



History of Gravestones

In these United States.

17th Century

Quick show of hands

- Upcountry?
- Midlands?
- Low Country?

- Attended my last talk here 2 years ago on the Mirror Trick?
- How many have since used the mirror trick?



Thanks!

- To the Lord
- To Mrs. Donna Foster
- Renee! (Happy Birthday)



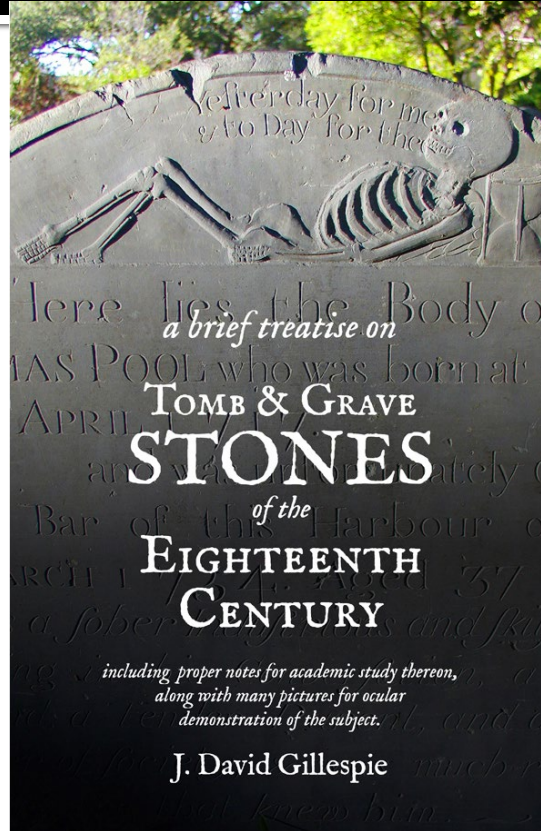
A little about me.

- To God be the Glory...
- I have been carving gravestones professionally for over 20 years now using chisel and mallet.
- Received a grant from the SC Arts Commission.

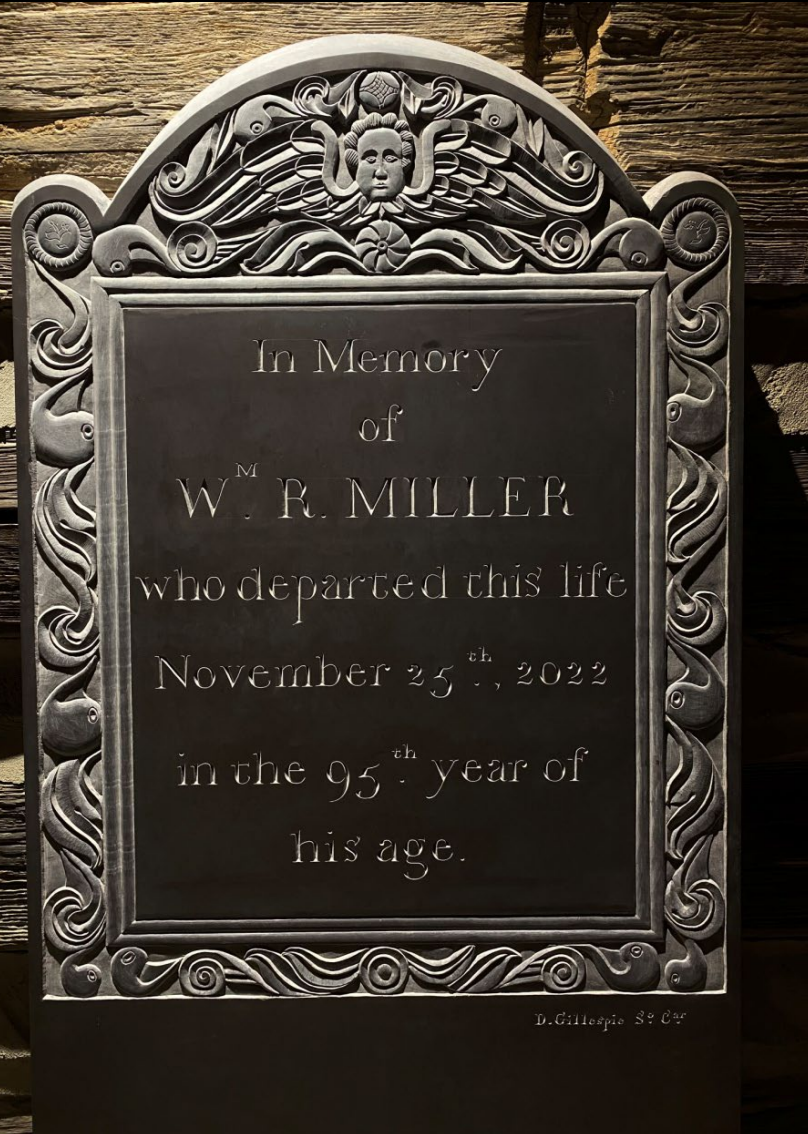


A little about me.

- Have stones at Drayton Hall Plantation, Charleston, the Congressional Cemetery in Washington DC, carved entire slave in Rock Hill SC.
- Have written a book on 18th century gravestones and how to identify some of the carvers.



Some of my work. To God be the Glory





Drayton

HAC · ITER · AD · ASTRA





Question!

- Where would you think the oldest dated Gravestone is in the United States?
- Raise your hand !

What is the oldest dated gravestone in the United States?

What about
this one
from 1674?

No!



What is the oldest dated gravestone in the United States?

What about
this one
from 1668?

No!



What is the oldest dated gravestone in the United States?

What about
this one
from 1647?

No!



What is the oldest dated gravestone in the United States?

What about
this one
from 1644?

Yes!



Didn't they land at Plymouth Rock in 1620?

Why, yes!

And here is
a portion
of that
stone
dated
1620!
(Carved in
the 1880s)



Didn't they settle Jamestown VA in 1607?

Why, yes!

And the
oldest
dated
legible
stone I
have
found
there is...



1699

*1699!

* The local
fragile
Sandstone
and
limestone
weren't
stable
enough for
gravestones



Why no older stones than 1644?

- * Both Jamestown and Plymouth Settlers were instructed to bury their dead secretly, so not to tip off the Natives that they were in a weakened state
- * Also No Stone Carvers were present and native stone in VA wasn't suitable.
- * Wooden Headboards or Stakes may have been used and rotted away.
- First and even some of the second generations to a new settlement in the new world were intent upon survival. They had very little time for carving gravestones.

Griswold Connecticut School.

1644-1704

***Matthew Griswold (1620–1698) Uncle**

***George Griswold (1633–1704)**
George was Matthew's Nephew.

•Both Settled in Windsor about 1637.

***Material: Red Sandstone**

***Heavy Slabs, Basic Styles.**

***Sandstone could not take fine detail so they had to be bold with lettering and basic ornament.**



Matthew Griswold (1620-1698)

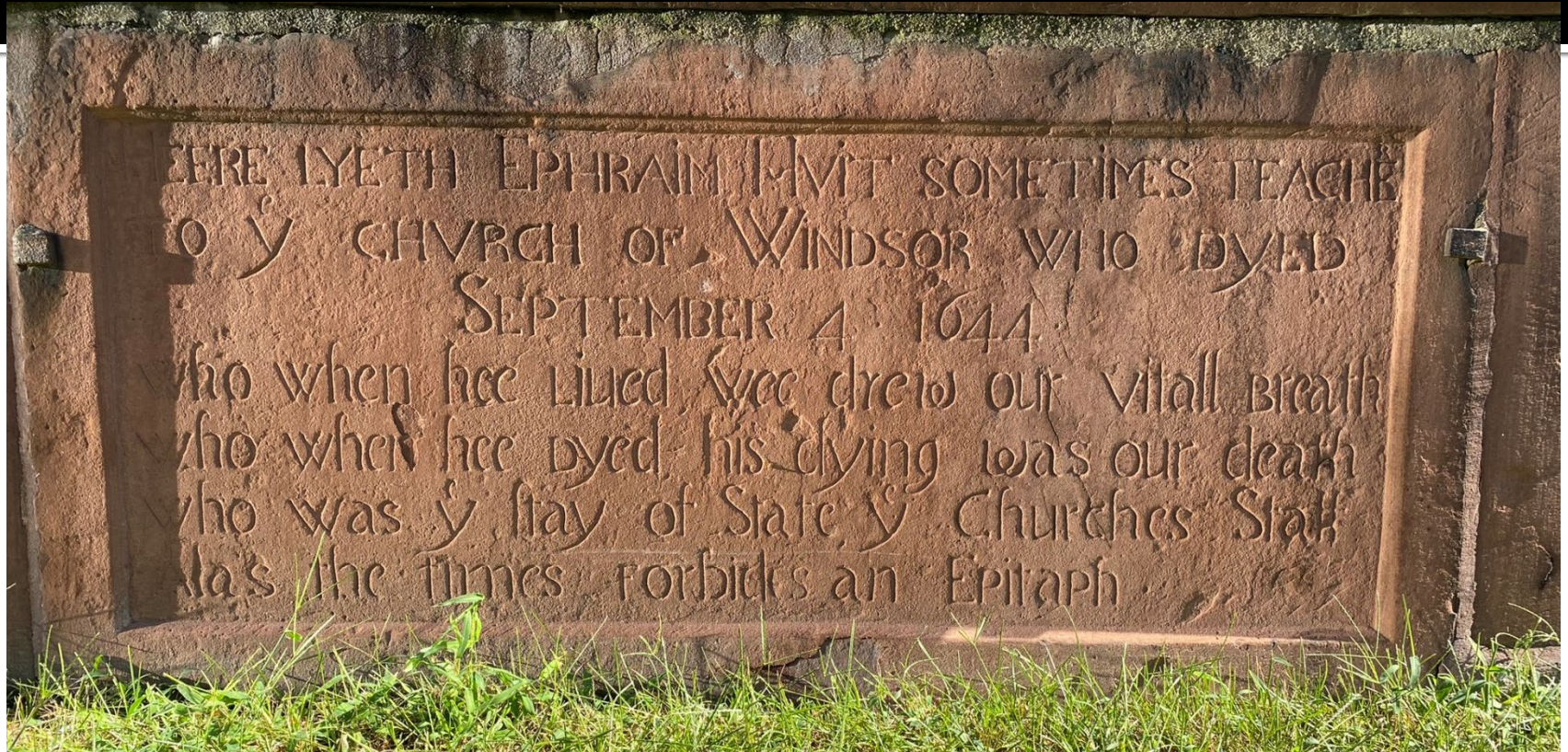
1644 Rev. Ephriam Huitt Stone

- Box Tomb for Rev. Ephriam Huitt
- Burial is underground. Tomb is set on top.
- Held together with Iron Bars
- OLDEST DATED GRAVESTONE IN THE U.S.



Matthew Griswold (1620-1698)

1644 Rev. Ephraim Huit Stone



HERE LYETH EPHRAIM HUIT SOMETIMES TEACHER TO YE CHURCH OF
WINDSOR WHO DYED SEPTEMBER 4 1644.

Who when hee lived wee drew our vitall breath, who when hee dyed his dying was our
death. Who was ye stay of State, ye Churches Staff,
Alas the times forbids an Epitaph.

1655 Matthew Griswold

*Material: Red Sandstone

* Similar to his stone carved for Lady Alice Fenwick called the “saddle stone” for its shape.



1657 George Griswold (1633-1704)

*George Griswold carved this at about 24 years old.

- Likely the oldest dated upright gravestone in CT.
- Notice also the frame left carved high above the inscription.
- Note Stylish letters.

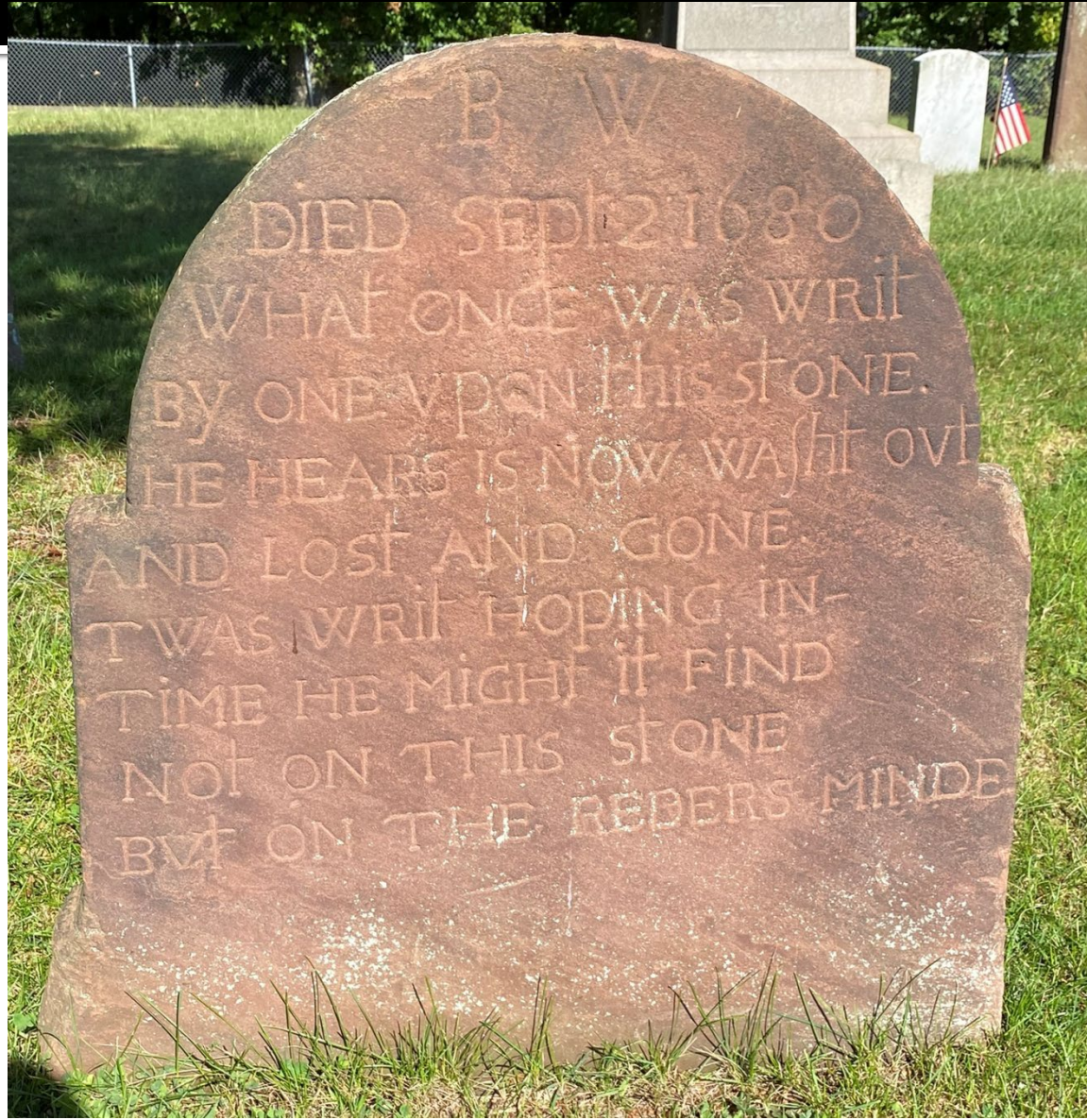


1680 George Griswold (1633-1704)

- A re-carved stone in 1680 from earlier that had faded away.

- * A Sandstone already unreadable by 1680, and likely not carved by the Griswolds originally

- * 1704 Probate Listing for George "Tools for ingraveing" augers gouges wedges narrow axes an interest in the "quariefield"



Massachusetts - EL Slate 1647

*Massachusetts Stones started more primitively.

*Roughly Cut Boulder
Maybe Slate

*Oldest Dated stone in
Massachusetts



*Photo courtesy of Derek Strahan
"Gravestones of New England"*

1653 Samuel Danforth

*Also a
Boulder
with a
shaped face
this time

* Heavy
Guidelines.
Each word
Separated
by a Colon :

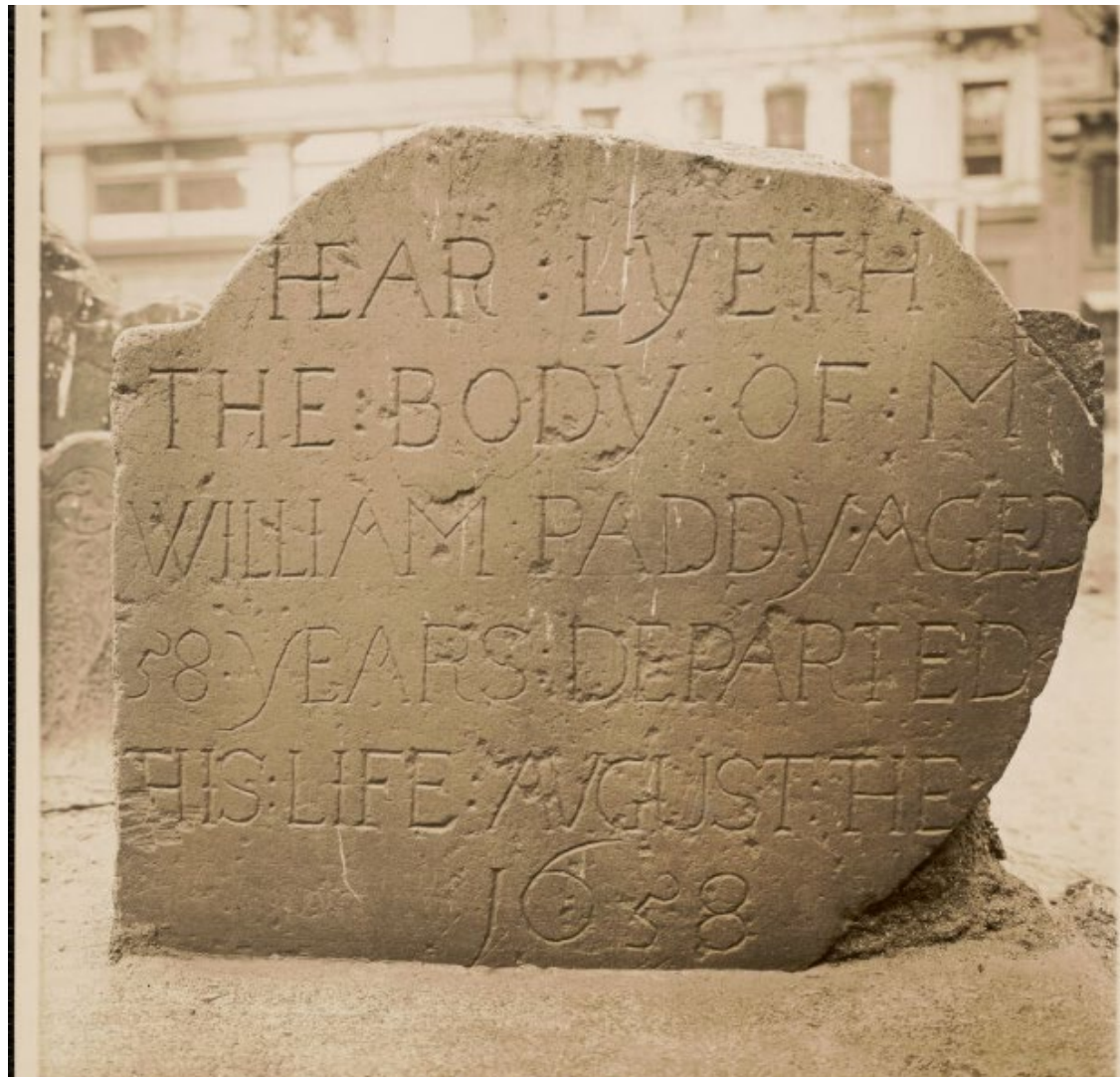


1658 William Paddy Stone

*Fully Dressed Stone
Front/Back and
Sides.

*Heavy Guidelines
now gone.

*Colons Still Present
between words.



1664 “The Stonecutter of Boston”

Faithful Rowse stone

All Upper Case letters. Letters only no ornaments

- Ligatures

- Number One looks like a candle with scroll base.

- *Colons given way to single dots between words.



1672 “The Stonecutter of Boston”

(For a horizontal slab stone our “Stonecutter of Boston” shows up in a Twon record with a 17 year old Thomas Welch.

Rev Zachariah Symmes died Feb 4, 1670. Town of Charlestown Mass .

“In Pursuance of a Town order the 6.11.72 that a tomb of stone should be erected over the grave of Mr. Zachariah Symmes deceased, It is ordered that the three deacons and Lawrence Hammond do treat and conclude with **the stone cutter at Boston** for meet stone for that use; and that John Goodwin or Sam Bickner or some other mason be agreed with to build a stone work, laid in lime, over the grave as soon as the weather will permit, and that the three deacons be desired to see the same issued with all convenient speed.”

	[P s. d.]
To a tombstone and burying cloth for ye town	12. o. o.
To bush. Lime	o. 10. o
To carting ye stone to ye Grave by Thos. Welch	o. 16. o. “

He Must have been the only or most important carver in Boston in 1672)

1674 “The Stonecutter of Boston”

Sarah Long stone

*Between 1668-1670
We start to see these
death heads start to
appear in New
England Grave
stones.

* Ornamentation
takes a giant leap
forward between
1668 to 1674.

* This stone has a
beautiful heart
cartouche at center
with smaller death
heads at the caps.



1674 "The Stonecutter of Boston"

Sarah Long stone (350 Years old at this picture)



1680 “The Stonecutter of Boston”

Phinehas Pratt stone

This is the textbook death head for the Stonecutter of Boston now fully developed.

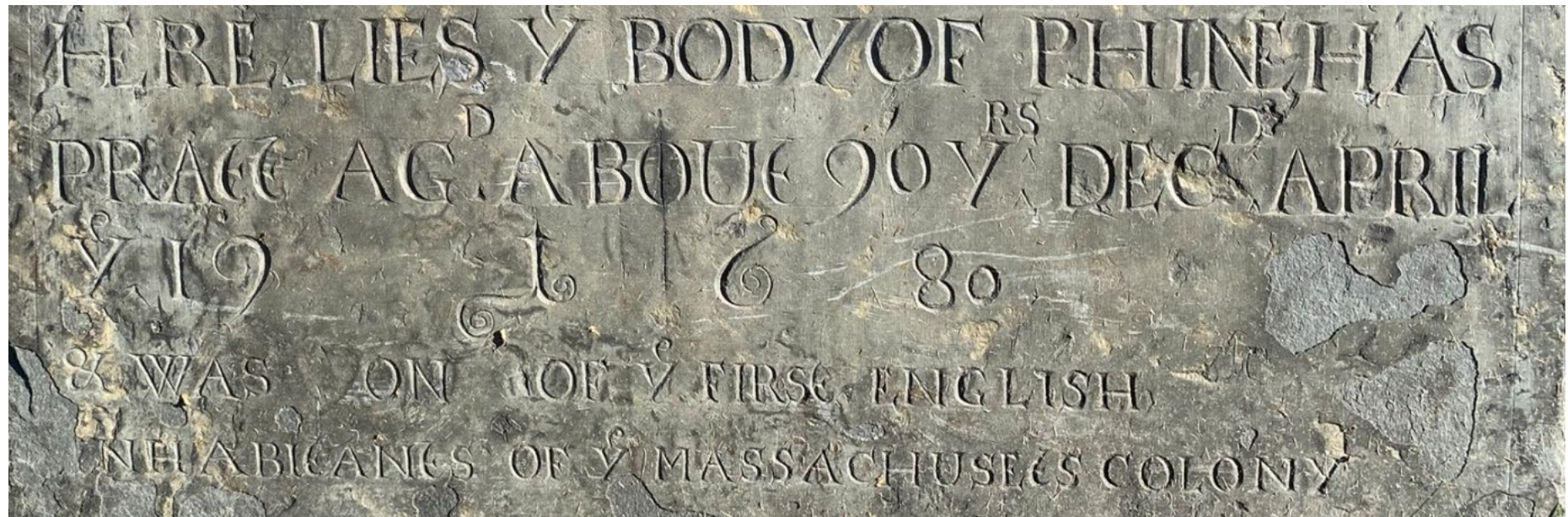
- Large Cranium sits above the wings.
- Notice Pick and shovel, crossed bones and coffin.

* Also Notice Hourglass with Latin “Fugit Hora”



1680 “The Stonecutter of Boston”

Phineas Pratt stone (born about 1590)



& WAS ON(E) OF YE FIRST ENGLISH INHABITANTS
OF THE MASSACHUSETTS COLONY.

1683 “The Stonecutter of Boston”

Anna Cutler stone

Classic Death
head he carves,
Large Cranium
higher than
wings.

Spiral caps
design.

Leaves/ Scroll
side pilasters.

The Stonecutter
of Boston's work
covers a span
from 1653-1695.



1677 Thomas Welch (1655-1704)

Samuel Carter stone

*At 17 was carting
Gravestones for the
“Stonecutter of
Boston”

*Here at 22 years old
carving this stone.

*Wider deeper
letters than “The
Stonecutter of
Boston”

* Death head
cranium smaller also.



1684 Thomas Welch (1655-1704)

*Since he was working for the stonecutter of Boston in 1672 I presume he must have also learned his trade from the Old Stonecutter, at least in part.

* Active from the mid 1670s until his death in 1704.



1707 Thomas Welsh (1657-1707)

- *Estate Inventory of Welsh in 1704 he had
Hammers, Chisels, Gouges, ...
“p’cell of working stones and
building stones about the house. “
- Next appears in the court Mr
Welsh’s widow as Mrs Hannah
Lamson, the wife of Joseph.
- So thus Joseph Lamson likely
acquired Welsh’s Wife, and Welsh’s
tools.
- Then in 1714 a record of
Charlestown Mass states “Thos
Welch’s House ware Mr. Lamson
now lives”
- Lastly, here is Thomas Welsh’s
gravestone, carved by Joseph
Lamson, and possibly even used
Welsh’s tools and stone to do the
work!



1658- 1722 “Joseph Lamson

* A Mariner,
Ship Captain,
Cordwainer,
Surveyor, and
Stone Cutter

* Must have
learned his
stonecutting
from the
“Stonecutter of
Boston”.

*Known for the
“little men with
Darts of Death,
or acting as Pall
Bearers”



1686 Joseph Lamson

- * Likely Carved this one at 28 Years old.
- * Possibly carved by the Stonecutter of Boston Himself. It is hard to say.
- * Same kind of eyebrows, even the same shape of the skull, but the old Stonecutter, may have always used the candle type 1 in his dates.
- Notice the Filigree work above the “Little Men” at top.



1694 Joseph Lamson

- Notice the little men as “Pall Bearers”
- Little Portraits on the caps.
- Latin Phrases just like the “Stonecutter of Boston” used.
- Hourglass
- Crossed bones
- Lamson style “Death Head”
- Nice Filigree Work above the Death head as seen in other Joseph Lamson Stones.



1722 Joseph Lamson's Headstone

Here is the actual tombstone of Joseph Lamson from 1722 carved by his sons either Caleb or Nathaniel or both.

- Its not often we see a gravestone of a gravestone carver.

- *Joseph's sons and grandsons kept the family carving stones up until 1808. Active 1680's-1808.



1690 William Mumford (1641-1718)

- Quaker during a time they disapproved gravestones.
- Lived at Copps Hill
- 1681 Already carving slates.
- Notice no eyebrow line.
- Carved many stones for the Mather family Puritan Minister.



Photo courtesy of Derek Strahan "Gravestones of New England"

1690 William Mumford (1641-1718)

- Recycled stone (See Gouge marks)
- No Eyebrow lines.
- Fruit and Gourd Borders (Pumpkin!)



*Photo courtesy of Derek Strahan
"Gravestones of New England"*

1711 William Mumford (1641-1718)

- Death Head with No Eyebrows
- Pumpkins in Borders



*Photo courtesy of Derek Strahan
"Gravestones of New England"*

Nathaniel Emmes (1690-1750)

1707 @17

* Carved ca 1707-1750

- Knew William Mumford, lived near him on Prince St, Boston, likely trained with him.
- First recorded as being paid by his own name for a stone in 1717, year before Mumford Dies.
- Likely helped carve some of Mumford stones in part, for him from 1710-1718.
- This stone at the Granary in Boston Signed N.E.



Photo courtesy of
Caryn on findagrave.com

Nathaniel Emmes (1690-1750)

- He only signed one other stone that I am aware of

- The Cornerstone to the Old South Church in Boston, that He laid with one other helper in March of 1729.

*Photo courtesy of Derek Strahan
"Gravestones of New England"*



1712 Nathaniel Emmes (1690-1750)

- Notice the Purple Slate Emmes sometimes uses.
- Notice the “Text Block” at center, kind of in a box.
- Circular “Caps”
- Deep veined scrolls on pilasters.



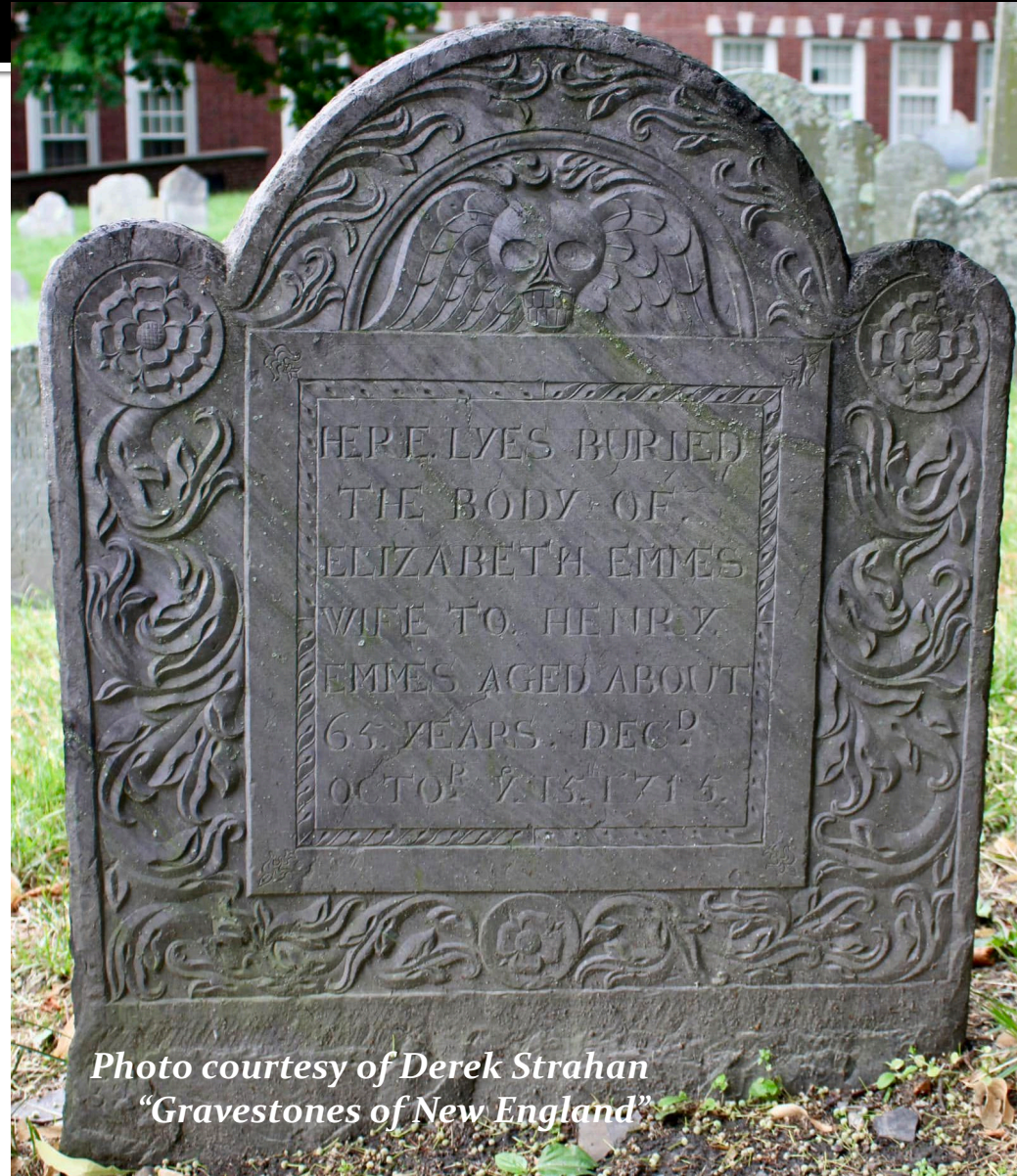
*Photo courtesy of Derek Strahan
"Gravestones of New England"*

1715 Nathaniel Emmes (1690-1750)

*Purple Slate

Text Block in center

- This stone for an Emmes Family member, likely his grandmother.
- Deep veined scroll work on borders
- Death head with no eyebrows just like Mumford.



*Photo courtesy of Derek Strahan
"Gravestones of New England"*

NOW! Hold your Horses!



- Why have you been telling us about all these stones that are irrelevant to South Carolina and its history?!

1717 Nathaniel Emmes (1690-1750)

This is the one I have been waiting to show you

- Third oldest dated gravestone in the SC
- Hollywood SC
- Text Block right in the center, Deep veined scrolls at Pilasters.



Photo courtesy of Mills Pennebaker" Lowcountry Digital History Initiative

1715 Nathaniel Emmes (1690-1750)

2nd Oldest
Dated
Gravestone
in South
Carolina

- Circular
Targets on
less
expensive
stones

- *Purple
Slate



Photo courtesy of Mills Pennebaker" Lowcountry Digital History Initiative

1710 Nathaniel Emmes (1690-1750)

Robert
Seabrook
(1652-1710)

Born in
England
Seabrook
Island
named
after him

Oldest
Dated
Tombstone
in South
Carolina.



Photo courtesy of Mills Pennebaker's Lowcountry Digital History Initiative

1710 Nathaniel Emmes (1690-1750)

Notice how
Circular
Caps and
scrolls are
very similar.
Deep
Veined
Scrolls
again.



Photo courtesy of Mills Pennebaker Lowcountry Digital History Initiative

Stonecutter's "Genealogy"

"The Stonecutter of Boston"

Thomas Welch

Joseph Lamson

William Mumford

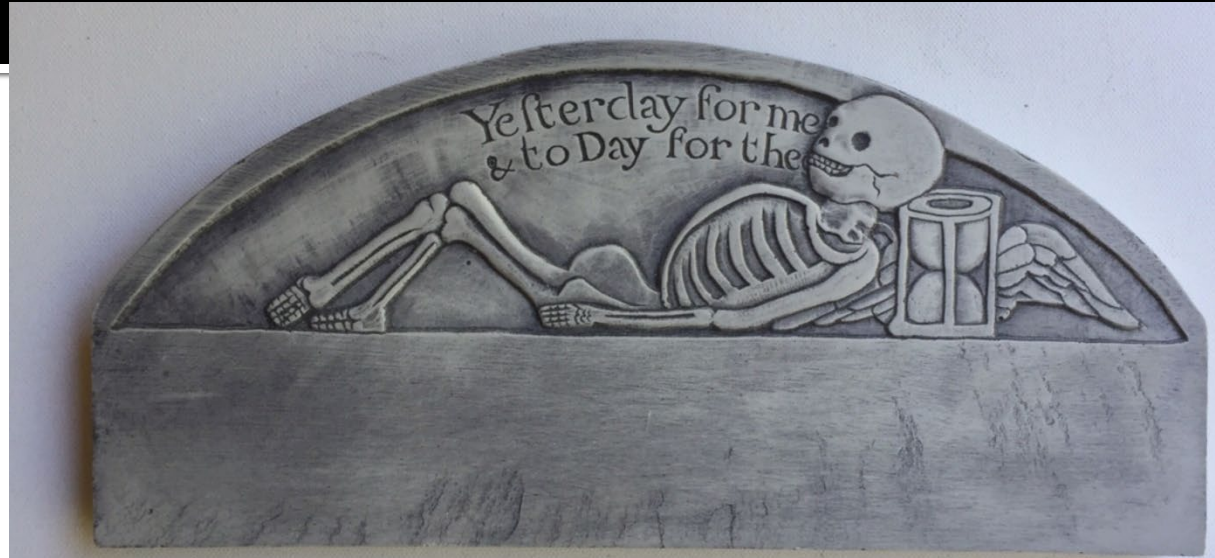
Caleb & Nathaniel Lamson

Nathaniel Emmes

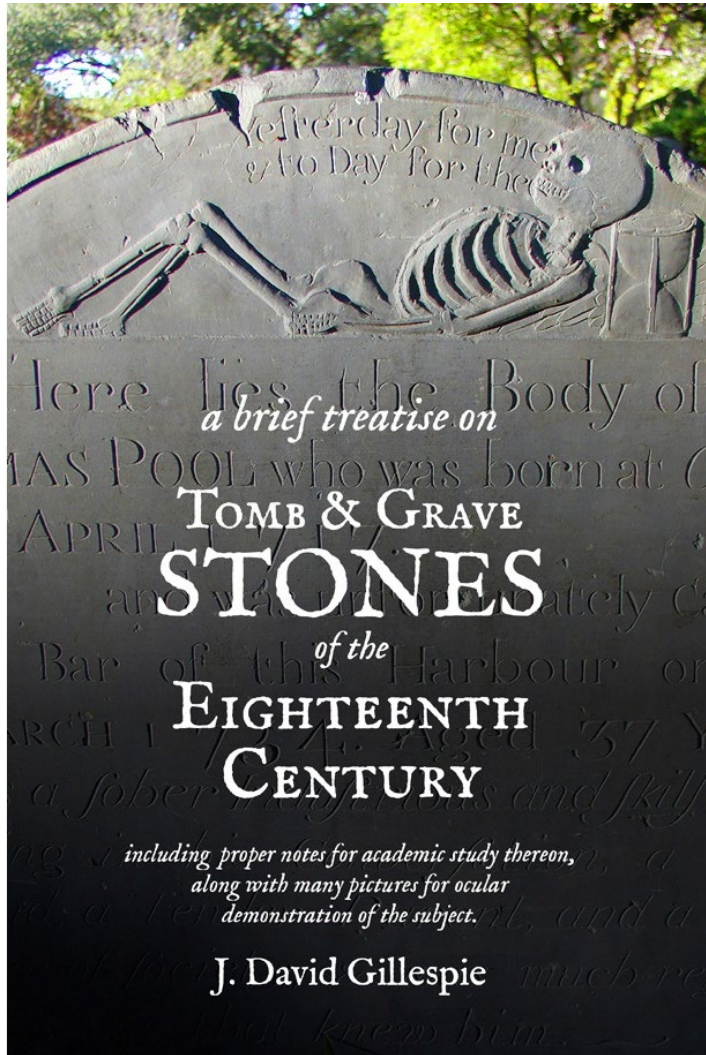
Henry Emmes & William Codner

Castings

- Folks, you don't have to be dead to take home some of my work!
- I know these aren't the most handsome of characters, but if they are of interest to you see Renee!



Book



No. 3

John Stanyarne Stone - 1749

Carver: Attr. to Henry Emmes

Height: 31 5/8"

Width: 27 1/4"

Thickness: 1 1/4"

Material: Light Gray Slate

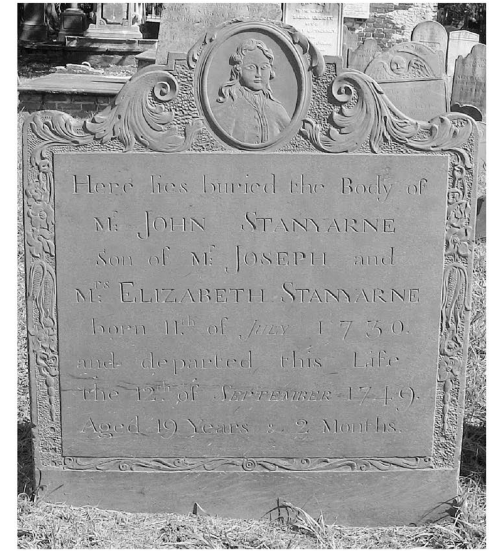
Portrait Height: 7 5/8"

Circular Congregational Church, Charleston, S.C.

Emmes started branching out from the basic shapes of the tympanum of the stones (#1) and has now added a stippled background for a nice textured effect. This would be accomplished by what appears on this stone to be a narrow straight edged chisel used repetitively. The details of the hair & face make this one of the best extant examples of 18th century tombstone portraiture.

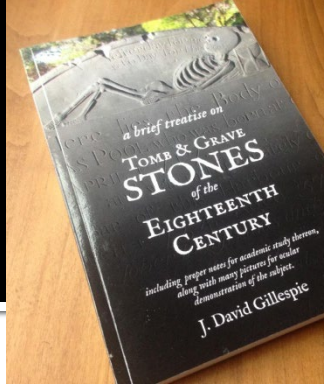


40



41

Questions?



www.pumpkintownprimitives.com

<https://www.youtube.com/@pumpkintown>

For You



DEATH HEADS and 1600s Gravestones at Phipps St Burying Ground Charlestown, MA

3.6K views • 1 year ago



Best trick EVER to read old Gravestones given by a stone carver! PART 1

140K views • 6 years ago