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**JOHN J. BRADLEY MAUSOLEUM**  
Woodlawn Cemetery & Conservancy Center  
Bronx, New York

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The location of the Woodlawn Cemetery is at the East side of The Bronx borough in the State of New York. It is recognized as one of the most significant cemeteries in the United States. In addition to the personalities buried there, its monuments, memorials, and landscapes have created a place with a unique atmosphere in the country.

Different circumstances caused the significant development of the Woodlawn Cemetery. One, was the requirement of new places for burials as a result of increased occupation in the Northern Manhattan. Also, there was an notable evolution towards the understanding of the cemeteries provoked from French, British and German ideas absorbed by the Woodlawn's Designers by 1880<sup>1</sup>. The result of these conditions brought the creation of a cemetery with a powerful landscape and emblematic monuments which became memorable over time.

The extensive collection of mausoleums erected in Woodlawn is a portrait of wealth together with the artistic and cultural knowledge of an era. For many people, the idea of resting inside a monument built under the idea of eternity became a priority. Somehow, it was the reflection of power and recognition, and consequently it became in a way in which the most influential characters wanted to be remembered.

The concept of the Mausoleum born from the idea of distinction, magnificence, and commemoration. According to the Oxford Dictionary, there are three definitions for this concept:

**Mausoleum** <sup>2</sup>

- a) Ancient History. Usually with capital initial. The magnificent tomb of Mausolus (one of the seven wonders of the ancient world) erected at Halicarnassus in the 4th cent. b.c. by his widow Artemisia.
- b) A stately or imposing edifice erected as a commemorative burial place for or by a person distinction.
- c) gen. A stately or imposing tomb

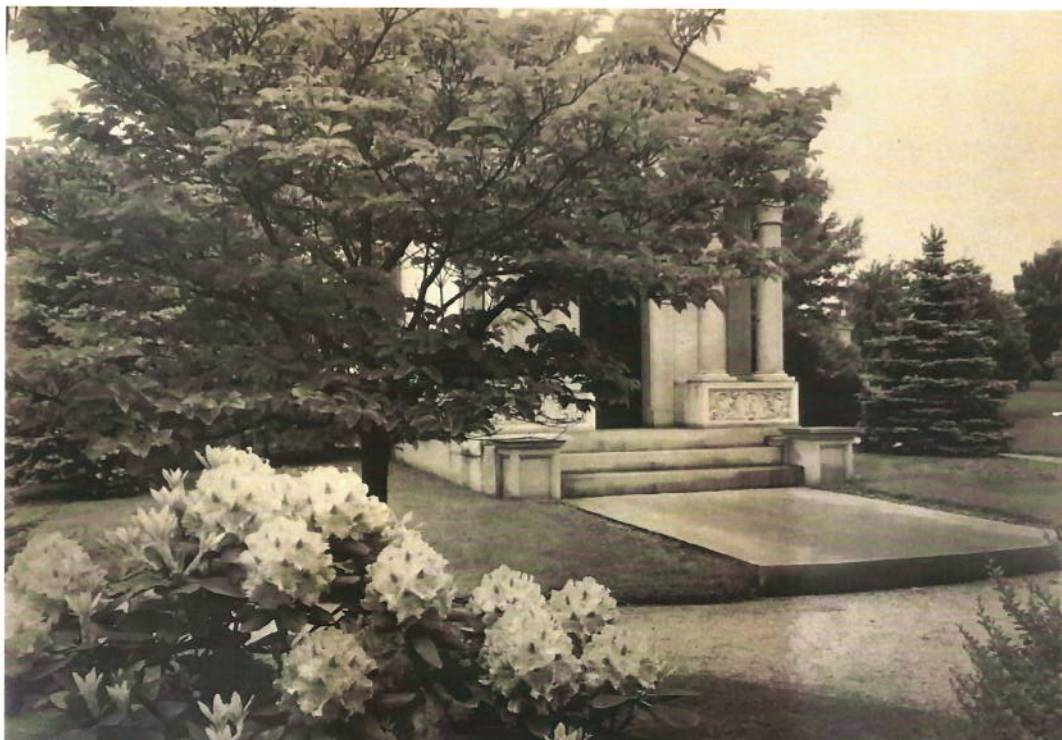
With this understanding, it makes sense that the magnificence of Woodlawn is directly related to its landscape and to the variety of mausoleums that are in its land.

For the case of Woodlawn, there are many anecdotes behind each Mausoleum. The case of the John J. Bradley monument is an example of a peculiar story which started with the dead of James E. Kelly.

James E. Kelly was a well-known horse racer who died in Paris on January 31 of 1903<sup>3</sup>. On September 21 of the same year, his wife May Kelly purchased a plot at the Chestnut Hill area inside the Woodlawn Cemetery. She commissioned the construction of the Mausoleum to the recognized firm C.E. Tayntor & Company. This company was distinguished for their ornamental and elegant works, and the Mausoleum erected for Mr. Kelly was not an exception. With a central disposition, the firm conceived a building which was to include the finest materials, such as Vermont Crystal Granite, stained glass, Dark Cedar Tennessee Marble, and the best quality bronze<sup>4</sup> (*fig 1*).

Mrs. Kelly took the remains of his husband to his Mausoleum during 1905<sup>5</sup>. In the following years, there were other people buried there too. In 1910 Hannah Pobjay was interred in the Mausoleum, followed by Ada P. Hildt in 1912, and Thomas Pobjay in 1915<sup>6</sup>. Probably they were Mr. Kelly sisters and a brother in law.

According to the book of sell records<sup>7</sup>, it appears that during the years after the death of James E. Kelly, his widow continued living in Paris. Possibly, she had married again because on September 11, 1933, under the name of May Gage, she transferred the James Kelly Mausoleum



*Fig 1. James E. Kelly Mausoleum. ca 1930. WCA Photographs. Avery Library. Classics*

to the contractor John J. Bradley. At that time, Bradley was working for the Subway Industry and his wife, May Allen Bradley, had died one year before<sup>8</sup> .

As part of the Mausoleum transaction, the remains of the people interred there had to be transferred. Richard Shaw, who was May Gage's Sibling, owned Section 153 of the Clover Plot, and he declared the use of the graves for the remains of the people that used to be at the James E. Kelly Mausoleum<sup>9</sup> .

After the transfer, the Mausoleum went through some renovations to adapt it for the Bradley family. One of the most clear modifications was at the entrance, where the Kelly's emblems were removed, and the name was changed (*fig 2*). Also, there is a possibility of interior renovations too; the existing materials and finishes seems different from those specified on the document published by C.E Tayntor & Company Manual in 1903.

After the internment of May Allen Bradley in 1933, the remaining catacombs continued unoccupied until the death of John J. Bradley in 1941. Subsequently, the maintenance of the building was under the responsibility of his daughter, Noell Bradley Nash, who, in 1971 declared the use of the crypts<sup>10</sup> for herself, interred in 1974; her husband William Nash, buried in 1987; Doris H. Keilt, heir of John J. Bradley who died in 1998 but was transferred to the building until 2006<sup>11</sup> ; and Paul Horn, interred in 1976. Nowadays the Mausoleum is endowed and has two empty catacombs.



*Fig 2. John J. Bradley Mausoleum. Ca 2018. Photograph by Mariana Ávila Flynn*

## Physical conditions

The building designed by C.E. Tayntor & Company was with a symmetrical disposition (*fig 3*)<sup>12</sup>, echoing its location at the central lot of a group composed of six circular lots. The foundation for its construction was six feet deep from the lowest point of the grade of the building<sup>13</sup>.

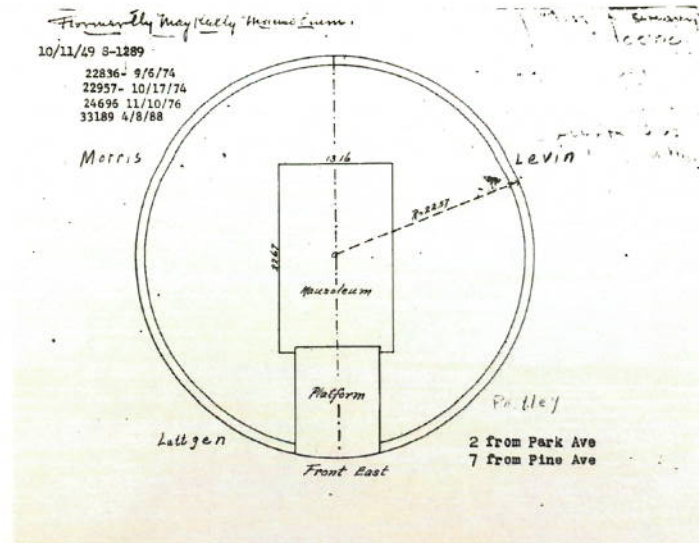


Fig 3. Trace Plan. WCA Major Monuments. Avery Library. Classics

Over the foundation there is a granite platform for the erection of the building. The access is marked by one platform located at the front east side, conducting to the three steps ordering the entrance to the building<sup>14</sup>. At the corners of the platform, there were arranged eight columns with composite capitals and ornate bas-relief carvings pedestals. This arrangement function as a threshold between the exterior and interior and, in the main facade, remarks the bronze door for the access. The conception of the building included the use of granite for the exterior appearance, polished finish for the columns and pilasters; and unpolished for the rest. These finishes are still visible in the building.

For the interior area (*fig 4*), the design included a central corridor and eight catacombs (four in each side), for which its shelves probably were of slate. The floor was planned as a solid piece of granite with a polished finish; however, nowadays it is unpolished. At the rear area, the scheme incorporated a seating space and a stained glass window. Both placed between two columns, also with composite capitals, and an arch over them. There are two kinds of marble used for the interiors: The details, such as the seating area, the columns and the arch, are most likely to be pink Tennessee Marble. These details stand out from the ceiling, the cover of the catacombs and the walls, in which the finished material is possible to be white Tennessee Marble; polished for all the elements, except for the cover of the catacombs, where it is unpolished.

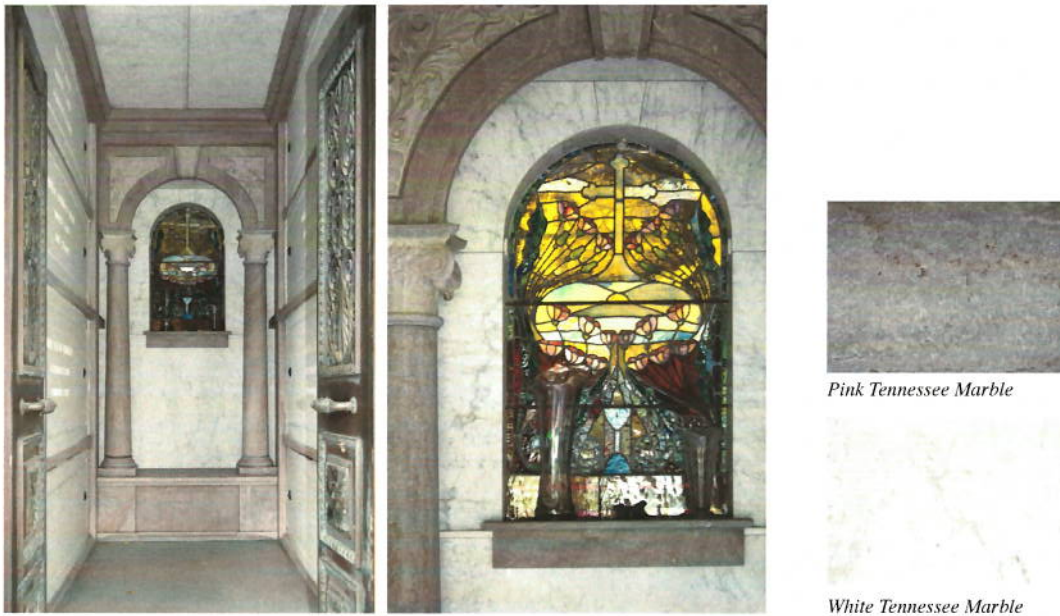


Fig 4. Interiors and finishes. Ca. 2018 Photographs by Mariana Ávila Flynn

As time has passed, the Mausoleum had witnessed some deterioration in its materials. This situation is most notable at the exterior, where the presence of biological growth (fig 5) in almost the entire building is clear. Most of it takes place in the unpolished surfaces and the joints between the granite pieces. It is possible that the detail of the roof (fig 6) caused some water damage, principally at the corners, where some brown stains are noticeable. In addition to this, the presence of white spots in some areas of the perimeter of the roof could be indicating the presence of salts of mortar (fig 7) These salts probably would be working their way through mortar joints, principally the ones located at the cornice.

The degradation visible on the exterior appears to be a natural cycle of the building, and, somehow the interiors had been protected. Overall, the interior area seems preserved in good condition and it hasn't been visibly affected by the exterior water damage. However, some of the tombs covers has been raised, which is probably related to the assembling system of the catacombs.

Nowadays, the atmosphere of the Woodlawn Cemetery is the portray of an idea of eternity which is visible on the materials, the meaning of the buildings, and its deterioration as a result of the natural pass of time.

The Cemetery by itself is capable of transmitting the essence of an era and, somehow, the evolution of the concept of death in New York and its surroundings. The entire place is an open space where the exterior of each one of its monuments now belongs to Woodlawn scenery. However, their interiors always will keep the memory of the remains of the families and their history.



*Fig 5. Biological growth*



*Fig 5. Detail at the roof with some water damage at the corner*



*Fig 7. Salts of mortar*

## Endnotes

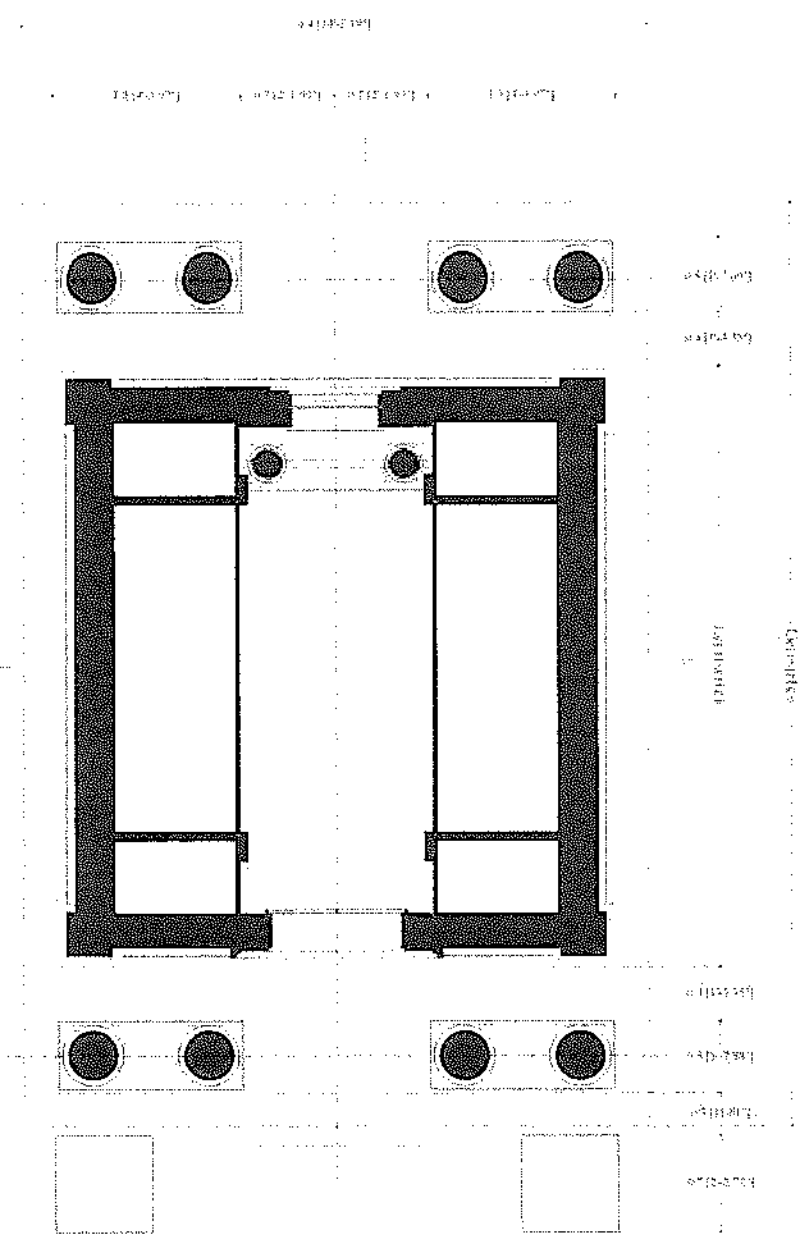
- 1 Woodlawn Cemetery. Charles D. Warren. "Garden Necropolis: Planning Woodlawn's Landscape" pp. 13
- 2 Oxford English Dictionary, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/115201?redirected-From=mausoleum#eid>
- 3 Courier- Journal (1869-1922). ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Louisville Courier Journal (1830-1922) pg. 8
- 4 Specifications for the Manufactures & Completion of a Mausoleum Erected in Woodlawn Cemetery for May Kelly. C.E Tayntor & Company
- 5 Woodlawn Authorization Note. Woodlawn Cemetery, 1905.
- 6 Register of Internments: 62884, 77929, 89524 & 82183
- 7 Purchase Record Card of the plot Chestnut Hill, Lot 11024, Section 111.
- 8 1930 United States Census. Ancestry
- 9 Declaration of the use of graves. Clover Plot, Section 153. August 31st, 1933
- 10 Lot Owners Correspondence. John J. Bradley Archive: WCA Lot Owner Correspondence. Box 18. Avery Library. Classics.
- 11 Opening authorization for the niche 1 of the lot 11024 of the lot 111 requested by Richard Keilt.
- 12 Trace Floor Plan. John J. Bradley Archive: WCA Major Monuments, Drawer 2.2, Folder 95. Avery Library. Classics.
- 13 C.E Tayntor & Company Document and Foundation blue print plans. John J. Bradley Archive: WCA Major Monuments, Drawer 2.2, Folder 95. Avery Library. Classics.
- 14 Specifications for the Manufactures & Completion of a Mausoleum Erected in Woodlawn Cemetery for May Kelly. C.E Tayntor & Company



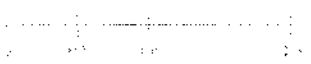
Site Plan

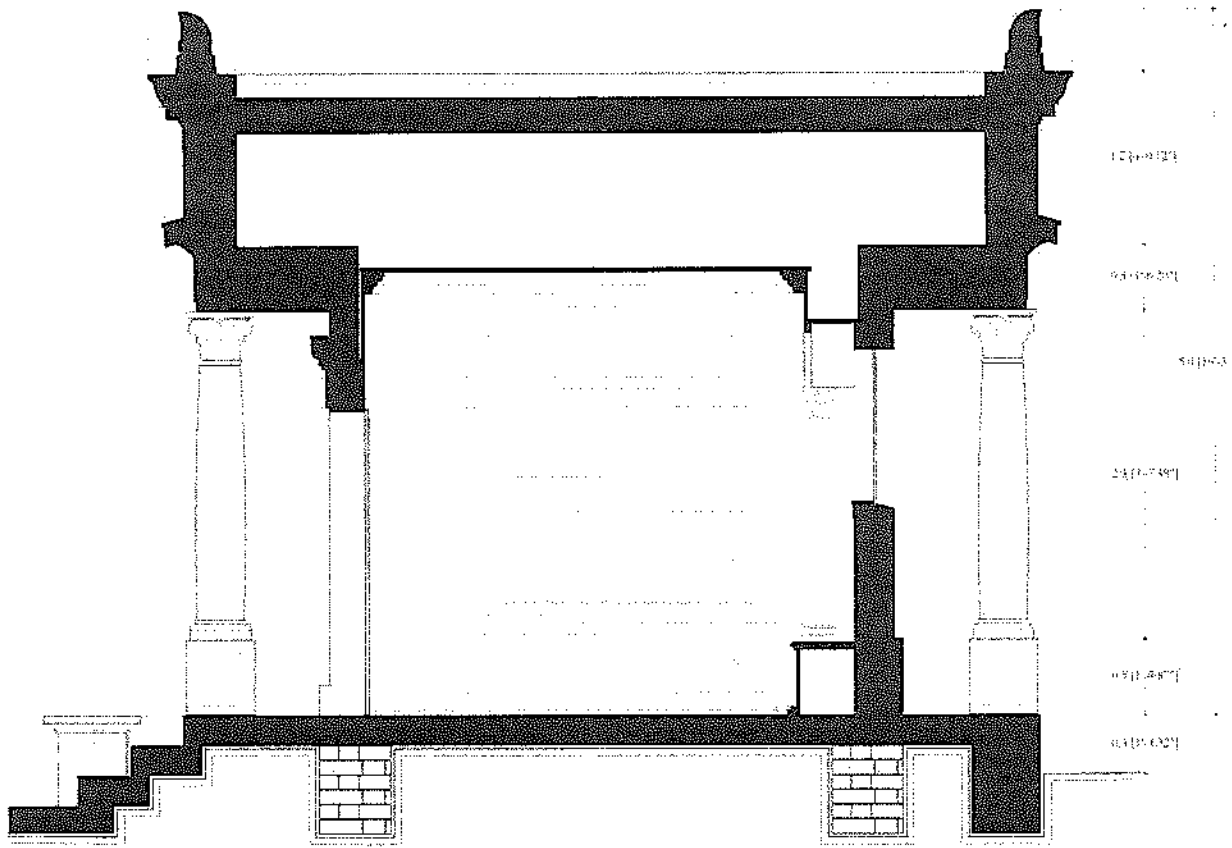






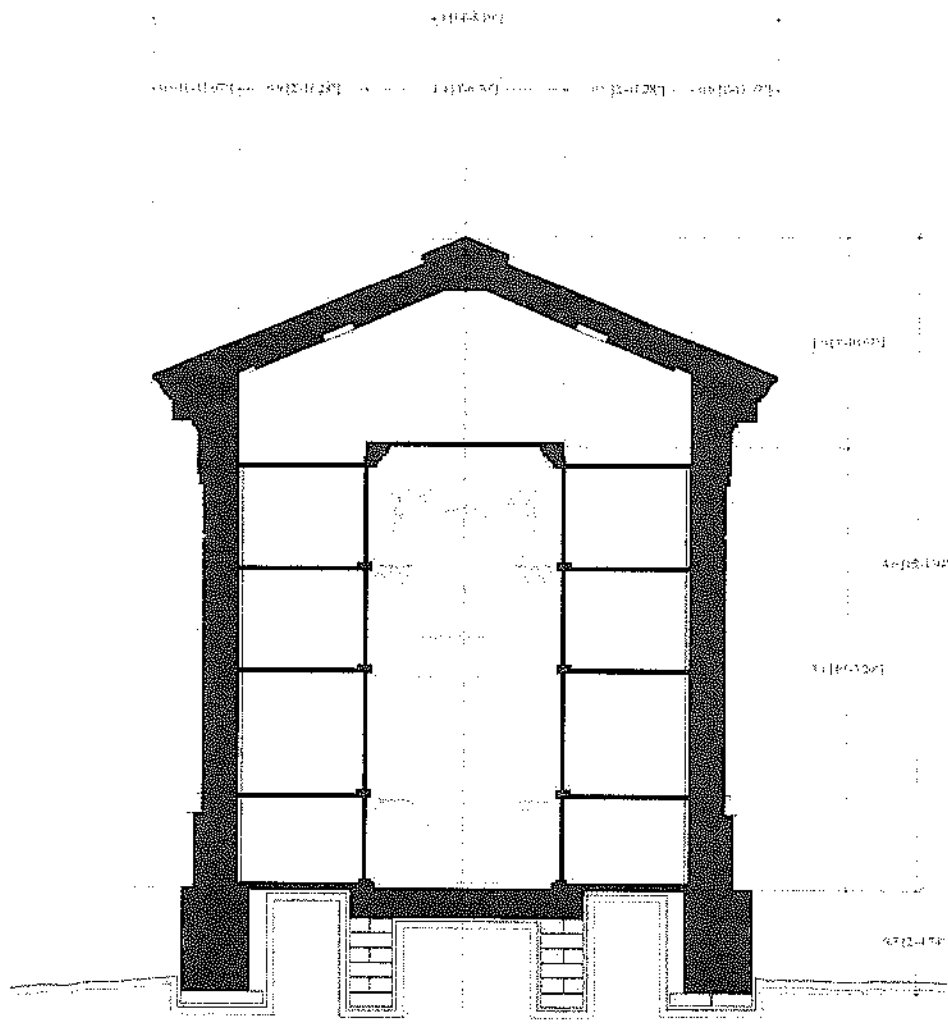
Floor Plan



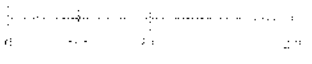


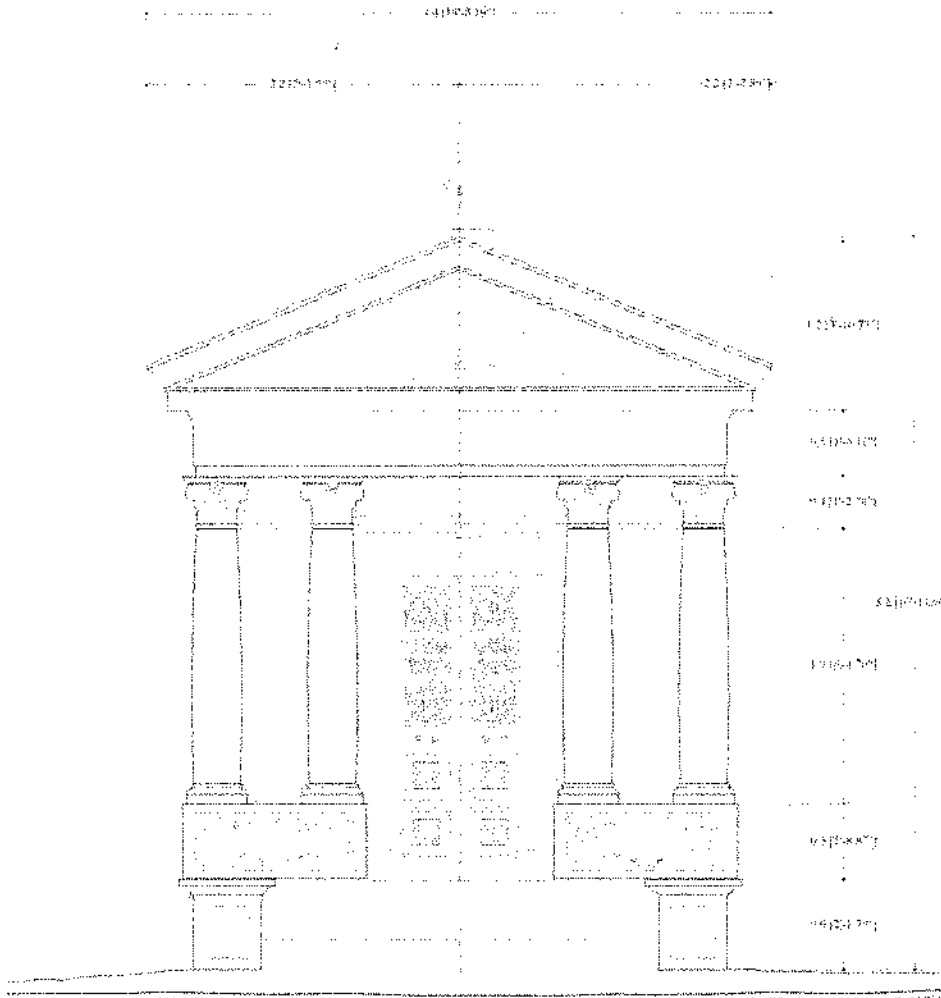
Section a-a





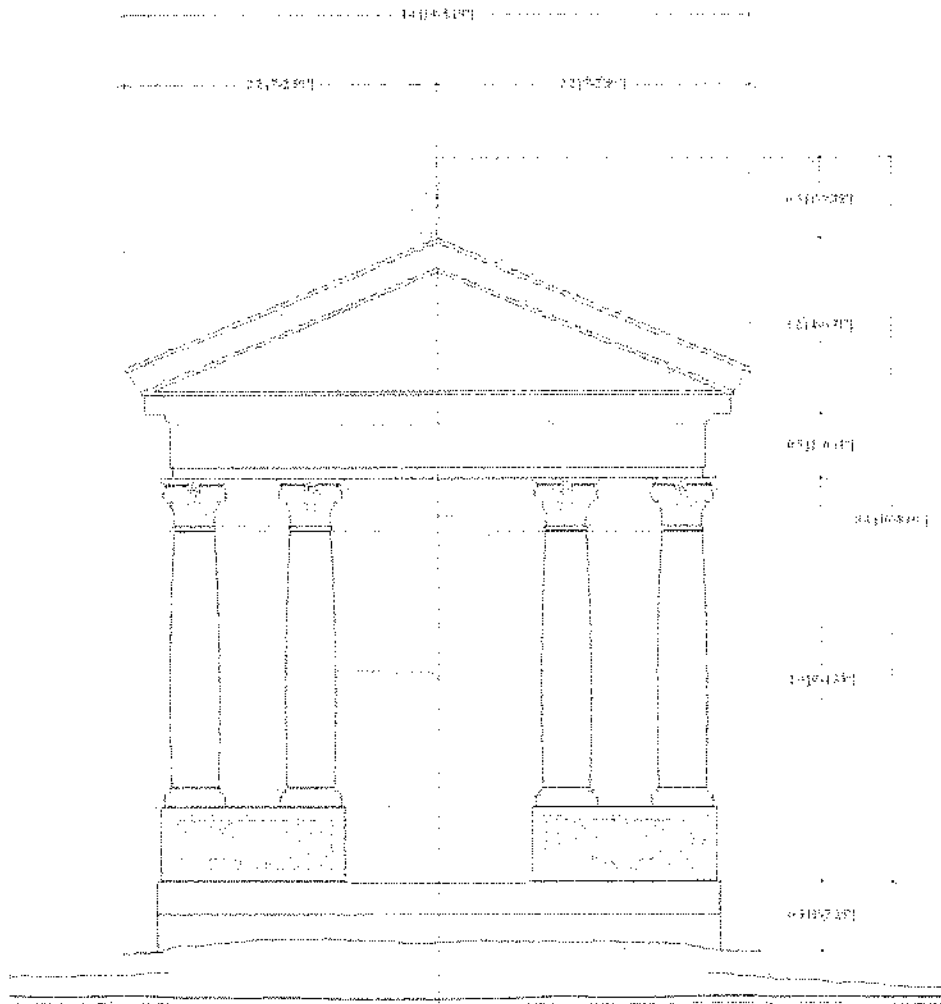
Section b-b'





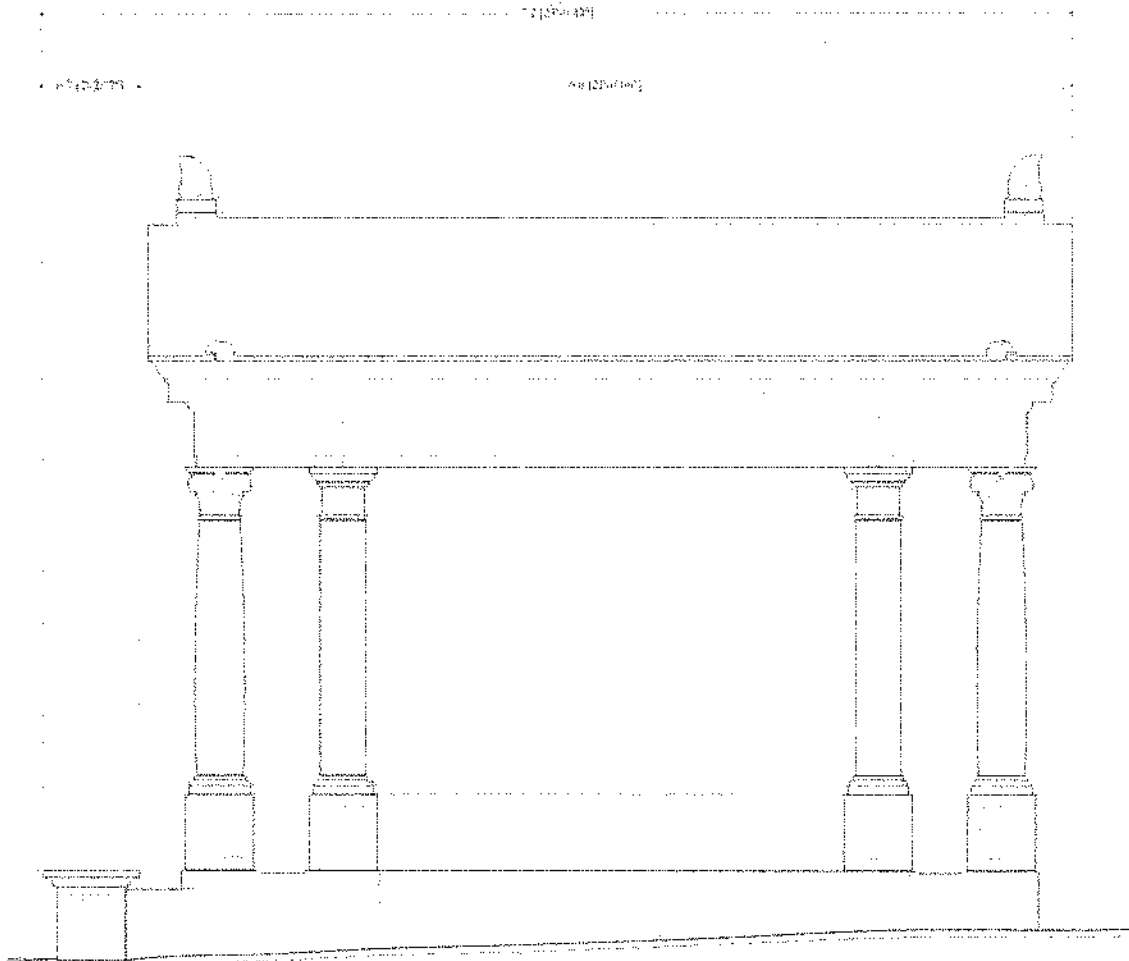
East Elevation

1/4" = 1'-0"

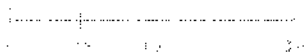


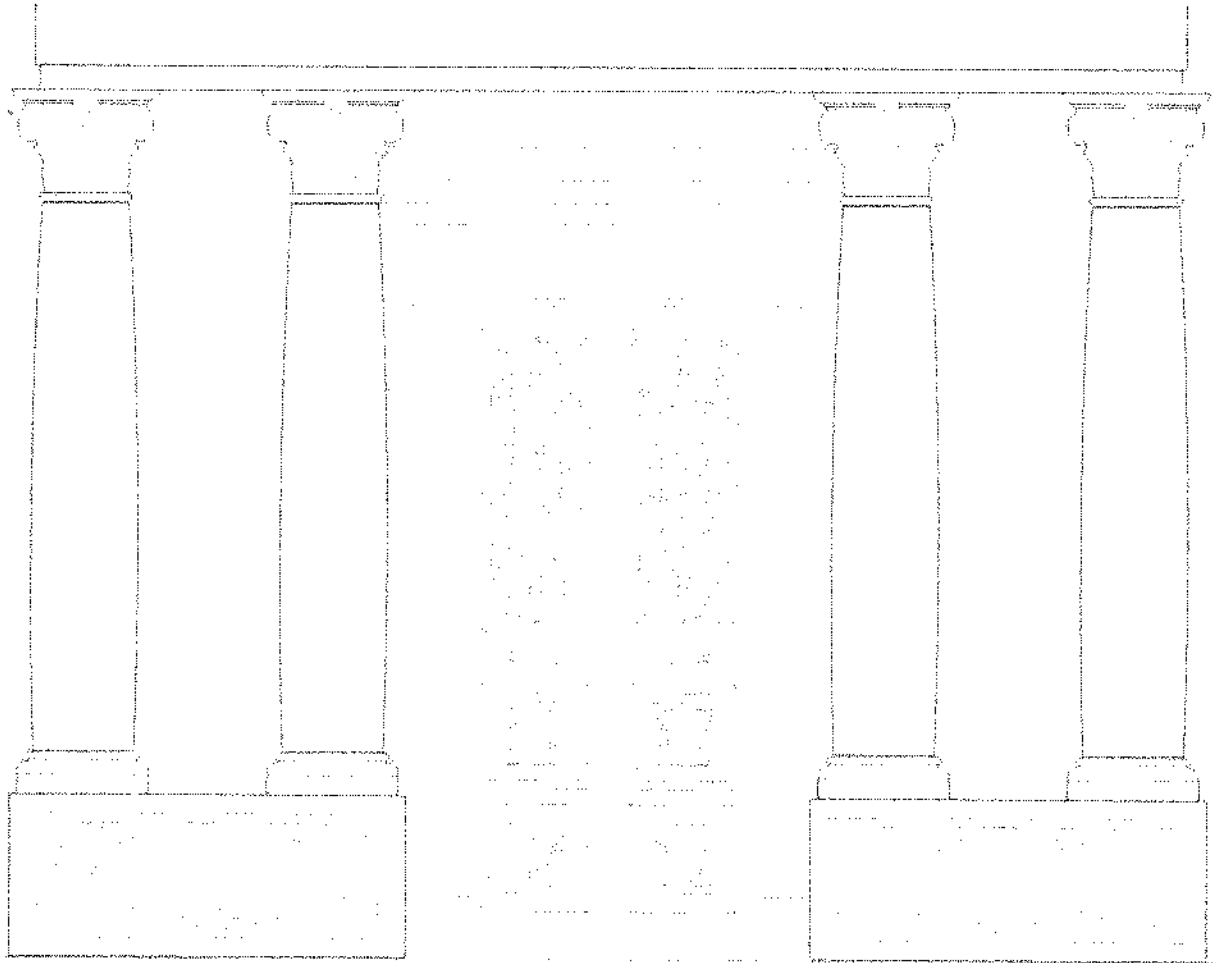
**West Elevation**

Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



North Elevation





Entrance detail

