

The Turner's Mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery

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The Turner's Mausoleum is located on Chestnut Hill's Ave. It takes about 10 minutes' walk from the entrance of Woodlawn to reach this mausoleum, and it is a great place for resting since it is hidden deep within the cemetery. In the mausoleum it buried a couple, John Charles Turner and Louise A Turner. The building style is traditional and concise, even though the designer's name is unknown, according to documents and letters it was built by Farrington, Gould & Hoagland, Inc.



The main facade

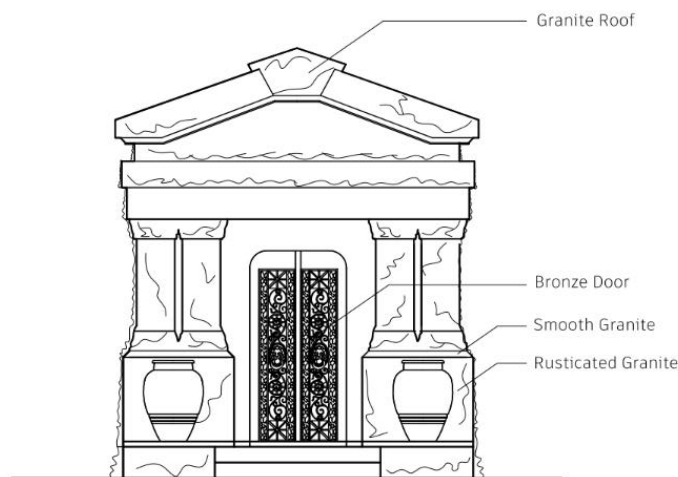
The Turner Mausoleum is located on a grassy area away from the road. Four pine trees are arranged in a line in front of the mausoleum; although they block some of the view of the facade, they contribute to the landscape design of the cemetery. Since the only path to the mausoleum requires passing through these trees, they add an additional layer of symbolism and remembrance.

When reaching the front step of the mausoleum, one can see that the entire structure has a symmetrical layout, a solid and dignified form, and well-balanced proportions, aligning with the

architectural qualities expected of a cemetery structure. The building's proportions and exterior design are remarkably simple, primarily using rusticated granite for the entire exterior—a choice that is rare even among other buildings by the same company in Woodlawn.

Overall, the Turner's Mausoleum has a minimalist profile, with a temple-like design on the front façade, complete with decorative vases with a classical touch, and a continuation of the minimalist design on the two side façades, with symmetry maintained on the rear façade through the glass windows. The harmonious use of durable materials and classical elements enhances the mausoleum's timeless and serene beauty.

For the main facade, the mausoleum begins with a two-step stone staircase, with a decorative vase on each side. Also, there are two simplified Doric columns on each side of the entrance, which are made of rusticated granite. In front of the entrance is a recessed porch, adding more depth. Then, there is a pair of bronze doors with detailed patterns. Also the owner's name "Turner" is carved above the door. The whole simple design highlights the importance of the entrance.



The main facade

For the side elevations of the Turner's mausoleum, Farrington, Gould & Hoagland continues the simple design style, and the materials is still rusticated granite. The overall structure consists of five courses of stone blocks and a base. Also, there are four bronze grilles with detailed carvings, which provide good ventilation since the interior of the mausoleum is well preserved. It shows the effort the thought the designer put into.



northern facade



south facade

When it comes to the rear facade, it is similar to the other three sides, using the same material and layout. The only difference is a window in the center with a bronze frame. This glass window has a double-layers design, so from the inside, we can see patterns, but they are not visible from the outside.



The back facade

The interior design of the building remains very simple, except using marble as the primary material, which is distinct from the exterior. The ceiling uses a coffered beam design, creating various rectangular sections. The exterior of the catacombs in the tomb also uses the same stone material.



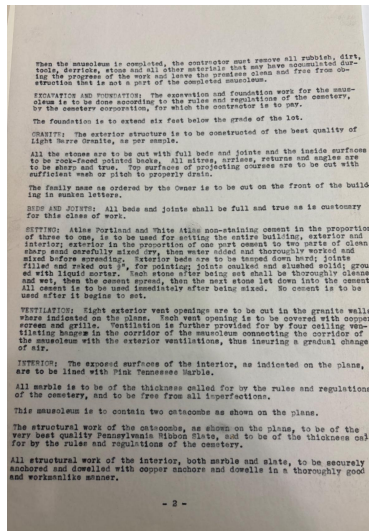
The coffered beam

The highlight of the interior is the central stained-glass window. Unlike other ones, the central window doesn't use traditional mosaic patterns or religious themes. Instead it used a landscape painting. The drawing describes trees, grass, and a pathway, using warm yellow and green tones to create a peaceful atmosphere of a sunset. The cypress trees pattern may relate to the pine trees at the entrance of the mausoleum and also reflect Turner's profession in the lumber industry, perhaps suggesting the tomb owner's love for natural scenery.



The stained glass window

In terms of materials, some correspondence confirms that the exterior of the building was constructed using high-quality “Light Barre” granite. For setting, Atlas Portland cement and White Atlas non-staining cement were used. The interior surfaces were decorated with Tennessee Pink Marble. The stone cutting style at the exterior is rough and blocky, with visible chisel marks, but the joints are very precise, and the connections are smooth, showing a natural style assigned with the likes of the owners.

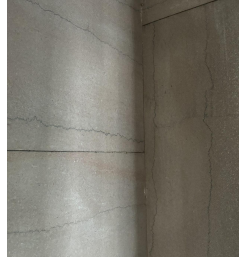


Correspondence between The Woodlawn Cemetery and Farrington, Gould & Hoagland

In terms of conditions, the entire mausoleum is in very good condition, which I believe is related to the clever placement of the bronze grille. There are two noticeable areas of damage. The first is biological growth at the bottom of the side facade . The chisel marks on the stone create some shaded areas, and since this side is away from sunlight, it is sensitive to dampness, leading to moss growth. The second area is the side elevation under the eaves and the interior stone finish, which shows some water damage to the exterior elevation due to rainwater from the upper portion; the interior stone finish is cracked.



Exterior Water damage



Interior Water damage



Biological growth

Overall, the design reflects a simple and peaceful style that aligns with the lifestyle of the owners. This couple, who were lumber merchants, now rest here, their lives unmarked by gossip or drama, instead characterized by calmness and hard work. Because of this, Mrs. Turner chose a design for their final resting place that matched the essence of their lives—modest yet tasteful.

John Charles Turner was born in June 1861 in New Jersey, but spent his childhood in New York City¹. According to the 1870 United States Federal census, his parents were both German immigrants and he was the only child. There wasn't clear record that show when and how his parents came and settled down in New York, but we do know that his father George Turner was a book binder and his mother Rebecka Turner was a housewife². When John was nine years old he moved with family to Toledo, Ohio, where he started his apprenticeship in the Norcross chair factory. Then he followed with the relocation of the factory to Hillsdale, Michigan. That's where young Turner started his study of chair maker and also evening school of Hillsdale College. It is said that he is not only the president of the class but also the youngest member during that year. John Turner worked a lot to pay his tuition with the income of selling

¹ "John.C.Turner" 1920 United States Federal Census, New York City, New York, New York, digital image, Ancestry.com.

² "John.C.Turner" 1870 United States Federal Census, New York City, New York, New York, digital image, Ancestry.com.

law books and wages of making chairs, and he ended with a degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1879. After graduation he taught school at Put-in-Bay, Ohio until 1881³.

According to *American Lumberman*, John Turner created a shift from chair maker to lumberman in 1882, when he worked in Cook & Wilson, a leading firm of white pine wholesalers at Michigan City, Indiana, as traveling salesman. His work took him through Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, where it can be assumed he met Louise A. Shields, later Louise Turner, who shared the mausoleum with him. Louise was from Illinois, which helps explain how the two crossed paths during his travels in the region. In 1885 he joined the Chicago house of Street, Chatfield & Keep and worked for a year. After that he joined with the leader of the white pine lumber trade, Joseph Rathborne, of Chicago, under the firm name of Joseph Rathborne & Co as a partner. Around that time he was attracted by the intrinsic merit of gulf cypress and traveled to Louisiana cypress producing fields, which led to a purchase of cypress shingles and lumber at wholesale. By 1888 he already owned a line of goods from the cypress country to East St. Louis, Illinois, from which point he distributed his purchases throughout a half dozen states⁴. In the same year in US census it was recorded that John Turner had married Louise Turner, which makes sense because he spent a considerable amount of time in Illinois.

In 1889, John organized the Louisiana Cypress Lumber Company with Joseph Rathborne. But he didn't stop of that; by 1895 he left the South and went to New York, with a fund of \$25,000, and organized the J. C. Turner Cypress Lumber Company. Even though the startup capital was limited, the connections he made with lumber manufacturers of the South made him stand out as one of the largest producers of cypress lumber in the US. "It was

³ The Personal History and Public and Business Achievements of One Hundred Eminent Lumbermen of the United States, First Series. Chicago: American Lumberman, 1905. pp. 43-46.

⁴ "John.C.Turner" 19200 United States Federal Census, New York City, New York, New York, digital image, Ancestry.com.

estimated that the company's holdings had aggregated to a full 1,000,000,000 feet over the 12 years since 1888. In 1895, he opened a distribution center at Irvington-on-Hudson handling cypress from the South and redwood from the West Coast, and achieved growth from annual sales of 6,000,000 feet to between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000 feet. By 1903, according to New York's law, J. C. Turner Cypress Lumber Company reorganized with the capital of \$50000, and it held capacity of 35,000,000 feet of cypress in Irvington. He also established a lumbermen's committee to optimize pricing strategies for the Hurricane Lumber⁵.

Apart from operating the company, John Turner also had many investments⁶. He invested heavily in the Ocmulgee River Lumber Company, which produced cypress and yellow pine, as well as in the Taylor-Cook Cypress Lumber Company of Brunswick, Georgia, whose cypress and yellow pine holdings totaled an impressive 150,000,000 feet.



J. C. Turner Lumber Company

But things didn't go well all the time. J. C. Turner Cypress Lumber Company had been involved in multiple property and legal disputes⁷. In 1906, John organized a new company named J.C. Turner Lumber Company and transferred all land interests to it to avoid legal

⁵ *American Lumberman*.

⁶ *American Lumberman*.

⁷ Southern Reporter. United States: West Publishing Company, 1908.

disputes. However, he was still taken to court on whether the previous lessee were allowed to extract pine resin from the pine trees that grown on the land. John proved himself as a strong businessman that he survived these and even set up Central Cypress Company with involved ones such as A.L. Taylor and E.A. Roberts at Hernando County, Florida⁸. The lumber would be manufactured there and be sold through the J. C. Turner Lumber Company, 1133 Broadway. Later the lease in Florida caused similar legal disputes.

John Turner passed away and ended his legendary life of 71 years in 1923⁹. He died at his home, 171 West 71 Street. He was first buried, and his wife Louise joined him 16 years later.

John Charles Turner.

John Charles Turner, one of the largest holders and producers of cypress lumber in America, died last night of angina pectoris at his home, 171 West Seventy-first Street. Mr. Turner was 63 years old.

In 1895 he organized the J. C. Turner Lumber Company, of which he was President and a Director at the time of his death. He was a pioneer in the cypress lumber field, and held large tracts in the South. The Northern yards of his companies are at Irvington.

"John Charles Turner" New York Times (1923-);

Louise A Turner, formerly Louise A Shields, was born in May 1865 in Illinois¹⁰. She was the daughter of Marie Shields and B.P. Shields. Unlike John, she had four siblings including Mary Ann Williams, Judy Miller, Dennis Shields and the late Robert Shields¹¹. She lived in Illinois probably where she met John Turner and got married in 1888. Before her marriage, there are few records about her personal life due to the lack of female's stories. After she was married,

⁸ Reports of Cases Argued and Adjudged. United States: n.p., 1907.

⁹ "John Charles Turner". *New York Times*, April 25, 1923.

¹⁰ "Louise Turner" 1920 United States Federal Census, New York City, New York, New York, digital image, Ancestry.com.

¹¹ "Miss Mary Turner Has Church Bridal: Rev. John Mark Officiates at Marriage to Hugh McNeill in Arlington, Mass., Church Escorted by Her Brother Miss Louise Turner Honor Maid for Sister—Their Father Was Commissioner of Labor Navy Man's Fiancée." *New York Times*, August 17, 1937.

she moved with her husband to New York and had their only daughter Emily Turner who later married with Tim Weatherholt who was also a lumberman. After John passed away Louise lived alone with her maid at 200 Park Avenue and died of cancer in 1939. After her death, the estate was distributed according to her will: Three nieces and one nephew each inherited \$50,000 and 15% of the remaining estate¹². Another nephew inherited \$25,000 and 10% of the estate, while other nieces and nephews each received \$20,000 and 6% of the estate. Arthur Currey, the executor of her will, inherited \$50,000 and stock in the J.C. Turner Lumber Company. Louise's driver, Alexander Sweeten, received \$20,000, and another \$20,000 was donated to Flower-Fifth Avenue hospital.

During their marriage, Louise seemed to be a social person. According to *New York Times*¹³, it was recorded that she was invited to some star-studded dinner and birthday parties several times. Her sister's wedding was covered in the newspaper and she showed up as bridesmaid¹⁴. But she never stole the thunder in these activities.

¹² Buckner Will Leaves Entire Estate to Wife. *New York Herald Tribune*, November 22, 1939.

¹³ "Mrs. John C. Turner Honored on Birthday: Mrs. Bartow S. Weeks Her Hostess at Dinner." *New York Herald Tribune*, May 10, 1935.

¹⁴ "Miss Mary Turner Has Church Bridal," *New York Times*, August 17, 1937.

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