



# WRITTEN IN STONE

## FRIENDS OF BURIAL HILL

FOUNDED IN 2010

COMMITTED TO THE PRESERVATION  
OF BURIAL HILL

[www.friendsofburialhill.org](http://www.friendsofburialhill.org)



PLYMOUTH 400<sup>®</sup>  
ORGANIZATIONAL

The Friends of Burial Hill  
are a Non Profit  
Organizational Partner  
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THIS PROPERTY  
HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE  
NATIONAL REGISTER  
OF HISTORIC PLACES  
BY THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



### The Gravestone as a Document

Walking through Burial Hill, or any cemetery for that matter, brings history to life for me. Some names are familiar, but more often I get acquainted with folk from the past just reading their gravestones. Early gravestones provide evidence of events that happened, documented at the time they occurred. Some say little more than the name and date of death, but others tell a story. The inscription on the marker for the Chandler children reveals that three died one right after the other. I might assume that an epidemic ravaged the area when seeing many deaths during a span of several months, especially when within the same family. Outbreaks of smallpox, scarlet fever, consumption, influenza, and typhus were a regular occurrence.

I've come across stones that tell of unexpected and sudden death from lightning strikes, two on Burial Hill in fact, drownings, a locomotive accident, shipwrecks, and a fall from a chaise. Sometimes the manner of death is stated poetically, such as the "lingering distressing illness or "a languishment" One gets a sense of the perils associated with childbirth to our forebearers. Many stones inform us that a mother died and is buried with her child in her arms. Infants often did not survive.

Not only can we glean information about the way someone died, but how they lived. Titles for instance tell us of professions - Reverend, Honorable, Esq. Captain, seaman, Governor, and " a Practitioner in Physick and Chururgery".

There is not usually much to tell us about women aside from she being a wife, daughter, consort (wife) or relict (widow). So far, I have seen only one Madam on the Hill. Occasionally, more than occasionally, you'll see a marker for a second and even a third wife. Were children left needing care? I always hope to see her maiden name, but that's not always the case.

The text of course is where most information is found, but much can be learned from the symbols carved. Often before I am close enough to read the epitaph I've already found clues. The shape and size of the marker, the material it is made from can inform on the century or even which quarter in that century. Is it a tablet, an obelisk, a lamb? Lambs were used almost exclusively for children. Getting closer, the symbolism might give me an idea of when a stone was erected. On Burial Hill the earliest found are the 17th century grim death's head and it's many evolutions followed by the later winged head. The willow and urn we see mostly at the end of the 18th century and it dominates up until the end of the first quarter of the 19th century. I look for fraternal emblems and pay close attention to allegorical symbols. Notice the oak leaf and the sheaf of wheat, they tell of strength and long life, the bud that had been cut - a life lost too soon.

These are quiet stories, told in whispers.

Cheryle Caputo

### Gravestone Conservation Workshops

JUNE THRU OCTOBER

1st, 2nd, 3rd Saturdays 8am-11am

Workshops will be held the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Saturdays of each month through October. New this season - we will include a workshop to train our regular volunteers to reset gravestones. Check Facebook or the website for updates or cancellations.  
[www.facebook.com/friendsofburialhill](http://www.facebook.com/friendsofburialhill)



### Memorial Day Flag In

MAY 25

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED  
7am-10am

We will replace our veteran's flags. Any help you can give is much appreciated!



### The Ancient Honorable Artillery Company

#### The Guernsey Cannon Dedication

The Cannon Dedication has been postponed until further notice. If you would like to read more on the Guernsey Cannon Dedication [www.ahac.us.com/plymouth-400](http://www.ahac.us.com/plymouth-400)



The Town has begun improvements to the site. The new pad which will receive the Falcon and carriage is nearly completed and the iron fence sections will soon be back in place following restoration.

### The Jackson Family Yard



The Jackson Family Yard wooden fence in section K had fallen into a dilapidated state over the years with only remnants remaining. The Friends of Burial Hill recently approached Town Officials with a request to allow us to have the fence replicated. With the hearty approval of the Select Board, the Town Manager and the Cemetery Superintendent to proceed, we contacted master carpenter Mr. Karl Lekberg who generously agreed to donate his services and to replicate the fallen fence with like materials and craftsmanship. The photos show a before and after image of the fence. Thank you, Karl!

Full story here: <https://plymouth.wickedlocal.com/news/20200413/video-built-by-retired-carpenter-new-railling-at-burial-hill-offers-glimpse-into-past>



Karl Lekberg,  
Master Carpenter



### The Warren Family Yard

The 1937 Map of Veterans Graves, Plymouth Cemetery Department depicts well over one hundred delineated family yards or lots on Burial Hill. While a number of the granite curbed enclosures remain, there is but one iron enclosure that survives. It surrounds the Warren Yard in section A and requires immediate restoration and a replicated gate.

**PRESERVE, PROTECT, PROMOTE**

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## Featured Stone



The featured stone marks the burial site of three of the nine children born to John B. Chandler and his wife Hannah.

Interred are John Thomas Chandler 12-11-1820 aged 6 months and his sisters Lucy Sturtevant Chandler 12-29-1820 nearly 6 years old and Hannah Brown Chandler 01-13-1821 aged 4. John, Lucy and Hannah died during the winter of 1820/1821 all within one month's time. Their deaths were recorded by the Town, but so far as I could determine not the manner of death which is not unusual for children. Taking into account that the children died in rapid succession, we could surmise that the cause of death may have been infectious in nature.

Another of the Chandler children died before reaching adulthood, a second daughter named Lucy Sturtevant Chandler 04-03-1825

, not yet 2 years old and although her name and date of death are not inscribed on the tablet it is likely she rests alongside her siblings. Incidentally, it was quite common to name subsequent children after a child in the family that had died.

This slate stone was carved at the Tribble Workshop. The weeping willow and flaming urn motif reflect a burgeoning interest in all things Greek and Roman. This interest carried over into funerary art. The most obvious interpretation for the willow is sorrow, grief, and mourning. In other cultures the willow represents immortality. In classical times it was more common to cremate than to bury the body and an urn was used to keep safe the remains. I believe that the use of urns on gravestones was probably used more as a decorative emblem as cremation was virtually unpracticed in America at that time and the urn was ubiquitous in classical artwork as well. The flame indicates eternity and undying love.



## Gravestone Surveys

We have over 600 Gravestone Surveys posted on our website [www.friendsofburialhill.org](http://www.friendsofburialhill.org)



## Volunteers Needed to Plant Flowers at Gravesites May 25th

23 deaths were memorialized with gravestones at Burial Hill for years ending in 20. We will plant annuals at these gravesites on May 25. Please let us know if you would like to take part or contribute! [cheryle.burialhillfriend@verizon.net](mailto:cheryle.burialhillfriend@verizon.net) or [June.burialhillfriend@hotmail.com](mailto:June.burialhillfriend@hotmail.com)

## Deaths for years ending in 20

NAME	INSCRIBED DEATH DATE	SECTION	NOTES
<b>1720</b>			
Ephraim Kempton	12-**-1720	B261	18th year of his age
<b>1820</b>			
Capt. Thomas Pope	07-06-1820	A53	30th year
Cornelius Morey	12-08-1820	A138	1 m 23 dys
Lois Bagnell	12-30-1820	A152	32 yrs.
Mrs. Abigail Sylvester	6-20-1820	B22	aged 88 years
Sarah D. Cotton	10-14-1820	B378	aged 19 years
Caleb Boutell	06-07-1820	B401	aged 9 months
Abigail Kempton	11-26-1820	B424	25 years 6 months
Miss Betsey Russell	11-03-1820	B554	aged 30 years
Mary Collingwood	1820	CE18	
William Nelson	10-09-1820	CW38	in his 53rd year
Lewis Nelson	04-18-1820	CW39	aged 2 years
Ebner Hall	10-10-1820	CW83a	aged 29 years Lost at sea
Geo. Edwards Leach	12-22-1820	F22	aged 6 years 1 month
Capt. Joseph Jr. Johnson	03-16-1820	F152	aged 24 years
Miss Sarah Crandon	03-24-1820	F181	in her 23rd year
Capt. Richard Holmes	10-22-1820	F193	in his 76th year
John T. Chandler	12-11-1820	G63	aged 6 months 21 days
Lucy S. Chandler	12-29-1820	G63	5 years 11 months 13 days
Capt. William Weston	06-27-1820	K9	in his 90th year
Mr. Benjamin Drew	12-20-1820	K108	aged 82 years
Mrs. Priscilla Tufts	08-20-1820	M11	aged 55 years
Mrs. Sylvia Cooper	09-29-1820	N147	in her 25th year

## Thank you...

Thank you so much to those who responded to our **Annual Appeal**. Your contributions help us to continue our preservation efforts for Burial Hill

We would also like to thank The LeBaron Foundation, Tim and Carolyn LeBaron and John and Gretchen Moran for the generous grants conferred to FOBH to support our work



## FOBH gear

Show your love and support of the FOBH! Hats, t-shirts, hoodies, sweatshirts \$16-\$38

**amazon**smile

**SHOP AND SUPPORT FOBH!** AmazonSmile is operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. When you shop AmazonSmile, 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible product gets donated to the charitable organization of your choice. <https://smile.amazon.com>



## Watch for Updates!

Please check for updates and cancellations on

[www.facebook.com/friendsburialhill](http://www.facebook.com/friendsburialhill)



We are now on Instagram!

[www.instagram.com/fobh1620/](http://www.instagram.com/fobh1620/)

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