



Farmville - Prince Edward Historical Society

P.O. Box 546

Farmville, Virginia 23901

May, 2010

Cemetery Art Work, Symbols, and Their Meaning

Presented by
Brady Fitts
Chairman, SCVGS

Tuesday, May 18, 2009
7:00 p.m.

PE Co Agricultural Center
Hwy 15 South to 100 Dominion Drive

Board Meets at 6:00 p.m.



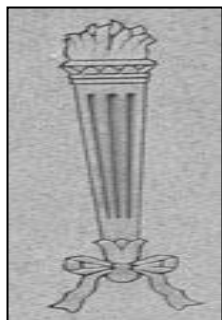
Brady Fitts speaks on cemetery art work, symbols, and their meaning

Often people will stroll through a cemetery reading the grave markers and commenting about the carvings on the stones. Do you know what handshakes, a rose, a hand pointing up, or an urn-and-willow motif mean on a grave stone? What are the different religious symbols you might find on grave markers? Brady Fitts, chairman of the South Central Virginia Genealogical Society, will explain some local grave stone makings, as well as other from the New England states.

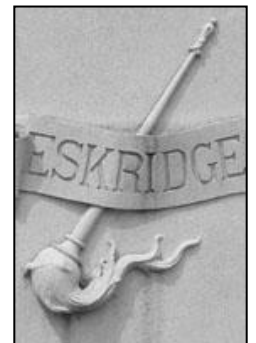


People select various tombstone designs for many reasons. The casual graveyard observer should be careful not to “over-think” a marker. Perhaps the family selected a symbol of wheat sheaves as the traditional emblem of the divine harvest. On the other hand, maybe the owner of the headstone was a grain farmer or mill operator. Maybe the family simply liked the design when they were purchasing the marker and the symbol had nothing to do with the deceased.

Symbols can express ethnic identity, religious affiliation, association membership, employment, or the inclination of the section of the country or the era. When studying cemeteries it is important to have a grasp of the culture of that part of the country or world and the life style and events of that area. A symbol that would mean one thing to the people of one community in the 1800’s might mean something totally different to the people of today’s world in another section of the USA.



What is the difference in the torch symbols used on these markers? The upright torch illuminates the darkness and represents enlightenment. It also denotes zeal, liberty, or immortality. If the inverted torch has a flame, it signifies that life is continuing after death. If there is no flame, it signifies the extinction of life and mourning.



This Day in May in Prince Edward County History

- 5-1-1832** Gov. Philip Watkins McKinney born in Buckingham
- 5-2-1894** First official proposal by trustees to move Presbyterian seminary from its 70-year existence at Hampden-Sydney
- 5-3-1905** Farmville Guard left for Richmond to attend funeral of Major General Fitzhugh Lee
- 5-4-1895** Farmville Guard called to Pocahontas to guard working men from violence at the hands of strikers
- 5-4-1901** The first "dry" Saturday in Farmville history; no liquor sales
- 5-5-1942** World War II sugar rationing begins
- 5-5-1996** WFLO tower collapses
- 5-6-1776** William Watts and William Booker elected Prince Edward representatives to convention to establish constitution for Commonwealth, to replace colonial rule
- 5-6-1965** J.J. Newberry Department Store at Third and Main burned.
- 5-7-1846** Town and citizens decide to buy \$100,000 stock to secure railroad service to Farmville; original South Side Railroad proposal would have linked county seats, taking railroad through Worsham
- 5-7-1978** Farmville Flea Market opened at new Randolph Warehouse
- 5-10-1905** Odd Fellows Lodge instituted
- 5-10-1926** Dr. W. E. Anderson died
- 5-11-1964** U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy visits Farmville schools
- 5-12-1894** *Farmville Herald* begins editorial campaign to keep Union Seminary at Hampden-Sydney
- 5-12-1920** Fire department draft horse "Charlie" drops dead after pulling engine to fire on Buffalo Street
- 5-14-1937** Patterson's Drug Company buys stock of Canada Drug Company
- 5-15-1942** Gasoline rationing began during World War II
- 5-17-1954** U.S. Supreme Court rules on *Brown v. Board*, unanimously, striking down "separate-but-equal" public education with Prince Edward case included
- 5-20-1834** Birth of Hampden-Sydney president Richard McIlwaine, who represented Prince Edward county in Virginia Constitutional Convention
- 5-23-1901** The Masons meet for the first time in their new Lodge room
- 5-24-1777** Thomas Anderson Morton, who operated first store in Farmville on Second Street opposite Morton's tavern, was born
- 5-24-1833** Death of area famous Congressman John Randolph of Roanoke
- 5-24-1902** Charlotte, Farmville and James River Valley Railroad Company organized
- 5-26-1898** Farmville Guard leaves for service in Spanish-American War
- 5-26-1918** Farmville Guard leaves for service in World War I
- 5-27-1887** J. W. Dunnington, tobacconist, died
- 5-28-1832** Charles H. Erambert, lt. Farmville Guard, photographer, born
- 5-28-1963** Civil War era locomotive "The General" visits Farmville
- 5-29-1736** Birth of Patrick Henry, sometime resident of, and delegate from, Prince Edward
- 5-30-1905** First memorial service for Confederate dead held at the cemetery in Cumberland
- 5-31-1897** Earthquake and aftershocks rattled window panes



Wilkins
family tree
Pittsburgh's
Allegheny
Cemetery



Raffaele
Gariboldi,
1886-1918 -
Hope
Cemetery,
Barre, VT



Fort Ann
Cemetery,
Washington
County, NY