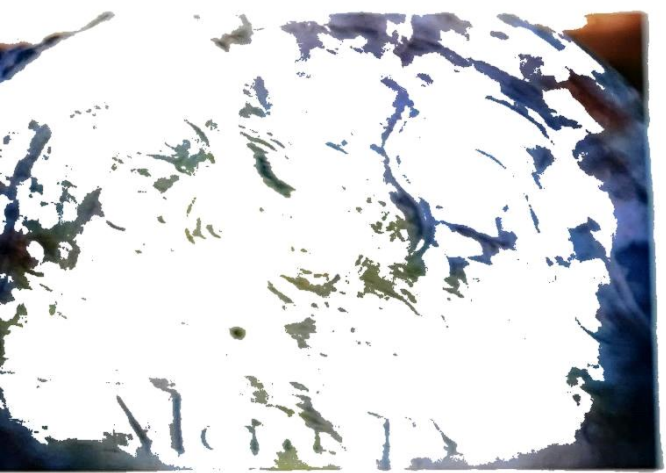


Old Burying Ground, c. 1632-1787

Burying

The first burials were permanently marked with stones as well as with wooden markers.

As time passed, the information on the stones became more detailed.



This is a large, rounded stone marker, likely a tombstone, with some faint inscriptions.

Gravestone of William Weston (1717-1787) in the Old Burying Ground. The stone is made of granite and is inscribed with the name of the deceased.

Cemetery Headstones

When the burying ground was established in the 1630s, there were no stone carvers in Plymouth colony to fashion grave headstones. The graves were marked with a simple wooden or fieldstone marker if anything at all. By the time of the death of Capt. Jonathan Alden in 1697, carved headstones imported from Boston or produced locally had become the norm.



This is a large, rectangular stone marker with a rounded top, inscribed with the name of the deceased.

Gravestone of William Weston (1717-1787) in the Old Burying Ground. The stone is made of granite and is inscribed with the name of the deceased.

When stone, the earliest surviving headstone in this burying ground, has a winged death's head, or skull, at the top. This motif was popular in New England during the late 17th and much of the 18th century. By the 1720's, the death's head was beginning to be replaced with more animated faces that would eventually evolve into winged cherubs or angels.

Because of its relative isolation from Boston, a number of local headstone carvers, living in the towns surrounding Duxbury, developed their own unique styles. Examples of their work can be seen here in the Old Burying Ground.



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Welcome to the Old Burying Ground, c. 1632-1787

The Old Burying Ground (also known as the Myles Standish Burying Ground) is the oldest maintained cemetery in the United States. The first burials occurred here as early as 1632, shortly after the area began to be permanently settled by Europeans. The burying ground remained in use for over 150 years, and is the resting place of Pilgrim forefathers and mothers, as well as descendants of the Pilgrim settlers and other new arrivals who settled in Duxbury.

Additional information about the Old Burying Ground may be found in the three other tablets located on the grounds, and in particular, general information about the burying ground may be found in the tablet at the Chestnut Street entrance, directly south and at the top of the slope.



Deacon William Brewster gravestone.
Courtesy of Sheila Lynch-Benttinen

Carver: **Nathaniel Fuller** (1687-1750) of Plympton, MA. Fuller's stones are identified by their heart shaped death's head with wings. Examples here include **Abigail Alden** (1725) and **Deacon William Brewster** (1723).



Top portion of Captain Thomas Frazier gravestone.
Courtesy of Sheila Lynch-Benttinen

Carver: **Bildad Washburn** (1762-1832) of Kingston, MA. He was responsible for over 700 headstones in the surrounding area, including two early examples here: **Capt. Thomas Frazier** (1782) and **Uriah Wadsworth** (1784).

Cemetery Headstones

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Molly Uffel gravestone.
Courtesy of Sheila Lynch-Benttinen

Carver: **Ebenezer Soule** (1710-1792) and sons of Plympton, MA. Their stones can be identified by their unique curled medusa-like hair. The stones of **David Peterson** (1760) and **Molly Uffel** (1756) are examples of the Soules' work.

Alden's stone, the earliest surviving headstone in this burying ground, has a winged death's-head, or skull, at the top. This motif was popular in New England during the late 17th and much of the 18th century. By the 1720's, the death's head was beginning to be replaced with more animated faces that would eventually evolve into winged cherubs or angels.

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Rev. Ichabod Wiswall gravestone.
Courtesy of Wendy Frontiero

Carver: **John Noyes** (1675-1749) of Boston. The headstone of **Rev. Ichabod Wiswall** (1700) is one of the most unusual in this burying ground. The carving includes what appear to be squids or fanciful water creatures, but are more likely representations of common fruits and flowers.



Priscilla Weston gravestone.
Courtesy of Sheila Lynch-Benttinen

Carver: **Lemuel Savery** (1757-1797) of Plymouth, MA. The stones attributed to him here are of winged cherubs: **Mary Peterson** (1777) and **Priscilla Weston** (1778).