

# The Link Mausoleum

Woodlawn Cemetery - Studio I Fall 2021

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## Abstract

This paper is an attempt to examine the physical reality of the Link mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery. It reflects on the history of the building, its designers, purchasers, and on the lives of the building's occupants. Through the process of documentation, the building's current existing conditions are revealed one hundred and five years after its original construction date in 1917.<sup>1</sup> Hand-drawn measurement sketches, photographs, and notes with annotations of material conditions were made during the documentation process. These provide ample information for the creation of the paper's architectural drawings. Research was also undertaken on the architectural and material nature of the built structure, with special help from the research team and the staff at Drawings & Archives at Avery Library. The biographical portion of the paper highlights the legacy left behind by the lives of the Mausoleum's occupants, Bernard Link (1861-1917) and Annie Link (1871-1933). Some of the sources used to understand the architectural, social and biographical nature of the family include census reports<sup>2</sup>, historical newspaper articles such as *The New York Herald Tribune*<sup>3</sup> and *The Sun*<sup>4</sup>, New York City Tax Photos<sup>5</sup>, and documents from a New York State Surrogate Court case on the Appeal of the Will of Annie Link following her death in 1933<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Conversation with Susan B. Olsen at the Woodlawn Cemetery on September 28, 2021

<sup>2</sup> New York State Census report (pp 18-19) from 1905 for ED 25 in District 10 shows that the couple lived alone in an apartment at a six storied high Gothic Revival building on a street south of Clinton Hill district in Brooklyn New York.

<sup>3</sup> "Appellate Court Upholds Will of Mrs. Annie Link: Surrogate's Decree After Two Jury Trials" *New York Herald Tribune (1926-1962)*; Mar 9, 1935. ProQuest Historical Newspapers: New York Herald Tribune. pp. 10

<sup>4</sup> "Barney Link Dies in Florida: Was President of the Poster Advertising Association." *The Sun (1837-)*, Mar 05, 1917. ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Sun. Pg 11

<sup>5</sup> New York City Department of Records and Information Services, 1930. NYC Tax Photo.

<sup>6</sup> Mulligan, Edwin C. & Beehan, William, E. "Supreme Court Appellate Division - First Department - In the Matter of Proving the Last Will and Testament of Annie Link, Deceased, as a Will of Real and Personal Property. Case on Appeal." Vol. 1. 1 Pages 1 to 588

## Designing The Link Mausoleum

The Link Mausoleum represents a return to the neoclassical values of simplicity and purity during a rapidly developing period of urbanization, globalized warfare, and trade in the early 20th century. While at first the building may appear to lack many of the traditional building elements, with no protruding pediments, arches, columns or even pilasters, the building is really quite complex and stands apart as a complete work. In 1917, Annie Link, with the help of designers from Harrison Granite Company, erected a memorial structure for her late husband, Bernard “Barney” Link.<sup>7</sup>

Harrison Granite Company was formed in 1845, and by the end of the 19th century became a company well known for its craftsmanship but more importantly for its quality stonework.<sup>8</sup> Its main stone and the one which was likely used in the Link Mausoleum is the Devonian light granite pluton known for its consistent color, fine grain and weather resistance. The igneous granite stone comes from mines that run near the Waits River Formation, near the town of Barre in Washington County, Vermont.<sup>9</sup> A 1918 Harrison Granite catalogue provides us with the following description regarding their design style, “the interpretation of classic forms is the true expression of lasting tribute to the departed. Simplicity of treatment rather than ornateness has characterized the efforts of this company for the past 73 years.”<sup>10</sup> It is this very description which so clearly expresses the simple yet enduring design style of the company that built the Link Mausoleum.

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<sup>7</sup> Letters of correspondence between Harrison Granite Company and Woodlawn

<sup>8</sup> A historical trade catalog from 1918 of Harrison Granite Company’s clientele and monumental works

<sup>9</sup> Pailles, Matt. “Barre Granite.” <https://www.ncptt.nps.gov/buildingstone/stone/barre-granite>.

<sup>10</sup> A description of Harrison Granite Company’s works and honors from their 1918 catalog.

The company's success was further marked by its work with prominent sculptors, architects and an in-house team of designers. Eventually, Harrison boasted clientele in over 200 cities in the Midwest, North, East and Southern states. They were awarded opportunities to create public monuments commemorating both Union and Confederate armies after the Civil War, such as The Lincoln Monument in Illinois and the Confederate Memorial in Richmond, Virginia.<sup>11</sup> The price point may have also been an attractive selling point for their clients. Quarries in Barre were closer to the surface than that of other granite quarries like the ones in Quincy or Westerly. It cost fifty to forty cents on the dollar less to get the stone out of the quarry than it would have at its largest competing quarry in Massachusetts.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps it is this low overhead that allowed Harrison Granite Company to compete and flourish in the monument business during the late nineteenth century.

### **Examining Physical Reality Through Documentation**

The process of documentation involves taking measurements in the form of sketches and photographs. Ultimately, this allows preservationists to examine the details of the design and deeply understand how buildings are constructed and may have deteriorated or been altered over time.<sup>13</sup> The sketches produced for this project attempt to follow the traditions and techniques of the HABS framework as portrayed in *The American Place*.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Harrison Granite Company showing public monuments that the company was awarded for both Confederate and Union armies.

<sup>12</sup> Issue 4 of Volume 15 in a historical trade journal for Stone (1888-1919) printed out of Indianapolis shows news of the formation of a Barre granite quarries syndicate in the year 1897.

<sup>13</sup> Woodlawn Project Guidelines and prompt by Kate Reggev, Andrew S. Dolkart, Claudia Kavenagh

<sup>14</sup> American Place, HABS NPS page 47

Paul Goldberger, a contemporary American architecture critic, premised in his book *Why Architecture Matters* that buildings have a physical reality due to their persistent physical nature as objects and must first be considered as forms and three dimensional shapes.<sup>15</sup> From a phenomenological approach, there are often different experiences of the building depending on whether one stands at its front, back, or its sides, and its interiors give way to yet another experience when one steps inside of its three-dimensional space.

Following Goldberger's contemplation of physical reality, each part of the Link mausoleum serves a rather continuous experience despite different vantage points. From all angles, the building appears to be set in a rural space, and one suddenly feels as if they have been transported to the countryside; it is unlike any common experience found in an urban city. From the road, one faces north (Figure 1) to view the front facade of the mausoleum. It is strategically placed at the furthest end of the lot, as if in a cottage-like design, with a large lawn and an overarching tree to its side at its northwestern corner.<sup>16</sup> <sup>17</sup> Historical court records also show that there once had been plans for replantings and therefore various landscape details that once existed at the Link Mausoleum in the year 1932.<sup>18</sup> Where weeds now grow southeast to the building, or where the grass no longer grows on the north side under the tree, those spaces likely now exist where foliage, bushes and flowers once existed as a part of a detailed landscape plan.

From the east and west elevations, continuity of lines, symmetry and centrality are themes present here. A plain stone frieze stretches across the entire structure, about a foot

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<sup>15</sup> Goldberger, Paul. 2009. *Why architecture matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 67-69

<sup>16</sup> Avery Library Archives & Drawings. Bernard Link Mausoleum. Woodlawn cemetery records. 1917.

<sup>17</sup> Design style matches that of a photo of a "Cottage Monument" on page 9 of the 1919 Harrison Granite Company trade catalogue.

<sup>18</sup> A testimony by Kerwin H. Fulton, president of Outdoor Advertising Company, on affairs regarding the mausoleum in the New York Supreme Court case on the appeal of the last will and testament of Annie Link. Pages 440-442

below the cornice. Simple oval-shaped stained glass windows help to complete the symmetrical finish on each of the two façades facing east and west. (Figures 2 and 3) The specially carved granite slabs that frame each window are cut and set as if to perfectly match the outward projecting and linear directions of four of the muntins on the windows. Adorned with eight lead muntins that angle toward the center of the smaller oval pane, the window is also enclosed by a bronze casement, which now shows signs of patina. The amber colored windows bring a warm and ambient glow to the interior, a feeling that seems to match the gentleness and purity brought on by the white Vermont marble finish that lines the catacombs, walls and ceiling of the interior. The construction plans initially included one single vault to be built by the rear line of the foundation, a request made by Annie Link.<sup>19</sup> During Annie's annual visits to her late husbands' tomb<sup>20</sup>, one might imagine a powerful moment as the sun's rays shone into the building as she stood westward facing a sunset and the vault of her late husband.



Figure 1. View of the south-facing facade of the mausoleum from the winding road.

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<sup>19</sup> July 1917 Notes of Correspondence between Harrison Granite Company and The Woodlawn Cemetery

<sup>20</sup> From a recording of Harriet E Fulton's testimony about her annual visits escorting Annie to Woodlawn for her husband's death's anniversary. 1935 Pg412

In *Designing Woodlawn: Buildings and Landscapes*, Andrew S. Dolkart writes, “while [mausoleums] may be small in scale with a single interior space,” or may have “no need for utilities, such as gas, electricity, or water, they are extremely complex buildings with a unique set of design problems and constraints.”<sup>21</sup> Two major issues that mausoleums must deal with when it comes to building technology are water damage and biological growth. Although light Barre granite<sup>22</sup> is significantly less porous than sandstone, moisture can still accumulate under its surface if not sealed properly. Discoloration on areas at the cornice and near the bottom (Figure 4) signify a roughened texture as a result of trapped moisture and spaces where frost has gathered over time.<sup>23</sup> Lichens and algae are also spotted near the top (Figure 5) of the mausoleum, especially by the cornice. Also shown in Figure 5 is a raised lip above the cornice, which was intentionally placed over the vertical joint, per suggestion from Woodlawn during the purchase period to avoid the risk of water damage.<sup>24</sup>



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<sup>21</sup> Dolkart, Andrew Scott. *Designing Woodlawn: Buildings and Landscapes*. Woodlawn Cemetery. New York: The Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York. 2014. Page 58.

<sup>22</sup> From sketches and correspondence on the Link Mausoleum in records at Avery Library Drawings & Archives. Link Mausoleum. Woodlawn Cemetery records. 1917.

<sup>23</sup> Stone (1888-1919) “Barre Granite Quarries Syndicate: and Quincy, too” 1897. 15 (4) (Sept 01): 380 <https://www.proquest.com/trade-journals/barre-granite-quarries-syndicate/docview/910640241/se-2?accountid=10226>.

<sup>24</sup> Letters of correspondence between Woodlawn Cemetery and The Harrison Granite Company in July 1917.

Figure 2 (left) A photo of the East elevation. Figure 3. (right) Amber stained glass on the oval-shaped window from the interior.

Despite its age, the building has held up considerably well given the aforementioned signs of material alteration. There are no major structural damage issues such as scaling or cracking from moisture retention and the constant cycle of frost and defrosting action of New York's cold winter days and evenings.<sup>25</sup> Granite can often experience damage from salt crystallization found in animal excretions; which is something to consider as the mausoleum sits in such proximity to a large overarching tree.<sup>26</sup> These are issues that pose a risk to the granite exterior in the future.

Other than light formation of patina at the lower parts of the two bronze doors as well as at some of the paterae, the bronze has held up in good condition considering its age. There are also signs of patina on the back of the mausoleum; of the four small bronze ventilation panels, two of the lower ventilation plates have become oxidized and now are a light green color. However, the top two ventilation plates as well as the inner side of the bronze doors do not show much patina and still manage to retain their dark bronze finish. The lack of active ventilation and use of its glass doors over many years may be a reason for the successful preservation of the metals in the interior of the mausoleum. The materials inside were freed from exposure to the harsher elements of the outdoors, such as moisture, soiling and oxidation. As a result, the bronze rosettes on the ceiling and on the crypts, as well as the bronze on the interior

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<sup>25</sup> From Tim Michiel lectures in Traditional Building Technology. September 22, 2021

<sup>26</sup> The Monument Diagnosis and Conservation System. "Damage Atlas"



of the doors, have retained their dark, brownish, reddish color.



Figure 4. (left) Water remains trapped in the stone under the cornice after an early afternoon shower.

Figure 5. (right) Algae grows along the bottom side of the cornice and lichens are spotted on the raised lip of the cornice covering the vertical joints.

### **Bernard and Annie Link**

Bernard Link was born on December 5, 1861 in Wisconsin to a Bavarian-born immigrant family.<sup>27</sup> Better known as Barney, the young man grew up on a farm with five siblings but seemed to have preferred an urban life. He and his wife, Annie Link, seemed to have preferred the urban life - residing in apartment buildings throughout most of their lives. Even though Barney's successful advertising business spanned all of Long Island by 1895 provided Barney and Annie the opportunity to afford to live in a large home, they seemed to prefer the urban setting of Brooklyn in their younger years. At the turn of the century, a 1900 census report recorded that Bernard and Annie Link lived in a Gothic four-bay, five storied apartment building on 515 Clinton Avenue (Figure 7) in Brooklyn near the upper class neighborhood just south of

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<sup>27</sup> 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Year: 1870; Census Place: Ottawa, Waukesha, Wisconsin; Roll: M593\_1743; Page: 393A



the present-day Clinton Hill Historic District.<sup>28</sup> They lived alone without servants, although Annie may have enjoyed the help of some maids when she stayed at the Robert Fulton Hotel at 228 W 71st Street after her husband's death.<sup>29</sup>

Barney, an artistic showman by training, knew how to capture audiences. Over the course of his life and career, he would prove himself to be a visionary and an excellent businessman. His executive leadership earned him many accolades - and he helped shape the advertising industry during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He began his career in show business with Barnum and then joined the Buffalo Bill show in 1887 moving to London, where he likely met his wife Annie Link. The Buffalo Bill's Wild West show (Figure 8) was his first role in advertising. Perhaps it was at Buffalo Bill's where he learned the influential power of artistic poster advertising. These illustrations helped to capture the imagination of the international audience of life in the American Wild West, but were often at the expense of depicting indigenous tribes as barbaric invaders and enemies of the polished, upstanding American hero.

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<sup>28</sup> A NY census report for district 10, enumeration district 25 from page 18 of the 1905 census records the couple, married for 14 years at this point, living at 515 Clinton Avenue.

<sup>29</sup> Annie had lived as a guest in the Robert Fulton Hotel near Central Park as recorded in page 20 of a written historical census report for enumeration district 0398 in Manhattan, New York during the 1930 federal census.

<sup>30</sup> *Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World*. PBS. Accessed October 29, 2021. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/oakley-show/>.



Figure 6. (left) A photograph of Barney Link, at age 34, from an article printed in The Billboard during a New Year edition in 1895. The article celebrated his success as a newly distinguished industry man in the world of advertising.

Figure 7. (right) The place of residence for Barney and his wife Annie Link in the year 1900 in Brooklyn Ward 20.

Barney Link left the company in 1894 to start the American Billposting Company of Brooklyn, which later merged with Brooklyn's oldest poster advertising firm T.J. Murphy. His vision allowed for his firm to continue absorbing other advertising firms in New York, including Reardon & Graul in Greenpoint, Murphy & Green in Long Island City, McElroy Bros in Flushing, and Chas. Wood in Jamaica. This allowed American Billposting to have exclusive rights in every city and town in Long Island. In 1907, Barney and his associates followed a similar market

expansion strategy, absorbing several Chicago-area poster companies, which gave the group virtual control over the entire Chicago outdoor advertising market.<sup>31</sup>

Barney was the president of the Poster Advertising Association of the United States when he passed. This trade association had memberships serving over 9,000 cities and towns in the U.S. by 1920 and held annual conventions since 1895. It was a place where “artists, lithographers, advertising men, manufacturers and distribution experts” would meet to discuss and shape the future of poster advertising among the nation’s most influential newspaper and poster companies. As advertising was often a cheap or no cost form of media to the public, poster and newspaper advertising became one of the important forms of print media during this time period for civic and welfare development. Its sentiments and artistic messages had the authority and power to affect the nation greatly and to help sway sympathy during this post World War I era.<sup>32</sup>



Figure 8. Poster of Buffalo Bill's show. Source: Library of Congress

<sup>31</sup> Collier, Richard Dr. “The Outdoor Advertising Timeline” Digital Collections and Libraries. Duke University Digital Libraries. Durham: Duke University. <https://blogs.library.duke.edu/digital-collections/road/timeline/1900-1909/>

<sup>32</sup> "Poster Advertising Association to Meet." *The Christian Science Monitor* (1908-), Sep 29, 1925.

Quite like the Neoclassical style of the mausoleum, Annie Link also demonstrated values rooted in simplicity and tradition over her lifetime. Annie was born in England in 1871 and lived until about sixty two; as a widow during the last sixteen years of her life. She was eternally loyal to her late husband and celebrated his birthdays even after his death,<sup>33</sup> visiting the mausoleum each year on the anniversary of his death and the anniversary of his burial date, March 2nd and 7th, respectively. Annie greatly valued her friendship with the couple, Dr. Tobin and his wife Claudine Tobin, above the relationships she had with her own relatives. Their friendship spanned over a decade and a half, and she greatly adored the young woman as if she had been her own daughter.

In a great final show of adoration and gratitude for their friendship, she changed her last will and testament days before her death to assign them her and her husband's material possessions and all of their real estate holdings. During the opening statement on behalf of proponents to the probate, the attorney Hugo Wintner, Esq. was heard to say the following to the jury.

*"Mrs. Link was an upstanding, attractive-looking woman, about sixty-one or sixty-two years old at her death, a woman who weighed possibly 150 pounds, 155 pounds, black hair, as I will show you, a very good, stylish-looking woman, who carried herself erect, a decided woman, resolute woman, a wilful woman, who spoke in a low voice but a determined voice, and did not easily make friends, did not lend herself to every Tom, Dick and Harry in friendship. She had intense likes and dislikes and chose her society."<sup>34</sup>*

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<sup>33</sup> Page 407 of the court case from a testimony by Harriet E. Fulton

<sup>34</sup> From the opening statement on behalf of the proponents on the appeal case for the will of Annie Link. New York Supreme Court. Pg 34

This change greatly upset a number of Annie's nieces and nephews whom she had only met a few times when she was younger and who lived in England. Although she was close to one of her nieces, Annie was criticized for her lifestyle choices, and ostracized for her decision to not remarry or bear offspring.<sup>35</sup> She was sharp and defied conventions of childbearing in her early years, and remained loyal to her late husband instead of remarrying. Tending well to business affairs, often without the consultation of others, Annie, was a resolute and clever woman amongst her peers, and she lived a full life from the fortune she and her husband earned from the advertising industry.<sup>36</sup> Woodlawn cemetery and its staff and volunteers continue to care for the Link Mausoleum today. It is one of the last remaining structures that exemplifies Annie's classical style, loyal spirit, and the legacy of Barney Link, an advertising pioneer.

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<sup>35</sup> Page 331 of the court case, a testimony regarding the relationship between Edith Salter and Annie Link by Arther Hempel.

<sup>36</sup> From the opening statement on behalf of the proponents on the appeal case for the will of Annie Link on page 34.

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