



Here lies buried the Body of

M^r: **The Mirror Trick**

Photography Tricks to Preserve our Heritage in Stone

M^{rs}: ELIZABETH STANYARNE

born 11th of JULY 1730.

and departed this Life

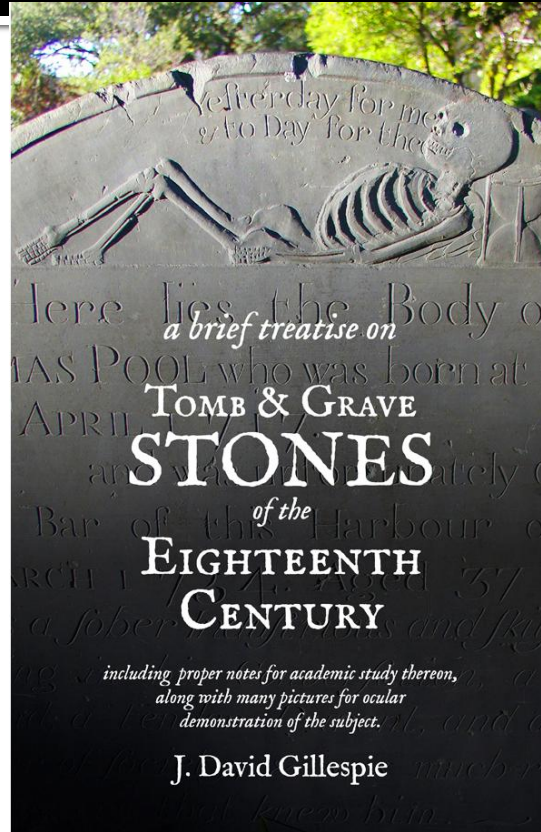
A little about me.

- 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.

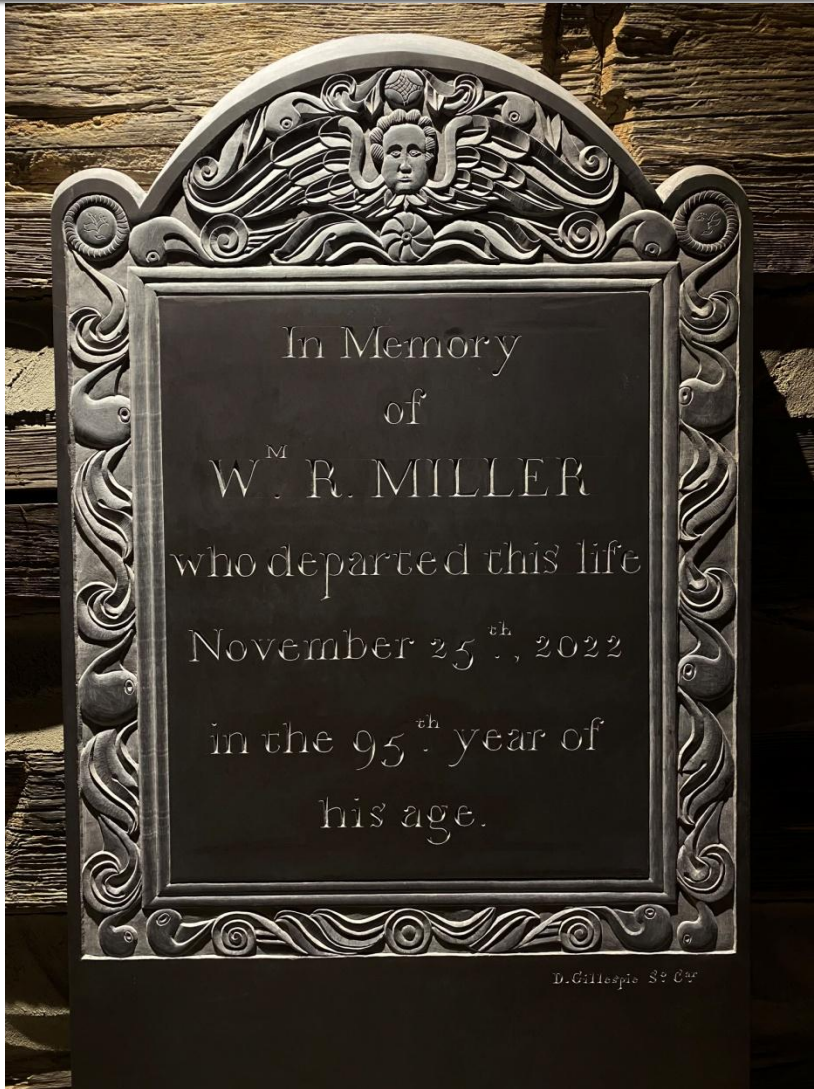


A little about me.

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



Some of my work. S.D.G.



Drayton, Lamson

Charles Henry
Drayton III
Sept. 26 1918
Dec. 2 2019



GAME! Show of Hands

- How many of you have ever...
- Rubbed Chalk on a Gravestone to see it better?
- Made a Gravestone Rubbing?
- Used tool to scrape out letters to see them better?
- Have Cleaned a stone with D2?
- Have used a brush to scrub letters?

“Restoration”

- Nowadays if folks cant read a stone they immediately conclude “It must need “restoring”
- Then they take it upon themselves to do the job.
- They may not have permission or rights to do so.
- They may be doing the stone more harm than good.

Mirror Trick. Our Goals

- 1. Tools.
- 2. Techniques.
- 3. Teach Others.

“Hands off Approach”

- I am an advocate of a hands off approach 99% of the time.
- Virginia Dept of Historic Resources have coined a term “Human Erosion”
- “Every time someone cleans a gravestone, they cause some damage, even the professionals” <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/blog-posts/cemetery-conservation-side-effects-of-best-intentions/>

Virginia Dept of Historic Resources

- **“Every time someone cleans a gravestone, they cause some damage, even the professionals”**

Tools

- A Full Length Mirror



Tools

- A Beautiful Volunteer to hold mirror.



Tools ■ SUN!



Technique: Photographer

- Person #1
- Photographer
- Pick out the vertical center of the stone.
- (Half the Height)



Technique: Photographer

- Person #1
- Photographer
- Get the camera lens to the vertical center of the stone
- Yes it may mean getting on knees or bring a stool!



Technique: Photographer

- WHY?
- Distortion.



Technique: Photographer



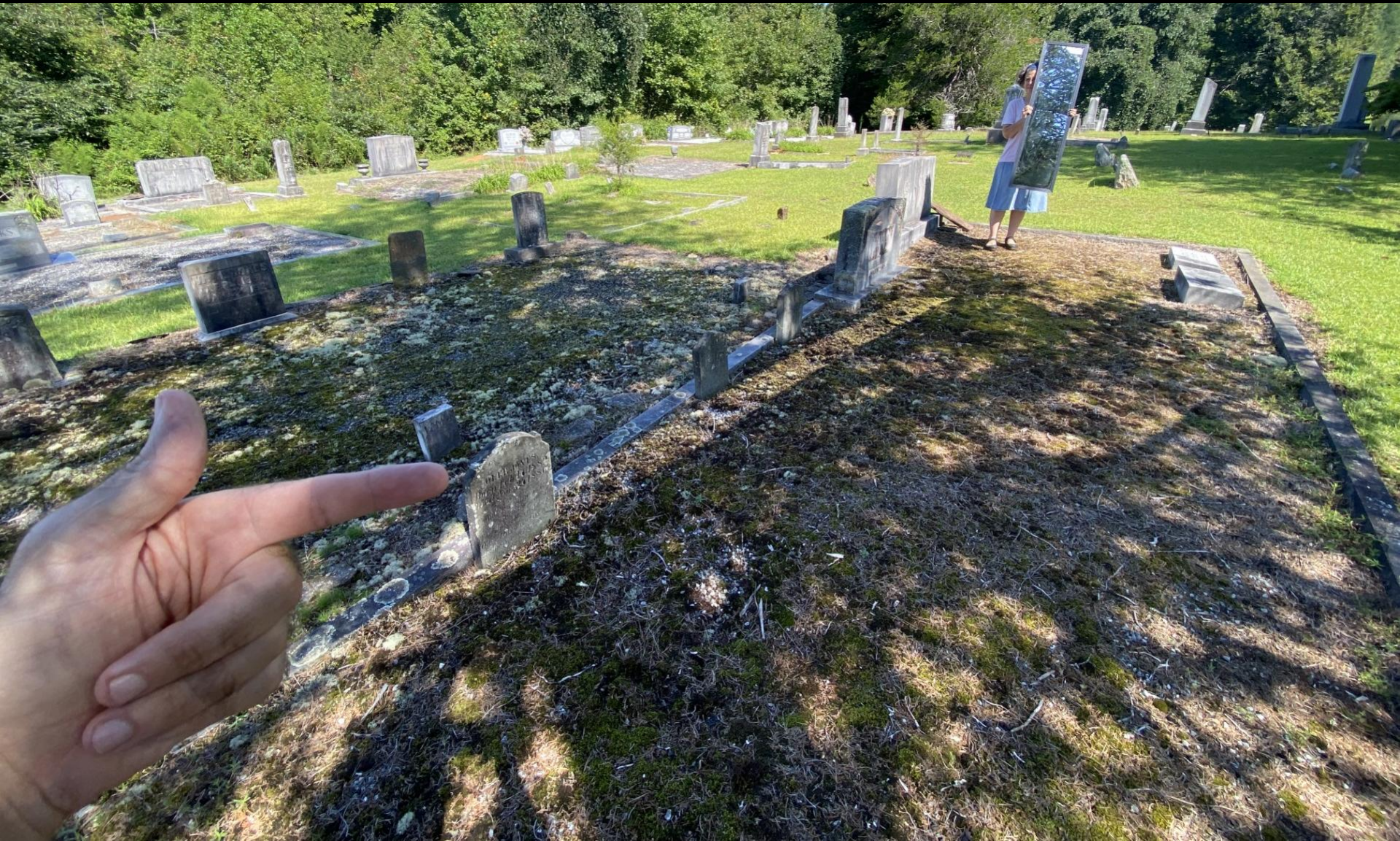
Technique: Assistant

- Take Full length mirror, and get even with the stone on the side with most sun.
- Take about half step forward ahead of face of stone.



Technique: Assistant

- Sometimes you must travel a distance to get light!



Technique: Assistant

- Experiment with angle for best picture. 5-10 Deg. Best.



Example

- “Oh look here is a stone that I cant read!”
- “It must need ‘restoring’!”



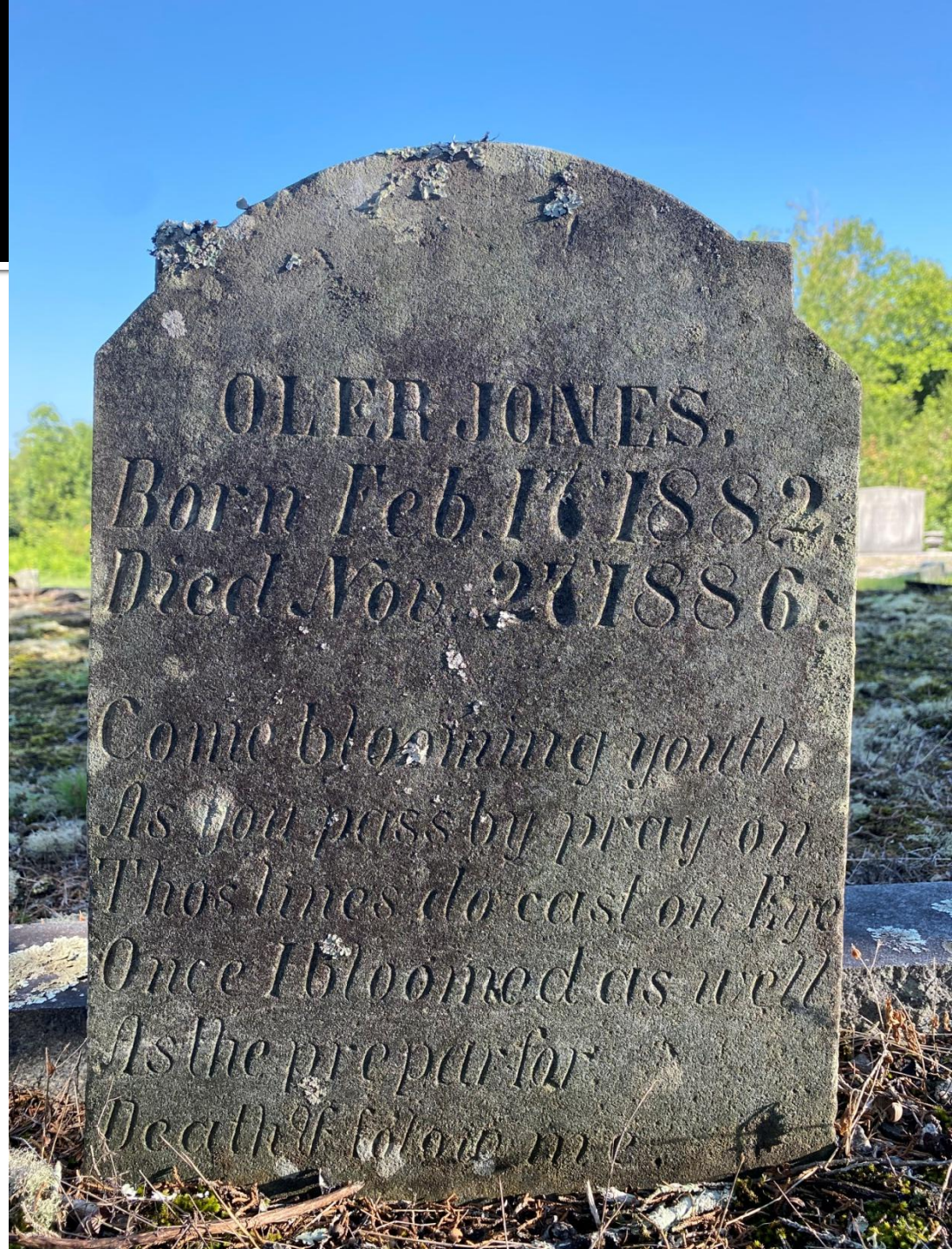
Step 1

- Put Camera at Vertical Center of Stone



Step 2

- Add Mirror Trick!



Results

- Which is better?



Fun Fact

- Gravestones are relief carvings!
- They were carved in the same raking light.

- Mirror Trick
Nothing
New.
Egyptians
Used it.
- Dan Farber
1970s



Example

- “Oh look here is a stone that I cant read!”
- “It must need ‘restoring’!”



Step 1

- Put Camera at Vertical Center of Stone



Step 2

- Add Mirror Trick!



Results

- Which is better?



Example

- A Slate from Charleston
- Taken from a position comfortable to me.



Step 1

- Put Camera at Vertical Center of Stone



Step 2

- Add Mirror Trick!



Results

- Which is better?



Example - BEFORE



After Mirror Trick



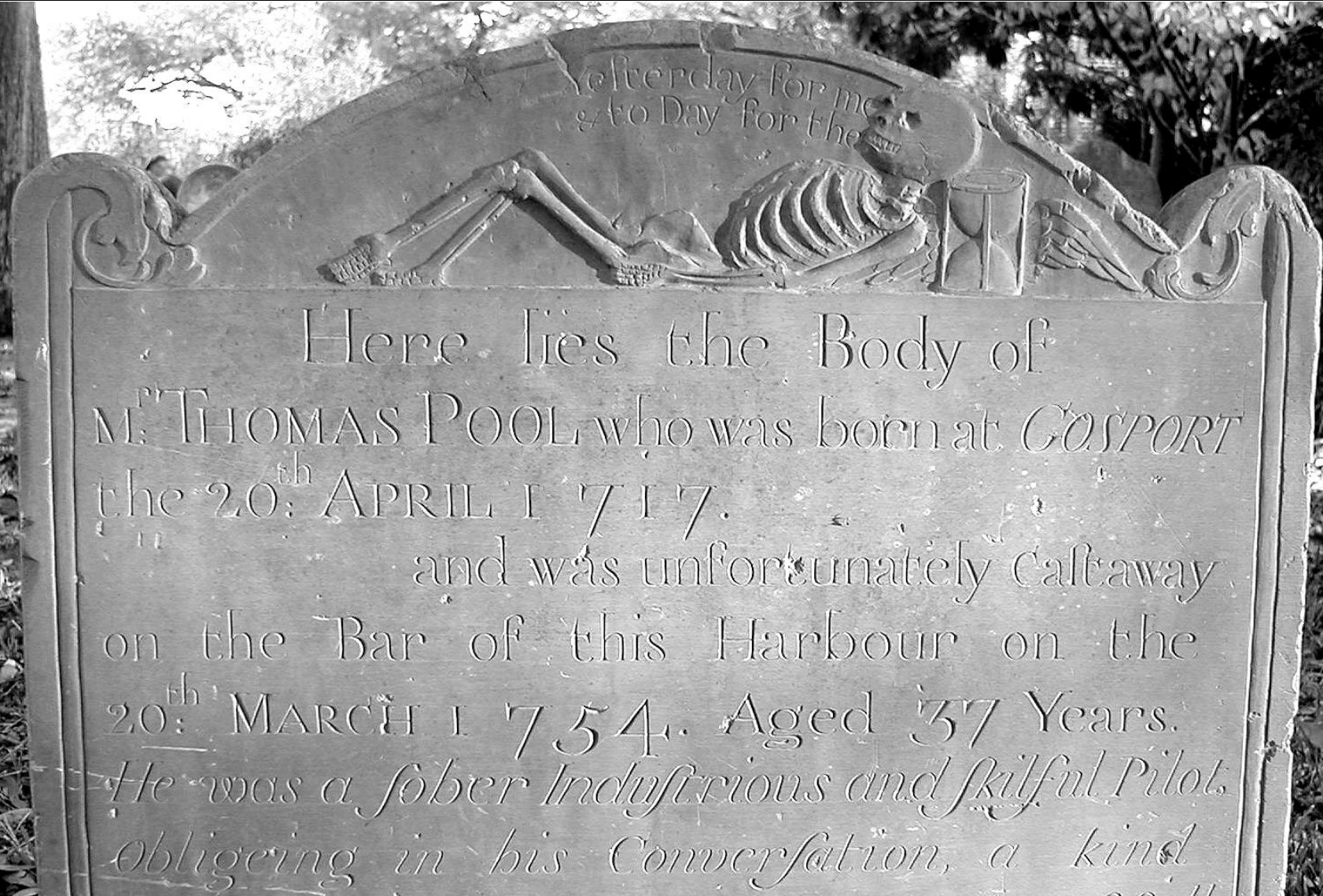
Compare, No Touch!



Before



After



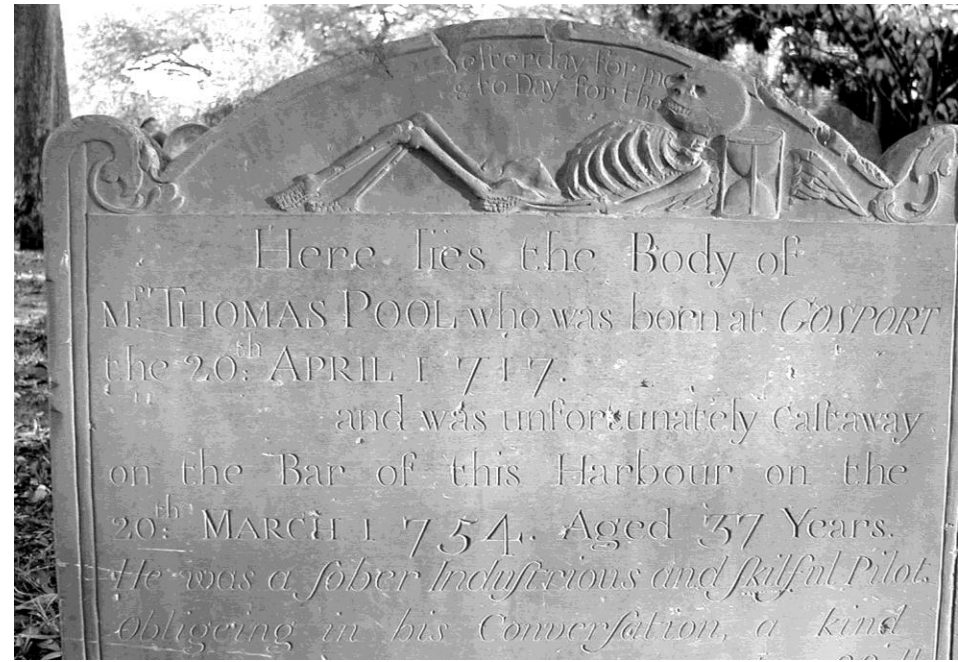
Yesterday for me
& to Day for the

Here lies the Body of
M. THOMAS POOL, who was born at *COSPORT*
the 20th APRIL 1717.

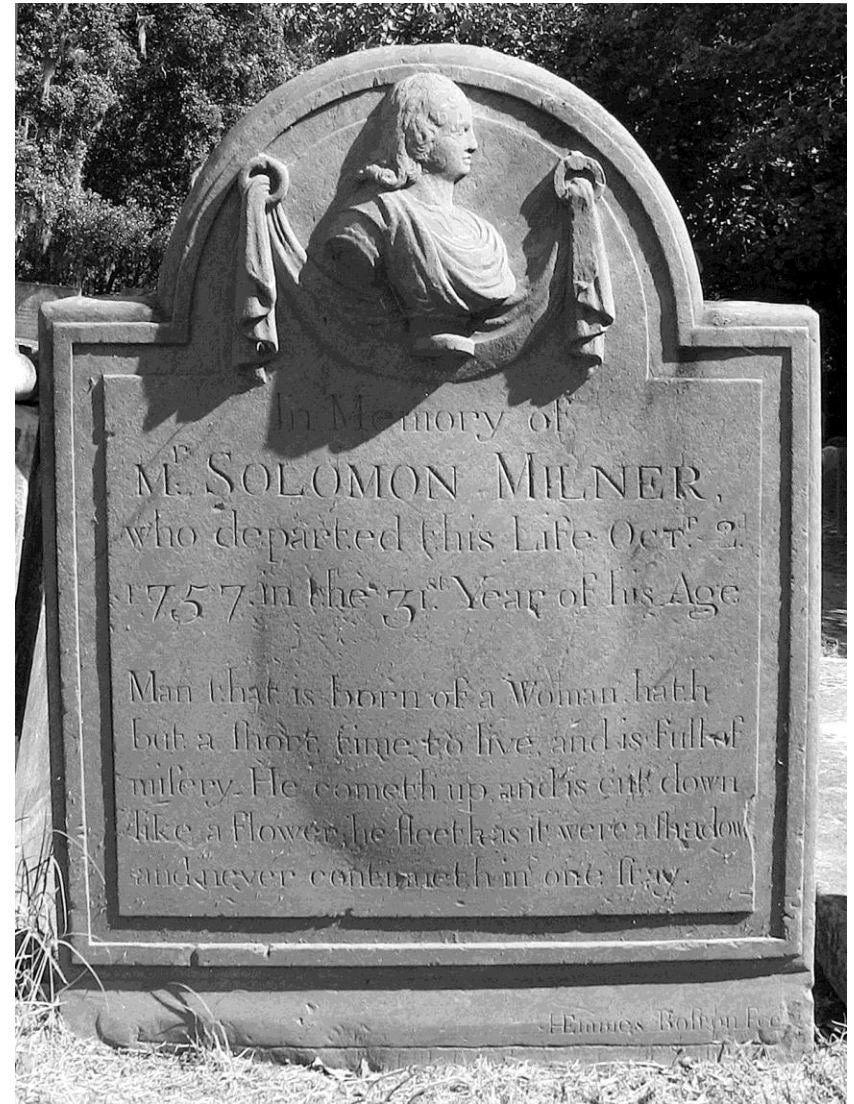
and was unfortunately Caltaway
on the Bar of this Harbour on the
20th MARCH 1754. Aged 37 Years.

He was a sober Industrious and skilful Pilot.
Obligeing in his Conversation, a kind

Compare



Compare for Yourself



Compare.



Special situations

Some stones
under
large tree
canopies.



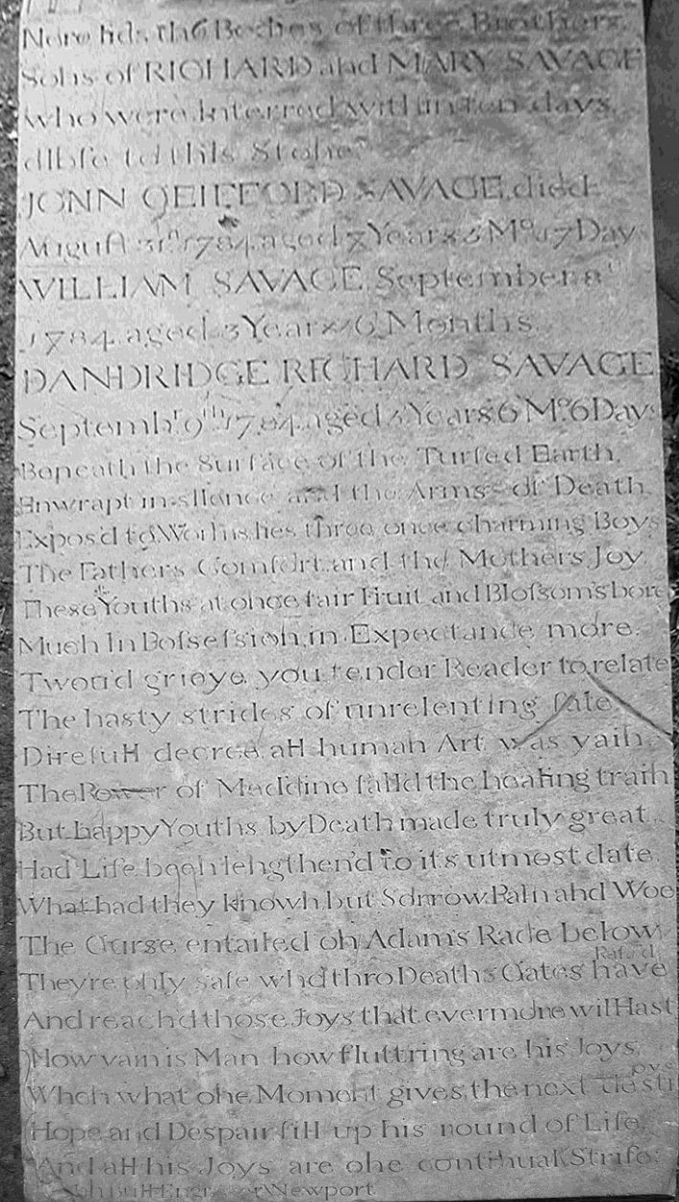
Special situations

- Ledger stones that lie flat
- No detail left on stone (*If it isnt there, it isnt there*)

More like the Bechers of three Brothers
Sons of RICHARD and MARY SAVAGE
who were interred with in ten days
died to this Stone
JOHN GILFORD SAVAGE died
August 31st 1784 aged 7 Years 3 M^o 7 Day
WILLIAM SAVAGE September 1st
1784 aged 3 Years 6 Months
DANDRIDGE RICHARD SAVAGE
September 9th 1784 aged 3 Years 6 M^o 6 Days
Beneath the Surface of the Turfed Earth
Enwrapt in Silence and the Arms of Death
Expos'd to World his three once charming Boys
The Fathers Comfort and the Mothers Joy
These Youths at once fair Fruit and Blossoms bore
Much in Possession in Expectance more
T'would grieve you tender Reader to relate
The hasty strides of unremitting Fate
Direful decreas all human Art was vain
The Power of Medicine fail'd the healing train
But happy Youths by Death made truly great
Had Life been lengthen'd to its utmost date
What had they know'd but Sorrow Pain and Woe
The Curse entail'd on Adams Race below
They're safely safe whil' thro' Deaths Gates have
And reach'd those Joys that evermore will last
How vain is Man how fluttering are his Joys
Which what one Moment gives the next destroys
Hope and Despair fill up his round of Life
And all his Joys are one continual Strife
Wm. H. F. New-Port

Teach Others

- Share this technique with others.
- Hands off most times are the best approach.
- Help preserve our heritage in stone for the coming generations.

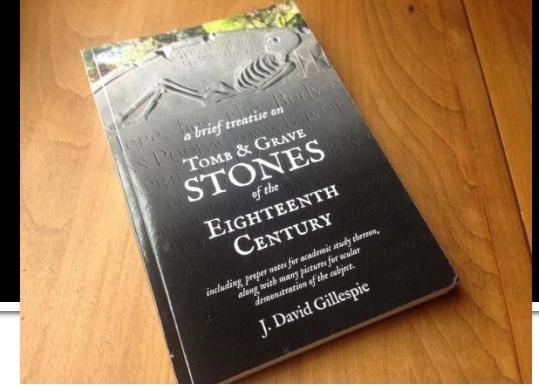


Here lies the Bodies of three Brothers
Sons of RICHARD and MARY SAVAGE
who were Interred within ten days
after to this Stone
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Newport

Find a Grave

- It is possible to record entire cemeteries like this for Find a Grave, or to record for a cemetery book , or if you serve on a cemetery committee conducting a survey of your cemetery.

Questions?



www.pumpkintownprimitives.com

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

