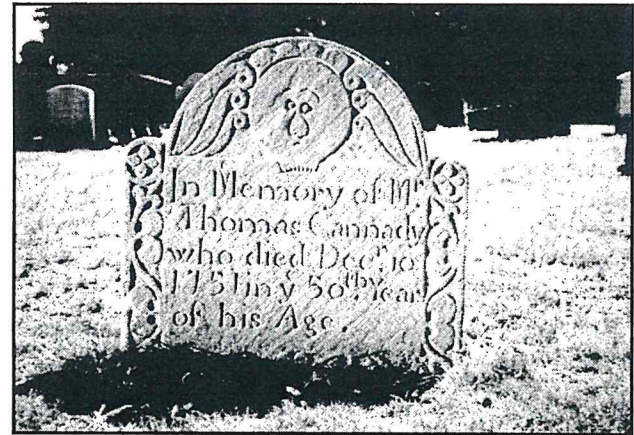


Self-Guided
**Historical
Walking Tour**



East Cemetery

**220 East Center Street
Manchester CT**

**Manchester Historical Society
106 Hartford Road
Manchester CT 06040-5921
(860)647-9983**

*175 Pine
St.*

History of East Cemetery

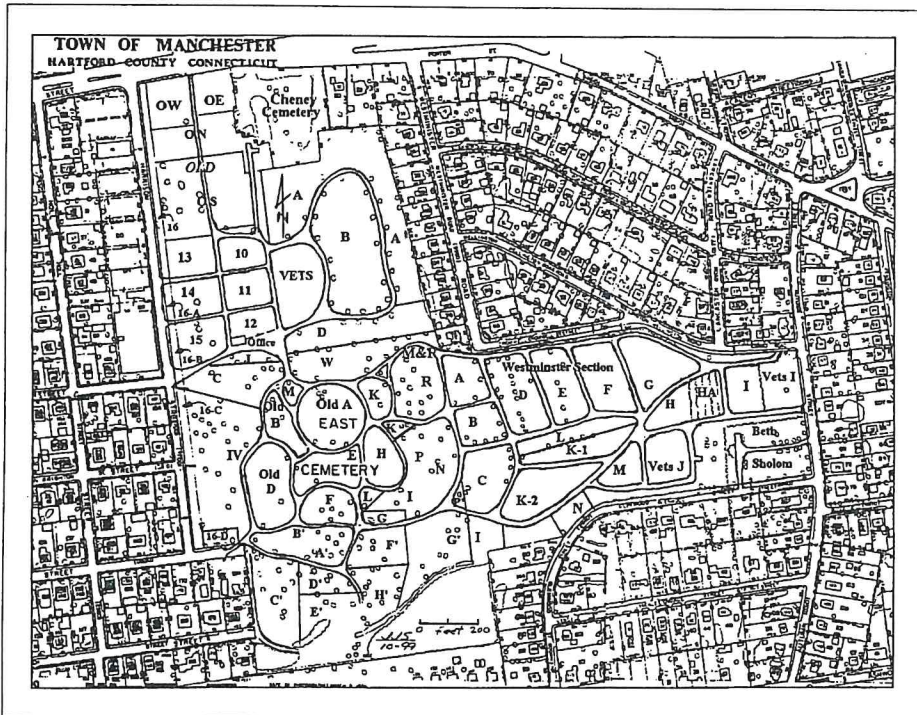
COVER PHOTO

The cover photo is of the oldest stone in East Cemetery. It has been attributed to Gershom Bartlett of Bolton and probably came from the Bolton Notch Quarry. The stone is at stop 10 on the tour in the northeast corner of East Cemetery.

BOOKLET PRODUCTION

This tour booklet was compiled for the Manchester Historical Society by John and Elizabeth Spaulding in October 1999. It was prepared using Microsoft Publisher 2.0. Photographs were taken by John Spaulding.

*(1936-2010)



In 1751 Thomas Pitkin deeded one acre of land to the Town of Hartford to be used as a cemetery. In 1783 East Hartford, including what is now Manchester, separated from Hartford. In 1823, when Manchester was incorporated, East Cemetery "moved" again.

It was not until 1843 that another acre was obtained from Martin Keeney and added to the cemetery. In 1856, Chauncey and Milton Keeney deeded another 1 1/2 acres. William Childs et al deeded about 14 acres in 1867 and 12 acres in 1896 bringing the total to about 29 acres. The cemetery has subsequently expanded to 51 acres.

The "first acre" is the northern section of East Cemetery and is believed to include part of Cheney Cemetery since several of the burials there occurred prior to 1843 when the second acre was added. The present 2.03 acres of Cheney Cemetery were deeded to the Cheney Cemetery Association by Cheney Brothers, Inc. shortly after the association was incorporated in April 1914. It is not known when Cheney Brothers, Inc. purchased the land.

The first two acres were laid out in individual graves with a few family plots mixed in. The area south of the cemetery office was developed in a "Rural Cemetery" configuration that was made popular by the development of Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge MA in 1831. The area northeast of the office and the Veteran's field was developed as "semi-rural" but the Westminster Street expansions to fifty-one acres is a return to the rectilinear pattern with modifications to fit the contour of the land.

Many of the stones are barely legible, especially those embedded in the maple trees near East Center Street. For these stones the information on the stones was taken from the Hale Collection which was recorded in November, 1934 and is located at the State Library in Hartford.

SUGGESTED TOUR SEQUENCE

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INTRODUCTION

This tour will guide you through the oldest part of the cemetery near East Center Street most of which was purchased in 1751 while the area was still a part of Hartford. The numbered points on the tour are focused on one or two individuals but many more will be mentioned. The complete list is included in the index at the end of the booklet.

The tour will give you a good view of the diversity of the people buried in East Cemetery as well as the diversity in their grave markers. The carver attributions were made by the author with the assistance of Laurel Gabel, research coordinator for the Association for Gravestone Studies and Dr. James Slater, author of *The Colonial Burying Grounds of Eastern Connecticut and the Men Who Made Them*, Revised Edition (1996). We can only be sure of the identity of the carver if we have found a record of the purchase in a carver's account book or a probate record for the deceased. Other stones by the carver are attributed based on the type of carving and the characteristics of the lettering. Confusion is often added if more than one person worked on the stone or if the carver was copying the style of another. Also, the styles of most of the carvers evolved during their careers as they became more proficient and adopted new styles as the preferences of their customers changed over time. As you walk through the cemetery you will note a decided change in style at about 1800. By 1820 most stones were marble and later evolved to the current practice of using only granite. Sandstone was used from 1770 to after the Civil War but the shape of the stones changed from upright slabs to obelisks and similar monuments.

The tour starts at the north end of the center road where it exits to East Center Street and proceeds first to the west toward Harrison Street then east toward and through the Cheney Cemetery before exiting to the south for the southernmost part of the tour. The length of the tour is about four-tenths of a mile.

(1) Ephraim Willes (1784) and Ephraim Wyllys, Esq. (1850)

The Wyllys family owned land on Spring Street just south of Wyllys Street. They are best known for the copper mine on their property which was mined, off and on, from the mid eighteenth century to the mid nineteenth century. Ephraim Wyllys was active in Manchester's government having been appointed one of the surveyors of highways at the first Town Meeting in 1823 and as a Selectman in 1831-32. The stone for Ephraim Willes was probably carved by Daniel Ritter. Ephraim Wyllys stone is the plainer marble tablet which was popular in 1850.

(2) David Phillips (1793)/David Bidwell (1798)

Walk to the west to the third row about ten feet from the fence where you will find the stone for the first of two Davids who had one thing in common. They both drowned. David Bidwell is memorialized on a large sandstone tablet on which it is noted that he "drowned." Remember that this was only ten years after Noah Webster published his first dictionary in 1783. Go thirty feet to the south to see the small schist stone for David Phillips who "drowned in the Scantick" only five years earlier. This stone was probably carved by Aaron Haskins.

(3) Peter Buckland (1816)

Peter Buckland's grave is two rows west of David Bidwell on a large plain sandstone monument that will soon be lost to the elements. Capt. Peter was active in Orford Parish affairs. Orford Parish was the name for the Manchester area before it was split off from East Hartford in 1823. Among other things, Peter was a carver of gravestones and there are at least twelve in East Cemetery attributed to him out of his total inventory of 180 stones in the East Hartford/Manchester/Glastonbury area. He signed some of his stones and several are probated to him. He is well known for carving backward capital N's. (For an example of this, look for the Jonathan Briant (1772) stone east of the center road which has six backward N's.)

(4) Eber Morely (1813)/Sally Hull (1820)

We know nothing about these individuals but they are unique because their stones are imbedded in the bark of a forty inch diameter maple tree to the west of the Peter Buckland stone. It is unfortunate that there was a lapse in cemetery maintenance many years ago that allowed this to happen. Fortunately, in 1934, a transcription of inscriptions was done by two recorders working on a WPA project sponsored by the State Library under the direction of the State Military Necrologist, Charles R. Hale. By matching the partial text that is now visible we are able to identify the stone. Mr. Hale, who was also Secretary for the Hartford Camp of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, was largely responsible for having veterans of all wars memorialized by military headstones which were installed in the 1920's.

(5) John Jacklin (1825), waiter of Gen. Washington

Move to the southwest of the maple tree about 150 feet to the three identical granite stones for the Munro family. Just to the east is a small marble tablet for John and Hannah Jacklin. We know that John was the waiter for Gen. Washington because it is inscribed on his well-worn stone. John Jacklin was

born a slave in western Connecticut of White, Negro and Narragansett Indian ancestry. He was selected as the General's waiter while Washington was visiting Hartford and is believed to have continued serving him. Jacklin's widow Hannah, a Revolutionary War pensioner, was living in the Henry C. Woodbridge house near Manchester Green in 1840.

(6) Rev. Benajah Phelps (1817)

Walk sixty feet to the southwest and in front of the McKee sandstone monument you will find the marble tablets for the Rev. Benajah Phelps and his family. He was born in Hebron and served a parish in Nova Scotia during the Revolutionary War. In March 1780 he was installed as the first pastor of the Congregational Church and served for thirteen years.

(7) Lt. Richard Pitkin (1799)

Walk to the northeast and across the center road to the military headstone for Lt. Richard Pitkin. His sandstone private stone is in front of the military stone but is almost totally shaled off. Lt. Pitkin and Capt. Timothy Cheney went to Lexington at the start of the Revolutionary War but were soon sent home as their civilian work was more important to the military. Capt. Cheney directed the making of powder sieves and Lt. Pitkin supervised the making of powder at the family powder mills. They were replaced in the war by Capt. Ozias Bissell who we will meet later.

Lt. Pitkin and his wife, Dorothy, operated the Pitkin Tavern near the intersection of Porter and Parker Street. There is an historical plaque in the green at that intersection that was placed in 1973 on the occasion of the town's sesquicentennial observance.

(8) Lorain Vibert (1828)

In the fifth row to the east and a little to the south is the plot for the family of Lorain Vibert. He was a glass blower at the nearby Pitkin Glass Works until his death. The marble tablets for Mr. Vibert, his wife and son are in fairly good condition but, in advance of their eventual demise, Mr. Joseph Vibert had a granite replacement stone installed flush with the ground nearby in the 1960s so that they would be remembered for another 200 years or more.

(9) Capt. Ozias Bissell (1822)

Moving about twenty-five feet to the north, you will find the marble tablet for Capt. Ozias Bissell who died at the age of 93. Capt. Bissell was captured by the British at the Battle of Long Island in 1776. After being released he

rejoined the army, was wounded three times, and captured a second time at Horseneck (Greenwich) Connecticut. After being released in 1781 he returned to Manchester. Five of his sons also served in the Revolutionary war and two are buried near him: Ensign Russell Bissell (1807) and Corp. Leverett Bissell (1813). The others are buried elsewhere. Ozias, Jr. served in his father's company. Elijah Bissell died on a British prison ship in New York harbor. Daniel joined the regular army after the war and rose to the level of brigadier general, possibly the first from Manchester to reach that rank.

(10) Thomas Cannady (1751)

Although it is unknown if Thomas Cannady was the first to be buried in East Cemetery, his stone is clearly the oldest. The stone is schist probably quarried at Bolton Notch which was owned for some time by the stone carver, Gershom Bartlett. The stone is in excellent condition and has its footstone nearby which is clearly a Bartlett stone. (More than eighty stones in the cemetery have been attributed to eight carvers. A partial list is included at the end of this booklet.)

(11) Capt. Timothy Cheney (1795)

Capt. Cheney has the only tablestone in the cemetery. It is made of a sandstone slab supported by seven legs. The top is badly eroded but a bronze plaque has been attached to memorialize Capt. Cheney, his wife Mary and daughter, Elizabeth. Another daughter, Mary, is nearby as are Capt. Cheney's parents, Elizabeth and Benjamin Cheney. Elizabeth's stone has been broken and repaired since Dr. Ernest Caulfield photographed it in the 1950's. Benjamin's headstone has been lost but his footstone survives. Their stones were carved by William Buckland whose brother, Peter, we met at stop (3).

Capt. Cheney and his wife, Mary, are the grandparents of the Cheney brothers who are interred in the nearby Cheney Cemetery.

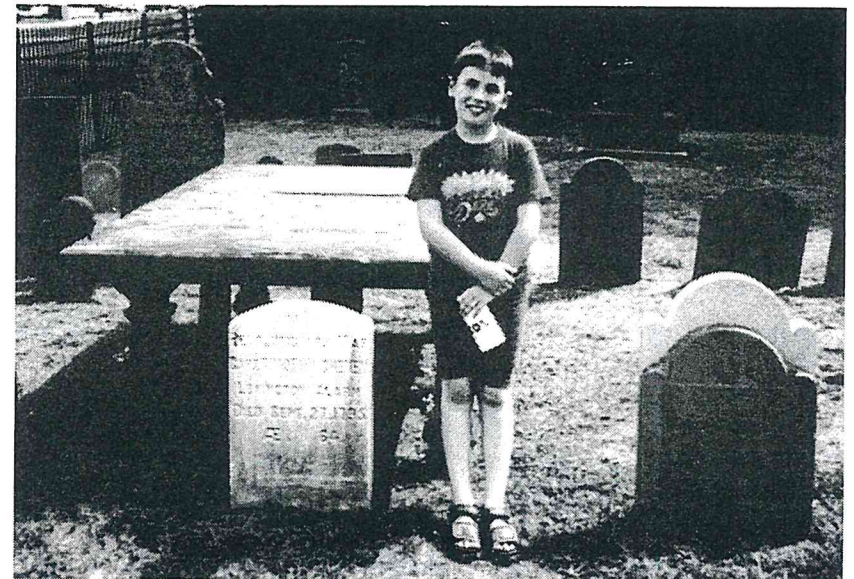
(12) Mile Marker

In the northeast corner of East Cemetery there is a schist mile marker that says "Miles to Hartford Courthouse, 9." The original location of the marker is unknown. When the Town sold the Highway Department garage at the corner of Harrison Street and East Center Street to a private company the stone was found in the garage. It was installed in East Cemetery as a public reminder of the roadside mile markers that were installed on colonial roads in the early days of Manchester.

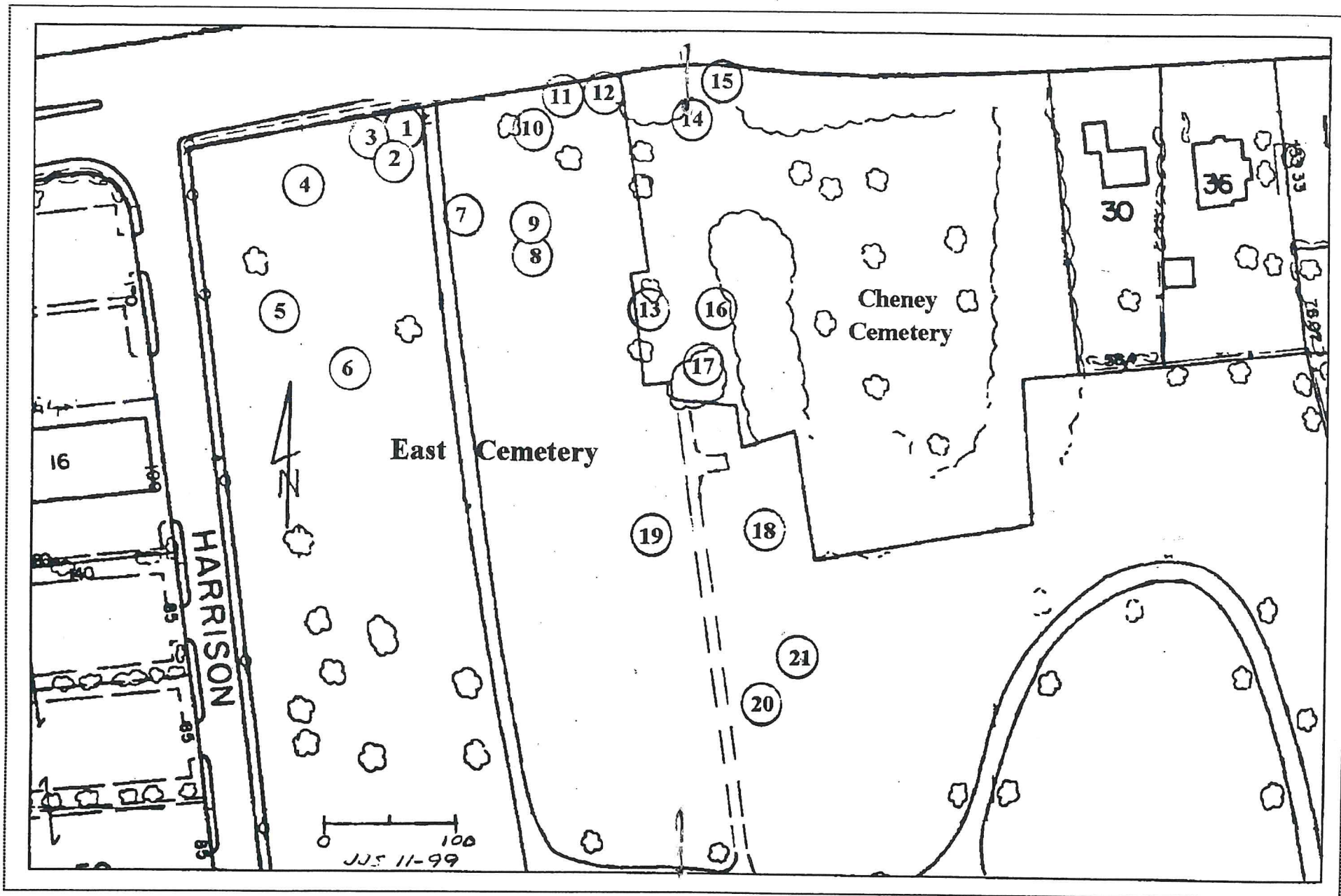
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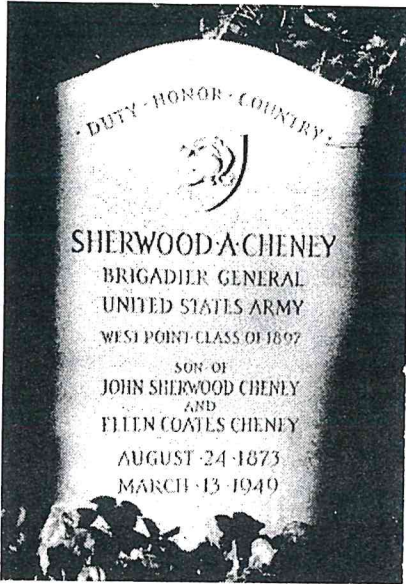
Parents of the Cheney Brothers



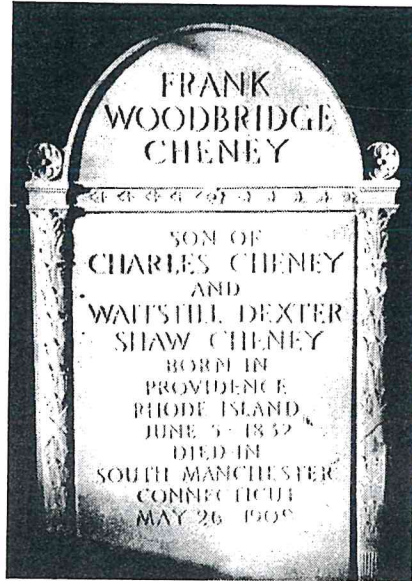
Stop 11



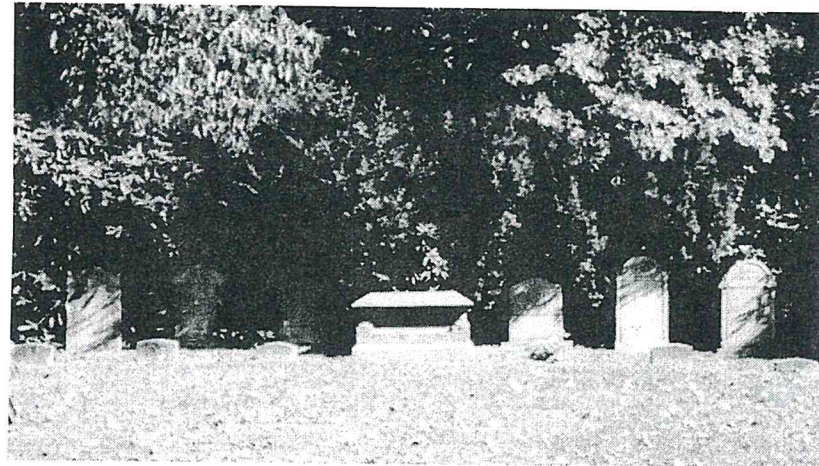
TOUR MAP



Stop 14



Stop 16



Stop 16

(Continued from page 8)

(13) George and Electa (Woodbridge) Cheney

At the entrance to the Cheney Cemetery are the unpretentious sandstone markers for George and Electa Cheney, the parents of the Cheney brothers. Their children were all raised at the Cheney Homestead, 106 Hartford Road, Manchester, which is owned and operated by the Manchester Historical Society.

This cemetery is a private cemetery owned by the Cheney Cemetery Association which was incorporated in 1914 when the land was transferred from Cheney Brothers, Inc. All of the Cheney brothers are buried here or in an adjacent section of East Cemetery.

George and Electa had nine children: George, John, Charles, Ralph, Seth, Ward, Rush, Frank and Electa. John, an engraver and artist, never married. He lived his last years at the Cheney Homestead and is buried next to his parents. Just to the south is the grave of Rush Cheney.

To the east in the second row is the marker for Frank Cheney, his wife Susan Cushing, and their daughter, Mary Cheney, who is memorialized by Mary Cheney Library in Center Park. Center Park was given to the Town by her parents.

Seth Cheney, an artist and engraver, is buried about thirty-five feet east of his parents.

(14) Brigadier General Sherwood Cheney (1949)

General Cheney, the grandson of George Wells Cheney, the oldest Cheney brother, is the only member of the family to reach the rank of General. From the grave of Seth Cheney, proceed north in the clearing within the Cheney Cemetery almost to the metal fence on East Center Street. General Cheney graduated from West Point in 1897, had a distinguished military career in the Corps of Engineers and retired in 1937. His portrait hangs near the entrance of the Old Manchester Museum on Cedar Street.

(15) George Wells Cheney (1841)

From General Cheney's grave, walk northeast about ten feet closer to the fence to his grandfather's grave. George, the eldest of the Cheney brothers, was the Manchester Town Clerk and a Justice of the Peace from 1828 until his death in 1841. His brothers started the company which bears their name in 1838 near the Homestead. During the three years prior to his death, George apparently was not involved in the company.

(16) Charles Cheney Tomb (1874)

Return to the large clearing and walk south to the large tomb on your left. This tomb, for the third Cheney brother, is the only one of this kind in East Cemetery. Memorialized on its surface are Charles, his two wives, and four children who died young. The individual stones for his wives flank the tomb. His first wife, Waitstill Shaw, died in Mount Pleasant, Ohio, as did the three daughters. She is also memorialized on the Shaw family monument in Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

On either side of the wives rest the two surviving sons, Frank Woodbridge Cheney and Knight Dexter Cheney and their families.

Lt. Col. Cheney commanded the 16th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment in the Civil War and was wounded in the battle at Antietam, Maryland. He left the army and soon met Mary Bushnell, daughter of the Rev. Horace Bushnell. Rev. Bushnell and his wife, Mary, who lived to be 100 years old, are buried in Old North Cemetery in Hartford.

Next to his mother is Ward Cheney who died in 1900 during the Philippine Insurrection which followed the Spanish-American War. At the end of the row are the twin girls, Dorothy and Marjory. Most of the rest of the twelve children are buried on the edge of the large lawn to the east of the Charles Cheney Tomb.

Knight Dexter Cheney and his wife Ednah had eleven children, (no twins), many of whom are also buried throughout the Cheney Cemetery. Knight Dexter was President of Cheney Brothers from 1894 to 1907.

(17) Ward Cheney (1876) and Thorne Family

Ward Cheney, the sixth of the eight Cheney Brothers, is memorialized with a slate stone to the west of the Charles Cheney tomb. Ward was the President of Cheney Brothers from 1855 until his death in 1876. This is undoubtedly a replacement stone provided when the beautiful slate stones for his grand children, the Thornes, were installed. Walk south down the row to see all of these slates. At the south edge of the Cheney Cemetery you will see the markers for two Cheney employees, Mary Sweeney (1898) and Marie Pardey (1955).

(18) Ralph Cheney (1897)

Just to the south of the Cheney Cemetery is the R.O. Cheney lot and the marker for Ralph Cheney, the fourth Cheney Brother. Ralph was elected president of the Mount Nebo Silk Manufacturing Company in 1838 and continued until 1855 when Cheney Brothers, Inc. was incorporated. After stepping down, he

managed the Cheney Brothers farm. He and his wife, Jerusha, adopted her niece, Mary, and nephew, Richard Otis Cheney, when their mother died.

(19) Deodat and Esther Woodbridge

Walk to the west across the path to Cheney cemetery from the south to see the sandstone monument for the Woodbridge family. On the north side are Deodat and Esther Woodbridge who owned the Woodbridge Tavern at Manchester Green. Their daughter, Electa, greeted General Washington when he passed through Manchester and eventually became the mother of the Cheney brothers.

Deodatus, whose family is on the east (primary face) was the youngest child of Deodat and Esther. On the south face note the inscription for Rev. Elisha Cook who had married the sister of Deodatus. Rev. Cook drowned on July 11, 1823 in Bigelow Brook near Brookfield Street after helping a neighbor gather a crop.

(20) Wells Woodbridge (1864)

Walk to the south along the path and on the left is the marble monument for Wells Woodbridge and his family. Mr. Woodbridge was also a son of Deodat and Esther. Incidentally, his wife and daughters are also listed on the west side of the sandstone monument at stop 19. He was the postmaster of the first post office in Manchester in 1808 at Manchester Green and served for twenty-six years. It was called the Orford Parish post office. When the town was incorporated in 1823, the name was changed to Manchester and remained so until it was changed to the Manchester Green post office in 1886.

(21) Wickham Family - Hartford Circus Fire (1944)

To the northwest of the Woodbridge monument is a sandstone obelisk for the John and Malinda Wickham family. This is not the branch of the family that Wickham Park is named for but five members of the family died in the fire at the Ringling Brothers-Barnum and Bailey Circus in Hartford on Thursday, July 6, 1944. Edith May (Wickham) Budrick and her children, Edith and Joseph Budrick, Jr., and Viola Ann (Wickham) Locke and daughter Elaine are listed on the monument. Four of them were buried in East Cemetery after the funeral at the Watkins Funeral Home at four p.m. the following Sunday. Mrs. Budrick's funeral was held later.

End of Tour

This ends the formal tour. On your way back to East Center Street wander among the gravestones looking for other familiar names in Manchester history. In the Cheney Cemetery there are many more stones in the open area east of the Charles Cheney tomb.

GRAVESTONE CARVERS IN EAST CEMETERY

Prior to 1800, gravestones were carved by individual carvers who, for the most part, were carving grave markers on a part time basis. In East Cemetery there are stones carved by at least seven carvers. Listed below are some examples that you can look for in the northern section of East Cemetery.

Gershom Bartlett (1723-1798)

Gershom Bartlett was a native of Bolton and at one time owned the quarry at Bolton Notch. He carved between 1750 and 1772 when he moved to Pompanoosuk, Vermont. Sample stones are: George Buck (1761), Thomas Cannady (1751) and Jonathan Riley (1753) These stones are all on the east side of the center road within twenty feet of the fence.

Peter Buckland (1738-1816)

Capt. Peter Buckland lived in Manchester and is buried in East Cemetery (Stop 3 on the tour). Most of the stones are sandstone, undoubtedly from the Buckland Quarry. The stones for Mary Cheney (1775) and Eleazar Keeney (1768) are good examples of Buckland stones. The markers for Jonathan Briant (1772) and Benjamin Daman (1771) show his schist stones.

Ebenezer Drake (1739-c.1803)

Drake, of South Windsor, also used Buckland sandstone for his stones. In East Cemetery there are two stones for the Corning family that are next to each other.

Aaron Haskins (1752-1795)

Aaron Haskins lived in Bolton and carved his markers on schist which is often of poor quality. See the stones for Sabra Fox (1784) and Jabez Dart (1776).

William Crosby Type

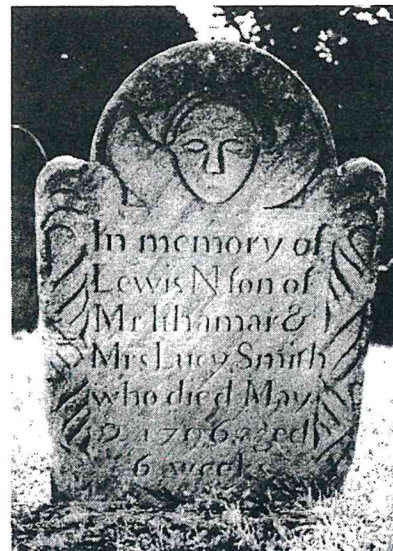
William Crosby was a partner of Peter Buckland (Stop 3) for a while. Crosby and the Johnson family in the Middletown area used sandstone from the Portland quarries. There are at least nine stones of this type in East Cemetery. Examples are Walter Keny (1798), Roderick Smith (1799) and David Bidwell (1798) (Stop 2).

Daniel Ritter (1746-1828)

The evidence that Daniel Ritter carved these particular stones is weak but they are all similar so have been attributed to him. The Richard and Prudence Keeney (Keney) (1789) stones are on schist while the Elisha Keny (1807) stone is sandstone. Other Ritter type stones are easy to find because there are at least twenty-five of them, the most by any carver.

Upswept Wing Carver

The name of this carver is unknown so this type of stone has been grouped under this name in hopes that further study will identify the carver. See the Daniel Wakefield (1806) stone to see how the name was derived. Compare the Sally Smith (1786) stone with that of Lewis Smith (1796). Sally's is much simpler but the lettering indicates that they probably were carved at the same time.



Stones Carved by the "Upswept Wing" Carver

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