



Death and Dying in Puritan New England: A Study Based on Early Gravestones, Vital Records, and other Primary Sources Relating to Cape Cod, Massachusetts

Curriculum Unit 03.02.01
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Introduction

This curriculum unit uses several types of primary and secondary source material concerning the colonial period of New England to teach high school students about everyday life in early America. It describes a research program to investigate Puritan worldviews and beliefs about death and dying. The research program includes a study of New England gravestone carving and the use of imagery on the early gravestones found in Cape Cod, Massachusetts burying grounds. Using vital records of the colonial period for Cape Cod towns, connections are made between the information available from gravestones and human demographic trends in seventeenth century and eighteenth century Cape Cod.¹ The source material used consists of:

1. Five hundred gravestones from seventeen of the earliest burying grounds at Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and a set of eight hundred color photographs of these gravestones;
2. An extensive database of vital statistics on Cape Cod colonists assembled from the gravestone texts;
3. A collection of published monographs on gravestone iconography that includes numerous photographs of gravestones from throughout New England;
4. Published vital records for each Cape Cod town, compiled by the towns and by the Society of Mayflower Descendants;
5. The sermons of Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards, three prominent religious and spiritual leaders of the New England colonial period.

The unit is intended for use in two upper level science elective courses that I teach at Wilbur Cross High

School in New Haven, Connecticut: Macy Honors Anatomy & Physiology, and Advanced Placement Environmental Science. Each course is limited to eighteen students, juniors and seniors. Aspects of this unit are applicable to younger students studying American history, American culture, or human geography. The unit has been developed through my participation in the 2003 Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute seminar, "Everyday Life in Early America," seminar leader John Demos (Yale University, Professor of American History and Professor of American Studies).

As with the curriculum units that I have developed in prior years of the Teachers Institute, this one emerges from some long-held interests of mine. I have been studying the colonial gravestones of Cape Cod since 1970, initially by enjoying the hobby of gravestone rubbing and shortly thereafter by beginning a more serious study of gravestones, using photography and comparative analysis of gravestone carving details. My life-long interest in the natural and human history of Cape Cod is reflected in previous curriculum units on archaeology at a tidal creek site in Wellfleet, Massachusetts and its implications for understanding technological change, and on Connecticut's freshwater wetlands, a unit drawing in part on the freshwater ecology on Cape Cod². For many years, I also have had interest in colonial American history.

This curriculum unit differs from most of my previous Teachers Institute units in some important respects. A substantial portion of the narrative that follows is based on my own research into Cape Cod gravestones and gravestone symbolism. In that sense, the unit is most similar to my teaching unit on historical archaeology at the Duck Creek, Wellfleet, Massachusetts site. The narrative here sets the stage for the definition of a student research program that is intended not only to educate students about Puritan New England, but also to teach them how to conduct original research. In the process, students carry out a detailed community study to seek answers to questions on topics that perhaps have not been addressed by others. I envision the following outcomes from this student research project: (1) a comprehensive analysis of Cape Cod gravestones and iconography from the period 1683-1760; (2) the accumulation of information about specific sets of gravestones that likely were produced by the same carver; (3) the matching of these gravestones with published vital records for each Cape Cod town, which will suggest the percentage of individuals in the total population who were memorialized by gravestones; (4) a deeper understanding of human population demographics in colonial Cape Cod, including age structure, fertility rates and mortality; (5) as a future outgrowth of this unit, the correlation of mortality in Cape communities with known outbreaks of infectious disease in New England. (The last outcome listed requires additional work on my part to develop teaching and learning strategies for studying outbreaks of illness, epidemic, and endemic disease in New England.) I believe that the research program described here can be carried out by pre-college students, and with success. The unit serves as a test case for this approach to teaching and learning.

Unit Objectives.

The Macy Honors Anatomy & Physiology course has been developed by me over the past ten years to include a study of the structure and function of the human body using patient simulations, comparative anatomy, dissection, and current events.³ I am introducing a section on death and dying to this course with the use of this unit. Further development of this unit to include a study of epidemic disease in colonial America also will have direct application to the Macy curriculum. The AP Environmental Science (APES) course follows a curriculum produced by The College Board/Advanced Placement Program.⁴ Human population issues presented in this unit relate to the major topic of "Human Population Dynamics" in the APES curriculum.

The objectives of the unit are to:

1. Involve students in a program of research on life (and death) in colonial New England, which will contribute to our understanding of the New England Puritan's worldview and relation with death.
2. Study human population dynamics of the colonial period, including such demographic factors as birth and death rates, survivorship and life expectancy, and age structure, including ages of greatest vulnerability to dying in Puritan New England.
3. Use such primary sources as colonial American burying grounds and gravestones in gaining insights into everyday life in colonial America.
4. Investigate such primary sources as sermons and diaries of seventeenth and eighteenth century New England.
5. Prepare for further investigative work on epidemic disease in colonial New England.

The Puritan Worldview and Notions of Death.

The reading from the John Demos seminar, "Everyday Life in Early America," that has been most useful to my thinking about Puritan beliefs on death and the afterlife is that of David E. Stannard's 1977 book, *The Puritan way of death: a study in religion, culture, and social change*.⁵ Stannard's chapter headings include "The World of the Puritan," "Death and Childhood," "Death and Dying," "Death and Burial," and "Death and Decline." Each of these chapters addresses what Stannard refers to as "the problem of death" for the New England Puritan, which was to accommodate both

"The idea of God's 'antecedent will,' desiring the salvation of all, and his 'consequent will,' extending it only to the elect."⁶

According to Stannard, the Puritan worldview included the following beliefs:⁷

1. The earth is positioned at the center of the Universe [a decidedly pre-Copernican belief].
2. The world is infused with design and divine purpose.
3. God is omniscient and omnipresent, and the course of every man's life is predestined.
4. God is inscrutable.
5. Death is inevitable, and it is God's punishment for the original sin of Adam.
6. Children are born with and imbued with this original sin.

7. Evil spirits and evil men occupy the earth. In fact, all suffer from "utter and unalterable depravity."
8. Death is a reward, at least for the chosen few.
9. Upon death, the soul is released from its earth-bound world.
10. The millennium is at hand, whether one takes it to mean the apocalyptic Day of Judgment or the thousand-year reign of Jesus prior to the Day of Judgment.
11. The most glorious purpose to which a Puritan can espouse is to work to "bring God's kingdom home."
12. Some will receive eternal salvation as a gift bestowed by God, but most face eternal damnation. Hell is a place of "unspeakable terrors."
13. It is impossible to know with confidence that you are among the saved. The best you can do is to examine your life constantly and maintain faith in your own goodness and God's own justness.

Stannard suggests that the Puritans had little tolerance for worldviews that differed from their own. He finds that the Puritans increasingly were psychologically, morally, and spiritually isolated from a developing secularization of society, a result partially attributable to the growth of cities and the expansion of commerce. Using this concept of a Puritan belief system, I now introduce the community study of burying grounds, gravestones, and vital records of the early Cape Cod settlements.

A Brief Account of the Settlement of Cape Cod.

The one hundred passengers of the Mayflower required sixty-five days to sail from Plymouth, England to America, departing their familiar European world on the sixth of September, 1620 and reaching the New World and sighting American soil at the Cape Cod Highlands of Truro, the ninth of November, 1620. After a failed attempt to round Monomoy and the south shore of the Cape and head toward the Hudson River, they reversed course and sailed north along the Cape's Great Outer Beach, entered Cape Cod Bay, and set anchor in East Harbor, also known as Provincetown Harbor (now the nearly land-locked, brackish water Pilgrim Lake of North

Truro and Provincetown). Their arrival in this sheltered harbor occurred on the 11th of November, just prior to the winter season. They devoted a month to exploring various regions of the Outer Cape on land and from bayside waters with their small boat, or shallop, facing "much foul weather."⁸ The sixth of December, the shallop exploration party headed to Plymouth and determined that it offered a far more safe harbor and a more auspicious place to establish a colonial settlement. The exploration party returned to report to those who remained at Cape Cod, and on the fifteenth of December, the Mayflower weighed anchor from East Harbor and sailed across Cape Cod Bay, safely entering Plymouth Harbor the following day. Construction of a settlement with houses "for common use" began thereafter.⁹

With the steady arrival of new settlers from England over the course of the ensuing decade and a half, restless Plymouth Colony inhabitants secured permission to establish new settlements away from Plymouth. Some sought out Cape Cod, and the Cape experienced its earliest permanent European settlements during the late 1630s and 1640s, with Sandwich (1637), Barnstable (1639), Yarmouth (1639), and Eastham, or Nauset (1644) receiving small or large groups of founding families. New villages established in Brewster (1656), Chatham (1656), Falmouth (1660) added to these settlements, along with several small villages or precincts in what are now the towns of Harwich, Dennis, Orleans, Wellfleet, Truro, and Provincetown. Additional communities were established on the Cape's south shore. Yet, Branford wrote thirty years later,

"Of these hundred persons which came first over in this first ship together, the greater half died in the general mortality, and most of them in two or three months' time. And for those which survived, though some were ancient and past procreation, and others left the place and country, yet of those few remaining are sprung up above 160 persons in this thirty years, and are now living in this present year 1650, besides many of their children which are dead and come not within this account."¹⁰

Meetinghouses and adjacent burying grounds were constructed and laid out in each of these Cape Cod towns and villages from an early date. The high death rate on the Cape and in Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colony, throughout the seventeenth century, along with associated malnutrition and disease, complications of childbirth, and a high fertility rate, resulted in frequent burials in these cemeteries. Population growth lagged in the 1640s but renewed in later decades, yet the death rate remained high. Death also was introduced with King Philip's War (mid-1670s), an exception to the generally peaceful relations between Native Americans and the Europeans and Africans.

Cape Cod Gravestones of the Colonial Period.

I have been studying the colonial gravestones of Cape Cod over the last 34 years. During this time, I have visited most of the early burying grounds repeatedly. I have carefully cleaned a number of gravestones of the lichen encrustations that chemically break down and corrode these slate markers, revealing the beautiful stone carvings beneath. I have photographed the gravestones as part of my systematic study of the use of symbolism and the evolution of carving styles on Cape stones. Lichens are, along with errant rider lawn mowers and the unavoidable freeze-thaw of winter, the greatest threats to the continued existence of colonial

gravestones on the Cape and throughout New England. At present, I have accumulated more than 800 slides of Cape Cod gravestones. By comparing gravestones located in Cape cemeteries with those described in publications by Harriette Merrifield Forbes (*Gravestones of Early New England and the Men Who Made Them, 1653-1800*. 1927), Allan Ludwig (*Graven Images: New England Stonecarving and Its Symbols, 1650-1815* . 1966.), and Dickran and Ann Tashjian (*Memorials for Children of Change: the Art of Early New England Stonecarving* . 1974.), it is possible to make some attribution of gravestones to specific stone carvers.

Interestingly, none of the above-mentioned publications make any reference to the cemeteries or gravestones of Cape Cod. Ludwig has stated that he felt Cape Cod gravestones likely would not present anything significantly new to his study of iconography (a very detailed and extensive study, indeed).¹¹ The only publication known to me that deals specifically with Cape Cod gravestones is the excellent book, *Epitaph and Icon: a Field Guide to the Old Burying Grounds of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket* , by Diana Hume George and Malcolm A. Nelson (1983). This book describes most of the important early Cape cemeteries and their pre-Revolutionary gravestones, from the towns of Sandwich to Provincetown, providing insightful information on the use of symbolism, attributing stones to various carvers, and connecting eighteenth and early nineteenth century epitaphs with Biblical and literary source material. It is a comprehensive field guide to Cape cemeteries.

The sections that follow in this curriculum unit serve as an introduction to colonial gravestone symbolism in the teaching of students about Puritan beliefs about death and the afterlife. I use as my starting point Allan Ludwig's interpretations of gravestone symbolism that are applicable to Cape Cod stones. My various comments are intended to build on the material presented by George and Nelson in their field guide. By my tally, *Epitaph and Icon* contains 21 photographs of Cape Cod gravestones from the years 1683-1760 and discusses a total of 63 gravestones from this period. The book pictures a dozen of the most significant pre-1760 gravestones and discusses two-dozen others. Clearly, the authors devoted many hours to studying the Cape's burying grounds.

It is apparent to me, however, that a more comprehensive treatment of the gravestones of Cape Cod is needed in order to recognize the full range of carving styles present on the Cape, to appreciate the influence of Boston, Plymouth, and Newport style centers, to place Cape Cod gravestones in the larger tradition of colonial stone carving, and to teach about it! The Cape has fifteen seventeenth century gravestones (George and Nelson found eight), and there are more than 210 gravestones that pre-date 1730, just three dozen of which are mentioned in *Epitaph and Icon* . While Cape Cod has a limited number of gravestones from the period 1680-1709 (37 known to me), Cape cemeteries are particularly rich in gravestones of the period 1710-1719, with nearly 100 stones dating from this decade. This was a particularly interesting period in the development of gravestone imagery and carving techniques, occurring in the same decade when Cotton Mather was producing some of his important theological and medical writings.

The gravestones of Cape Cod represent more than a simple repetition of gravestones from Boston, Plymouth, and elsewhere in New England, and much can be learned by a careful study of their imagery and carving styles. During the development of this curriculum unit, I have spent a number of hours in the cemeteries of Barnstable, Yarmouth, Orleans, Eastham, Wellfleet, Truro, and Provincetown, compiling information from gravestones that adds to descriptive information I had previously assembled. As I continue my fieldwork in cemeteries across the Cape in the weeks and months ahead, my database of 500 gravestones very likely will double in size, although most of the expansion of the list will occur with additions of stones from the period 1730-1760.

Cape Cod's oldest inscribed gravestone is the Dorothy Rawson stone (died 1683), found in Lothrop Hill Cemetery, Barnstable. It is not fully clear why it required nearly half a century of settlement before inscribed gravestones made their appearance in Cape cemeteries. The oldest gravestone found in a New England burying ground is the Rev. Ephraim Huit tablet or cenotaph (d. 1644) in Palisado Cemetery, Windsor, Connecticut. The earliest inscribed gravestones in Boston date to the 1650s. Possible explanations for the slow start in gravestones being placed in Cape cemeteries include a hesitancy of the early settlers to mark the graves of their growing numbers of deceased for fear of encouraging attack by the Native Americans, the initial absence of a gravestone carving tradition in the New World, the need to import gravestones from Boston and Plymouth carving centers, the use of uninscribed fieldstones to mark early burials, the use of wooden markers that have not survived, and the use of inscribed stones that have disappeared with the ensuing time.

Stannard (1977) writes of the English tradition of burial,

"[. . .] Very few pre-Restoration headstones exist in England today, suggesting that they were made of wood and have perished, that they were destroyed by Puritan zeal, or that they were simply never erected in the first place. Those few that do exist are almost uniformly small, simple blocks of stone."

The Dorothy Rawson stone, a slate stone with beautifully carved winged death's head, paired gourds, pumpkins, and the use of Latin text (*Vive Memor Loethi* - "the memory of the person lives") is the sophisticated product of a Boston-based carver, perhaps William Mumford. This gravestone is formed in the tripartite shape characteristic of essentially all non-cenotaph gravestones produced in the 1650s and following in New England. The Joseph Drake stone of Palisado Cemetery, Windsor, Connecticut (d. 1657) is an early example of the tripartite structure of gravestones. Many of the colonial gravestones also had footstones, designating with headstones the precise cemetery terrain in which the deceased's body was interred. The tripartite shape mirrors that of headboards and footboards to colonial beds, and metaphorically suggests the final resting place of the departed person.¹² Nearly all inscribed gravestones in Cape Cod cemeteries were produced using slate quarried and carved off-Cape in Boston, Charlestown, Plymouth, Massachusetts or Newport, Rhode Island style centers and subsequently exported to the Cape for use in memorializing the dead. Cape Cod is a glacially formed peninsula consisting of sand and gravel and the occasional boulder, or glacial erratic. The only gravestones that safely can be attributed to local Cape Cod stone carvers are the crudely carved fieldstones (or perhaps the lightly inscribed imported slate stones) found in a number of Cape cemeteries, most notably Lothrop Hill (Barnstable), Ancient Cemetery (Yarmouth), Cove Burying Ground (Eastham), the Old Burying Ground in Orleans, and Wellfleet's Chequessett Neck Cemetery (known locally as Indian Cemetery). Lothrop Hill and Ancient Cemetery have the best examples of what appear to be a series of burials in parallel plots using both headstones and footstones. These fieldstones also happen to be located in the oldest sections of each cemetery. A careful study of fieldstone markers in Cape cemeteries is very much needed, and it should include partial excavation of stones buried by shifting land surfaces, removal of lichen encrustations, and comparison with the pattern of burials over time in each cemetery. I comment further on these early fieldstone markers later in the narrative.

The second and third earliest stones on the Cape are the Hope Chipman stone (d. 1683[/84]) in Barnstable (incorrectly considered by some historical narratives to be the oldest Cape stone, due to the failure to distinguish Old Style from New Style dates) and the Thomas Clark stone (d. ca. 1684) in Sandwich. Each of

these stones is a carefully prepared, dressed stone (front and back surfaces are flat) with tripartite structure but completely lacking in the use of iconography. The Thomas Burgess stone (d. 1685[/86]) and the Dorothy Burgess stone (d. 1687[/88]), husband and wife buried in Sandwich, also may have lacked iconography but their original headstones are lost and only their footstones remain, standing behind replacement slate stones erected in 1917. The next oldest gravestone, that of young John Prince in Sandwich (d. 1689), has a simple, winged death's head but is unique to Cape gravestones in lacking iconographic carving on the pilasters. Thereafter, all Cape Cod gravestones of the 1690s through the remainder of the colonial period use some combination of carved images of death and rebirth.

The Imagery Appearing on Cape Cod Gravestones.

Winged Death's Heads (spanning the entire period of 1683-1760):

Cape Cod gravestones show a variety of early winged death's heads, representative of the carving styles of William Mumford (active ca. 1680 to early 1700s; d. 1718), Joseph Lamson (1658-1722), Nathaniel Lamson (1693-1755), Ebenezer Soule and family (active in eighteenth century), Nathaniel Fuller (active from 1730s to 1750s), three generations of James Fosters (eighteenth century), and others. A slide set (see Classroom Activities) includes representative carving styles of death's heads. Two interesting types of death's heads requiring further study are those that occur on curved or bowed slates (see Anthony Thacher stone of Yarmouth, d. 1711) and those that I refer to as "misshapen skulls" (see Lieut. Edmond Freeman stone of Eastham (d. 1718/19) and Shearjashub Bourn Esqr. stone of Sandwich (d. 1718/9).

Winged Soul Effigies (1711-1718/19):

There are only seven examples of winged soul effigies on Cape Cod gravestones from the period 1711-1718/19. Three examples comprise some of the finest carved gravestones on Cape Cod. They are the Marcy Freeman stone (1711), with a beautifully carved heart and floral patterns surrounding the heart in addition to the soul effigy, the Joshua Doane stone (1716), and the Mary Doane stone (1716), both of Wellfleet's Chequessett Neck Cemetery ("Indian Cemetery"). I rank the two Doane stones (husband and wife) in the top half dozen of all Cape stones for quality of craftsmanship. Inexplicably, George and Nelson did not include this small but important cemetery in their field guide. The Doane and Freeman stones bear a strong resemblance to gravestones attributed to Nathaniel Lamson (1692-1755) of Boston. They may have been carved by his father, Joseph Lamson (1658-?). The Honourable John Thacher Esqr. Stone of Yarmouth (d. 1714) is unique to the Cape in that it has a soul effigy carved from yellow sandstone. It has deteriorated badly in recent years. The Thomas Lewes stone of Eastham (d. 1718[19]) has an almost lion-like soul effigy as its central image. The Deacon Samuel Freeman footstone (d. 1712) is the only Cape footstone with a winged soul effigy, and it can be grouped with a small number of footstones with winged death's heads. Ludwig writes, "Lamson's sons, Caleb and Nathaniel, quietly slipped back into formula carving without once having realized what their talented father had accomplished."¹⁴ I agree with George and Nelson that Caleb and Nathaniel Lamson deserve more credit for their carving skills than Ludwig gives them.

Crossbones and Crosses (1703-1728):

Ludwig lists gravestones having crosses from the period 1760-1780, and also some earlier stones with crosses, dated from 1710 to 1721. He writes,

"The symbol of the cross could appear emblazoned across the face of a stone, hidden away in the corners, obscured by a circular band, cut in the shape of a Maltese cross, or like a rosette; but whatever the way the New Englander chose to have his cross carved, there is no longer any question that it was a far more popular symbol than any historian of 18th century New England has hitherto supposed."¹⁵

I have identified ten pre-1720 gravestones and three footstones in Cape Cod cemeteries that bear crossbones, and in some instances it is apparent that the crossbones were used as crosses. Crossbones were carved on gravestones during the period 1703-1718/19, and also from a later period beginning in the late 1720s. The first grouping of gravestones exhibiting similar carving styles includes the Abigail Otis stone¹⁶ (d. 1712), the Jonathan Freeman stone (d. 1714), the Mary Doane stone (1716), the Joshua Doane stone (d. 1716), the Hezekiah Purinton stone (1717/8), and the Shearjashub Bourn stone (1718/9). Each of these stones has an intricately carved set of crossbones positioned above or alongside the winged skull. Each is a superbly carved stone also using elaborately carved scrollwork surrounding the skull. In all likelihood the stones were produced by the same stone carver, and I suspect that it was a Lamson.

The second grouping of stones consists of those of John Sunderlin (1703), Tamsen Sunderlin (1709), the Marcy Freeman footstone (1711), the Bethshua Bourn footstone (1714), and the Elizabeth Pope footstone (1715). The Freeman footstone has a pair of crossbones, arranged in an X pattern, in the top portion of an otherwise plain pilaster. The two Sunderlin stones have similar crossbones positioned in an obscure circle at the bottom center of the headstone, but they are arranged vertically, that is, in the form of a cross. The Bethshua Bourn and Elizabeth Pope footstones have similar cross-like crossbones at the pilaster tops, appearing here inside two concentric circles. In each of these examples, the cross is hidden in a very obscure part of the headstone or footstone. The third example of a cross appearing on an early gravestone is that of the Thomas Lewes footstone (d. 1718/19). A close examination of the pilaster tops of the footstone reveals two unmistakable crosses – not crossbones. Ludwig writes, "It still remains to be seen for whom these crosses were carved and why."¹⁷

Hourglasses (1697/8-1717/8):

Ludwig states, "Stonecarvers simply followed an emblematic tradition when they linked together Death and Time [. . .]" and "the hourglass, an attribute of Time, could be given over to Death or connected with him by juxtaposition."¹⁸ He refers to stones with hourglasses from the late seventeenth century and from the 1730s and 1740s, and indicates that "hourglasses are often seen in simple symbolic conjunction with the winged death's head"¹⁹. Hourglasses appear on twelve Cape Cod gravestones and one associated footstone during the period 1697/8-1717/8. The Mrs. Joanna Cotton stone of Sandwich (d. 1702), the Capt. Jonathan Sprow stone of Eastham (d. 1706/7), the Mrs. Anna Lewes stone of Barnstable (d. 1715), the Jonathan Hopkins stone of Brewster (d. 1716[7]), and the Deacon Hezekiah Purinton headstone and footstone of North Truro (d. 1717/8) are representative examples. On several of these stones (Elisha Bourne, Jonathan Hopkins, Hezekiah Purinton), sand grains are represented in the bottom portion of the hourglass, signifying that time has run out. As Ludwig writes, "the hourglasses symbolize the corruption and decay of the flesh"²⁰

Paired Gourds/Breasts and Pumpkins (1683-1719/20):

Ludwig writes,

"The gourd was a very popular symbol in the 17th and early 18th centuries in and around greater Boston and seemed to have been taken as a symbol of both life and death [. . .] The gourd, then, seems to have symbolized the coming to be and the passing away of earthly things."²¹

"The gourds on the [Rebecca] Bunker stone [of Cambridge, Massachusetts, d. 1709] could also be interpreted as breasts, and it would be foolish to believe that the Puritans were too prudish to see the similarities."²¹

"In literature, breasts could symbolize the Scriptures, the Church, the ministry, or the divine milk needed to nourish the soul [. . .] it is possible to interpret the pendantlike forms on the Bunker stone as either gourds or breasts. Certainly it can no longer be argued that the Puritan mind was too "Victorian" to indulge in such imagery."²¹

There are 36 Cape Cod gravestones from the period 1683-1717 that have gourds, pumpkins, or both as prominent symbols on the pilasters. The Dorothy Rawson stone of Barnstable (d. 1683), the Capt. Peter Adolph stone of Sandwich (d. 1702/3), the Margery Joyce stone of Yarmouth (d. 1705), the Jeremiah Hows stone in Howes Family Cemetery, Dennis, the Jonathan Freeman stone in Brewster (d. 1714), and the Josiah Miller stone in Yarmouth (d. 1717) are representative examples. The Adolph stone bears a striking resemblance to the Mr. Israell Chauncy stone of Stratford, Connecticut (d. 1702/3), where Lamson stones are known to be located. A branch of the Lamson family lived in Stratford. The pilasters on the Adolph and Chauncy stones are stylistically identical, and the two stones share some features in their lettering. The Margery Joyce and Jeremiah Hows stones differ from each other in various respects, but probably were carved by a Lamson. The Jonathan Freeman stone is the most remarkable one on Cape Cod bearing gourds or breasts as they appear not only on the pilasters, but also on the bottom border of the headstone. With a beautifully carved winged death's head, an hourglass and crossbones, the twelve paired gourds, and intricate foliar carving, the Freeman gravestone is one of the finest. The Josiah Miller stone is a cradle-end stone with single, large gourds on the pilasters. It is near-identical to several Lamson cradle-end stones in the old burying ground in Wakefield, Massachusetts.

Gadrooned Urns and/or Tulips (1703-1714):

Ludwig identifies the carver known only as "J.N." as the first to use the symbol of the gadrooned urn or goblet on colonial gravestones.²² The cinerary urn contains, at least figuratively, the ashes of the deceased. Examples of J.N.'s (and perhaps other carvers') urns date to the 1680s and 1690s. The most expertly carved of these urns is that of Edward Tompson of Chelmsford, Massachusetts (d. 1705), which has a composite flower emerging upright from the urn's opening and two thistle-like flowers wilting over to either side. This tympanum has intricately carved scrollwork left and right of the urn. Ludwig states that J.N. used "highly sophisticated engravings rather than rough woodcuts" as the basis for his designs.²²

Cape Cod has five gravestones depicting the gadrooned urn with flowers, or flowers without an urn, as the central image. Four are from the period 1710-1714. The Hannah Hall stone of Hall family Cemetery, Dennis (d. 1710) is a fairly lightly inscribed stone with a simple urn containing a composite and two wilted tulips, surrounded by two perkier looking tulips with basal leaves framing the inside border of the tympanum. The Bethier Lothrop stone of Barnstable (d. 1714) is somewhat more deeply inscribed, but it is still a fairly plain statement of the imagery. In contrast, the Mrs. Bethshua Bourn stone of Sandwich (d. 1714) is one of the most intricately and expertly carved gravestones in any Cape Cod cemetery. It is a sizeable stone with a gracefully handled, layered and fluted urn, and with five composite flowers and two wilted tulips emerging from the urn, linked by foliar scrollwork. Expert scrollwork also fills the pilasters and the bottom border. This stone was almost totally obscured by lichen growth when I first viewed it in 1974. Cleaning the stone revealed one of the treasures of Cape cemeteries.

The two remaining stones with tulips but no urns are the Ruth Chipman footstone in Sandwich (d. 1713), pictured in George and Nelson²³, and the Walley Crocker stone in Barnstable (d. 1703). The intricately carved Chipman headstone is carved in slate, but the footstone is carved from a yellow sandstone. The Crocker stone has a simple arrangement consisting of a composite flower growing from an apparent earthen mound, surrounded by two wilting tulips. This is the earliest example of the dying tulip/urn genre occurring on the Cape.

Hearts (1711):

Ludwig writes of

"[. . .] The geometric heart symbol being an emblem of the soul's love of God and of the soul itself."²⁴

"We know that in England and Europe the emblem of the heart could have a variety of meanings, but in New England it appears to have been associated most closely with symbols of the soul in bliss and always in symbolic opposition to the imagery of death."²⁴

The only early Cape Cod stone with a heart motif is the Marcy Freeman stone of Eastham (d. 1711), which shows the highest quality of craftsmanship in carving. An hourglass and beautifully carved central soul effigy appear above the heart, the heart carries the text about the deceased, and the space around the heart is filled with intricately carved scrollwork. This headstone is well described by George and Nelson.²⁵ The Freeman stone is very similar to the Mrs. Hannah Bartlet stone of Plymouth, Massachusetts (d. 1710), except that the Bartlet heart has a less pleasing, squat shape, and above the heart is an hourglass and a winged death's head, rather than the hourglass with soul effigy seen on the Marcy Freeman stone.

Soul Doves (1698):

Ludwig writes,

"[Cotton] Mather calls the soul a bird and refers to the body as a shell keeping it captive. The

equating the soul with the image of a bird was a common European metaphor in the 17th century and it is not surprising that the New Englander brought it to the new world with him.²⁶

The Mary Green stone, 1715, Newport, Rhode Island shows two birds flanking a bowl in which spheroid objects are pyramided. I know of only one other gravestone that uses this symbolism, Cape Cod's Batha Hall stone, 1698 (Hall Burying Ground, Dennis), which is probably not late seventeenth century but rather was carved at about the same time as the Mary Green stone. In the Batha Hall stone, the spheroid objects appear to be grapes or cherries, with the largest fruit, perhaps an apple, suspended over the bowl. The leaves associated with this fruit are certainly not grape leaves but are consistent in shape with cherry or apple tree leaves. (See the extensive discussion in George and Nelson.²⁷)

Deliberately Mutilated Gravestones (1684(?)):

Ludwig cites three gravestones that show deliberate damage to the central soul effigy ("identical excisions of the anthropomorphic soul image") done not by vandals but by the stone carvers, perhaps under pressure from the families or the community. Of the John Hurley stone of Haverhill, Massachusetts (d. 1729), the Miriam Walton of Providence, Rhode Island (d. 1732, according to Providence Vital Records - the date of death on this stone also is excised), and the Martha Fuller stone of Hebron, Connecticut (d. 1785), Ludwig writes, "The mutilated stones of New England testify to the fact that all Puritans did not accept the new imagery with enthusiasm," and he continues, "thus far no such carefully mutilated stones have been found in the 17th century, but 17th century imagery did not revolve around the picturing of a central soul image [. . .]"²⁸

Stannard (1977) adds to Ludwig's comments,

"Not until the eighteenth century is there any evidence that stones were mutilated, but even in these cases the image invariably attacked was that of a soul in heaven - a representation at last too popish to bear - and the care with which such excisions were carried out suggests that it was not the work of community iconoclasts, but was done prior to the stone's erection by families or stonecarvers who had second thoughts about the symbolic ground being trodden."²⁹

There is an important 17th century gravestone in the Sandwich Old Burying Ground that shows deliberate mutilation. It is the Thomas Clark stone, 1684(?), previously described as one of the few early Cape Cod gravestones lacking iconography. Regardless of the absence of imagery, all the text describing the life of this young child was excised from the stone, letter by letter. It still can be read with close examination. I have not yet located reference to Thomas Clark's birth or early death in Sandwich vital records, but it is interesting to note that Sandwich was the site of the first Quaker population in New England. The careful excision of text referring to this deceased child may have some relation to the Quakers' initial abhorrence for the use of "graven images."

Stones Signed by the Stone Carver (1711):

I have located one signed gravestone in Cape Cod cemeteries. It is the James Paine stone in Lothrop Hill Cemetery, Barnstable (d. 1711), and it is signed with the initials NL (for Nathaniel Lamson) above the winged skull. The right vertical of the letter "N" and the upright of the letter "L" are shared as one carved line. I made

this discovery in 1996 upon cleaning the stone of its heavy growth of lichens. Based on this signed Nathaniel Lamson stone, a number of Cape stones now can be attributed to Nathaniel Lamson. The James Paine stone has a simply carved winged skull, paired gourds, and a beautifully carved floral bottom border.

Gravestones Bearing Old Style/New Style Dates (1697/8-1749/50):

Many Cape Cod gravestones dating to the late 1600s and the first half-century of the 1700s that were erected for those who died between the calendar dates of January 1 and March 24 show two years for the date of death. The use of two years reflects the official use of the Old Style (Julian) Calendar by England and her American colonies prior to 1752, and the anticipated acceptance of the New Style (Gregorian) Calendar. England's refusal to adopt the Gregorian Calendar dated to the split between King Henry VIII and the Church of Rome when the king found himself unable to be granted a divorce by the Pope. Not to be outdone by the leader of the Church of Rome, Henry had Parliament pass the Act in Restraint of Appeals in March 1533 declaring England independent of all foreign authorities, papal or governmental. In 1534, the Act of Supremacy completed the split with Rome by declaring the king the supreme leader of England.

The Gregorian Calendar is named for Pope Gregory XIII (formerly Ugo Buoncompagni, reigning from 1572 to 1585), a supporter of science who commissioned his best astronomers to devise a new calendar, implemented in 1582. The revised calendar corrected the small but significant inaccuracy of the Julian Calendar, which made the year 11 minutes, 14 seconds longer than the true solar year. This resulted in an error of 10 days in 1500 years, and thus a misreading of the solstice and equinox positions of Earth and the sun. Upon implementation of the new calendar, Gregory declared that October 4, 1582 be followed immediately by October 15 so as to reset the following year's spring equinox to astronomical accuracy. Many but not all Cape (and other New England) gravestones record two years for these deaths occurring between January 1 New Style new year and March 25 Old Style new year.

The Book of Common-Prayer (1660) housed at Yale's Beinecke Rare Book

& Manuscript Library offers further explanation of this interesting calendrics story. The introductory pages of the Anglican Bible state,

"Note also that the year of our Lord beginneth the 25 day of March, the Same day supposed to be the first day upon which the world was created, and the day when Christ was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary."

Beinecke's later, 1682 edition of The Book of Common-Prayer adds,

"Note, that the Supputation of the year of our Lord in the Church of England, beginneth the 25 day of March. March 25 is the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin."³⁰

As further evidence of our appropriate recognition of March 25 as New Year's Day, I point out to my students that March is the first month of the year, September is the seventh (septem), October the eighth (octem), November the ninth (novem), December the tenth (decem), and February the twelfth. And, of course, the nine month span from March 25 to December 25, the traditional day for the birth of Jesus, is the approximate

duration of a human pregnancy. Given this complicated situation, the carver of the Melethiah Lothrop stone in Barnstable (d. February 5, 1711/10/12) must have been uniquely confused about the Old Style and New Style dates, as he added a third year to the gravestone to be safe.

Gravestones with Biographical Information, Biblical Quotes, or Latin Text (Selected Examples):

From Sandwich Old Burying Ground, the Shearjashub Bourn Esqr. Stone (d. 1718/9):

HERE LYETH YE BOD
OF SHEARJASHUB BOURN
ESQR WHO DEPARTED THIS
LIFE MARCH YE 7TH 1718/9
IN THE 76 YEAR OF HIS AGE
HE WAS A VERTIOUS RIGHTEOUS & MERCIFUL MAN
AND A GREAT FRIEND TO YE INDIANS
PRECIOUS IN YE SIGHT OF YE LORD IS YE DEATH OF HIS SAINTS

From Lothrop Hill Cemetery, Barnstable, the Mrs. Anna Russel Stone (d. 1729/30), Pictured in George and Nelson³¹:

HERE LYES INTERRED YE BODY OF MRS
ANNA RUSSEL CONSORT TO MR JOSEPH
RUSSEL WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE FEBRY
YE 5 1729/30 IN YE 23D YEAR OF HER AGE
AND IN HER ARM THEIR SON LEONARD
DIED YE SAME DAY AETATIS 17 DAYES

Beneath this Marble Stone doth Lye
Two Subjects of Death's Tyranny
The Mother who in this Close Tomb
Sleeps with the Issue of her womb
Here Death deals Cruely you see

Who with the Fruit cuts down the Tree

Yet is his Malice all in vain

For Tree and Fruit shall Spring again.

From Cove Burying Ground, Eastham, the Rev. Samuel Treat Stone (d. 1716/17):

HERE LYES INTERRED YE BODY OF YE

LATE LEARNED AND REVD. MR. SAMUEL TREAT,

YE PIOUS AND FAITHFUL PASTOR OF THIS CHURCH,

WHO AFTER A VERY ZEALOUS DISCHARGE OF HIS

MINISTRY FOR YE SPACE OF 45 YEARS, & A

LABORIOUS TRAVEL FOR YE SOULS OF YE

INDIAN NATIVS, FELL ASLEEP IN CHRIST,

MARCH YE 18, 1716/17, IN YE 69 YEAR

OF HIS AGE. [the line breaks are my own]

An eighteenth century marble replacement marker stands in the cemetery today commemorating Rev. Samuel Treat, along with the original slate footstone, inscribed "Mr. Samuel Treat." According to Kenelm Collins of the Eastham Historical Society, the original slate stone was "removed from Cove Burying Ground prior to 1905 and kept at Snow Library in Orleans until its destruction by fire in 1952."³² Mr. Collins has reconstructed the fire-damaged gravestone from many broken parts, but I have not yet had opportunity to view this marker. John Warner Barber (1841) records the inscription on the original Treat headstone³³. It is perhaps the most remarkable biographical statement written on any Cape stone of this early period. Rev. Mr. Treat, originally of Milford, Connecticut, apparently was held in the highest esteem at the time of his death. Barber writes that he was,

"The first minister in this town, [. . .] distinguished for his evangelical zeal and labors, not only among his own people, but also among the Indians in this vicinity; and he was the instrument of converting many of them to the Christian faith."³³

I suspect that the original headstone was carved by a Lamson and resembled the Shearjashub Bourn Esqr. stone of Sandwich (d. 1718/9) in size and quality of carving. This remains to be learned.

From the Back of the Walley Crocker Stone of Barnstable (d. 1703):

Mark ye 10 & 14 Suffer

Ye Little children to
Come unto Me & Forbid
Them Not For of Such
Is Ye Kingdom of God.

This gravestone is found in Lothrop Hill Cemetery with other stones dating from 1694 to 1715. Curiously, the stone is positioned in the ground backwards with the respect to the surrounding stones. The Biblical quote thus faces forward, and the front portion of the headstone, bearing Walley Crocker's name and date of death, faces away from the viewer. George and Nelson write of this stone,

"Next to the [Elizabeth] Lathrop stone [1694] (near the middle of the ground) is an even smaller monument whose very anonymity is moving. Undecorated, like the Hope Chipman stone, and without motif or date or even name, it probably dates from the 17th century."; "the children of an early Barnstable family may be buried beneath it, but we shall never know whose."³⁴

George and Nelson's estimation of a seventeenth century date for the Walley Crocker stone is a very good estimation, but a more careful examination of this stone would have eliminated its anonymity.

Fieldstone gravestones (1713-1736):

As noted above, there are a number of fieldstone grave markers in Cape Cod cemeteries that do not offer many clues as to ownership or date of death. Some of these very likely were installed in the early burying grounds in the latter portion of the seventeenth century, and if so they are the oldest extant European gravestones on the Cape. Chequessett Neck Cemetery ("Indian Cemetery") in Wellfleet is purported to contain some Indian gravestones, one or more bearing the "Indian marks" of those they memorialize in European fashion. George and Nelson write of "one small, mute, unreadable fieldstone in the southwest sector [of Cove Burying Ground, Eastham], which we have irresponsibly named the Monument of the Unknown Pilgrim."³⁵ I believe I know the fieldstone to which they refer, and they may be right in their attribution. This cemetery does, after all, contain the remains of three of the original Mayflower passengers. However, it is worth pointing out that there are some early eighteenth century fieldstone markers in this cemetery not far from the "Unknown Pilgrim" that do carry inscriptions, if one looks at them at the right time of day with sharply angled rays of sunlight. They are:

BENJAMIN PAINE 1713 and DYED MAY YE 30 (with an uninscribed footstone) 1716 AGED 45	BENNET PAINE
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The above-mentioned gravestones from Cape Cod burying grounds suggest some of the wealth of information that is obtainable from a detailed study of these dated markers. The following activities are designed to involve my students in original research using the gravestones and other primary and secondary sources.

Classroom Activities.

Activity I. Introduction to Cape Cod, Massachusetts

(Unit Objective #1. Involve students in a program of research on life (and death) in colonial New England, which will contribute to our understanding of the New England Puritan's worldview and relation with death.) Slide presentation on the geology, natural history, and colonial architecture of Cape Cod. The slides (not listed here) are drawn from my collection of Cape Cod scenes.

Activity II. Introduction to Colonial Gravestones and Gravestone Symbolism

(Unit Objective #3. Use such primary sources as colonial American burying grounds and gravestones in gaining insights into everyday life in colonial America.) Slide presentation on the gravestones of colonial New England, including a focus on Boston, Plymouth, and Newport style centers and the diffusion of these gravestones to Cape Cod burying grounds. The slides are drawn from the author's collection.

This classroom activity makes use of a worksheet that has students record information as the various slides are viewed, including the name and age of the deceased, the date of death, any biographical information presented on the gravestone, the symbolism appearing on the stone, and its iconographic significance.

Activity III. Gravestone Symbolism

(Unit Objective #3, continued.) Students are presented with a portfolio of photographs of Cape Cod gravestones from the colonial period (1683-1770). The portfolio consists of 8"x10" black-and-white and color prints of numerous gravestones (including headstones and footstones) found in the early burial grounds of Cape Cod. They are asked to sort the gravestones into stacks based on the occurrence of different symbols, keeping in mind that use of these symbols is directly correlated with the time periods in which the gravestones were carved. They are then given reference materials (including Allan Ludwig's *Graven Images*) and asked to determine the proposed cultural and religious significance of each symbol identified. This activity has the advantage of giving students an opportunity to examine a number of different gravestones found in separate Cape Cod cemeteries and make direct comparisons among them, looking for similar carving styles and perhaps identifying gravestones produced by the same stone carvers. It also enables students to see how the use of particular symbols underwent evolutionary change. In the process, students learn about the importance of symbolism to colonial culture.

Activity IV. Visit to Grove Street Cemetery and the Center Church Crypt

(Unit Objectives #1 & 3, continued.) Grove Street Cemetery is an extremely historical cemetery established in New Haven in the latest 1700s and early 1800s. The gravestones that originally were positioned on the New Haven Green (which continues to be a cemetery, although not recognized as such by most visitors to the Green) were removed in the early 1800s and repositioned alphabetically along the west and north boundary walls of Grove Street. This cleared the Green of gravestones and opened up its public space. Grove Street Cemetery has its own historical significance, well described in materials available at the recent bicentennial celebration of its establishment. In the cemetery, one can move from stone to stone and see the representative carving styles and uses of symbolism of early Connecticut Valley gravestones for the period 1677 through the 1770s. The activity is intended to give students an opportunity to explore an early cemetery

and make discoveries, just as they would in a museum. This will be the first visit that many students have ever made to an early graveyard. Visiting burying grounds was a far more routine part of everyday life in the colonial period than it is today.

The Center Church Crypt preserves dozens of early gravestones from this same time period, in their original locations below the main sanctuary of the church. When the crypt had an earthen floor, the gravestones were well protected from damage. With the installation of a cement floor some years ago, subsequent flooding of the crypt caused irreparable damage to some brownstone (New Haven arkosic sandstone) markers trapped below the flood water line. Still, a good range of carving styles and stone materials can be viewed here. Of particular interest for the Revolutionary Period is the gravestone of the wife of Benedict Arnold, a marble slab against the wall near the entry area.

Activity V. Demographic Study of Cape Cod Gravestones, 1683-1760

(Unit Objective #2. Study human population dynamics of the colonial period, including such demographic factors as birth and death rates, survivorship and life expectancy, and age structure, including ages of greatest vulnerability to dying.) Of the 500 Cape Cod gravestones entered into my database, I have recorded the age at death for 366 individuals. I plan future visits to the Cape cemeteries to record age at time of death for a higher percentage of the 500 stones. In this activity, students treat the "population" of gravestones as a single population of individuals to develop an age structure diagram for Cape Cod colonists. This is admittedly an artificial construct, spanning as it does an eighty-year time period rather than one moment in time, but much useful information can be gained through this exercise. In my preliminary work with the 366 gravestone records for which I have age at time of death, I find that 57 gravestones (15.6% of total) were erected for those who died from birth to age 4 years, and that this is the single largest five year age category of the deceased. Other large age groups at time of death are the 30 stones for those who died in the age range of 20-24 years (8.2%) and the 30 who died at 60-64 years (8.2%). Interestingly, nearly 20% of individuals lived to age 70 and above, based just on gravestone records.

Clearly, there are some specific biases concerning the use of gravestones to determine population structure. It is far more likely that an individual who lived into adulthood would merit a gravestone than would a child who did not survive infancy. It has been estimated that no more than 5% of all colonists have extant gravestones today, and that a substantial percentage of newborns and infants never received gravestones at the time of their early deaths. My students have the responsibility of interpreting these data and trying to determine if, for example, women of the childbearing years (ca. 20-35) were more prone to death than were men of the same age range. By working with the gravestone evidence and integrating this information with vital records of Cape towns (the activity described next), my students will be contributing to our understanding of population demographics in colonial New England.

Activity VI. Extensive Study of Vital Records for Cape Cod Towns

(Unit Objective #2, continued.) In this prolonged study, groups of students are assigned pages from the various vital records of Cape towns (see Student Reading List) to extract information on births and deaths from the earliest years of record-keeping to the end of the colonial period. As they read a birth or death record from the vital records, they enter the information into a database, all information ultimately to be merged into one large database. The potential tedium of this activity is mitigated by several dozen students sharing the workload and conducting it from time to time over a period of weeks, and by their ability to appreciate the power of databases in sorting information attributes such as births, deaths, chronology of mortalities, and surname. Brewster and Truro are to be used as a trial effort, to see how best to work with the vital records.

Let me illustrate how this study might be conducted. According to the published vital records for the town of Truro, Deacon Hezekiah Purinton and his wife Mary had the following children³⁶:

Mary, borne in Truroe October 20, 1706

Jemima, borne in Truroe October 31, 1708

Sarah, borne Truroe October 6, 1709

Mercy, borne in Truroe November 10, 1711

Elisabeth, borne in Truroe October 23, 1713

Hezekiah, borne in Truroe September 26, 1715

Abiel, borne in Truroe February 23, 1717/18

A student-conducted review of vital records, including the death notices for Truro would, with hope, indicate how long each of these children lived. An examination of cemetery records extending into the 1800s would indicate if any of these children were buried in Truro. It is possible that they moved away from their birthplace. Also, some children could have died in infancy and not received a gravestone. A comparison of the cemetery records and the vital statistics records could well shed light on the relation between the two sources of information. These vital records for the Purinton children indicate a common pattern among women of the colonial period. It was common in this age for women to give birth, nurse, and care for infants in reproductive cycles lasting two years. In the second year, mothers also would be starting a new pregnancy. In the case of the Purinton family, infant Jemima had less than one year before her mother's attentions were directed to the third daughter to arrive, Sarah. One wonders if Jemima died in childbirth or infancy. My students will try to find out. (Stannard presents an interesting discussion on the "underestimation of infant mortality"³⁷ as most infant deaths went unrecorded, and draws on writings of historians Kenneth A. Lockridge and John Demos.)

Activity VII. Use of Primary Sources to Learn about Everyday Life in Colonial New England

(Unit Objective #2. Investigate such primary sources as sermons and diaries of seventeenth and eighteenth century New England.) A further component of the student research project is the examination of such primary documents as the sermons of Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards. I have begun assembling photocopies of sermons given by these prominent ministers during the late seventeenth and early to mid-eighteenth centuries, and I find that they are fascinating in the view that they give of the colonial mind, or at least the thinking of the moral and spiritual leadership of Puritan New England. Students will have several of these sermons as reading assignments, and they will write brief summaries of the subject matter of the sermons and draw inferences about the worldviews or belief systems of the Puritans.

Cotton Mather's 1711 sermon, "A voice, from the place of silence, or, Seasonable Thoughts upon Mortality: a sermon occasioned by the raging of a mortal sickness in the colony of Connecticut, and the many deaths of our brethren there," is a remarkable example of how this primary source material can be used in teaching about worldviews. As this unit is expanded to include a consideration of epidemic disease in colonial New England, Mather's sermon will have additional use for teaching, as well. Mather wrote³⁸,

"There has been this winter, and since our snow began to fall, such a cry, raised by the King of

Terrors, walking his dismal rounds, thro' the Colony of Connecticut, that for us to be deaf unto the cry, would be a stupidity uncapable of an apology." And for me now to take a proper notice of it, will be, but to do the part of a steward in the House of our Glorious Lord."

With these words delivered in a 1711 sermon in Boston, the Reverend Cotton Mather "perform[ed] the duty of a faithful messenger" and offered his "Seasonable Thoughts upon Mortality" to his Christian brethren concerning the great loss of life in the Colony of Connecticut from an outbreak of measles. He promised that "some very useful, and awful truths, are going to be set before you." He continued,

"The admonitions of mortality cannot be too frequently, or too fervently, at any time inculcated; especially at a time, when at no great distance from us we see the Arrows of Death doing formidable executions [. . .] There is no subject of more consequence to be handled by a preacher. The lively thoughts of death, will have a singular tendency to make us Lively Saints; they tend exceedingly to keep alive all serious and practical religion. And how many objects have we on every side continually advising of us, that our death will quickly be upon us!"

In addition to the 1711 Cotton Mather sermon, my students will be working with Increase Mather's *Pray for the Rising Generation* (Boston, 1678), Cotton Mather's *The Thoughts of a Dying Man* (Boston, 1697), and Cotton Mather's *Awakening Thoughts on the Sleep of Death* (Boston, 1712). As this is a student research project involving the collection of useful documents, my students will come to more far more about these sermons than do I at present.

Annotated Teacher Bibliography.

Stannard, David E. 1977. *The Puritan Way of Death: a Study in Religion, Culture, and Social Change*. New York: Oxford University Press, 236pp. This is an important resource for understanding the New England Puritan worldview and notions of death and dying in colonial New England.

Tashjian, Dickran and Ann. 1974. *Memorials for Children of Change: the Art of Early New England Stonecarving*. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 309pp. "A broad, interdisciplinary study of the seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century gravestones of New England. Fascinating linking of gravestone carving with contemporaneous painting, furniture, and funeral sermons.

Student Reading List (Including Research Materials).

Barber, John Warner. 1841. *Historical Collections, being a General Collection of Interesting Facts, Traditions, Biographical Sketches, Anecdotes, &c., Relating to the History and Antiquities of Every Town in Massachusetts with General Descriptions*. Worcester, Massachusetts: Dorr, Howland & Co. Barnstable County is covered in pages 32-60.

Forbes, Harriette Merrifield. 1927. *Gravestones of Early New England and the Men who Made Them, 1653-1800*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 141pp. This is the first scholarly publication on gravestones and gravestone symbolism and everyone's inspiration to pursue studies of colonial New England gravestones.

George, Diana Hume, and Malcolm A. Nelson. 1983. *Epitaph and Icon: a Field Guide to the Old Burying Grounds of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket*. Orleans, Massachusetts: Parnassus Imprints, 128pp. An essential reference for the student of Cape Cod cemeteries and gravestones.

Ludwig, Allan I. 1966. *Graven images: New England Stonecarving and its Symbols, 1650-1815*. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 482pp. This publication initiated my interest in gravestones several years after its release. The single most useful source of information on gravestone iconography and New England carving styles in the context of the Puritan religion.

Mather, Cotton. 1712. *A Voice, from the Place of Silence, or, Seasonable Thoughts upon Mortality: a Sermon Occasioned by the Raging of a Mortal Sickness in the Colony of Connecticut, and the Many Deaths of our Brethren there*. (Delivered at Boston - lecture 24.d.11.m.1711, 12 [February 24, 1711/12]. Boston: T. Grimm(?), 56pp. An important Cotton Mather sermon on epidemic dying in the Colony of Connecticut, using the metaphor of melting snow to discuss "the lively thoughts of death," and "the sinful children of men."

Mayflower Society of Mayflower Descendants. 1933. *Vital Records of the Town of Truro, Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1849*. Boston: Mayflower Society of Mayflower Descendants, 480pp. Vital records are published for Yarmouth, Brewster, etc.

Pratt, Rev. Enoch. 1844. *A Comprehensive History, Ecclesiastical and Civil, of Eastham, Wellfleet and Orleans, County of Barnstable, Mass. From 1644 to 1844*. Yarmouth: W.S. Fisher and Co., c. 180pp. For research.

Smith, Jr., Leonard H. 1980. *Vital Records of Southeastern Massachusetts. Volume I. Eastham and Orleans*. (published serially in the *Mayflower Descendant* (a quarterly magazine of Pilgrim genealogy and history) 1901-1935). Clearwater, Florida: by the author. Additional Smith publications provide records other Cape Cod towns.

Classroom Materials.

An extensive color slide, color print, and rubbing collection of colonial New England gravestones from Cape Cod, Boston, and Connecticut. The color slides currently number 800 images, and they are being added to in the weeks and months ahead. Some copies of slides have been placed in the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute collection of educational materials for classroom use.

A photocopied collection of sermons by Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards from the late seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century, obtained from Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. These sermons serve as an important source of information on the Puritan worldview and the Puritan understanding of death and the afterlife.

Notes:

1A future outgrowth of this unit will be the study of epidemic disease in colonial America, a subject on which I did substantial reading during the weeks of the seminar but which I reserve for a later date to develop further.

2Broker, Stephen P. 1998. Technological change in a coastal New England village, 1790-1990: the Duck Creek Harbor site, Wellfleet, Massachusetts. Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Volume III, pages 54-78 (seminar, Art and Artifacts: the Cultural Meaning of Objects); Broker. 1995. Connecticut's freshwater wetlands. Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Volume V, pages 39-63 (seminar, The Geological Environment of Connecticut).

3The Macy course, introduced to the New Haven Public Schools with initial support from the Macy Foundation, uses Patient-Based Learning Modules developed by the University of Southern Illinois, School of Medicine

4See The College Board/Advanced Placement Program. 2001. Course Description, Environmental Science, May 2002, May 2003 (The Acorn Book). New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 45pp. (web address collegeboard.com/ap)

5Stannard, David E. 1977. *The Puritan Way of Death: a Study in Religion, Culture, and Social Change*. New York: Oxford University Press, 236pp. This is an important resource for understanding the New England Puritan worldview and notions of death and dying in colonial New England.

6Ibid., page 34. Stannard's footnote for this passage relates to the writing of historian Johan Huizinga.

7These beliefs or attributes of the Puritan way of thinking are drawn from throughout the various chapters of the Stannard book. See pages ix, 40, 42, 84, and 89 in particular.

8Bradford, William. 1952, 2002. *Of Plymouth Plantation, 1620-1647*, with introduction by Samuel Eliot Morison, page 68.

9Ibid., page 72.

10Ibid., page 447.

11Allan Ludwig, personal communication, 1972.

12John Demos, personal communication (2003 seminar).

13George, Diana Hume, and Malcolm A. Nelson. 1983. *Epitaph and Icon: a Field Guide to the Old Burying Grounds of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket*. Orleans, Massachusetts: Parnassus Imprints, 128pp. Page 42 for Shubael Taylor gravestone.

14Ludwig, *Graven Images*, page 313.

15Ibid, pages 124-133, with the quotation from page 133.

16I photographed this remarkable gravestone in the early 1970s, when it was held together with a bolt through the center. By the early 1990s, the stone lay in three pieces in the Sandwich Old Burying Ground, largely destroyed, and was again photographed.

17Ludwig, *Graven Images*, page 133.

18Ibid, page 88.

19Ibid, page 100.

20Ibid, page 197.

21Ibid, page 154; page 155; pages 155, 160.

22Ibid, pages 296-300; page 296.

23George and Nelson, *Epitaph and Icon* , page 23.

24Ludwig, *Graven Images* , page 155; page 160; page 168.

25George and Nelson, *Epitaph and Icon* , page 64; photograph on page 65.

26Ludwig, *Graven Images*, page 214; photograph of Mary Green stone of Newport, Rhode Island (d. 1715) on page 217.

27George and Nelson, *Epitaph and Icon* , page 50; photograph on page 50.

28Ludwig, *Graven Images* , page 234; photograph of Hurley and Walton stones on page 235.

29Stannard, *The Puritan Way of Death* , page 117.

30References taken from notes made some years ago at Beinecke Library.

31George and Nelson, *Epitaph and Icon* , photograph and description on page 27.

32Ken Collins, personal communication, Summer 2003.

33Barber, John Warner. 1841. Historical collections, being a general collection of interesting facts, traditions, biographical sketches, anecdotes, &tc., relating to the history and antiquities of every town in Massachusetts with general descriptions.

34George and Nelson, *Epitaph and Icon* , pages 25-26.

35Ibid., page 64.

36Mayflower Society of Mayflower Descendants. 1933. Vital records of the town of Truro, Massachusetts to the end of the year 1849. Boston: Mayflower Society of Mayflower Descendants, 480pp.; The Deacon Hezekiah Purinton stone is almost unique in Cape Cod cemeteries. The death's head lacks wings, instead being surrounded by an hourglass and crossbones. The only other early gravestone on the Cape with this crossbones and hourglass imagery in place of wings is the destroyed Abigail Otis stone of Sandwich (d. 1712).

37Stannard, *The Puritan Way of Death* , page 54.

38Mather, Cotton. 1712. A voice, from the place of silence, or, Seasonable Thoughts upon Mortality: a sermon occasioned by the raging of a mortal sickness in the colony of Connecticut, and the many deaths of our brethren there, page 2; page 2; page 3.

Appendix. Gravestone Symbolism/Cape Cod Gravestones:

Paired Gourds and Pumpkins, 1683-1719/20 (36 identified gravestones):

- The Dorothy Rawson stone, d. December 28, 1683, age 2 years (Barnstable)
- The Sarah Lewes stone, d. March 17, 1697/8, age 63 years (Barnstable)
- The Margaret Miller stone, d. October 26, 1698, age 60 years (Yarmouth)
- The Elizabeth Allyn stone, d. December 23, 1698, age 17 years (Barnstable)
- The Joanna Cotton stone, d. October 12, 1702, age 60 years (Sandwich)
- The Capt. Peter Adolph stone, d. March 16, 1702/3, age 48 years (Sandwich)
- The Mr. John Sunderlin stone, d. December 26, 1703, age 84 years (Brewster)
- The Margery Joyce stone, d. April 12, 1705, age 30 years (Yarmouth)
- The Thomas Mulford stone, d. June 8, 1706, age 66 years (Eastham)
- The Elisha Bourne stone, d. December 21, 1706, age 59 years (Sandwich)
- The Samuel Allyn stone, d. December 26, 1706, age 20(?) years (Barnstable)
- The Capt. Jonathan Sprrow stone, d. March 21, 1706/7, age 73 years (Eastham)
- The James Gorham stone, d. November 18, 1707, age 57 years (Barnstable)
- The Paul Sears stone, d. February 20, 1707/8, age 69 years (Yarmouth)
- The Thomas Sturges stone, d. June 30, 1708, age 48 years (Barnstable)
- The Jeremiah Hows stone, d. September 9, 1708, age 71 years (Dennis)
- The Mrs. Tamsen Sunderlin stone, d. June 16, 1709, age 83 (Brewster)
- The Anna Gray stone, d. January 15, 1709/10, age about 4 months (Brewster)
- The Deacon John Hall stone, d. October 24, 1710, age 73 years (Dennis)
- The Anthony Thacher stone, d. March 26, 1711, age 1 year (Yarmouth)
- The John Miller stone, d. June 9, 1711, age 79 years (Yarmouth)
- The James Paine stone, d. July 13, 1711, age 20 years (Barnstable)
- The Abigail Otis stone, d. November 3, 1712, age 11 weeks (Sandwich)
- The Deacon Samuel Freeman footstone, d. November 20, 1712, age 74 years (Eastham)
- The Thankful Higin stone, d. July 13, 1712, age 19 years (Eastham)
- The Thomas Baxter stone, d. June 22, 1713, age 59 years (Yarmouth)

- The Jonathan Freeman stone, d. April 27, 1714, age 35 years (Brewster)
- The Samuel Hedge stone, d. May 19, 1714, age 38 years (Eastham)
- The Bethiah Hinckley stone, d. April 2, 1715, age 42 years (Barnstable)
- The Elizabeth Pope stone, d. April 15, 1715, age 35 years (Sandwich)
- The Mary Hamlin stone, d. April 19, 1715, age 72 years (Barnstable)
- The Samuel Blake stone, d. April 29, 1715, age 24 years (Barnstable)
- The Edward Dillingham stone, d. May 27, 1715, age about 9 days (Dennis)
- The Mr. Daniel Parker stone, d. September 23, 1715, age 20 years (Barnstable)
- The Mr. Joseph Hall stone, d. May 31, 1716, age 73 years (Dennis)
- The Josiah Miller stone, d. December 13, 1717, age 4 years (Yarmouth)

Hourglasses, 1697/8-1717/8 (13 identified gravestones):

- The Sarah Lewes stone (reverse cradle-end), d. March 17, 1697/8, age years Barnstable)
- The Mrs. Joanna Cotton stone, d. October 12, 1702, age 60 years (Sandwich)
- The Capt. Jonathan Sprrow stone, d. March 21, 1706/7, age 73 years (Eastham)
- The Elisha Bourne stone, d. December 10, 1710, age 18 years (Sandwich)
- The Marcy Freeman stone, d. September 28, 1711, age 80 years (Eastham)
- The Abigail Otis stone, d. November 3, 1712, age 11 weeks (Sandwich)
- The Jonathan Freeman stone, d. April 27, 1714, age 35 years (Eastham)
- The Barnabas Lothrop Esqr. Stone, d. October 6, 1715, age ?? years (Barnstable)
- The Mrs. Anna Lewes stone, d. December 26, 1715, age ?? years (Barnstable)
- The Deacon Thomas Freeman stone, d. February 9, 1715/16, age 62 years (Brewster)
- The Jonathan Hopkins stone, d. January 28, 1716-7, age 23 years (Brewster)
- The Deacon Hezekiah Purington stone, d. January 8, 1717/8, age 41 years (North Truro)
- The Deacon Hezekiah Purington footstone, d. January 8, 1717/8, age 41 years (North Truro)

Crossbones and Crosses, 1703-1728 (13 identified gravestones):

- The Mr. John Sunderlin stone, d. December 26, 1703, age 84 years (Brewster)

- The Mrs. Tamsen Sunderlin stone, d. June 16, 1709, age 83 years (Brewster)
- The Marcy Freeman stone, d. September 28, 1711, age 80 years (Eastham)
- The Abigail Otis stone, d. November 3, 1712, age 11 weeks (Sandwich)
- The Jonathan Freeman stone, d. April 27, 1714, age 35 years (Eastham)
- The Mrs. Bethshua Bourne footstone, d. May 13, 1714, age 66 years (Sandwich)
- The Elizabeth Pope footstone, d. April 15, 1715, age 35 years (Sandwich)
- The Mrs. Mary Doane stone, d. July 2, 1716, age 17 years (Wellfleet)
- The Capt. Joshua Doane stone, d. November 29, 1716, age 20 years & 8 months (Wellfleet)
- The Deacon Hezekiah Purinton stone, d. January 8, 1717/8, age 41 years (North Truro)
- The Thomas Lewes footstone, d. March 19, 1718_, age 63 years (Eastham)
- The Shearjashub Bourn Esqr. stone, d. March 7, 1718/9, age 75 years (Sandwich)
- The Capt. Jonathan Bangs stone, d. November 19, 1728, age 88 years (Brewster)

Gadrooned Urns and/or Tulips, 1703-1714 (5 identified gravestones):

- The Walley Crocker stone, d. October 2, 1703, age 2 months & 2 days (Barnstable): tulips and central flower
- The Hannah Hall stone, d. August 23, 1710, age 44 years (Dennis): gadrooned urn with flowers, tulips
- The Ruth Chipman footstone, d. October 4, 1713, age 71 years (Sandwich): paired tulips
- The Bethshua Bourne stone, d. May 13, 1714, age 66 years (Sandwich): elaborate gadrooned urn with tulips and composites
- The Bethier Lothrop stone, d. October 26, 1714, age 28 years (Barnstable): gadrooned urn with tulips

Hearts, 1711; 1728-1742/3 (1 identified gravestone):

- The Marcy Freeman stone, d. September 28, 1711, age 80 years (Eastham)

Winged Soul Effigies, 1711-1718[19] (6 identified gravestones):

- The Marcy Freeman stone, d. September 28, 1711, age 80 years (Eastham)
- The Presiller Hall stone, d. March 30, 1712, age 68 years (Dennis)
- The Deacon Samuel Freeman footstone, d. November 20, 1712, age 74 years (Eastham)
- The Mrs. Mary Doane stone, d. July 2, 1716, age 17 years (Wellfleet)
- The Capt. Joshua Doane stone, d. November 29, 1716, age 20 years & 8 months (Wellfleet)

- The Thomas Lewes stone, d. March 19, 1718_, age 63 years (Eastham)

Soul Doves, 1698 (1 identified gravestone):

- The Batha Hall stone, d. February 1698, age 6 weeks (Dennis)

Deliberately Mutilated stones, 1684(?) (1 identified gravestone):

- The Thomas Clark stone, d. July 24, 1684(?), age 7 weeks and ? days (Sandwich)

Stones Signed By Carver (1 identified gravestone):

- The James Paine stone, d. July 13, 1711, age 20 years (Barnstable)

Old Style/New Style Dates (representative examples):

- The Sarah Lewes stone, d. March 17, 1697/8 (Barnstable)

- The Capt. Peter Adolph stone, d. March 16, 1702/3 (Sandwich)

- The Capt. Jonathan Sprow stone, d. March 21, 1706/7 (Eastham)

- The Paul Sears stone, d. February 20, 1707/8 (Yarmouth)

- The Mrs. Bethiah Paddack stone, d. March 8, 1707/8 (Brewster)

- The Anna Gray stone, d. January 15, 1709/10 (Brewster)

- The Mary Banges stone, d. January 26, 1711_ (Brewster)

- The Melethiah Lothrop stone, d. February 5, 1711/10/12 (Barnstable)

- The Mrs. Lydia Skiffe stone, d. March 17, 1713/4 (Sandwich)

- The Deacon Thomas Freeman stone, d. February 9, 1715/16 (Brewster)

- The Jonathan Hopkins stone, d. January 28, 1716/17 (Brewster)

- The Thomas Freeman stone, d. March 22, 1716/17 (Brewster)

- The James Sturges stone, d. January 3, 1717/8 (Yarmouth)

- The Deacon Hezekiah Purinton stone, d. January 8, 1717/8 (North Truro)

- The Jonathan Halet stone, d. January 12, 1717/ (Yarmouth)

- The Simon Crosby stone, d. January 19, 1717/18 (Brewster)

- The Remember Jennings stone, d. January 23, 1717/18 (Sandwich)

- The Anna Paddack stone, January 31, 1717_ (Dennis)

- The Mr. Benjamin Parker stone, d. February 4, 1717/8 (Yarmouth)
- The Mr. Robert Astinie stone, d. February 17, 1717/18 (Brewster)
- The Capt. John Paddack stone, d. February 18, 1717/18 (Dennis)
- The Mr. Zachariah Paddack stone, d. April 8, 1717/18 [!!!] (Dennis)
- The Patience Bacon stone, d. January 13, 1718_ (Barnstable)
- The Sarah Paine stone, d. February 11, 1718/19 (North Truro)
- The Lieut. Edmond Freeman stone, d. February 11, 1718/9 (Eastham)
- The Shearjashub Bourn Esqr. stone, d. March 7, 1718/9 (Sandwich)
- The Thomas Lewes stone, d. March 19, 1718_ (Eastham)
- The Deacon Job Crocker stone, d. March 20, 1718/19 (Barnstable)
- The Infant Hallet stone, d. January 25, 1719_ (Yarmouth)
- The Mrs, Sarah Hallet stone, d. January 31, 1719/20 (Yarmouth) (a number of gravestones from the period 1720-1747, then . . .)
- The Mr. John Miller stone, d. January 31, 1747/8 (Yarmouth)
- The Joseph Lothrop Esqr. stone, d. February 11, 1747_ (Barnstable)
- The Mr. Nathaniel Harding Junior stone, d. March 1, 1747/8 (North Truro)
- The Samuel Smith stone, d. February 21, 1748_ (Wellfleet)
- The Susanna Paine stone, d. March 8, 1748/9 (North Truro)
- The Mrs. Hannah Hallet stone, d. February 6, 1749/50 (Yarmouth)

Fieldstone Gravestones, 1713-1736 (4 representative inscribed examples):

- The Benjamin Paine stone, d. 1713 (Eastham)
- The Bennet Paine stone, d. May 30, 1716, age 45 years (Eastham)
- The Barn[abas] Fre[e]m[an] stone, d. 1736 (Eastham)
- The Marcy Fre[e]man stone, d. 1736 (Eastham)

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