

You may have attended the funeral of your parents or grandparents and been to that cemetery.

But....

You will likely only know where your great-grandparents are buried through family stories or research which likely includes cemetery information, sometimes your first clue. Names are variable, records are lost, or burned, or not digitized yet if they even exist. But the stones, if they exist, the stones are another piece of the puzzle.

Recording this burial information and sharing it with others is painstaking. If you are lucky enough to find an ancestor's stone, it will be important to use those technical writing skills and document your find so that others can understand and visit the stone, and add to your information. It's a bit like "cousin bait" that Cheri Passey has talked with us about. Put some information out there and others, seeing it, may be able to add to it.

With that thought in mind, I wanted to share with you some things to keep in mind when visiting a cemetery:

*Take your photos as though you are telling someone else how to find that same stone. As long as you're there, why not? After all, taking a photo of the name and inscription on the stone is what you want, but taking that same photo by backing away a bit and photographing the stone showing it's surroundings will give you and others a means to locate that stone in the future. Is there a fence nearby, a grove of trees, a hill, other stones nearby that are unusual in height, material? Is there a road in the vicinity, a street sign, a sign for the cemetery?

*Keep in mind that a cemetery may have a sign, but family members who bury their ancestors there may refer to the cemetery by another name. Whoever talks with the funeral director will tell them to indicate the name of the cemetery.... The funeral director will do as they say.

*The cemetery land may have changed ownership, the name can change over time, not always, but it happens.

*So here are some photos that show differences in stones and how most cemetery researchers describe them.

There are five ways stones can reveal a marriage:

1. The stones show a marriage date or wedding rings
2. The stones list their children
3. The stones are marked mother on one side and father on the other or have footers indicating mother/father, husband/wife
4. The stone states the person was married to.... Or that one is the wife/husband of the other.
5. There is a child buried beside or near them listing that child's mother and father by full name