

The City of Seattle LPB-128/83

Landmarks Preservation Board

400 Yesler Building Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206)625-4501

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

Name and Location of Property: "McGraw Square (McGraw Place)"
@ intersection of 5th Avenue, Westlake Avenue, and Stewart Street.

At a public hearing held on October 5, 1983, the City of Seattle's Landmark Preservation Board voted to approve designation of McGraw Square (McGraw Place) as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance #106348.

Section 3.01 (2) It is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the history of the city, state or nation.

John Harte McGraw (1850-1910) was a person very important in the history of Seattle and of the State of Washington. The memorial to him was dedicated in 1913. At the dedication which was attended by most of the prominent citizens, he was referred to as "Seattle's foremost citizen". They spoke of his qualities as a man and of his many efforts in the public welfare, especially the project for connecting Lake Washington with the tide water by a ship canal. It was pointed out that the funds for the memorial came from men and women in all walks of life and with little or no solicitation.

McGraw was Sheriff of King County at the time of the anti-Chinese riots (1886) in Seattle where he showed commendable efforts to halt the anti-Chinese vigilantes and was able to maintain law and order. He was the second governor of the state, serving from 1893 to 1897. He went into the business of real estate and finance, later becoming the president of the First National Bank and serving as president of the Chamber of Commerce. No history of Seattle or of the State of Washington could be written without reference to John Harte McGraw.

Section 3.01 (6) Because of its prominence of spatial location contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the city.

The sculpture and its setting embody the distinctive characteristics of the public sculptural memorials at the turn of the century, of which there are few in Seattle; this being one of the more prominent and excellently executed of them all. The setting is subordinate to the sculpture, in its busy, urban site. The figure is done in a fine realistic sculptural manner then popular throughout the nation, particularly on the East Coast; the work of sculptor Richard Edwin Brooks (1865-1919) of Paris, New York and Washington, D.C.

The setting was designed by the famous firm of landscape architects and planners, the Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts. Its pleasant, urban quality is a good example of their work, designing the setting to be non-assertive while serving as an appropriate background to the sculpture. The setting, at the intersection of three major streets in the heart of downtown Seattle, is a particularly prominent one for this statue and park.

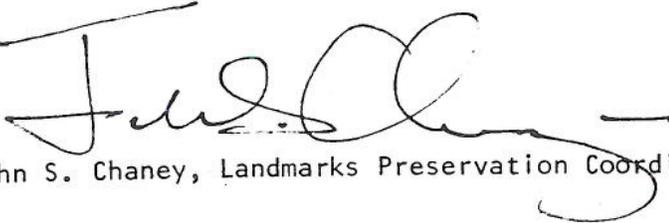
Features of the Landmark to be preserved include:

- the entire park, landscape and memorial elements.

Issued: October 7, 1983

Roberta Deering, Acting City Historic Preservation Officer

By:



John S. Chaney, Landmarks Preservation Coordinator

JSC:sa

cc: Walter R. Hundley



City of Seattle
 Department of Community Development/Office of Urban Conservation

Landmark Nomination Form

Name McGraw Square Year Built 1913
 (Common, present or historic) or McGraw Place

Street and Number Fifth Avenue, Westlake Avenue & Stewart Street

Assessor's File No. _____

Legal Description Plat Name ↓ Block 7 Lot Westerly portion of Lot 1
Heirs of Sarah A. Bell's Addition

Present Owner Seattle Park Dept Present Use Park

Address 100 Dexter Ave. N. Seattle

Original Owner above Original Use Park

Architect Olmsted Brothers Builder unknown

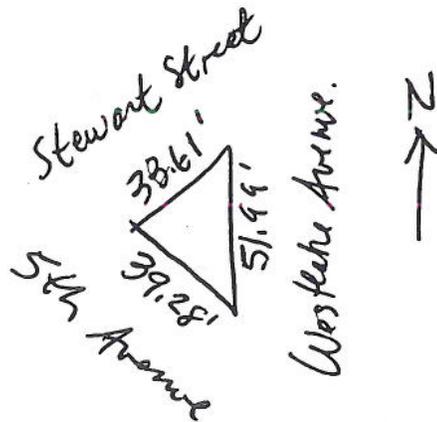
Sculptor, Richard Edwin Brooks

Description: Present and original (if known) physical appearance and characteristics

A large finely sculptured bronze statue of former Governor John Harte McGraw set in a small (660^{sq}) triangular park with concrete benches and brick walls. The statue is set on a stone pedestal base. There are two pine trees flanking the statue with some low shrubbery. Richard Edwin Brooks (1865-1919) is the sculptor and the setting was designed by the Olmsted Brothers. It stands in front of the old Times Square building which is listed in the National Register as well as being a Seattle Landmark.

It is, of course, a memorial to John Harte McGraw (1850-1910), a prominent citizen of Seattle and of the State of Washington.

Everything is in good original condition, however the landscaping needs some maintenance as does some of the brickwork.



Site plan - no scale

Statement of significance

(1850-1910)

John Harts McGraw was a person very important in the history of Seattle and of the State of Washington.

This memorial to him was dedicated in 1913. At the dedication which was attended by most of the prominent citizens, he was referred to as "Seattle's foremost citizen" who spoke of his qualities as a man and of his many efforts in the public welfare especially the project for connecting Lake Washington with the tide water by a ship canal. It was pointed out that funds for the memorial came from men and women in all walks of life, and with little or no solicitation. McGraw was sheriff of King County at the time of the anti-Chinese riots (1886) in Seattle, where he showed commendable efforts to halt the anti-Chinese vigilantes and was able to maintain law and order.

He was the second governor of the state serving from 1893 to 1897. He went into the business of real estate and finance later becoming the president of the First National Bank and serving as president of the Chamber of Commerce.

No history of Seattle or of the State of Washington could be written without reference to John Harts McGraw.

Statement of Significance (cont.)

The sculpture and its setting embody the distinctive characteristics of the public sculptural memorials at the turn of the century. There are not very many in Seattle and this is probably the most prominent and excellently executed of all. The setting is subordinate to the sculpture, however it has a good urban quality and is well designed and built. The figure is done in a fine realistic sculptural manner then popular throughout the nation — particularly on the East Coast.

The sculpture is an outstanding work of a very important sculptor, Richard Edwin Brooks (1865-1919), of Paris, New York, and Washington, D.C. Brooks executed many statues of public figures on the East Coast such as: Col. Thomas Cass (Boston), General Hood (Baltimore), John Hanson and Charles Carroll (Statuary Hall, U.S. Capitol), Col. Wadsworth (Hartford), John Haynes and Roger Ludlow (~~Corcoran School of Art, Wash. D.C.~~), (facade of Connecticut State Capitol at Hartford), E.F. Andrews (Corcoran School of Art, Wash. D.C.). Brooks was also the sculptor of the fine statue of Will H. Seward located in Seattle's Volunteer Park.

This large bronze figure of McGraw is an outstanding work of an important national artist of his era. Its style

Statement of Significance (cont.)

and setting is very characteristic of the public sculptural monuments of its time. Seattle has very few examples, particularly in downtown.

The setting was designed by the famous firm of landscape architects and planners, the Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts. Its simple pleasant urban quality is a good example of their work, which is non-assertive while serving as an appropriate background to the sculpture and does not detract from it.

Of course, the prominence of the Olmsted Brothers, as nationally significant landscape architects and planners is well known. They are responsible for much important work in Seattle's parks and boulevard systems, however this small project is unique.

references: McGraw
included

"History of Seattle"
by Clarence B. Bagley Vol. II pg. 769-772
S.J. Clarke Publishing Co. Chicago 1916

Brooks

"Dictionary of American Biography"
Vol III pg. 88-89
Charles Scribner's Sons, N.Y. 1929