

## **Cemetery Etiquette & Gravestone Iconography**

- The first rule of visiting a cemetery is to not disturb mourners or an active funeral.
  - If possible, go to a different area further away, or come back at a different time (preferably if a funeral is going on).
- Always obey posted rules.
  - Some church graveyards may have restrictions on who and when visitors are allowed. Photography is sometimes limited at church graveyards.
  - Only go during the times permitted.
- Be mindful of where you step or sit.
  - Do not walk directly or sit on graves, even those made of stone.
  - In older cemeteries, the coffin may have caved in and too much weight above it could cause the ground to fall in.

### **Inappropriate Cemetery Etiquette**

- Do not cause excessive noise. If someone is with you, but chooses to stay in a vehicle, do not play music too loud.
- It is best to leave pets at home, even if they may be allowed. This is for a matter of safety, as well as respect.
- Do not leave any trash when visiting a cemetery. This includes water bottles, fruit/food, cigarette butts, etc.
- Be mindful of the mementos you may leave at an individual's grave.

### **Things To Be Attentive of When Visiting a Cemetery or Graveyard**

- Always wear sensible clothing and shoes.
  - There can often be small thistles or briars.
  - Insects, such as ants, can be everywhere.
- If visiting in the summer, always be aware of your surroundings.
- If the cemetery is on private property, always get permission before going.
- Take a buddy with you if the cemetery is secluded and you have not been before.

### Types of Materials Used to Mark Graves

-Field Stones	-Wooden Markers	-Concrete	-Bronze Plates
-PVC Piping	-Seashells	-Brick	-Slate
-Sandstone	-White Bronze	-Marble	-Granite
-Limestone	-Quartzite	-Zinc	-Iron

### What is the Difference Between a Grave Marker, a Headstone, and a Gravestone?

- A Grave Marker is a flat bronze plaque that is installed on a stone, to identify the deceased.
- A Headstone is an upright monument that identifies the deceased.
- A Gravestone is an inscribed headstone or grave marker.

### What are some of the Different Types of Gravestones?

-Tomb	-Vault	-Tablet Stone	-Ledger Stone	-Obelisks
-Statues	-Military	-Mausoleums	-Columbarium	-Bevel
-Epitaph	-Memorials	-Table Tomb	-Family Stone	-Orb
-Cenotaph	-Flat	-Bolster	-Wedge	-Cradle
-False Tomb		-Double Burial	-Woodman of the World	
-Flower Box		-Scalloped	-Pulpit/Alter	
-Arched Headstone		-Slant Headstones	-Cremation Memorials	

### Military Headstones & Grave Markers

- Civil War Type: Carved image of shield with name, rank, and home state of soldier.
  - Were originally only used for Union Soldiers.
  - It is now used for soldiers of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Indian Campaigns, Spanish-American War, and others.
  - They have rounded tops and the shield is inset.
  - They have no dates listed.
- Confederate Soldiers were not provided with a military (government issued) headstone until 1906.
  - The top is pointed and there is No shield design.
  - Words are carved inward. Some have dates.
  - Often the Southern Cross of Honor is at the top.

- General Type:
  - Began being used after WWI. Many are flush to the ground.
  - Others are 4" thick, 13" wide, and 42" above the ground. But this is not always the standard.
- Not all Military Headstones are government issued or official.
- The veteran or family of the veteran can choose a different design that has more information.

### **Symbols & Their Meaning**

- Gravestones often have carved symbols on them that may convey more information about the deceased than the inscription.
- Some symbols do have more than one meaning or interpretation.
- It is not always easy to identify the symbols if the stone is weathered or broken.
- When a stone has several symbols, use all of the individual meanings to tell a story about the individual.

### **Symbols**

- Anchor: Passage way to Heaven and victory over death
- Angel: Agent of God, Guardians of the dead
- Cherub: Innocence
- Crown: Life or glory after death, victory over death, resurrection
- Crown with a Cross: Departed soul gaining victory over death through Christ the King
- Crucifixion: A true Christian
- Dove with Olive Branch: Peace and forgiveness
- Dove in Flight: Soul's journey to Heaven
- Resting Dove: Peace & Innocence
- Book/Bible: Deceased was a devoted religious individual, represents person's good deeds being recorded in the book of life, individual was literate
- Drapes/Curtains: Mourning & grief, veil between living & deceased, human shedding mortal body to join God, protective nature of God
- Hand Pointing Up: The departed has gone to heaven and asks grieving & mourning loved ones to look up
- Hand Pointing Down: God is reaching down for the soul of the deceased, could also indicate sudden or unexpected death

- Hand with Broken Chain: A loss in family, break in the family chain
- Hand with Book: The embodiment of faith
- Hand with Cross: Unwavering faith, reminding those alive to have faith
- Handshake: Final farewell or eternal bond between living and deceased
- Handshake Husband & Wife: Eternal Devotion
- Hand from Clouds: Hand of God reaching down from the Heavens
- Compass & Square: Masonic Emblem, Freemasonry
- Fern Frond: Sincerity & Humility
- Pinecone: Spiritual enlightenment
- Calla Lily: Resurrection & Rebirth, Overcoming Challenges, Faith & Purity
- Easter Lily: Resurrection of Christ
- Lily of the Valley: Innocence and humility, renewal and resurrection
- Rose in Full Bloom: Immortal love, died in prime of life
- Broken Stem: Premature or untimely death, a life cut short
- Poppy: Eternal sleep
- Passion Flower: Passion of Christ
- Wreath: Victory over death
- Open Gates: Passage from Earth to Heaven
- Flying Hourglass: How fast time flies during life. Wings can also represent flight into afterlife
- Lamb: (Typically on an infant or child's grave) Innocence & purity
- Orb: Earth & cosmos
- Stars: Light of the Holy Spirit overpowering death
- Upside Down Star: The Order of the Eastern Star
- Star of David: Representative of the Jewish faith
- Stump/Tree Trunk: A life cut short
- Weeping Willow: Immortality & life after death, mourning & grieving
- Urn: We all turn to ashes/dust
- Wheat: Believers over nonbelievers, redemption, must die to be reborn, body of Christ
- Grapes: Blood of Christ, God's care
- Corn: Rebirth and fertility, also associated with farmers
- Palm Frond: Victory of the spirit over the flesh
- Bee Hive: Christianity and faith, individuals who work/help with the church
- Ivy: Immortality & friendship