

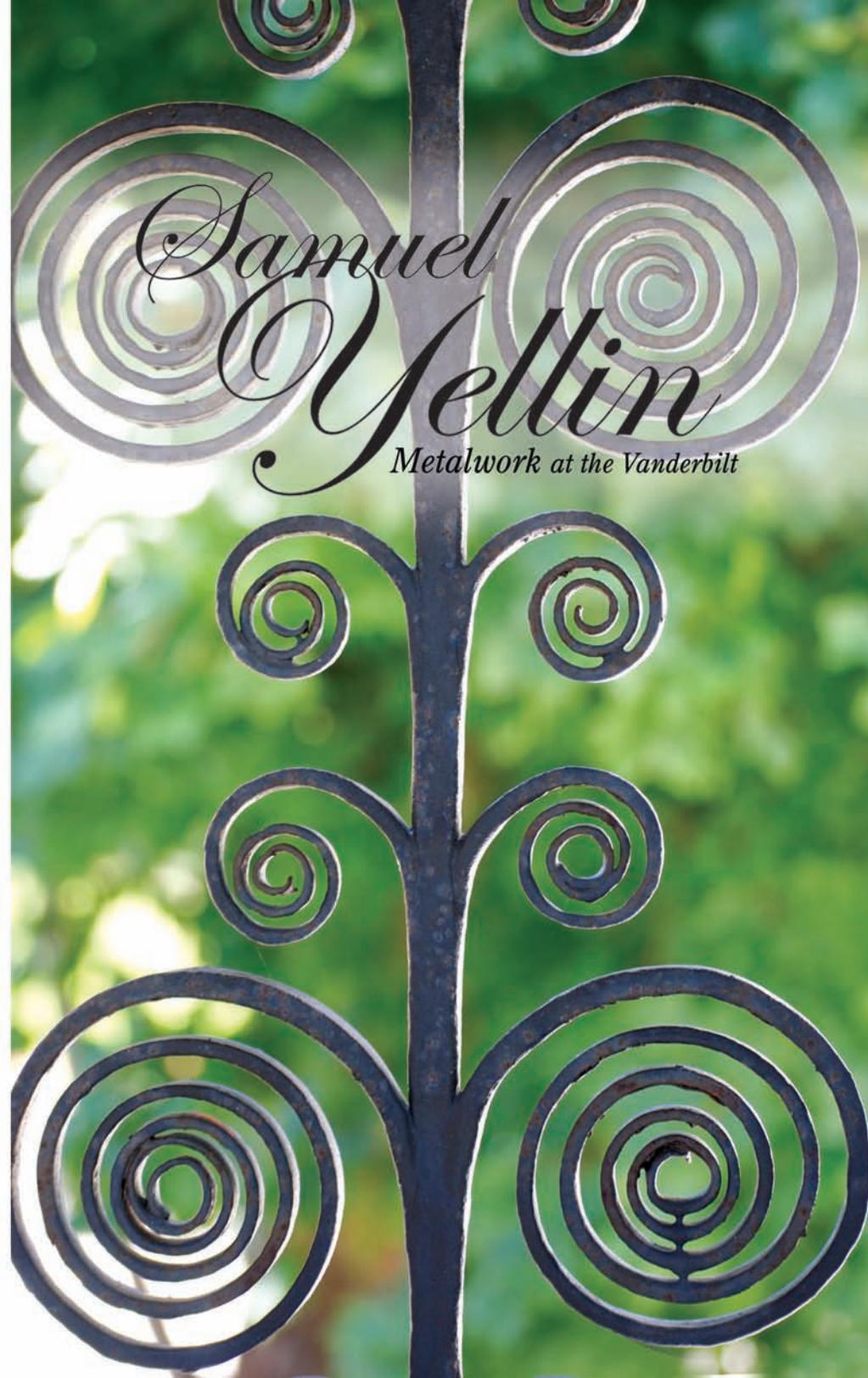


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Marine Museum



## Introduction

Metalwork by Samuel Yellin graces the Eagle's Nest estate, former summer home of William K. Vanderbilt II and present-day Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. This brochure will guide you as you walk the grounds to view Yellin's work – there is so much of it to see here.

Yellin, a Polish immigrant and self-described blacksmith, elevated the craft of hand-forged iron to the realm of fine art. He studied the craft as a young man, and later toured Europe to study the work of masters who came before him. He relied on the anvil and hammer—no modern equipment—remaining true to the process and integrity of the material.

Eagle's Nest was designed by renowned architects Warren and Wetmore in the early 20th century. Yellin's ironwork punctuates the flat, white stucco facades of the Spanish Revival style structure with surprisingly delicate designs. His love for the medium translates to the pieces he produced.

Yellin created window grills, door handles, light fixtures, railings, planters, gates and weather vanes for Eagle's Nest. He used marine forms and nautical themes to add whimsy to his designs and customized them to reflect Mr. Vanderbilt's personality, tastes and interests.

Yellin produced a prolific body of work in his short 54 years, employing almost 300 ironworkers at one time. His iron designs can be found in 45 states and adorn the Federal Reserve Bank in New York City, Yale University and the estates of many Gold Coast mansions. With the passage of time, Yellin's work is increasingly recognized and revered for its significance to the Arts and Crafts revival in American architecture.



*There is only one way to make good decorative iron work and that is with the hammer at the anvil, for in the heat of creation and under the spell of the hammer, the whole conception of a composition is often transformed.*



*- Samuel Yellin*



CS1



Door to second floor of Marine Museum



The staircase and entrance to the Marine Museum.

Yellin loved architects and their passionate clients. William K. Vanderbilt II was no exception. This philanthropist and scientist adored iron. The architects, Warren and Wetmore, hired Yellin to create a plethora of forged metalwork for Vanderbilt's new home on the North Shore of Long Island. Eagle's Nest, a Latin beauty, shows off the black iron against the light-colored stucco in almost every corner and vista of the estate. Have you ever seen a winch

decorated with iron acanthus leaves? There are grilles, railings, doors, lanterns and gates galore at Eagle's Nest.

Yellin created ornamental metalwork for many of the Gold Coast mansions. Yet it is at Vanderbilt's estate where the work is most prominent. The creativity and mastery of this ironwork shouts - "look at me." For any lover of the craft of architecture blacksmithing - Eagle's Nest is a must see pilgrimage.

*Clare Yellin*

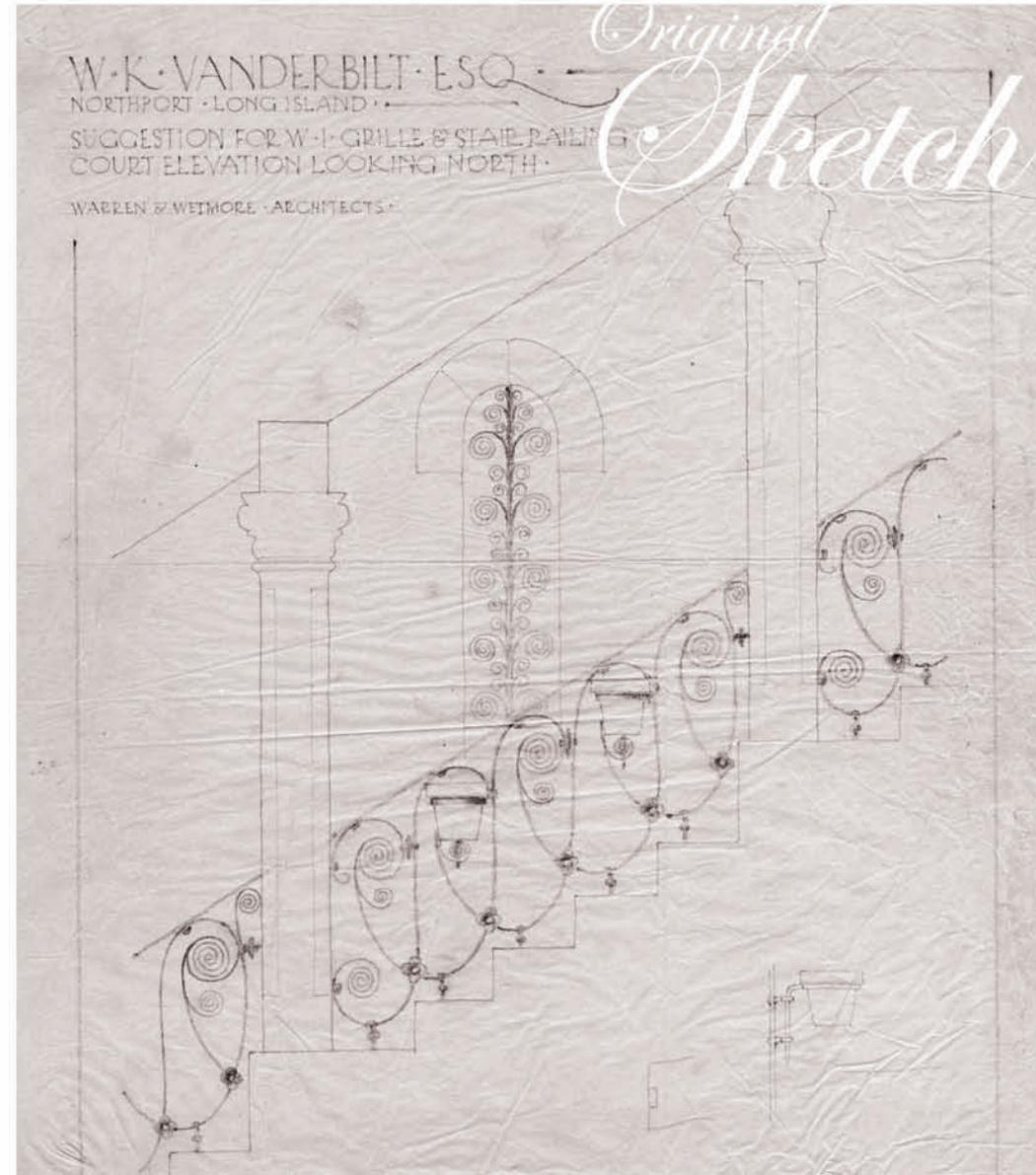
# Staircase to the Bell Tower

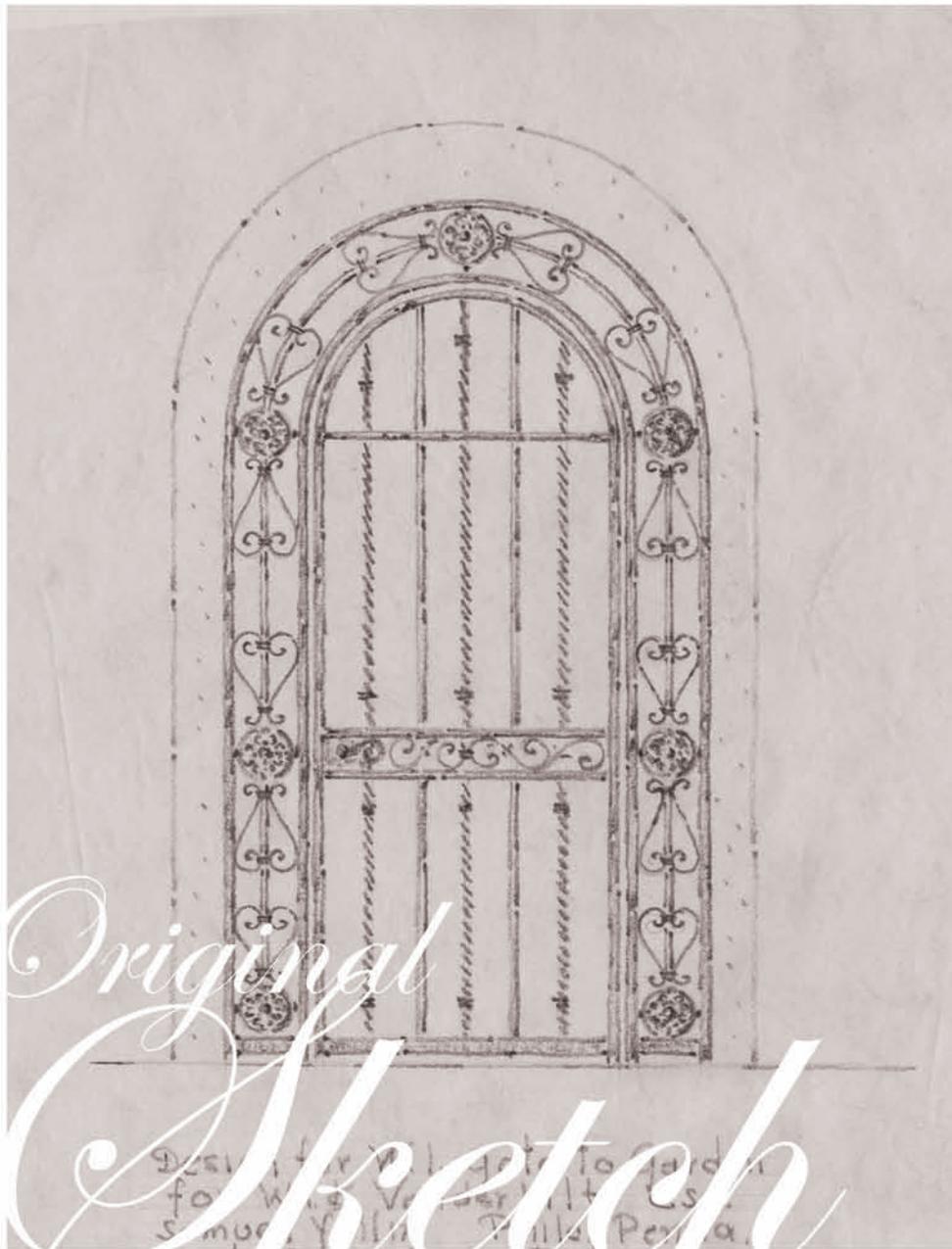
CN2,CW3



To the left are images of the staircase that leads to the Bell Tower. Incorporated into the ironwork of this railing are functional holders for flower pots. Vines grow and drape down, mimicking and embracing the railing's organic quality.

Below is the original sketch drawn by Samuel Yellin. This staircase is located in the Mansion courtyard.





Original sketch drawn by Samuel Yellin for the archway. From inside the courtyard this gate provides a beautiful view of the Long Island Sound. Over the years it has served as a wonderful location for wedding photos.



CS2



Above is a close-up of the gate highlighting one of the intricate designs of iron found within the larger structure. Like most of Yellin's work, as you get closer, the intricate details of the work reveal surprising and interesting forms.

“*It is most important that a piece of work shall be harmonious from every point of view. I mean that, besides being a part of its surroundings, it must harmonize within itself.*

- *Samuel Yellin*”



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# The Boxwood Garden Gate

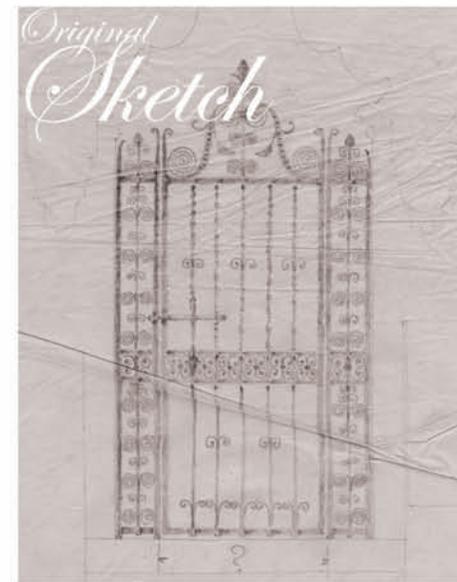
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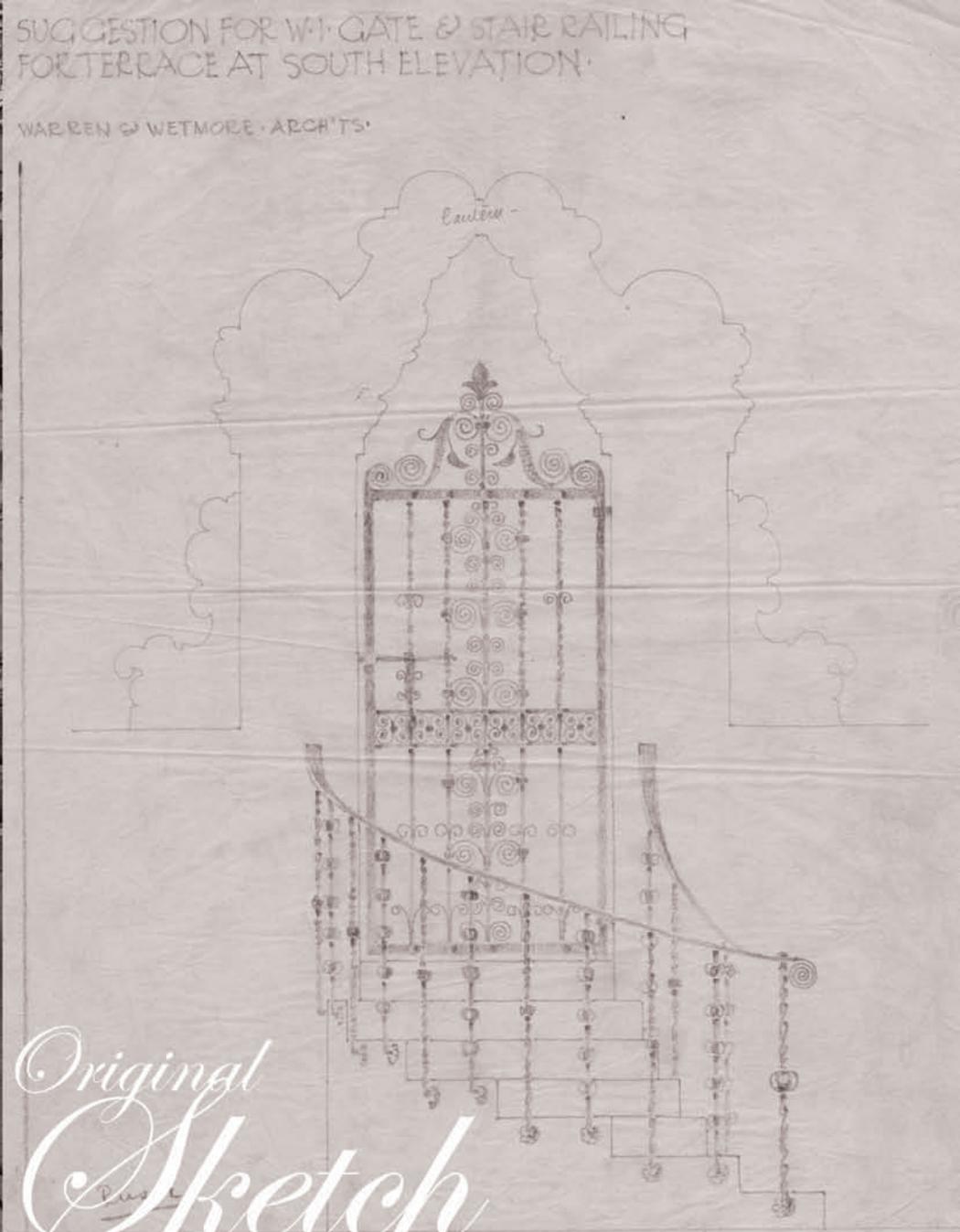


N2



This gate leads down the staircase to the Habitat exhibit hall. Ironwork doors are often intended as barriers to keep people out, but Yellin's doors beckon you to enter and begin your journey. The scroll details evoke vines growing through the ironwork. The delicate quality of the original sketch (lower right) is translated flawlessly into the iron by Yellin's skilled hand. The lock has a fairy tale quality appropriate to the magical setting of Eagle's Nest.





E1

To the left is one of two ornate iron gates located in the Boxwood Garden area. It stands at the top of a staircase, accentuated by gently curved railings that harmonize with surrounding plantings. Above is the original sketch for the gate and railings drawn by Yellin. His work has been referred to as “sketches in iron.”



N2

W4

Below is a close-up of some of the intricate handles and knobs of the many gates and doors along the exterior of the mansion. These images highlight the complex artistry and designs found within the larger ironwork structure. Be sure to look closely, as there is much to see. While Yellin's work can be appreciated from a distance, closer examination is a testament to his talent, humor and mastery of design.

Horse heads, eels, human faces, botanical and biological forms can all be found on close examination of the entrances. Yellin's work is a perfect combination of utility and whimsy.



E2



Marine Museum



N3



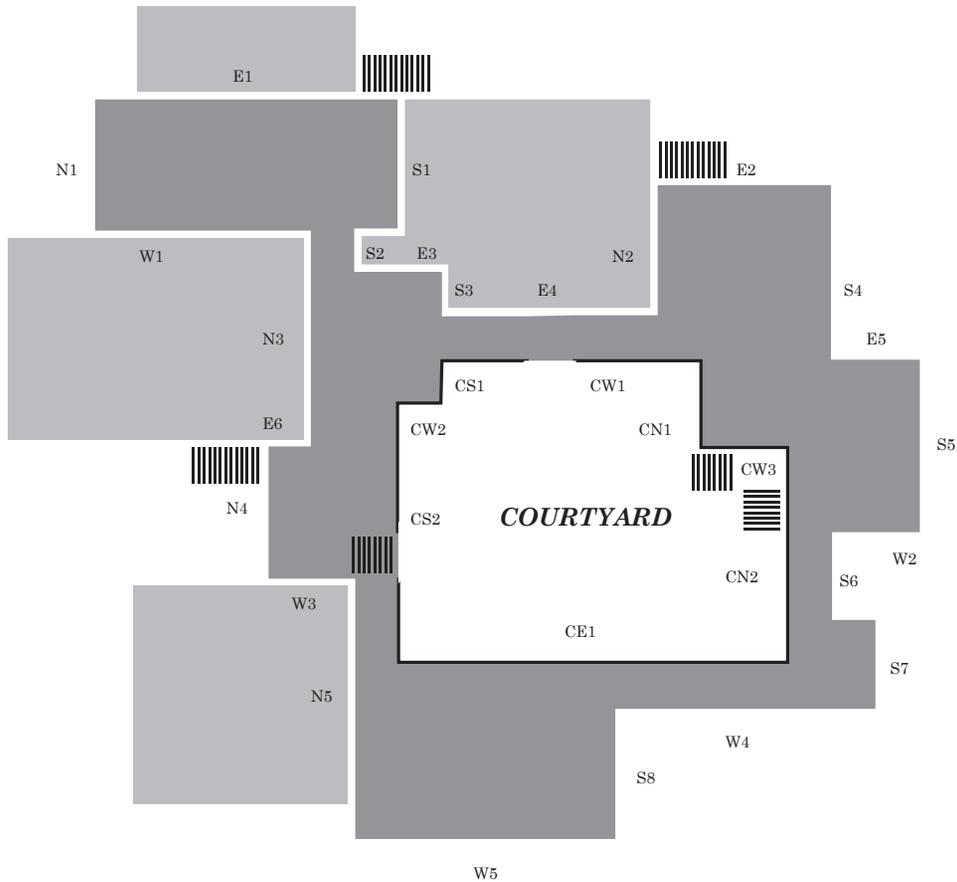
E4 / CW1

# *The Weathervane*

Yellin designed a weathervane for the majestic bell tower entrance to the mansion courtyard (images below). It was removed twenty years ago to prevent further damage to its decorative elements. We are presently trying to fund its restoration and hope one day to return it to its rightful spot. Images at left are other weathervanes on the estate.



# Map of the Mansion Area



## LOCATION OF PICTURED METALWORK

- CS1 - Window grill with Yellin signature stamp
- CN2 - Railing on staircase to the Bell Tower
- CW3 - Railing on staircase to the Bell Tower
- CS2 - Arched gateway overlooking Long Island Sound
- N2 - Scroll handle on Boxwood Garden gate
- N3 - Vertical door handle
- W4 - Etched door knob
- E2 - Horse head door knocker
- E4 - Serpentine door handle

The Marine Museum is a two-story white building located just north of the parking lot near the road.



Yellin (right) with striker in shop, circa 1920's.  
Image courtesy of Samuel Yellin Metalworkers Co.

The William K. Vanderbilt II Mansion contains numerous pieces of ironwork created by renowned metalsmith, Samuel Yellin (1885-1940). Many would argue that Yellin was, perhaps, the most accomplished ironsmith in 20th century America. From 1909 until his death in 1940, Yellin consistently produced work that set a standard that others would emulate throughout the century. A native of Poland, Samuel Yellin emigrated to America in 1906.

Already a trained smith, Yellin quickly adapted to life in Philadelphia. Before he was 30 years old, he established a metalworking studio and began creating commissioned ironwork for cities up and down the East Coast. Throughout his life he produced ironwork for numerous estates. His patrons read like a Who's Who of American industrialists: Vanderbilt on Long Island, Rockefeller in Tarrytown, Mellon in Pittsburgh, DuPont in Wilmington, Eastman in Rochester, and Flagler in New York. Yellin made both exterior and interior ironwork.

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*When I go to rest at night, I can hardly sleep because my mind is aswarm with visions of all the gates and grilles and locks and keys I want to do. I veryily believe I shall take my hammer with me when I go and at the gate of Heaven, if I am denied admission, I shall fashion my own key.*  
”

*- Samuel Yellin*

*- Anna Fariello*