



Problem 3: Field Documentation and Formal Analysis – Fleischmann Mausoleum
Fall 2012 HP Studio 1: Reading Historic Buildings
Faculty: Francoise Bollack, Ward Dennis, Andrew Dolkart

Rachel Levy
10/15/2012

The Fleischmann mausoleum occupies the southwest corner lot of the Larch plot at Woodlawn Cemetery. It is located at the intersection of two small avenues, Hawthorne and Birch, neither of which are directly accessible from the main thoroughfare, Central Avenue. The building sits just outside the concentrated area of mausolea clustered near the Jerome Avenue entrance. This combination of factors makes Fleischmann a modest treasure at Woodlawn; a visitor is unlikely to encounter it unless sought out. Though little information is available concerning the choice of plot and design of the building, it can hardly be a coincidence that Mr. Fleischmann himself exhibited this same modesty, despite great wealth.

The heirs of Louis Fleischmann, who died September 25, 1904, built the mausoleum in 1906.¹ Mr. Fleischmann was a beloved “baker-philanthropist,”² as the spate of articles released near his death stated. Born in Vienna in 1836, he immigrated to the United States in 1874 following a decorated service in the Austrian army.³ An older brother had immigrated earlier and started a successful business manufacturing compressed yeast, Fleischmann’s Yeast, which continues to operate today. Though he knew nothing of baking, Fleischmann established the Vienna Model Bakery at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876 to great success (Fig. 1), then moved it to the corner of Broadway and Tenth Street in Manhattan (Fig. 2) where it flourished as a meeting place for “prominent German” opera singers “sipping their fragrant coffee and eating the sweet cakes for which Vienna is famous.” A 1904 article already reminisces about a European past, calling the bakery “a bit of the old land transplanted into cosmopolitan New York.”⁴ It was such a success that it expanded to Philadelphia, Chicago, and St. Louis, likely making it one of the country’s earliest restaurant chains⁵ (Fig. 3).

Like Fleischmann himself, the Vienna Bakery also had a charitable side which was dubbed the “bread line.” Fleischmann began distributing as many as 500 loaves of bread nightly to indigent men who lined up outside.⁶ An article published after his death demonstrates the societal attitude toward Fleischmann’s destitute beneficiaries, exemplifying how profound this type of direct charity was for the time,

Who in New York does not know the “bread line”? Its pathetic fame is not of New York alone, but has extended throughout the world until the pitiful file of hungry men, who wait for their food in all kinds of weather... has become one of the sights as well as one of the institutions of this great city. There are men who are actually hungry—who are practically starving in this city of wealth and plenty—men for whom hope is dead... and who yet linger on because that is the path of least resistance.⁷

Despite the radical nature of his charitable work, Fleischmann’s family knew nothing of the bread line until it had been operational for two years. This same modesty extended to his philanthropy, for which he kept no

records, distributing directly to individuals and institutions without involvement of charitable organizations. Once a gift was made, he forbade allusion to it by others, eschewing notoriety in all forms.⁸ A “modest, unassuming gentleman,” his philanthropy depended on the fact that his “desire to do good was even stronger than his distaste for public applause.”⁹

Fleischmann died at his home in 1904 after paralyzes due to a series of strokes. It was noted in the press that although he was baptized Roman Catholic, he practiced no religion later in life. The private funeral service conducted at home was Episcopalian, and included a quartet from the Metropolitan Opera while members of the bread line, come to pay their respects, were kept in check by a police platoon outside.¹⁰

Fleischmann was buried in Greenwood Cemetery¹¹, and was later moved to Woodlawn after the mausoleum was built in 1906 by Leland and Hall Company (Fig. 4), a predecessor to Presbrey-Leland.¹² Little information can be found about its construction, though correspondence notes that the plot was approved by Mr. Fleischmann, perhaps Louis, but likely his eldest son Charles, an attorney who managed his father’s affairs.¹³

The building itself is Classical in form, made out of light Barre, Vermont granite in a finely hammered finish with bronze accents on the door and window grate. It is sited at an angle to the intersection so that visitors approaching from all directions are meant to have a picturesque three-quarter view, allowing for appreciation of the building’s rectangular massing and Classical proportions from all sides. To emphasize this, originally a path encircled the property to encourage viewing from every angle. Two large bushes anchor the front corners of the building, though they do not appear part of the original plan. The front façade is Classical, echoing Greek Doric temples in its simplicity of form and ornament. The building is raised on a four-stair stylobate, set apart from its surroundings. Atop this base are four Doric fluted columns forming a pronaos that is tetrastyle. The columns support a full pedimented Doric entablature, forming a free-standing portico acting as an open receiving space before entering the cella. The family name is incised in the center of the frieze, and above each column is a laurel wreath on top of a triglyph carved in relief. The intercolumniation, which is even on either side of the door, but has eustyle spacing ($2 \frac{1}{4}$ modules where the module is the width of one column shaft at the base) in the center, emphasizes the centrality of the entrance. The detailed bronze double door, which creates a dark rectangle amidst the light granite, adds to this effect.

The basic rhythm of emphasized columns and deemphasized space and overall proportion of the façade heavily echoes Stuart and Revett's drawing of a Temple to Rome and Augustus in *The Antiquities of Athens* (Fig. 5), also featuring a tetrastyle Greek Doric portico with triglyphs and similar intercolumniation.¹⁴ The Fleischmann mausoleum ornaments are actually quatriglyphs (sic), with three oversized guttae, where six would have been traditional for a triglyph. The laurel wreath motif has Classical roots in the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllos, and it was used heavily in the Greek Revival movement, notably in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol in 1829.¹⁵ The use of a wreath on top of a triglyph, however, appears to be a Leland and Hall innovation. The wreath motif is repeated on the stained-glass windows inside.

After passing through the portico, one enters the building along the long axis. Upon entering, a second axis is created by the identical windows on opposite walls, letting light into the enclosed space (Fig. 6). Straight ahead upon entering is a wall of tombs faced in a marble grid with bronze rosette pulls on the opening of each crypt. Louis Fleischmann, his wife Wilhelmine, several children and spouses, as well as Louis' in-laws are all entombed in eleven of the twenty catacombs. In plan, the interior space forms a rectangle equal in size to that of the total catacomb space, with the exception of door and window molding. The recognition of this spatial equality is referenced on the side façade of the building, which can be divided into two equal squares (Fig. 7).

That there is no religious ornament on the building is significant, and may reference that Mr. Fleischmann was not religious while living in the United States. The lack of personal design elements may also reflect that the family chose the mausoleum design from a catalog, which Leland and Hall was known to produce,¹⁶ rather than being involved in the design process. The original drawings for the mausoleum show a personalized bronze window grate with a large 'F' that was never built, which would support this conclusion (Figs. 8 and 9). Not long after Mr. Fleischmann died, the bakery was closed and the land was sold to neighboring Grace Church. The company was incorporated into General Bakery Company in 1911 by son Raoul, and Louis Fleischmann's wife and daughters moved to France in the 1920s.¹⁷¹⁸ Growing "weary of the tedium of massive bread manufacturing," Raoul Fleischmann later went on to become the financial backer for *The New Yorker* magazine in 1924.¹⁹

Though Mr. Louis Fleischmann appears to have had little to do with the construction of his family's final resting place, its modest location within the cemetery reflects his own modesty surrounding philanthropy. However, its siting on the intersection demands attention; though only medium sized, it is larger than the other buildings surrounding the site, is the only one raised significantly off the ground, and is the only one designed with such stark Classical roots. These factors represent a tension in the monument between Louis Fleischmann's conscious avoidance of the spotlight, and his family's choice of mausoleum design which suggests an opposite sentiment.



Figure 1
(via digital.lib.umd.edu)

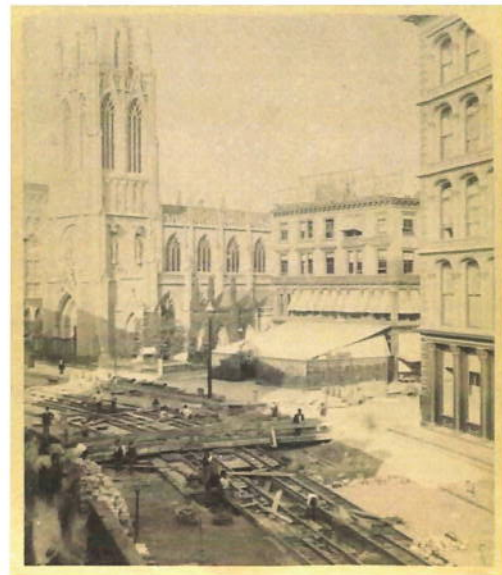


Figure 2
(via npyl.org)
(via restaurant-ingthroughhistory.com)

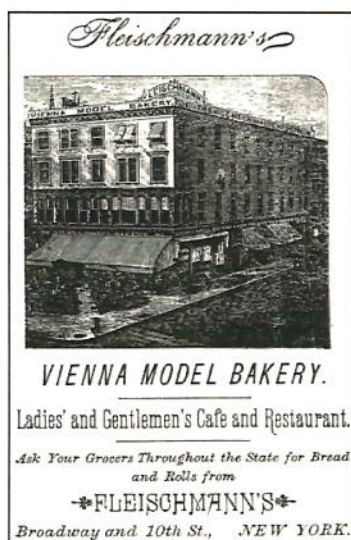


Figure 3

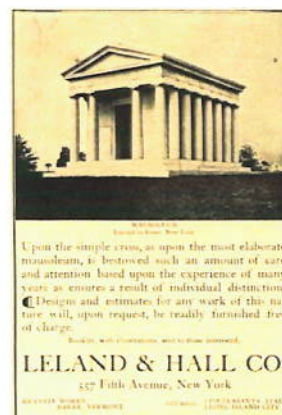


Figure 4
(via amazon.com)



Figure 5
Temple to Rome and Augustus by James Stuart and
Nicholas Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*
(via Google Books)

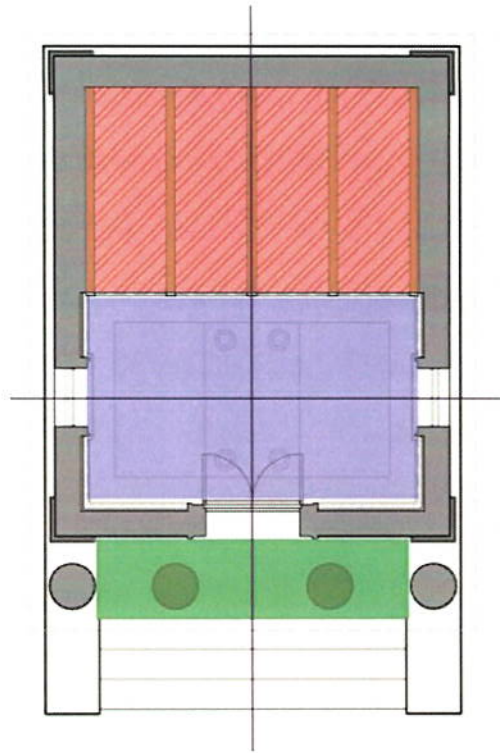


Figure 6

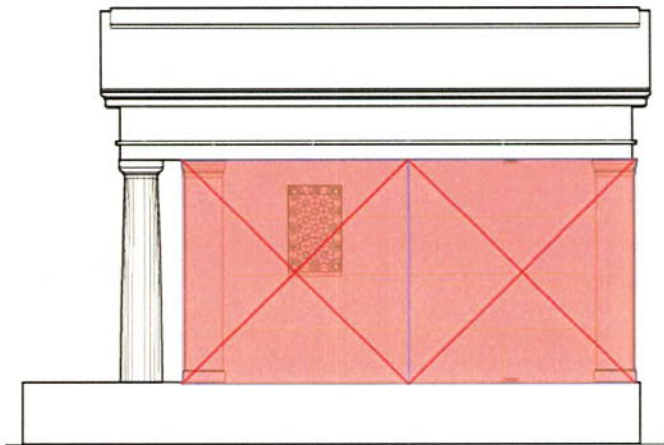


Figure 7



Figure 8
Exterior window drawing



Figure 9
Exterior window actual

¹ "LOUIS FLEISCHMANN DEAD.: Funeral of Baker-Philanthropist Will Be Private." *New York Times*; Sep 26, 1904; pg. 9.

² Ibid.

³ "LOUIS FLEISCHMANN, PHILANTHROPIST, LOW: Baker and Friend of Hungry..." *New York Times*; Sep 25, 1904; pg. 7.

⁴ "Death of Its Founder Will Not Make Any Break In Its Usefulness -- ..." *New York Times*; Oct 2, 1904; pg. 33.

⁵ Whitaker, Jan. "Early chains: Vienna Model Bakery & Café." Last modified 2008. <<http://restaurant-ingthroughhistory.com/2008/08/31/early-chains-vienna-model-bakery-cafe/>>; Accessed 11 October 1012.

⁶ "Death of Its Founder Will Not Make Any Break In Its Usefulness -- ..." *New York Times*; Oct 2, 1904; pg. 33.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "LOUIS FLEISCHMANN, PHILANTHROPIST, LOW: Baker and Friend of Hungry..." *New York Times*; Sep 25, 1904; pg. 7.

⁹ "Death of Its Founder Will Not Make Any Break In Its Usefulness -- ..." *New York Times*; Oct 2, 1904; pg. 33

¹⁰ "THE BREAD LINE MOURNS: Episcopal Service for Louis Fleischmann, Who Had Been a Catholic." *New York Tribune*; Sep 28, 1904; pg. 9.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² "Presbrey-Leland Company Merger." *Monumental News*, courtesy Susan Olsen.

¹³ *Fleischmann Mausoleum Correspondence File*, Woodlawn Cemetery Archive; Avery Library, Columbia University.

¹⁴ Stuart, James and Nicholas Revett, *Antiquities of Athens: Volume 1*. Princeton Architectural Press, 2008. Orig. published 1762; Chap. 1 Plate 3.

¹⁵ Loth, Calder. "Classical Comments: The Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus." Last modified 2 March 2011. <<http://blog.classicist.org/?p=2526>>; Accessed 11 October 2012.

¹⁶ "1907 Ad Leland Hall Architecture Mausoleum Rome NY - Original Print Ad." <<http://www.amazon.com/1907-Leland-Hall-Architecture-Mausoleum/dp/B005DH1KKO>>; Accessed 11 October 2012.

¹⁷ Whitman, Alden. "Raoul H. Fleischmann, Publisher Of The New Yorker, Dies at 83." *New York Time*; May 12, 1969; pg. 1

¹⁸ "MRS. LOUIS FLEISCHMANN: Mother of the Publisher of the New Yorker Dies in France." *New York Times*; Dec 29, 1936; pg. 2.

¹⁹ Whitman, Alden. "Raoul H. Fleischmann, Publisher Of The New Yorker, Dies at 83." *New York Time*; May 12, 1969; pg. 1

