



SINCE 1841

WOODLAND

HISTORIC CEMETERY & ARBORETUM

Resident Spotlight with Community Connection

Edith Walton Deeds Business Woman and Philanthropist



Edith Walton Deeds was born in Spring Valley, Greene County, Ohio on October 27, 1869. She was the daughter of Samuel and Mary Amelia (Weller) Walton.

While the Carillon was generally recognized as her greatest material gift to Dayton, Mrs. Deeds was also active for many years in sponsoring and contributing to a number of music events and organizations. The idea for the carillon came to Mrs. Deeds while she was listening to the chimes in one of the belfries in Belgium. Mrs. Deeds personally supervised the selection of the towers location and the many details of its construction.

Mrs. Deeds purchased a three-acre tract of land from the National Cash Register Company to build the carillon, a tower 170 feet in height that would shelter a cluster of 32 bells. One hundred and fifty sketches were drawn for Mrs. Deeds before she gave her approval to the final design from architects Reinhard and Hofmeister of New York City, designers of Rockefeller Center. The structure was fashioned of granite, steel and Indiana limestone.

Mrs. Deeds said that her motives for creating the carillon was that, "In no other way can simple inspiring music be spread among an entire populace."

Edith attended Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana where she studied music, painting and languages. She organized the first boys harmonica orchestra composed of children from Dayton schools. When asked the reason for it her reply was, "It is better for the boys to play the harmonica at home than to stand idly around the Dayton street corners."

Mrs. Deeds' mother was a member of the Baptist denomination. When the family moved to Dayton they became members of the First Baptist Church where Edith became very involved in church activities. Edith Walton met Edward Deeds at the First Baptist Church on a Sunday in September 1897. As she was passing out membership cards at the church door, she noticed a young man enter through a side door who looked lost. She offered to help him. At the same time, a friend of hers approached and called her by her nickname of "Deedie" and the young man commented, "That's interesting, because my name is Deeds." Edith Walton and Edward Deeds were married June 5, 1900.

Mrs. Deeds was a patron of music and donor of the Deeds Carillon. She died in New York City in her suite at the Park Plaza Hotel at the age of 79 on February 9, 1949. Funeral services were held at the Deeds home known as Moraine Farm located in Kettering by Dr. Charles Lyon Seasholes, pastor of the First Baptist Church where Mrs. Deeds had been a member for more than 50 years.

On Saturday, February 12, 1949, a symphony of bells tolled for the gracious lady who gave to the citizens of Dayton and the Miami Valley its carillon. The funeral





cortege rolled by the carillon as the bells rang their melodious music and, as the casket carrying Mrs. Deeds strolled by, "Lead Kindly Light" the favorite hymn of Mrs. Deeds was played by Robert E. Kline, Mrs. Deeds' favorite carillonneur. As the procession made its way to Woodland Cemetery and the bells faded into the distance, they seemed to say, "Farewell, dear friend – to thy memory never."

Edith Walton Deeds was born October 27, 1869 and died on February 9, 1949. She is located in the Deeds Mausoleum in Section 121 Lot 2.

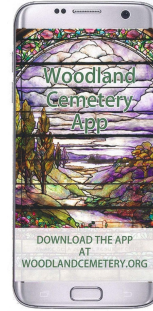
For more of the story about Edith Deeds and Deeds Carillon, [click here](#).

Visit the gravesite of Edith Walton Deeds on the [Women of Woodland Tour](#) at the [Woodland Cemetery](#) website.

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