

DEEP EAST TEXAS GRAVE MARKERS

TYPES, STYLES, AND MOTIFS



1. *San Augustine County, San Augustine City Cemetery*

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DEEP EAST TEXAS GRAVE MARKERS

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INTRODUCTION

Grave markers are often the only physical evidence of a person's existence and offer opportunities for even ordinary people to 'speak' from the grave. Sometimes the deceased selects the marker or leaves instructions for its composition.



2. Houston County, Denson Cemetery

In modern times, the grieving family typically chooses the type, style, motif, and inscription according to commercial availability, aesthetic appeal, and budgetary constraints. A cemetery visitor will likely have no idea of the actual circumstances that caused a particular marker to have its shape, design, and decorative elements. Like other possessions, markers are subject to fashion trends and since the advent of mass production and laser techniques, markers once unique for their individual carving may now be distinctive because modern technology permits extensive customization.

DEEP EAST TEXAS GRAVE MARKERS

This booklet seeks to provide the reader with an overview of the most frequently encountered marker types (shapes), styles, and motifs in Deep East Texas. Photographs are entirely from East Texas cemeteries, and thus may omit markers common in other areas.

Harriette Merrifield Forbes, an artist, author, and historian who began photographing and documenting New England gravestones in the 1880s, is considered the first student of grave markers in the United States. Since then, several prominent scholars have delved into the field bringing perspectives from various disciplines – anthropology, archaeology, art, architecture, history, and religion, to name a few. Some researchers studied carver techniques and made attributions based on comparisons of techniques; others contemplated spiritual dimensions of marker motifs; still others identified cultural and ethnic heritage elements in marker symbols. Nevertheless, without written records to explain a deceased's or family's choices, we can only generalize about the meaning of symbols.



3. Houston County, Mt. Vernon Cemetery

Because this project focuses on grave markers, little attention is given to burial practices, cemetery design, and commemorative customs.

One notable feature of many Deep East Texas graveyards is ‘scraped’ ground or swept earth (see Image 3), a tradition transplanted from Africa to the Deep South, then westward to Texas. From a practical viewpoint, it provides low maintenance and ease of detecting snakes that plague warm climates and quiet habitats; however, its popularity is decreasing.

Few of the markers pictured come from garden or park-like cemeteries that became popular in cities during the mid to late 1800s. Glenwood Cemetery in Crockett, Houston County, is a basic example of that ‘rural’ cemetery movement, a trend not often adopted in areas like Deep East Texas. Several cemeteries depicted herein follow the general American practice of aligning markers facing east, in keeping with the Christian ideology that Gabriel’s horn will sound from Jerusalem (the East) on Judgment Day, thus the dead must be ready to rise facing East.



4. Houston County, Enon Cemetery

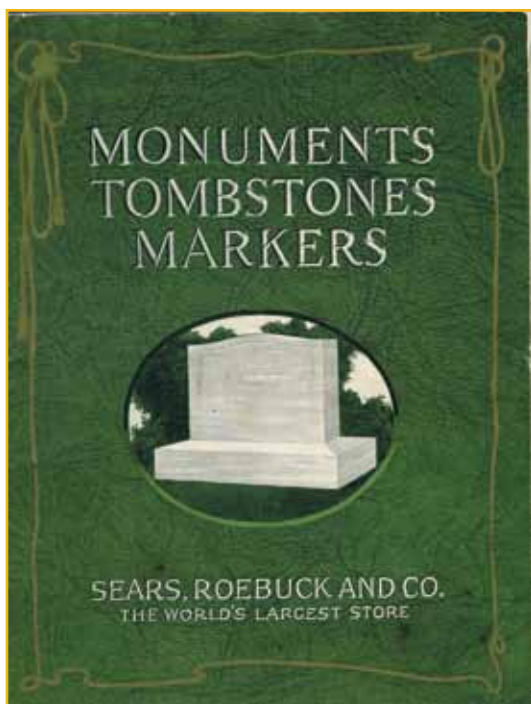
Another characteristic Deep East Texas burial grounds share with others in the South is the open-air pavilion containing benches and sometimes a pulpit. These are used for funerals, memorial services, and as gathering places for families on homecoming days.

DEEP EAST TEXAS GRAVE MARKERS

This publication is funded by the Preserve America Cemetery Interpretation Project, a joint venture between Stephen F. Austin State University and the City of Nacogdoches. The goal of the project is to promote the preservation of cemeteries and grave markers as part of developing their interpretive potential.

We hope this publication will enhance the reader's appreciation for, and understanding of, grave markers.

Nancy Adgent and Perky Beisel



1929 Sears, Roebuck and Co. grave marker catalog

SECTION 1 – GRAVE MARKER TYPES

Economic status, transportation available from stone quarries, and refined tastes associated with highly-educated city dwellers differentiate markers typically found in rural areas in the *Camino Real* corridor from those usually seen only in prosperous large cities with early access to rail and water transit. Only after Crockett gained its first railroad in 1872 and Nacogdoches in 1882, did large marble and granite stones and mass manufactured markers become common.



5. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

Many cemeteries contain identical markers. Sales of a few 'stock' markers through Sears, Roebuck & Co. and Montgomery Ward catalogs in the early to mid-1900s, contributed to the uniformity, yet with a high number of homemade or folk markers persisting, Deep East Texas cemeteries retain a distinctive character.

Type categories are based primarily on the shapes cataloged in Harold Mytum's *Recording & Analyzing Graveyards*. Some folk markers do not neatly fit into the groupings, but, when possible, we have included examples of folk markers for each type. These types are presented roughly in order of complexity.

TABLET

Stone Tablet



6. *Houston County, Patton Cemetery*

An upright, relatively thin marker usually carved and/or inscribed on one side. It may be set on a base or buried directly in the ground, and may be stone, metal, or other material.

Metal Tablet



7. *Nacogdoches County, Swift Cemetery*

TABLET (CONT.)

Folk Wood Tablet



8. Houston County, Shady Grove Cemetery

Folk Concrete Tablet with Marbles



9. Houston County, Bynum Cemetery

LEDGER



10. Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery

Flat, relatively thin, inscribed slabs of stone or concrete, on the ground, low monuments include Victorian flower boxes and mummy or coffin-shaped stones or concrete raised above ground level. Usually ledgers have no head or foot stones; however, since this one is inscribed, it can fit this category.

Folk Concrete Ledger with Marbles



11. Houston County, English Cemetery

BOULDER/ROCK/FIELDSTONE

A fieldstone is a naturally occurring, irregularly shaped, uninscribed rock, usually found in or near the graveyard and placed on top of, or in, the ground marking a burial. These could be called folk boulders.



12. Houston County, New Hope Cemetery



13. Sabine County, McMahan's Chapel Cemetery

Sometimes natural rocks are inscribed on man-made smooth surfaces as in the cenotaph above (a memorial, not marking a person's grave).

BOULDER/ROCK/FIELDSTONE (CONT.)

In the early to mid-1900s, a back to nature movement spurred a rustic style. Granite blocks were cut to resemble natural, hewn rocks. Usually these were inscribed on a smooth text panel.



14. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

CROSS

A cross is a vertical post intersected with at least one horizontal cross-piece; some have connecting curved pieces forming a ring around the cross. Celtic crosses with elaborate rope-like, knotted designs sometimes mark graves of people with Scots-Irish heritage; however, the design was a popular trend among the upper class, regardless of ethnic background, in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The cross most frequently seen is the Latin or Roman, folk version of PVC shown below.



15. Houston County, Chaffin Cemetery

CROSS (CONT.)

Latin or Roman Cross



16. Houston County, Antioch Cemetery

Botonee Cross

The Botonee Cross has club-shaped ends also called trefoil that signify the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost).



17. Houston County, Stantain & Thomas Cemetery

CROSS (CONT.)

Fleury or Gothic Cross

A version of the Fleury or fleur-de-lis or Gothic Cross below sometimes indicates French ancestry, although in recent years it has been used by people of other heritage. The triple-pointed tips are carved in various ways and also represent the Trinity.



18. *Houston County, Golden Gate Cemetery*

Ionic Cross & Southern Cross

The Ionic Cross has 'arms' that flare out on the ends, known as expanded terminals. This was also known as the Southern Cross of Honor because it was used for Confederate Veterans.



19. *Sabine County, McMahan's Chapel Cemetery*

CROSS (CONT.)

Passion Cross (Folk)

Also known as the Cross of Suffering, the pointed ends represent the nails that pierced Christ's hands and feet. Often on Hispanic graves.



20. Houston County, Union Prairie Cemetery

Ringed Cross

Sometimes on Scots-Irish graves. With a dagger as the vertical bar, the motif is Masonic.



21. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

DISCOID & HEART

A round disc or variation thereof is an ancient form found in Celtic areas, but it has been adopted by others throughout the South, often in folk markers. These modern, manufactured interpretations are unexpected finds.



22. Houston County, Forest Lawn Cemetery

A heart shape is a form of discoid. The marker itself must be carved or formed in this shape. A heart motif engraved on a stone or applied to a marker would not qualify as a heart type.



23. Houston County, Forest Lawn Cemetery

LOW MONUMENT

Low monuments are raised off the ground more than ledgers, often have shaped tops, are rarely inscribed, and have no head or foot stone. The concrete body shapes below could be considered folk low monument types.



24. Cherokee County, Selman-Rourke Cemetery

Because the marker below has no headstone and is only a few inches above the ground, it is a low monument type. It resembles a bed with the 'pillow' at the head. If there were no pillow and the 'bed' were higher, it could be called a box type.



25. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

BOLSTER

A bolster is a cylindrical shape, a form of pillow.



26. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

A bolster may appear on a variety of other types, here on a desk face and a log atop a pedestal.



27. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery



28. Cherokee County, Mt. Zion Methodist Cemetery

DESK & WEDGE

As the names suggest, this type has a slanted face, typically covered with a scroll or book. The desk top may be near the ground or on a pedestal. A wedge is a low, horizontal shape with the slanted face.



29. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*



30. *Houston County, Helton Cemetery*



31. *Nacogdoches County, Mast Cemetery*

BODY STONES (GRAVE COVERS)

When permanent grave covers exist in combination with headstones, they are called body stones and are technically not low monuments because they are only a component of a multi-part grave marker. Convex concrete, metal, or fiberglass body stones are a defining characteristic of East Texas graveyards.



32. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

FLOWER BOXES/CRADLES

Popular in Victorian times, the dirt within the flower box was often planted with flowers, hence the name. The stones forming the perimeter rectangle are called curbs and outline an individual or family grave plot.



33. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

FLOWER BOXES/CRADLES (CONT.)

Small flower boxes for children are called cradles due to the similar shape.



34. *Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery*

BENCH/EXEDRA

An exedra is a Greek term for a semi-circular, outdoor seat or bench. That form is typically only in elaborate, expensive marker. A straight bench as an integral component of a marker is more often used in areas like Deep East Texas.



35. *Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery*

BOX, CHEST, & TABLE

Shaped like their names, these types are usually false crypts – the body is buried below ground. Variations may be shaped like a bed, coffin, or sarcophagus. They usually have a top or lid. There is no exact height that differentiates a low monument from a box.

Box Markers



36. San Augustine County, San Augustine City Cemetery



37. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

BOX, TABLE & CHEST (CONT.)

Although the shape below looks like a box or chest, it is considered a table because the top stands after the side panels are removed. A true chest type has joined side and end panels, all supporting the structure, rather than corner blocks alone supporting the top.

Table Marker



38. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

Chest Tomb



39. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

PEDESTAL

Rectangular, cylindrical, or cuboid blocks, often stacked, that may be topped with urns, lamps, drapery, statuary, or other elements. Variations include broken column, vaulted obelisk, truncated obelisk, and pointed obelisk. In the late 1800s/early 1900s, hollow zinc (called white bronze) markers manufactured primarily in Bridgeport, Connecticut were popular particularly in pedestal styles because they appeared impressive, yet were cheaper than stone. The color ranges from light gray to greenish blue.

Pointed Obelisk
(White Bronze)



40. Houston County
Glenwood Cemetery

Vaulted Obelisk
Topped with Urn



41. Houston County,
Glenwood Cemetery

PEDESTAL (CONT.)

The obelisk below ends before the typical point, thus is called a truncated obelisk. It is also called a vaulted obelisk because the top shape supporting the urn resembles a cathedral's vaulted ceiling.

**Unadorned
Vaulted Obelisk**



42. *Nacogdoches County,
Fairview Cemetery*

**Folk Native Stone
Pedestal**



43. *Cherokee County, Old
Palestine Cemetery*

Cuboid Pedestal

Pedestals may consist of a single shaft or a series of graduated, stacked components. Cuboid pedestals look more like blocks, and, as the name indicates, they support upper segments. This one is topped by a temple form pediment.



44. *Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery*

SCULPTURE

Sculpture may be free-standing or attached to bases, pedestals, or frames. They usually depict human or angel forms, but may be objects or abstract. Although traditionally they are one-of-a-kind carvings, they may be mass produced. Certain 'stock' figures, such as a girl dropping flowers and uniformed soldiers, are in cemeteries countrywide.

Sculpture – Figures

Sculpture types are the grave markers, not objects placed on a grave in addition to a headstone.



45 & 46. *Houston County, Corinth Cemetery*

Sculpture – Shapes & Objects



47. *Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery*

SCULPTURE (CONT.)**Sculpture – Shapes & Objects**

Two Texas state sculptures, one manufactured and the other a concrete folk marker, are recognizable objects, while the folk shape fashioned from concrete pavers is artistic.



48. Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery



49. Houston County, Rocky Mount Cemetery



50. Houston County, McKelvey Cemetery

SCULPTURE (CONT.)

Tree Forms

Shaped like tree trunks, stumps, logs, or limbs, this type is easy to recognize. Contrary to popular belief, markers of this type do not necessarily indicate membership in the Woodmen of the World fraternal organization. WOW markers have the organization's emblem.



51. Cherokee County, Mt. Zion Methodist Cemetery



52. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

SCULPTURE (CONT.)**Tree Forms (cont.)**

Several tree forms are technically pedestals as well, and the one below is topped with bolster logs. Twigs outline the text panel.



53. Houston County, Mount Vernon Cemetery

CRYPTS & VAULTS

The Deep East Texas region has some above-ground, box, curved, or barrel-vaulted brick crypts, often covered with a layer of stucco. In some cases, gravesites were dug, lined with brick or stone, and the above-ground structure was built. The plot could have been intended for single or multiple burials. As family members died, their wooden coffins were placed in the horizontal shaft. Natural deterioration allowed subsequent burials to be stacked on top. In other cases, caskets were allowed above ground when covered by a substantial 'house'.

CRYPTS & VAULTS (CONT.)



54. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

Some of these are false crypts and merely cover a traditional underground burial. It is not always possible to determine whether a crypt is a false one simply by looking at the exterior. In most parts of the U.S., 20th Century laws prohibit above-ground burials even with structures such as these.

TUMULUS, MAUSOLEUM, CAIRN

Tumulus

A tumulus is a mound of earth, sometimes including stones, covering one or more graves. A tumulus is akin to Native American mounds.



55. *Cherokee County, Caddo Mounds State Historic Site*

TUMULUS, MAUSOLEUM, CAIRN (CONT.)

Mausoleum

A mausoleum is usually designed by an architect and is a free-standing building that contains the bodies of the deceased in wall or floor vaults. Structures with front and partial sides built of stone or brick and covered in the back and most of the sides with dirt and/or stones may be called a mausoleum or a tumulus – the former if the building would be free-standing without the earth embankment or the latter if not.



56. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

Cairn

If there is a mound primarily of stones, it is called a cairn, often associated with people of Celtic ancestry. In Deep East Texas it is much more common to see native stone, gravel, or other materials in a thick layer over the burial. This grave appears to have been covered with stones at one time and now has traditional head and foot stones.



57. *Houston County, Enon Cemetery*

VERMONT MARBLE

PLAIN



CARVED



ARTISTIC CHURCH YARD SLABS

In White Clouded Rutland Vermont Marble Only

THE quaint old "Church Yard Slab" style of monument possesses a certain element of charm and simplicity which gives it a warm spot on the hearts of all. This style of stone after many centuries will retain its hold and is growing more and more in popular favor amongst admirers of the quiet and unostentatious who find great satisfaction in its simple beauty. Its broad plain surface is exceptionally well adapted for a military or fraternal emblem and there is ample space for inscribing about any epitaph in verse letters.

A selection of military and fraternal emblems will be found on page 26. For verses and epitaphs suitable for inscribing on monuments, see page 22.

PLAIN CHURCH YARD SLABS As Shown at Left

ONE face of main block is polished. Back, top and edges are sand finished. Mortised into base two inches. Base is all sand rubbed finish. Furnished in White Clouded Vermont Marble only.

- Total Height, 3 feet 8 inches
- Main Block—1 foot 8 inches wide; 2 inches thick; 3 feet high.
Base—1 foot 10 inches wide; 10 inches thick; 8 inches high.
Shipping Weight, 240 pounds.
- 23 A 0186—White Clouded Vermont Marble \$17.50
Total Height, 3 feet 8 inches
- Main Block—1 foot 8 inches wide; 2 inches thick; 3 feet high.
Base—1 foot 10 inches wide; 10 inches thick; 8 inches high.
Shipping Weight, 240 pounds.
- 23 A 0188—White Clouded Vermont Marble \$23.00
Total Height, 3 feet 8 inches
- Main Block—1 foot 8 inches wide; 4 inches thick; 3 feet high.
Base—1 foot 10 inches wide; 1 foot thick; 8 inches high.
Shipping Weight, 270 pounds.
- 23 A 0190—White Clouded Vermont Marble \$28.00

CARVED CHURCH YARD SLABS

As shown at left. Polished front. Top, edges and back of main block fine sand rubbed finish. Mortised two inches into the base. Base all sand rubbed finish. Carved clasped hands symbol of parting and of greeting, raised one-half inch in panel 7 x 4 1/2 inches. Supplied in White Clouded Vermont Marble only.

- Total Height, 3 feet 8 inches
- Main Block—1 foot 8 inches wide; 2 inches thick; 3 feet high.
Base—1 foot 10 inches wide; 10 inches thick; 8 inches high.
Shipping Weight, 240 pounds.
- 23 A 0192—White Clouded Vermont Marble \$26.00
Total Height, 3 feet 8 inches
- Main Block—1 foot 8 inches wide; 2 inches thick; 3 feet high.
Base—1 foot 10 inches wide; 10 inches thick; 8 inches high.
Shipping Weight, 240 pounds.
- 23 A 0194—White Clouded Vermont Marble \$31.50
Total Height, 3 feet 8 inches
- Main Block—1 foot 8 inches wide; 4 inches thick; 3 feet high.
Base—1 foot 10 inches wide; 1 foot thick; 8 inches high.
Shipping Weight, 270 pounds.
- 23 A 0196—White Clouded Vermont Marble \$36.00

Adapted from 1929 Sears grave marker catalog, page 12

SECTION 2 – ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Styles popular during one time period in the Northeast U.S. often appeared a decade or two later in the South and West. ‘High style’ markers and mausolea are less common in rural areas and markers in outlying areas may contain fewer and less elaborate design elements.



58. Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery

Architectural styles, particularly as expressed in grave markers, are often combinations of two or more styles, thus are difficult to categorize. The one below has elements of three styles: a vaulted obelisk (Egyptian), a Gothic temple nave, and a Classical urn on top.



59. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

EGYPTIAN REVIVAL

A few years after Napoleon's 1798-99 forays into Egypt, all things Egyptian became popular, even in cemeteries. And the fad revived after each major archaeological find, such as the excavation of King Tutankhamen's tomb. Typical elements are a shape like the entrance to a pharaoh's tomb, lashed papyrus stalks, lotus blossoms, and a sun disk (wings on either side of an orb topped by a cobra). Markers shaped like obelisks and sarcophagi were other forms of Egyptian Revival in the early 1900s.



60. Houston County, McCarter Cemetery

CLASSICAL REVIVAL

After the Revolutionary War, Americans wanted to associate the new country with ancient Greek and Roman cultural ideals and adopted design features related to classicism – swags, festoons, busts and figures sculpted in low relief. Classical styles again came into vogue about 1850 and remained popular through the early 1900s. Typical elements include urns, Corinthian columns, drapery, arches, shell shapes (called coquillage), draped figures, temple forms.



61. Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery



62. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

GOTHIC REVIVAL

Pointed window and door arches, quatrefoil (club) shapes, grand spires, cross vaulted naves, and flying buttresses characterize this style often chosen for church architecture.



63. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

Although the overall style below is Art Deco, the windows are Gothic pointed arches.



64. *Nacogdoches County, Christian Cemetery*

GREEK REVIVAL

Typically exhibiting a gable front, pediment, and Doric columns, the style was particularly popular in the South. It often incorporates laurel wreaths, a symbol of victory to the ancient Greeks, in the decoration.



65. *Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery*

ART DECO

Popular in the 1920s-1940s, Art Deco featured geometric shapes, inlaid designs, and borrowed from many styles to express features such as the classical acanthus leaves below in unusual forms like this angular rather than curved urn.



66. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

DEEP EAST TEXAS GRAVE MARKERS

RUSTIC

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, American architects designed the built environment to reflect nature, rusticing stone to appear naturally rough-hewn.



67. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

In grave markers as in buildings, rustic style incorporates log construction.



68. Houston County, Weches Cemetery

MODERN/CONTEMPORARY

Characterized by a restrained use of ornamentation and modern interpretations of traditional decorative elements, contemporary style marker expressions range from streamlined elegant to utilitarian.



69. Houston County, Connor Cemetery

This contemporary marker uses irregularly shaped tile, a non-traditional tombstone material, as well as a modern, simple artistic design.



70. Houston County, Weches Cemetery

FOLK

Folk or 'homemade' styles (also called vernacular) are more related to economic status and to ethnic or cultural concepts than to a particular design. Made of wood, concrete, brick, stone, metal, or other easily available and inexpensive materials, they may include everyday and cast-away items such as tile or glass pieces, pebbles, marbles, and shells.



71. Houston County, Forest Lawn Cemetery

The Deep East Texas area is rich in folk grave markers with a wide variety showing unusual use of materials and interesting artistic features. Examples include hand lettering, crosses, religious shrines or reliquary, hearts, and birds.



72. Houston County, Campbell Cemetery

FOLK (CONT.)

Types are most often tablets and concrete is the typical material used. Crosses are frequently the sole motif, like this one made of tile squares. Often designs are molded into the concrete. Occasionally the entire marker has been painted, but more often in East Texas the inscription is painted.



73. *Houston County, Jasper Cemetery*



74. *Sabine County, Gasby New Zion Cemetery*



75. *Houston County, Old Cedar Cemetery*

FOLK (CONT.)

This unusual Plexiglas marker with etched flowers is a refreshing, well crafted, modern folk marker.



76. Houston County, Forest Lawn Cemetery

The unique wire structure below resembles a circus tent or Victorian conservatory, and is reminiscent of less elaborate grave houses erected to cover burials in the pioneer South.



77. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

FOLK (CONT.)

Folk traditions extend to burial practices and burial plot decoration and delineation. Graves are often adorned with gravel, shells, religious statuary, and personal mementos, sometimes called 'grave goods', usually tied to African-American or Hispanic cultural identity. Traditionally, grave goods were items belonging to the deceased such as bottles, cups, clocks, and even bed frames.



78. Houston County, McKelvey Cemetery



79. Houston County, Mexican Cemetery



80. Houston County, Connor Cemetery

Items that were not owned by the deceased and are placed on graves are more properly called decorations than 'grave goods'.

BARRE GRANITE

GLENROCK MARKERS

GRAY Barre Granite Markers to match the **GLENROCK** monument pictured below have smooth hammered finish tops and all four sides set in the natural rock face. Lettering is extra. See pages 30 and 31.

Number	Length	Width	Height	Ship. wt.	
23 A 0418	18 inches	8 inches	8 inches	225 pounds	\$12.00
23 A 0419	22 inches	8 1/2 inches	10 inches	215 pounds	\$14.25
23 A 0416	24 inches	8 1/2 inches	17 inches	336 pounds	\$16.50



THE "GLENROCK"

THE "GLENROCK"

Gray Barre Granite

THE massive ruggedness of surface and form, seemingly as everlasting as the granite hills of Vermont themselves, makes this family memorial peculiarly adapted to stand sentinel over the resting place of the departed and to insure the respect and honor of countless generations to come.

Main Block and Base are of light Barre Granite, all in the natural or rustic rock face finish except the beveled upper surface of the Base and the panel for the family name, which appears on the front only. These are hammered to a smooth, dull finish.

Lettering is extra. See pages 30 and 31 for prices. The picture shows the round top hammered raised letter for the family name in panel, but a sunk letter can be used if preferred. A rock faced marker with smooth hammered top to match the Glenrock monument is shown in the illustration. See prices for markers above at right.

Total Height, 3 feet 8 inches

Main Block—3 feet wide; 1 foot thick; 2 feet 6 inches high.
Base—3 feet 10 inches wide; 1 foot 10 inches thick; 1 foot 2 inches high.
 Shipping Weight, 2800 pounds.

23 A 0408—Gray Barre Granite..... **\$165.00**

Total Height, 4 feet

Main Block—3 feet 4 inches wide; 1 foot 7 inches thick; 2 feet 10 inches high.
Base—4 feet 2 inches wide; 2 feet thick; 1 foot 2 inches high.
 Shipping Weight, 3700 pounds.

23 A 0409—Gray Barre Granite..... **\$215.00**

Total Height, 4 feet 2 inches

Main Block—3 feet 8 inches wide; 1 foot 4 inches thick; 3 feet high.
Base—4 feet 8 inches wide; 2 feet 4 inches thick; 1 foot 2 inches high.
 Shipping Weight, 4900 pounds.

23 A 0410—Gray Barre Granite..... **\$245.00**

Total Height, 4 feet 6 inches

Main Block—4 feet wide; 1 foot 6 inches thick; 3 feet 2 inches high.
Base—5 feet wide; 2 feet 4 inches thick; 1 foot 4 inches high.
 Shipping Weight, 6200 pounds.

23 A 0411—Gray Barre Granite..... **\$300.00**

Total Height, 4 feet 10 inches

Main Block—4 feet 6 inches wide; 1 foot 8 inches thick; 3 feet 6 inches high.
Base—5 feet 8 inches wide; 2 feet 10 inches thick; 1 foot 4 inches high.
 Shipping Weight, 8500 pounds.

23 A 0412—Gray Barre Granite..... **\$396.00**

Adapted from 1929 Sears grave marker catalog, page 22

SECTION 3 – GRAVE MARKER MOTIFS

Interpretation of symbols depends on their use in combination with other elements, the context of the time period, place, and culture, and the viewer's perspective. Much of our fascination with grave markers comes from the fact that meanings are not set in stone. An anthropologist may see different symbolism in a particular motif than would an art historian.



81. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Motif meaning is often speculative and may vary by ethnicity, religion, and other factors specific to the individual burial. It is very possible that many markers were chosen simply because the buyers liked the decorative elements rather than for any particular symbolism. And, after the advent of mass production, rural residents of modest means were limited to what was commercially available and affordable, including Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog offerings. Such 'stock' designs likely carried no special meaning for the buyers.

ANIMALS – BIRDS

Birds and lambs are the most frequently seen animal images. Doves carry a slightly different meaning (innocence, purity, peace) than other birds, but it is often difficult to determine if a bird on a marker is a dove. In a religious connotation, the dove is a symbol for the Holy Spirit. The dove is a traditional motif in several cultures including German and Mexican.

Doves

The dove alighting may indicate the soul at peace or the Holy Spirit bringing peace to the mourners.



82. *Houston County, Latexo Cemetery*

A dove in flight equates to the soul winging its way to heaven. The bird in flight with a bud, leaf, or flower in its beak symbolizes flight of a young 'budding' or beautiful soul to heaven.



83. *Cherokee County, Selman-Rourke Cemetery*

ANIMALS – BIRDS (CONT.)**Doves (cont.)**

A dove in flight with an olive branch symbolizes the soul at peace or the Holy Spirit bringing peace.



84. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

A 'wounded' bird (one wing up and one down) motif indicates sorrow, a 'mourning' dove.



85. Houston County, Tyer Cemetery

ANIMALS – BIRDS (CONT.)

Doves (cont.)

The bird on a cross symbolizes the soul winging its way to heaven on Christian faith.



86. *Nacogdoches County, Christian Cemetery*

Eagles

A double-headed eagle with a crown and the number 33 is the insignia for a 33rd degree Mason. Eagle wings with a shield is the symbol for the U.S. Army.

Animals – Lambs

Some carvings of lambs look more like cattle or dogs, in part due to deterioration of the stone or quality of the carving.



87. *Houston County, English Cemetery*

ANIMALS – BIRDS (CONT.)**Animals – Lambs (cont.)**

Lambs are almost always on children's graves and indicate innocence. In a religious context, lambs represent children's souls in the care of Christ, the Good Shepherd.



88. Houston County, Old Zion Cemetery

Animals – Other

Other animals on markers usually indicate a particular favorite pet of the deceased, such as a cat, dog, or horse. Sometimes a sports team mascot (Texas longhorn, for example) or animal symbol of an organization appears on a marker.



89. Nacogdoches County, Alazan Cemetery

ANIMALS – BIRDS (CONT.)

Animals – Other (cont.)

In this case, the wildcat with armored tank treads for paws is the insignia of a military unit.



90. *Houston County, Corinth Cemetery*

A rooster symbolizes vigilance. It can also be a caution for Christians to be watchful, a reference to Christ telling Peter that a cock would crow after he denied being a follower of Christ. Since a hen is also on this marker, here it may simply mean the deceased raised chickens.



91. *Houston County, Post Oak Cemetery*

ETHNIC

While Southern graveyards typically feature family plots, often outlined with brick or concrete curbing or metal fences, grave layout can indicate ethnicity. German cemeteries are generally divided in straight lines with plots for couples, rather than larger family groups. In traditional German burials, the husband is to the left of the wife – the opposite of most other ethnic groups.



92. Nacogdoches County, Mast Cemetery

Non-German cemeteries or sections are less rigidly geometric, sometimes even haphazard. Hispanic, African-Americans, or other groups that comprise a minority of burials in a multi-ethnic graveyard are usually concentrated in one corner or section. Dirt mounds maintained long after burial are traditional in certain African, Mexican, and Native American cultures.



93. Houston County, Mt. Moriah Cemetery

ETHNIC (CONT.)

Occasionally ethnicity can be determined from a marker, usually a folk marker. Some ethnic groups are so closely tied to a particular religion that determining what is ethnic versus what is religious is almost impossible. Celtic crosses, found in Catholic and non-Catholic cemeteries, are sometimes on graves for people of Scots-Irish descent. Latin crosses are abundant in Catholic cemeteries as well as on Hispanic graves. Wooden crosses with painted angels are popular in many East Texas African-American cemeteries.



94. Houston County, New Hope Cemetery



95. Houston County, Forest Lawn Cemetery

ETHNIC (CONT.)

Several area markers have Spanish inscriptions, this one *“Como un recuerdo de sus padres y hermanos,”* meaning that the marker was placed in remembrance of their parents and brothers.



96. *Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery*

The plot below includes a Madonna figurine in a recessed arch, frequently seen on Hispanic Catholic graves.



97. *Nacogdoches County, Procella Cemetery*

ETHNIC (CONT.)

The folk cross below retains the funeral home metal marker showing the surname Zapata.



98. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

A cross within a cross is frequently on Hispanic graves.



99. Houston County, Evergreen Memorial Cemetery

ETHNIC (CONT.)

Sometimes ethnic background is stated on a marker as on this one: "Born in Germany".



100. Nacogdoches County, Mast Cemetery

Native American ancestry is occasionally shown on a marker.



101. Houston County, Enon Cemetery

ETHNIC (CONT.)

Some motifs appear to be Native American even though there is no explicit mention of ethnicity on the marker.



102. Houston County, Guiceland Cemetery

Upright wheat is a symbol of Ukrainian heritage, as Ukraine is considered the breadbasket of Europe. The upright and growing stalks also symbolize immigrants thriving in the new country. This person is of Czech descent; the wheat could refer to his time as an agriculture teacher.



103. Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery

FIGURES & BODY PARTS

Representation of various figures and body parts, most frequently hands, is common on markers. Some of the earliest extant markers in New England have skulls, sometimes with crossbones. In Puritan times, death was considered an event to prepare for, rather than a time to memorialize the deceased. Skulls symbolize mortality, death – a ‘dust to dust’ concept. Over time, skulls and crossbones were replaced by faces, some winged. The face represents the soul and wings indicate flight of the soul heavenward. This folk marker appears to have a winged soul motif; however, the maker could have intended it to be an angel.



104. *Nacogdoches County, Gravel Ridge Cemetery*

Figures – Angels

Angels are considered God’s messengers and guardians of the dead and are classified by category: grave guardians, pointing, praying, recording, soul-bearing, trumpeting, and warrior. Depictions of certain activities have specific meanings. An angel with a trumpet is the Angel Gabriel ready to announce the Resurrection, while one holding a book is showing the way to heaven through scripture.

FIGURES & BODY PARTS (CONT.)

Figures – Angels (cont)

The guardian angel below is cradling the heart-shaped marker symbolizing protection of the deceased.



105. Houston County, Concord Cemetery

Guardian angels also protect graves and perform ministering functions. This angel is placing flowers on the grave of the deceased.



106. Nacogdoches County, Mast Cemetery

FIGURES & BODY PARTS (CONT.)

Figures – Angels (cont)

An angel pointing up indicates the deceased is not in the grave, but has 'gone to heaven'.



107. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Angels with hands clasped are in prayer even when their eyes are open and gazing upward. Old Testament passages refer to angels as interceding for the dead and describe angels as praying on behalf of those under their care.



108. Houston County, Augusta Cemetery

FIGURES & BODY PARTS (CONT.)

Figures – Angels (cont)

The recording angel below is writing the deceased's name in the Book of Life so the soul will be admitted into Heaven.



109. San Augustine County, San Augustine City Cemetery

The soul-bearing angel below is carrying the deceased child (soul) to heaven.



110. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

FIGURES & BODY PARTS (CONT.)

Figures – Cherubs

Angelic, childlike forms without wings, usually on graves of children, indicate innocence. Cherubs are either nude or lightly draped.



111. Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery

Figures – Cupid

With an appearance similar to a cherub, Cupid, the ancient Roman god of love, is always depicted with a bow or arrow.



112. Houston County, Denson Cemetery

Figures – Effigies

Effigies are human forms with various meanings, most often representing the soul. The sleeping child effigy symbolizes a soul at peace, asleep in Jesus, and in eternal slumber.

FIGURES & BODY PARTS (CONT.)

Figures – Mythological and Folkloric

The marker below has carved figures, sometimes called imps, which assist with funeral tasks such as carrying the pall. Although often depicted with wings, imps can be distinguished from cherubs by the activities performed and by their appearance in combination with other mythical figures.



113. Houston County, Corinth Cemetery

Figures – Humans

The grieving cowboy kneeling at a cross is a Texas version of praying for the soul of the dead.



114. Houston County, Golden Gate Cemetery

Female mourners are sometimes shown face down over the marker, and others have visible tears on a sad face. Most carry a garland of flowers indicating sorrow.

FIGURES & BODY PARTS (CONT.)

Parts – Eye

The “All Seeing Eye” is part of Masonic symbolism (Masonic and Odd Fellows) and signifies the omnipotence and watchfulness of God.



115. *Houston County, Chaffin Cemetery*

Parts – Finger Pointing

A hand with index finger pointing up indicates the deceased’s soul has gone to heaven “home”.



116. *Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery*

FIGURES & BODY PARTS (CONT.)

Parts – Finger Pointing (cont.)

This motif is sometimes shown with the left hand or with the palm facing out. There is no consensus that the meaning is different.



117. *Nacogdoches County, Mast Cemetery*

Parts – Hand

A hand reaching down from the clouds is the Hand of God, in this case removing the deceased from his earthly bonds, breaking the family ties.



118. *Cherokee County, Selman-Rourke Cemetery*

FIGURES & BODY PARTS (CONT.)

Parts – Hand With Cross

A hand holding a cross symbolizes Christian faith and hope of eternal life.



119. *Nacogdoches County, Swift Cemetery*

Parts – Handclasp

Handclasps mean married love. A handshake shows a firm grip with thumb and fingers of one person clearly visible around the other's hand, while a clasp has little of one person's fingers showing. Handshakes and clasps usually depict typical male clothing on one sleeve and female dress on the other.



120. *Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery*

FIGURES & BODY PARTS (CONT.)

Parts – Handshake

Handshakes can mean goodbye or friendship. If both have male sleeves, this symbol is fraternal, usually Odd Fellows or occasionally Masonic; if one hand has billowing clouds around it, it is the Hand of God pulling the soul to heaven.



121. *Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery*

A handshake with one finger pointing down indicates that the person named below (and the one not pointing) is the deceased.



122. *Houston County, Connor Cemetery*

Hands reaching toward each other indicate parting of loved ones. A hand reaching down from above represents the hand of God taking the soul. Hands clasped in prayer have an obvious religious symbolism. Hands of one person folded one over the other indicates the deceased at peace. This motif will have identical clothing on both sleeves.

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

Most modern emblems for fraternal organizations usually include the name.

Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scout emblem features an eagle with a shield inside a fleur-de-lis with the motto “Be Prepared” inscribed across a banner at the bottom. Founded in 1910, the Scouts’ motif symbolizes the loyalty to God and country contained in their Oath.



123. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

Colonial Dames XVII Century

Based in Washington, D.C., the organization is open to women with an ancestor who lived and served prior to 1701 in one of the 13 original U.S. colonies. It is a historical research and education society.



124. *Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery*

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)

Daughters of the American Revolution

With goals similar to the Colonial Dames, the DAR extends membership to women who descend from an ancestor who aided the cause of American independence from England. Their symbol is a wheel containing 13 spokes with 13 stars around the perimeter, symbolizing the unity and progress of the colonies.



125. Nacogdoches County, Chireno Lower Cemetery

Daughters of the Republic of Texas

Open to women descendants of a person who served Texas prior to its 1846 annexation into the U.S., the organization encourages historical research and preservation of historic sites. Their emblem is similar to the Texas State Seal and has a five-pointed star surrounded by oak leaves on the left and olive leaves on the right, all within a double circle. Oak leaves symbolize strength and honor and olive leaves connote peace.



126. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)

Knights of Pythias

Formed in 1864, the Order's goal was to achieve peace through understanding. The initials of their motto, "Friendship, Charity, and Benevolence," appear in their symbol – a triangular shield below a knight's helmet.



127. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

International Order of Odd Fellows

The Odd Fellows symbol is three chain links, each containing an initial of their motto, "Faith, Love, Truth." Some IOOF markers have two crossed shepherd's crooks indicating the organization is watching over its 'flock' or members. Its women's corollary, the Rebekahs, uses a vertical crescent holding 7 stars beside a dove and an olive branch.



128. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)

Lions Club

A service organization founded in 1917, the club focuses on preventing blindness. Their emblem is a circle with an outward facing lion profile on each side and the initial 'L' in the center. In the example below, the word 'Lions' is at the top of the circle.



129. Houston County, Hill Cemetery

Masons – AFAM (Ancient Free & Accepted Masons)

Known as the Masons or Freemasons, the letters AFAM are rarely used on grave markers.



130. Houston County, McKelvey Cemetery

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)**Masons – AFAM (Ancient Free & Accepted
Masons) (cont.)**

The most frequently seen Masonic symbols are the square and compasses symbolizing that members are to be circumspect and square in their dealings. The G within the interstice of the square and compasses stands for God and geometry.



131. Houston County, Patton Cemetery

Other tools sometimes seen on markers are the plumb, mallet, chisel, spade, trowel – each linked to a particular level or degree in the organization as well as to a character trait. Masons who attained the 33rd Degree have a double eagle motif.

Masons – Mark Master

The keystone shape is the insignia of a Mark Master level and the letters H, T, W, S, S, T, K, S stand for “Hiram the widow’s son sent to King Solomon,” a reference to a Biblical passage about the master craftsman who created the metal décor for Solomon’s Temple.



132. San Augustine County, San Augustine City Cemetery

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)

Optimist International

A volunteer organization helping children reach their potential.



133. *Houston County, Parker Cemetery*

Order of the Eastern Star

Eastern Star is the female auxiliary of the Masons; however, men are now allowed to join. Each segment of their five-pointed star emblem is filled with a different color and signifies the essence of the five degrees. Within each ray of the star is a symbol for one of five Biblical heroines. Adah (blue), the daughter who sacrificed herself, is symbolized by a veil and represents the lesson of duty and obedience; Ruth (gold), the widow who gathered wheat, by a sheaf and the lesson of honor and justice; Esther (white), a Jew chosen as Queen of Persia, by a crown and the lesson of loyalty to family and friends; Martha (green), sister of Lazarus, by a broken column and the lesson of Faith in God; and Electa (red), the mother, by a chalice, the lesson of charity and hospitality.



134. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)**Order of the Eastern Star (cont.)**

Letters 'F.A.T.A.L.' within the star stand for 'Fairest Among Thousands, Altogether Lovely.' The motif at the top of this marker (orb, olive branches, and oak leaves) is a 'stock' carving and does not relate to the Eastern Star.



135. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Sometimes the star has only the letters O.E.S. (Order of the Eastern Star).



136. Houston County, McKelvey Cemetery

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)

Shriners

Affiliated with the Masons, the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine for North America uses an emblem consisting of a scimitar from which hang a crescent and five-pointed star with a sphinx head at the center top of the crescent.



137. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

Sons of the Republic of Texas

Similar to the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and using the same emblem, the Sons group accepts members who descend from a resident of the former Texas Republic.



138. *Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery*

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)

United Confederate Veterans

Some groups, such as the United Confederate Veterans, placed separate metal plaques in the ground near markers rather than applied to the markers. Its successor, Sons of Confederate Veterans has a similar medallion, also using the Ionic Cross known as the Southern Cross of Honor.



139. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Veterans of Foreign Wars

A member service organization for U.S. veterans, the emblem shows an eagle with wings spread (similar to the seal of the U.S. and the insignia of several military branches) inside a circle containing the VFW name. A stylized sunburst encircles the perimeter.



140. Nacogdoches County, Chireno Lower Cemetery

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)

Woodmen of the World

Deep East Texas cemeteries hold numerous WOW markers. Initially the organization provide a death and marker benefit. Later, markers were provided only for an added payment, and eventually markers were not part of membership benefits.



141. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

The lumberman's tools – axe, beetle (maul or sledge), and wedge – are usually depicted right side up and the significance of the upside down tools is undetermined. The tree base often has carved woodland plants such as ferns and ivy.



142. Cherokee County, Mt. Zion Methodist Cemetery

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)

Woodmen of the World (cont.)



143. *Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery*

Although tree trunk markers are associated with the WOW, the shape was not mandatory.



144. *Houston County, Creek Cemetery*



145. *Houston County, Rockland Cemetery*

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS (CONT.)

Woodmen of the World (cont.)

WOW markers have organizational emblems, traditionally a tree stump withing a circle with their motto at the base. The Latin phrase, "Dum Tacet Clamat," translates to "though silent he speaks." Tree markers for non-WOW members will not have this emblem.



146. Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery

The emblem below is for the women's auxiliary organization, the Supreme Forest Woodmen Circle, and has a shield with stars and stripes plus the axe, beetle, wedge and letters SFWC.



147. Houston County, Corinth Cemetery

MILITARY

Although the U.S. government issues standardized markers for U.S. veterans, some families choose to purchase customized markers. Certain motifs rarely appear on a non-military marker: flag, eagle, sword, shield, rifle, cannon.

Flags

A flag symbolizes liberty and loyalty. Both markers below are for soldiers killed in World War I.



148. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

A draped flag indicates the deceased was killed in action. In a military context, upright torches signify vigilance.



149. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

MILITARY (CONT.)

Civil War

Confederate soldiers originally received markers from the states they served, thus the motifs are not consistent. Usually CSA soldiers had a tablet of this shape with an Ionic (or Southern) cross. The one below appears to be a recent issue in the current style used by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.



150. Houston County, Beeson-Box Cemetery

Because the marker below has an extra inscription, a feature not provided by the VA, it appears to be an original marker.



151. Sabine County, McMahan's Chapel Cemetery

MILITARY (CONT.)**Civil War (cont.)**

The CSA marker below for a Tennessee infantryman differs slightly from the ones preceding in that the dates are years only. The “MUS” indicates that the soldier was a musician. Some Texas markers include periods after the C.S.A. and some have no dates, deviations that may have varied according to the company producing the markers or the information provided by the person requesting the marker. In the last few decades, organizations such as the Sons of Confederate Veterans have attempted to identify and obtain markers for all Confederate veterans.



152. Houston County, Cedar Point Cemetery

Union soldiers received markers with raised lettering inside a recessed U.S. shield. This veteran served in a Pennsylvania regiment.



153. Houston County, Bynum Cemetery

MILITARY (CONT.)

Rifles and Swords

Crossed rifles usually indicate infantry service and that the deceased was killed while serving. Swords crossed may recognize a person of high rank or could also mean killed in battle. Crossed swords behind a Bible indicate chaplain service.



154. *Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery*

Shield and Eagle

The shield and eagle wings below are on a marker for a soldier killed in World War I. The shield indicates strength and courage and the eagle wings show courage, faith, and generosity. Both are components of the U.S. and its military service branches' insignia.



155. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

OBJECTS

Several objects have religious or other symbolism that may not be readily apparent. For that reason, they are shown in this section.

Anchor

An anchor rarely indicates the deceased is a sailor. It is an ancient symbol of hope and usually has religious symbolism – hope of eternal life in Christ.



156. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

The anchor over propeller below signifies women's military service in the U.S. Navy. It was used beginning in 1945 for the World War II Women Accepted for Emergency Volunteer Service (WAVES) and Naval Reserves.



157. Houston County, Wesley Chapel

OBJECTS (CONT.)

Arch

The arch symbolizes a portal or passageway to the other side indicating the soul traveling from earth to Heaven. Some also interpret it as triumph and victory in death.



158. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Block, Balanced

While this could simply be an artistic expression, it may also carry a religious connotation that the fate of a person's soul hinges on their earthly Christian foundation.



159. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

OBJECTS (CONT.)**Book Closed**

If 'Holy Bible' is inscribed, the meaning is obviously religious; if it is blank, it could indicate an occupation of teacher, preacher, or scholar.



160. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

Book Closed, Back Cover Up

A closed book with the back cover facing up symbolizes a life finished.



161. *Houston Cemetery, Glenwood Cemetery*

OBJECTS (CONT.)

Book Open

If an open book is a Bible, the words “Holy Bible’ are usually inscribed on it. Otherwise, it likely symbolizes the Book of Life. According to Biblical passages, if a person’s name appears, they will be admitted to Heaven on Judgment Day.



162. Houston Cemetery, Glenwood Cemetery



163. Houston Cemetery, Glenwood Cemetery

OBJECTS (CONT.)**Boots & Hat**

This uniquely Texan motif probably indicates that the deceased has hung up his hat and set aside his boots for the last time – a modern version of the “Put my little shoes away” motif on children’s markers during the Victorian period.



164. *Houston County, Boggs Cemetery*

Buildings

Known as temple forms, markers like the one below represent churches, symbolizing the deceased is held within the faith.



165. *Houston Cemetery, Glenwood Cemetery*

OBJECTS (CONT.)

Buildings (cont.)

A fairly common motif, the group of buildings shown below depicts the “Heavenly City” promised by the Bible (“In my Father’s House are many mansions”) to faithful Christians.



166. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

Curtains Closing

Curtains being drawn on a life ending are expressed with drapery (a veil) on both sides of a central object, here a door. This motif symbolizes passage from one realm to another.



167. *Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery*

OBJECTS (CONT.)

Drapery

Drapery or a shroud connotes mourning or death. It may be on the marker shape itself (e.g. pedestals or crosses) or on other decorative elements such as urns.



168. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Gates

Often referred to as “Gates Ajar” or “Pearly Gates”, these represent the entrance into Heaven.



169. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

OBJECTS (CONT.)

Globe/Orb/Sphere

Orbs or spheres represent the earthly sphere. Sometimes latitude and longitude markings are carved to definitively identify the object as a globe. Another interpretation is the oneness with the universe.



170. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Hourglass

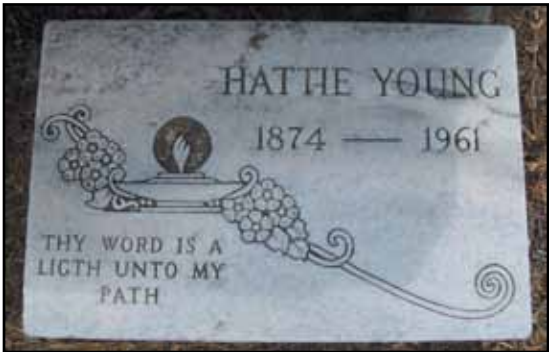
A motif that dates back centuries indicating death and that time on earth has run out.



171. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

OBJECTS (CONT.)**Lamp**

The lamp represents truth, wisdom, God's word illuminated and the flame indicates everlasting life. This marker gives a Biblical reference: "Thy Word is a Light Unto my path." Lamps, called *yahrzeits*, are often on Jewish grave markers.



172. Houston County, Evergreen Memorial

Letters/Words – Cede Deo

"Submit to God" according to this marker.



173. Houston County, Meriwether Cemetery

OBJECTS (CONT.)

Letters/Words – IHS

Latin inscriptions are often found in Catholic cemeteries and the cross in crown has a different connotation for Catholics than for other denominations. In Catholic belief, the motif means eternal life will come to those who stay true to God. The initials IHS stand for the first three Greek letters of IHSUS (Jesus).



174. *Nacogdoches County, Our Lady of Lourdes Cemetery*

OBJECTS (CONT.)**Letters/Words – RIP**

Latin '*Requiescat in Pace*', meaning 'Rest in Peace,'
Usually is shown only by the initials RIP.



175. *San Augustine County, City of San Augustine Cemetery*

Posts, Newel

Representations of the post at a stairway landing occasionally indicate that the deceased was a woodworker. Often stone carvers also worked in wood and used familiar shapes for grave markers. A newel post could also symbolize the end of a long walk culminating at the door of Heaven.



176. *Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery*

OBJECTS (CONT.)

Scroll

Often used as a text plate, a scroll without text refers to scriptures, or in rare cases, to law.



177. Houston County, Forest Lawn Cemetery

Shell

Shells have been used since ancient times to indicate a passage or pilgrimage and rebirth. This one includes a lamb within the shell.



178. Sabine County, McMahan's Chapel Cemetery

OBJECTS (CONT.)**Star**

Likely only a decorative element, this folk marker with six-pointed star could indicate divine guidance or belief in Christ and heavenly wisdom. A five-pointed star, the Star of Bethlehem or of Jacob, symbolizes divine guidance and protection.



179. Houston County, Liveleyville Cemetery

Sunburst

This half sunburst represents the resurrection and rebirth. Some religions consider it a symbol of Christ, the 'light of the world'.



180. Nacogdoches County, Christian Cemetery

OBJECTS (CONT.)

Sunset

A sunset indicates end of a life, death with hope of rising again. Although it is debatable whether some motifs show the sun rising or setting, suns appear to be rising from clouds and setting between hills without clouds.



181. Houston County, Denson Cemetery

Torches

Upright torches indicate immortality, a righteous life, and Christian faith while inverted ones indicate life extinguished.



182. Houston County, Manning Cemetery

OBJECTS (CONT.)**Urn, Draped and Undraped**

Sometimes it is hard to tell if an element is a lamp or an urn. Urns usually have two handles or none and lamps have only one. Urns are a classic symbol of death; drapery indicates mourning.



183. Nacogdoches County, Mast Cemetery



184. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Urn with Flame

Urns with vertical swirls at the top are flamed, meaning eternal vigilance or remembrance.

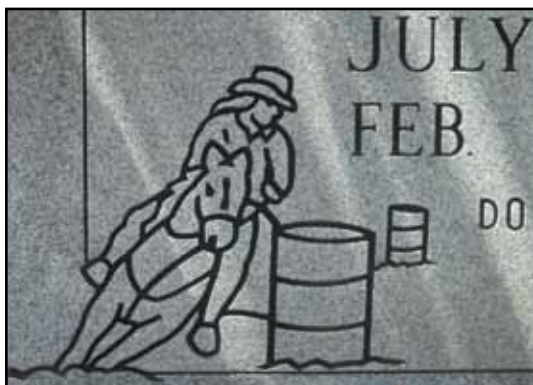


185. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

OCCUPATION/AVOCATION

Occupational or hobby motifs are more frequently seen on modern markers than on historic ones and the meaning is usually obvious. Some in Deep East Texas cemeteries reflect the region's culture – oil, piney woods, cattle ranching, and horses.

Barrel Racer



186. Houston County, Weches Cemetery

Camper

The camper and fishing boat on a lake likely indicate pursuits this couple enjoyed in retirement.



187. Houston County, Latexo Cemetery

OCCUPATION/AVOCATION (CONT.)

Cattleman & Gardener



188. Houston County, Dailey Cemetery

Logger



189. Houston County, Corinth Cemetery

Judge or Lawyer

The Goddess of Justice holding scales and leaning on a stack of books identifies the deceased as a lawyer or judge.

OCCUPATION/AVOCATION (CONT.)

Medical Professionals

Doctors are identified by the Caduceus, two snakes coiled around a staff topped by two wings.



190. *Nacogdoches County, Chireno Lower Cemetery*

The traditional medical symbol, known as the Rod of Asclepius, with only one snake and no wings is less frequently used. The nurse's motif is the Caduceus surrounded by a circle with initials R.N.



191. *Houston County, Hill Cemetery*



192. *Houston County, Hill Cemetery*

OCCUPATION/AVOCATION (CONT.)

Motorcyclist



193. Nacogdoches County, Swift Cemetery

Musician

Musicians' markers sometimes have notes, but more often show the instrument of choice. Amateur and professional musicians and songwriters use both symbols.



194. Houston County, Hill Cemetery

Oil Worker

The derrick and "owner Thunderchief" are self-explanatory.



195. Nacogdoches County, Mast Cemetery

OCCUPATION/AVOCATION (CONT.)

Preacher

Methodist circuit riding preachers may have a metal emblem showing a rider on a horse.

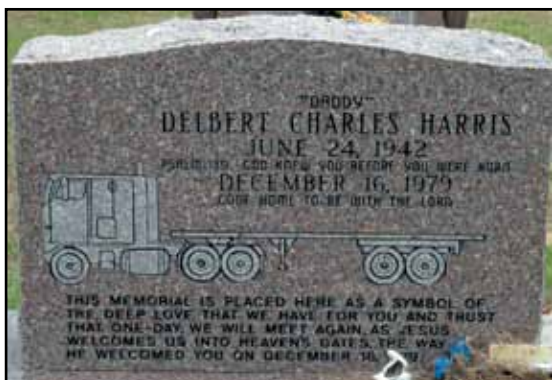


196. Sabine County, McMahan's Chapel Cemetery

Teacher/Writer/Scholar

A stack of books indicates knowledge; usually the deceased was a teacher, writer, or scholar.

Truck Driver



197. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

RELIGIOUS

As expected of a location in the Bible Belt South and with a large Catholic population, Deep East Texas grave markers exhibit considerable religious iconography and inscriptions. Some would say that the very concepts of soul and heaven are religious beliefs. Even doves, lambs, lilies, and olive branches are mentioned in the Bible, thus many symbols used on markers relate to religious heritage. Folk markers in the area exhibit uniquely Texan symbolism such as this wood cross with a lariat indicating the end of the deceased's earthly pursuits.



198. Houston County, Evergreen Memorial Cemetery

RELIGIOUS (CONT.)



199. Nacogdoches County, Our Lady of Lourdes Cemetery

Denominational differences are difficult to distinguish except among the three predominant groups – Catholic, Jews, and Protestants – represented in most cemeteries of the region. Nativity scenes, a crucifix, and depictions of the Holy Family, Christ, or the Virgin Mary generally are only on Catholic markers. Catholic iconography is abundant and the symbolism complex. Some imagery differs by ethnicity. The Star of David is typically reserved for Jewish burials.

RELIGIOUS (CONT.)**Angel at Cross**

This pointing angel (raised hand broken off) with hand over heart is indicating the deceased is in heaven. To Catholics, the cross symbolizes Christ's suffering and the grape leaves on the cross refer to Communion.



200. Houston County, Evergreen Memorial Cemetery

Bible

Open or closed, the Bible symbolizes Christian faith.



201. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

RELIGIOUS (CONT.)

Christ with Broken Heart

Christ is pointing to his heart which is surrounded by rays and thorns and topped by a Latin cross. His other hand is pointing up, indicating that his blood can bring eternal life. This particular symbol is almost always on Catholic grave markers and is considered the sacred heart (Christ within humanity). The rays equate to Christ's love and the thorns are a reminder of the crucifixion.



202. Houston County, Mt. Zion Cemetery

Christ with Child Angel

Because of their innocence, some Protestant denominations believe infants are thought to enter heaven immediately upon death, and here Christ is receiving a tiny angel.



203. Houston County, New Cedar Branch Cemetery

RELIGIOUS (CONT.)**Christ with Crown of Thorns**

This modern interpretation of Christ on the cross with a crown of thorns is a form of crucifix, and, in Catholic iconography, equates to suffering and Christ's sacrifice. The initials "INRI" often are above Christ's head, for the Latin phrase that translates to "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."



204. *Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery*

Cross

A cross in Protestant belief symbolizes Christian faith and hope for eternal life.



205. *Houston County, Davis Cemetery*

RELIGIOUS (CONT.)

Cross – Draped

A draped cross symbolizes Christ's resurrection, i.e. He is gone from the Cross.



206. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

Cross in Crown

The cross in crown motif is the reward of the faithful and symbolizes trading earthly burdens (cross) for a heavenly reward (crown). A crown above a cross indicates Christ's sovereignty. The words "Life, Truth, Love" at the base of the pillars and in the keystone are the motto of Christian Scientists; however, on tombstones the words do not necessarily mean the deceased belonged to that group.



207. *Nacogdoches County, Zion Hill Cemetery*

RELIGIOUS (CONT.)

Cross in Heart

This folk marker likely symbolizes the deceased's Christian faith and love of Christ.



208. Houston County, Mt. Zion Cemetery

Cross – Woman Clinging To

A woman clinging to the cross represents faith and hope of salvation.

Gates

Gates ajar or 'pearly' gates are the entrance to Heaven. They often are in combination with other motifs such as the cross in crown or the finger pointing up to the crown, meaning the deceased has gone to heaven for her reward (crown).



209. Cherokee County, Mt. Zion Methodist

RELIGIOUS (CONT.)

Madonna with Dagger in Heart

Mary with a dagger through her heart symbolizes her sorrow over Christ's death. The flowers are likely Madonna (or Easter) lilies representing Christ's resurrection.



210. *Nacogdoches County, Our Lady of Lourdes Cemetery*

Rosary

A rosary indicates devotion to the Virgin Mary.



211. *Houston County, Mt. Zion Cemetery*

RELIGIOUS (CONT.)**Shrine or Reliquary**

A miniature shrine or reliquary characterizes some Hispanic Catholic graves. Its recessed arch may include a photograph of the deceased, a crucifix, a Madonna, or a combination of these.



212. Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery



213. Houston County, Creek Cemetery

RELIGIOUS (CONT.)

Shrine or Reliquary (cont.)

Although not solely on Hispanic markers, the Madonna is depicted with a blue mantle (representing heaven and spiritual love) more often in Hispanic markers than other ethnic groups.



214. San Augustine County, San Augustine Catholic Cemetery

Star of David

The double triangle forming the Star of David is rarely used for non-Jewish burials. When it appears on non-Jewish markers, it means the Holy Trinity or is part of a Masonic symbol.



215. Houston County, Fodice Cemetery

VEGETATION

Flowers in bouquets, swags, or wreaths symbolize condolences and grief and are offered as a tribute to the deceased. Because they live only a short time, flowers also connote the brevity of human life. As individual motifs, each flower has a separate meaning.



216. Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery

Foliage without a flower indicates sorrow as the beauty is gone. Certain leaves including laurel, oak, and olive have special meanings. Cut sheaves of wheat represent the divine harvest – a life fulfilled. Wreaths and garlands mean victory as they have been since ancient times given to winners of military and athletic contests.

VEGETATION (CONT.)

Flower – Daisy

Daisies are often on children's markers for they signify innocence and simplicity.



217. *Houston County, Bowdoin Cemetery*

Flower – Dogwood

The dogwood flower has the characteristic four petals with indented tips. Religious tradition holds that the tree was used for Christ's cross and the flower tips thereafter show markings of nails that were used to crucify Christ. Dogwoods indicate salvation through Christ's sacrifice.



218. *Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery*

VEGETATION (CONT.)**Flower – Hibiscus, Drooping**

The image conveys sadness and sorrow. This flower, a hibiscus, is rarely seen on markers outside the Pacific islands. Because it is open for less than a day, it symbolizes brevity of life.



219. *Nacogdoches County, Christian Cemetery*

Flower – Lily, Calla

The calla lily symbolizes married love and is usually used only on markers for married women. For unmarried women or children, it means purity.



220. *Houston County, Sheridan Cemetery*

VEGETATION (CONT.)

Flower – Lily, Day

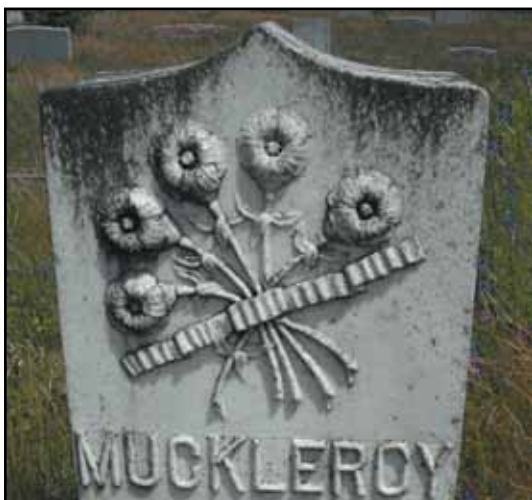
As the name suggests, the daylily indicates the brevity of life.



221. *Houston County, Glenwood Cemetery*

Flower – Lily, Easter (Madonna)

Easter lilies connote purity and innocence and in a religious use are symbolic of the resurrection.



222. *Nacogdoches County, Swift Cemetery*

VEGETATION (CONT.)**Flower – Rose**

The rose symbolizes love, beauty, and condolence. A fully open one may indicate the person died in the prime or fullness of life.



223. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Flower – Rosebud, Broken

Rosebuds are usually on children's markers and a broken one means a young life cut short. Frequently the words "Budded on earth to bloom in Heaven" appear with this motif.



224. Houston County, Center Hill Cemetery

VEGETATION (CONT.)

Flower – Rose through Veil over Globe

This unusual combination of symbols may mean that the soul (rose) has passed through the veil (transparent fabric) between earth (globe) and heaven.



225. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

Flower – Rosette

A rosette at the bottom of this marker is an old decorative element often used by Pennsylvania Dutch (Germans) on tombstones and as 'hex' signs on barns.



226. Nacogdoches County, Alazan Cemetery

VEGETATION (CONT.)**Leaves – Acanthus**

The thorny acanthus leaf has been used as a decorative element since ancient times and is most recognized for its use in the capitals (top sections) of Corinthian columns. Some believe it symbolizes life's difficult journey. Its appearance differs according to the marker style. The first one below shows an Art Deco stylizing and the second one is Classical.



227. Cherokee County, Mt. Zion Methodist Cemetery



228. Houston County, Hagan Cemetery

VEGETATION (CONT.)

Leaves – Fern and Ivy

A fern frond symbolizes humility and sincerity and ivy means faithfulness and friendship. Both are often on the bases of Woodmen of the World tree markers, in this case with a calla lily.



229. Cherokee County, Mt. Zion Methodist Cemetery

Leaves – Laurel

Laurel leaves, particularly when in a wreath (as they usually are), signify victory and immortality because the leaves do not wilt. They are often on soldiers' markers.



230. Houston County, Hayes Cemetery

VEGETATION (CONT.)

Leaves – Maple

Maple leaves typically indicate Canadian birth or citizenship.



231. *Houston County, Evergreen Cemetery*

Leaves – Oak

Oak leaves symbolize maturity, longevity, strength, honor, and the acorns indicate the potential for rebirth, to be grow anew in heaven. Oak leaves are frequently used on military markers.



232. *Nacogdoches County, Cove Springs Cemetery*

VEGETATION (CONT.)

Leaves – Oak & Laurel

A wreath with oak leaves and acorns on the left and laurel leaves on the right is typically reserved for military officers or civic servants. It symbolizes strength, honor, victory, and immortality.

Leaves – Oak and Olive

In the example below, the Texas State Seal consisting of an oak branch on the left and an olive branch on the right and the State 'Lone Star' in the center commemorates the deceased's service to Texas.



233. Nacogdoches County, Oak Grove Cemetery

Leaves – Olive

Olive branches whether singly or in garlands or wreaths indicate peace. Olive leaves are usually depicted slightly thinner and longer than laurel leaves. Both may be shown with tiny fruit.



234. Nacogdoches County, Christian Cemetery

VEGETATION (CONT.)

Leaves – Palm

A palm branch symbolizes triumph over death and immortality.



235. Nacogdoches County, Gravel Ridge Cemetery

Leaves – Palmette

The palmette leaf (also called anthemion) is based on a palm frond's fan shape and for centuries has been merely a decorative element.



236. Houston County, Old Zion Cemetery

VEGETATION (CONT.)

Leaves – Palmette (cont.)

Its meaning in ancient Greek, Roman, and Egyptian days has been lost but it is thought to have symbolized rebirth.



237. Nacogdoches County, Fairview Cemetery

Trees

Tree stumps and broken tree trunks indicate premature death. Felled trees indicate the end of a mature life.



238. Houston County, Shady Grove Cemetery

VEGETATION (CONT.)**Tree of Life**

Sometimes depicted with a flower on top or on branches, the tree of life is stylized and represents everlasting life.



239. *Houston County, Helton Cemetery*

Trees – Weeping Willow

Weeping willows were one of the most popular carvings in the early to mid-1800s; however, they are not numerous in Deep East Texas cemeteries. As expected from the name, willows reflect sorrow and mourning.



240. *Houston County, Augusta Cemetery*

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**Now within Thy fold eternal
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241. Sabine County, Gasby New Zion Cemetery

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