

CEMETERY TERMS AND SYMBOLS
ANIMALS, PLANTS, TRADES, MISC SYMBOLS, INITIALS, ABBREVIATIONS

Compiled by Roy Lindsey
January 2015

Animals:

Birds - eternal life or resurrection
Butterfly - short life
Dog - good master
Dove - peace & eternal life
Lamb - innocence
Lion - courage
Rooster - awakening, resurrection

Plants:

Fruits - plenty, fruits of life
Ivy - friendship, immortality
Laurel - accomplishment, heroism
Lily - innocence, purity
Morning Glory - beginning of life
Oak Leaves and Acorn - power, victory
Palm Branch - victory, rejoicing
Poppy - eternal sleep
Roses - completion and the brevity of earthly existence
Rose (full bloom) - prime of life
Rosemary - remembrance
Thistles - remembrance, Scottish descent
Tree - life
Tree Trunk - short life
Tree Sapling - life everlasting
Tree Stump stone in Cemetery - Woodmen of the World
Wheat - divine harvest
Weeping Willow - grief

Trade Symbols

Barber - Bowl (for bleeding) & Razor
Butcher - an axe, steel knife and cleaver
Farmer - Coulter (type of hoe), flail (threshing implement), swingletree

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(rod for beating flax), stalk of corn
Gardener - rake & spade
Mason - wedge & level
Mariner - anchor, sextant
Merchant - scales, sign
Minister - Bible
Shoemaker - awl, knife, nippers
Smith - crown, hammer & anvil
Teacher - open book
Weaver - loom, shuttle & stretchers
Wood Wright - wooden objects they made

Misc. Symbols:

3 Books - Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants
3 Rings - the Oddfellows, friendship, love and truth
Angel - guardian, spirituality
Bible - hristian
Chalice - Sacraments
Cherub - innocence
Crescent - Goddess, Muslim religion
Cross - Christian, resurrection
Crown - glory of life after death
Flame / Light - to be immortal
Garland / Wreath - glory, Saintliness
Harp - Praise to the God
Heart - Catholic, love, suffering of Christ
Hearts (2) - marriage
Horns - wisdom, rebirth
Menorah - Judaism
Ring (broken) - family circle has been severed
Rod / Staff - comfort
Star - spirit that shines
Star of David - Judaism
Sun - renewed life
Swords Crossed - high Military rank

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Trumpeters - Harbingers of the Resurrection
Urn - immortality, remembrance

Initials:

a.a.s. - died in the year of his/her age (56 years died in 1856)
d.s.p. - died without issue
d.s.p.l. - died without legitimate issue
d.s.p.m.s. - died without surviving male issue
d.s.p.s - died without surviving issue
d.unm - died unmarried
d.v.p. - died in the lifetime of his father
d.v.m. - died in the lifetime of his mother
Et al - and others
F.L.T. - friendship, love and truth
Inst - present month
Liber - book or volume
Nepos - grandson
Nunc Nun - an oral will, written by a witness
Ob - he/she died
Rel. or Relict - widow or widower
Res. or Residue - widow or widower
Sic - exact copy as written
Testees - witnesses
Ult - late
Ux or vs - wife
Viz - namely

Words or abbreviations:

Cemetery – sleeping place
D.A.R. - Daughters of the American Revolution
Epitaph - an inscription on a grave stone
g.s. - gravestone
h.s.e. (hic situs or sepultus est) - here is buried
Obelisk – immortality

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s.a. (sine anno) - without year

S.A.R. - Sons of the American Revolution

S.C.V. - Sons of the Confederate Veterans

s.l.a.n. (sine loco, anno vel nomine) - without place, year, or name

s.l.et a. (sine loco et anno) - without place and year.

S.U.V. - Sons of Union Veterans

S.V. - Sons of Veterans

Uxor - wife

V.R. - vital records

wid. - widow

widr. - widower

Note: Compiled from a variety of online sources.