Gas Company Presents Stone Pediment To Peale Museum


A contribution of the Gas and Electric Company toward restoration of the building where gaslight first was used in this country, a sculptured stone pediment, thirty feet long, has been presented to the committee in charge of rebuilding the old Peale Museum, Holiday street near Lexington.

In making public his acceptance of the gift, yesterday, Charles W. Snyder, chairman of the committee, said that the pediment, in addition to being an excellent example of early Baltimore architecture was particularly appropriate because its designer was Robert Cary Long, architect of the original Peale Museum.

Carved of sandstone, it originally adorned the facade of the old National Union Bank of Maryland, Fayette and Charles streets, built in 1837 and razed early years later.

Since 1857 it has been a part of the Gas Company's old Spring Garden Building, at the foot of Lombard street, a tribute to the keen artistic appreciation of Gen. Columbus O'Donnell, who, rather than see the monument demolished, had it removed intact and built into the west wall of the building. General O'Donnell was a director of the National Union Bank and president of the Baltimore Gaslight Company.

Mr. Snyder said it has been decided to place the pediment because of its length in the garden, which will be built in the rear of the museum, rather than in the building itself. The Gas Company has offered to remove the pediment and transfer it to the museum at its own expense, he added.

Expressing his appreciation of the gift, Mr. Snyder said:

"The city is indebted to the Gas Company for the gift of this excellent architectural example but for its care and thoughtfulness in preserving it as well. But for General O'Donnell the monument would in all probability have been destroyed when the National Union Bank was razed; it certainly has an relation to the architectural design of the old gas building and I can't help but think that General O'Donnell's only thought was to save this part of a building that was recognized as one of the finest examples of architecture in the East."

The mythical figure of Neptune and the Goddess Ceres form the foreground of the pediment, flanking a replica of the seal of Maryland. It will be built into the north wall of the museum garden.

Mr. Snyder estimated the museum would not be opened formally until late summer.