

Problem Three: Documentation and Analysis of Historic Buildings

The Rhinelander Mausoleum was constructed at the request of William Rhinelander of New York, New York. Rhinelander had inherited the success of his father, William C. Rhinelander, who had made a great fortune in real estate in Manhattan. The building was completed in October of 1907¹ shortly before Rhinelander's death in January of 1908.² Construction was completed by the C.E. Tayntor Granite Company. The company, which operated out of Manhattan, dealt in granite from Maine and Vermont and constructed monuments and mausoleums.³ The building was constructed using C.E. Tayntor's patented roof, which the company claimed would ensure "a non-leaking roof" and form "perfect vision lines from all points of view." The exterior of the mausoleum was finished in White Hallowell Granite, with an interior finished in Light Veined Italian Marble and Pittsford Valley Marble.⁴ The ornate doors leading into the mausoleum are cast in bronze, forming a cross when closed that is backed by delicate detail. The grille protecting the stained glass window on the north facade is also cast in bronze.

The mausoleum is an amphistylar design, taking full advantage of the multiple perspectives that the plot offers. The overall facade design is structured on the Grecian Doric

¹ Mausoleum Order Sheet. Rhinelander Group, Woodlawn Collection, Avery Drawings and Archives, New York.

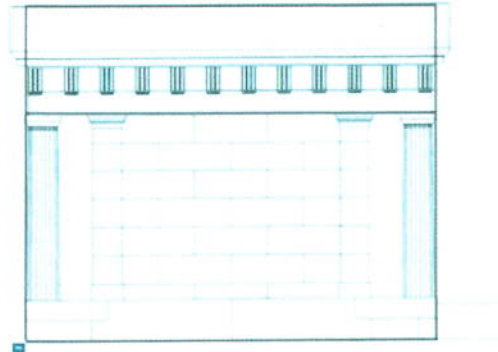
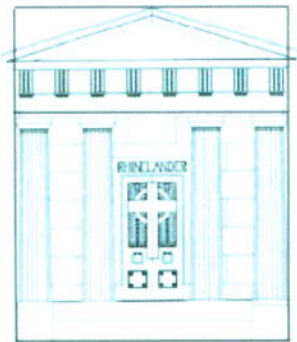
² "William Rhinelander Dead: Descendant of Huguenot Who Fled Hither to Escape Persecution." *New York Times*, January 4, 1908. <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=FB0B1FFD3C5A17738DDDAD0894D9405B888CF1D3>, 2011

³ C.E. Tayntor Granite Co., letter to Woodlawn Cemetery, September 17, 1907. Rhinelander Group, Woodlawn Collection, Avery Drawings and Archives, New York.

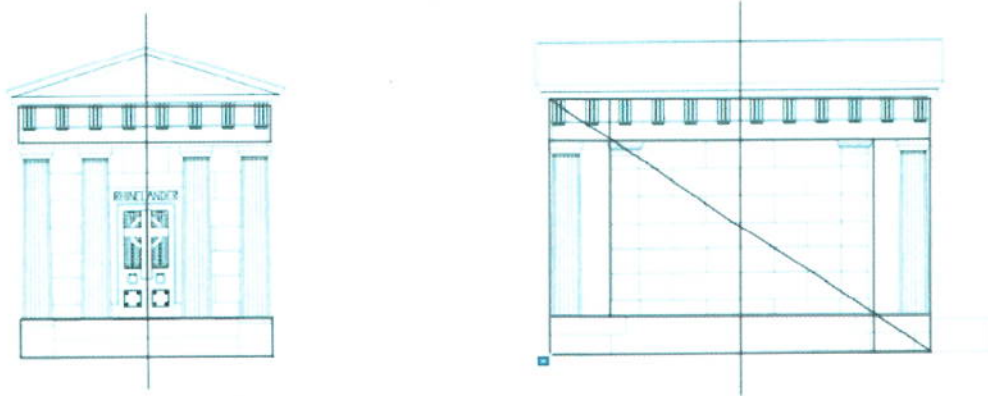
⁴ "Specifications for the Rhinelander." Rhinelander Group, Woodlawn Collection, Avery Drawings and Archives, New York.

order, with details tightly held by lines of symmetry. The mausoleum features the typical pieces of Doric order. The top of the facade begins with the cornice, which is sat on top of a frieze of triglyphs and metopes, followed by the architrave. All of this is visually supported by Doric columns, with capitals and shafts sat directly upon the base of the portico. This lines of symmetry go hand in hand with the replication of Doric orders on the north and south facades. The symmetry of the north facade is a visual clue to the replicated symmetry of the interior of the mausoleum. Upon closer examination, there are multiple replications within the facades of the mausoleum, as illustrated below:

Golden Ratios



Lines of Symmetry and Repetition



The interior stained glass window was designed by Edward Peck Sperry. Sperry designed numerous stained glass windows across the country and his talents were well regarded in the field. Sperry worked alongside some of the best designers in the country at the Tiffany Studios in New York.⁵



Rhineland North Window designed by Edward P Sperry

⁵ Tannler, Albert M., "Series 2: Tiffany Windows in Western Pennsylvania." <http://www.phlf.org/james-d-van-trump-library/architectural-glass-in-pittsburgh-and-western-pennsylvania/series-2-tiffany-windows/>, 2011

An equally important aspect of the Rhinelander Mausoleum is the element of design incorporated into the surrounding landscape. The plot itself is rather prominent, sitting at the intersection of two roads in the cemetery. The landscape architecture was completed by the Hinchman, Pilat, and Tooker Firm at some point after 1908.⁶ Perhaps, the most prominent member of this firm was Carl F. Pilat. Although Pilat's work on the Rhinelander Mausoleum was earlier in his career, elements of his ideas about landscape architecture in cemetery is well expressed with this plot. Pilat spoke about his goals with the Rhinelander Mausoleum in a 1921 issue of *Park and Cemetery and Landscape Gardening*. Pilat stated that his three main goals were "to form a satisfactory setting for the mausoleum; to screen from view the nearby monuments and mausoleums; to partially obscure the rigid boundaries and soften the conspicuous lines of roads and path, thus increasing the apparent size of the plot." In order to complete these goals, Pilat added two bronze tripod vases onto the front of the mausoleum to provide additional color and relief to the mass of granite. There was also a full scale planting of a diverse variety of plants along the east and west facades.⁷ This planting mirrored the strong symmetry of the building and followed its amphistylar design by framing the north and south facades. Pilat would later express his views more explicitly in *The Architectural Record* where he explained his distaste for "the average cemetery with its rows of mausoleums, shafts, and other more or less pretentious monuments in close proximity, with their conflicting lines and

⁶ Hinchman, Pilat, and Tooker, "Landscape Plan, 1908." Rhinelander Group, Woodlawn Collection, Avery Drawings and Archives, New York.

⁷ Leland, Ernest S. "Planting The Mausoleum Plot: III. The Rhinelander Mausoleum, Woodlawn, New York. *Park and Cemetery and Landscape Gardening*, 1921." Rhinelander Group, Woodlawn Collection, Avery Drawings and Archives, New York.

motives competing for the attention of the passerby.”⁸ Pilat believed that such monuments missed the peace and beauty of what these memorials were intended to be.

The documentation on the deliberate nature of the mausoleum’s landscaping is an important element to consider when discussing preservation of this structure. Pilat’s landscape design has long since been abandoned, and the existing landscape breaks the meticulous proportion and symmetry of the original plan. Rather than framing the structure and mirroring its symmetry, the plants have become overgrown and lopsided, throwing the visual lines out of proportion. This element of design complicates the issue of preserving this structure.

Regarding deterioration, the most obvious exterior threat to the structure is biological growth, primarily on the north and west facades. This biological growth upsets the stone’s abundant potential to reflect sunlight. The marble in the northeast corner of the interior appears to have shifted for some reason. While the cause of this shift is unknown, it could possibly lead to greater structural issues in the future. Currently, it upsets the interior’s visual symmetry.

⁸ Pilat, Carl F. “A Cemetery Plot As A Memorial.” *The Architectural Record*, 1922. http://books.google.com/books/about/A_cemetery_plot_as_a_memorial.html?id=BktoNwAACAAJ , 2011