

The Stanford White Triple Portal

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH
NEW YORK, NEW YORK



Conservation Evaluation Summary Report

Prepared by

EXCELSIOR
ART SERVICES

Prepared for



ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S
CONSERVANCY

EXCELSIOR ART SERVICES

excelsiorartservices.com

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Preface

This document is a result of the engagement between St. Bartholomew's Conservancy (Conservancy) and Excelsior Art Services (Excelsior) to conduct a Conservation Evaluation (the Excelsior Evaluation) of the Stanford White Triple Portal of St. Bartholomew's Church. It is divided into three parts plus appendices.

Part one is a concise description and historical introduction to the church and its importance.

Part two summarizes the Conservation Evaluation realized by Excelsior. A short narrative on the **philosophical approach and rationale for conservation** is presented first. The Evaluation consists of four major components: **Cipollino Marble Columns, Iconographic Sculpture, Bronze Doors, and Stairs/Entryway/Facade Elements**. Each of these is further divided as follows:

- **Background** – the most relevant conditions of the exterior of the Triple Portal detailed in the Building Diagnostics and Condition Survey (the CU Survey) realized by Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation Historic Preservation Program in cooperation with St. Bartholomew's Conservancy, 2017-2019 (Appendix 1).
- **Findings** – Excelsior provided an in-field review of conditions found in the CU Survey, and generally verified them. Additional and not previously reported observations were noted. In May 2023, an aerial lift was hired to permit an intimate hands-on Conservation Evaluation.



Hands-on Conservation Evaluation from Aerial Lift.

- **Recommended Scope of Work** – a path of conservation action.
- **Challenges** – a distillation of issues revealed during the Excelsior Evaluation.
- **Additional Considerations** – a supplementary commentary on associated findings and recommendations of the Excelsior Evaluation.

The last section of part two presents **issues of concern** for the conservation of the Triple Portal which are also noted in **bold lettering** throughout this report and may aid in the decision-making process.

Part three is a brief statement on the key points of this document.

The **appendices** are supporting and reference documents for the reader to have a broader, deeper, and more colorful picture.



St. Bartholomew's Church and Community House on Park Avenue in New York City.

Part One | Introduction

St. Bartholomew's Church, a beloved National Historic Landmark and New York City Landmark that is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, epitomizes the successful realization of complex functional aesthetic and spiritual requirements. The church is accessed through the magnificent Stanford White-designed Romanesque Revival Triple Portal on Park Avenue, a cohesive, composite work of art and an exceptional synthesis of American architectural and artistic genius.

Completed in 1903 as a memorial to Cornelius Vanderbilt II by his wife Alice Gwynne Vanderbilt and their children, it incorporated spectacular bas-relief cast bronze doors and carved stone iconographic sculpture by renowned artists Daniel Chester French, Andrew O'Connor, Herbert Adams, and Philip Martiny.

The celebrated architect Bertram G. Goodhue, tasked with integrating White's Triple Portal into his 1914 design for the church's new home on Park Avenue, wrote: "The Triple Portal is universally regarded by architects and public alike, as one of the most beautiful things, perhaps the most beautiful thing of its kind in America."¹ St. Bartholomew's Church's visionary decision to reuse White's Triple Portal and Goodhue's alterations to it redound to add rich context and significance.

Time and pollution have not spared the Triple Portal, which now shows its age with weathered and soiled marble columns and sculpture, disused bronze doors, and subsiding steps.



2016 National Historic Landmark Plaque.

¹ Bertram G. Goodhue, "The Proposed New St. Bartholomew's Church," January 16, 1915, St. Bartholomew's Archives, 1915

Part Two | Conservation Evaluation Summary Report • The Stanford White Triple Portal • St. Bartholomew’s Church

Philosophical Approach to Conservation

The primary role of contemporary cultural heritage conservation is the management of change. Its judgment and exercise seek to maintain authenticity as an overarching value, whether singularly or where it intersects with other distinctive values significant to the resource. The conservator is poised to serve with a diverse toolkit of scholarship, science, technology, craft, and respect for tradition. That said, when confronted with an art object as unique as St. Bartholomew’s Triple Portal, contemporary conservation philosophy and ethics overwhelmingly advise minimal intervention. To attempt more is to risk depriving the object of its ability to convey itself genuinely and completely to its global audience.

Contemporary cultural heritage conservation is also incremental and iterative. Defining treatment goals and then applying and assessing performance informs the feasibility of subsequent conservation activity. As an example, removing inappropriate patching of the Triple Portal’s marble columns may reveal previously unknown conditions. Any such discovery should be documented and carefully assessed before commencing further treatment. Likewise, to confirm their efficacy and optimum usage, treatment methods and materials recommended in this report will require field verification by a professional conservator.

At its core, St. Bartholomew’s Triple Portal embodies a singular expression: the confluence of multiple generations of architectural and artistic brilliance, the veracity of its historic materials and technologies, and its

sumptuous composition that is at once subtle and powerful. The Triple Portal’s status as an irreplaceable work of art is undeniable; it merits a conservation approach equally skilled, thoughtful, and timeless.

Cipollino Marble Columns

The Triple Portal exterior prominently features twenty-four columns, hand-selected by Stanford White for their attractive veining patterns and subtle green coloration. The columns serve



Cipollino Marble Columns.

primarily as decorative components in the overall composition and are not structural. *Cipollino*, or *little onion* in Italian, is a coarsely stratified, carbonate stone that is subject to deterioration from internal factors and acid attack.

Coincidentally, the Triple Portal was situated near a coal-burning power plant in its former location and for a time in its current one. It was undoubtedly affected by acidic compounds generated in the polluted environment.

Archived letters (Appendix 2) record elements of White's involvement in the design, selection, and finishing of the Cipollino marble columns and his awareness of their weathering characteristics. In 1909, the firm of McKim, Mead and White received and approved a proposal (Appendix 3) to use the preservative Caffall Process on the columns, a treatment where heat is applied to a flaking stone's surface, and a molten solution of ozokerite wax is brushed on to impregnate and stabilize it. In time, the wax degraded into the darkened, dingy surface condition seen presently. The columns' aesthetic has long suffered due to their weathered, fragmented, unsuitably repaired, and soiled surfaces.

Their current appearance and conditions notwithstanding, they are integral to the Triple Portal, a beautiful testament to White's imperturbable artistry.

BACKGROUND

The CU Survey identified several issues of concern with the columns' state of conservation. Noted therein is **Loss** in the form of **light to heavy erosion and spalling and light to heavy general soiling** of surfaces present to varying degrees on all columns. Several of the columns have been **repaired with cementitious patches**, which are incompatible and

² **Bold lettering** throughout this report indicates issues of concern for the conservation of the Triple Portal. A summary of them can be found on page 14 of this document.

mismatched, and some columns are encircled with **metal bands and netting** purportedly installed for stabilization.²

FINDINGS

The Excelsior Evaluation found that the columns' existing patches are predominantly unsound and failing due to poor bond strength and differential thermal expansion. The patches are composed of different materials and have an inconsistent and distracting appearance. The obtrusive metal bands encircling the columns are of questionable purpose and may even be adversely affecting them due to differential expansion/contraction. The bronze bands located on the columns at the sides of the central doorway have oxidized, and runoff has stained the adjacent marble surfaces with a greenish cast.



Detail: Incompatible/Mismatched Patches.

RECOMMENDED SCOPE OF WORK

The following recommendations are made to help the Triple Portal and its Cipollino marble columns retain their maximum heritage values. The building's integrity and complex history are embodied in the hand-selected columns' authentic material and visual character. Conserving these venerable monoliths honors the artistic intent of Stanford White, one of the most celebrated arbiters of the ideals of the *American Renaissance* in architecture and the arts.

Firstly, the columns require initial phased stabilization of incipient spalls with selective applications of conservation-grade adhesives based on epoxy resins and/or ethyl methacrylate co-polymer and/or lime-based hydraulic injection grout to minimize losses. The subsequent removal of prior interventions (metal bands, netting, and mismatched cementitious patches) may proceed cautiously. If necessary, any newly exposed conditions can be assessed and treated.

Following the stabilization of incipient spalls, the next phase of work is the cleaning of residual soiling/surface treatments, which require specialized equipment and techniques. Laser cleaning was tested by Excelsior Art Services (Appendix 4) on one of the columns and has promise to be the optimal means for removing organic surface soil (yellowed wax from the 1909 Caffall Process). Laser cleaning at this stage is the preferred method to minimize the potential for mechanical damage and the entrapment of harmful soiling in subsequent conservation activities, i.e., stabilization/consolidation.

After cleaning, subsequent stabilization of remaining surface cracks and fissures should be done by injecting specified, conservation-grade lime-based hydraulic injection grout. The grout fills should be detailed to stabilize surfaces and shed rainwater away from areas vulnerable to damage from infiltration.

Once the columns have been stabilized, the next step should be the careful removal of



Simulation of Protective Coating Visual Enhancement.

existing failed cementitious patches and the integration of new patches in proportion to the previous repairs. This will stabilize surfaces and maintain the integrity of the columns' form. In many cases, the existing patches have already disbonded from the substrate, i.e., they no longer adhere to the substrate. This is indicated by a hollow sound that emanates when they are tapped. Their removal may consist of gently scoring and fragmenting the patches where necessary to safely disengage them. Skillfully matched and applied patch material, a cementitious compound based on suitable aggregates of similar composition, color, and gradation to the marble substrate, and that are suitably durable, well bonded, dimensionally and chemically stable, is recommended. As with the grout fills, the new patches should be detailed to stabilize surfaces and shed rainwater away from areas vulnerable to damage from infiltration. While smaller patches will be self-supporting, larger voids may be

reinforced by integrating non-reactive fiberglass rods to span the void and mechanically engage the marble, thus providing additional stability to the column.

The new patches should be tooled and pigmented to make them subtly detectable as restorations. A palette of options is available for determining the visual appearance of patches. Treatment may range from a uniform neutral coloration, to surface in-painting, to the use of scagliola, a traditional technique employed to simulate the marble's unique veining and colors throughout the depth of the patch.

Lastly, the mockup applications of protective coatings such as microcrystalline wax, acrylic silane solution, or silicon dioxide-based conversion consolidant should be tested and compared for performance. The selected coating may enhance the newly cleaned columns' reflectance and subtle coloration as was intended by its designer, and if suitable, may be applied globally and refurbished as needed.

CHALLENGES

The treatment (cleaning, stabilization, including patching) of the existing conditions presents challenges that require an iterative process to resolve. The Cipollino columns' existing soiling, metal bands, and cementitious patches may obscure previously unknown conditions, which may be revealed during their removal. As such, any new conditions should be documented, assessed, and stabilized before the commencement of phased treatment. A recommended pilot program to identify optimal means for the conservation of the Cipollino columns may be found in (Appendix 5).

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Further evaluation with non-destructive techniques such as Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV), magnetometry, ultrasonic velocity/conductivity measurements, and petrography should occur to better understand the columns' structure, absorptivity, detailing, the presence of any past repairs, and their geological origin.

Viewed empirically, the columns have stood true for over 120 years, including the last 105 years on Park Avenue above the reverberations of the Metro-North Railroad. The acidic pollutants that formerly drove their active deterioration have since been moderated, and while midtown New York City air quality does not currently meet federal regulations, it has in recent decades significantly improved.

Iconographic Sculpture

The Triple Portal features an extensive program of carved limestone and marble sculpture depicting prefigurations and prophecies from the Old Testament and Christ's Life, Passion, and Resurrection. The sculpture is most strongly represented by Andrew O'Connor's tour de force of salient, high-relief limestone friezes and stand-alone prophets, the recessed and sublimely rendered Coronation of the central tympanum, and the dramatic Crucifixion scene of the accompanying frieze. The visual crispness of the carved forms has softened over time due to natural weathering processes and exposure to acidic atmospheric pollutants. Sculptural losses on these features have a particularly jarring effect on the intended reading of the iconography. Newly identified cracks may be naturally occurring faults in the marble and/or possible damage associated with the Triple Portal's move in 1918.



Large Lateral Crack Bottom Left, Central Tympanum.

BACKGROUND

The CU Survey noted **Loss** in the form of **light to heavy erosion of surfaces** and **light to heavy general soiling** on most of the Triple Portal's sculptural and decorative surfaces. Biological growth was noted on prominent limestone sculptures and atop decorative limestone architectural courses.

FINDINGS

The annotations of the CU Survey, particularly of the central portal elevation and its marble sculptural elements are not entirely accurate. This was due in part, to the heavily soiled surfaces that had obscured the conditions until a well-intentioned cleaning occurred in 2021 (Appendix 6). Although the cleaning was largely effective in removing dark soiling, it

unfortunately adversely impacted the stone. Still, nearly all iconographic sculpture and architectural decorations harbor residual soil that may be cleaned.

Discreet samples were taken to identify the nature of the residual soiling and surface treatments on the Triple Portal's architectural and sculptural stone surfaces, and instrumental analysis was conducted to inform the next conservation steps. The results can be found in the sampling report (Appendix 7).

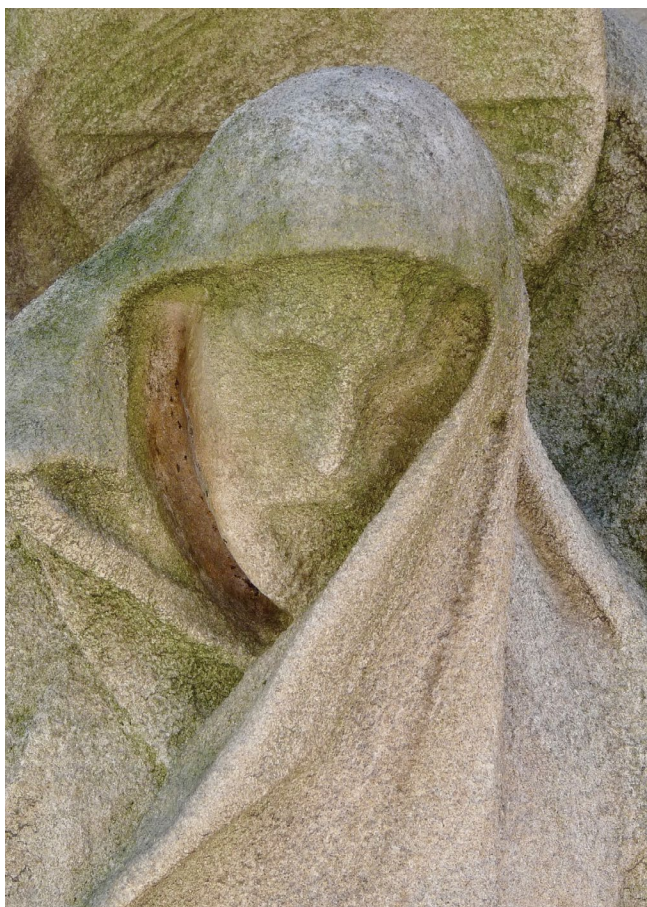
Excelsior noted an issue of concern of **Loss** in the form of **light to heavy erosion** on most iconographic sculpture of the Triple Portal. In particular, **heavy erosion** of the prominent, carved-in-the-round marble forms of the central tympanum and frieze exhibit fragile, friable



Actual Scale 3D Printed Model (at Left) that Can Support the Restoration Process.

surfaces and significant loss of critical sculptural features. The losses are progressive, as seen in the photographic record, and by several undocumented previously applied cementitious patch repairs that are adjacent to them. The tympanum and frieze exhibit multiple in plane and hairline cracks that appear stable but are still of concern. Patch repairs on the limestone sculpture have failed, and the mortar is deteriorated in the joints of the friezes.

Excelsior annotated conditions post-cleaning of O'Connor's central tympanum and frieze (Appendix 8). All of the Triple Portal's surfaces are rapidly re-soiling with particulate matter, and the limestone is being recolonized by biological growth. Thanks to newly installed bird-deterrent netting, the formerly pigeon-infested iconographic sculpture is now free of harmful roosting behavior and the associated volume of droppings.



Detail of Biological Growth on Limestone Sculpture.

RECOMMENDED SCOPE OF WORK

The following recommendations aim to arrest the actively progressive deterioration of sculpture and to provide options for faithfully restoring missing features critical to the legibility of the iconography.

Firstly, the iconographic sculpture's residual soiling should be discreetly cleaned with laser ablation and/or other appropriate method. Properly tuned laser cleaning can remove residual soiling without mechanical impact on the underlying substrate and reach inside recesses and around surface geometries whereas many other cleaning methods cannot.

Following cleaning, the fragile, friable surfaces of the central tympanum should be carefully assessed to determine the type and the extent (silicon dioxide conversion and/or silicic ethyl ester or ethyl silicate complexes) of consolidation treatment required to stabilize them. Defining treatment goals and then applying and assessing consolidation performance will help inform the feasibility of subsequent conservation activity. If deemed appropriate, adding in-kind "dutchman" or composite cast sculptural restorations may be realized. Digital scan data can be used to support remote carving and modeling activity, including creating 3D prints of existing sculptural surfaces, which can permit precise integration of restorations into the historic fabric. This approach reduces the need to access the Triple Portal repeatedly, minimizing disruptions to the church and incidental wear and tear of vulnerable marble.

Select marble sculpture that is most crucial to the legibility of the iconography, specifically the Christ figures of the central tympanum's Coronation and the central frieze's Crucifixion, may be prioritized for restoration. Other areas of sculptural loss may be stabilized and left unrestored.

Lastly, filling/stabilizing cracks is recommended on the central tympanum and frieze with conservation-grade adhesives based on ethyl

methacrylate co-polymer, and/or lime-based hydraulic injection grout.

CHALLENGES

The central tympanum preferentially sheds rainwater in patterns that cause prominent features to be vulnerable to erosion. Runoff may compromise these features' recommended stabilization/consolidation treatment efficacy. Discreetly engineered baffles that safely redirect rainwater runoff away from vulnerable features could be tested to determine if the addition is effective and suitably sympathetic to the building fabric.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

With the Conservancy's digital scan data captured in May 2023 by Direct Dimensions, Inc., virtual restoration of losses of the iconographic sculpture may be achieved remotely without impacting the Triple Portal's fragile materials. For details about the scans and their potential, see Data Capture and Processing Explanation for St. Bartholomew's Conservancy (Appendix 9) and Conservator's Notes by Excelsior Art Services | Digital Documentation—The Stanford White Triple Portal of St. Bartholomew's Church (Appendix 10).

It is highly recommended that the Conservancy underwrite a monitoring and preventive conservation regime for the Triple Portal's exterior. This should include engaging conservators to periodically (every 3-5 years max.) gently remove accretions of fine particulate matter from the facade and sculptural elements by soft brushing, vacuuming, and/or non-pressurized water misting.

Bronze Doors

Anchoring the Triple Portal's arched entryways, three magnificent pairs of bronze doors feature high-relief depictions of apostles and episodes from the Old and New Testaments. The larger central pair is distinct for being Andrew O'Connor's first major commission. O'Connor was a studio assistant to Daniel Chester French who oversaw its design and execution.



High Resolution Scanning of Iconographic Sculpture.

BACKGROUND

All the doors are now permanently open inside the narthex and have gone through many years of harsh environmental exposure, irregular use, and deferred maintenance. Their outboard, protective oak pocket doors have been fixed in place and are the sole means of security and entry to the church through the Triple Portal on Park Avenue. New York Landmarks Conservancy (NYLC) produced a conservation report (Appendix 11) on the bronze doors in 1999. In 2022, Acheson Doyle Partners Architects, the church's Architect of Record, created detailed drawings for the doors and frames (Appendix 12). As part of its evaluation, Excelsior reviewed these documents, which are important references.

FINDINGS

Excelsior noted an issue of concern in the form of **Repairs – inoperable and damaged;** and found that although all three sets of doors can freely swing into relatively open

and closed positions, each has issues with broken hardware and alignment with their respective leaves and integral frames. This is felt most keenly with the larger, central pair of bronze doors, particularly the north leaf, which exhibits damage/distortion from being forced into position. A section of the north door's decorative trim nearest the ground was broken off and lost. Evidence of probing was revealed on the door frame behind the lost trim, where a roughly cut opening was likely made to inspect the interior. Attempts to remove a panel on the back of the door to access the inner workings also appear to have been made, but no record of such interventions seems to exist.

All doors have a dark, sulfur-influenced patina and are very dirty. Despite their compromised utility and lack of care, all the bronze doors are generally stable and in good condition.

In February 2023, Excelsior directed a materials sampling in collaboration with SOCOTEC Specialty Engineering to identify the bronze alloys of all the doors. The report's findings are revelatory information for the art historical record and enable faithful in-kind replacement of the lost decorative trim. For more details on the testing results, see Bronze Cast Alloy Material Analysis — St. Bartholomew's Church by SOCOTEC Engineering (Appendix 13).

RECOMMENDED SCOPE OF WORK

The following recommendations offer a path for conserving the Vanderbilt Memorial bronze doors while reactivating their public presence. The church has thoughtfully suggested installing glass doors in front of the center pair to give passersby a view of the church interior. Any such addition must be sympathetic to the original design and suitably detailed to integrate with the historic fabric of the Triple Portal. Should such an addition be officially approved, the center bronze doors need not function as security for the building because the glass doors would serve that purpose. The subsidiary north and south doors, on the other hand, could be used optionally to secure their respective portals and, therefore, should



Evaluating Operability of Bronze Doors.



XRF Reading on Lost Decorative Door Trim.

receive repairs to their hardware and integral frameworks. The compromised operability of the center pair's north leaf may be addressed by adjusting the integral pivots and the doors' surrounding framework to allow the artwork to be strategically orientated towards Park Avenue when desired. Highly qualified specialists should be engaged to repair and conserve all three sets of doors in situ.

Restoration work should include faithfully replicating the missing bronze decoration with the supportive use of 3D scanning technology combined with traditional crafts. The resulting bronze cast of matching alloy may be precisely integrated by TIG welding and carefully chased to match the existing trim's profile. The heritage patina of the bronze doors may be closely matched by applying heat and chemical solutions. The doors should be comprehensively deep-cleaned (solvent/aqueous and anionic/nonionic surfactant/detergent) and finished with



Historic Photo Detail of Lost Decorative Trim.

a protective coating (specially formulated, conservation-grade wax). All work should be done in a controlled work environment created for the specific purpose of avoiding any adverse impact on visitors or the building fabric.

CHALLENGES

White intended to achieve an “Etruscan green” traditional patina on the three sets of bronze doors. As the original artisans’ bedeviled attempts proved, attempting this is highly unlikely to be successful.

Archived letters detailing competing foundries’ alloy preferences and the patina issue are summarized in Conservator’s Notes on Bronze Cast Alloy Material Analysis (Appendix 14).

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Following the initial conservation treatment project, all the doors may be reliably maintained

in situ and conserved by controlled, cyclical cleaning (aqueous/anionic/non-ionic surfactant/detergent) and refurbishment of specially formulated, conservation-grade protective wax coating. This could be done in conjunction with the recommended periodic work on the iconographic sculpture.

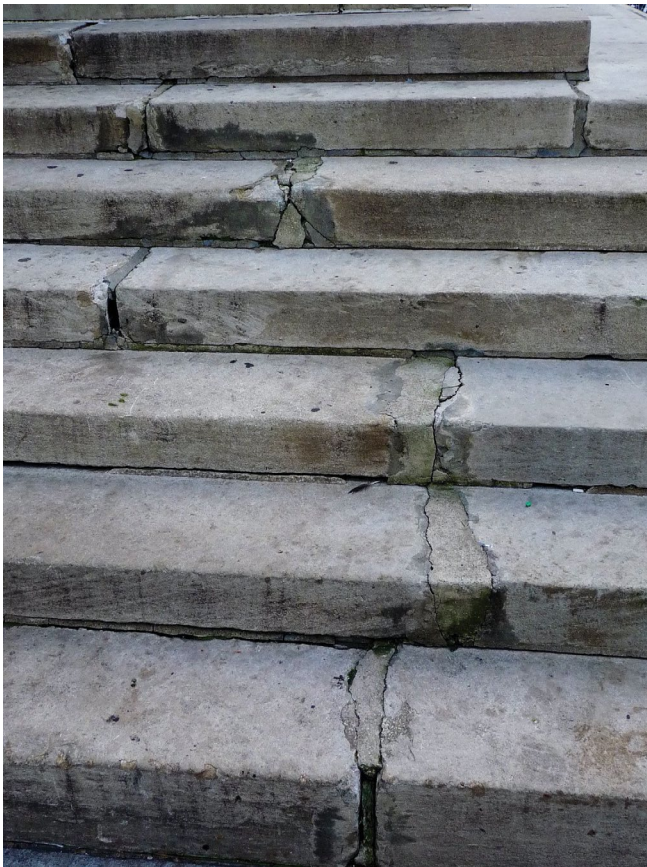
Limestone Stairs / Entryway / Facade Elements

The commission for St. Bartholomew’s Church at Park Avenue specified integrating White’s Italianate Romanesque Triple Portal into Goodhue’s design. The requirement has been credited with galvanizing Goodhue to break from his trademark Gothic style to explore unprecedented modes of architectural expression. Disassembled and relocated to Park Avenue in 1917-1918, the Triple Portal was positioned facing West rather than East, set back from the roadway, and placed atop a new limestone staircase, the last emphasizing its monumentality and making it resemble more closely White’s initial inspiration, the entrance to the Abbey Church of St. Gilles-du-Garde in Provence. The staircase offers a vantage point to contemplate the iconographic sculptures while ascending to the narthex threshold. Parishioners, visitors, passersby, and church social services patrons gather there, creating a distinct sense of place.

BACKGROUND

The CU Survey found the stairway has cementitious repairs to address a large structural crack on the north side due to heaving and the placement of a utility trench at sidewalk level that may be undermining it.

Several treads are cracked, and some pieces are slightly misaligned. Multiple patch repairs were also noted. The stairs are lightly soiled, and metal signs and railings have stained the limestone where they are in contact with it. As with the Triple Portal’s other carbonate stones, the stairway treads’ once crisp edges are softened from the effects of weathering and wear.



Large Structural Crack, North End Stairway.

FINDINGS

The Excelsior Evaluation found that the stairway's mortar joints have deteriorated, while the landing has been topped with composite patch material to stabilize the assembly and create a less abrupt and safer pedestrian transition to the narthex.

RECOMMENDED SCOPE OF WORK

The following recommendations are made to renew the integrity and use of the historic stairway designed by Bertram G. Goodhue. Construction crews should coordinate with skilled artisans in a phased stairway restoration that permits continued access to the church. The church architects should be asked to provide design and critical stabilization compliant with New York City building codes. Conservation of the existing treads should be preferred. Replacement should be in kind and minimal.

At the top of the stairs, the red marble wainscoting panels, ornamental carved

limestone, and the broken base course of the Portal should also be assessed, documented, and treated suitably. Meanwhile, the rusted steel flagpoles and the Portal's decorative ironwork should be carefully prepared and painted by a skilled contractor.

CHALLENGES

Park Ave between 50th–51st Streets bustles with activity and factors that affect both the church operations and the exterior fabric of the Triple Portal. These factors include but are not limited to, vibrations from Metro North trains passing beneath Park Avenue, and activities associated with resting, eating, and queuing for community social services.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The bird deterrent netting should be constantly monitored for signs of wear, breaches, or failure. Any proposed work on the Triple Portal should not remove or cut any portion of the netting as doing so will void the warranty. Any proposed work that requires netting removal should first have a contingency plan for restoration by BirdMaster, International Bird Control Systems, Inc., the contractor that installed it.

Food truck cooking fumes and automotive exhaust from Park Avenue similarly contribute to the rapid re-soiling of the building. Suboptimal lighting diminishes the safety and appreciation of the location. These are all matters that should be addressed in conjunction with the conservation of the Triple Portal.

Issues of Concern for Conservation of the Triple Portal

The issues of concern for the conservation of the Triple Portal’s historic features in connection with their observed conditions presented herein can aid decision-making processes. While this can help define the scope of work, it does not represent all of the conservation actions that need to be addressed.

Cipollino Marble Columns

Loss – light to heavy erosion; spalling

Iconographic Sculpture, Central Tympanum and Frieze

Loss – light to heavy erosion

Cipollino Marble Columns

Soiling – light to heavy general soiling

Bronze Doors, Central Pairs

Repairs – inoperable and damaged

Cipollino Marble Columns

Repairs – metal bands and netting

Cipollino Marble Columns

Repairs – cementitious patches



Central Tympanum with Significant Loss of Critical Sculptural Features.



The Stanford White Triple Portal, St. Bartholomew's Church, on Park Avenue in New York City.

Part Three | In Summary

The Conservation Evaluation conducted by Excelsior Art Services on the most relevant architectural and decorative features of the Stanford White Triple Portal of St. Bartholomew's Church shed new light on their state of conservation. The CU Survey provided an important background that served as a stepping stone to conducting this hands-on conservation evaluation that revealed key findings and challenges ahead – of note: the origin and removal of insoluble surface treatments on the Cipollino marble columns; the current state of conservation of the iconographic sculpture in the central tympanum that was not previously fully understood; the precise alloy compositions of the bronze doors to illuminate the art historical record and to reliably replicate it for restoration purposes; and sustainable means to visually enhance and conserve the facade and permit safe access.

Finally, it is important to observe that the Excelsior Evaluation, while supported by archival research, was painstakingly hands-on. Correspondingly, Excelsior presents operative recommendations rooted in a sound philosophical approach to conservation and issues of concern, providing a path of conservation action to care for The Triple Portal.

Appendices

1. Building Diagnostics and Condition Survey (the CU Survey) by Columbia University in Cooperation with St. Bartholomew's Conservancy (2017-2019)
2. Archived Letters First Person Stanford White Regarding Cipollino Marble Columns
3. Caffall Waterproofing Co. Proposal to McKim, Mead & White Regarding Cipollino Marble Columns
4. Summary of Laser Cleaning Tests by Excelsior Art Services
5. Conservator's Notes by Excelsior Art Services | Cipollino Marble Column Conservation Pilot Recommendations – The Stanford White Triple Portal of St. Bartholomew's Church
6. Saint Bartholomew's Church — West Facade Masonry and Related Restorations — Section 040310 — Historic Masonry Cleaning
7. Sampling Report by Excelsior Art Services and Conservation Scientist Catherine Matsen
8. Updated Conditions Survey – Central Tympanum and Frieze by Excelsior Art Services
9. Data Capture and Processing Explanation for St. Bartholomew's Conservancy by Direct Dimensions, Inc.
10. Conservator's Notes by Excelsior Art Services | Digital Documentation – The Stanford White Triple Portal of St. Bartholomew's Church
11. Conservation Report by New York Landmarks Conservancy
12. St. Bartholomew's Church Partial Exterior Restoration – West Facade & Roofs by Acheson Doyle Partners Architects, the Church Architect of Record
13. Bronze Cast Alloy Material Analysis — St. Bartholomew's Church by SOCOTEC Engineering
14. Conservator's Notes by Excelsior Art Services | Bronze Cast Alloy Material Analysis — St. Bartholomew's Church by SOCOTEC Engineering (LF222590-R-01 Rev.1)

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Over the past year, Excelsior has been a witness to St. Bartholomew's Church's Radical Welcome and the positive impact of its mission on the community. Our admiration and gratitude to St. Bart's Rector, the Right Reverend Dean Wolfe, the Vestry, and Tara Marlovits, Chief Operating Officer. Special thanks to Honorary Warden and Chair of the Church's Properties Committee, Percy Preston Jr., whose devotion as archivist and author is praiseworthy. Our sincere thanks to Michael F. Doyle, FAIA and Louis Martino, Principal of Acheson Doyle Partners Architects, P.C., St. Bartholomew's Church's Architect of Record.

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This conservation evaluation report was much fortified by the bracing collegiality and

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excelsiorartservices.com
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