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Abstract

Stonecutting in Adams county followed all the general developmental trends and stages exhibited by the craft in other parts of Pennsylvania. Adams county, nonetheless, evolved its unique approach to gravestone art, for rural early American stonecutters were by and large highly unique artistic individuals.

The earliest prominent stonecutters maintained high artistic standards as well as exhibiting a high degree of creativity. These were craftsmen of the Scots-Irish Bigham family of Marsh Creek and the Pennsylvania-German Meals family, centered at Bender's Cemetery, Butler township. A third outstanding Adams county stonecutter was the predecessor of Barnet Hildebrand of East Berlin. This artist carved both in German script and in English and possessed a fine flowing style with an unusual German eye for proportion and spacing. In 1805, most Adams county residents were still being buried with rough red fieldstone to mark head and foot. Yet by 1805, members of these three prominent stonecutting groups had established a standard for Adams county stone-crafting excellence. Their influence continued to shape the character of the county's gravestones until granite became the medium of choice. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Adams County Historical Society, ACHS, Adams County, Pennsylvania History, Cemetery, Gravestone, Stone-cutting, Wheelwright

Adams County Grave-stonecutters, 1770-1918

by Nancy DeLong

Overview

Stonecutting in Adams county followed all the general developmental trends and stages exhibited by the craft in other parts of Pennsylvania. Adams county, nonetheless, evolved its unique approach to gravestone art, for rural early American stonecutters were by and large highly unique artistic individuals.

The earliest prominent stonecutters maintained high artistic standards as well as exhibiting a high degree of creativity. These were craftsmen of the Scots-Irish Bigham family of Marsh Creek and the Pennsylvania-German Meals family, centered at Bender's Cemetery, Butler township. A third outstanding Adams county stonecutter was the predecessor of Barnet Hildebrand of East Berlin. This artist carved both in German script and in English and possessed a fine flowing style with an unusual German eye for proportion and spacing. In 1805, most Adams county residents were still being buried with rough red fieldstone to mark head and foot. Yet by 1805, members of these three prominent stonecutting groups had established a standard for Adams county stone-craving excellence. Their influence continued to shape the character of the county's gravestones until granite became the medium of choice.

Researching the earliest stonecutting is made difficult by the nature of the craft. In the colonial and federal periods, this rural area we now call Adams county lacked sufficient affluence to support full-time stonecutter craftsmen. Stonecutting was work that supplemented the family livelihood; it was not essential. In frontier times those who knew how to carve in stone presumably shared their knowledge with younger men of their family or community. They also imparted a battery of other skills that might become increasingly useful as the new country evolved. Men who were good with their hands were valued for what they could accomplish, and most needed to be able to "turn their hand" to more than one sort of task. Frontier mentality lasted longest in rural areas such as Adams county. For census and tax purposes, various stonecutters in the area listed their occupations as "stonecutter and farmer," "wheelwright," and later "chair-maker," "engraver," and

“machinist.” There is some indication that “potter” and/or “tanner” should be added to the list. Second-generation carvers also did not pursue stonecutting for unbroken periods of time. While exhibiting less skill than first-generation carvers, the second-generation stonecutters seemed to create more unique or adventurous designs and stone treatments. Peter Brieghner, who secured carving work from both English-speaking and German-speaking customers before 1810, illustrates this second-generation approach.

The earliest German stonecutters in the county had the refined, three-dimensional carving skills that had been necessary in the old country. The distribution of their beautiful stones proves residence close to Bender’s Church in today’s Butler township. This area was home to the Meals family, a group most strongly identified with the craft from 1820 to 1954. Although there is no direct proof that Samuel and Gabriel Meals (active stonecutters, c. 1820) learned to carve from older members of their own family, commonly employed stylistic features offer indirect evidence that they did so.¹

In addition to making use of their more intense training backgrounds, the first-generation carvers explored new creative ideas allowed by the artistic freedom in frontier America. An early Meals family stonecutter thrice explored carving the full form of an angel complete with winged feet (see figure 1). The Scots-Irish Samuel Bigham, who relocated in North Carolina after 1776, also personified this sort of early creativity with his beautiful branches of leaves, his nature-art, and the unique and puzzling contents of the shields in his coats-of-arms.

Adams county estate papers leave scant information as to who carved which gravestones. Many persons buried under remarkable grave markers did not leave an estate account. Many with complete estate accounts appear to have been buried with no grave markers. Of those few who had both, perhaps one in twenty estate accounts will list a gravestone expense and indicate money paid out to the stonecutter. Few wills specify that gravestones be erected. Apparently, there was never a standard for including a gravestone as part of the business of settling an estate.

In common with many other fledgling businessmen, Charles Ramsey was no doubt inspired by the creation of the new county called Adams in 1800. In 1807, Charles Ramsey attempted to make a living in Gettysburg by only carving gravestones. His business venture last-

ed less than two years. Young Charles Lafferty declared stonecutting his occupation for only one year, 1826. In 1827, Charles suffered the sheriff's sale of his belongings. After starting out in carving, Daniel Menges also lost his first modest property in an 1833 sheriff's sale. It did not pay to pin all one's hopes on stonecutting even if that was what one did best. Before 1840, wise individuals who could carve gravestones did so only when such work was practical. They seem to have valued their ability to carve in varying degrees. Many locals who could carve adeptly apparently did so infrequently. Additionally, several carvers of modest skill carved many, many stones.

Since the 1770s when Samuel Bigham of the Marsh Creek settlement produced gravestones for residents of Abbottstown and Straban townships, folks in the area have used the purchase of gravestones to establish and reestablish communal ties. On the basis of need, many area residents recognized that they must associate with others not of their own cultural heritage or not of their own immediate geographic area. Purchasing gravestones provided a means for connecting with other social groups. Often, associations created or strengthened were forged among people who lived close to one another and were of the same cultural heritage and economic class, yet this was never exclusively the case. Economic, emotional, or social needs were met as stonecutting contracts were dispersed. Stonecutting transcended the partisan and political rivalries that divided the area along cultural lines, for it touched the great equalizer – death. In addition, all recognized that the worth of a gravestone was significant. A medium-sized stone could equal the cost of a cow or horse. The custom of networking socially through dispersing stonecutting contracts became a part of Adams county's cultural fabric. Prior to 1918, it was rare for an established local family exclusively to use the same stonecutter (or stonecutting family) without ever employing the competition.

The choice of stonecutters before 1840 seems to have depended only indirectly upon the artistic skill of the carvers available. Carvers were basically free to create artistic designs at their own discretion. Customers sporadically supplied epitaphs, but early decorative effects appear to have been employed mainly at the suggestion of the stonecutter. The stonecutter probably used an evolving succession of pleasing designs to impress viewers with the quality of his work and thus invite future commissions.

The most unique stone treatments and trends in Adams county

are found before 1840. By 1840, when the use of marble superseded the use of slate and sandstone, stencil patterned lettering and art replaced the freely chiseled inscriptions and art of previous decades. Stonecutters began to sign many of their works. Daniel Menges, however, prolonged the earlier folk-art approach to stonecutting well into the 1860s, producing many of Adams county's most interesting marble monuments.

Throughout Adams county's Victorian period the spacing of the stencil-style letters on gravestones remained individualistic. The work of Menges, the Meals and Spangler families, and others may be identified in many cases where the stones are unsigned simply on the basis of the spacing of the lettering. Each of the later "marble works" businesses had favorite designs, with some favorite design features remaining in use for decades.² In contrast, there was a great variety of shifting gravestone styles and price ranges from which the customer could choose. One could even order gravestones from Sears and Roebuck. The customer's exposure to all this Victorian variety is still reflected in the peculiar character of the various Adams county "grave-stone communities." Stonecutter August Diehl, who died in the 1870s, owned a Townsend's Design Book worth \$3.50 from which apparently customers could select standard patterns to personalize in any variety of ways. Yet Isaac Group of Tyrone township drew his own design for the gravestone he had William Miller of Gettysburg carve for his daughter's grave. Standardization was not the rule during the county's Victorian times, yet it was clearly possible to support oneself by carving marble gravestones by the 1850s and 1860s.

By the 1870s stonecutting "monument works" had sprung up in many of the smallest communities. These communities included McSherrystown, East Berlin, York Springs, and Arendtsville. Reports indicate that communities compared the skills of local stonecutters with the skills displayed by other monument works in Gettysburg, Dillsburg, Carlisle, or even Baltimore.³ However, so long as the stonecutter used soft marble to make gravemarkers, there remained an outlet for personal creativity in Adams county gravestone design. The much harder granite medium, introduced into the county about 1918, required new tools and more refined techniques. Granite signaled the true standardization of the craft and reduced the number of small businessmen who could afford to stay employed at stonecutting.

* * * *

The Bigham Family

One segment of the Scots-Irish Bigham family settled in the Marsh Creek area in 1749. Among the group was a Samuel Bigham, Jr., who produced gravestones here between 1770 and 1776. There were several "Samuel Bigham" stonecutters. It seems that the Bigham family had gained experience at carving gravestones even before their journey from Ireland to America. In Ireland carvers satisfied strict standards in creating proper full coat-of-arms designs on each gravestone. In America, the stonecutter was free to experiment and explore any themes that had meaning to the community group.⁴ This freedom of expression, added to the obvious worldly knowledge and skill of Samuel Bigham, resulted in a brief burst of beautiful Adams county art worked in black slate.

The Bighams could procure the finest quality of slate available in the colonies. In addition, Samuel Bigham, Jr., designed and executed works as skillfully as the finest colonial craftsmen of his time.⁵ His signature "s.b." is used on the Abraham Agnew stone, Lower Marsh Creek, Highland township.

Samuel Bigham, Jr., had great impact upon the local people of Adams county. For instance, he carved the lion-bearing gravestone that John Abbott erected for his son after the boy's sensational suicide. Abbott and Bigham were both of English speaking families, but Bigham was Presbyterian and Abbott was Anglican. A contract such as this one, forged across sectarian lines, testifies to the respect Abbott held for Bigham's work.

Samuel Bigham, Jr., also had a great impact on local stonecutters. After the untimely deaths of two Straban township youth, Bigham executed a coat-of-arms containing a life-like goat, a rope, and a three-sectioned collar with three separate buckles. The meaning of much of Bigham's symbolism is unclear today, yet decorative features of his work (the ropes and veined leaves in his carvings) directly influenced the style of other local Scots-Irish and even German stonecutters (for example, the work of Peter Brieghner below, who executed the stone of John Abbott, Sr., in English).

Around 1776, the Bigham family relocated in North Carolina. There they continued to carve and evolve intense artistic stone-bound expressions of the freedom their new community valued. From patri-

otic eagles and stars to sailing ships (yet always featuring the Scottish dove of promise), the Bigham carvings in total form a moving reference to the emerging values of the common American before 1800s.⁶

At Lower Marsh Creek Presbyterian Cemetery in Highland township, stands the slate gravestone of Jean Brownfield (d. 1760) and her little sister Elizabeth (d. 1776; see figure 2). Both girls attained the age of five years. Mr. Bigham choose to portray a child-angel on the top of this gravestone. Not a part of the Scots-Irish tradition of gravestone symbolism, the little effigy reflects the fashions of big-city coastal gravestone art. The stone would have been at home in Boston or Philadelphia. Instead, it was placed in a verdant country green. The frontier people doubtless beheld it wonderingly, if they could indeed save a moment for reflection from the urgent concerns of their daily lives.

Another intriguing example of Bigham art may still be found at Black's Cemetery, west of Gettysburg. Here stands the unique gravestone of James Innis, a land-owner on the Manor of the Masque. For the marker of a gentleman who had more than reached his maturity, Samuel Bigham chose to employ a full coat-of-arms. The interior elements of the shield are, however, placed informally. There appears a carpenter's square and a compass. No estate account on Innis exists to provide more information.

A local Scots-Irish carver whom Bigham influenced was the mysterious "carver of the crown." This as yet identified stonecutter produced a great quantity of Scots-Irish gravestones, which may still be found at Black's and in the Marsh Creek area. This quaint stonecutter always executed a sprawling crown atop the content of the epitaphs he lettered. (The crown was but one part of a traditional coat-of-arms.) Often, but not always, the "carver of the crown" used a Bigham spiral and/or a vine with leaves in his design.

Another example of the influence of Samuel Bigham, Jr., survives in the gravestone of eighteen-year-old Jane Waugh (d. 1770; see the cover illustration). This stone is carved in very unusual low relief. Because of the good quality of the stone material, however, the monument has survived the passage of time. The carving atop the stone shows both a bird and a fox with three distinctly German tulips on a crooked stem. The lettering seems to indicate that one of the Bigham family members indeed carved this record. Finally, the figure of the colonial gentleman and the casket below defies adequate interpreta-

tion. (Other Adams county stonecutters portrayed a simple casket shape below the wording on some of their stones.) The detail of the Jane Waugh stone is beautifully executed, but whether or not the moving sphere above the casket indicates the flight of the soul remains subject to question. Perhaps the illustration shows some sort of winch for lowering a casket. According to the dates on the stones, there was a large number of deaths in Lower Marsh Creek in 1770. Perhaps a plague of sorts occasioned the invention of a winch in this burial area. A second stonecutter at this location also carved a casket with an attached sphere.

One need look no further than the Samuel Bigham family carvings for a reason to be impressed by the social adjustments taking place here around the time of the Revolutionary War. The reciprocal influence of the Bighams across traditional cultural barriers of heritage indicates that Adams county contained the elements necessary for the development of a true Americanized consciousness. Social melding was apparently taking place even before the area became known as "Adams."

* * * *

Peter Brieghner

The stonecutting style of Peter Brieghner of Berwick township owes much to his German heritage and also his contact with the stonecutting of local Scots-Irish families, including that of Samuel Bigham.

Brieghner's earliest stones date from 1785 and 1786 and employ his distinctive Elizabethan shape with rope twist around the perimeter. All the carvings of this period exhibit a distinctive mix of capital and lower-case letters. Peter probably produced these works while still in his teens, and apparently after a minimal apprenticeship. The Abbott, Caldwell, and McIntire inscriptions of this period are in English, while most of the other stones by Peter Brieghner employ German inscriptions. Two early stonecutting examples at the Pines, Straban township, display a unique checked decorative figure centered below the inscription (see figure 3). This motif appears to have sprung from the influence of Scots-Irish heraldry. Other carvings (in English) apparently by other stonecutters utilize the same symbol. These carvings may be found at New Chester and also Conewago Chapel.

Beginning in 1789 with the Anna Barbara Albert stone at Lower Bermudian and continuing until at least 1801, Peter Brieghner employed a distinctly German trio of six-pointed stars on the top of his gravestones with the Germanic *urbogen* (curve of the earth) grounding the base of the stones.⁷ During these years, his spacing, as well as his use of capitalization and letter size, became more sophisticated. At Abbottstown's St. John's Cemetery is the stone of "Jacob Berlin" (1790). Researching Jacob's estate led to the identification of Peter Brieghner as the person paid for producing the "head Stone."

The Adam Mauren stone in Bender's churchyard (1792) illustrates the final period of Peter Brieghner's carving. It employs a tiny swirling German swastika inside a six-pointed star centered at the top of the slate. Flanking the star are two arching veined leaves, while below the inscription is a purely decorative swirl shape similar to but smaller than those used by the early German Meals family. At Conewago Chapel, the stone of Catharina Merthin (1800) utilizes all the same elements, as does the stone of Margaret Lashels at Low Dutch Cemetery, Mt. Pleasant township. Margaret's stone is inscribed in English.

Peter Brieghner began to explore a new motif design circa 1798 – crossed bones. These shapes usually rise above the plane of the carving, so they must be planned for as soon as the stone is conceived. German stones with similar raised crossed bones may be seen in Sheafferstown, Lebanon county, and doubtless other areas as well. Peter was the only Adams county stonecutter to use them repeatedly. Brieghner's first documented use of crossed bones may be found at Abbottstown on the stone of Johan Adam Grasser (d. 1798). Cumulatively, Peter Brieghner's final stonecutting works employ a mix of all the elements he had already mastered as well as two new features. Above the raised crossed bones, a radiant raised heart emerges, and on either side of the heart a detailed leaf graces the flat surface of the slate. Hearts to a German indicated the fulfillment of the soul in heavenly bliss.⁸ Thus, the symbolic message of Brieghner's final works contains much more than the stark warnings of death's inevitability. Excellent examples from the end of this period may be found on the stones of "SeBASTIAHN FINCK" (1801; see figure 4), Abbottstown, and "ISERAEEL KUTZMILLER" (1802), Littlestown.

Leaves were not traditional German symbols, yet they figure prominently on the final Brieghner stones. Leaves and ropes, however,

are prominent artistic features on the beautiful Adams county Bigham-carved gravestones (1770-1776). Young Peter would have studied these markers before he began his first stonecutting. The Abbottstown gravestone of young John Abbott employs most remarkable leaves and rope (because the stone had deteriorated badly, it is not legible enough for reproduction here). The sensational aspects of young Abbott's suicide made it unlikely that any resident of Berwick, c. 1800, would have been unaware of this marker. John Abbott, Sr. (an Anglican), had commissioned this gravestone be carved by Mr. Bigham (a Presbyterian) of the Gettysburg area. This stone was and still is a conversation piece in the town bearing Abbott's name (for a comparison of leaves by Bigham and Brieghner, see figure 5).

The Bigham leaves are so true to life that it is hard to imagine a young potential stonecutter not being enthralled by them, and one wonders why it took Peter Brieghner fifteen years to employ them on his stones. However, if inclined to doubt a Scots-Irish influence, compare the capital 'A' used by Bigham, Brieghner, and other Scots-Irish stonecutters working in the immediate area (see figure 6 for another example of Brieghner's early work). Without exception, Bigham's Adams county stones predate Brieghner's work, yet the letter variation and the rope trim that both Bigham and Brieghner employed suggest the former's influence on the latter. Brieghner's first carvings were lettered in the English language, yet the traditionally placed stars, swastikas, and urbogens of his second period strongly reflect the man's German upbringing. One may wish to view Brieghner's later imitation of Bigham's leaves as an artistic compliment. Peter had matured stylistically in that he was finally integrating the leaves into his own complex design format instead of merely trying to copy them as a novice would.

Today, Peter Brieghner's distinctive work may still be found at the Pines near New Chester, Bender's Church in Butler township, Littlestown's White Church, Low Dutch Cemetery and Young's in Mt. Pleasant township and at St. John's in Abbottstown (Abbottstown may contain the largest number of Brieghner stones).

A fine example of Peter's work has thus far survived the assault of vandals at Trinity Churchyard, E. Walnut and School Ave., Hanover. This is the stone of Johann Jacob Helmann who died in 1789. The back of the stone bears a statement about the significance of life and death given by the deceased, a German practice very rarely seen in this area.

Peter Brieghner apparently did not continue stonemasonry after 1802. Indeed, the body of his work was never large, although its wide distribution indicates his popularity. The septennial census of 1807 did not report a profession for Peter Brieghner. In 1814, the report listed his profession as "farmer," in 1821 as "cooper." It is possible that he always worked in several professions.

Viewed chronologically, Brieghner's work exhibits systematic exploration of various artistic expressions. Checked flourishes give way to urbogens, which in turn give way to bones, then bones with hearts above them. Apparently, Brieghner's customers did not seek to influence this early stonemason in his choice of decoration, yet they did choose the poems to be inscribed on several of the gravestones. Brieghner seems to have been free to explore the decorative art that he successively found personally compelling. With his artistic desire realized to the best of his ability, the mature Peter moved away from stonemasonry to work in professions less backbreaking and more financially stable. Peter Brieghner's entire body of work remains earnest and honest from first to final carving.

The Gettysburg *Centennial* reported the death of Peter Brieghner of Berwick township in 1839, at the age of 70 years. His estate lists value principally in farming land.

Within Adams county the work of Peter Brieghner is important because it shows how a local man of modest means and education could be affected by trends in a culture other than his own Pennsylvania German heritage. His work illustrates that an Adams county stonemason, c. 1800, could succeed in carving for both English-speaking and German-speaking families. His work also illustrates a unique blending of individual responses to the then-dominant trends in German gravestone art. That his work was so widely accepted indicates not only that the man was well liked, but also that the persons who employed him were satisfied with markers that deviated from the more traditional norms. Perhaps they were unaware of the norms, yet felt that Brieghner could adequately convey their intentions through his carving.⁹

* * * *

Charles Ramsey

Charles Ramsey's career as an Adams county stonecutter was brief, yet it has proved extremely easy to document. His name appears in the septennial census of 1807, with his profession listed as "stonecutter." This in itself is very unusual because most of the men carving gravestones in Adams county before 1850 listed other occupations as their main source of income for census purposes. In 1807, Ramsey was taxed only for his occupation according to the records of the Gettysburg borough. The following year, 1808, he was also taxed only for occupation, but a line was drawn through his name indicating a closure for his records.

Ramseys were widely distributed over what is now Adams county in the colonial and early federal periods. Notable members of the family relocated in Tennessee and North Carolina. The only other Ramsey on the tax lists of Gettysburg prior to and during the years of Charles's brief stay was Reynolds Ramsey, well-known storekeeper and owner of horse, cow, female slave, and three and 3/4 lots in the borough. Perhaps Charles was able to locate his place of work and/or dwelling under Reynolds' roof. Charles Ramsey seems to have done a high proportion of carving for estates. Perhaps Charles was additionally able to make use of the more established man's business associations in procuring clients.

The stonecutting of Charles Ramsey is documented in two estate accounts, both dating from 1807. The first is the estate of Archibald Coulter, who died in September of 1806 at the age of 63 and is buried at the Pines, New Chester. Carving the modest slate stone earned Charles Ramsey \$6.00. The second estate account is that of Revolutionary War veteran David Agnew who died in 1797 and is dated 1807. It lists Charles Ramsey as having produced both head and foot stone for this gentlemen's resting place. David Agnew is buried at Lower Marsh Creek Presbyterian Cemetery.

Also at the Lower Marsh Creek are the slate stones of veteran Robert M^cJimsey (d. 1799), James Thompson (d. 1801), and Jane P. McGinly (d. 1803; see figure 7). All appear to be the work of Charles Ramsey. The slant of the lettering, the distinctive shape of the small case "y," the number "1," and the lines embellishing the closing all reveal the identity of their carver. Charles Ramsey used very thin lines

to fashion his letters, but he had a fine aptitude for spacing those letters attractively (These characteristics may be expected from an Adams county Scots-Irish stonecutter.) Since his lines are so thin, the photos of Ramsey's work are especially hard to read.

Charles Ramsey was apparently not content to abide long in our county. Perhaps he relocated with others of his heritage. To date, the various possibilities have not been researched.

* * * *

Charles Lafferty

Charles Lafferty, stonecutter, wheelwright, and chair-maker, lived in the town of York Springs, Huntington township, from 1827 until his death in 1859. He left behind a modest estate and several children not yet of age. Charles Lafferty's earliest stonecutting work may be found at the Pines, New Chester, with other examples preserved at Lower Bermudian and Low Dutch cemeteries as well as at other sites. Wherever Charles Lafferty employed his fractur-like decorative bar designs on either side of the word "of," he left behind distinctive stones that cannot be mistaken for the work of any other stonecutter. Lafferty is an Irish, not Scots-Irish name, and perhaps this man's carving reflects an Irish style (which often parallels German). Charles Lafferty always circled the word "IN" in the phrase "IN MEMORY OF." However, other carvers also used a circle around this beginning word (see figure 8). Photo and rubbing comparisons have been most helpful in establishing a better comprehension of the character of Lafferty's stonecutting. His letters are always deeply marked into the slate or sandstone. He carved few stones, yet all his work seem to indicate a strong, yet artistically whimsical character.

The earliest carving of Charles Lafferty appears to have been done about 1826. The green slate stone of Catharine Whiest (d. 1826) at the Pines, New Chester, shows evidence of straight lines which aid in laying out the lettering actually etched into the surface of the stone. This appears to be the only work in which guidelines are so obvious. The Lower Bermudian gravestone of Christian Bushey (d. 1826; see figure 8) is also cut of the same green slate. The final account of Christian Bushey's estate indicates that Charles Lafferty was paid \$6.50 for his work of carving this headstone. It bears Charles's trade-

mark decorative bar design. The sandstone grave markers of Daniel and "Ephraim" Funk in Sunnyside Cemetery at York Springs seem also to have been done by Charles Lafferty in 1826.

It appears to have been hard to make a living at stonecutting in Adams county when first entering the business. The Gettysburg *Centennial* announced the sheriff's sale of Charles Lafferty on February 28, 1827. On September 27, 1827, he shows up in the tax records of Huntington township as single man. The following year Lafferty's affairs apparently turned for the better. He married Miss Sydney Sadler of Huntington township on August 7, 1828. The extended Sadler family owned a good bit of land in the New Chester area.

About 1829, Charles Lafferty carved a pair of slate stones for Mary M^cDannel and (apparently) her husband. These unique and individualized works survive at Low Dutch Cemetery, Mt. Pleasant township.

In 1830, Charles was listed as a wheelwright in Huntington township. In 1833, he bought the house and lot in York Springs, but in 1850 tax rolls listed him as "chairmaker."

It is unclear exactly when Charles Lafferty stopped carving gravestones. Perhaps he made the transition to carving in marble yet never signed any of his works in this new material. Perhaps his later works do not resemble the stones he first carved in 1826. In 1859 when he died in Huntington township, his inventory listed among many other tools a "grinding stone and frame," a "Drilling machine," and "two boxes of chisels and gouges." At the crying sale, files and chisels were broken down into small lots. Among those who purchased the tools were J. E. Spangler – a lot of files – and C. E. Miller – five lots of two chisels each. Both these men produced accomplished stonecutter descendants in Adams county.

No evidence as yet indicates where or from whom Charles Lafferty learned the stonecutting trade. The name Lafferty is rare in early Adams county. In 1833, six years after Charles Lafferty's sheriff's sale (and the year he bought the lot in York Springs), an old man named Manasas Lafferty died at the county poor house. The *Compiler* indicates that he was known as "Old Manas." Could this have been Charles' father or uncle? One can only wish that a more complete record had been printed, for perhaps it was from "Old Manas" that Charles learned how to carve such decorative messages in stone (see figure 9).

* * * *

Daniel Menges

Many people feel that the earlier the stonecutting the more purely it expresses true folk, ethnic art. These people believe that using stencil patterns and design books somehow contaminated the expression of the stonecutters. For them only a “pure” work of strictly ethnic origin is worthy. Even willow trees are to them evidence of ethnic “corruption,” and thus are held in less regard.

The work of Adams county stonecutter Daniel Menges belies this insistence on “ethnic purity,” for Daniel’s work retained his own uniquely German cheeriness throughout a long career (see figure 10). Through many stylistic changes, Menges managed to explore the various themes that intrigued him as well as to meet the demands of decades of customers. Daniel Menges was not a highly educated man. When he first began carving he used stencil patterns to help him. The patterns, however, served merely as aids; they helped but did not dictate what he could design.

Menges appears in the tax records of Mt. Pleasant township in 1829. In 1831, he acquired one and a half acres of land. In 1833, he and his wife, Magdalena lost two little children: “Maryan,” aged one year, and “David,” aged three. These children are buried at Christ Reformed Church in Littlestown. Their father carved their little red sandstone gravestones that stand side by side. During this early period Daniel Menges also carved the puzzling twice-double East Berlin slate markers for the children of William and Elizabeth Wolf (Daniel had his own way of spelling “Elisabeth”).¹⁰

Hard luck continued to follow the young Menges family. On February 17, 1834, the Gettysburg *Centennial* announced a sheriff’s sale of their property:

2 acres more or less adjoining lands of John Kuhn Widow Cline and others on which are erected a one-story log Dwelling house, log stable, springhouse, and a well of water near the door, also an orchard and garden. Seized and taken in execution as the estate of Daniel Menges.

Leaving this cozy dwelling behind, the family moved to Middletown (Biglerville), the home of Magdalena’s parents. The

Menges clan made a better living in Middletown, even owing their own horse, cow and adjoining lot. From this relatively central location, Daniel Menges carved for bereaved families of modest means who lived in every area of the county during the 1840s and 1850s. Menges carved a huge number of plain-lettered, small marble stones, as well as many monuments like the decorative markers that appear in accompanying photos. He was as popular as the Meals brothers. Folks traveled from Littlestown, York Springs, Conewago Chapel, Upper Bermudian, the Pines and Flohr's Church to order Menges's stones. These markers are easy to identify even when unsigned because of the distinctive spacing patterns. Above all, Menges was an artist who valued decorative effect. There is only one cemetery where his markers are conspicuously absent – Evergreen Cemetery.

By 1850, son Edward Menges was active in the stonecutting business. He had even signed a few gravestones himself. Apparently, however, Edward lacked whatever it took to succeed on his own. Although he married and lived adjoining his parents' home, he was not long taxed for an occupation. Perhaps Edward was the reason that Daniel could continue to carve well into his 66th year of age. Edward could have helped provide the strength that moved the marble from place to place. Neither Edward nor his wife had an estate or a gravestone erected in their memory, yet there are gravesites where they both may lie in Bender's Cemetery, beside Edward's mother.

Daniel Menges explored a wide range of decorative styles during his career. He lavished stylized tulips particularly on the graves of young children and old ladies. He persisted in spelling phonetically and in spacing creatively also, although the spelling improved with the years. Significantly, he had no natural love for the perfectly centered or the perfectly symmetrical. His work was very honest and natural, but it was never refined, as was the carving of William B. Meals, his contemporary. When Daniel procured a new set of decorative stencils, he simply worked out the ideas that he found most to his liking and then moved on from those ideas. It is also likely that his customers sometimes requested that he use particular designs. It is just as probable that many customers valued his ability so much that they let him choose how to decorate the stones they were purchasing. Knowing the ways of the country folk, it is likely that Daniel Menges had a unique yet endearing personality. He probably loved to visit with and commiserate with his customers when they came to order stones. Those who

were indifferent to his art were evidently not immune to the charms of his personality, because he got enough business to continue to enjoy doing what he did. Menges visited with his customers and continued to explore his stencil possibilities joyously for decades with no vestige of self-consciousness. This is how any true folk artist approaches his work, and it is this quality of joy that makes Menges stones so endearing (see figure 11).

The carving that had begun in the 1820s or 1830s ended in 1865. Menges produced a beautiful large marker for his wife Magdalena, using at Bender's his first and only wreath with flowers. Also in that year he produced the meticulous gravestone of York Springs Civil War casualty, Charles G. Miller. This stone is so perfectly free of spelling errors or happy little accidents that one can hardly believe it is a Menges work until one reads the signature. Daniel must have been really honoring this young soldier to have accomplished this carving so carefully, unless he had some help. After 1865, he seems to have stopped carving, although the name Menges still shows a tax for occupation. Then the horse and cow are gone, and by 1869, Daniel himself is gone.

Adams County Poor House records show Daniel Menges residing within its establishment in 1870. He is listed as "demented." In 1871, there is no Daniel Menges. There remains, however, yet a third unmarked grave beside that of Magdalena Menges, and we may hope that Daniel lies there, if anonymous, content for all his labors.

* * * *

August Diehl

Augustus (August) Diehl fashioned the marble monuments popular in the late Victorian decades while living in Heidlersburg and working at Good Intent Mills, Huntington township. This artistic stonemason lived only until the age of 27. Information concerning his career has been gained from estate papers, the 1880 census, and also from the gravestones which he carved and signed.

The first local gravestones to appear with the signature "A. Diehl" are dated 1879. These indicate that by the age of 23, August had set up his own business and was conforming to the practice of the majority of local carvers by signing a few of the stones that he carved. On December 23, 1879, he married Hannah Elenora Bower, daughter of

William Bower, Huntington township. In 1880, a son, Edward, was born. It may be assumed that August had served as an apprentice and/or a journeyman stonecutter for a number of years in order to learn his trade. In 1880, census records indicate that he had an apprentice of his own living and working with him, a John Peters, aged nineteen.

August Diehl's business is somewhat typical of the 1880s in that his operation was not family-owned-and-operated. He appears to have struck out from an undetermined point of origin (perhaps in another county), locating his own shop in the industrial center of Good Intent Mills, along Bermudian Creek. Here, local wool was woven into cloth for clothing and fine blankets. The end products of his work were sold both at Good Intent and at locations outside the area.

Many of the stones in local cemeteries signed "A.Diehl" are extremely traditional for the time period and locale. Perhaps Diehl's most endearing works are the stones on which he lavished a German fracture-style lettering, using a fine eye for design and proportion (see figure 12).

This lone stonecutter also created monumental, obelisk-style pieces. The Idaville stone of Jesse R. Group is one obelisk in which August may have taken no special pride (see figure 13). He did not sign it. Jesse Group's estate papers indicate that the eight-foot high monument was created by August Diehl. Working a piece of marble of this size required man and horse-power and a prior knowledge of many mechanical aspects of working with stone.

When August Diehl died of a sudden illness in 1883, estate papers show that he and his young family had lived modestly. The vendue list total value was \$242.23. The single most expensive item owned by the Diehls was an Erie organ, which brought \$87.50.

Three other prominent local stonecutters attended the estate sale, and purchased many of the tools and supplies. In the following account, the names Wm. Miller, Ruben Minter, and E. G. Lough indicate established carvers in Gettysburg, Arendtsville, and York Springs, respectively. The "Diehl Bros" listing is ambiguous, since pumice stone may be used for sharpening and grinding tools needed in a wide range of professions.

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Ruben Minter |seive |50 |
| Wm. Miller |sand |10 |
| Ruben Minter |blocks |35 |
| Wm. Miller |shears |1.40 |
| E. G. Lough |drill |20.25 |
| | (Moyer drill with bits) | |
| Diehl Bros |20 lb. of pumice stone |1.40 |
| Diehl Bros |9 lb. houe (?) |45 |
| Wm. Miller |grit |75 |
| D. Starry |rope |75 |
| C. Yeats |tool box |10 |
| R. Minter |pail |15 |
| Wm. Miller |plug and feathers |10 |
| Wm. Miller |2 wooden rollers |10 |
| Wm. Miller |2 iron rollers |10 |
| Wm. Miller |2 iron rollers |8 |
| Wm. Miller |plaster |50 |

In addition to the above list, the inventory appraisalment shows “three pairs of gravestones, finished. . \$40.00,” and “one Townsends Design book . . . \$3.50.” This design book must have supplied information about popular motifs and stone treatments. It could also have included sample poems and epitaphs. In this period, one stonecutter could duplicate the work of another by employing stenciled patterns. One may hope that a *Townsend’s Design* book has survived somewhere in Adams county and will eventually be acquired by the historical society. The book would be quite valuable. Indeed, the product of the stonecutter was often quite valuable.

In 1883, William Miller of Gettysburg was paid \$178.59 to finish “working out the marble” that remained incomplete at the time of Diehl’s death. The estate seems to have settled out slightly in the red.

Records housed at the Adams County Historical Society reveal no indication of August Diehl’s final resting place. The two most likely possibilities are that he was buried without a gravestone, or that he was buried outside Adams county. Further research may provide a richer understanding of the impact of August Diehl’s stonecutting establishment upon the little industrial center of Good Intent Mills.

* * * *

The preceding profiles have featured stonecutters who practiced their craft either in isolation or as the trend-setter of their family group. The following profiles illustrate how the stonecutter's calling often became an integrated part of family identity.

Viewed comprehensively, these biographic sketches can give an introduction to the rewards of studying gravestones, yet some significant Adams county stonecutters have not been mentioned, while others who were not prolific have been included because their works can be documented to reveal the character of the craft. There is much more research to be done in this area. Hopefully, crumbling marble and shattering slate will withstand the harsh treatment of our modern culture to become the subjects of future scrutiny.¹¹

* * * *

The Meals Family

Only gradually did stonecutting become a full-time occupation in colonial America. Our growing nation tended to ignore the subtleties of growth of the art. Here, for example, is the sole and brief explanation of the inception of the Meals family stonecutting business as summarized by the *Gettysburg Times*, July 15, 1950:

The Gettysburg Monument Works which was located beside the house in the 1860's, was established in 1820 by Gabriel Meals, great-grandfather of G. Kent Meals, who operated the monument works until his death in 1948 [For a photo of the Gettysburg Monument Works, see figure 14.]

One might conclude that Gabriel's decision to choose this line of work came about fairly quickly. Actually, such a hasty conclusion could not be farther from the scenario suggested by local evidence. The septennial census report of 1821 lists Gabriel Meals only as "farmer," yet he most certainly did carve gravestones as well. In addition,

Samuel Meals of Menallen township is listed as “farmer” and “stone-cutter” in the 1821 census report. The Meals family was a large one. Almost surely, Gabriel and Samuel were not the only family members carving in slate. Cemeteries close to the Meals’s first settlement (Bender’s and Upper Bermudian) particularly abound with beautiful unsigned German gravestones bearing tulips, sun shades, and unique angels. These works indicate the endeavors of several closely related individuals. Local evidence suggests that members of the Meals family had practiced stonecutting ever since arriving in this area, but that none of them carved exclusively before the period of the 1821 census. The Pines in Straban and Bender’s Cemetery in Butler township contain some Meals carvings in three dimensions. These pre-1820 stones utilize a crowded lettering style. Many contain phrases verbatim from the *taushein* of the deceased individual. Persons who carved in this intricate three-dimensional style often had learned their craft in the old country.

Gabriel Meals signed at least three gravestones. The most significant of these is at Upper Bermudian Cemetery, the badly worn marble monument of a member of the Bowers family (see figure 15). Gabriel was just making the transition from slate to marble in 1841 when Bowers died. In our county, use of marble also entailed use of new stencil patterns to create both letters and motifs. In general, this modernization hastened the abandonment of “old-fashioned” German folk designs. The signature on this Bowers stone is placed on its side and reads “G and H Meals” in script. Below the entire inscription appears a large, circular symmetrical sun-shape in kinship with earlier carvings at Bender’s. The use of the sun-shape makes this a transitional sort of stone. At the Pines, Gabriel Meals also placed a signature on the side of the stone of a nine-year old child named Louisa (last name illegible). Also at the Pines is the large marble of Elizabeth Cremer (d. 1842), signed “G.Meals, Getrg” with a special circular signature seal.

The stone of Elizabeth Cremer is one of many elegant and refined Meals creations utilizing then-current trends in gravestone art (see figure 16). The Meals family, more than any other in Adams county, was able to tap into the new supply of broadly available artistic features and produce what customers wanted. Earliest came the full mourning pictures, or, more commonly, the tall and hollow-looking lone willow trees. The Meals family even began with the open Bible motif as early

as 1842, employing this soon-to-be-common motif on a tiny marble stone at Low Dutch Cemetery, Straban township. The Elizabeth Cremer stone is important because the leaves, letterings, and precise drapery features used on it were also utilized by Gabriel Meals on a trio of large intricate marble stones at Bender's (see figure 17). These three stones are unsigned, or the signatures have been buried in cement.¹²

These carvings are the important works of a mature stonecutting artist, an individual who could combine symbolic elements assimilated in his younger days with an exploration of the medium of new marble. Gabriel Meals was producing at his best when he created monuments for "home-folk." It is perhaps no coincidence that these stones are erected at this particular churchyard. Although Gabriel had relocated in Gettysburg more than twenty years before, he probably still thought of this church as "home." Work by the Meals family always remained very popular at Bender's.

According to the signature on the Pheobe Brinkerhoff slate marker in Evergreen Cemetery, Gabriel's sons Henry and William were early at work in their father's "monument works." The 1850 census lists the following in Gabriel's household in the Gettysburg borough:

| | | |
|--------------------|----|-------------|
| Gabriel Meals | 56 | farmer |
| Nancy | 53 | |
| Henry | 26 | stonecutter |
| William | 24 | stonecutter |
| Frederick | 16 | |
| Joseph | 13 | |
| George | 10 | |
| Lydia | 7 | |
| Elizabeth Baughman | 84 | |

In 1850, roses began acquiring popularity (Uriah Carson, d. 1851, buried at Cline's Church, Menallen, for example). Meals-style willow trees became fat and full and proclaimed their sorrow from a circle symmetrically centered above the inscription. These willow stones were seldom if ever signed. Estate papers have twice affirmed their authorship – Meals of Gettysburg.

The 1860 census indicates that young George Meals had also begun to work in marble. William B. Meals had become the leading carver of his clan. Meals's work was purchased and employed county-

wide; there is scarcely a cemetery without examples of Meals's precise work.

The Meals family began and finally ended their stone carving with evidence of great pride in the family craft. The July 15th, 1950 *Gettysburg Times* article concludes as follows:

Both William B. and Louis H. Meals were sculptors and carved a number of statues from stone for cemetery work. They placed a large number of the monuments in Evergreen Cemetery and placed stones as far away as Charleston, W. Va., Baltimore, and Downingtown. One of the stones of which they were proudest is that of the Bevan family in Evergreen Cemetery, which has flowers sculptured on the stone from top to bottom and down the other side. The stone is the exact replica of that of a member of the Bevan family buried in Barcelona, Spain.

* * * *

Barnet Hildebrand (Researching the History of Adams County Stonecutters)

Mindful of the reader's sense of curiosity, it seems appropriate to explain exactly how this research of stonecutters' histories was carried out in the 1990s in Adams county. The history of Barnet Hildebrand as stonecutter offers a useful example.

A windy March morning in cold sunshine brought the chance for a visit to mysterious Round Hill Cemetery in Reading township. Three quarters of the way up the rise, three large marble stones stood very close to one another (see figure 18). They marked the graves of William Hodge and both of his parents. All three stones were obviously erected after the death of William, because the dates of the parents' death were so early that only slate would have been available for markers when they died.

Nevertheless, 1838 was early for the use of marble in Adams county. Who could have been working in such an innovative medium? The decorative effects and unique punctuation were spare, similar and

hauntingly familiar – reminiscent of the rounded shapes in the initials on the Joseph Bittinger stone in Abbottstown’s Lutheran Cemetery.¹³ The Bittinger stone was unique because half of it was in English and half in two-dimensional German script. Here at Round Hill were special messages on the stone of William Hodge’s parents, particularly the father’s epitaph (refer to caption, figure 18). William had therefore intentionally requested the erection of markers bearing this information before he died. This was a situation in which estate papers, if they existed, would further explain the significance of the stones, perhaps even identifying their carver.

The lettering on these stones was very precise. Although it lacked some of the flow and authoritative energy expressed on the Joseph Bittinger stone, it was steady and consistently spaced, like that exhibited on the earlier slate medium in Abbottstown and East Berlin. These three stones should all have been produced by Bittinger’s stonecutter, yet all were works from a later period.

It was time to leave Round Hill. It would have to be either much earlier or much later in the day when these monuments could be photographed because of the angle of the sun at this time would not allow legible photography. A photo would have to be done on another day, as well as a rubbing. The afternoon of the same day, March 11th, I visited the Adams County Historical Society to research the estate of William Hodge. There was no use looking up Joseph Bittinger again. Joseph Bittinger’s stonecutter had for years eluded identification. Not only was this gentleman’s estate not on file, but the “sister” stones in East Berlin were also unlikely to lend any positive identification through the recording of their executor’s accounts. These East Berlin people were either children or very young women, not the sort to have died owning so much property that it needed to have been legally noted.

After Tim Smith brought me the Hodge estate account, I found not only the name of the carver, but also the reason for the precise arrangement of the stones as set forth by William Hodge in his will. The executors of Hodge were charged to:

Purchase white marble head and foot stones for my Father’s, mother’s and my own grave to be finished and lettered as is common in the neighborhood and set up at the expense of my Estate.

And in the final account by executors James Morrow and William Patterson was the further information that “Barnet Hildebrand” had been paid in two installments for the tombstones – \$44.00 and \$21.00 respectively.

Now to find the white cards on Barnet Hildebrand . . . there was his death - June 4, 1864. There also was his marriage on September 8th, 1834, to Eliza Brown in “Berlin.” But he was not in the census records. Puzzling as this was, this was as far as time constraints for the day would permit the research to proceed. Much later Dr. Charles Glatfelter provided the missing link: the name Barnet was the same as the name Bernard and Hildebrand had even been spelled differently long ago. Armed with this knowledge, it was easy to ascertain that Barnet lived, worked, and was taxed in the town of East Berlin. He had declared his profession as that of engraver. He had even managed to die with an estate and to be buried with a joint tombstone, one shared with his wife and (apparently) a son (dates only on the stone). This was good news because the excellent and prolific Daniel Menges (another Adams county stonecutter) had died in the poor house and been buried in an unmarked grave.

Returning to the East Berlin cemetery, many, many, thin, white, marble gravestones looking “just like” that of William Hodge came into focus where they had been overlooked before. These carvings proved that Barnet’s work was very popular with the people of his community – more in demand than even the beautiful carvings in the same same style from the earlier period. I took several photos. No new “matches” were later found in any other estate account, however. The positive Hildebrand identification would have to rest based on the three Hodge stones at Round Hill. Only very rarely do estate accounts list the carver of a tombstone – perhaps one in twenty accounts is “kind” enough to provide this sort of information.

Barnet had attained the age of 64 when he died in 1864. That meant that he could not have carved most of those earlier slate stones because he would have been a baby in 1805. Probably some member of the Hildebrand family carved the early slate works and later taught Barnet the trade. The most obvious choice would be Barnet’s father, John. John Hildebrand proved to have been a tanner by profession. Besides John, there was an older brother of Barnet’s, John, Jr., a potter who passed away in 1831. It was still artistically clear that Barnet had learned from the scribe of the beautiful East Berlin stones, the

carver of the Adam Rupley, Simon Snyder, and Nancy Hildebrand gravemarkers.

Nancy Hildebrand's stone might provide a clue (see figure 19). Eight years before I had made a rubbing of this beautiful stone and given it to the East Berlin Historical Society. The stone's inscription recorded the death of Nancy and her babe in childbirth. Under the epitaph were the initials "JH." After an additional eight years of observing script on tombstones, it was now easier to see that the scripted initialing had denoted capital "J" and capital "H" and was not to be confused with the young lady's own initials.

Back to the cemetery for another look and more rubbings. Unfortunately, to date there has been actually no way to prove which J. Hildebrand carved the stones in question. Mrs. Olive Jones of Hanover is a descendent of the Hildebrand family. She kindly supplied the information that Nancy was the first wife of Jacob Hildebrand, another of Barnet's older brothers. Another trip to the estate files confirmed that all the Hildebrand men died without having made a will, so there was no signature to compare with the script initials. However, Barnet Hildebrand's signature was gleaned from some Orphans' Court proceedings. Unfortunately, it seems that no one had saved examples of John, Jr.'s pottery, which might have made some unique speculations possible.

The profession of "potter" did not in and of itself exclude the possibility that John (or Jacob) Hildebrand had carved some gravemarkers between 1804 and 1816, thus influencing the "engraving" of the younger brother, Barnet. Other Adams county stonecutters had earned livelihoods as coopers, wheelwrights, and chair-makers. The oldest East Berlin carvings had been executed with a fine liquid flow, such as the lines of a craftsman who needed to work quickly (as a potter does) in order to attain the best results. Sometimes we do not find all the answers and are left hoping that someone else will eventually supply the missing links.*

*(I wish to thank Mr. Gary Collison, Penn State American Studies professor, for his encouragement. Above all, I wish to thank Dr. Charles Glatfelter and Dr. James P. Myers Jr. for all their assistance and active support of my research and writings. – N.G.D.)

NOTES

1. Before 1820, Meals family stonecutters differed in their styles of lettering but shared the following common artistic elements: sunbursts, pairs of tall tulips with undulating stems, six-pointed stars, and peculiar winding scrawl embellishments.

2. For example, the design feature favored after 1850 by the stonecutting Spangler family of East Berlin was the folded, scrolled and paired, stylized leaf looking like the wooded gilding on a Victorian picture frame. This feature lent itself to many unique adaptations. Gabriel Meals employed a small central daisy-like flower in all the known works of his final period. Arendtsville carver Ruben Minter favored the rose and the rosebud around 1850.

3. For example, stonecutters themselves compared their works in competitive newspaper advertising.

4. Richard E. Meyer, ed., *Cemeteries and Gravemarkers: Voices of American Culture*, (Logan, Utah, Utah State University Press, 1997); Edward W. Clark, *The Bigham Carvers of the Carolina Piedmont* (Logan, Utah, Utah State University Press, 1992), 32.

5. *Ibid.*, 37

6. M. Ruth Little, *Sticks and Stones: Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemakers* (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 108-117.

7. Preston A. Barba, *Pennsylvania German Tombstones A Study in Folk Art* (Allentown, PA: Schlechter's, 1954), 12.

8. *Ibid.*, 22.

9. The Jane P. McGinley stone by C. Ramsey displays an original epitaph, as indicated by the unusual spelling. Stonecutters' common practice was to copy words exactly as provided by the individual purchasing the stone. "IN/Memory of/JANE P. McGINLY/who Departed this Life;/December 23rd 1803/In the 38th year of hir Age/O Grave where is thy victory/the Righieous have hope in/There Death-."

10. The two stones are almost exact duplicates. They are carved on the same thick dark slate shape. The inscription on both reads "Erected by WILLIAM and/ELISABETH WOLF to/The memory of their two Infant children in 1829 (2nd in 1833)/Born in a world of toil and sorrow/Encompassed round with care and/Doom without a wish to see the [] hurried onward [The rest is underground]." Since this stone was ordered shortly after the death of Daniel's two children, perhaps he carved the first marker, installed it, then retained the order slip with the verse because it had meaning to him. Later, looking at the order slip, he forgot that he had already executed the stone and thus duplicated it.

11. Other ways to appreciate the heritage in our cemeteries include the study of epitaphs and the study of the placements of the stones themselves. The relative waxing and waning popularity of various artistic features (for example, the rose, the open Bible) paralleled local response to nation-wide cultural trends. Other essays outlining the significance of the gravestones as an every day art form may be found at the Adams County Historical Society in the cultural study titled *Attitudes Toward Living and Dying* by this author.

12. Using stonecutters' traditional symbols, the John Henry Bender stone (1845) at Bender's Cemetery conveys a once-familiar message. The drapery surrounding the figure symbolizes the transition between this world and the next. The open Bible symbolizes the revealed Word of God. The rising-sun fan above the pastor's head symbolizes the actual message of the revealed Word. This stone appears to assert that the message is "resurrection." Two similar gravestones in Bendersville, Menallen township, assert in print "God is Love" (these two are works of an unidentified stonecutter).

13. The gravestone reads: "J B [large decorative initials]/departed/this transitory Life/in the 52nd Year of his age/JOSEPH BITTINGER/Born Feb. 26th 1773/died July 26th 1804." The German part of the inscription appears to give the same information, but the bottom portion of the stone is set in concrete. There is a second slate stone with this type of double inscription in the Arendtsville Cemetery. It is by the same carver.

Figure 1. Rubbing detail, Upper Bermudian. Stone of Christina Minnigen, age 5, d. 1792. (Carver identified with the Meals family).



Figure 2. Jean Brownfield, d. 1760, and Elizabeth Brownfield, d. 1766 (Lower Marsh Creek; carved by Samuel Bigham). Text reads: "Here lys the Body/of Jean Brownfield/who Departed this/life Septemb^r 26/1760 Aged 5 years./Here lys y^e Body of Eliza-/beth Brownfield who Departed this Life May/ y^e 9th 1766 Aged 5 Years (mixed fonts of the original have been normalized).

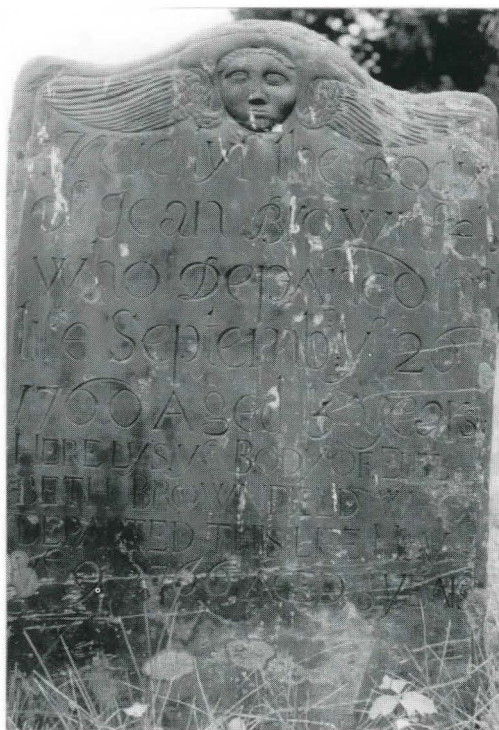




Figure 3. Detail, Hugh Caldwell's gravestone, d. 1785 (the Pines).



Figure 4. Sebastian Finck, d. 1801 (Abbottstown; carved by Peter Brieghner). Text: "Hier Ruhet/Sebastiahn Finck Ge:/bohr[en] Febuahri Den 12^{ten}/1728 In Den Ehe Gelebe und/Gezeigt 15 Kinder Gestorben/November Den 16^{ten} 1801/Sein Alter Var 72 Jahr/10 Mon: und 4 Tag" (font styles normalized).



Figure 5. Details: the above rubbing of a leaf is from a Bigham gravestone. The leaf below is from the gravestone of Sebastian Finck, carved by Peter Brieghner.

Figure 6. John Abbott, Sr., d. 1786 (Abbottstown; carved by Peter Brieghner). Text: “Here Lyes The Body/of John Abbott/Who Departed This/Life Feb^y The 19 1786/Aged 86 Years &/One Month And 17/Days” (font styles normalized).

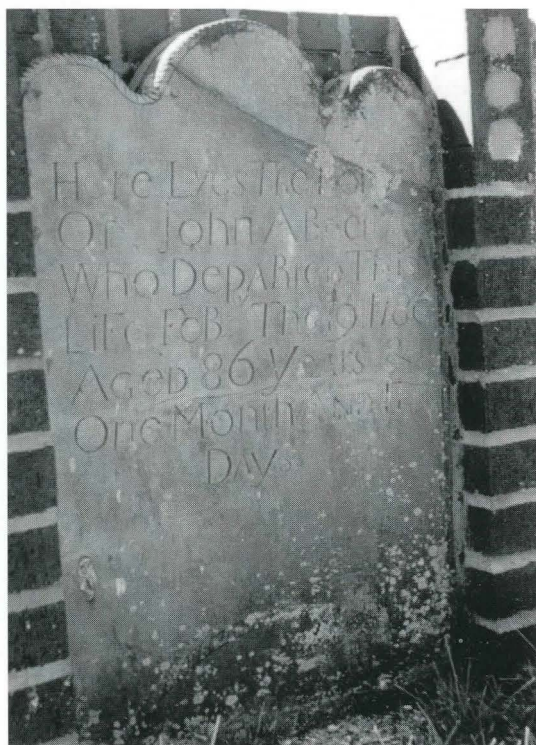


Figure 7. Jane P. M^cGinly, d. 1803 (Lower Marsh Creek; carved by Charles Ramsey). Text: "In Memory of Jane P. M^cGinly/Who Departed this Life/December 23rd 1803/In the 38th year of hir Age/O Grave where is thy victory/the Righieous have hope in/There Death" (font styles normalized).

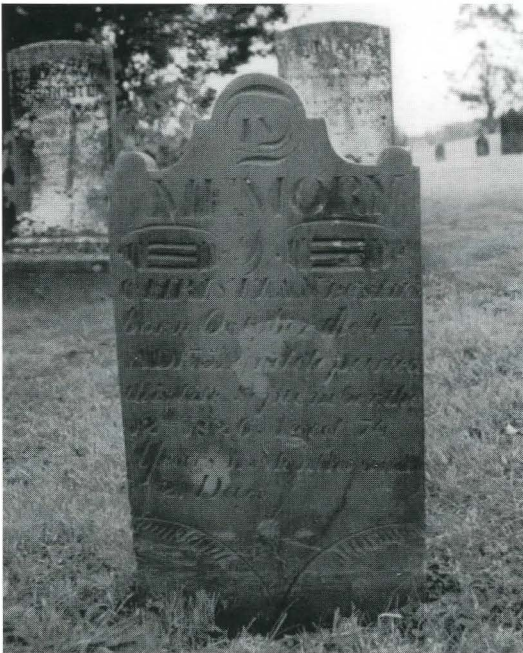


Figure 8. Christian Bushey, d. 1836 (Lower Bermudian church; carved by Charles Lafferty). Text: "In/Memory/of/Christian Bushey/born October the 4th/AD 1751 and departed/this life September the/12th 1826 Aged 74/Years 11 Months and/21 Days" (font styles normalized).

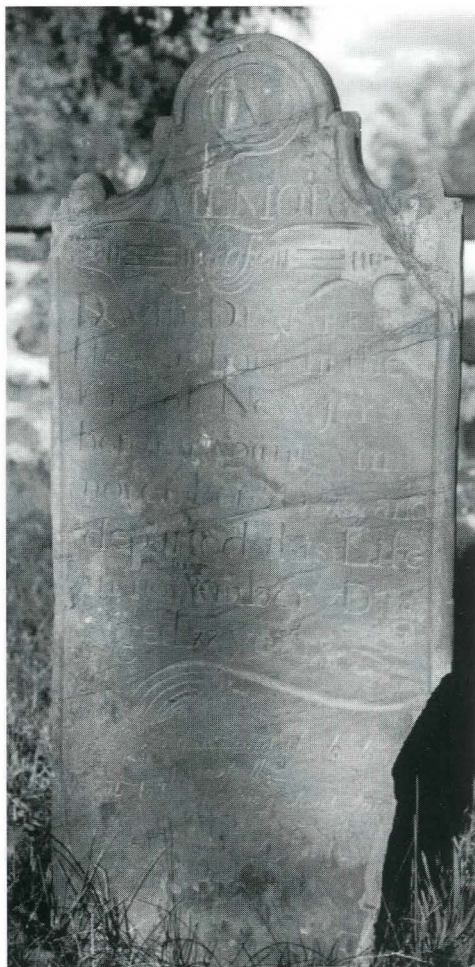


Figure 9. David Demaree, d. 1808 (Low Dutch Cemetery; carved by Charles Lafferty). Text: "In/Memory/of/David Demaree [?]/He was born in the/East of New jersey/bergen county in/november AD 1730 and/departed this Life/in november AD 1808/Aged 77 years//And now I add this lowlier/spell/Sweet to the passing Sweet fair" (font styles normalized).



Figure 10. Sarah Goulden, d. 1844 (the Pines; carved by Daniel Menges). Text: "In/Memory/of Sarah/goulden dau^{gr}/of John G []n/who departed/This Life may/7 AD1844 aged/24 Years 5 mo/[?] days" (font styles normalized).



Figure 11. David Matthias, age 2, d. 1842; Rachel Elisabeth, aged 4, d. 1842 (two sandstone children's markers at Bender's Church carved by Daniel Menges. Leah's stone on the right is by one of the Meals family).

Figure 12. Susana Myers, d. 1880 (Bendersville Cemetery; carved by August Diehl). Text: "Susana/Wife of/Charles Myers/Born/June 30. 1842/Died/ [?] 16 1880/Aged/67 yrs. 6 mos. & 6 ds.//Dearest children strive you well/I can no longer stay/I hear my Savior sweetly call/And I must haste away" (font style normalized).

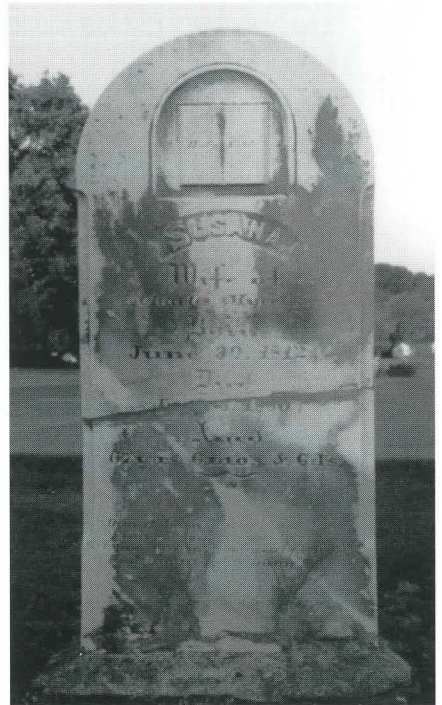




Figure 13. Jesse R. Group, d. 1883 (United Methodist Evangelical Church, Idaville; carved by August Diehl). According to the 9 March 1883 account of the executors of Jesse Group's estate, \$275.00 was paid for this obelisk.



Figure 14. Undated photograph of L. H. Meal's "monumental works" (Adams County Historical Society).



Figure 15. [First name not legible] Bowers, d. 1817 [?] (Upper Bermudian Cemetery; signed “G and H Meals”).

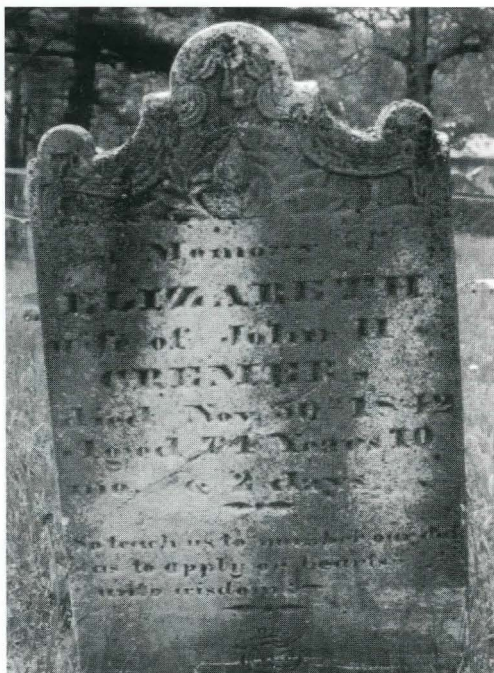


Figure 16. Elizabeth Cremer, d. 1842 (the Pines; carved by Gabriel Meals – the faintly carved signature “G. Meals, Getrg” can be seen in the bottom center of the marker).

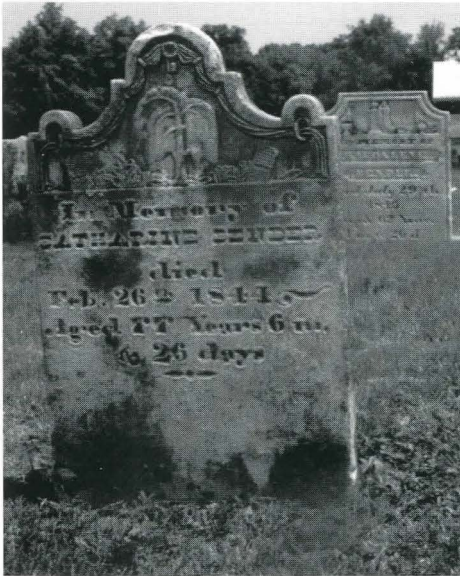


Figure 17. Catharine Bender, d. 1844, and John Henry Bender, d. 1843 (Bender's Church; carved by Gabriel Meals. Note the tasseled flower at the top of each stone. John's marker displays the pastor reading the "word of God," the meaning of which is suggested in the sunburst above the pastor's head).

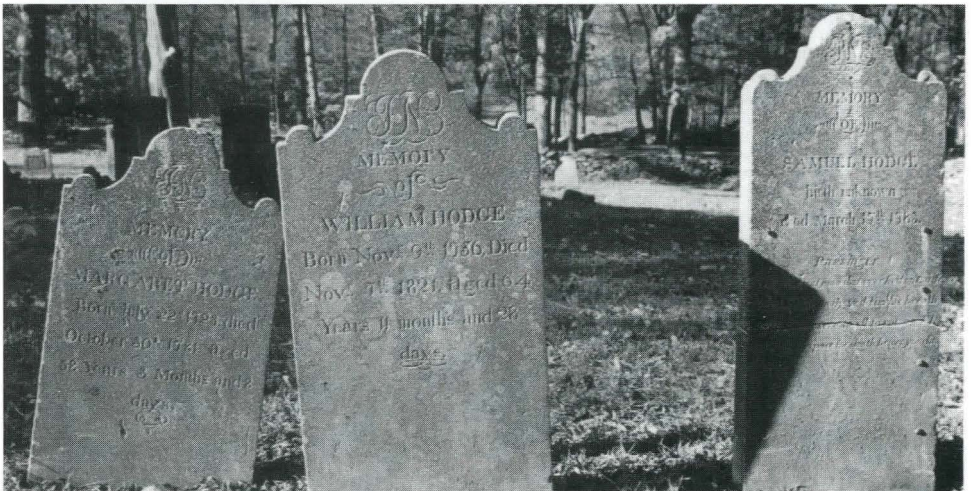


Figure 18. Margaret Hodge, d. 1781; William Hodge, d. 1821; and Samuel Hodge, died 1783 (Round Hill; carved by Barnet Hildebrand). Epitaph on Samuel's stone reads: "Passenger/The strongest man that ever liv'd on earth/At last did quietly yield up his breath/This of [?] sure to all to you and I/Come thee, prepare for death before you die."



Figure 19. Nancy Hildebrand and infant child, d. 1804 (East Berlin cemetery; carved by J. Hildebrand). Text: "In/Memory/of/Nancy Hildebrand/and her Infant Child/born Sep. 5th 1781/died Oct. 20th 1804/Aged 25 Years 1:Mo/ & 15 Days./JH" (font styles normalized).