

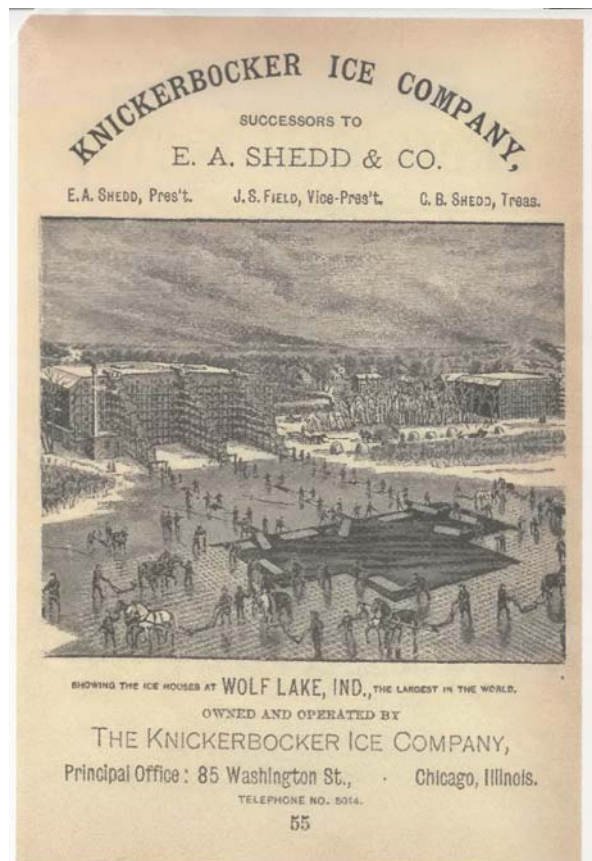
## The Shedd Connection to Cedar Lake, Indiana

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There is no basis in fact that John G. Shedd had any connection to the ice industry at Cedar Lake. All of the biographical information about him fails to mention that he managed either the Knickerbocker or Consumers ice companies. In the biographies written about him, he is attributed to as a successful businessman in the dry business industry. He worked at a store in Bellows Falls, Vermont, from 1867 to 1872. He arrived in Chicago soon after the Great Fire and began working as a stock clerk at Field, Leiter, and Company. Later, he moved up to a salesman and worked his way to department head. Eventually, he became the merchandise manager. By 1893, he became a partner of the firm, and by 1901, vice-president. With the death of Marshall Field in 1906, Shedd became president of Marshall Field until he retired from the position to become chairman of the board until his death in 1926.

The research and writings of Beatrice Horner-Castrogiovanni, Cedar Lake's first town historian, on the ice industry states that John G. Shedd did manage the Knickerbocker Ice Company. Her research is primarily from interviews of those around Cedar Lake, especially the pioneer village of Armour. Some of her information cannot be substantiated by other documentary evidence. It is a paradox of history. The oral history and memories of people is important, but it has to be stated that human memory is fallible, not perfect. Some confusion could have arose from the fact that there were other Shedds involved with the ice and ice cream industry at Cedar Lake.

In 1874, Edward Avery Shedd of Chicago formed E.A. Shedd and Company, a sand-mining and ice company. He bought out 12 other firms and created the Knickerbocker Ice Company of Chicago in 1885. The Knickerbocker Company acquired Consumers Company in 1903. Edward served as president and chairman of the finance committee from 1898 to 1899. The company not only had ice interests at Cedar Lake, but also other areas in the region, with their largest facilities on Wolf Lake in Hammond (see ad). It is



interesting to note that in the summer and winter of 1875, E.A. Shedd and Company supplied 15,000 tons of ice for the first large cold storage warehouse built by Philip D. Armour at the Union Stock Yards in Chicago. This began the refrigeration and cold storage system of the Chicago meat packers that revolutionized Armour and Company, a process that later expanded throughout the country. In 1876, Edward's oldest brother, Charles Banks Shedd, joined the company and soon they had the largest ice business in Chicago.

Edward and Charles' cousin William Joshua Shedd entered E.A. Shedd and Company in 1878. In 1885, he became a stock-holder, director, and general manager of the Knickerbocker Ice Company. William was the first vice-president of the Knickerbocker Ice company and served for 25 years.



By 1898, Edward and Charles retired from the business when they sold their interests to Eastern businessmen. At some point in the early 1900s, Peter Howkinson sold his ice interest at the northwestern

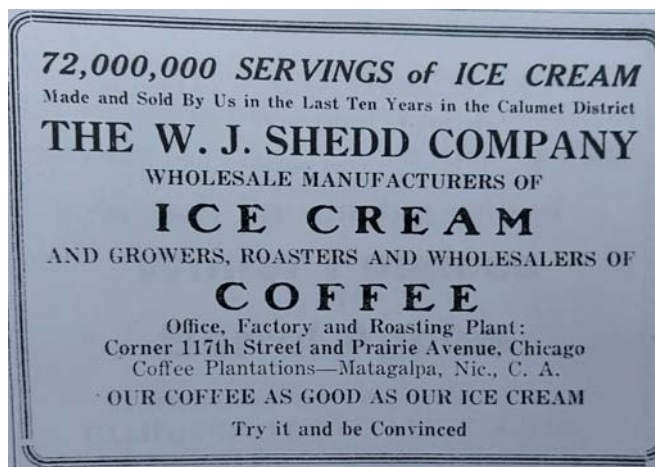


These elevators sat on the lake's northern edge in Armour Town in 1910. Ice blocks rode up the elevator and into the barn, where a man with an ice hook pushed the blocks into orderly rows. When the floor was covered with ice, the ice was covered with sawdust, marsh grass, or cattails and another layer of ice was placed on top. This process was repeated until the barns were full. (LRCM.)

shore of Cedar Lake to the Consumers Company. Armour and Consumers shared their ice barns on Cedar Lake's northwestern shore (see picture, previous page, Armour barn at left, Consumers at right). The Knickerbocker Ice Company was located at the lake's southwestern shore and had control of the entire south end until about the 1920s.

Besides the ice business, the Shedd's also became involved in the ice cream business, when William's son, Howard O. Shedd, and his associates purchased the Kendall Ice Cream Company in 1907. William became a secretary, treasurer, and director of this company. His son, Howard, re-named it the W.J. Shedd Ice Cream Company in 1917 to honor him. At that time, William lived in Midlothian, Illinois, where he was proprietor of the Stone Lakes Dairy Farm. He was also president of the Matagalpa Coffee Company.

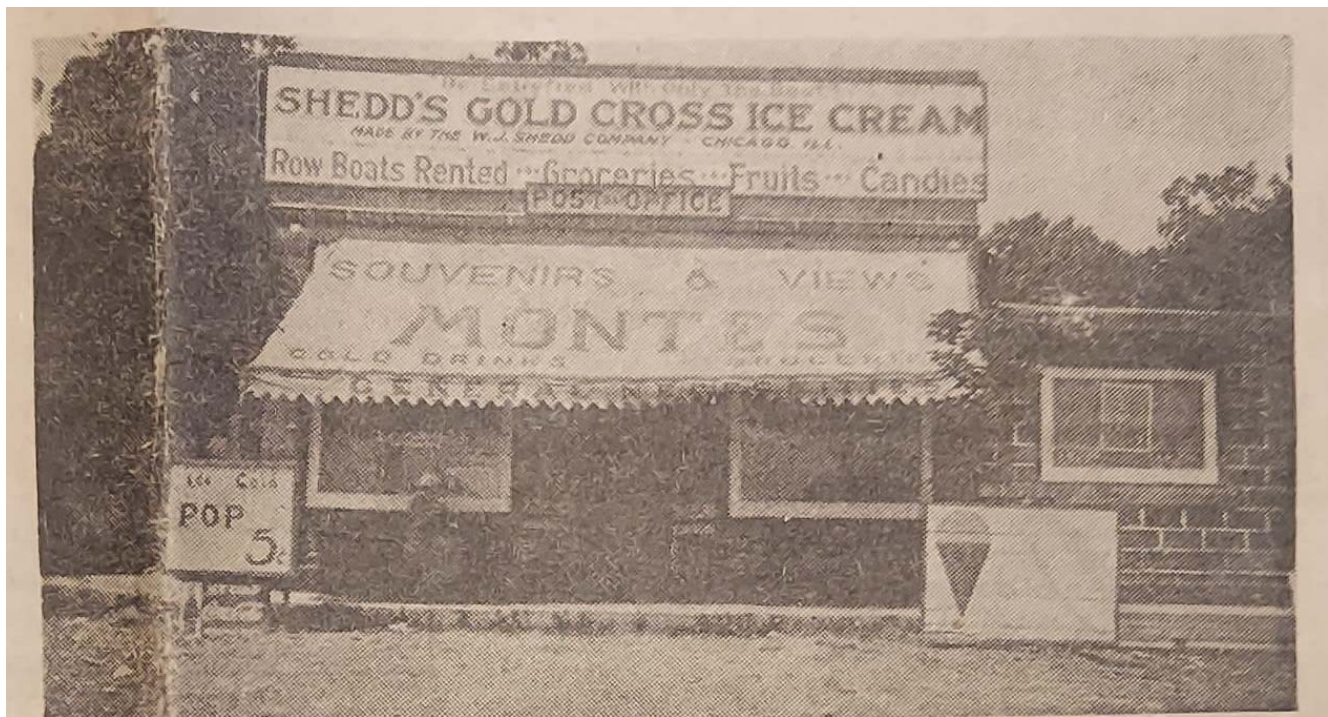
The Kendall Ice Cream Company advertised ice cream and ices of various flavors, but the W.J. Shedd Company focused strictly on wholesale ice cream operations. Their products were made from pasteurized cream, eggs, sugar, nuts, and fruits, and had a wide spectrum of flavors. By the 1920s, Shedd's Gold Cross Ice Cream began to be advertised and was a high-selling product. It was considered the company's "gold standard," containing fourteen percent butterfat, where the law only required eight percent. In 1920, a quart cost 60 cents and a pint cost 30 cents. An advertisement from the April 18, 1919, *Blue Island Sun Standard* (p. 3), states that 72,000,000 servings of ice cream had been made and sold by the W.J. Shedd Company in the last 10 years in the Calumet District.



Percy M. Jansen of Griffith, Indiana, was the Indiana distributor for the W. J. Shedd Company, with the facility that he built at 679 Summer Street in Hammond, Indiana. His fleet of trucks delivered Shedd's Gold Cross Ice Cream all over the Calumet Region. With business doing so well, by 1924, new coolers were installed which put the manufacturing plant at a capacity of 3,000 gallons of ice cream daily. A new truck was added to the fleet at a cost of \$15,000. It was under the management of Jansen that the Gold Cross Ice Cream was delivered to L. Monte Biesecker's grocery store that was located at Cedar Lake's midwestern shore, across from the Monon Depot. The storefront had a large sign that even advertised Shedd's Gold Cross Ice Cream (see newspaper picture, next page).

Unfortunately, on November 23, 1922, William J. Shedd committed suicide at his home. His son Howard continued the Shedd business. The company changed its name to Shedd and Haines in the late 1920's and sold ice cream by the brick. Some of the layered flavors were vanilla with caramel and orange with pineapple. By 1930, the company changed its name to the Shedd-Ward Ice Cream Company with Howard as president and continued to sell ice cream by brick or bulk. Yet another name change occurred on November 1, 1939, when the company became The Shedd Company.

There are no physical remnants of the role that the Shedd family played in Cedar Lake except for what is in the historical record.



**THE POST OFFICE** and grocery of L. Monte Biesecker was constructed in 1915. Note the sign "Post Office" above the awning. This store did a business in the days when the Monon Railroad had four to six trains a day coming to Cedar Lake with loads of tourists on picnic excursions to the old Monon Park and other resorts in the area.

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