

SYMBOLS OF SUMMER



W A T E R H O U S E S Y M B O L I S M N E W S L E T T E R # 7 4

SPECIAL SYMBOLS

- Hydrangea conveys enduring grace and beauty
- Fern conveys solitary humility and frankness
- Hammer conveys power and immortality
- Tree of life conveys birth, life and death
- Olive oil conveys purity and fortitude

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Every year during the summer, there is usually one flower or plant that outshines the others. This year, on the Cape, it is the Hydrangea.

First discovered in Japan, the name hydrangea comes from the Greek "hydor," meaning water, and "angos," meaning jar or vessel. This roughly translates to "water barrel," referring to the hydrangea's need for plenty of water and its cup-shaped flower. With its wooden stems and lacy, star-shaped flowers packed closely together in a pompom, the hydrangea's color ranges from white to blue to pink and purple, determined by the acidity level of the soil.

There remains some debate over the hydrangea's symbolism – with some connecting it to vanity and boastfulness (perhaps reflecting its abun-

The fern also seems to be at it's peak during summer. It conveys solitary humility, frankness, sincerity, endurance, confidence, fascination and Christ. Fern leaf conveys victory over death.

Also in the photo you see a

HYDRANGEA

dance of petals and lavish, rounded shape) and others suggesting that a bouquet of hydrangea expresses the giver's gratefulness for the recipient's understanding. Still others suggest it represents anything that's sincerely heartfelt. Despite this variation in flower meaning, there appears to be an overwhelming consensus that this 4th wedding anniversary flower possesses enduring grace and beauty.

The flower conveys transitoriness, beauty, the soul, the work of the sun, festivity, joy, the cycle of life, birth, death, regeneration, virtue, purity, goodness, mystery, victory, temptation, deceit, love (especially female), woman, balance, justice, the finest product and evanescence of life.



Hydrangea, Windfall House, Sandwich, MA

FERN

candle which conveys life, especially that of an individual, hope, learning, festivity, the external soul, charm against evil spirit, and Christ as the light of the world. Two candles convey the dual nature of Christ; three candles convey the Trinity; and five candles convey the five wounds of Christ.



Ferns, Windfall House Sandwich, MA

REDISCOVERY OF AN OLD FRIEND

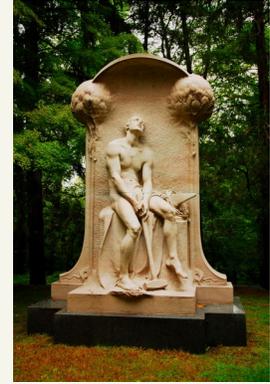
In the process of putting together the symbols for the Stone in America article, I came across the image to the right at Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Tarrytown, NY.

The work is by Karl Theodore Francis Bittner (1867-1915), a well-known sculptor who did the doors and tympanum for Trinity Church in New York City, Thomas Jefferson sculpture, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, and Louisiana Purchase Group, St. Louis, MO.

This work to the right was done to memorialize Henry Villard (1833-1900) who was a journalist, civil correspondent and made a fortune after the civil war brokering German investments in American railroads. On his marker, it says "died at Thorwood, Dobbs Ferry on Hudson, November 12th, 1900 in view of this spot". Symbols related to this sculpture include the tree of life which conveys birth, life and death; youth which conveys innocence and the future; the anvil which conveys the

brain, the intellect, the force that created the universe, and the primal furnace; and the hammer which conveys power, destruction, immortality, divine vengeance and physical power and strength.

Bittner was born December 6, 1867 in Vienna and died April 9, 1915 in New York. He was an Austrian-born United States sculptor best known for his architectural sculpture, memorials and residential work. Notice the photo was taken in the summer.



Henry Villard Grave Monument, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Tarrytown, NY

OLIVE OIL

The summer night is like a perfection of thought.

~Wallace Stevens

One of the major parts of summer salads is olive oil and the writing on this can reads "when eight year-old Pietro Capatriti gave his only coat to a poor man, the boy had no way of knowing he had just changed his family's destiny. That winter, the young boy layered his shirts one on top of the other to keep warm. In the spring, the poor man called on Pietro to thank him for his kindness. He had a gift

for the boy: a young sapling—the Capatriti family's very first olive tree. "

"Pietro took great pride in his olive tree. Soon, he planted another tree and then another...Working together, the family mastered the art of producing olive oil."

"For centuries, Italians have treasured olive oil as a symbol of purity, fortitude and peace."



EMILY'S GATE

Cathy Vogel from Decatur Cemetery, Decatur, Georgia sent me a photo of this recently restored gate.

The grave is that of Miss Emily E. Pittman who died in 1852 at the age of 21. She was the step-daughter of Dr. Peter F. Hoyle, a prominent physician and civic leader in

Decatur. He owned the farm where Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Georgia is situated today.

The box tomb was from the Glendinning Marble Yard in Augusta (stamped). The cemetery has no written records about its installation due to

lack of information from that period.

There are still lots of mysteries. The ironwork looks too late to date to 1852. Also, the Battle of Decatur took place in and around the cemetery in 1864. How did the gate survive if it was in place?



CELTIC CROSS

Wynn Montgomery sent me this wonderful picture of a Celtic cross from Chippiannock Cemetery in Rock Island, IL. It was sculpted by the father of Alexander Calder and is filled with symbolism, much of it nautical and religious. It is a cenotaph honoring William Harte, a Civil War naval officer killed in battle.

If you would like to see details of this incredible marker, please let me know.

One side has the image of an old man which conveys wisdom, thought and

learning. At the top of the cross is a nude woman which conveys fertility and mother earth. Also on the cross is a full mast ship which conveys consciousness, hope and confidence. On the other side of the cross is the angel Gabriel blowing his horn which conveys protection, supreme guidance and second coming. Next to him in each of the corners is the wine goblet which conveys the blood of Christ and in the other corner, the anchor which conveys hope.



UNUSUAL GRAVEMARKER TYPE

Gale Wall, on her blog, <http://digitalcemetery-walk.blogspot.com/>, had Debbie Reed send her the following query: "this spring while visiting a rural cemetery in Greenford, OH, my husband and I happened upon a very strange marker. It looks to be some type of vessel to hold remains but we had never seen one quite like this. Has anyone seen anything like this marker before?"



Rural Cemetery, Geeenford, OH

Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability.

~Sam Keen

ANOTHER UNUSUAL GRAVEMARKER TYPE

While getting ready for my presentation at the Cataumet School House, I came across these gravestones at the Cataumet Cemetery, Cataumet, MA. At the top of one is an urn which conveys anointing thy soul because the Greeks believed in cremation and would put ashes in an urn and pour an expensive olive oil into the urn to anoint the soul.

Has anyone seen this marker before?



Cautamet Cemetery, Cataumet, MA

**What are your ideas
for future newsletters?**



**WATERHOUSE
SYMBOLISM
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**The mission of Waterhouse Symbolism is to
research and document symbols locally, regionally,
nationally and internationally.**



NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Another great summer on the Cape and I have been exploring many Cape Cod historic cemeteries looking for symbols. I actually am enjoying putting together a powerpoint presentation "Lost Language or Gravestone Symbols in Cape Cod Cemeteries". Just the other day I was exploring a cemetery in Cataumet and found a couple pristine zinc markers.

Take care,
Richard Waterhouse

S U M M E R R E A D I N G

As a child, I use to spend summers in Weekapaug, Rhode Island at my grandparents house which is located very close to Westerly.

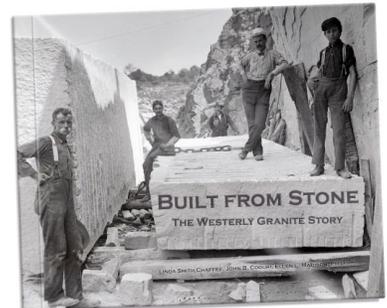
My grandfather and grandmother, who were great pursuers of both art and history, never shared with me the rich history of the granite industry in Westerly.

The book "Built from Stone: The Westerly Granite Stone" does a beautiful job explaining the importance of granite and how Westerly monument makers created markers and monuments for cemeteries around the world.

The 1880-1900: *The Heyday part* of the book starts out by stating that "three factors serendipitously coalesced during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century to create a demand for fine monuments. First, the

park-like cemeteries had been growing for nearly fifty years. A second driving force was the desire to commemorate the heroes of the of the Civil War. The third factor was the value that society placed on elaborate monuments to commemorate the lives of famous men or of deceased loved ones."

Several monuments, mausoleums and buildings that I have seen and outlined in this fascinating book are: 10th Wisconsin Infantry monument in Chickamauga National Military Park, Fort Oglethorpe, GA sculpted by Edward L. Pausch (1856-1931); 16th US Infantry Monument at Chickamauga National Military Park, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia; and the Richards Mausoleum, Oakland Cemetery, Atlanta, Georgia;



"Built from Stone: The Westerly Granite Industry" can be purchased at <http://builtfromstone.com/>.