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March 21, 1996

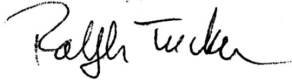
Dear Ms Gage,

In response to your letter of 16 March, I can only speculate what information it is that you seek, and which report you refer to.

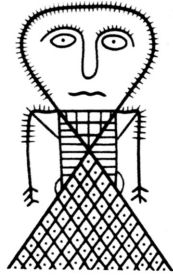
Puritan Gravestone Art contains an article on the gravestone carvings of Hartshorne and of the Mullickens; *Markers IX* contains my article on the Mullicken family of gravestone carvers; and *Markers XI* contains my article on the Leighton and Worster gravestone carvers. These carvers are all part of the group of "Merrimac Valley Carvers" that I have studied. The Websters, Marbles, Noyes, and Robert Fowle are other carvers that are somewhat related. I have a great deal of information on most of these men.

As for the Mullickens, Robert, Sr., Robert Jr., and Joseph all carved gravestones. Other members of the family are known to have been clockmakers, blacksmiths, farmers, and innkeepers. I suggest that you read the article in *Markers IX* and if interested further, write me.

Sincerely,



Ralph Tucker



THE ASSOCIATION FOR
GRAVESTONE STUDIES

[June 1989]

6-26-89
Box 414
Georgetown
ME 04548

Newburyport Public Library

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed is a paper given at our recent conference. Of especial note for you is the inclusion of the carvers Paul Noyes and Enoch Noyes, and Jonathan Hartshorne all of Newburyport—many of whose stones can be found in your graveyards. The carvers of Haverhill, Bradford, and Rowley are also found in abundance and compose a very significant group of very early artisans.

Sincerely,

Rev. Ralph Tucker

OVERVIEW OF ESSEX COUNTY GRAVESTONE CARVERS

The Merrimac River Valley produced a variety of folk art on its gravestones which is altogether unlike anything else found in the early gravestones of New England. It can be identified by a dominant mask-like face with circular eyes, linear nose and square or oblong mouth. This style can be traced from the late seventeenth century well into the late eighteenth century through five or more known families of stonecutters. The styles are so unique that they can be easily identified and can usually be assigned to a particular carver or family.

Lt. John Hartshorne (1650-1738) is the originator of the Merrimac Valley style, having carved stones from the late 1600's in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Prior to his work there can be found only a handful of gravestones in the Merrimac River Valley, all of which are crude and obviously "home made" with only brief lettering and no iconography. Hartshorne began his work with a circular or oval shaped face. By 1705 his style became stabilized as his proficiency improved and he developed new treatments of his basic patterns. As there were no established carvers, a number of stones were produced for earlier deaths leading to confusion in the dating of the earlier stones. Some, for example, were made for persons who had been dead for over thirty years. A study of the stones, however, shows that Hartshorne started carving just before 1700.

6/ In 1708 there was an Indian raid in the town of Haverhill in which Hartshorne's wife, his oldest son and three grandchildren were killed. Hartshorne then removed downriver and Robert Mullicken, Sr. (1688-1741) of Bradford, Mass., across the river from Haverhill took up the occupation of stonecutter and carried on the business together with at least three of his sons. They used the same basic styles on their stones but with certain unique details and lettering which enable us easily to identify their work.

In 1709 Lt. Hartshorne married the widow Mary Leighton Spofford of Rowley and went to that town where he lived until his wife's death in 1719. While there he taught his new brother-in-law Ezekiel Leighton (1656-1723) to carve. When Hartshorne removed to Connecticut in 1720, Ezekiel continued to carve, together with his son Richard (1686-1749) and Grandson Jonathan (1715-1772). Although the early Leighton stones are quite crude they soon developed into competently carved stones with unique patterns obviously influenced by the earlier Hartshorne style stones.

Arriving in Connecticut about 1720 Hartshorne continued to carve there for eighteen years. His Connecticut work there influenced the styles of Obadiah Wheeler & Benjamin and Julius Collins, as

well as the Manning and Loomis families. We thus find the Merrimac Valley carving tradition surviving in Connecticut to the early nineteenth century.

Meanwhile back in Bradford, the brothers Stephen (1718-1798) and Abel (1726-1801) Webster learned to carve, undoubtedly from the Mullickens. The Websters then moved to Chester, and Hollis New Hampshire and on up the Merrimac river to several towns in the valley where again the mask-like faces appear, different but obviously derived from the Hartshorne model.

Also born in Bradford, Jonathan Worster (1707-1754) became a stone carver. It appears from his carving style that Jonathan learned his carving skills from the Leighton family as his stones are nearly identical to those of the Rowley carvers. Jonathan removed to Littleton and later to Harvard, Massachusetts where he and later his son Moses (1739-1773) carved a remarkable series of nearly identical stones with masklike faces.

Again in Bradford, Joseph Marble (1726-1805) was closely associated with the Mullicken family. He produced stones of mask-like type, but which tended to be more skull-like in shape. He provides a transition to the kind of patterns common in the Boston urban area although of a much more primitive character. It is interesting that his son John (1764-1844) was apparently sent away for his apprenticeship as his stones are well carved and lettered and in urban styles on a good slate from the Pin-Hill Quarry. They no longer are of the "Merrimac Valley" style.

In the 1760's the Noyes family of Newburyport produced carvers, Paul Noyes (1740-1810) and his son Enoch (1773-1832) but they like the later day Marbles produced stones with cherubs, tree and urns, and various architectural motifs - all in the popular style of the day.

There are other Essex County carvers similar to the Marble and Noyes shops who produced a variety of styles. None of these, however, worked in the Merrimac Valley style. Some of these carvers can be identified and dated, but none have received the study and recognition they deserve. Among these are the carvers Nathaniel Balstone, James Ford, Robert Fowle, John Holliman, Levi Maxey, and Caleb Robinson.

JOHN HARTSHORNE (1650-1738)

John Hartshorne, the earliest known Essex County carver was the step-brother of the Charlestown carver Joseph Lamson (1658-1722). He started to carve about age 50 in Haverhill, MA., where he resided until 1708 when he removed to Rowley. About 1720 he removed to Connecticut where he carved until about 1738. He established the Merrimac Valley style which is known for its oval or round faces with round eyes, linear nose and mouth, lack of wings and generally geometric shape. His Connecticut styles are distinctive and usually vary from his Massachusetts stones, but are clearly and easily identifiable. In Connecticut several carvers were influenced by his styles, but each one soon developed his own style and only traces of Hartshorne can be found in their work. As Hartshorne worked, he developed several styles which allow us to trace his work. The main styles of his stones are as follows:



EARLY STONES have elongate elliptical faces, round eyes, long straight noses and slit mouths. The finials are usually pinwheels or round geometric devices. Bars or stripes fill the space between the face and the semi-circular tympanum. There is an irregular use of colons and a few letters are carved backwards.



TRANSITIONAL STONES begin to have segmented bars which later develop "eyes". These can be seen as birds or serpents. The faces develop borders or frames as do the eyes. The side borders become more elaborate and floral.



MATURE MASSACHUSETTS STONES have large geometrically decorated circles introduced on either side of the faces. The bird-like bands are pushed to the side and are increasingly smaller. The framed faces tend to become more round than oval. This style is never found in Connecticut.



HALO STONES have the segmented bars in semi-circular shapes behind the face. Some but not all contain "eyes". A few stones of this type are found in Hartshorne's last years in Massachusetts, but this is basically a Connecticut variety.



HAIR STYLE STONES have solid bars (unsegmented) arising and descending on each side of the face somewhat resembling rabbit ears. Hearts and triangles often fill the side borders. This style is never used in Massachusetts.

LETTERING

All the stones are upper case with the occasional use of lower case in an inscription below the epitaph. The letter "U" has curved and slanted sides almost approximating the letter "V". The frequent use of a nearly horizontal ampersand [&] is typical. He doesn't use a crossbar in the letter "I" as the Mullickens did. His "W" is an overlapped "V". The letter "Y" has the right side in a straight line and is not curved. The numeral "5" tips at a severe angle and "2" resembles a semicircle sitting on a horizontal line. A number of his Connecticut stones were sold unlettered to his nephew, Joshua Hempstead, who had them lettered, usually in the New London area, by other carvers.

M. + H. use F W
 early years for H. date — to —

THE MULLICKEN FAMILY

John Hartshorne left Haverhill about 1709 for Rowley, he continued to produce gravestones for the Haverhill and Bradford area. Sometime about 1715, however, stones of a slightly different type begin to appear in Haverhill and Bradford which were produced by the Mullicken family. Robert Mullicken, Sr. (1668-1741) and his sons Robert Jr. (1688-1756), and John (1690-1737) all carved similiar type stones, while a third son Joseph (1703-1768) developed several styles of his own.



EARLY MULLICKEN STONES have teardrop shaped faces, round eyes, linear noses and mouths. Large circles with geometric designs are on either side of the faces. In the corners of the tympanum and beneath the chin are devices resembling flowers or lines. The earliest stones often have asterisks scattered around the face. The borders are usually geometric, often in a diamond pattern. Robert Mullicken, Sr. used a clear style of printing all in upper case. Robert Jr., used an unusual mixture of upper and lower case. This style stone is dated from 1714-1722.



STANDARD STONES are similiar to the earlier ones except that a frame surrounds the face, the top of the frame is joined to the top border of the tympanum, and the asterisks are omitted. The side borders have scrolls and flowers in some variety. These are dated from 1721 to 1751.



SKULL STONES carved by Joseph. There was a diphtheria epidemic in 1737-8, and a handful of stones appear with a pear shaped skull and round empty eyes (a few with triangular eyes). These are quite unlike the Merrimac Valley style but over a period of years they develop and revert to such a style. These stones date from 1737-1740.



DEATH HEAD STONES by Joseph are identical to the skull stones except that they have wings added. A type of floral-vine border is common, and an occasional fancy border decorates the tympanum. The earlier stones of this type have a flat bottomed chin, but they gradually become rounded resulting in a pear shape face. These stones generally date from 1739-1749.



PUMPKIN HEAD STONES by Joseph are the last type to develop. The previous type simply becomes more round than pear-shaped. The mouths come to be horizontal and straight and the noses triangular. Many of the stones for females have a scalloped bonnet. There is a tendency for the wings to be nebulous and even to disappear, leaving us with the geometric face of the Merrimac Valley style. These last three styles all appear to be the work of Joseph Mullicken. The pumpkin style dates from 1750 to 1766.

LETTERING

Robert, Sr. carved the earliest two styles and can be identified by the clear upper case lettering.

Robert Jr., carved mostly the standard type but with such unusual use of mixed upper and lower case lettering that it cannot be missed.

John's work cannot be identified. We only know that he died early and there is record of his being paid for stones.

Joseph's stones are all lettered in clear upper case and are of the last three types.

On all of the Mullicken stones the letter "I" has a crossbar which is very helpful in identifying their work. The letter "L" has the upright bar often at an acute angle, especially in the work of Robert Jr., and Joseph. The letters "B" and "D" have elongated serifs in Joseph's work.

FINIALS

The Mullicken family usually use a pinwheel design in the finial, (something that the Leighton family rarely did). The Mullickens rarely used a star in the finial.

FOOTSTONES

The footstones of the Mullicken up to 1740 contain an outline of a coffin in their design, unique to this family.

LEIGHTON FAMILY STONES

1687? When John Hartshorne left Rowley about 1720 to go to Connecticut he left behind several members of the Leighton family who pursued the work of gravestone carving. His brother-in-law Ezekiel (1657-1723) carved a number of the early stones which are backdated and which are quite crude in both lettering and carving, several of which are initialed. Ezekiel's son Richard (1687-1749) and later his grandson Jonathan (1715-1772) improved in skill and developed the style over the years.

Identifying marks of the family are several. They use undulating or wavy lines as borders, sometimes in the tympanum, and especially on the footstones. The finials usually have circles with stars in them (while the Mullicken family uses pinwheels). The lettering is quite good except in the earliest stones, but with a shallow depth. The faces are round or tear shaped with eyes close together, and with linear noses and mouths up to the late 1750's. The styles then change eye, nose and mouth shapes. The thorn "ye" often has an upside-down "e". A large size lower case letter "a" is sometimes used as upper case. Most stones are of a poor grade schist and weather poorly, being particularly vulnerable to lichen. A border of double spirals is most frequently used and in later stones is universal.



SQUIGGLE STONES (1713-1723) Made by Ezekiel Leighton (1657-1723) some with "M BY EL" carved on the back of the stone or footstone. They have outlined eyes and linear nose and mouth. Side borders are wavy lines or double spiral lines. There are uneven spaces between lines. The spelling is poor but the lettering is reasonably good, although not deeply carved. The outstanding characteristic consists of irregular curved lines surrounding the face.



CIRCLE STONES (1716-1733) have framed faces with framed eyes, a linear nose and mouth with a circle on either side containing a six branched star. Some have irregular or wavy lines in the corners of the tympanum. Borders are similiar to the previous style. These are by Richard Leighton (1687-1749).



COIL STONES 1721-1752 similiar to the above but with a variety of coils replacing the circles. As time goes on the tympanum increasingly has empty space instead of coils and circles. These are by Richard Leighton.



SPECTACLE STONES 1751-1773 are similiar to above with the addition of a band connecting the eyes giving the appearance of a pair of spectacles. The eyes are not as close together as in the previous styles. With the progression of time the eyes become more oval in shape and the mouth loses it's horizontal shape and becomes somewhat grumpy in appearance - some of these have wings, some don't. This style is carved by Jonathan Leighton (1715-1772).



SPIDER STONES 1749-1760 are associated with Spectacle Stones, appearing first as footstones for them and later as headstones. An unusually small lower case "t" is used. The outline band around the face is often omitted and the mouth and nose are not always linear. The wings often appear as spider-like legs. Some varieties have a spectacle face, other like the older linear geomtrical styles. These stones are by Jonathan Leighton.

THE NOYES FAMILY STONES



(740?) Paul Noyes (1741-1810) of Newburyport, MA., produced a number of stones starting shortly after the revolution, using the urban style of a winged face (or cherub). He varied his stones by having his inexpensive stones engraved rather than carved, the fancier stones having three dimensional heads. He also produced some stones with a cameo effect when the stone allowed. His borders are varied but one of his favorites is borrowed from the Boston carver Geyer. On double stones he often produced a three lobed top containing two cherubs with the middle lobe containing an hour glass. Later he made tree and urn stones, and occasionally an atypical design (such as one containing a quadrant made for a navigation teacher). His lettering is good with frequent use of italics. His stones can be found in coastal towns from Maine to Georgia, as well as in the Merrimac Valey.

Enoch Noyes (1773-1832) his son produced tree and urn stones similiar to those of his father and others. This type of stone is so standardized that it can only be attributed to a given carver when signed or probated.

THE WORSTER FAMILY STONES



1793?

Jonathan Worster (1707-1754) and his son Moses (1739-1789) are the apex and conclusion of the Merrimac Valley style. Jonathan, although born in Bradford, Mass., obviously learned to carve from the Leighton family as their stones are nearly identical. The stones are all lettered in upper case until about 1748 when there is an abrupt shift to upper and lower case. There is poor spacing within and between lines. The spelling is odd but individual letters are well cut. The ovoid faces have pointed chins usually but some early stones are round. The round eyes, linear noses, and horizontal mouths are standard. There is a great use of coils in both tympanum and borders. Star filled circles are often used. Moses has one distinguishing mark - he produces a "beard" by having a pointed chin with a rounded inner line. The footstones resemble those of the Leighton's with wavy lines as borders. Their work is easily recognizable and from 1730-1770 it hardly varies in detail. As Jonathan removed to Littleton and later Harvard, their work is rare in the Merrimac Valley area and is found mostly in Middlesex County, MA. Later in Moses' life (mid to late 1760's) he succumbed to more popular styles and produced a pouty-mouthed cherub and also a wingless head, neither of which has the impact of the earlier work.



THE MARBLE FAMILY STONES

Joseph Marble (1726-1805) and his son John Marble (1764-1844) were of Bradford, Mass. and many of their stones are mentioned in probate records, or are signed, making verification of their styles less difficult. They both struck out from the Merrimac Valley style by adding wings. Joseph carved in two distinct styles, both using a technique more akin to engraving than carving. The lettering is in both upper and lower case. The use of the letter "I" with a crossbar as the Mullickens used is dropped early in Joseph's work. He does not use the term "interred", and rarely uses stars in the finials, preferring instead the Mullicken pinwheel. Several deceased members of the Mullicken family have Joseph's stones. I categorize Joseph's style as follows:



LINE DEATH HEAD (1763-1785) use triangular noses, eyes which sometimes have pupils added, and straight or oval mouths. Both of these styles have simple borders and avoid the double spiral sides used by the Leighton family.



John Marble (1764-1844) departs from the Merrimac Valley style and is included here only because he is a Bradford man and illustrates the fact that the popular urban styles finally reach into the country. John uses an excellent slate from the Pin-hill quarry of Harvard, MA., where he is connected with Nathaniel Ball. John's stones are found dated from 1776 into the nineteenth century. He starts out with a well developed carved round face with a tight hairdo, wings and often a device of three leaves over the face. The lettering is very good and contains the letter A with a "v" shaped crossbar which can be used as an identifier. Side borders vary between straight lines, pillars or narrow vines. Later stones follow urban styles and have trees and urns, or plain lettering with no carving at all. The use of marble instead of slate marks his latest style. John frequently signed his stones, often adding "sculptor".

There are several other carvers by the name of Marble in other areas who have yet to be related to this family. There was a Coker Marble, Edwin Marble, and Arthur Marble of Bath and later Skowhegan, Maine as well as S.D. Marble of Pittsfield MA, and some by the name in Ohio, in the 19th century.

THE WEBSTER BROTHERS

Stephen Webster (1718-1798) and his brother Abel (1726-1801) were both born in the carver producing town of Bradford but spent their working lives first in Hollis and Chester, NH., and later up the Merrimac Valley at Plymouth, NH. Initially they worked in schist and later in the good Pin-hill slate. They both had good lettering profusely sprinkled with periods, colons and semicolons. The serifs on many letters are made with drill holes.



STEPHEN'S STONES are most like the Merrimac Valley style as they are oval faces with a marked outline, sometimes with stars or pinwheels on either side. The faces however, often have rather simple wings added. They tend to be chaste in design with a down curved mouth, balloon eyebrows, and bulbous nose. While the fluted borders have pillars resembling those of his brother, they are not cabled, and his side borders are usually tied into the top border.



ABEL'S STONES are all winged some with line eyebrows, smiling mouths and bulbous noses. They have some framing over the top of the head but the chins are rarely framed and tend to be quite narrow, some faces approach a keyhole shape which one can also find in some stones made by the Park family carvers. Abel uses fluted and cabled pillars topped by pineapples and he leaves little empty space anywhere on the stone.



There are several atypical stones apparently by the Websters of a more geometric style but few have been found to date and more work needs to be done before further generalization can be made. The known stones date from the late 1740's to about 1770.



JONATHAN HARTSHORNE (1703 - c. 1776)

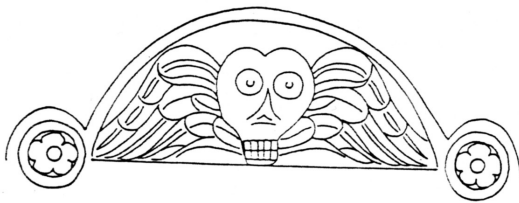
Jonathan Hartshorne, the grandson of the original Merrimac Valley Carver, John Hartshorne, spent his early years after the 1708 Indian massacre, in nearby Methuen where he married and had five children. He made there gravestones for his children Elizabeth and John in 1728. His son's stone in Methuen is a badly carved eroded stone with an outlined face, circular eyes, stringy hair and mixed lettering which is not deeply cut. Simple vine like lines are used for a border. There are pinwheel finials. By 1742 he had removed to Newburyport where he had four more children. In 1742 he is recorded as carving stones in Newbury. From this small evidence one has to identify his work. There is only one variety of gravestone carving that is unidentified in the greater Newburyport area so we can only presume that it is the work of Jonathan.



GRUMPY STONES have oval eyes after 1759 although earlier they are round; bulbous or lateral noses; and most outstanding frowning fat lips. Some stones have curly hair while others are bald. All are winged. He may also have carved some "spectacle" stones where the eyes are connected with a bar similiar to the later stones of the Leighton family. Unlike that family, however, he uses pinwheel finials instead of stars. The side borders are composed of various types of spirals or of vines. He uses mixed upper and lower case lettering which improves as he ages. He uses unusually small lower case letter "t" and "d" and after 1760 tends to use the word "interrd" He started using a poor grade schist which erodes rapidly, but about 1760 uses a red-brown sandstone which was much better. His stones aren't found far from the Newburyport area in contrast to the Mullicken and Noyes families, whose stones are much more widely distributed.

JOHN HOLLIMAN
(c 1700 - ?)

John Holliman, who was known as both a painter and a gravestone carver, worked in the area of Salem, Massachusetts between about 1720 and 1750. His exact dates of birth and death are unknown. Essex County probate records reveal three probate payments to Holliman specifically for gravestones in addition to five non-specific entries in amounts appropriate for gravestones. No signed or initialed markers have been found. Holliman's stones are most numerous in and around Salem, Danvers, Beverly and Marblehead; however, his work can be found in scattered locations throughout Essex County. He experimented with numerous designs and shapes and on many different kinds of material, including slate, sandstone, what appears to be white limestone, and a hard, light gray, local rock. The stone material was frequently of poor quality. Holliman's overall carving often appears lopsided, either untidy or careless. The lettering is sometimes imprecise, but legible, and is characterized by curved spines on such letters as "n", "p", and "h"; a very awkward "3"; and noticeably uneven carving strokes. He carved the popular skull-style stones, but also attempted faces, fancy borders, architectural features, flowers, and even a version of the Lindall masterpiece. Although his ambition frequently exceeded his carving ability, the resulting stones are varied, interesting in their irregularity, and always easy to identify. At Charter Street Burying Ground, Salem, the probated William Gedney stone (1740) and the marker for Col. John Hawthorne (1717) are typical of Holliman's work, as are the stones he carved for his own children.



ynp3



JAMES FORD
(1721-1781)

The carver James Ford lived and worked in Salem in the late 1760s and early 1770s. There appear to be fewer than sixty Ford-carved gravestones, concentrated mostly in Salem, Marblehead, Rockport, Ipswich, Essex, Lynnfield, Beverly, and Manchester. Documentation of his carving style is based on three probate payments and on his characteristic lettering, the elliptical (rather than round) finial designs that he favored, and his unique face-with-wings style markers and footstones. No signed or initialed stones have been found. Ford carved only two basic designs: a face-with-wings and a standard skull. The Benjamin Felt stone (1769) in Salem's Charter Street Burying Ground is typical of the face-with-wings design. The winged-skull stones offer little in their tympanum design to differentiate them from the work of other carvers, and, until now, have been overlooked as a separate body of work. In identifying Ford's carving, the most obvious clues are contained in the lettering: Ford often used a hooked "J" for l, and an "I" in place of the letter J, and his numeral "2" was frequently top heavy. A close inspection of the tablet inscriptions on his stones reveals rather small, tight, lower-case letters with numerous fancy serifs, fillers, and penmanship type flourishes. These same calligraphic fillers are often used as primary footstone motifs. Two James Fords, father and son, lived in Salem in the 1760s and 70s. Our research to date suggests (but does NOT prove) that the carver of this small body of Essex County work was probably James Ford, Sr., whose principal occupation was as a writing master and teacher in Salem. The winged-skull style stones for Daniel Peeas (1774) and Daniel Curtis, Jr. (1772) at Charter Street Burying Ground are typical of Ford's work. His own gravestone (1781) stands in the small St. Peter's Churchyard in Salem.



2: I J S

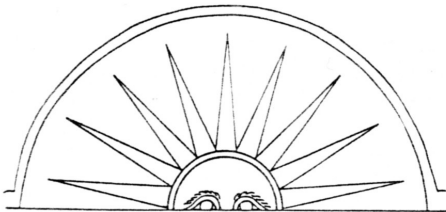
ROBERT FOWLE
(1743-1805/6)

Much research remains to be done on the work of gravestone carver Robert Fowle. He appears to have been a full-time carver with a decade of work to his credit; however, only a handful of his stones have been identified. Part of this deficiency may stem from the fact that Fowle moved between Essex County and Boston and may at times have been affiliated with one or more of the other established Boston carvers. The John Brewster stone (1766) in King's Chapel Burying Ground for which Robert Fowle was paid, for example, is virtually identical to the standard skull-with-wings stones probated to the Codners. Whether on his own or as a journeyman in some larger shop, Fowle, like several of the other Boston carvers, produced generic skull stones that are indistinguishable from those of his contemporaries. There are three known probate payments to Fowle, but we have found only two of these stones: the skull-with-wings style marker for John Brewster mentioned above, and a face-with-wings stone for Joseph Clough (1766) in Salem's Broad Street Burying Ground. The two designs have little in common. Fowle's face-with-wings motif is characterized by a round head with an attached wig of cap-like hair; the eyes are narrow, slanted, almost squinty, and the mouth appears pursed and unsmiling. The face is sculpted slightly, which gives an illusion of high cheek bones. Fowle's lettering is standard and correct with few unique characteristics. However, one idiosyncrasy that further study may be able to validate is his use of a curved serif on the tail of the letter "p". Additional work needs to be done in the Newburyport and Boston areas to further define Fowle's styles. It is possible that many stones previously attributed to well-known carvers may, in fact, be Fowle's work. Early 19th century Boston records also list a stone carver named Isaac Fowle, whose relationship to Robert Fowle has not been determined.



LEVI MAXCY
(1770-1821)

Levi Maxcy was born in Attleboro, Massachusetts, in 1770 and probably began carving in the area sometime between 1788 and 1792. He moved to Salem prior to his marriage there in 1793. Maxcy's major carving design, which he apparently brought with him from Attleboro, was an almost exact copy of the faces carved by Gabriel Allen of Providence, Rhode Island. He also used the rising/setting sun motif, the peculiar spread acanthus leaf design, and the narrow rope borders that were popular in his native Bristol County. In keeping with the fashion of the early 1800s, he adopted classical urn and willow styles, frequently distinguishing his stones by the use of formal swags, ribbon bows, and oval medallions. Maxcy footstones of the early 1800s are often identified by their use of large embellished script initials. Levi Maxcy may have been one of the most successful copyists around. He was a technically capable and very adaptable carver, but lacked originality, a deficiency that seemed not to have affected his popularity; examples of his work can be found from Nova Scotia to South Carolina. There are at least three probate payments to Levi Maxcy for gravestones in the 18th century, and a thorough search of early 19th century probates would undoubtedly turn up additional payments. Maxcy also signed at least three stones: James Clark, Jr. (1786), West Medway; Mary Kimball (1796), Wenham; Stephen Collins (1793), Liverpool, Nova Scotia. Each of these three stones is of a different design. Maxcy was paid for the stone of Joseph Sampson (1794) in Salem's Charter Street Burying Ground. The Charter Street stones for Robert Peele (1792), Josiah Peele (1784), Ezra Burrill (1792), and the three Glover children (1776-1784) are also typical examples of his work.



There are at least two other unknown carvers with small concentrations of work in Essex County.

MARBLEHEAD/MUGFORD MAN
(active 1758-1761)

One unique group of stones in and around Marblehead, is by a carver we have labeled "the Marblehead/Mugford Man." His work is fairly primitive, but not without appeal. He carved two slightly different styles, represented here by the skull-with-wings stone for Mary Mugford (1760), and a face-with-wings for Lydia Mugford (1760), both in Marblehead. There are fewer than 20 examples in this group, almost all dated between 1758 and 1761. The "Mugford Man's" lettering often included some script and appears more accomplished than the shallowly inscribed, undeveloped tympanums. A simple four-petaled flower was often used somewhere on the stone. Was this the early work of one of the known carvers?



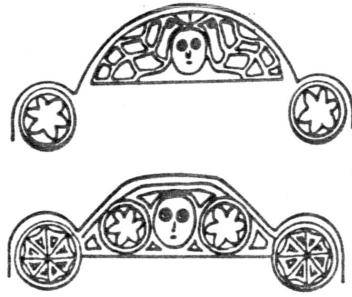
CONNECTICUT-INFLUENCED SALEM SLATE CARVER
(active about 1788-1791)

A second unique group, consisting of only five or six stones, is concentrated in Salem/Peabody. These markers, which we have called "Connecticut-Influenced Salem Slates," all date between 1788 and 1790 and were probably carved during one brief period in late 1790 or 1791. None of the examples is probated or signed. The John Nutting, Eunice Vans, and Elizabeth Hood stones (1790) at Charter Street Burying Ground, Salem, and the Molly Sprague example (1790), Peabody, are typical of this unknown carver's work. All of the markers in this group use a face as the primary motif. The stone material is a fine-grained light gray slate, and the carving, especially the lettering, is bold and often deeply cut. (Was the carver accustomed to working on Connecticut sandstone?) Faces have high, arched wings, a simple band to represent hair or a cap, elliptical eyes without brows, well-defined lips, and sometimes a lightly inscribed carving line to outline cheeks. The tympanum face, the lettering, and the Connecticut-style footstones associated with these stones, bear a very marked resemblance to the known work of Hosea Roberts, a Connecticut carver who was later in partnership with William Crosby and Orange Hurlbutt. Our search for a Salem link with Roberts or for some other Connecticut/Salem connection has so far been unproductive. Hosea Roberts was paid L2.6.0 for gravestones from the Salem estate of Hugh Smith (1791), who records say died at St. Lucia. Hugh's stone cannot be found. The fragments of two Connecticut sandstone markers identify the graves of his wives at Salem's Broad Street Burying Ground.



Thank you to Carol Perkins for the line drawings on pages 14-19.

MERRIMAC VALLEY STYLES (simplified)



John Hartshorne

Robert Mullicken, Sr.



Ezekiel Leighton



Robert Mullicken, Jr.



Richard Leighton



Joseph Mullicken



Stephen Webster



Jonathan Worster



Moses Worster

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GRAVESTONE CARVERS

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