Art of the Tombstone

Old Burial Hill Cemetery, Marblehead

by

Standley Goodwin
Oldest Headstone; 1681

Here lies buried
A Body of Mary
Wife to Christopher Lattimer
Aged 49 years
Dec. 7 8 of May
1686
Marking Graves

• The Burying Ground was next to the first Church in Marblehead which moved in 1695.
• Early burials were marked with wooden posts at the head and foot of the grave.
• The stone headstone and footstone were developed in Boston between 1650 and 1670.
• Their use quickly spread to Salem.
• In 1681 Marblehead was a small place.
• The first stone was probably purchased from Boston.
Tombstone Art

• The strict Puritan Church didn’t allow public artistic expression in most areas.
• The Tombstone was one of the few areas where they did.
• Some very artistic stones were made between 1681 and the 1740’s.
• Most stones were small and some contained some fantastic details.
Here Lyes the Body of Mrs Prudence Turner, Wife to Mr Isaac Turner Died April 24th 1717, in her 36th Year of her Age.
Judging Tombstones

• Around 1720 low quality stones appeared in increasing numbers.
• Their makers didn’t spend much effort on the Headstone motif or borders.
• They couldn’t lay out the tombstone inscription so it fit.
• Their spelling left a lot to be desired.
Crude Headstone

Here lyeth the body of Eleazer英格尔斯, who died Febua'y 27th, 1747, aged 56 years.

Average Headstone

Here lyeth the body of Eleazer Ingalls, who died Febua'y 27th, 1747, aged 56 years.
Folk Art?

Here lyeth the body of Joseph Gallison, who died Septme., the 30th in 18th year of his Age 1719.
HERE LYES ¥ BODY ¥ OF SAMUEL WALDRON AGED 34 YEARS DYED 8 OF DECEMBER 1691

THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED

Crossbones: Mortality

Hourglass: Swiftness of Time
HERE LYES THE BODY OF MARY ELITHROP WIFE TO JOHN ELITHROP WHO DECD WITH HER SON BENJ IN HER ARMS AUG 7 1717 IN THE 35 YEAR OF HER AGE
Winged Effigy: Flight of the Soul

Here Lyes the Body of M. Samuel Reed
Aged 57 Years 2 Mon. & 3 Ds. Died December 9 1718
Richard Hawley
1698

Coat of Arms:
Lineage

HERE LYES BURIED THE BODY OF RICHARD HAWLEY DEPARTED THIS LIFE OCTOBER 5TH 1698 IN YE 63 YEAR OF HIS AGE
John Legg
1718
Flowers: Brevity of Existence
Arch: Victory In Death

Dr. Benjamin Hills; 1738

Here lies Buried the Body of Doct. Benjamin Hills, who Departed this Life Jan'r 2nd Anno Domini 1738 in the 70th Year of His Age.
JOHN, SON OF M. JOHN
& M. ISABELLA TAWLEY
DIED SEP, 22, 1736
AGED 8 YEARS 8 M' & 22 D's

THOMAS, SON OF M. JOHN
& M. ISABELLA TAWLEY
DIED SEP, 14, 1737
AGED 12 YEARS 9 M' & 11 D's
John & Thomas Tawley Motifs

- Crossbones
- Skeleton
- Winged Hourglass
- Father
- Time
- Scythe
In Memory of Mrs. Elisabeth Tedder, the Beloved wife of Mr. Valentine Tedder, a Daughter to Mr. Sam'l & Mrs. Sarah Dodd, who Died Oct. 4th Anno Domini 1769 aged 33 Years.

Naked as from the earth we came and great to life at first we to earth return again and mingle with our dust. The clear delight we here enjoy and fondly call our own are but short favours borrowed here to be repaid anon.
Here lies interred, the remaines of Madam Elizabeth Russell, who departed this life Feb., the 4th 1771, A. E. 80 years.

Weep not for me, my Son most dear, I am not Dead, but sleeping here. My Debts are paid, my Grave you see. Wait but a while, you'll follow me. The Memory of the Just is Blessed. The Righteous shall be had in Everlafting Remembrance.
In memory erectum

Reverendi D. Guillemi Whitwell

tectifica prima Christi apud Marblehead

Erector, sua et in regia viellorum genere

Deum precatus est ac tenet, ait peccatorum

Memor etiam de serene Oratone, suas ad populum

habitu evangelicis, plebs breviter continente

conscientia animata, iam in Totum humanum

Genes complexus est, et charitatis patriam

habuit, quae nunc repert. Exemplum pietae

et Christi virtutis praecipuum, et inter

hanc vitam, ac eus laboris Novembris 3° Diem

M DCCCLXXIII, Etatis. 43. Annis annorum

Erectum in memoria a Rev. Huill Whitwell

Rector of the first Church of Christ in Marblehead.

He was a faithful and upright man, and the guardian of

Heaven. In his address to God, he was fervent and

pure. He was a devout man, and the Bible was

strongly attached to his soul. He

was a bright example of piety and Christian virtue, in

the midst of life, and he

candidly accepted on the 3rd of November 1783, the 10th

of his mission.
Mrs. Susanna Jayne; 1776

Headstone

Footstone
Susanna Jayne Motif Meanings

1. Hourglass – Swiftness of Time
2. Bones – Mortality
3. Angels – Heavenly Hosts
4. Laurel Wreath – Victory in Death
5. Scythe – Divine Harvest
6. Sun – Resurrection
7. Orb – Reward of Resurrection
8. Hooped Snake – Eternity
9. Skeleton – Mortality
10. Bats – The Underworld
HERE LYES INTERRED

THE BODY OF MR

SAMUELL RUSSELL, Senior

AGED about 66 or 67 YEARS

DEPAIRED THIS LIFE

JULY, & 12th. 1711.
Heart:
Soul in Bliss
In Memory
of Mr.
Christopher Bubier
who died June 30th,
1789. aged 83 years.

Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of his saints.
In Memory of
Thomas F. Salkins,
who died Sep. 3, 1808.
Æt. 56.
& Mary P. Salkins,
Daughter of Thomas F. &
Mary Salkins, died
Aug. 19, 1812;
Æt. 18.

Afflictions saw long time they bore,
Physicians strive in vain,
'Twas placed to give them air.
The End