

Waterhouse Symbolism e-newsletter #4  
October 1, 2006

- Angels
- Musical Instrument (Harp)
- Crown with a cross, star, and triangle

Angels have always been important in symbolism because they are thought as protectors or guardians of the soul. In some cases, they are responsible for assisting with the decision that the person buried near the angel goes to heaven.



This angel is found at Oak Hill Cemetery in Birmingham. Note that the angel is standing on rocks which mean that the person who it is memorializing had a life that was built on a firm foundation. Also, notice that the angel is looking up to heaven, where the person's soul is ascending. He is also dressed in a Greek classical robe which is a symbol of mourning or grief. He is holding a Crusaders' cross which is the cross of the English Anglican Church. During the Crusades (1095-1669), English soldiers who died in battle could be identified by this cross on their uniform. This was the precursor to our modern day military dog tags.



This angel is in Maple Hill in Helena, Arkansas. Notice the harp she has in her arm. The harp is a symbol of heaven or life after death. Also, notice that the harp has no strings, which means that the person's life it is memorializing, has stopped playing here on earth, but will have eternity. Seeing musical instruments in Victorian Cemeteries is quite common and point towards the ethereal instruments of heaven. You can't see it but she is holding olive tree branch which is a symbol of peace. It is also a symbol of fruitfulness, purification, strength, and victory. Notice the different in the wings between the two angels. The one in Oak Hill is a child so his wings are not fully grown like

the angel in Maple Hill.



This is a top part of a grave marker in Riverbank Cemetery in Hantsport, Nova Scotia and is for Arthur W. Campbell who died at the age of 43 in 1869. At the bottom is the star which is the single star known as the star of the east which led the wise men to Bethlehem and baby Jesus. They are symbols of divine guidance. Five points of a star

symbolizes heaven and six points like this one, symbolizes creation.

The triangle in the middle of the star is a single figure formed of three parts, and is used as the symbol of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Ghost.) The star is made of two triangles. Once again, there are three triangles which symbolize the Trinity.

At the top is the cross with a crown which is a sovereignty of the Lord. When the crown is combined with a cross, the crown means victory and the cross means Christianity.