



Art of the Tombstone

Old Burial Hill Cemetery, Marblehead

by
Standley Goodwin

Oldest Headstone; 1681



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.

Mrs. Prudence
Turner; 1717



Signed



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



Average Headstone



Folk Art?



Here Lyeth the body of
Joseph Gallison who died
Septm^r the 30th in 18th
year of his Age 17 19

Crossbones:
Mortality

Hourglass:
Swiftness of Time



Vines: Wine;
Symbolic Blood of Christ

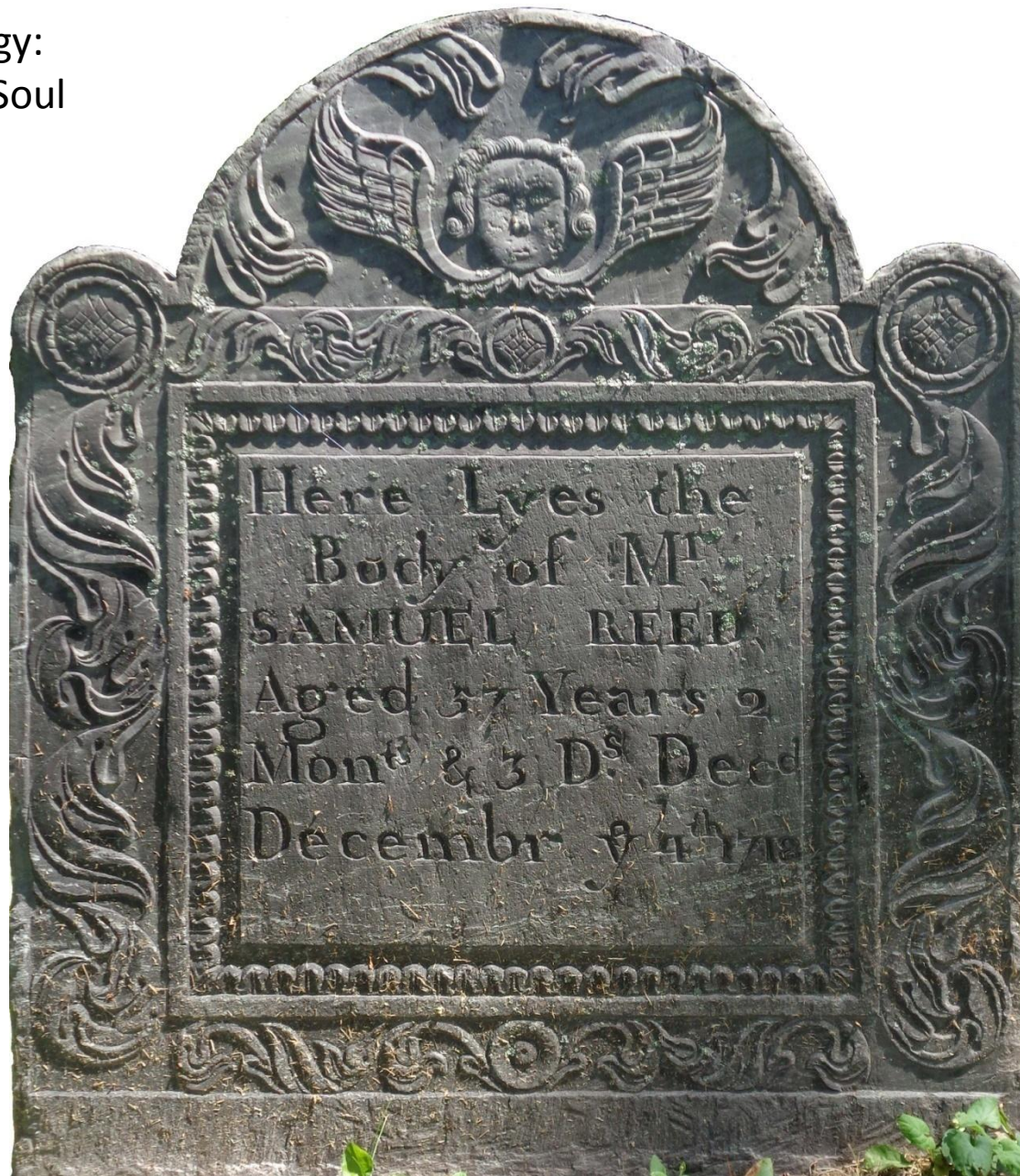
Arch: Victory
In Death

Mrs. Mary
Elithrop 1717



Winged Effigy:
Flight of the Soul

Samuel
Reed 1718



Richard
Hawley
1698

Coat of Arms:
Lineage



John Legg
1718



Flowers: Brevity
of Existence

Arch: Victory
In Death

Dr. Benjamin
Hills; 1738



John & Thomas
Tawley; 1736



John & Thomas Tawley Motifs

Crossbones

Skeleton



Winged
Hourglass

Father
Time

Scythe



Mrs. Elisabeth
Tedder; 1769



Crown: Christian
Righteousness

Madam Elizabeth
Russell; 1771



Here lies interr'd, & Remains
of MADAM ELIZABETH RUSSELL,
who Departed this Life Feb^y.
the 4th 1771. Aged 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
Everlasting Remembrance.

Rev. William Whitwell; 1781



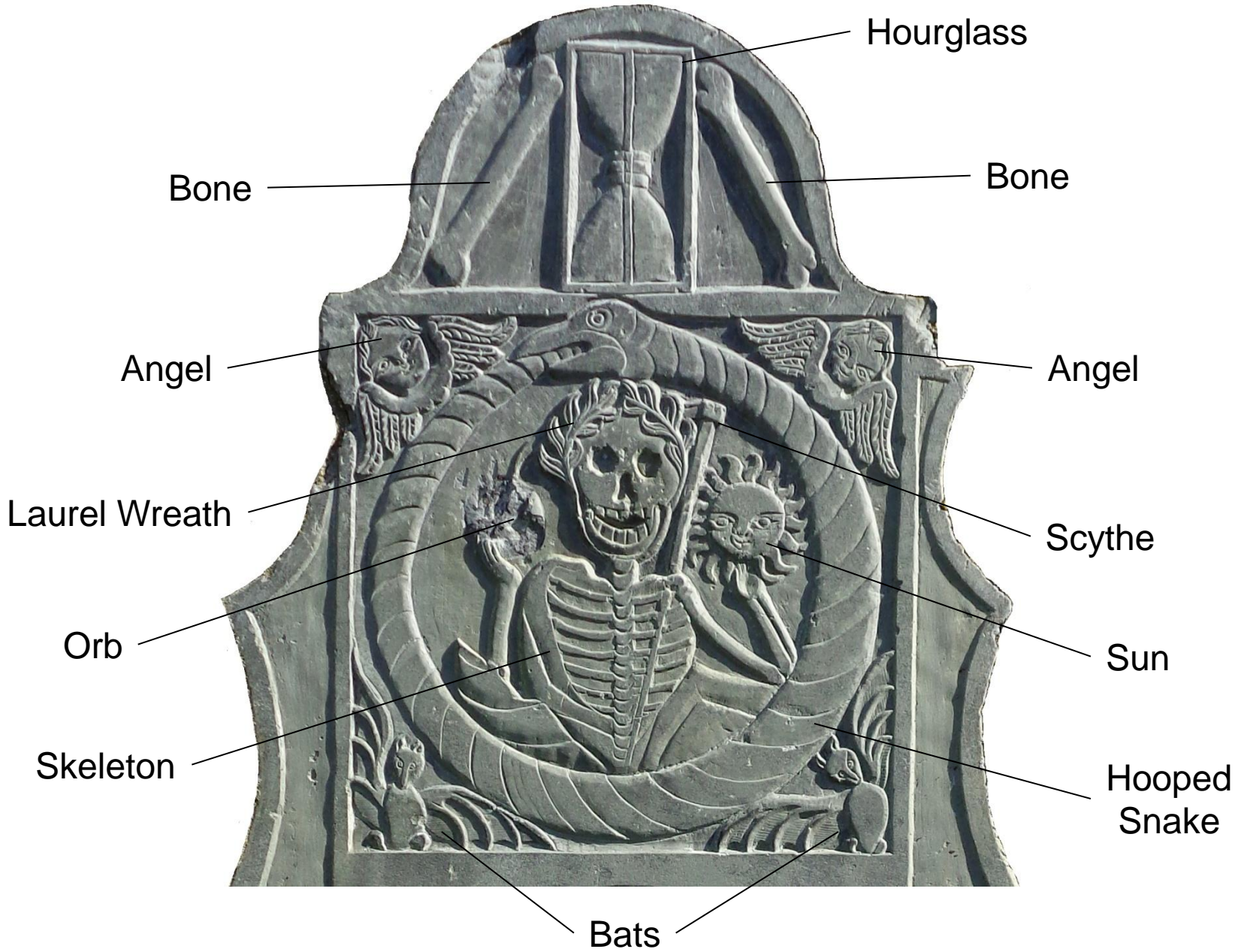
Headstone



Mrs. Susanna
Jayne; 1776



Footstone



Hourglass

Bone

Bone

Angel

Angel

Laurel Wreath

Scythe

Orb

Sun

Skeleton

Hooped Snake

Bats

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

Samuel
Russell Sr. 1711



Signed



Heart:
Soul in Bliss



Dated





IN Memory

of M^r.

CHRISTOPHER BUBIER

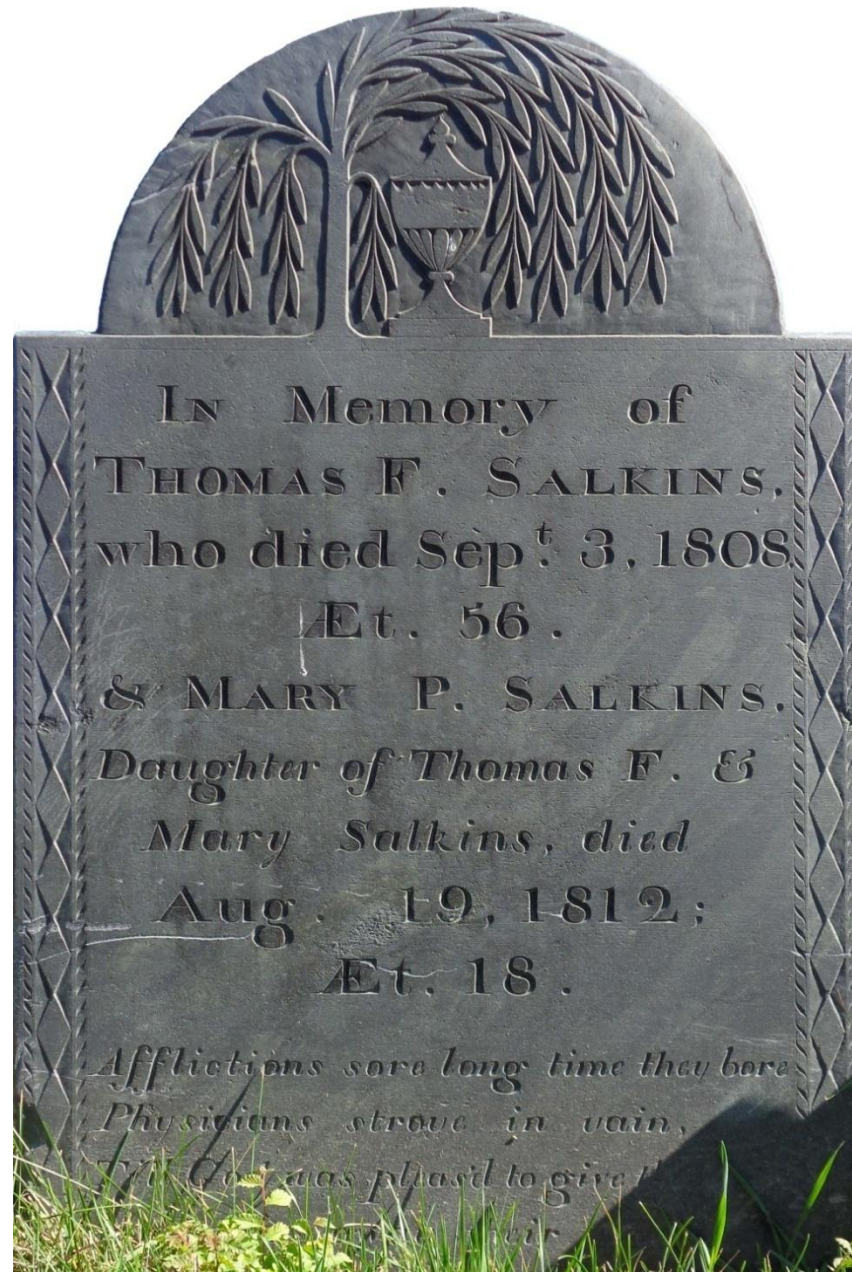
who died June 30th

1789: aged 83 years.

Precious in the sight of the Lord

is the death of his saints.

Willow &
Urn



IN MEMORY OF
THOMAS F. SALKINS,
who died Sep^r. 3, 1808

Æt. 56.

& MARY P. SALKINS.

Daughter of Thomas F. &
Mary Salkins, died

Aug. 19, 1812;

Æt. 18.

Afflictions sore long time they bore

Physicians strove in vain,

Yet God was pleas'd to give

thee to our

A wide-angle photograph of a cemetery under a clear blue sky. The foreground and middle ground are filled with numerous gravestones of various shapes and sizes, including many dark grey, rounded-top stones. A prominent white obelisk stands on a grassy hill in the background. To the right, a wooden gazebo with a dark roof is situated on a rocky outcrop. The overall scene is peaceful and well-maintained.

The End