

L. C. GILLESPIE MAUSOLEUM

Bingyu Lin

The L. C. Gillespie mausoleum is located in the northwest corner of Woodlawn Cemetery. It is placed on a circular lot, at the junction of Chestnut Ave and Chestnut Hill Ave (Fig. 1). Since it is near Central Avenue, where many of the grandest mausoleums are located, this mausoleum is conspicuously displayed.

The site was well landscaped, consisting of a level and smooth lawn with a maple tree 40 ft in diameter to the east of the mausoleum (Fig. 2). The mausoleum is in the center of the plot, facing southwest. A small grave stone is next to it.

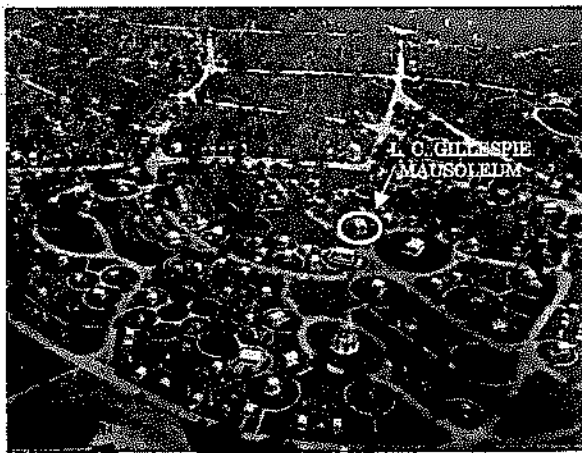


Figure 1 1911 aerial view Woodlawn Cemetery by Captain James Suydam. Avery Library & Archives, Woodlawn Cemetery Records.

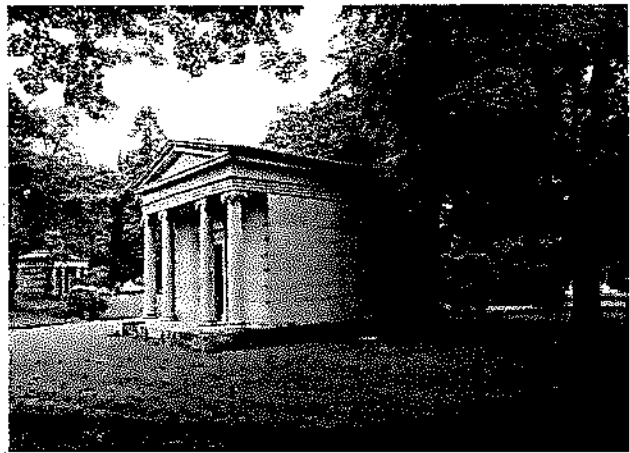


Figure 2 Lot 10960, L. C. Gillespie mausoleum. Photography by Bingyu Lin.

Building

The L. C. Gillespie mausoleum was built by the prominent mausoleum builders C. E. Tayntor & Company, which quarried granite in Maine and Vermont and had offices in New York (Fig. 3). All the exterior material, the finest light Hallowell granite, is from the quarries of C. E. Tayntor & Co in Maine¹.

It is an Ionic temple in front, but it is Classical in style. The granite is fine hammered on all exposed surface, and has four columns in front with carved capitals. The name L. C. GILLESPIE

¹ Dunlop Mausoleum <https://www.mausoleums.com/portfolio/dunlop-mausoleum/>

² Avery Library & Archives, Woodlawn Cemetery Records, WCA Mausoleum Owner Correspondence, Box 7, Folder 24.

is carved in raised letters on the lintel over the door. According to the Woodlawn Cemetery archive, the foundation of this mausoleum is 6 ft deep from the lowest point of the grade of the building and is made of good building stone and Portland cement, putting in as per the rules and requirements of Woodlawn Cemetery³. The building has three steps, each a single stone unit, flashed by extensions of the base cube of stone on each of the side elevations.

The roof of this building is a C. E. Tayntor & Co. patent roof. It was for a number of years very difficult to construct a satisfactory roof, which could bear the change of temperature and long-continued exposure to rain and snow without causing the roof to become discolored and permitting percolation of water therethrough. In 1899, C. E. Tayntor & Co. invented a novel design for roofs for buildings, which provided an improved, simple, and strong roof construction. The L. C. Gillespie mausoleum roof is comprised of solid pediments front and rear; between the pediments there are three stones that overlap on to the pediments (Fig. 4). The ridge stone overlaps the side stones. Therefore, the joint formed by the junction of the several parts of the roof were well protected. Besides, the central roof stone is in a proper position, without interfering with the vision-lines of the roof. However, the roof still needs repainting from time to time to maintain its function (Fig. 11(a)).

The interior of the mausoleum is a quite large cross-shaped space. The cladding work is finished in dark cedar Tennessee marble, with all exposed surfaces highly polished. It contains 48 catacombs. Each shelf in one piece reaches from end to end and from side to side of the catacomb, with the front edges of the shelves trimmed with dark cedar Tennessee marble. Each of

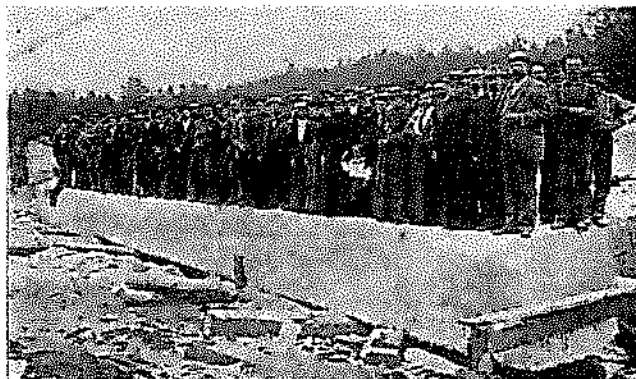


Figure 3 View at C. E. Tayntor & Co's quarry, Barre, VT., during visit of western dealers. <https://www.ancestry.com>

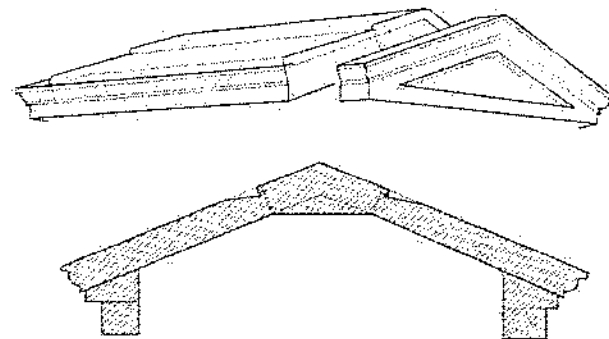


Figure 4 Roof of L. C. Gillespie mausoleum built by C. E. Tayntor & Co. Charles E Tayntor. C E Tayntor Granite Company. U.S. Patent US842590A, July 14, 1906, and issued January 29, 1907.

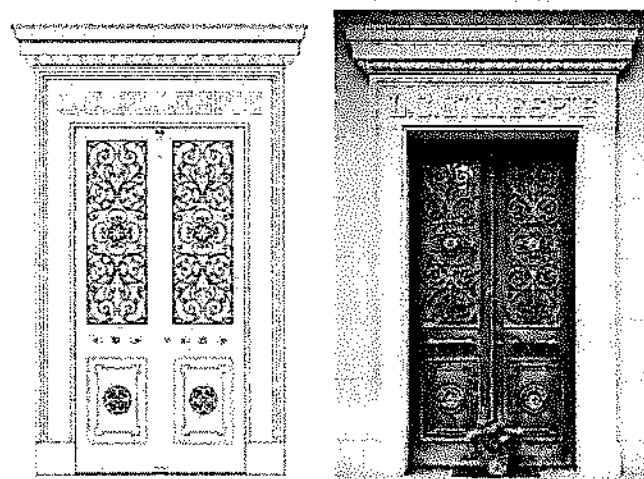


Figure 5 Door of L. C. Gillespie mausoleum. Photography by Bingyu Lin.

³ Avery Library & Archives, Woodlawn Cemetery Records, WCA Mausoleum Owner Correspondence, Box 7, Folder 24.

⁴ Charles E Tayntor. C E Tayntor Granite Company. U.S. Patent US842590A, July 14, 1906, and issued January 29, 1907.

⁵ Charles E Tayntor. C E Tayntor Granite Company. U.S. Patent US842590A, July 14, 1906, and issued January 29, 1907.

catacomb tablets has two bronze rosettes, using in removing and replacing the tablets when desired. There is a ventilator in the central marble ceiling (Fig. 6), along with four tiny vents on the side walls, helping to keep the room dry.

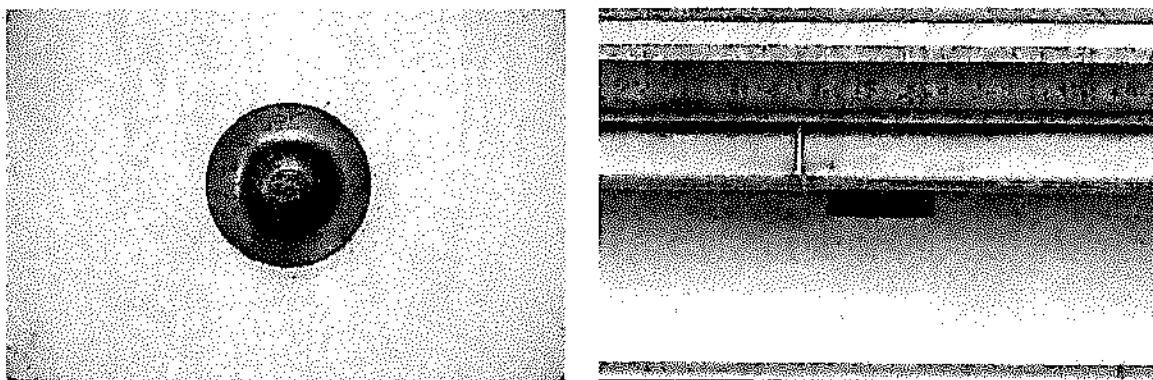


Figure 6 Ventilator on the ceiling and vent on the walls. Photography by Bingyu Lin.

This mausoleum has a pair of handsome doors (Fig. 5), made of the best United States standard bronze⁶. Each door has an open grille, back of which grille is hung a plate glass shutter, securely set into a bronze frame, and properly hung to the door, which shutters may be opened or closed as desired. The locks, hinges, bolts and all fastening to these doors are of bronze. The building has three stain glass windows with the bronze frame, one at rear and two at the side. A bronze grill is securely set into the granite work at the outside of the windows to protect the windows from damage.

L. C. Gillespie

There are 36 people buried in the mausoleum, including the original owner of the mausoleum, Louis Charles Gillespie, his wife, his mother, his sons, daughters and their spouses, grandchildren, and three other relatives. The grave outside the buildings buried one of his sons and son-in-law. But the reason why they weren't buried in the mausoleum is unknown. L. C. Gillespie ordered to build the mausoleum in 1903. He was very wealthy and confident, planned to have 48 catacombs in the initial design of mausoleum for his big family and heirs.

L. C. Gillespie was born on December 2, 1835, in Troy, New York. His father, Charles Gillespie, manufactured varnish. Gillespie did not take over his father's company. After the close of the civil war, he started his own company in New York and established the varnish gum⁷ business. It was during that period that he married Josephine Lucy Packard. They had eight children in 14 years. He died on March 21, 1911, having lived a long life of 75 years.

⁶ Avery Library & Archives, Woodlawn Cemetery Records, WCA Mausoleum Owner Correspondence, Box 7, Folder 24.

⁷ A natural or synthetic resin used in making varnish.

The company's name is L.C. Gillespie & Sons (Fig. 7), located at 6th and 8th Fletcher St, Manhattan. It later became the country's largest importers of China wood oil and varnish gums. Gillespie was established in Asia -- China, India, Java and New Zealand in particular (Fig. 8) -- since the 19th Century, but after World War One the company took an interest in the Congo. It was good timing. The War in Europe had created new opportunities for American exports to Africa, displacing Germany and other colonial powers to take second place position after Great Britain. The Gillespie was so rich that according to 1910 U.S. census, it had 7 servants from Virginia, Pennsylvania and North Carolina. However, L. C. Gillespie & Sons went bankrupt in early 1928, just before the Great Depression.



Figure 7 L. C. Gillespie & Sons workers breaking down Gum. <https://www.ancestry.com>



Figure 8 L. C. Gillespie & Sons building in New Zealand. <https://www.ancestry.com>

Besides the mausoleum, L. C. Gillespie had several other estates. In 1878, he built a summer house, Tower Hill, near Morristown, NJ (Fig. 9). Tower Hill was as large as 115 acres, overlooking Washington Valley. There was a frame carriage house, four frame barns, five cottages, extensive gardens, and a lake. There was a six-story stone water tower on Tower Hill (Fig. 10), estate of L. C. Gillespie, which was a landmark famed for years⁸. When Gillespie died in 1911, he left an estate valued at \$720,975, according to the accounting made by Appraiser Nagle⁹. In 1929, Tower Hill was sold to the Catholic Church as a girls' school, sold for \$125,000¹⁰. It is now the Villa Walsh.

⁸ *Paint, oil and chemical review. 1920. Oak Park, Ill., etc: Trade Review Co., etc.*

⁹ Leopoldville 1920s – Yankee Traders on the Congo <http://kosubaawate.blogspot.com/2012/03/leopoldville-1920s-yankee-traders-on.html>

¹⁰ Rae, John Warden. 1999. *Mansions of Morris County*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia.

¹¹ *Paint, oil and chemical review. 1920. Oak Park, Ill., etc: Trade Review Co., etc.*

¹² Charles Gillespie and Louis Charles Gillespie, Varnish Manufacturers <https://www.ancestry.com/boards/surnames.gillespie/2553/mb.ashx?pnt=1>



Figure 9 Summer house, Tower Hill, near Morristown, NJ. Rae, John Warden. 1999. *Mansions of Morris County*.

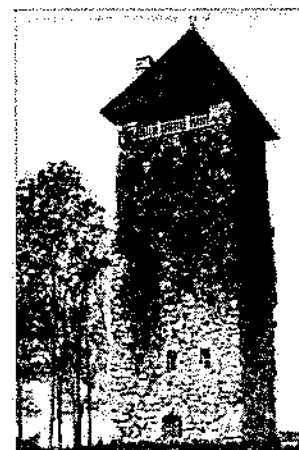


Figure 10 Six-story stone water tower on Tower Hill, estate of L. C. Gillespie. Rae, John Warden. 1999. *Mansions of Morris County*.

Maintenance and Condition

According to the correspondence¹³ between the Gillespie family and superintendents of Woodlawn Cemetery, the mausoleum got maintained from time to time over the past few decades:

- May 9th, 1932. Have lot rolled and seeded, and general care.
- April 8, 1935. Thorough overhauling; raked out and repointed the joints; cleaned the entire building. Cost \$840.
- March 27, 1940. A hole was drilled in the bronze door hinge and a cotter pin put in. Cost \$10.
- May 17, 1949. Repointed the roof joints.
- February 8, 1951. Regular mowing, weeding, watering and top-dressing; regrade and seeded the lot. Cost \$970.
- July 5, 1978. Pruned the tree branches away from the mausoleum. Cost \$300.

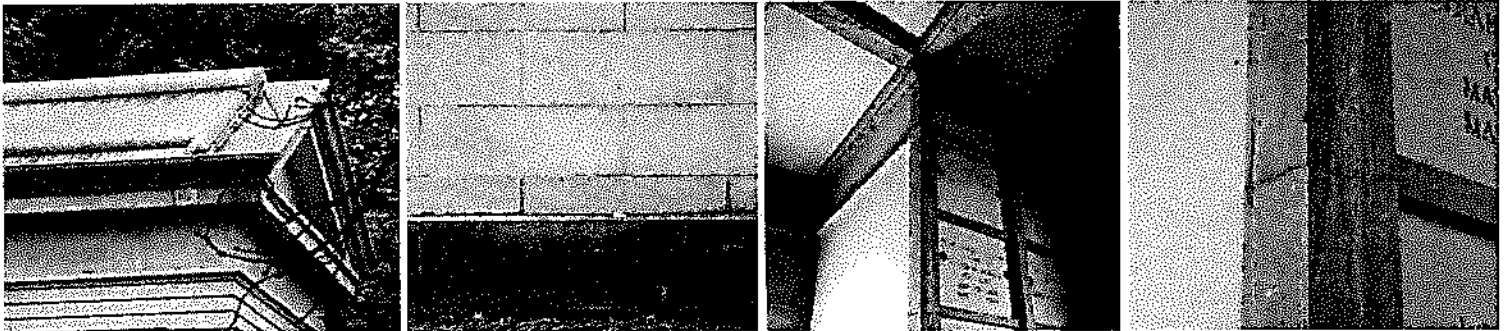
At present, the building is largely in good condition. The materials and workmanship, where visible, are good. The inspection did not discover large damage. There are some cracks and damage required attention and further estimates (Fig. 11):

- Moisture and biological growth. Even though the roof is of well-designed patent, the correspondence and the white marks on the joints show the roof has been repaired. Water

¹³ Avery Library & Archives, Woodlawn Cemetery Records, WCA Mausoleum Owner Correspondence, Box 7, Folder 24.

once percolated into interior space, leaving trails of dripping. The green and black color shown on the base reflect moist and biological growth.

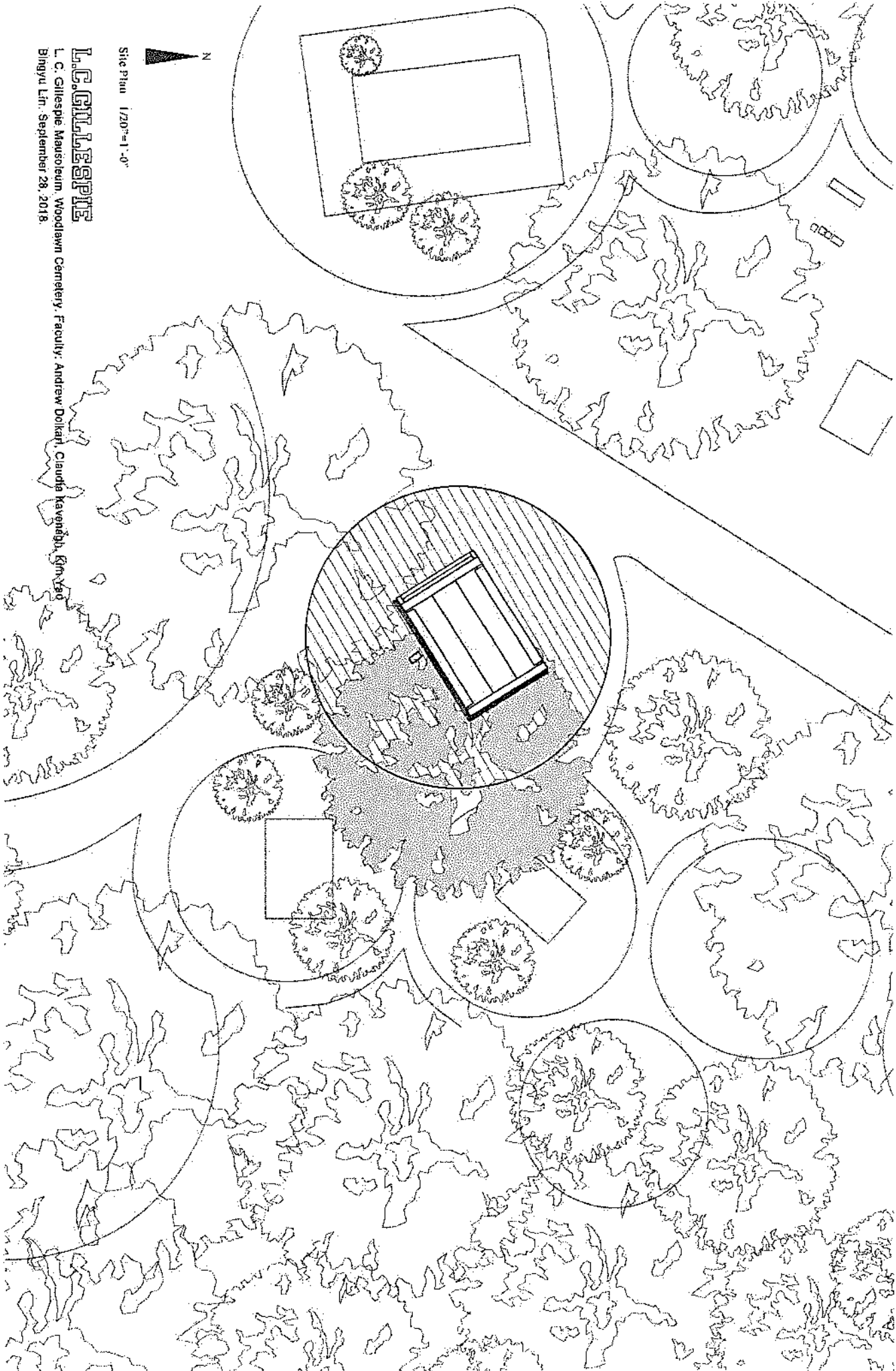
- Cracks. Several minor cracks were observed in the shelves of catacombs.



(a) The joints show evidence of repointing (b) Biological growth on the base (c) Drip marks (d) Minor cracks and drip marks.

Figure 11 Moist and Biological damage and cracks in L. C. Gillespie. Photography by Bingyu Lin.

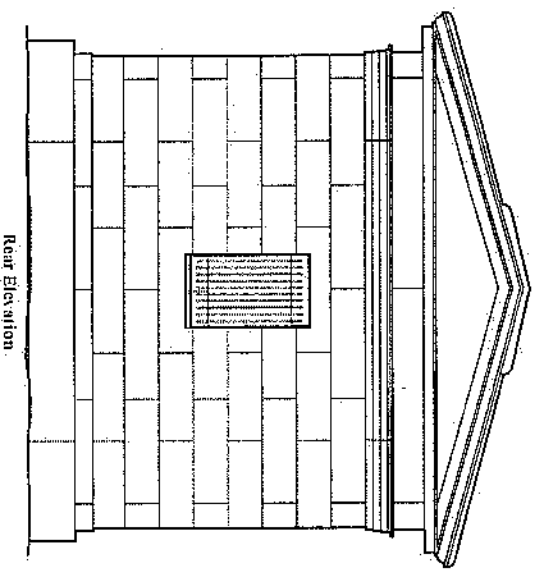
Having a history of more than 100 years, the mausoleum is still in use, and the latest funeral was held in 2010. Just not long ago, someone came to visit this mausoleum, putting a flower in front of the door. Maybe the L. C. Gillespie mausoleum will continuously serve for its heirs, witnessing the history of this family.



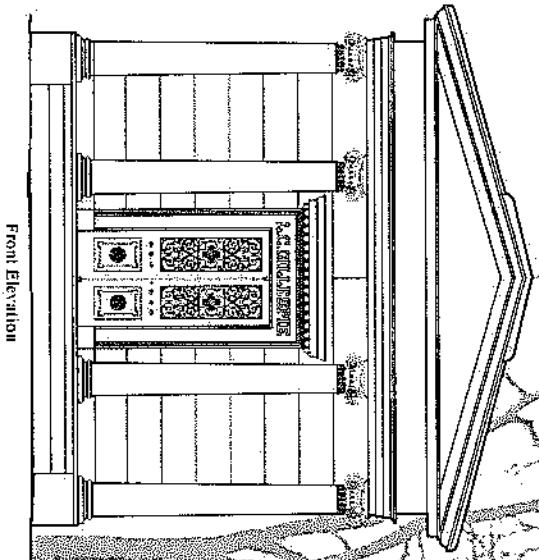
Site Plan 1/20"=1'-0"

L.C. GILLESPIE

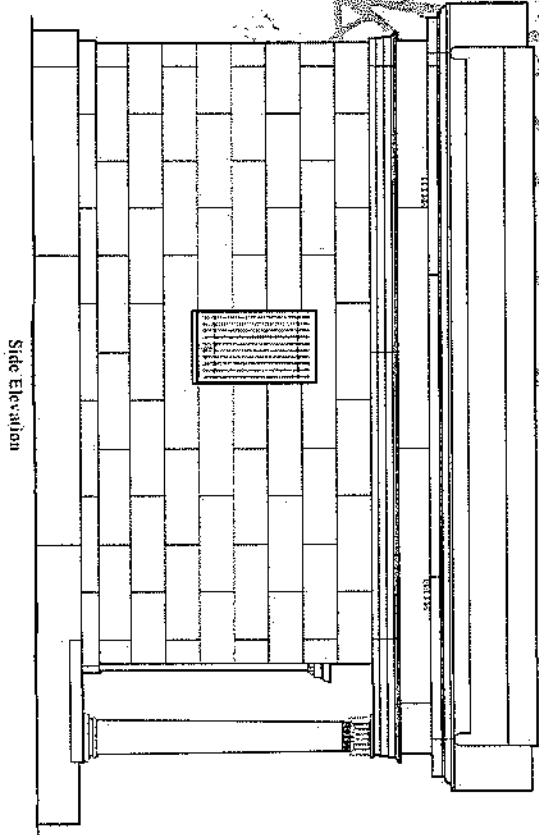
L. C. Gillespie Mausoleum, Woodlawn Cemetery, Faculty: Andrew Dolkan, Claudia Kavenagh, Kim Vao
Bingyu Lin, September 28, 2018.



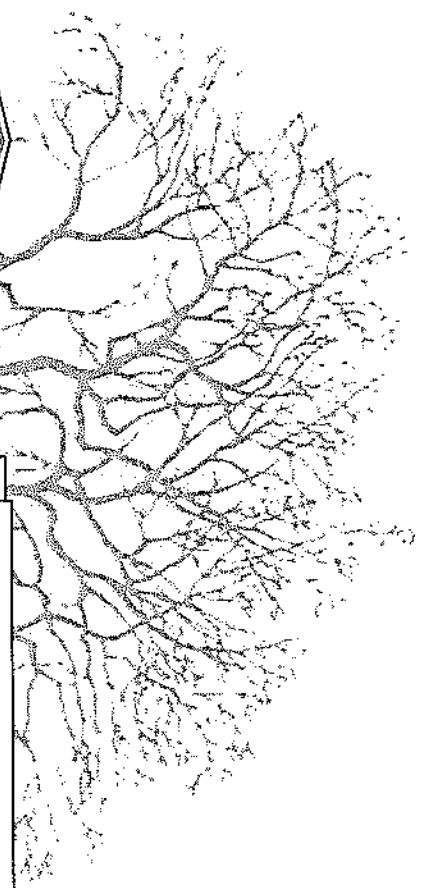
Rear Elevation



Front Elevation



Side Elevation

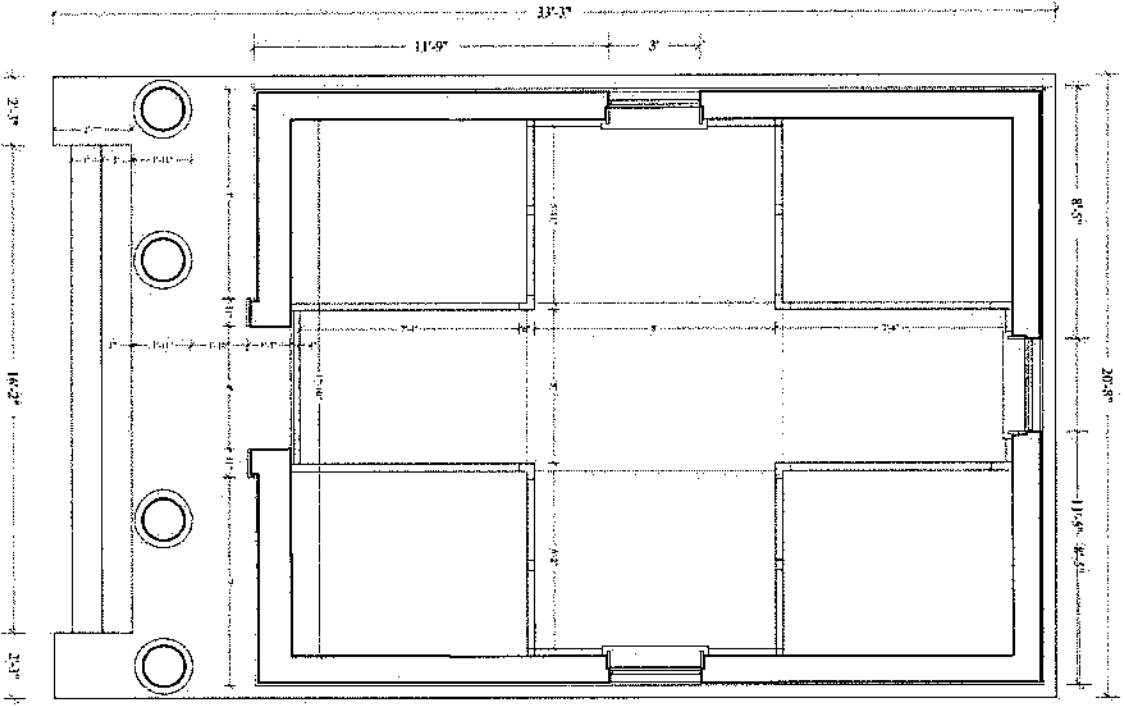


1/8" = 1'-0"

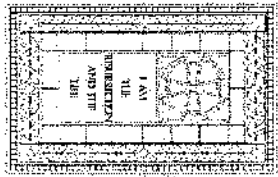
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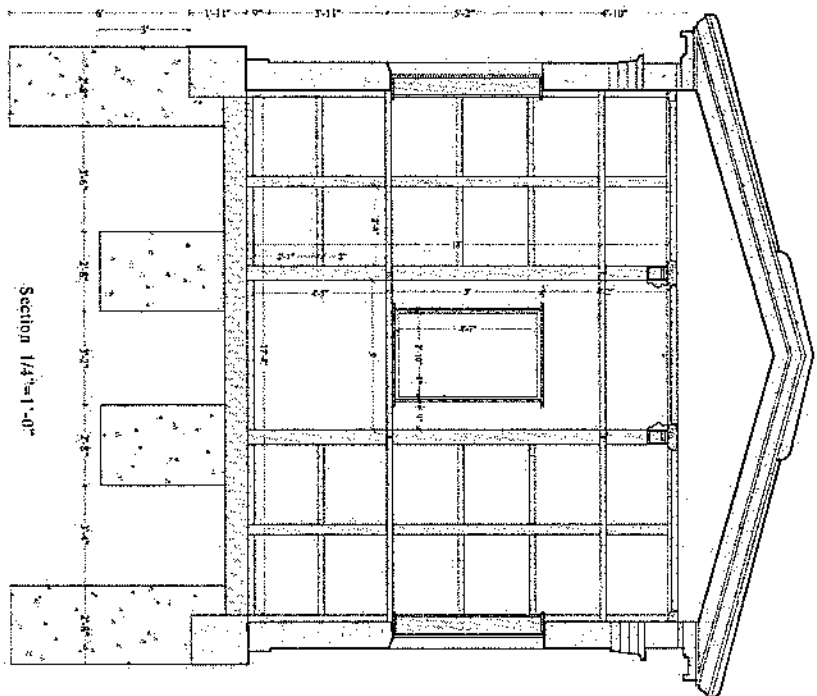




Building Plan 1/4"=1'-0"



Stained glass detail 1/2"=1'-0"



Section 1/4"=1'-0"

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