

**Stories in Stone: Lewis Rogers Atwood and “The Atwood Circle”  
1860-1926  
Section N Lot 216**

By Alex Luken

When the grounds of Cave Hill Cemetery were initially laid out in 1847, civil engineer Edmund F. Lee envisioned a special burial location for distinguished individuals who lived and died in the service of their country. This area would contain tree lined roadways, and feature sculptures and cenotaphs honoring distinguished citizens. The location is the highest point in the cemetery and looks westward towards the city of Louisville and the Falls of the Ohio. It is 85 feet in height above the sidewalk in front of City Hall.



Price-Atwood Family lot- Section N

The plot of ground was first offered to the family of President Zachary Taylor upon his death in 1850. The family, however, elected to have him interred in the Taylor family burying ground on their farm off of Brownsboro Road. The lot was also under consideration as a location for the re-interment of George Rogers Clark. The Civil War and the establishment of the Cave Hill National Cemetery within Cave Hill Cemetery grounds in 1861 altered Lee’s original vision for that section of the cemetery grounds. In 1916, Lot 216 was purchased by Lewis Rogers Atwood, Sr.

because of its proximity to his wife’s family lots across the road in in Section N Lots 210, 211 and 212.

Lewis Rogers Atwood, Sr. was the oldest son of Robert and Jennie Farrar (Rogers) Atwood, born in 1860 in Louisville, KY. His mother was the daughter of Dr. Lewis Rogers, a noted physician and professor at the Louisville Medical College, and the granddaughter of Dr. Coleman Rogers. His paternal grandfather, Peter B. Atwood, emigrated to Kentucky from Culpeper County, Virginia in 1799 and was a veteran of the War of 1812 and the frontier wars. He settled in Louisville in 1835, and was president of the Kentucky Marine and Fire Insurance Company and the Louisville Board of Underwriters prior to his death in 1867.

Lewis Rogers Atwood, Sr. was truly a self-made man of the Gilded Age. A reversal of family fortunes in the 1870s necessitated that Atwood begin work upon the completion of high school. In 1878 at age 18, he began as an office boy at Peaslee-Gaulbert Company, one of the leading national paint manufacturers and inventor of ready-mix paint. In 1889, following his marriage to

Caroline Butler, he was appointed Assistant to George Gaulbert, founder of the company. In 1894, he was appointed company Secretary, and in 1908 following George Gaulbert's death, he was elected president of Peaslee-Gaulbert Company, and its three local subsidiary companies. During World War I, he served as chief of the Paint and Pigment section of the War Industries Board. In 1923, he was elected president of the National Paint, Oil and Varnish Association.

Lewis and Caroline (Butler) Atwood had four children, the youngest of whom died in WWI at 20 years of age. His daughter, Barbara Thruston (Atwood) Price and her husband, Dr. John W. Price, Jr. founded the Price Institute of Surgical Research at the University of Louisville School of Medicine in 1957.

The monument and markers on the Atwood Circle lot were designed by the Ecclesiastical Department of Tiffany Studios in New York City, and executed at the Louis Comfort Tiffany quarries in Cohasset, MA. A second Tiffany marker (often referred to as the "Tiffany Vase") is found across the road in Lot 212 marking the grave of Caroline (Butler) Atwood's sister-in-law, Fanny (Short) Butler, wife of Dr. Thomas L. Butler. Both monuments are exemplary examples of Tiffany Studio's work in stone. Founded in 1889, the Ecclesiastical Department of Tiffany Studios was created to meet a demand for decorative items for churches and cemetery markers. Numerous examples of Tiffany's monumental work may be found in Green-Wood Cemetery in New York City.

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