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Documentation and Analysis of Historic Buildings

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### **The Dilworth Mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery**

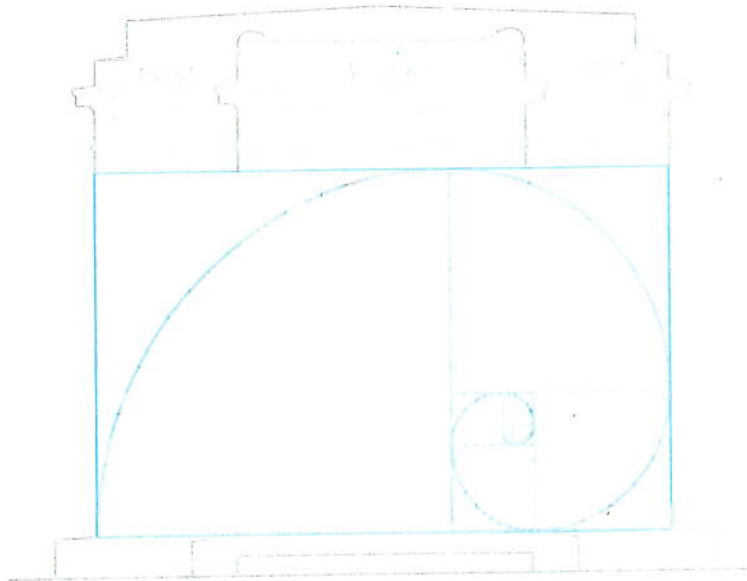
In 1929, Dewees Wood Dilworth, who bears the name of his maternal grandfather, Pittsburgh steel tycoon, W. Dewees Wood, purchased a nearly square plot of land in the center of the Woodlawn Cemetery. After graduating from the elite St. Mark's prep school, Dewees first served in the Army to fight the Germans and later got his degree from Yale Law School. Summoned his fortune as an investment banker, Dewees was looking for a mortuary architecture that is comparable to his grand estate in Roslyn, Long Island designed by the Parisian born architect Jules Henri de Sibour. Therefore, he commissioned Trowbridge & Livingston to design his family mausoleum. The architecture firm gained its fame in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with commissions of large-scale commercial and institutional buildings, such as the B. Altman & Co., department store, and the soaring Bankers Trust National Company on Wall Street. This mausoleum is a rare but excellent example of Trowbridge & Livingston's design in a modest scale.

Admittedly, the Dilworths has chosen a rather low-profile location for their mausoleum. Instead of placing it in one of the circular spots at the street corner that were highly visible to visitors, the piece of land they bought is in the center of a 'basin' with slightly hillier landscape in the front and back. That is to say, the Dilworth Mausoleum is out of the sight from the roads. On the other hand, this choice can be entirely strategically. Since the mausoleum sits on a square shaped flat plot that avoids any edge and slopes, unlike similar buildings of its kind, the design

doesn't need to compromise to any restriction of the landscape. The only rules it has to follow are pure aesthetic and idealistic. Indeed, the Dilworth Mausoleum was built as a white marble cubic stands on a flat square, facing due east.

In addition to its orientation, the mausoleum pays tributes to Greek temple in many other ways. The front portico, for example, consists of two columns in Doric order, topped by an entablature solely decorated with a series of guttae in the architrave, and two trumpet shells above the cornice. Siting on a foundation of a modest one-foot-five-inches-height, the building in large generates an air of lightness that is in contract with the masculine portico. The front façade is clean and simple, with the only details being the nicely-layout, refined joints between blocks of marble.

An element likely being taken from decoration of sarcophagus in order to give a hint about the function of the mausoleum, the trumpet shells above the cornice have a second layer of meaning. They imply the secret behind the balanced, elegant façade: golden ratios. None of the major lines that determine the appearance of the mausoleum is placed there for arbitrary reasons.



Beauties of mathematics are found in other details of the building as well. To name a few, the width of the building is double the width of the portico; the width of the door is double the width of the column capital; the width of the second flight of the staircase equals the height of the column. Obviously, those numbers don't work out by coincidence. The supporting evidence is that, according to the blue prints of the building plan, the distance between the exterior wall and the catacombs are longer than necessary. The standing space between two shelves of catacombs is also wider than the usual cases. These can only be seen as the results of interior space accommodating the carefully calculated dimensions of the exterior wall. Since one of the co-founder of the architect firm, Samuel B.P. Trowbridge had studied in Athens in his younger years; a possible deduction would be that, the firm Trowbridge & Livingston was reasonably familiar with the Greek form and honed their understanding of classically inspired architecture through years of practices in both dignified public buildings and elegant private town houses. More than likely, the reserved but stately design of the mausoleum façade is a representation of the firm's outstanding taste and technique in an unabridged fashion.

However, it is noteworthy that this mausoleum is not an exact replica of an ancient temple. Rather, it is a reduced version of a classical form. The undecorated frieze and cornice, for example, showcase such a minimalistic principle. It is noteworthy that the only exemption of this simple and delicate rule comes from the bronze entrance door. Ornamented with a floral-themed grille, a ring pull, and a handful of circular reliefs surrounding the doorframe, this door seems to have its own agenda and visual interests that are detached from the rest of the building. However, according to the initial contract with Harrison Granite Co., those bronze works were made with natural oxidized finish and have been rubbed down with pumice and crude oils. That's to say, given the due east orientation of the mausoleum, the sunlight is meant to cast a deep

shadow to mute all the details on the recessed, dark colored door, while further emphasis on the delicate geometries formed by the gleaming Georgia white marble.

The same simplicity and symmetrical layout is extended to the interior, which function honestly as a container of six catacombs. Panels of Georgia pink marble that wrap up the entire interior space echo with the exterior wall. The matching pattern of the flow on the ceiling not only forms a natural decoration but also adds a hint of classiness to the ambience. It is noteworthy that those catacombs no longer host the Dilworths any more. Nearly 55 years after the initial erection of the building, Irene Vicari, daughter of an Italian immigrant family has bought the mausoleum. The name of the Dilworth family on the mausoleum was hence removed and instead carved with Vicari, Rella and Nesi. This white marble mausoleum has seen being shared by Irene, her husband (Giovanni Vicari), her brother (Vincent Rella), her sister (Frances Nesi) and a brother-in-law (Roland Nesi).



Overall, the soft look of the Dilworth Mausoleum gives an impression of dignity rather than intimidating authority. The exquisite materials (mainly marble and bronze) further associate purity and nobleness to the reading of the social status of its owner. Erected in an age when most of the mortuary architectures was built in granite for durability, strength and cost-efficient considerations, the Dilworth Mausoleum took a different route to explore the potentials of white marble, of the Greek temple form, and of a lavish but not showy architectural language to commemorate the history of a respectful family. Listed as job 521 of Trowbridge & Livingston, this mausoleum contributes to the historical valuation of the variety and versatility of their works. Despite the small volume of the building, the architect delivered the same high standard of quality to its design. Just like the skyscrapers that put the firm's name on the map, this one-story comes no short of the result of years of accumulation of experience and creativity. It was treated as a highly individualized, memorial art piece, rather than grand but generic monuments usually found in commercial catalogues. Therefore, the historical significance and architectural value of the Dilworth Mausoleum is unquestionable.

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Images were taken and edited by the author of this article.



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Problem 3: Dugro Mausoleum - Woodlawn Cemetery  
FALL 2015 HP STUDIO I: Reading Historic Buildings  
Faculty: Françoise Bollack, Ward Dennis, Andrew Dolkart

Built in 1927 by Stephen A. Ruddy, the Dugro mausoleum is a modest memorial for the Dugro family. The building is set back from Fern Avenue, near the rear of the plot on a gently sloping hill. To the left and right are smaller tombstones and then similarly sized mausoleums. The mausoleums in this immediate vicinity are similar in their size, style, and use of materials. At first glance they seem to have been built by the same architect at the same time, and while there is an obvious unity between them, they present an interesting theme and variation. To the left



is the Hahnenfeld mausoleum which uses rusticated stone in a manner similar to the Dugro mausoleum, however, this mausoleum (Figure 1) exhibits a classical form with a entrance portico and two Tuscan columns. On the right is the Charles Waller mausoleum which is similar to the Dugro building in its size and flat, austere facade, however it's strikingly different in that it is comprised entirely of smooth stone (Figure 2).

As visitors approach the Dugro mausoleum they are instantly confronted with the entrance to the building. The reduction of forms and lack of portico make this entrance immediate and abrupt. However this should not be mistaken as a lack of transition space. Since the mausoleum is situated on the back of the plot, the walk from the street to the front doors could be interpreted as part of the entrance. Upon opening the doors the visitor sees a narrow hallway-type space that is lined with four catacombs on each side and a stained-glass window on the back wall. Below the floor is the tomb of the Dugro's youngest son who died at the age of nine. Considering the placement of the child's catacomb and the narrowness of the interior space, it seems unlikely that the mausoleum was designed to accommodate visitors in its interior space. Additionally, there is very little information to be gathered by actually walking into

the space, as the visitors are able to read all of the catacomb inscriptions from the doorway (FIGURE 3).

The exterior facade is cut from two different types of stone, Woodbury Gray granite is the lighter stone that makes up most of the building; however the roof and ground stones are cut from a darker stone, creating contrast within the building.<sup>1</sup> The stone arrangement on the facade of the mausoleum is symmetrical and consists of a series of nested rectangles. These rectangles are visible in the cuts of each stone but also in the bronze doors, the smooth stone around the doors, the three interior stones, the three outer stones, and the rectangular engravings on the smooth stone on either side of the Dugro name (Figure 4). These rectangles are constructed as multiple post and lintels and the affect is a very heavy massing. The bronze doors provide the only bit of relief from the massive stones. Though these are not the original doors that were drawn in Ruddy's plans which were to be provided by The Eagle Bronze Works in Mount Vernon, NY, these match many of the doors on nearby mausoleums and their delicate metal work, while remaining true to the rectangle theme, provides the only ornamentation on the front facade.<sup>2</sup>

As for historic precedents, this post and lintel style is one of the most basic and primitive construction techniques dating back to the Neolithic stone tombs, dolmens, and monuments. Megalithic masonry, like the Dugro mausoleum, is comprised of vertical slabs used for walling with flat stones spanning the tops. Well known examples of this include Locmariaquer (France) and Stonehenge, both of which functioned in the funerary rituals of their time period.<sup>3</sup> There is also a similarity to the preclassical Mycenaean post and lintel gates most famously seen at the Lion Gate.<sup>4</sup> Knowing that Mycenaean art is the foundation of classical Greek and Roman architecture, the mausoleum begins to resemble a very simplified, classical temple. Seen in this way, the large rusticated stones on the side are the pilasters, which hold up the entablature with the Dugro name engraving, and a pedimental roof on top.

Turning to the history of the Dugro family, Philip Henry Dugro was born in New York City on October 3, 1855. He was the son of Anthony and Dorthea Dugro, who immigrated from

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<sup>1</sup> Dugro Mausoleum Folder. Woodlawn Cemetery Collection. Avery Library, Drawings and Archives. ca 1926.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Spiro Kostof, *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals Second Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1995), 30-40.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 101-109.

France and made a large fortune investing in real estate. Philip was a lawyer who graduated from Columbia College in 1876 and Columbia Law School in 1878.<sup>5</sup> After graduating from law school, Henry was elected as a Democrat to the Assembly from the XIVth District, a Representative to Congress in 1880, a judge of the city of New York Superior Court in 1886, and finally as a justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York in 1896, 1900, and 1914.<sup>6</sup> As a judge, Dugro gained national attention in 1905 by advocating for all divorce cases to be referred to the Federal courts<sup>7</sup>, and again in 1919 when he ruled in favor of increasing the wages of carpenters in a building dispute case.<sup>8</sup> In 1884 Anthony Dugro passed away and left his large estate and all of the land he owned to his sons, Philip and Francis Dugro.<sup>9</sup> In 1890 Philip Dugro entered the real estate market, and hired the architect R.S. Townsend to begin plans for the luxurious Hotel Savory on 5th Ave and 59th Street.<sup>10</sup> Philip lived in the hotel with his wife Sophia, his son Charles, and his daughter Antonia until his death from pneumonia on March 1, 1920. In accordance with his wishes, his funeral was held at St. Patrick's Cathedral with a low mass and no eulogy. Over two thousand attended the mass, and in honor of the late Justice, the state, county, and city courts closed for the morning so that all the Supreme Court Justices, Judges in Special and General Sessions, city employees, lawyers, and jurors could attend the funeral. He was then interred in the Dugro family mausoleum in the Lutheran Cemetery of Middle Village, Queens. The Lutheran Cemetery had originally been land that was owned by Anthony Dugro, Philip's father, and when he sold the land to the Lutheran society for the purpose of building a cemetery he requested a plot for himself and his family. Anthony had a mausoleum built on the plot and then consecrated by a Catholic priest.<sup>11</sup> Today this mausoleum sits in the All Faith Cemetery in Queens and houses 39 relatives of the Dugro family, including

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<sup>5</sup> *America's Successful Men of Affairs An Encyclopedia of Contemporaneous Biography Vol. 1*, ed. Henry Hall (Tribune Association, 1895), 205.

<sup>6</sup> *Important Men of 1913*, database, *Ancestry.com* (<http://ancestry.com>: accessed 5 Oct. 2015), entry for Philip Henry Dugro, 161.

<sup>7</sup> "Justice Dugro, Who Beat Astor in Politics, Dies," *New - York Tribune (1911-1922)*, Mar 02 1920: 8.

<sup>8</sup> "Justice P. H. Dugro Awards Carpenters Increased Wages," *New - York Tribune (1911-1922)*, Mar 19 1919: 9.

<sup>9</sup> "Dugro Heirs Renew Plea for Report of Profits of Estate," *New - York Tribune (1911-1922)*, Jun 10 1920: 22.

<sup>10</sup> "Hotel Savoy Purchased by Fred'k Brown," *New - York Tribune (1923-1924)*, May 09 1923: 21.

<sup>11</sup> "1,500 at Funeral of Justice Dugro in St. Patrick's," *New - York Tribune (1911-1922)*, Mar 06 1920: 6.



Anthony Dugro.<sup>12</sup> However, in 1926, Sophia Dugro, perhaps in anticipation of her own death, hired Stephen A. Ruddy, a prominent granite dealer in Queens, to design and build her family a new mausoleum in Woodlawn Cemetery.<sup>13</sup>

Sophia Dugro was born in New York City on February 8, 1861 to Sophia and Charles Goeller, who immigrated from Germany sometime before 1861.<sup>14</sup> On November 25, 1875, Sophia and Philip were married in St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.<sup>15</sup> Sophia and Philip had three children, Anthony Dugro (5/17/1878-3/25/1886), Charles Horatio Dugro (10/13/1879-4/10/1928), and Antonia D. Scholler (5/19/1889-6/15/1935), all of whom are now buried in the Woodlawn mausoleum with their parents. Philip and Sophia were a well traveled couple and spent time in 1909 and 1912 visiting France.<sup>16</sup> Even after the death of her husband in 1920, Sophia continued to travel back and forth to Germany and France. According to her passport application in 1922 she had spent a few months living in France in 1921.<sup>17</sup> On April 29, 1926 Sophia passed away from influenza and myocarditis while in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France with her daughter Antonia and her son-in-law Albert C. Scholler.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to Philip and Sophia Dugro, their children Anthony, Charles, and Antonia are all interred in the Woodlawn mausoleum. Anthony, like his father Philip, was moved from the Lutheran mausoleum in 1927 to join his mother in Woodlawn mausoleum.<sup>19</sup> Charles Horatio Dugro who served in World War I from 1917-1919, died on April 20, 1928 of heart disease.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Carrie, All Faiths Cemetery, email message to author, Oct 09 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Dugro Mausoleum Folder.

<sup>14</sup> Year: 1870; Census Place: *New York Ward 17 District 10 (2nd Enum)*, *New York, New York*; Roll: M593\_1036; Page: 354A; Image: 712; Family History Library Film: 552535.

<sup>15</sup> Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Collection Name: *Historic Pennsylvania Church and Town Records*; Reel: 133.

<sup>16</sup> Year: 1912; Arrival: *New York, New York*; Microfilm Serial: T715, 1897-1957; Microfilm Roll: *Roll 1927*; Line: 28; Page Number: 31.

<sup>17</sup> National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Washington D.C.; NARA Series: *Passport Applications, January 2, 1906 - March 31, 1925*; Roll #: 1901; Volume #: *Roll 1901 - Certificates: 144226-144599, 12 Apr 1922-12 Apr 1922*.

<sup>18</sup> National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.; *General Records of the Department of State*; Record Group: *RG59-Entry 205*; Box Number: 4184; Box Description: 1910-1929 France Co - Gu.

<sup>19</sup> Dugro Mausoleum Folder.

<sup>20</sup> "Charles H. Dugro," *New York Herald Tribune* (1926-1962), Apr 21 1928: 15.

Both he and his second wife, Ada Hume Dugro, are buried in the Woodlawn cemetery. Charles' son Philip Henry Dugro II (from his first marriage to Alice M Van Cleeve) is buried in the Lutheran cemetery mausoleum.<sup>21</sup> Antonia Dugro Young Cassett Scholler and her daughter, Antonia "Dugie" Scholler, are also buried in the Woodlawn mausoleum.

Though there are some mysteries about the Dugro family that will never be solved, there are many clues from their life and travels that can help us piece together some possible answers. First the question of why Sophia had a second mausoleum built in Woodlawn when she had already buried her son Anthony and her husband Philip in the very large mausoleum that Anthony Dugro senior had built in the Lutheran cemetery. As mentioned above, Philip Dugro's funeral was a Catholic mass that was held at St. Patrick's Cathedral, and the mausoleum that was built in the Lutheran cemetery had been consecrated by a Catholic priest. However, Philip and Sophia were married in a Methodist church, indicating that she was most likely not Catholic, and subsequently she would not have been allowed to be buried with her husband. Therefore it is probable that she hired Stephen A. Ruddy to build a more modest sized mausoleum where she and her immediate family could all be buried together.

The second mystery is the stained-glass window by Polish artist Eugeniusz Ludwik Dabrowa Dabrowski. In the bottom right corner of the window there is a signature "Eugeniusz Dabrowa Paris 1926." Considering how much Philip and Sophia, and then Sophia and Antonia travelled back and forth to France, it would appear that during one of her trips, possibly even the last one in 1926 when she passed away, that Sophia purchased a stained glass window for the mausoleum. Very little is known about Eugeniusz Dabrowa. The New York Public Library's Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon Online database has one listing for Eugeniusz Ludwik Dabrowa Dabrowski who is listed as a Polish stained glass artist who lived in Poland, Austria, and France. Their listing claims that Dabrowski was based in Paris and was a "glass painter" at the time that the Dugro's were traveling in France.<sup>22</sup> Luckily, the National Museum in Warsaw has a Dictionary of Polish Artists, and they were able to provide an entry for Dabrowa-Dabrowski. His entry in the dictionary states that he was a furniture designer, landscape painter, and most importantly, a stained glass artist for the Dugro Family mausoleum in New York City. Often times he was commissioned for specific pieces, such as furniture, paintings, or stained glass. He also

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<sup>21</sup> Carrie, All Faiths Cemetery, email message to author, Oct 09 2015.

<sup>22</sup> Art and Architecture Room 30, New York Public Library. email to author. Oct 09 2015.

exhibited his work at the Salon des Independents in Paris, and it is probable that it was at one of those Salons that Sophia Dugro saw Dabrowski's work.<sup>23</sup>

In conclusion, the window is a depiction of Saint Sophie, and whether or not that was a decision of Sophia Dugro or Eugeniusz Dabrowa we'll never know, however it does not seem like a coincidence. Sophia Dugro and St. Sophie both had three children and both were widows. The focal point of St. Sophie is her strength and her suffering as a mother. Her daughters were Faith, Hope, and Love and they were tortured and killed by emperor Hadrian. St. Sophie was forced to watch and then to bury the remains of her three daughters. While Sophia Dugro did not have to bury her three children, she did have to bury her young son Anthony, and her motivation for building this mausoleum was to make sure that she could be buried with her family, just like St. Sophie.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających. Malarze, rzeźbiarze, graficy*, vol. 2 (D – G), Ossolineum 1975, p. 21-22.

<sup>24</sup> "Martyr Sophia and her three daughters at Rome," *Orthodox Church in America*, last modified on Sept 17 2015, <https://oca.org/saints/lives/1999/09/17/102638-martyr-sophia-and-her-three-daughters-at-rome>.



FIGURE 1: Hahnenfeld Mausoleum

FIGURE 2: Waller Mausoleum





FIGURE 3: Interior



DETAIL: Bronze Rosette (Interior)



DETAIL: Bronze Vase (Interior)





FIGURE 4: Visual Analysis- Nested Rectangles

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