

WOODLAWN RESEARCH PROJECT:

NEWTON MAUSOLEUM



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1. Introduction

Woodlawn Cemetery, located at the northern boundary of the Bronx, was established in 1863 and was the final resting place for many prominent American businessmen and politicians. The Newton Mausoleum is within the cemetery, situated on Pine Lawn, facing northwest and directly overlooking Pine Ave, with a window at the rear. (Figure 1)

The mausoleum is surrounded by open space, offering clear and bright views. On the northeast side, a pine tree, a species that remains evergreen throughout the year, has been planted. It is a common feature in cemetery and memorial areas, symbolizing eternity, peace, and remembrance of the deceased, which also aligns with the name of the plot. (Figure 2)

Its monument maker was Robert Caterson(1837-1929), a renowned monument maker in New York. His company specialized in the design and construction of mausoleums, vaults, and monuments, particularly within Woodlawn Cemetery.¹

¹ Van Vorst, Brianne (LSGC), Drew Anderson (MET), and Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen (MET). *Woodlawn Cemetery Stained Glass Condition Survey*. Liberty Stained Glass Conservation, 2022, p. 1.

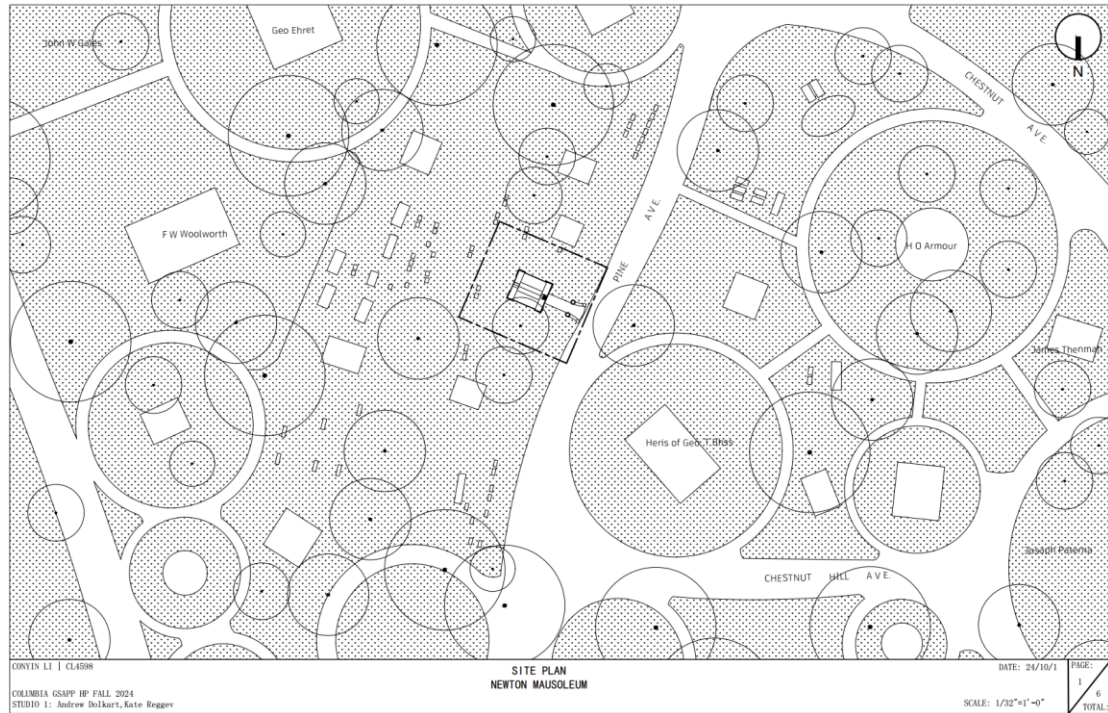


Figure 1: Siting



Figure 2: Plantings, paving, and landscape

2. Newton Family Overview

2.1 The sources of the Newton family's wealth

The mausoleum belongs to Buna Vista Newton and his wife, Anna Elizabeth Bruckner Newton. (Figure 3) Based on the window date(1900), the mausoleum was constructed

prior to that year. According to the price list, this type of mausoleum, which accommodates eight graves, has a starting price of \$125.² (Figure 4) However, factors such as prominent central locations, scenic landscapes, and proximity to famous graves tend to drive prices higher. The Newton Mausoleum is situated near a main road at an intersection, in an elegant and open setting, directly facing the large mausoleum of the Heirs of Geo. T. Eliss. This prime location places it well above ordinary or peripheral areas. Therefore, I speculate that the price of their mausoleum was far above the baseline of \$125. In the following sections, I will analyze the sources of the Newton family's wealth.



Figure 3: Buna Vista Newton and his wife Anna Elizabeth Bruckner Newton. U.S., *Find a Grave® Index, 1600s-Current*, Ancestry.com, 2012.

² Woodlawn Office. *Information Concerning Prices of the Woodlawn Cemetery*. 20 East 23rd Street, New York, 1903.

LOTS MAY BE HAD AT THE
FOLLOWING PRICES:

Three Grave Lots, for	.	\$125.00	upward.
Four " " "	.	162.50	"
Six " " "	.	250.00	"
Eight " " "	.	390.00	"
Ten " " "	.	480.00	"

Larger lots of different shapes and sizes to meet the needs of the intending purchaser, may be had for \$1,000 and upward.

A representative will meet those interested at the Cemetery, or will by special appointment call at the office or residence of anyone so desiring, to give them full information as to lots and prices.

Figure 4: Price List. *Information concerning prices of the Woodlawn Cemetery, New York, 1903.*

2.1.1 Medical profession

The core member of the Newton family is Buna Vista Newton, a renowned doctor in Manhattan, New York, with a high income. He won a strong reputation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with his medical achievements reported in several New York newspapers³. (Figure 5) His social achievements significantly enhanced the family's wealth and social influence.

³ *The Brooklyn Daily Times*. March 7, 1866, p. 4.

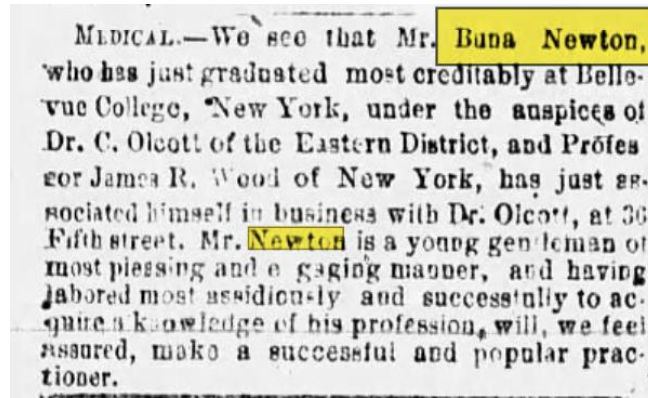


Figure 5: Praise. *The Brooklyn Daily Times*, March 7, 1866, p. 4.

2.1.2 support from families

A portion of the Newton family's wealth stemmed from family alliances and the accumulation of wealth over time. Through the family tree (Figure 6), I discovered that it is a branch of the Newton family of Massachusetts.

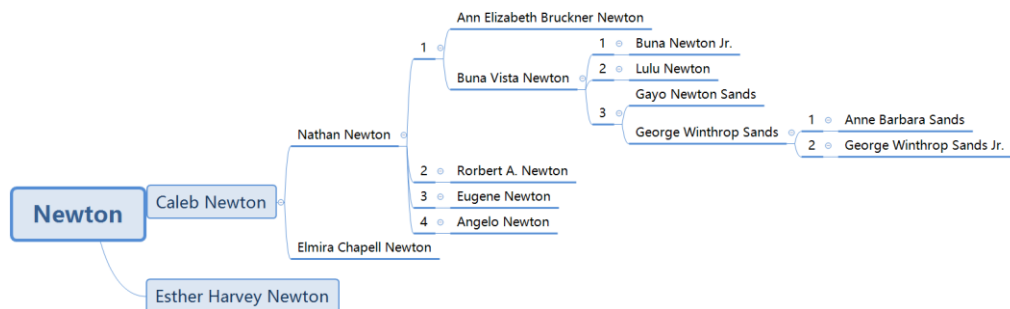
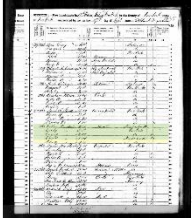
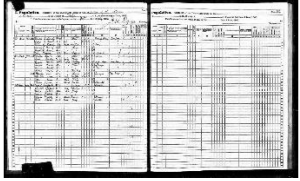



Figure 6: Family tree

By tracing events through newspapers, census records, and other historical sources (Figure 7), I can roughly determine the migration trajectory of the Newton family, centered around Buna Newton: "Massachusetts - New York - Chicago - New York."

Age	Marital Status	Residence Place	Date	source
Massachusetts				
0	Single	Cordaville, Worcester County, Massachusetts	26 May 1846	The birth of Buna Newton ⁴
New York				
4	Single	New York Ward 17, New York , New York, USA	1850	 5
19	Single	Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	1865	 6
Chicago				
46	Married	Cook, Illinois	1892	Buna Newton in the Cook County, Illinois, U.S., Birth Certificates Index, 1871-1922 ⁷
46	Married	Chicago , Cook, Illinois	25 Dec 1892	The birth of Buna Newton Jr ⁸
47	Married	Chicago , Cook, Illinois	20 Apr 1893	The death of Buna Newton Jr ⁹
48	Married	Chicago , Illinois	23 Mar 1895	 10
New York				

⁵ The National Archives in Washington, DC. *Record Group: Records of the Bureau of the Census; Record Group Number: 29; Series Number: M432; Residence Date: 1850; Home in 1850: New York Ward 17, New York, New York; Roll: 556; p. 518a.*

⁶ New York State Archives. *Census of the State of New York, 1865.* Albany, New York, USA.

⁷ Ancestry.com. *Cook County, Illinois, U.S., Birth Certificates Index, 1871-1922.* Database on-line. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

⁸ Ancestry.com. *Cook County, Illinois, U.S., Birth Certificates Index, 1871-1922.* Database on-line. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

⁹ Ancestry.com. *Cook County, Illinois, U.S., Deaths Index, 1878-1922.* Database on-line. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

¹⁰ Ancestry.com. *New York, New York, U.S., Extracted Death Index, 1862-1948.* Database on-line. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.

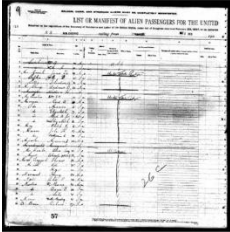


64	Married	Liverpool, England→ New York , New York, USA	10 Oct 1910	 14
67	Married	Le Havre→ New York , New York, USA	24 Oct 1913	 15
83	Married	238 228, West-71-Street, Block A, Manhattan, New York , New York, USA (Rented)	1930	 16
97	Married	490 West End Ave , Manhattan, New York , USA	1 Sep 1943	Buna Newton in the New York, New York, U.S., Extracted Death Index, 1862-1948 ¹⁷
Burial	Married	Private Mausoleum Woodlawn Cem NYC	4 Sep 1943	Buna Newton in the New York, New York, U.S., Extracted Death Index, 1862-1948 ¹⁸

Figure 7: the migration trajectory of the Newton family

Comparing individuals from the Newton Genealogy(Figure 8), I find that their roots in Massachusetts can be traced back to Richard Newton, who arrived in America in the 17th century and settled in Massachusetts, becoming part of the region's upper class.

¹⁴ The National Archives in Washington, DC. *Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957*. Microfilm Serial or NAID: T715; Record Group Title: Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1787-2004; p. 85. Washington, DC, USA.

¹⁵ The National Archives in Washington, DC. *Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957*. Microfilm Serial or NAID: T715; Record Group Title: Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1787-2004; p. 85. Washington, DC, USA.

¹⁶ U.S. Census, 1930. Census Place: Manhattan, New York, New York; Page: 12B; Enumeration District: 0398; FHL Microfilm: 2341288.

¹⁷ Ancestry.com. *New York, New York, U.S., Extracted Death Index, 1862-1948*. Database on-line. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.

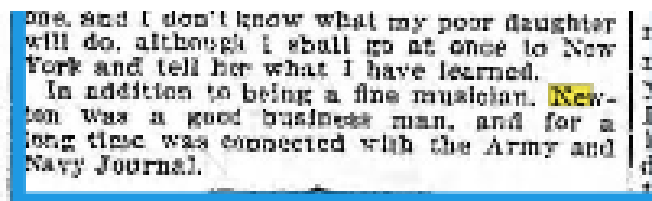
¹⁸ Ancestry.com. *New York, New York, U.S., Extracted Death Index, 1862-1948*. Database on-line. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.

Dr. Buna Newton has purchased from Wilhelmina Jaeschke and others the Jaeschke apartment house and the ground on which it stands, at the southeast corner of Ohio and Cass streets, 50x50½ feet, for \$80,000. The building is six stories high and was constructed about four years ago.

The first consignment of material for the Chicago steel works' new plant at Chicago Heights arrived yesterday, consisting of seventeen cars of machinery, engines, and boilers. Monday a large force of mechanics will be employed to set up the machinery and get it in running order at as early a date as possible.

Figure 9: Real Estate Notes. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 6, 1893, p. 14.

Regarding other family members, Buna Vista Newton's brother was well known as an organist and was also a successful businessman (Figure 10), contributing to the family's influence.



me, and I don't know what my poor daughter will do, although I shall go at once to New York and tell her what I have learned. In addition to being a fine musician, **Newton** was a good business man, and for a long time was connected with the Army and Navy Journal.

Figure 10: Eugene Newton. *Brooklyn Eagle*, April 27, 1896, p. 1.

2.2 History of cemetery use

The mausoleum serves as the Newton family's burial site. Inside, one catacomb remains empty. Those interred include Buna Vista Newton; his wife, Anna Elizabeth Bruckner Newton; his parents, Nathan Newton and Elmira Chapell Newton; his brother, Robert A. Newton; and his children, Lulu Newton and Buna Newton Jr. (Figure 12) Despite their tumultuous marital history, Buna and Anna were ultimately laid to rest together in this mausoleum.

The Newton divorce case had garnered widespread attention from the public and the

courts since 1868 and was reported multiple times in *The Times*. After years of appeals by Buna, the case concluded in 1872. In the final judgment, the judge confirmed that Buna Newton was indeed guilty of adultery, as accused by Anna E. Newton in the lawsuit. Based on this, the judge decreed the dissolution of their marriage. Additionally, as a penalty for the party at fault, the judgment stipulated that Buna was not allowed to remarry as long as Anna was still alive. (Figure 11) Buna passed away in 1943, and Anna in 1950, meaning Buna did not remarry after the divorce. (Figure 12) Despite the record of their divorce, Buna and Anna were ultimately buried together in the family mausoleum, possibly reflecting the family's wishes or symbolizing a form of reconciliation.

END OF THE NEWTON DIVORCE CASE.
Decree of Divorce Granted.
A Copy of the Judgment.

The Newton divorce suit, which has been before the public and the courts since 1868, has been terminated by the granting of a divorce to Mrs. Newton. The case has been fully reported in the *Times* on various occasions, and it must be familiar to our readers.

The following is a copy of the judgment of divorce as granted by Judge Pratt:

Anna E. Newton against Buna Newton.— This action having been brought on to be heard upon the complaint herein, and upon the report of Theodore F. Jackson, Esq., a referee duly appointed in this action, from which it appears that all the material facts charged in the said complaint are true, and that the defendant has been guilty of the acts of adultery therein charged. On motion of Theodore Edison, of counsel for said plaintiff, it is ordered and adjudged, that the marriage between the said plaintiff and the said defendant be dissolved, and the same is hereby dissolved accordingly; and the said parties are each of them is freed from the obligation thereof. And it is further ordered and adjudged, that it shall be lawful for the said complainant to marry again in the same manner as though the said defendant was actually dead, but it shall not be lawful for the said defendant to marry again until the said complainant is actually dead.

C. E. PRATT,
Justice Supreme Court.

Figure 11: End of the Newton Divorce Case. *The Brooklyn Daily Times*, March 30, 1872, p. 4.

relationship	name	year																			
		1810	1819	1840	1842	1846	1850	1866	1880	1881	1882	1886	1888	1892	1896	1893	1914	1922	1943	1950	1959
father	Nathan Newton	Mass									NY										
mother	Elmira Chapell Newton		NY										NY								
brother	Eugene Newton			NY											Oregon						
	Angelo Newton				Mass																
	Robert A. Newton							NY										NY			
core member	Buna Vista Newton				Mass														NY		
spouse	Anna Elizabeth Bruckner Newton							NY												NY	
child	Lulu Newton							NY													NY
	Gayo Newton Sands														New Haven				France		
	Buna Newton Jr.															Chicago			Chicago		

Figure 12: The life spans of the family

3. Architectural Style

The Newton Mausoleum exhibits a Classical Revival style, which was popular in North America during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Its drawing inspiration is from the architectural design principles of ancient Greece and Rome, characterized by strong symmetry. The top of the building's entrance features a pediment, similar to the design of ancient Greek temples. Below, I will analyze the decorative features from five aspects: the column design, the door frame and bronze door, the urn sculpture, the stained-glass window, and the detailed ornamentation. I will discuss their symbolic meanings, the artistic influences behind the design, and the construction techniques.

3.1 The column design

The mausoleum's column design is a variation of the Corinthian order, which is one of the three major classical orders of ancient Greece. Its decorative elements include volutes, four-petaled flowers, and acanthus leaves.¹⁹ (Figure 13) The volutes symbolize order and harmony. The number of petals in the four-petaled flower

¹⁹ *ThoughtCo*. "What Is a Corinthian Column?" Accessed November 8, 2024. <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-corinthian-column-177504>.

represents the four directions and the four seasons, symbolizing balance, stability, and nature. The floral motifs represent eternal life, while the acanthus leaves symbolize the natural cycle and rebirth.²⁰



Figure 13: The mausoleum's column. *Baidu Baijiahao*, 2020.

3.2 The door frame and bronze door

The mausoleum's door frame is decorated with a combination of laurel and palm. The patterns on the bronze door feature palm, ribbons, and flames. (Figure 14) In ancient Greek and Roman culture, laurel, ribbons, and flames were symbols of victory, representing glory and immortality, suggesting eternal life or the ascension of the soul.²¹ In Christian culture, the palm is often associated with martyrs and resurrection, symbolizing purity, peace, and the rest of the soul.²² Additionally, the choice of bronze material has a deliberate design purpose. As a patina develops over time, the building was gained a sense of historical gravitas.²³

²⁰ *Wikipedia*. "Acanthus (Ornament)." Accessed November 8, 2024.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acanthus_%28ornament%29.

²¹ *Ancient-Symbols.com*. "Laurel Wreath." Accessed November 8, 2024. <https://www.ancient-symbols.com/symbols-directory/laurel-wreath.html>.

²² *Antiquitatem*. "Crowned with Laurel: Oracle, Poetry, and Honor in Antiquity." Accessed November 8, 2024. <https://www.antiquitatem.com/en/crowned-with-laurel-oracle-poetry-oracle/>.

²³ *Heritage Science*. "Patina on Bronze: A Symbol of Historical Gravitas." Accessed November 8, 2024. <https://heritagesciencejournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40494-017-0149-y>.

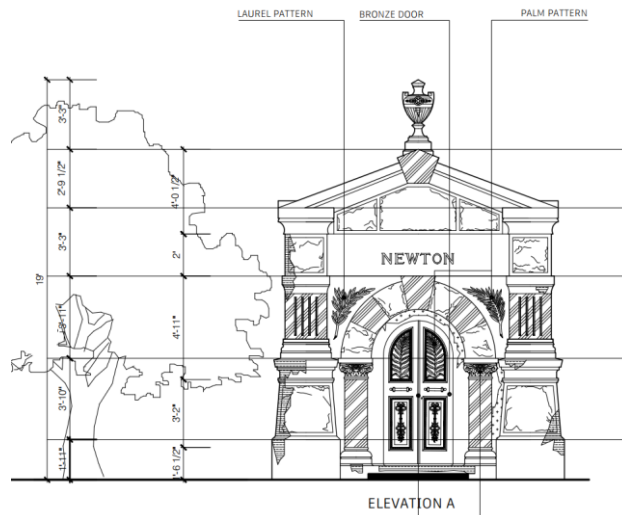


Figure 14: The door frame and bronze door

3.3 The urn sculpture

In some cultures, such as in Sumerian civilization(Figure 16), water represents life and purity. The urn sculptures atop the mausoleum(Figure 15) symbolize eternity and the purification of the deceased's soul.²⁴

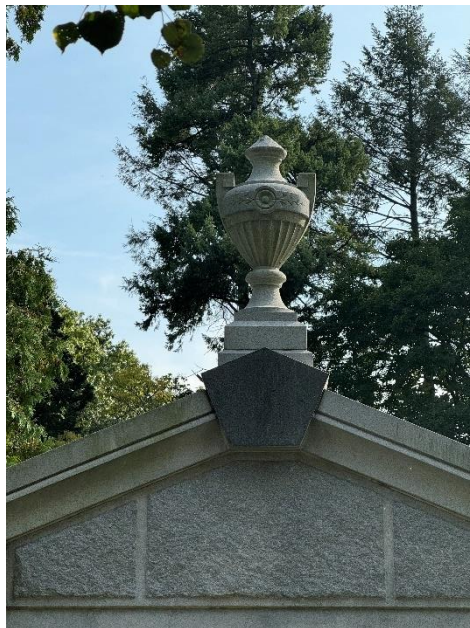


Figure 15: The urn sculpture

²⁴ Kramer, S. N. *Sumerian Mythology*. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1944.



Figure 16: The Sumeric mural. *Sumerian Mythology*, 1944.

3.4 The stained window

From the interior view of the window, the stained glass features a combination of geometric grids, a yellow sun with radiating rays, a floral crown, volutes, and arched designs,²⁵(Figure 17) symbolizing order, light, peace, eternity, and the connection to heaven, respectively.²⁶

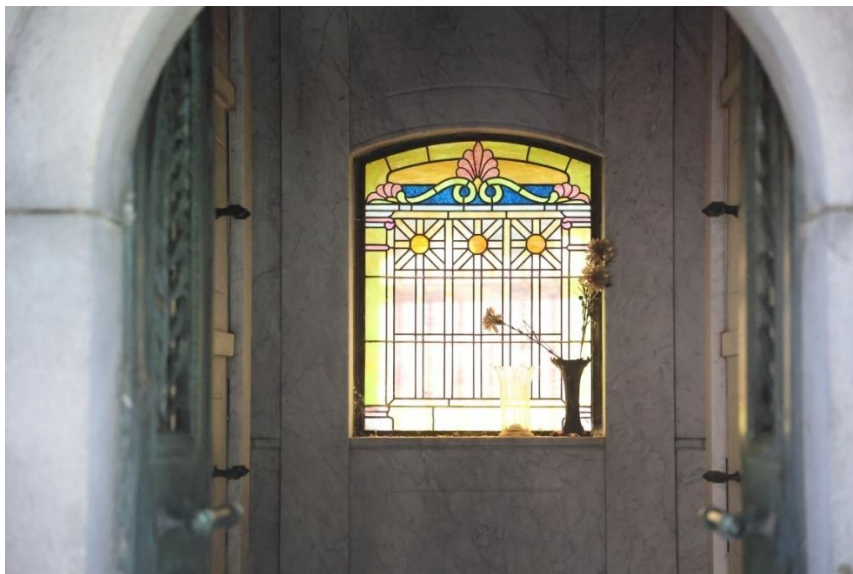


Figure 17: The interior view of the window

²⁵ *Stained Glass Inc.* "Unveiling 15 Christian Symbols in Stained Glass Art." Accessed November 8, 2024. <https://blog.stainedglassinc.com/blog-1/15-christian-symbols-in-stained-glass/>.

²⁶ *Cumberland Stained Glass.* "The Symbolism of Stained Glass." Accessed November 8, 2024. <https://www.cumberlandstainedglass.com/the-symbolism-of-stained-glass/>.

In addition, the exterior features bronze grills with diamond-shaped elements at the top(Figure 18), adhering to classical style traditions.



Figure 18: The exterior view of the window

3.5 The detailed ornamentation

The handles of the catacombs(Figure 19) feature a multi-section design with a prominent central node, imitating the capitals and bases of columns, possibly influenced by ancient Greek and Roman architectural styles. The ends of the handle are adorned with delicate finials, elements that may originate from Neoclassical or Victorian design styles. Similarly, the material is aged bronze, reflecting the design intent of enhancing the historical feel.



Figure 19: The handle of the catacomb

4. Materials Analysis

The choice of materials for the mausoleum is closely related to its monument maker, Robert Caterson (1837-1929). According to a 1905 catalog published by Robert Caterson, "Marble is also a monumental material in common use, and next to granite in demand."²⁷(Figure 20) Robert Caterson's designs emphasized advanced craftsmanship and the use of high-quality materials, including bronze doors, and sculptural decorations, and were renowned for their classical revival style and construction with marble and granite. These design preferences are evident in his famous work, the Collis P. Huntington mausoleum, and are also reflected in the Newton Mausoleum. The exterior is constructed of granite, the interior of marble, and bronze is used for the door, window grilles, and the handles of the catacombs. (Figure 21) And it is topped with an urn sculpture.

²⁷ Caterson, Robert, and Robert Caterson (Firm). *General Monumental Work: Mausoleums, Vaults, Monuments, Etc.* New York, 1905, p. 4.

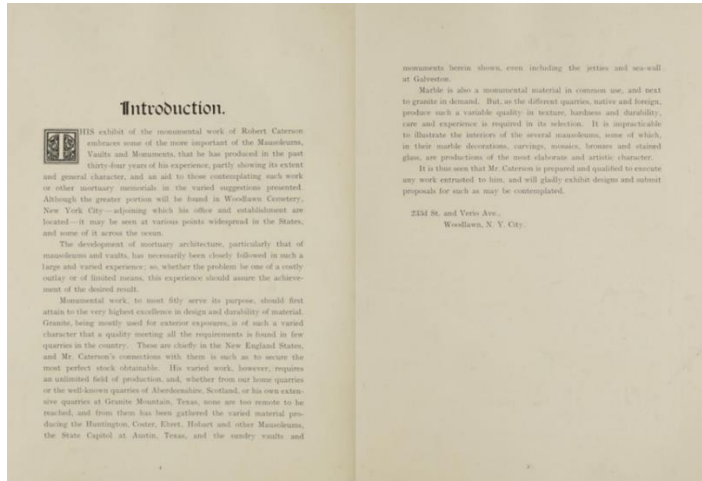
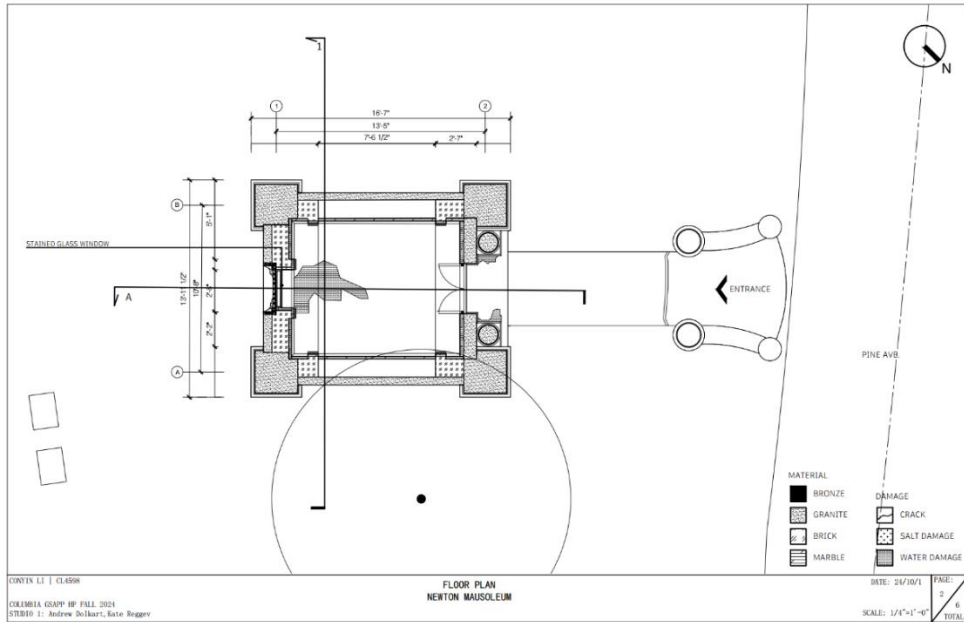


Figure 20: Robert Caterson's choice of materials. *General Monumental Work: Mausoleums, Vaults, Monuments, Etc., New York, 1905, p. 4.*



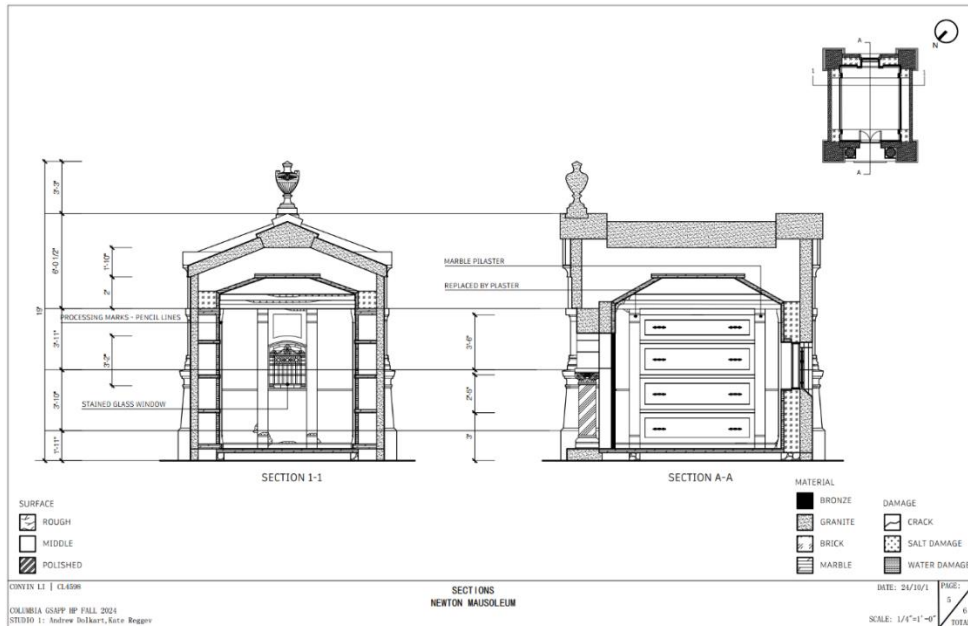


Figure 21: Materials in the Newton Mausoleum

“Granite, being mostly used for exterior exposures, is of such a varied character that a quality meeting all the requirements is found in few quarries in the country.”²⁸

Applying various surface treatments to granite is also a characteristic of Robert Caterson’s designs. The granite of the Newton Mausoleum combines both rough and smooth surfaces. As shown in the image below, the roughness can be categorized into three main levels, corresponding to four processing techniques.(Figure 22, 23)

First, the larger surface areas of the mausoleum’s facade, such as the pediment and wall sections, exhibit a relatively rough and irregular texture, possibly achieved through a flame finish. Similarly, the lower portions of the columns have rough textures with more pronounced relief than the previous areas, likely created through bush hammering. These two finishes help create contrast under light.

²⁸ Caterson, Robert, and Robert Caterson (Firm). *General Monumental Work: Mausoleums, Vaults, Monuments, Etc.* New York, 1905, p. 4.

Second, some smoother surfaces, such as the column capitals and wall frames, are relatively flat but still retain a natural texture, possibly achieved through a sawn finish.

Finally, in smaller decorative areas, such as the top of the pediment and arch, the surfaces are smoother and have a certain sheen, likely resulting from a polished finish.

This finish makes the decorative areas more refined and prominent.

The designer likely used these various finishes to create visual and tactile contrasts, highlighting different architectural elements while conveying a sense of permanence and refinement.

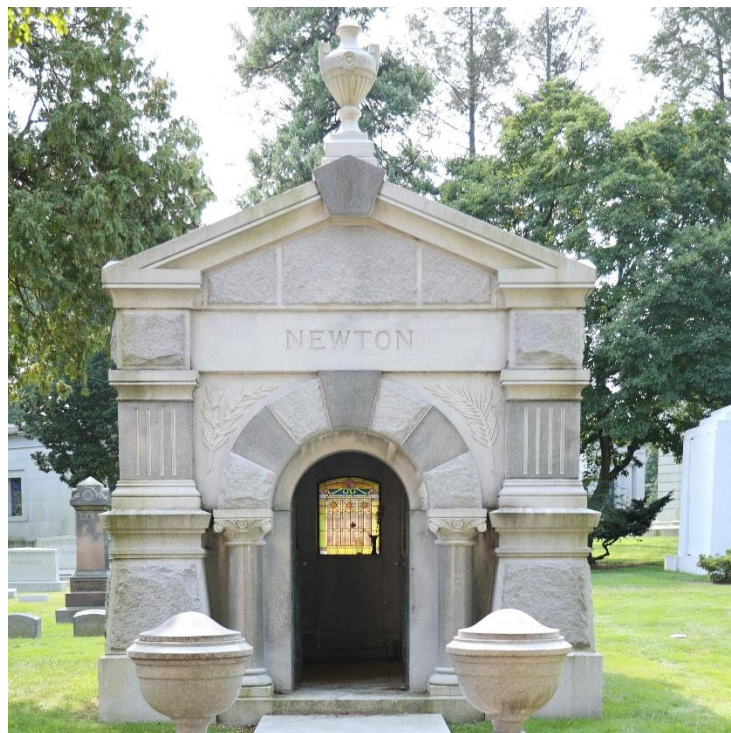


Figure 22: Facade

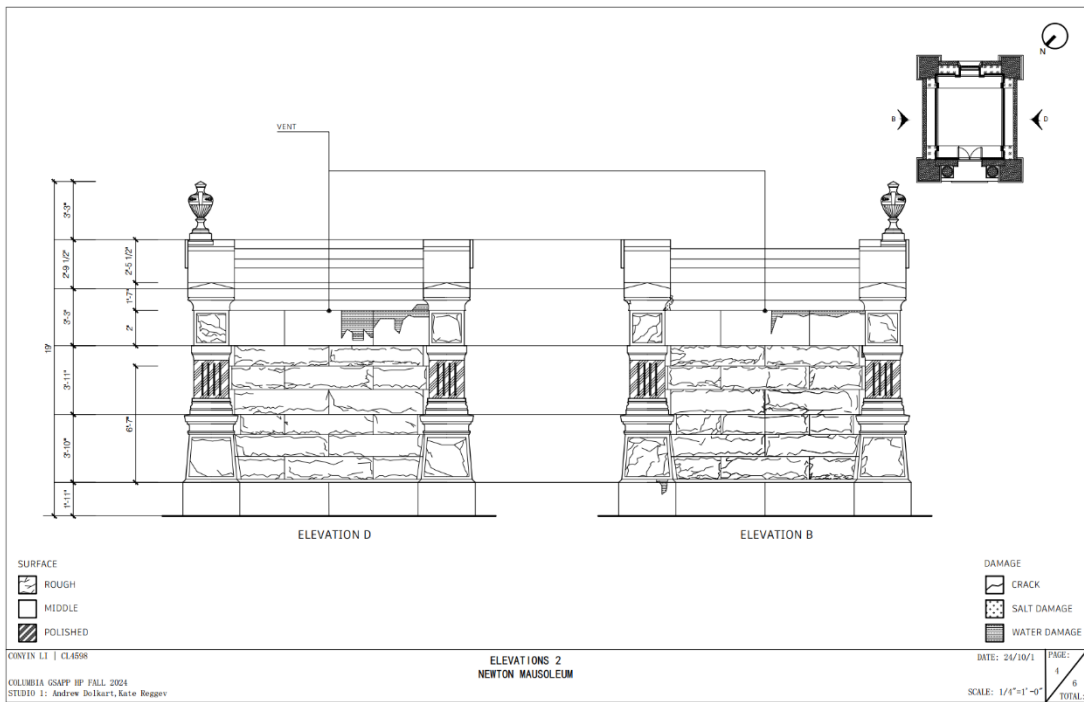
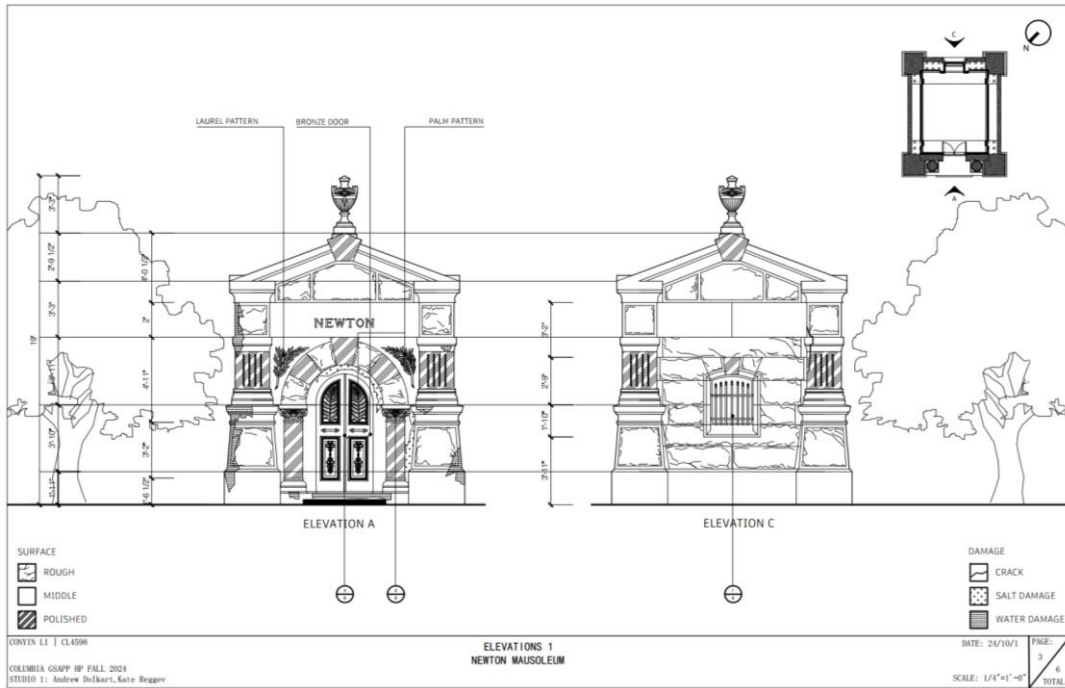


Figure 23: The surface types of granite

5. Construction Process

Inside the building, I find that the stone above the pilasters near the façade is not a single piece; its division line coincides with the wall segmentation and corresponds with the columns on the exterior. (Figure 24, 25) Based on observations of the stone

division method, as well as considerations of structural stability and construction convenience, I hypothesize that the construction sequence of the Newton Mausoleum proceeded as follows.(Figure 26)



Figure 24: No division



Figure 25: Split

First, the side walls would be installed to provide structural support for the subsequent installation of the front and rear walls. Next, the front wall would be installed to ensure the precision of the complex decorations. Then, the relatively simple rear wall would be installed last, allowing the construction team more workspace and passageways. Finally, the roof would be installed, with its delayed placement allowing sufficient light and transportation access for the handling of interior stonework, decorations, and detailed adjustments.



Figure 26: Facade splicing

Additionally, some construction marks can be found inside the mausoleum. The pilasters are carved from a single piece of marble, and there are visible pencil marks on the sides where the capital connects to the column shaft. These are not stains at the connection point nor are they accidental; similar marks were found on all three intact pilasters. Therefore, I speculate that these were marks left by the workers during the carving of the capitals. (Figure 27)

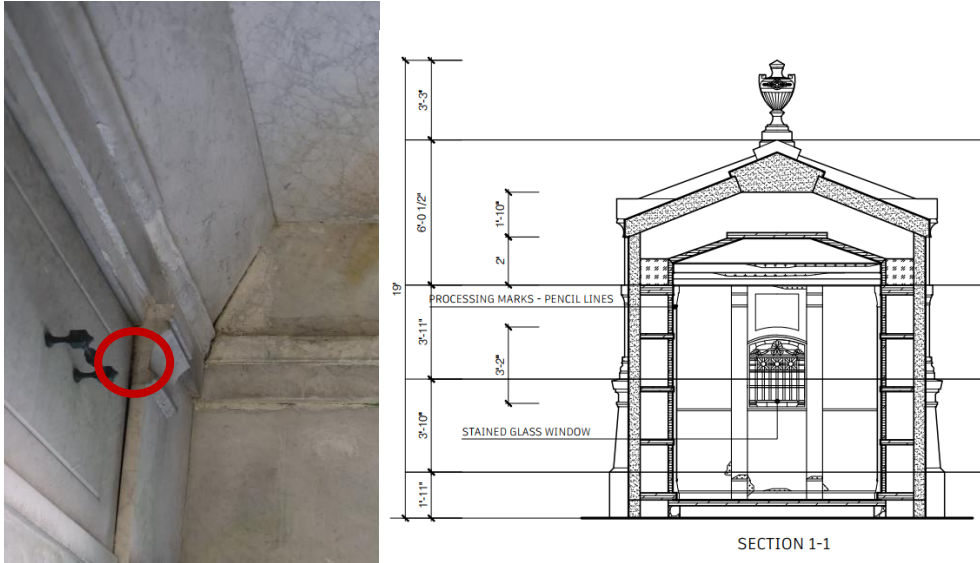


Figure 27: Pencil lines

6. Conditions

The existing deterioration of the Newton Mausoleum can be categorized into natural and man-made damage.

6.1 Natural damage

Natural damage mainly includes water damage, salt damage, and cracks. The interior of the mausoleum shows water stains and salt deposits near the ceiling, likely due to moisture infiltration. (Figure 28)



Figure 28: Water damage and salt damage

The exterior also exhibits signs of deterioration. Notably, on the eastern side of the rear

facade, there is a long crack that runs continuously across several connected stone blocks. (Figure 29) Given that this crack occurs within the load-bearing structure and that granite is a relatively heavy construction material, I am inclined to believe that foundation settlement is the primary cause of this crack.



Figure 29: The crack

6.2 Man-made damage

On the left capital of the mausoleum's western facade, there is a mechanical damage. (Figure 30) However, this height would typically not be easily affected by human interference. While natural factors such as weathering, rain erosion, or extreme weather could have some impact on the stone, they would not result in this type of mechanical impact. Therefore, I speculate that this may be related to the construction or restoration process.



Figure 30: The mechanical damage

For that, I found an old photograph(Figure 31) and discovered that the inscription on the mausoleum's front facade was changed from 'Newton & Haeuser' to 'Newton'. (Figure 32) Based on the font arrangement and observations of the stone surface, I believe that this change involved replacing the entire stone rather than re-carving the original one. This suggests the replacement of the lintel stone as a potential cause of the damage. It is possible that the craftsman accidentally damaged the right-side stone while altering the inscription. Such situations are common in the restoration of historic buildings, especially when the process involves removing and installing heavy stone materials.

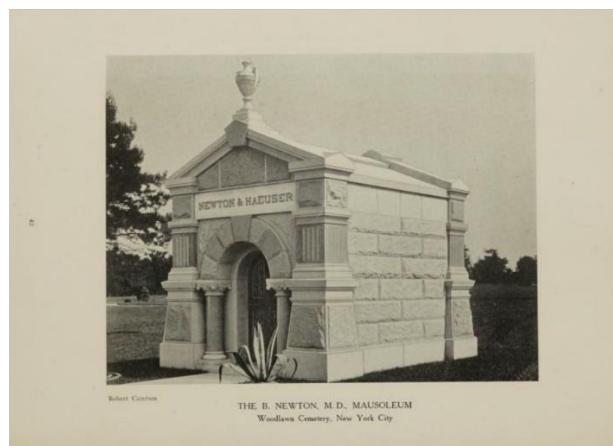


Figure 31: Before. *General Monumental Work: Mausoleums, Vaults, Monuments, Etc.*, New York, 1905, p. 42.



Figure 32: Now

Correspondingly, I observed that the top of the pilaster near the front facade on the interior has also been damaged. Its capital has been replaced(Figure 33), while smaller issues, such as mechanical damage, may not have been repaired. These details serve as evidence of the mausoleum's restoration history.



Figure 33: Replaced

As for the reason for the inscription change, I think the original inscription, "Newton & Haeuser ", reflects the history of the mausoleum's joint construction. The modification of the inscription was likely a decision made by the Newton family after gaining full control of the mausoleum. Because there appears to be no marital or familial connection between the Newton and Haeuser families, nor any evidence of early social or business collaboration. Additionally, no members of the Haeuser family are buried in the mausoleum.

6.3 Maintenance status

The Newton Mausoleum is in good condition. I found a bronze plaque that had fallen into the grass near the entrance, with the word "Endowed" inscribed on it. (Figure 34) Based on other mausoleums(Figure 35), it can be reinstalled. This indicates that a fund or family has donated money for the maintenance of the site to ensure it receives long-term care and upkeep. To further ensure its preservation, I recommend the following maintenance actions: regular monitoring, cleaning, moisture control, inspection of load-bearing structures, and plaque reinstallation.



Figure 34: The bronze plaque



Figure 35: Plaque in other mausoleums

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