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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Tree of Life stands as the union between heaven, earth and water
- Ivy conveys immortality and fidelity
- Butterflies are known as wandering spirits
- Sunrise conveys resurrection

TREE OF LIFE

One part of fall is trees because they begin their slow process of losing their bright and colorful foliage of leaves. This issue is dedicated to trees both deciduous and evergreen.

The image to the right spotlights the Tree of Life. It conveys vigor, productiveness, diffused knowledge and progressiveness. The tree of life is the point of union between heaven, earth and water. Notice in the back right of the image is the gates of heaven with the long staircase leading us to the promised land. Also, notice the two weeping willows (mourning or grief) above the left angel. Notice the other angel holds a palm branch (spiritual victory over death). The bird is a dove (Holy Spirit). Globes in the tree convey eternity.



TREE OF DEATH (GREENWOOD CEMETERY, ATL)

The fallen tree broken in half rests against each other on the grave of Bernie B. Wald (1900-1934) and conveys death. It also conveys that the person's life was cut short before he reached his prime which is the case here since Mr. Wald died at the age of 34. Sometimes, stumps or tree trunk s are

markers for the Order of Woodmen, but in most cases, the symbol of the Woodmen is on the stump. It is not on this one. Notice at the base, we see, a fern (humility, frankness, and sincerity), a Calla Lilly (majesty and marriage), and Ivy (immortality and fidelity). Notice that there are two ivy leaves.



OAK TREE AT MOUNT WARREN CEMETERY, DEER ISLE, ME

This broken oak tree is from Mount Warren Cemetery in Deer Island, Maine. The grave marker is for Captain William Warren who died September 28, 1850 at the age of 39 years, 3 months & 11 days.

It can mean mortality versus immortality because the top of the tree will die but the bottom of the tree will live. Also, notice on the tree there are a couple of acorns which is a symbol of resurrection.

Even though the broken branch will die, the acorns

will fall to the ground and will become new seedlings and eventually new trees.

In Waterhouse Symbolism Newsletter #2, I showed a grave stone Weeping Willow in Oakland Cemetery's Oldest Jewish section and one branch of the weeping willow had snapped which is very similar to this image.

Mount Warren Cemetery used to be a church cemetery, but the church located next door has been deconsecrated in recent years and is now a private residence.



PINE TREES (1954) & TREES ON FIRE (1988), DAVID C. DRISKEL

Pine trees, evergreen in nature, stand for longevity and immortality. Trees are symbolized in many different cultures including China. For example, the Chinese felt that longevity was one of the greatest of all human blessings. The works on the right show pine trees being affected by two kinds of light. For example, the one on the right is being affected by either the light of sunrise or sunset. Sunrise conveys resur-

rection and sunset conveys death. The one on the far right is affected by the light of fire which conveys death and destruction. Even though these two works were painted almost thirty-five years apart, we see the lyricism of the stroke work and the way the branches of the trees seem to move.



VINCENT VAN GOGH'S WHEAT FIELD WITH CYPRESS TREES (1889)

Another artist who captures the lyricism of the leaves in a tree is Vincent Van Gogh. The cypress tree to the Irish and the Near and Middle East were very sacred. The Irish used its resin as embalming fluid because of its connection with longevity. The Near and Middle East Societies used it in their statuary and

sacred architecture. The cypress was also connected to the tree of life and it is seen growing in Victorian cemeteries for that reason.

Vincent Van Gogh painted this the year before he died in 1890. Notice the relationship between the mountains and the cypress trees.



BUTTERFLY, CHRYSALIS, FLAME AND LEAF, CASTINE CEMETERY, MAINE

A symbol of resurrection, the grouping of a leaf, chrysalis, butterfly and flame is seen in cemeteries throughout the world. Immortality versus mortality is examined because the chrysalis is the symbol of earthly death and the butterfly is a symbol of heavenly life.

A person's life follows the same pattern as the caterpillar and butterfly. The chrysalis, here on the leaf, stands for earthly or mortal life. Its metamorphosis, or

resurrection as a butterfly flying heavenwards suggests the immortality of the soul.

Butterflies, in Greek Civilization, are known as wandering spirits and can indicate a visitor or the premonition of death. In classical Rome, the soul was believed to leave the body through the mouth in the shape of a butterfly.

The flame conveys one's time here on earth and when extinguished, his soul will go to heaven.



BUTTERFLY, OAK LEAF AND CHRYSALIS(1860), OAKLAND CEMETERY, ATL

Also, the symbol of the butterfly fluttering among the flowers represents the soul of the warrior fallen on a battlefield to the Aztecs. This marker consists of three items (chrysalis, butterfly and oak leaf), which is the symbol of the Trinity (Father, Son & Holy Ghost).

To the ancient Greeks, the Celts, and many other cultures, the oak leaf represents bravery, eternity, endurance, honor, hospitality, humanity, liberty, regeneration, and strength.

Another interpretation of the oak leaf is that life here on earth must end, but if it has been a life of integrity, the person may meet death with a calm courage according to the Romans. The oak leaf is also used as a military insignia in Germany and the United States.

If you are keeping up with my newsletters, we visited this marker in Issue 13. The reason I am showing it to you again is because I want to show you the similarities and differences of the two.



PORTRAYAL OF THE MIGHTY OAK AND LEAVES

Because of the powerful symbol of the mighty oak (longevity and immortality) and the oak leaf itself (bravery, eternity, endurance, honor, hospitality, humanity, liberty, regeneration, and strength), you see it portrayed different ways in funerary art. Sometimes, the leaf can be all by itself as seen by the monument

on the right and as two branches as seen by the monument on the far right.

Possibly one of the reasons that you see it in the names of many Southeastern Cemeteries (Oakland Cemetery and Oak Hill Cemetery) is because of the longevity of the tree. Like a cemetery, it will last a long time.



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SYMBOLS THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES

ANOTHER MYSTERY SOLVED

One of the fascinating parts of doing this newsletter is when someone emails me a gravestone marker to find out the meaning. Chris Prince emailed me the gravestone to the right which resides in Briggs Cemetery, Union County, SC.

Chris thought the bottom part of the stone was Latin and the top part of the stone was German. During my Maine journey, I visited a wonderful German Protestant Cemetery in Waldoboro. I suggested to Chris that he contact the President of The

Maine Old Cemetery Association, Cheryl W. Patten. She sent it out her executive committee and Enola Couture responded back after her son James discovered the meaning of it. He ran through some German fonts and said it closely matched the "Square Text" font in the Fraktur family. Changing the spaces, he found JOANNIS ATKINSON. Cheryl sent the information back to Chris and he said that it closely matched the name John Atkinson whom he knew lived in the area.



NOTES FROM THE EDITOR



Can you guess what next month's theme will be? Halloween & Legends – if you have suggestions of images, let me know.

As many of you know, I do a symbolism tour of Oakland Cemetery. The next one is September 6. The cost is only \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children and senior citizens. All proceeds go to Historic Oakland Foundation for their preservation efforts.

Take care,

Richard Waterhouse