Orleans and joined the Red Cross in the war time. Their marriage was maintained until 1919, as she was last seen in the New Orleans' newspaper in June 1919. The newspaper reported her resignation from the Red Cross and her departure to Minneapolis.<sup>35</sup> Along with the US entry into WW1, Edward E. Moberly Jr. was registered into the war mobilization. The 1917 registration form showed that he tried to exempt his enlistment with the reason of "dependent wife", but he failed.<sup>36</sup> He joined the US army in 1918 with several other Ramos lumber workers and went to France on Sep 25<sup>th</sup>, 1918<sup>37</sup>. This was the very end of WW1 when he arrived in Europe and no record showed if he joined any battle in France, but it's certain that he served at 327<sup>th</sup> Battalion Company B as a private in the tank corps.<sup>38</sup> This



Figure 6 Catherine Moberly

<sup>30</sup> US Marriages Index, 1849-1950 Minnesota

<sup>31</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1910, Minneapolis

<sup>32</sup> US Census Bureau, United States Federal Census, 1920, Minneapolis

<sup>33</sup> "Californian marries Minneapolis woman", *Star Tribune*, 20<sup>th</sup> Oct 1913, Minneapolis, pp.6

<sup>34</sup> "Ramos, a model saw mill town", *Times-Picayune*, 1917

<sup>35</sup> "Social News", *Times-Picayune*, 1919 June 1st

<sup>36</sup> U.S. World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918

<sup>37</sup> "Trench Blues": An African American Song Of World War I, Unknow Archive

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Army Transport Service Arriving and Departing Passenger Lists, 1910-1939

troop was under the command of George S. Patton and equipped with French FT-17 light tanks.<sup>39</sup> He stayed in France until Apr 20<sup>th</sup>, 1919, and returned to home from Bordeaux Amer Bassens, France by the USS Susquehanna<sup>40</sup>. The last two years of his life are uncertain because there is no census information about him and his family in 1920. On Jan 5<sup>th</sup>, 1921, his sisters, Florence Blair Moberly and Margaret Moberly had a double wedding at St Bartholomew Church, Park Ave New York. He attended the wedding in January. However, he mysteriously died at New York Apr 25<sup>th</sup>, 1921, three months after his sister's wedding. He was buried at lot 14908 Chestnut Hill plot, Woodlawn, and was moved into the family mausoleum when it was built in 1933.<sup>41</sup>



Photo by Beatrix Smith.  
Mrs. Franklin Craig Morton and Mrs. Harry Messiter Addinsell.

Figure 8 Margaret and Florence Moberly

There is not much information about the life of Edna M. Moberly. As the twin sister of Edward E Moberly Jr, she was born in Chicago in 1890 March 16<sup>th</sup>. She was unmarried and lived with her parents her whole life. She and her parents traveled many times to France in the 1920s to the 1930s.<sup>42</sup> She died naturally at age 60, Nov 9<sup>th</sup>, 1950, in Hertford British Hospital, Paris<sup>43</sup>. She was the last person buried in the Moberly Mausoleum.



Figure 9 Edna M. Moberly

<sup>39</sup> Dale Wilson, *The American Expeditionary Forces Tank Corps in WW1*, pp. 74

<sup>40</sup> U.S. Army Transport Service Arriving and Departing Passenger Lists, 1910-1939

<sup>41</sup> Susan Olsen email correspondence, Oct/7/2022

<sup>42</sup> New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Reports of Deaths of American Citizens Abroad, 1950





*Figure 10 320 Park Ave 1940s*



*Figure 11 620 Park Ave 1940s*



*Figure 12 Art Glass in Moberly Mausoleum*



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