

**ENGLISH GARDEN, 460 ASSINIBOINE PARK DRIVE –  
BOY WITH THE BOOT STATUE**

*Unknown (1898)*



In 1897, with the British Empire preparing to celebrate Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee, a local Winnipeg organization came before City Council to propose the erection of a bust of the Queen as well as a fountain with a statue of a small boy holding a leaky boot in front of City Hall on Main Street. Known throughout the world as “The Unfortunate Boot” or “The Boy With The Boot” statue, the story behind the original statue is unclear but there are references to it as early as 1875 and it is found in many countries.

The statue depicts a young boy, with loose fitting shirt, long pants held up by a single suspender strap, and a cap. The boy is wearing a boot on his left foot while his right hand holds the leaking boot from his right foot

The statues sculptor and manufacturing history are also unknown, but most articles on the topic agree that the statues erected in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were likely cast in Italy. The bronze statue is 1.2 metres tall and weighs approximately 140 kilograms.

The statue and the bust did not stay long at their original locations. The bust moved across Main Street in 1962 and then to the English Garden at Assiniboine Park in 1967. The statue was moved in 1913 to Assiniboine Park (then called City Park), near the Duck Pond. It would remain there until the enhancement of the English Gardens, which had been established in 1927, in the early 1950s. A new formal entrance was dedicated in 1953 with the Boy With The Boot Statue in the centre.

The statue appears to be in good condition despite numerous incidents of theft and vandalism. Several times, park officials have found the statue with the boot missing and in 1994, a local fraternity stole the entire statue. It was returned several months later.

The entire statue is protected by the designation and any alterations would require approval.