

= Elliott Fitch Shepard =

Elliott Fitch Shepard (July 25 , 1833 ? March 24 , 1893) was a New York lawyer , banker , and owner of the Mail and Express newspaper , as well as a founder and president of the New York State Bar Association . Shepard was married to Margaret Louisa Vanderbilt , who was the granddaughter of philanthropist , business magnate , and family patriarch Cornelius Vanderbilt . Shepard 's Briarcliff Manor residence Woodlea and the Scarborough Presbyterian Church , which he founded nearby , are contributing properties to the Scarborough Historic District .

Shepard was born in Jamestown , New York , one of three sons of the president of a banknote @-@ engraving company . He attended the City University of New York , and practiced law for about 25 years . During the American Civil War , Shepard was a Union Army recruiter and earned the rank of colonel . He was later a founder and benefactor of several institutions and banks . When Shepard moved to the Briarcliff Manor hamlet of Scarborough @-@ on @-@ Hudson , he founded the Scarborough Presbyterian Church and built Woodlea ; the house and its land are now part of Sleepy Hollow Country Club .

= = Early life = =

Shepard was born July 25 , 1833 in Jamestown in Chautauqua County , New York . He was the second of three sons of Fitch Shepard and Delia Maria Dennis ; the others were Burritt Hamilton and Augustus Dennis . Fitch Shepard was president of the National Bank Note Company (later consolidated with the American and Continental Note Companies) , and Elliott 's brother Augustus became president of the American Bank Note Company . Fitch , son of Noah Shepard , was a descendant of Thomas Shepard (a Puritan minister) and James Fitch (son @-@ in @-@ law of William Bradford) . Delia Maria Dennis was a descendant of Robert Dennis , who emigrated from England in 1635 . Elliott was described in 1897 's Prominent Families of New York as " prominent by birth and ancestry , as well as for his personal qualities " . He attended public schools in Jamestown and the college @-@ preparatory University Grammar School (then located in the City University of New York building) , and graduated from the university in 1855 . Shepard began studying law under Edwards Pierpont , and was admitted to the bar in the city of Brooklyn in 1858 .

= = Civil War service = =

At the outbreak of the American Civil War Shepard became an aide @-@ de @-@ camp to Union Army General Edwin D. Morgan , with the rank of colonel . Shepard never entered the field , but was involved in recruiting volunteers . In 1862 he visited Jamestown to inspect , equip and provide uniforms for the Chautauqua regiment , his first return since age twelve , and was welcomed by a group of prominent citizens . Shepard recruited and organized the 51st Regiment , New York Volunteers , which was named the Shepard Rifles in his honor . George W. Whitman , brother of the poet Walt Whitman and a member of the regiment , was notified by Shepard of a promotion ; Shepard may have influenced his subsequent promotion to major in 1865 . In addition , Shepard was involved in correspondence with Walt Whitman .

Shepard was placed in charge of the recruiting station in Elmira , and enlisted 47 @,@ 000 men from the surrounding area . Although President Abraham Lincoln offered him a promotion to brigadier general , Shepard declined in deference to officers who had seen field service .

= = Career = =

In 1864 , Shepard was a member of the executive committee and chair of the Committee on Contributions from Without the City for the New York Metropolitan Fair . He chaired lawyers ' committees for disaster relief , including those in Portland , Maine and Chicago after the 1866 Great Fire and the 1871 Great Chicago Fire respectively , and was a member of the municipal committee for victims of the 1889 Johnstown Flood .

In 1867 Shepard was presented to Margaret Louisa Vanderbilt at a reception given by Governor Morgan ; their difficult courtship was opposed by Margaret 's father , William Henry Vanderbilt . A year later , on February 18 , 1868 , they were married in the Church of the Incarnation in New York City . After an 1868 trip to Tarsus , Mersin he helped found Tarsus American College , agreeing to donate \$ 5 @, @ 000 a year to the school and leave it an endowment of \$ 100 @, @ 000 (\$ 2 @. @ 63 million in 2015) . He became one of the school 's trustees and vice president of the board .

In 1868 , Shepard became a partner of Judge Theron R. Strong in Strong & Shepard , continuing the business after Strong 's death . He continued to practice law for the next 25 years ; he helped found the New York State Bar Association in 1876 , and in 1884 was its fifth president . In 1875 Shepard drafted an amendment establishing an arbitration court for the New York Chamber of Commerce , serving on its five @-@ member executive committee the following year . In 1880 , the New York City Board of Aldermen appointed Shepard and Ebenezer B. Shafer to revise and codify the city 's local ordinances to form the New @-@ York Municipal Code ; the last revision was in 1859 .

During the 1880s he helped found the American Savings Bank , the Bank of the Metropolis and the Columbian National Bank . On March 20 , 1888 , Shepard purchased the Mail and Express newspaper (founded in 1836 , with an estimated value of \$ 200 @, @ 000 (\$ 5 @. @ 27 million in 2015) from Cyrus W. Field for \$ 425 @, @ 000 (\$ 11 @. @ 2 million in 2015) . Deeply religious , Shepard placed a verse from the Bible at the head of each edition 's editorial page . As president of the newspaper company until his death , he approved every important decision or policy . In the same year , Shepard became the controlling stockholder of the Fifth Avenue Stage Company to force it to halt work on Sundays (the Christian Sabbath) .

When Margaret 's father died in 1885 , she inherited \$ 12 million (\$ 316 million in 2015) . The family lived at 2 West 52nd Street in Manhattan , one of three houses of the Vanderbilt Triple Palace which were built during the 1880s for William Henry Vanderbilt and his two daughters . After Elliott 's death Margaret transferred the house to her sister 's family , who combined their two houses into one . The houses were eventually demolished ; the nine @-@ story De Pinna Building was built there in 1928 and was demolished around 1969 . 650 Fifth Avenue is the building currently on the site .

Shepard and his family toured the world in 1884 , visiting Asia , Africa , and Europe . He documented his 1887 trip from New York to Alaska in The Riva . : New York and Alaska taken by himself , his wife and daughter , six other family members , their maid , a chef , butler , porter and conductor . According to Shepard , the family traveled 14 @, @ 085 miles (22 @, @ 668 km) on 26 railroads and stayed at 38 hotels in nearly five months . After the 1884 trip , aware of the opportunity for church work in the territory , he founded a mission and maintained it with his wife for about \$ 20 @, @ 000 (\$ 526 @, @ 700 in 2015) a year . For some time Shepard worshiped at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church under John Hall , and was a vice president of the Presbyterian Union of New @-@ York . Shepard was president of the American Sabbath Union for five years , and he also served as the chairman of the Special Committee on Sabbath Observance .

= = = Briarcliff Manor developments = = =

During the early 1890s Shepard moved to Scarborough @-@ on @-@ Hudson in present @-@ day Briarcliff Manor , purchasing a Victorian house from J. Butler Wright . He had a mansion (named Woodlea , after Wright 's house) built south of the house , facing the Hudson River , and improved its grounds . Construction of the mansion began in 1892 , and was completed three years later . Shepard died in 1893 , leaving Margaret to oversee its completion . The finished house has between 65 @, @ 000 and 70 @, @ 000 square feet (6 @, @ 000 and 6 @, @ 500 m2) , making it one of the largest privately @-@ owned houses in the United States .

After Shepard 's death Margaret lived there in the spring and fall , with her visits becoming less frequent . By 1900 she began selling property to Frank A. Vanderlip and William Rockefeller , selling them the house in 1910 . Vanderlip and Rockefeller assembled a board of directors to create a country club ; they first met at Vanderlip 's National City Bank Building office at 55 Wall Street (

Vanderlip was president of the bank at the time) . Sleepy Hollow Country Club was founded , with Woodlea becoming its clubhouse and the J. Butler Wright house as its golf house .

Shepard established a small chapel on his Briarcliff Manor property , and founded the Scarborough Presbyterian Church in 1892 . The church and its manse were donated by Margaret after his death . It was designed by Augustus Haydel (a nephew of Stanford White) and August D. Shepard , Jr . (a nephew of Elliott Shepard and William Rutherford Mead) . The church , dedicated on May 11 , 1895 in Shepard 's memory , was briefly known as Shepard Memorial Church .

= = Family and personal life = =

Shepard and Margaret had five daughters and one son : Florence (1869 ? 1869) , Maria Louise (1870 ? 1948) , Edith (1872 ? 1954) , Marguerite (1873 ? 1895) , Alice (1874 ? 1950) and Elliott Jr . (1877 ? 1927) . The children attended Sunday school and church , and were educated by private tutors and governesses . Shepard also employed a private chef for his family . Shepard was a strict father known to beat his son , who was described as being as wild as his father was rigid and moralizing .

Shepard was tall , with a pleasant expression and manner , and The New York Times called him the " perfect type of well @-@ bred clubman " . He had thick hair , manicured nails , a well @-@ trimmed beard and an athletic figure . An opponent of antisemitism , he attended dinners publicizing the plight of Russian Jews and regularly addressed Jewish religious and social organizations avoided by others . He rented pews in many New York churches , supported about a dozen missionaries and was described as a generous donor to hospitals and charitable societies . Shepard was politically ambitious , and decided to build Woodlea as a symbol of power and influence . Shepard had horses and carriages which were ridden by the family in parks , and he prided himself on his equestrianism .

Shepard was a supporter of the Republican Party , contributing \$ 75 @,@ 000 (\$ 1 @.@ 98 million in 2015) to the 1888 Presidential campaign fund and \$ 10 @,@ 000 (\$ 263 @,@ 400 in 2015) to the state committee for the Fassett campaign . He furnished Shepard Hall , at Sixth Avenue and 57th Street in New York City , offering it rent @-@ free to the Republican Club . Shepard belonged to a number of organizations : the New York State Bar Association , the American Museum of Natural History , the National Academy of Design , the Sons of the American Revolution , the New York Yacht Club , the New York Athletic Club , the New York Press Club , the Lawyers ' Club of New York , the Republican Club , the Manhattan Athletic Club , the Riding Club , the Twilight Club , the Union League Club of New York , the New England Society of New York , the Adirondack League and the Union League of Brooklyn .

= = Later life , death , and legacy = =

In 1892 , the City University of New York gave Shepard a Master of Laws degree and the University of Omaha gave him a Doctor of Laws degree . On January 11 , 1893 , Shepard addressed the House Committee on the Columbian Exposition in an effort to convince the committee not to open the exposition on a Sunday - the Sabbath . Shepard himself attended , having spent \$ 25 @,@ 000 (\$ 658 thousand in 2015) on September 7 , 1891 in reserving sixteen rooms with board at the Auditorium Hotel for six months during the fair .

Shepard died unexpectedly during the afternoon of March 24 , 1893 at his Manhattan residence . Two doctors were attempting to remove a bladder stone from him ; they gave him ether at 12 : 45 p.m. For a few minutes Shepard did not seem to react , though soon afterward his color started changing and his respiration and pulse dimmed , so administration of ether was stopped , however not enough ether was given to continue with the operation . His condition started to worsen again ; the doctors suspected food or vomit was blocking his windpipe or bronchial tubes . The doctors then administered oxygen , which helped temporarily ; however , at 4 : 00 p.m. his pulse became steadily more feeble , he fell unconscious , and died at 4 : 10 p.m. His cause of death was edema and congestion of the lungs , after the administration of ether , but due to an unknown cause . Shepard

was first buried in the Vanderbilt mausoleum in Moravian Cemetery . On November 17 , 1894 one of his daughters , his wife , and her brother George Vanderbilt oversaw the transfer of his remains and those of his daughter Florence to a new Shepard family tomb .

Shepard 's estate included the \$ 100 @, @ 000 Tarsus American College endowment , \$ 850 @, @ 000 in real estate and \$ 500 @, @ 000 in personal property for a total of \$ 1 @. @ 35 million (\$ 35 @. @ 6 million in 2015) . His will distributed money and property to his wife and children , his brother Augustus , and religious organizations . Shepard funded a number of scholarships and prizes , including one at the City University of New York and New York University 's annual Elliott F. Shepard Scholarship , and donated a large collection of books from lawyer Aaron J. Vanderpoel 's library to the New York University School of Law .

When the wife of Chicago publisher Horace O 'Donoghue read him the news of Shepard 's death four days after the event , he picked up a razor and slit his throat . Although his suicide was first thought to be impulsive , it was later learned that the likely cause was O 'Donoghue 's large debts to Chicago publishing houses .

= = Selected works = =

Shepard , Elliott Fitch ; Shafer , Ebenezer B. (1881) . Ordinances of the Mayor , Aldermen and Commonalty of the City of New York : In Force January 1 , 1881 . New York , New York . OCLC 680539530 .

Shepard , Elliott Fitch (1886) . Labor and Capital are One (10th ed .) . New York , New York : American Bank Note Company . OCLC 43539083 .