

The Dolmetsch Mausoleum

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Columbia University Historical Preservation Studio 1: 28OCT2025



The Dolmetsch mausoleum is located in the Park View section of Woodlawn Cemetery. It sits facing Filbert Avenue, internally to Woodlawn Cemetery, running parallel to Jerome Avenue in the Bronx. The Dolmetsch mausoleum is in close proximity to The Velma Woolworth Chapel and Crematory off the main avenue of approach to the mausoleum of John H. Harbeck. The mausoleum is from the work of Farrington Gould and Hoagland, one the most noted architects in the cemetery, and was constructed in 1927.¹ The Dolmetsch mausoleum has five members of the family interned.

Identifying the family members all through the lineage of Richard Dolmetsch, and by date of passing, begins with Richard Dolmetsch who was born September 3, 1865 and passed away on December 8, 1926; Mathilde C. Werniger (mother of Lina) was born September 22, 1845 and died on November 24, 1932; Lina (Lillie) Marte Dolmetsch (wife of Richard Dolmetsch) was born July 13, 1874 and died on December 26, 1952; Harry C. W. S. de Brun (husband of Mathilde, daughter of Richard) was born July 26th, 1889 and passed on July 16, 1957; Mathilde Dolmetsch de Brun (daughter of Richard Dolmetsch) was born February 25, 1898 and passed away on August 28, 1983. The mausoleum is set up for six total interments, though five are present; upon entering the mausoleum there is an open space to the top left, on the west side, with Harry C. W. S. de Brun resting on top of Mathilde C. Werniger. To the right, on the east side, Mathilde Dolmetsch de Brun is at the top followed by Richard Dolmetsch and Lina Marte Dolmetsch is on the bottom. The dates of passing do not follow any correlation to how they are interned.

¹Farrington Gould and Hoagland Inc. "Client Communication" 1927. Page 3

Family Members

Richard Dolmetsch is the namesake of the mausoleum and the one who financed its creation. His grave is inscribed with the quote “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God,” Saint Matthew. Of Christian faith, there are no other religious signs to specify a sect, but members of the family are of Lutheran baptism or marriage. Richard Dolmetsch first appears through research on October 24, 1881 when he arrives in New York on the ship *Netherland* from Antwerp, Belgium.² Richard is sixteen years old and has arrived in the US by himself. His origin location is noted as Baden. Baden is located in present day Germany but held its own state within the Germanic empire from 1871-1918.³ Many immigrants of German descent have Germanic states as origin locations on early Ellis Island documentation; Germany's current borders did not solidify until WWII. Richard Dolmetsch's name then appeared again in 1882 in the Germany Emigration Index through Württemberg.⁴ It was common for emigration indexes to be created after arrival into the US. Before Richard was a naturalized US citizen he once again arrived in the US on August 31st, 1893 at the age of twenty-eight from Germany.⁵ It is unknown why Richard left the US following his first arrival in the US, but we do see his presence begin to take hold in 1885. In the 1885 census he was living in the Third Ward in Rahway New Jersey with some extended members of his family. One of these members is Gustave O Zeller. Gustave will later go into business with Richard.⁶ On June 25th, 1892 Richard married Lina Werniger.⁷ Lina and Richard will then have their only child, a girl, Mathilde Dolmetsch. In the 1900 census we find additional information and can infer more details about the young

² Richard Dolmetsch. “New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (Including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), Page: 6a; Enumeration District: 0631.1820-1957 - AncestryLibrary.com.” Accessed September 22, 2025.

³ “Baden, Germany Virtual Jewish History Tour.” Accessed September 22, 2025.

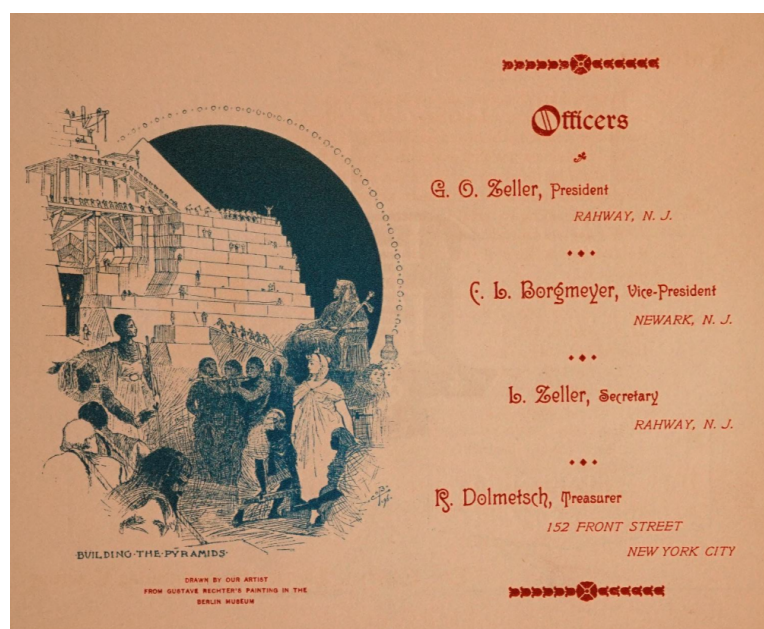
⁴ Richard Dolmetsch. “Württemberg, Germany Emigration Index - AncestryLibrary.com.” Emigration Index. Vol. I-VIII. Accessed September 22, 2025.

⁵ Richard Dolmetsch. “New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (Including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), Microfilm Serial or NAID: M237; RG Title: Records of the U.S. Customs Service; RG: 36A. 1820-1957 - AncestryLibrary.com.” Accessed September 22, 2025.

⁶ Richard Dolmetsch. “New Jersey, U.S., State Census, 1885 - AncestryLibrary.com.” Film Number: 43 Accessed September 29, 2025.

⁷ Richard Dolmetsch. “New Jersey, U.S., Marriage Records, 1670-1965 - AncestryLibrary.com.” Accessed September 22, 2025.

Dolmetsch family. They live at fifty-three Jagnes Avenue in Rahway, New Jersey and have a listed “servant,” a young woman named May Harmza who is twenty-two years old. The census lists Richard as a creamer and living on a property noted as a farm. It can be inferred that the financial means of the Dolmetsch family is increasing, given the presence of both property and servants. Richard is listed as a naturalized citizen with the ability to read, write, and speak English.⁸ Though the New Jersey Census lists Richard, and his family as living on a farm and as a Cremery, just one year later we see Richard Dolmetsch listed as the Treasurer for the Egyptian Lacquer MFG. Co.⁹



Just two names above Richard we also see G. O. Zeller as the president. This trade catalog was produced in 1896 and notes an office at 152 Front Street New York, NY, manufacturing in Rahway, NJ and Stuttgart, Germany. Gustave O Zeller obituary notes his occupation as a chemist, and with his title as

president it can be correlated to cite him as the founder/inventor of the product.¹⁰ Through this endeavor and relationship we see the wealth and notoriety of the Dolmetsch family continue to rise. The Egyptian Lacquer Manufacturing Company arrives on the scene at the 1893 Chicago

⁸ Richard Dolmetsch. “1900 United States Federal Census - AncestryLibrary.com.” Rahway Ward 3, Union, New Jersey; Roll: 997; Page: 13; Accessed September 21, 2025.

⁹ Egyptian lacquer manufacturing co., New York [from old catalog. *Transparent & Colored Lacquers for Metal Goods*. With The Library of Congress. [New York, The Baldwin & Gleason co., limited], 1896. Page 4.

¹⁰ Egyptian lacquer manufacturing co., New York [from old catalog. *Transparent & Colored Lacquers for Metal Goods*. With The Library of Congress. [New York, The Baldwin & Gleason co., limited], 1896. Page 2

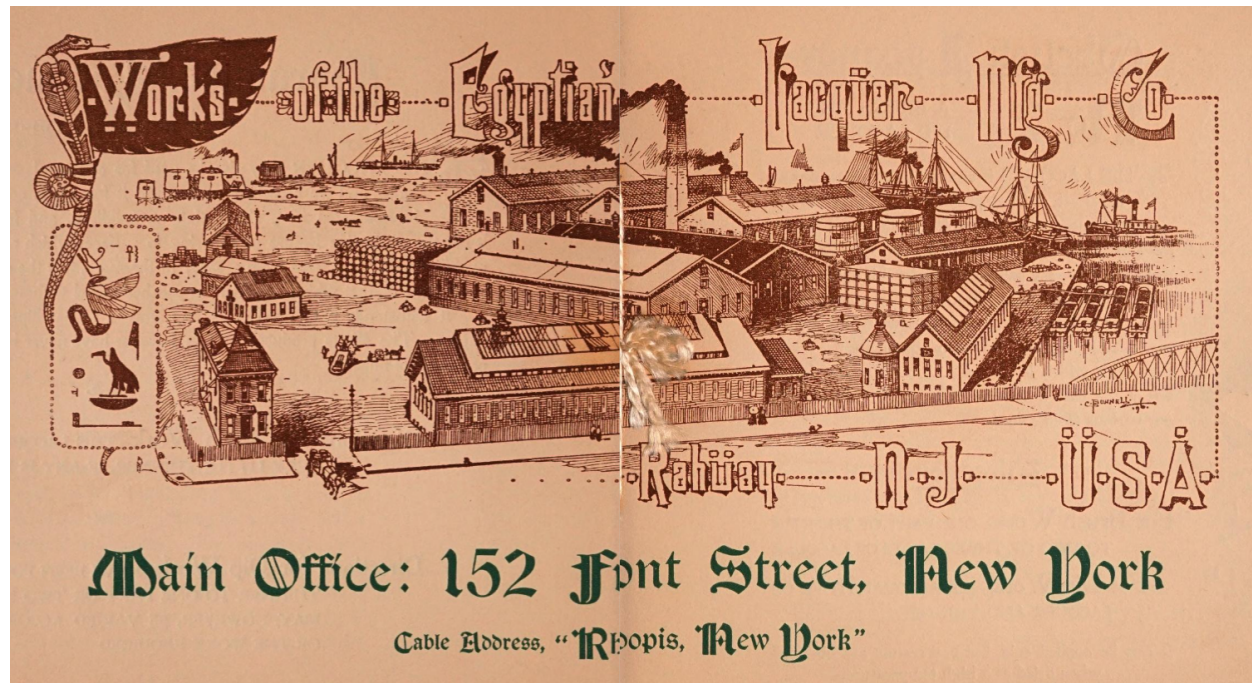
exhibition where it wins an award as an lacquer “For advancement in the art pertaining to metal lacquers, and the complete manner in which they perform the work for which they were intended, as shown by examination of metals lacquered for inside and outside work, brass, gold. and silver-plated ware, which produce fine, hard enamels, brilliant surfaces, perfect and entire film, dead colors, and are not affected by mandling or rough usage.”¹¹ This prestigious award, though the only lacquer/finish for metals at the expedition, combined with a global fascination of Egyptian antiquities sets the Egyptian Lacquer Manufacturing Company ripe for success. We see this monetary success in the 1910 Census where the Dolmetsch family is living on Morningside Avenue in Ward 12 of Manhattan with his occupation listed as secretary and residence listed as a house.¹² The move from industrial Rahway, New Jersey to wealthy Manhattan exemplifies the rise in wealth for the Dolmetsch family. The Egyptian Lacquer Manufacturing Company will give the Dolmetsch family its wealth and notoriety, remaining a point of reference in Mathilde (Mother-in-law) and Lina (Wife) obituaries. The company is still running today and is located in Franklin, Tennessee where it moved in 1949. The date of incorporation is stated, through the company website, as 1876 in Rahway New Jersey where Gustave was living.¹³ It gives no note to Gustave or Richard as founders but does go on to note the long national history of the company. The Egyptian Lacquer Manufacturing Company currently has manufacturing plants and offices in Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Saint Louis, and Indiana.

¹¹ Egyptian lacquer manufacturing co., New York [from old catalog. *Transparent & Colored Lacquers for Metal Goods*. With The Library of Congress. [New York, The Baldwin & Gleason co., limited], 1896. Page 3

¹² Ancestry. “1910 United States Federal Census - AncestryLibrary.com.” Manhattan Ward 12, New York, New York; Roll: T624_1024; Page: 6a. Accessed September 21, 2025.

¹³ “About | Egyptian Coatings | Franklin, TN.” Accessed September 22, 2025.

This 1896 catalog shows the pure elegance of the time and the prowess of the company.¹⁴



Pictured above: Figure 1. Egyptian Lacquer Manufacturing Co., Transparent & Colored Lacquers. 1896 Trade Catalog.

Pictured left: Figure 2. New York Times (New York, N.Y., United States). "Display Ad 385 -- No Title." April 1, 1928.

Your Car Painted Lower Priced Popular Models

Eight coats of genuine Egyptian Lacquer, as used on Lincoln, Pierce Arrow, Packard, and other fine cars of American make.

Two Colors \$65

36 Hours Service

Present low prices for all work in every department are unusual. Act now and you save almost half.

It costs you nothing to investigate. Drive your car in, or phone Butterfield 7309.

H. MUNSON BAIER
Custom Motor Coach Work
403-415 E. 76th St., N.Y.C.

The book is well illustrated and goes on to list the products and applications. (Figure 1) It notes brush lacquers and dip lacquers, each with different procedures to ensure lasting success of the finish. Fast forward through the invention of the automobile we find the lacquer used as a car finish. This advertisement was published in the New York Times on April 1st, 1928 marketing "Your car painted for \$65 and 8 coats of lacquer." The equivalent of around

\$1,200 today. (Figure 2) Further showing how the lacquer business was a luxury item giving successful enterprise for the Dolmetsch family. We see this success continue for the Dolmetsch

¹⁴ Egyptian lacquer manufacturing co., New York [from old catalog. *Transparent & Colored Lacquers for Metal Goods*. With The Library of Congress. [New York, The Baldwin & Gleason co., limited], 1896.

Family in the 1920 Census. The residence of the Dolmetschs has moved to 780 West End Avenue, a changing environment of high-end apartments.¹⁵ 780 West End Avenue was redesigned by Blum and Blum, brothers of French descent. They created 5,6, and 7 room apartments with intricate and ornate detail for their high end clientele.¹⁶ Named in the household members is a maid and Richards occupation is listed as chemical in industry manufacturing. Through this time Richard receives a degree from Columbia University in Pharmacy, though no records can be found, the degree encourages Richard's understanding of the lacquer business and industry.¹⁷ Though extremely successful in his endeavor with the Egyptian Lacquer Manufacturing the company filed suit against Richard on May 13, 1920. "During Dolmetch's tenure as treasurer, it is alleged, about \$6,000,000 passed through his hands and he deposited large sums in banks and trust companies to his account as trustee" Richard was found liable in 1920 had to pay back the \$6,000,000, approximately \$115 million today.¹⁸ Richard had been with the company from 1895 to 1918 and it was during this time that the money was stolen. There is no information of continued employment for Richard Dolmetsch before his death on December 8, 1926 and no evidence of declining health before his passing at fifty-nine. He passed away during an operation at Polyclinic Hospital. Interesting filings can be found in his estate and his holdings. Richards property was valued at \$1,814,884 (\$34.5 million today) but the majority of his wealth was found in securities; \$1,680,016 (\$30.24 million today) which included 4,970 shares of Egyptian Lacquer stock valued at \$881,528 (\$16.75 million today) around $\frac{1}{3}$ of the company.¹⁹ A massive holding for a company he defrauded. The holdings, property and wealth were left to his wife and to his daughter upon her death.

¹⁵ Richard Dolmetsch. "1920 United States Federal Census - AncestryLibrary.com." Manhattan Assembly District 19, New York, New York; Roll: T625_1221; Page: 12A; Accessed September 22, 2025.

¹⁶Tom Miller "Daytonian in Manhattan: Blum & Blum's 1912 780 West End Avenue." *Daytonian in Manhattan*, July 9, 2024.

¹⁷ *New York Herald Tribune (1926-1962)* (New York, N.Y., France). "Richard Dolmetsch." December 9, 1926.

¹⁸ *New-York Tribune* (New York [N.Y.]). "Ex-Treasurer Asked to Account for \$6,000,000." May 13, 1920.

¹⁹ *New York Times* (New York, N.Y., United States). "DOLMETSCH LEFT \$1,814,884: Large Holder in Egyptian Lacquer Co. Gave Bulk to Widow." SOCIAL NEWS. October 27, 1927.

Surviving her husband for twenty-six years Lina (Lillie) Marte Dolmetsch. The inscription on her grave reads "The lord bless thee and keep thee. The lord Make his face shine upon thee and give thee peace." Lina was born in Brooklyn to Oscar and Mathilde Werninger, both immigrants from Germany.²⁰ Though Lina/Lillie/Lena was born in the US, she had ties to Baden Germany. On April 23rd, 1881 she was baptized in Wurttemberg (Baden-Württemberg), Germany.²¹ These dates coincide with Richard's movements to and from Baden and a connection can be drawn to a possible meeting. Eleven years later Lina marries Richard at the age of eighteen. Lina's name continues to be found in census reports alongside her husband, and her daughter, born six years after their marriage. No occupation or other notes can be found. After her husband's death she remained a widow until her death in 1952. From her inheritance Lina enjoyed the full grasp of her wealth. The 1940 census lists her address at 625 Park ave with a butler, maid, and cook and solely herself as the head of household.²² Ship and manifest records show trips to France, Italy and Sweden are repeated affairs. The last display of wealth to be highlighted is the sale of a 1928 Rolls-Royce Phantom with the original price of \$13,335 (\$244,191 today). The sales documentation traces its original ownership to Lina Dolmetsch, though it has long since been sold by the family.²³ Lina Marte Dolmetsch's Obituary is short and concise, it reports her death at her home and her husband's connection to the Egyptian Lacquer MFG. Co.²⁴

Dolmetsch's only child is Mathilde Dolmetsch, she has no inscription below her name in the mausoleum. She married Harry C. W. S. de Brun on June 12th, 1920 in New York.²⁵

²⁰ Lina Dolmetsch. "New York, New York, U.S., Index to Birth Certificates, 1866-1909 - AncestryLibrary.com." New York City Birth Certificates; Borough: Brooklyn; Year: 1874 Accessed September 25, 2025.

²¹ Lina Dolmetsch "Germany, Lutheran Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1500-1971 - AncestryLibrary.com." Accessed September 25, 2025.

²² Lina Dolmetsch. "1940 United States Federal Census - AncestryLibrary.com." New York, New York, New York; Roll: m-t0627-02656; Page: 1A; Enumeration District: 31-1360. Accessed September 25, 2025.

²³ Classic Cars. "For Sale: 1928 Rolls-Royce Phantom I in Astoria, New York." Accessed September 25, 2025.

²⁴ *New York Times* (New York, N.Y., United States). "Mrs. Richard Dolmetsch." December 28, 1952.

²⁵ "Marriage Announcement 1 -- No Title - The New York Times." Oct. 4, 1919. Accessed September 21, 2025.

Mathilde was an ambulance driver of the Motor Corps of the National League for Women's Service during WWI and Harry also served as a Medical officer.²⁶ The 1950 census lists Mathilde's occupation as keeping the house along with other members of the household being her three children and maid.²⁷ She passed away at 85 and is survived by her three children.

Harry C.(Carl) W.(William) S. (Schultz) de Brun (Husband of Mathilde) inscription below his name reads "Many followed him and he healed them all". Saint Matthew 12:15. Harry was born in Stockholm, Sweden and arrived in the US four years after his birth on July 26th, 1893. Harry would go to become a doctor studying at Fordham University and The University of Bordeaux in France before serving in WWI as a Medical Officer. His service took him through the US, France and Italy where he served with the American Expeditionary and was discharged as a Major.²⁸ From his time in the Military service he would continue to serve the public as a New York City Police Department Surgeon for twenty-five years.²⁹ After his retirement from civil service he would go on to teach at the New York Polyclinic Hospital and Medical School. Harry would also contribute to the advancement of the medical field by authoring works to treat trauma victims along with fractures, dislocations and epiphyseal separations.³⁰ At the age of sixty-seven he succumbed to an illness and passed away at the family's second home in Saranac Lake NY.

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The final member interred in the Dolemetch Mausoleum is Mathilde C. Werniger (Rieker), the mother of Lina Marte Dolmetsch. The inscription on her tomb reads "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev 2:10. She was born in Germany and arrived in the US on June 5th, 1875. She would go to marry Oscar Werniger in 1873 in New York and only gave birth to one child, Lina. The 1920 Census lists her as the sole member of the

²⁶ Tom Miller. "Daytonian in Manhattan: Blum & Blum's 1912 780 West End Avenue." *Daytonian in Manhattan*, July 9, 2024.

²⁷ Mathilde Dolmetsch. "1950 United States Federal Census - AncestryLibrary.com." Accessed September 21, 2025.

²⁸ Harry C.de Brun. "New York, U.S., Abstracts of World War I Military Service, 1917-1919 Adjutant General's Office. Series B0808. - AncestryLibrary.com." Accessed September 21, 2025.

²⁹ *New York Times* (New York, N.Y., United States). "Obituary 4 -- No Title." July 17, 1957.

³⁰ Harry C. W. S. De Brun, "Essential Immediate Treatment of Trauma." *The American Journal of Surgery* 1, no. 6 (1926): Page 1.

³¹ *New York Times* (New York, N.Y., United States). "Obituary 4 -- No Title." July 17, 1957.

household living at West 120th Street.³² Her obituary falsely states she is the mother of Richard Dolmetsch. She passed away at her home at eighty-seven years of age.³³

Mausoleum: The Structure Itself

The structure itself is on the cusp of being 100 years old, bringing with it a history of construction, maintenance and design. Approved on April 15th, 1927, the Mausoleum is built by Farrington Gould and Hoagland of 258 Broadway and was to be made out of the “the very best quality and of the highest grade.”³⁴ The plot and bid for the mausoleum was done by Lina Dolmetsch after her husband's death. Richard Dolmetsch passed away in December of 1926, around five months before the foundation was poured. The exact date of completion on the mausoleum is unknown. Before the mausoleum was complete Richard was interned on the same plot and moved to the structure itself upon completion. Farrington Gould and Hoagland plans were approved on May 3rd, 1927 and the foundation was to be poured “as soon as possible.”³⁵

The overall design of the mausoleum is relatively simple compared to other Farrington Gould and Hoagland designs found throughout the cemetery. Some of their most famous works, including the Woolworth mausoleum, along with many others, have large front entrances with thick columns topped with Ionic ornament. The Woolworth mausoleum itself brings in Egyptian elements that would have perfectly fit the history of Richard Dolmetsch's career. Instead the Dolmetsch mausoleum is a simple rectangular structure, almost square, that rises up four steps before entering an ornate bronze double door.

³² Mathilde C. Werniger. “1920 United States Federal Census - Manhattan Assembly District 19, New York, New York; Roll: T625_1221; Page: 12A; AncestryLibrary.com.” Accessed September 22, 2025.

³³ *New York Times* (New York, N.Y., United States). “Mrs. Richard Dolmetsch.” December 28, 1952.

³⁴ Farrington Gould and Hoagland Inc. “Client Communication” 1927. Page 4

³⁵ Farrington Gould and Hoagland Inc. “Client Communication” 1927. Page 12

Upon entering the mausoleum one is immediately greeted with a painted-glass angel opposite of the door. The angel-like figure is seen holding a crown and palm. The crown can be seen as a symbol of glory and reward over death. The crown can also be seen as the authority of the lord. The palm is typically associated with Easter, and Jesus's spiritual victory over death representing eternal peace.³⁶ The glass, encased with bronze, has a natural patina to it though the original artist/maker is unknown. Each of the five members of the Dolmetsch family's graves are covered with a Valhalla white marble slab. Each piece has a polished finish with the engraved names bookcased with cast bronze rosettes, ten total for the five graves.³⁷ Supporting the four marble sheets, that act as ceiling panels, is a cast bronze rosette ceiling hanger, that through blueprints, we know is attached by a rod to the roof.³⁸ The corners are tied into the walls coming to four points at the center where the rosette, tied into the ceiling, supports it from collapsing. The exterior of the structure is masonry construction built with large Concord N.H granite blocks on all four sides.³⁹ The pediment and roof are also constructed from Concord N.H granite. Varying in height, seven rows of granite, including the base, make up the walls of the structure.⁴⁰ Other ornate elements include the bronze door with greek crosses symbolizing the families christian faith. The door is encased in a laurel leaf pattern symbolizing honor and victory often found in cemeteries. Seemingly a simple structure, the Dolmetsch mausoleum creates a strong symbolic notion as one climbs several stairs, through a bronze door encased in a laurel leaf pattern, to be met with a painted angel. This rise and power is a symbolic gesture that can be interpreted as a rise to heaven.

Condition Report

³⁶Katie Shands. "Historic Buildings in Williamson County." Yourwilliamson.com. Accessed September 30, 2025.

³⁷ Farrington Gould and Hoagland Inc. "Site Plan" 1927. Page 2

³⁸ Farrington Gould and Hoagland Inc. "Site Plan" 1927. Page 3

³⁹ Farrington Gould and Hoagland Inc. "Site Plan" 1927. Page 4

⁴⁰ Farrington Gould and Hoagland Inc. "Site Plan" 1927. Page 3

The present condition of the structure has much to do with the construction of the roof and water damage. Looking from the ground, the roof appears to be pitched and sloped from the center line of the structure allowing water to flow off the sides of the building. This is incorrect: the parapet hides a flat roof leaving the water with no measured egress. This is abundantly clear on the northwest side of the building where the mortar of the pediment granite block and the roof block is completely gone. Efflorescence is present from water running down the wall. On the rear of the structure, we see the pediment protecting only the top eighth of the granite blocks, appearing a clean gray, with the rest of the roof, pediment, and lower granite shades of green from organic growth. The building has eight exterior bronze vent openings that are intended to allow air flow in the structure and appear to be working as designed. The bronze vents, along with the bronze door, show signs of oxidation in green.

The interior shows no signs of standing water but does show signs of trapped moisture. The four marble ceiling tiles, supported by the bronze rosette and rod, show significant warping and sag. The marble slabs adorning each of the five graves also show signs of warping/bowing. Overall, after almost 100 years of age, the mausoleum is in satisfactory condition.

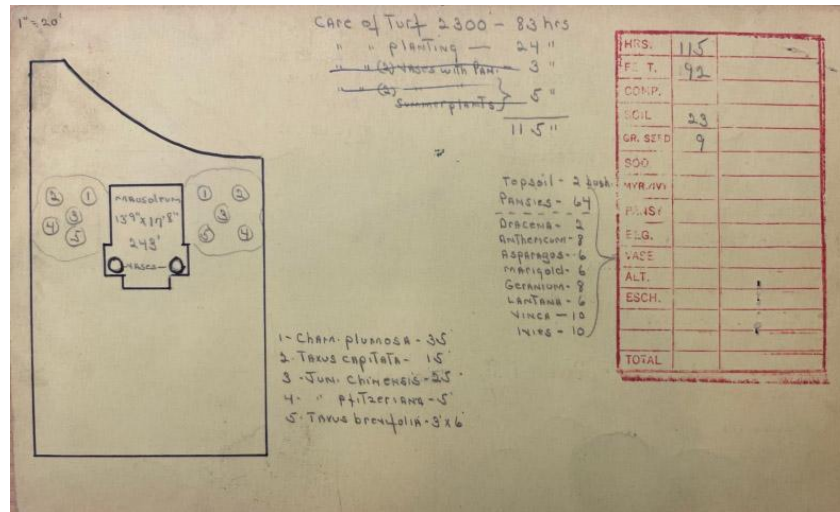
In 1953, a year after the death of the Lina Dolmetsch, \$6,000 dollars, roughly \$70,000 today, was paid for the repointing of the exterior of the mausoleum.⁴¹ This money was paid to the special care fund specific to the Dolmetsch lot. Given the final internment in the mausoleum of Mathilde Dolmetsch de Brun in 1983 it can be assumed that no money remains for upkeep of the plot.

Landscape design

The structures themselves are not the only element of the Mausoleum footprint. Upon installation, and throughout the life of the plot, the landscape created great significance for the overall effect viewing the mausoleum. The issue with the landscaping is that it needed more

⁴¹ Farrington Gould and Hoagland Inc. "Client Communication" 1957. Page 1

attention than the physical structure of the mausoleum and is much easier to remove for ease of maintenance. Below: Figure 4. Woodland Cemetery Archive. Landscape design. 1928



From the plans we see five different plants used in an overall symmetric pattern. Though not exactly symmetrical, the overall layout mirrors each other in form. Today there is only one original plant remaining. Plant number one *Chamaecyparis Pisifera*, commonly called a Plumosa, was the only tree on the plot. All of the other plants were shrubs and removed over time. The symmetric pattern of the shrubbery was intended to make the mausoleum the center piece as a grand structure. At the front of the mausoleum are two cast stone planters that are identical and sit on the plinth. Currently no plants or perennials are planted.

The Dolmetsch mausoleum stands as a representation of great American wealth and changes to where this wealth was concentrated. The rise of capitalism and the Industrial Revolution began to show great wealth not just from landowners, monarchs and aristocrats but from merchants, factory owners and entrepreneurs. Though Richard Dolmetsch may not have invented lacquer coating, and may not have even amassed his wealth through lawful means, his name will forever be in Woodlawn Cemetery as a part of the American story.

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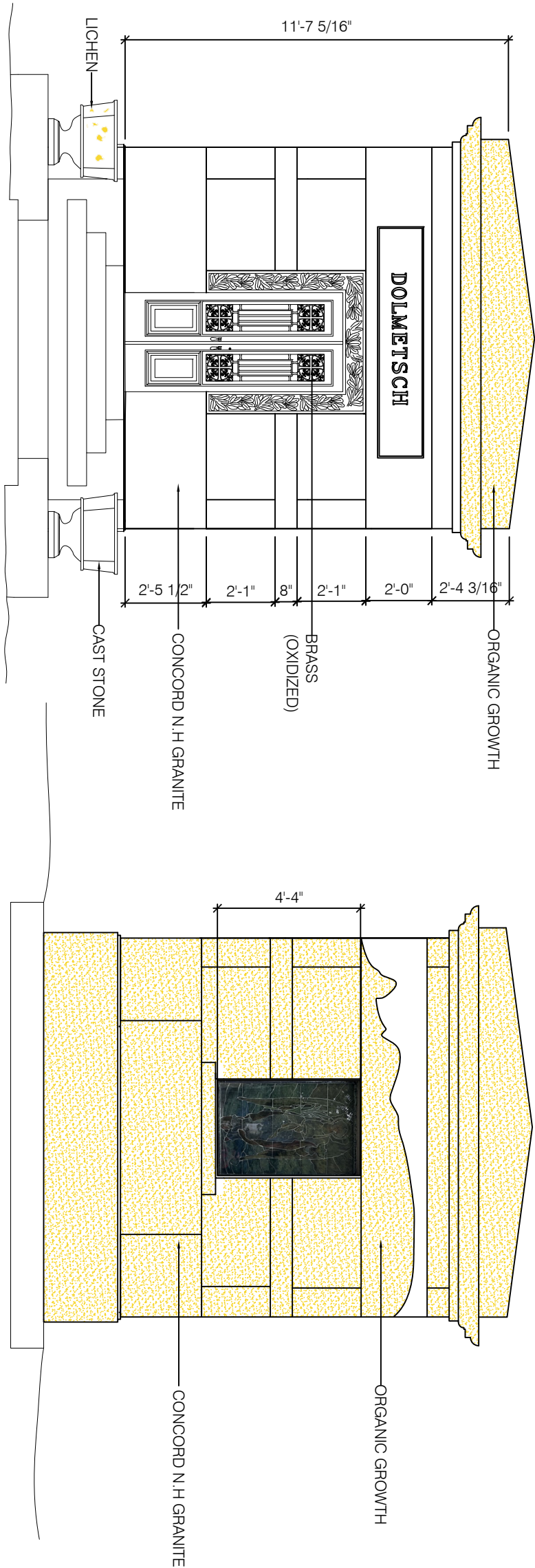
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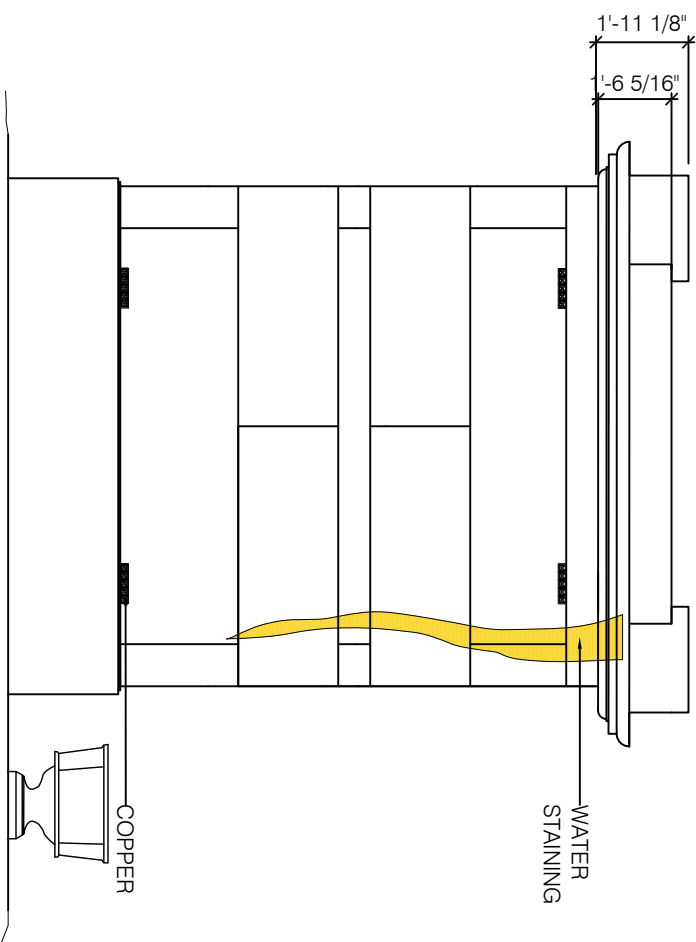
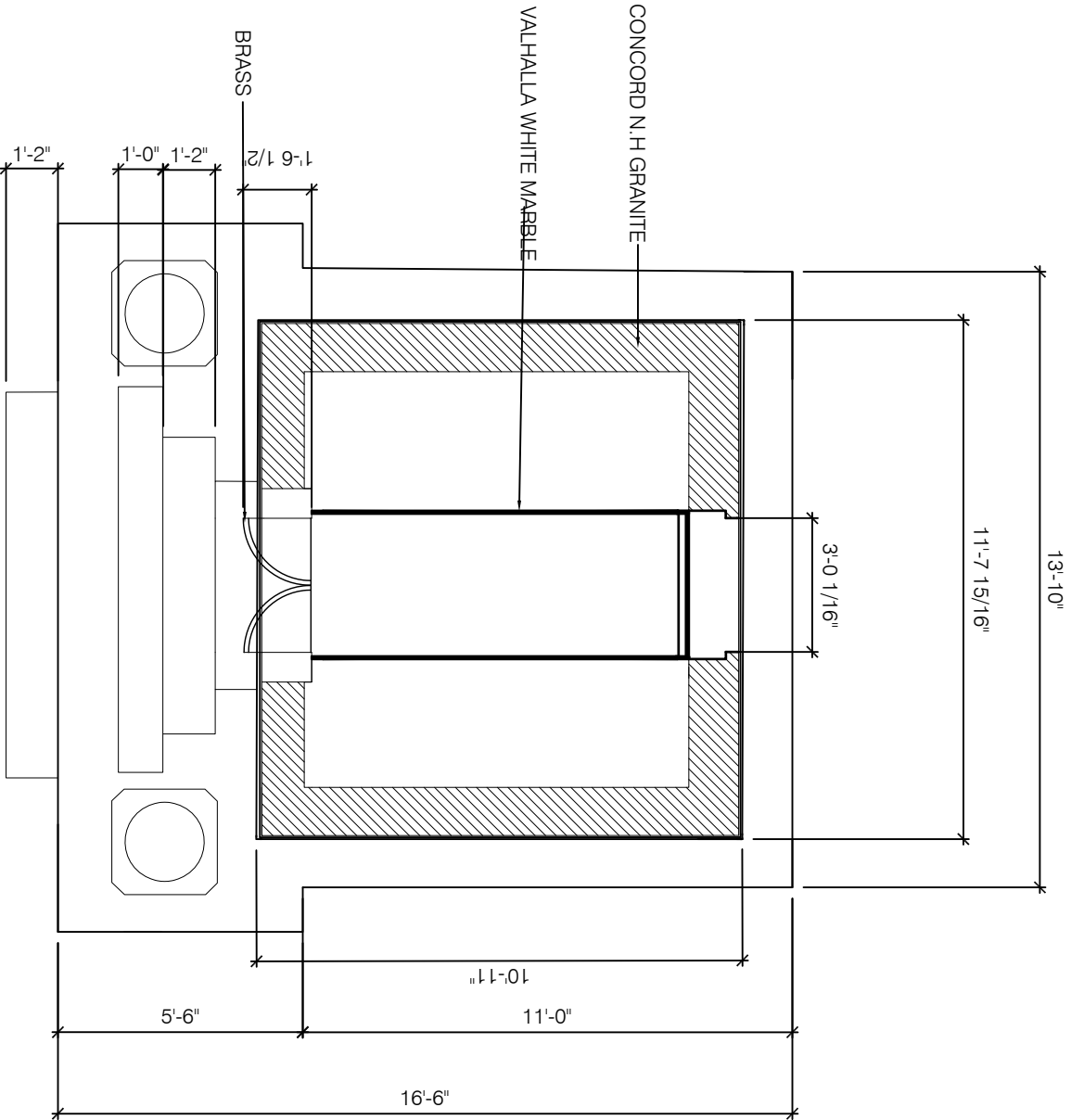
Photos

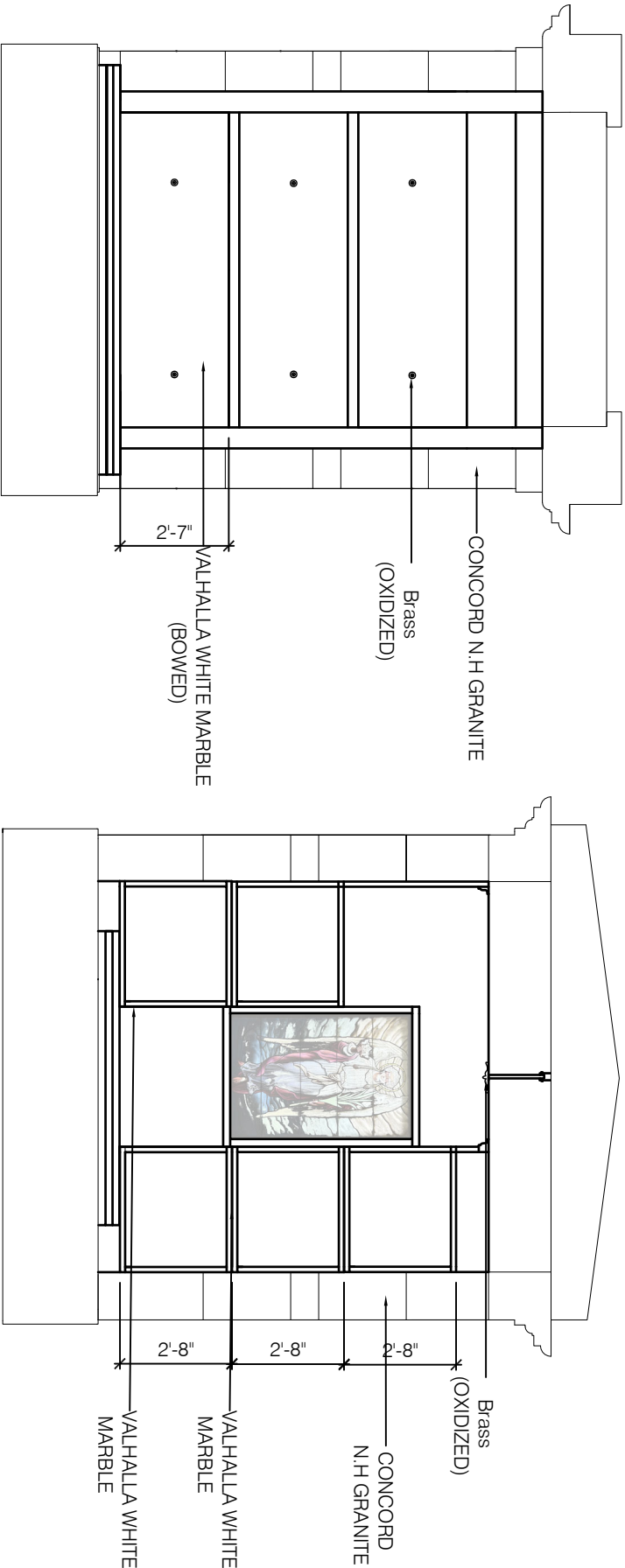






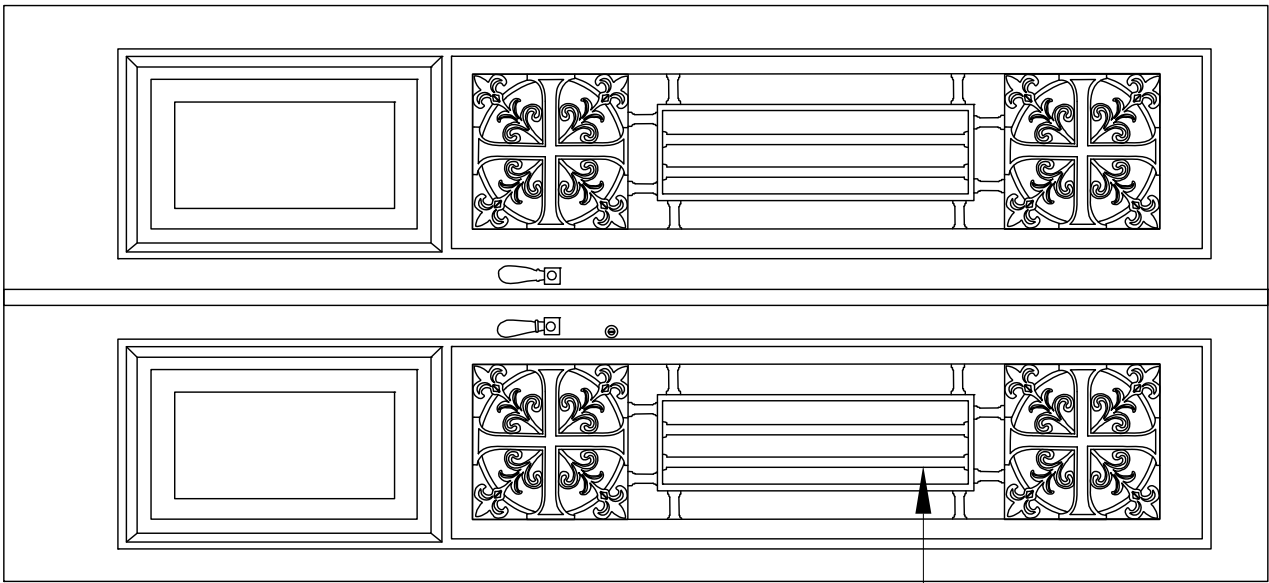






SECTIONS & DETAIL

DOLMETSCH MAUSOLEUM



3'-0"

6'-7"

Brass
(OXIDIZED)