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**Markers of Identity: A Study of Pennsylvania German Gravesstones  
in Berks County, Pennsylvania**  
Spring 2006

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## **Markers of Identity: A Study of Pennsylvania German Gravestones in Berks County, Pennsylvania**

### **Disciplines**

Anthropology

**Markers of Identity:**

**A Study of Pennsylvania German Gravestones  
In Berks County, Pennsylvania**

**Emily M. Lanza**

**Dr. Schuyler  
Thesis Supervisor**

**Senior Honors Thesis  
For Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology  
University of Pennsylvania  
2006**

*Quiet Dust*

*This quiet dust was gentlemen and ladies  
And lads and girls;  
Was laughter and ability and sighing,  
And frocks and curls;*

*This passive place a summer's nimble mansion,  
Where bloom and bees  
Fulfilled their oriental circuit,  
Then ceased like these.*

~ Emily Dickinson

**Abstract:**

Graveyards and mortuary memorials can reveal not only attitudes towards death but also identities and beliefs in life. Seven churchyards in Berks County were surveyed during the Summer and Fall of 2005 in order to record and to study the gravestones of a specific community, the Pennsylvania Germans. First arriving in the Americas during the later half of the seventeenth-century, Pennsylvania Germans settled in southeastern Pennsylvania and developed a thriving community and culture. The cemeteries and churchyards of the Pennsylvania Germans convey individual and collective social identity and serve as collections of “artifacts” that embody their culture and ideology. The survey recorded various aspects of the memorials including form, material, motifs, and inscription so that each feature could be analyzed in order to determine the function and role each feature possessed in the display of identity. With available absolute dates, a chronology of each feature was created in order to show the evolution of style and preference as well as the development of the community and corresponding expression of identity. The interpretation of the meaning and temporal contexts of these features and memorials led to conclusions about gender, age, socio-economic, and ethnic identity during the early history of the Pennsylvania German community.

**Acknowledgements:**

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I would like to thank the staff and parishioners of the churches in Berks County who not only welcomed by interest but also provided useful information.

I also would like thank exceedingly my Father, Mother, and Brother for generously helping me survey all of the memorials and for tolerating the heat and humidity while visiting the graveyards in the Summer of 2005. I greatly appreciate their continuous love and support.

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\* All Photographs Courtesy of Emily Lanza

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Although created to serve as the final resting place for the dead, cemeteries can often reflect the lives, the lifestyle, and beliefs of the living. These “communities of death” mirror the social-cultural processes of a living community with their organization and displays of status, ideologies, and values. The design and placement of memorials represent not only religious values and attitudes towards death but also occupations, socio-economic status, and relations in life. With this wealth of information, cemeteries can reveal elements of a community beyond the basic literature and historical background. The Pennsylvania German community, while still a living community today, thrived during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many of its members played important roles in shaping the state of Pennsylvania as well as the young nation. Although local histories describe the details of important events, the Pennsylvania German crafts which survive today, including architecture, art, manuscripts, and gravestones, display their creativity, values, and ideals as a community and serve as the best pieces of evidence for the lives of these individuals.

The study of Pennsylvania German gravestones in Berks County provides an intimate perspective of these people who primarily lived and died in the same area. The survey imitated an interview with the individuals of the community and gathered information concerning the demographics of people throughout the centuries. In addition to the more basic facts, one can observe in the cemetery the emotional and intangible aspects of life embodied in the memorials. In the past as well as the present, these memorials have served as cultural objects and markers of identity. The memorials express, display, and preserve, a person’s gender, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, and individuality; moreover, the collective understanding and ideologies behind these choices reveal the structure and relations within the community. Creating a community in

a new country, the Pennsylvania Germans utilized gravestones to mark individual and shared identities which evolved in tangent with the development of the community itself; therefore, this survey and study seeks to discover and to understand the context and history of these identities through time, which the Pennsylvania Germans revealed and preserved in their memorials.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **Pennsylvania German History and Background**

The first German immigrants arrived in Philadelphia on the ship the *Concord* in 1683 and settled in southeastern Pennsylvania (Gilbert 3; Graves 61). They came from Switzerland, Baden, Württemberg, Alsace, Lorraine, and other countries and states around the Rhine (Gilbert 1). In their homeland, they confronted continuous threats of war and religious and civil conflicts. Although the Thirty Years War had ended over thirty years before 1680, political strife still debilitated the small states and principalities throughout central Europe. Religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants also divided the land and instigated religious persecution (Lichten 5). William Penn, who visited the Rhineland in 1671, offered these people peace, religious toleration, fertile farm land, and a new home in his colony of Pennsylvania (Lichten 5). The first wave of German immigrants settled in Germantown, PA and continued to arrive and spread throughout southeastern Pennsylvania for the next 100 years until the American Revolution (Lichten 6).

Although united by the desire to create a new peaceful home as promised by Penn, the German immigrants who arrived in Pennsylvania represented different socio-economic classes, religious affiliations, and occupations. Farmers, indentured servants, and members of a more educated class came to the New World (Gilbert 4) in addition to parishioners of many religious sects such as the Lutherans, Reformed of the United Church of Christ, Mennonites, Amish,

Moravians, and Communitarians who primarily settled in their established community in Ephrata, Lancaster County of Pennsylvania (Gilbert 7; Graves 61). According to their non-German neighbors, the Germans were known to exhibit the character traits of being thrifty and devout as well as being dedicated to living a simple life and working on their land (Lichten 6). The German immigrants also served as excellent soldiers and “church people” (Gilbert 11) in their new home.

These Germans contributed to their adopted community not only economically with agricultural production but socially with large population numbers. The 1790 census recorded a national population of 3, 172, 444 persons including 257,775 Germans. Likewise, out of the 423,373 white people in Pennsylvania, 140,983 were of German descent (over 30 %) (Stoudt 1973 42). The Germans existed as the second largest “ethnic” group next to the English in the American colonies (Gilbert 12). Adding to the growing population, the second wave of German immigrants began in the 1830’s and continued throughout the nineteenth century (Graves 61).

### **German Identity and Americanization**

The German immigrants, while successfully creating homesteads and communities throughout southeastern Pennsylvania, did encounter certain prejudices and obstacles against their German culture and language especially from their neighbors who were primarily English settlers (Gilbert 16). Some Germans appeared to be “dumb” as they steadfastly adhered to their German language and refused to speak any English (Gilbert 17). They also favored German and religious schools that taught in the German language and actively opposed the “free schools” as instituted by the state of Pennsylvania Free School Law of 1834 (Gilbert 23).

During the nineteenth-century with the growing heterogeneity of American society and the strengthening of English as the dominant language, the German traditions and language began to decline as they adapted their culture to these changes. More Germans began speaking English in order to communicate with their neighbors. People stopped speaking German in schools and even in churches (Stoudt 1973 237). While a great portion of the older generation, raised and taught in German schools, died in the Civil War, the younger generation, taught in English state schools, could not continue sustaining the German language during the later half of the nineteenth-century (Stoudt 1973 134). Likewise, German Churches began conducting sermons in English in order to bring more people into the church. Henry Muhlenberg, the father of American Lutheranism, even supported this program which he viewed as an inevitability and a necessity to support the survival of the Lutheran churches in a growing English community (Graves 88). Following this trend, the last German service in Trinity Lutheran Church in Reading was conducted in 1842 (Stoudt 1973 122). In addition to the language, other German customs and traditions seemed isolated from American culture and were labeled as old-fashioned and outmoded (Stoudt 1973 237). In reaction to the growing decline throughout the nineteenth-century, some German-Americans tried to revive and preserve their German culture. In order to save their German language, some devoted members of the German community mass-produced German literature (Stoudt 1973 133). German newspapers in cities like Reading and Lancaster in Pennsylvania were also established (Graves 88).

During this period of decline and rejuvenation, Pennsylvania German Folk art flourished with the production of more crafts, both practical and aesthetic. This style evolved with the development of the Pennsylvania German community. Bringing over from Germany ornamental styles and skills, the Pennsylvania Germans as a community developed the folk art manifested

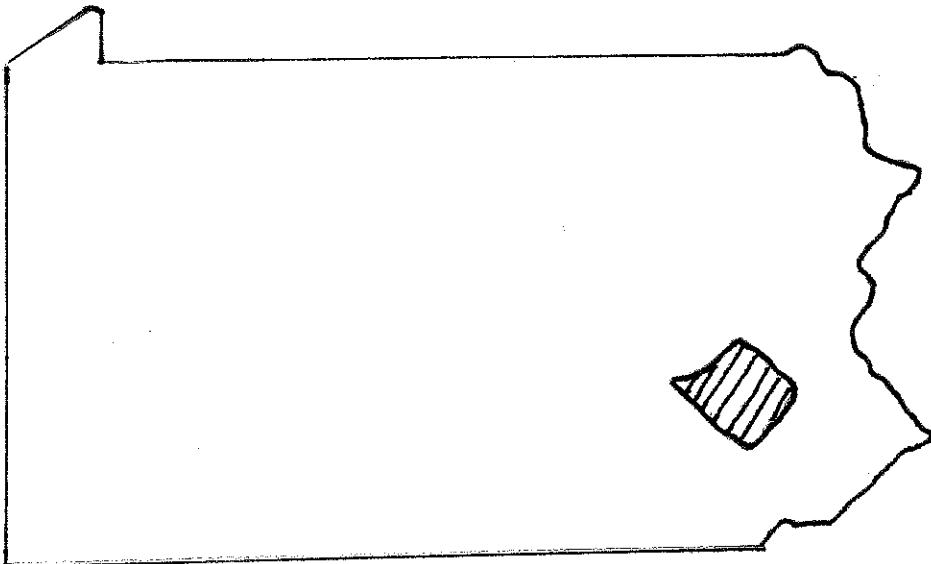
from common ideas and iconography (Stoudt 1948 5). The folk art thrived from practical craft production with decorations on houses, barns, pottery, furniture and gravestones (Lichten 7). The styles and context of the symbolism of the folk art originates and matures exclusively within the community structure. The style of Pennsylvania German Folk Art depends on the strength and cohesion of the community; likewise, the Pennsylvania German community utilized folk art as symbols of identity, such as the flowers and hearts which will later be discussed as popular motifs (Bergengren 181).

Strains within the German culture and community escalated during the mid-nineteenth century with the increase in German immigration. The peak numbers of German immigrants in the United States occurred not during the eighteenth-century but in the 1870's and 1800's (Graves 61). The "colonial Germans" who arrived in the eighteenth-century conflicted with the new German immigrants of the nineteenth century (Stoudt 1973 135). Living in the United States for over a century, the descendants of the "colonial Germans" realized that their culture conflicted with the Germans who recently arrived from Europe. This survey of gravestones will try to observe differences and patterns in time that may correspond with these tensions between Anglo-German and nineteenth-century German culture. An "excess" or obvious expression of German identity on graves may be in response to threats or acts to suppress German culture.

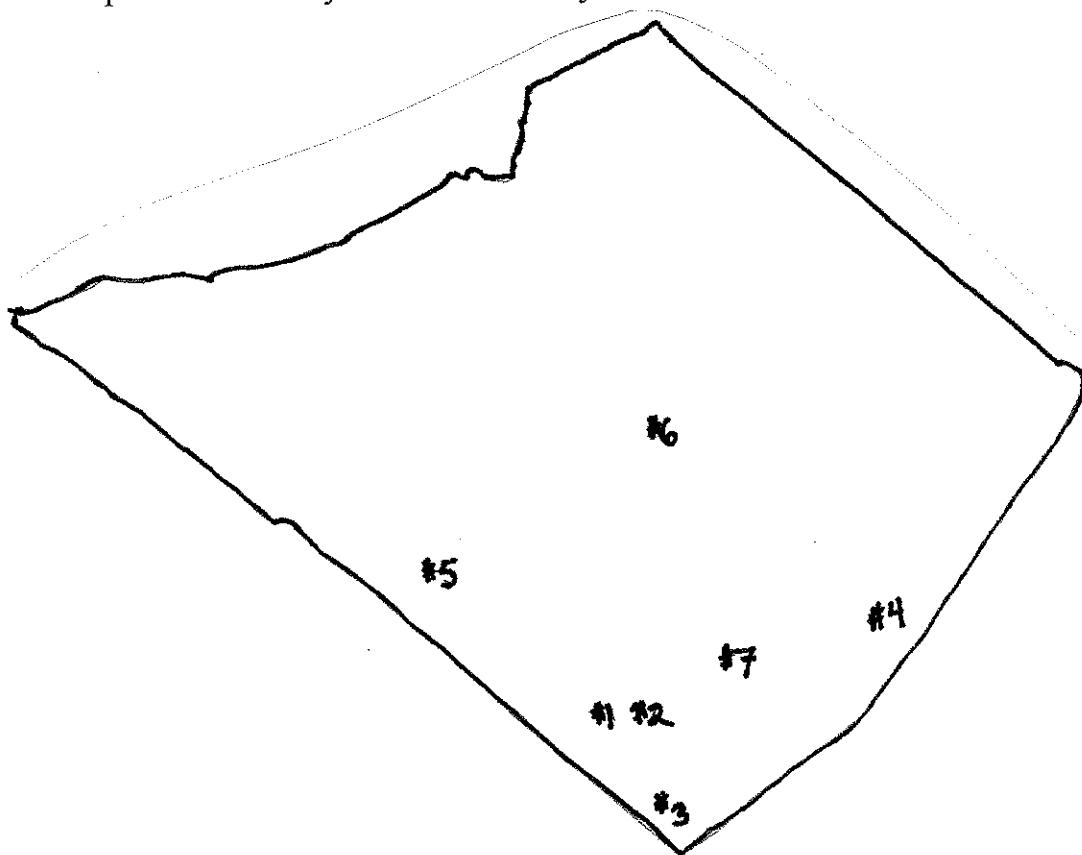
### **Historical Background of Churches**

(See Map 1 and 2)

The seven churchyards surveyed are located in southern Berks County, Pennsylvania about 60 miles Northwest of Philadelphia. Berks Country has served as a center of Pennsylvania German life and culture for the past 300 years. Each church surveyed represents a different denomination, architectural style, and relationship with the secular community contributing to a



Map 1: Berks County Location in Pennsylvania



Map 2: Location of Surveyed Churchyards in Berks County

- Key:
- |                                      |                            |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House | 2. Allegheny Union         |
| 3. Harmony Methodist Church          | 4. St. Gabriel's Church    |
| 5. Mohn's Hill Church                | 6. Trinity Lutheran Church |
| 7. Plowville Lutheran Church         |                            |

Source: Berks County Government (<http://www.co.berks.pa.us/berks/site/default.asp>)

greater variety and representation of religious patterns in the area. Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House, located off of Rt. 568 in Alleghenyville, stands as an icon of the colonial lifestyle and community which the German peoples created as they first settled the land. The small building served as gathering place for families around the area who utilized the meeting house as a community center and school in addition to a place of worship for three denominations: Reformed, Lutherans, and Mennonite (Horning 1). The small graveyard across the road from the Meeting House contains many generations of the same German families who have been living and farming in the area since the eighteenth-century. Many descendants of those who are buried in the churchyard still return to the Meeting House for worship on special occasions (Horning 1). Standing in the graveyard of the Meeting House, one can see across the valley to the Allegheny Union Church. The relationship between these two places of worship reflects the growth of the German community in the area during the later 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as the expanding population moved to the later and larger church and churchyard of Allegheny Union. Harmony Church, found off of Rt. 10 in Morgantown, provided services for the local community who worked on the farms and the iron furnace in the area. During its long history, St. Gabriel's Church of Douglassville served as a place of worship for Berks County residents of many different ethnicities and religions. Historically, the leaders of the church tended not to discriminate against those of different nationalities and operated their cemetery according to an "open door" type policy ("Saint Gabriel's"). Although first settled by Swedish Lutherans, the congregations of St. Gabriel's were often served by German Lutheran pastors such as Henry Melchoir Mulhenberg, the father of American Lutheranism (Bicentennial Committee 2; "Trinity Lutheran" 2001). Containing the oldest grave of Berks County, St. Gabriel's cemetery reflects this tradition and ethnic variation with gravestones of not only German but Swedish, English and

Scottish residents. For this study, some of the gravestones in St. Gabriel's cemetery will be used as a comparison between gravestones of German and other nationalities. Like the Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House, Mohn's Hill Church and cemetery serve the local community of Mennonites, a specific sect of German immigrants; however, the Mohn's Hill community spans a larger geographical distance with greater population numbers. The churchyard of Trinity Lutheran Church of Reading, the only urban churchyard in the survey, contains the burials of important local figures of Pennsylvanian German history. Deeded by Conrad Weiser, Trinity Lutheran Church began as a log building built in 1752 on the same site as the modern church today ("Trinity Lutheran" 2001). The first cemetery was located under the modern day church and was discovered during renovations in 2000 ("Trinity Lutheran" 2005). In 1860, the English and German congregations separated; and the English members moved their place of worship to another site. Twentieth-century members of the congregation are not buried in the churchyard but in separate cemetery outside of the center of the city due to obvious restrictions of space in the urban setting ("Trinity Lutheran" 2005). Located about fifteen miles from the center of Reading, Plowville Lutheran church predates the American Revolution with the deed issued in 1767 by the William Penn family. While most of the early worshippers were only of German heritage, the church now provides Lutheran services to the remaining German community in the area in addition to peoples of various descents. (De Temple 18).

### **Previous Research and Literature**

A study of gravestones serves an important role in the field of Historical Archaeology as an artifact study. Like other artifacts, gravestones reflect religious and aesthetic values as well as providing useful information to archaeologists and other interested researchers; however, unlike

many artifacts, gravestones “automatically” supply an important element for archaeology: absolute dates. The date of death on gravestones allows archaeologists to establish chronological trends of styles and form more easily. James Deetz, in his book *In Small Things Forgotten*, addressed the Puritan gravestones in Massachusetts as an archaeological study and expanded gravestones studies into the field of Historical Archaeology (Watters 174). Establishing a typology and chronology, Deetz approached gravestones as part of a whole cultural system in his attempt to establish a “relationship between material culture and cognition” (Watters 174). Through chronological patterns of gravestone motifs and styles, Deetz extrapolated specific conclusions about local and national culture and history as he aimed “to observe stylistic change in material culture and to relate this change to changes in the society that produced it” (Deetz 89). Through a more Folk Culture perspective, Henry Glassie addresses the problem of analysis and interpretation of the meaning of gravestones and any conceptual patterns and underlying processes (Watters 176). In his *Patterns in Material Folk Culture*, Glassie, a folklorist, discusses the composition of gravestones by craftsmen who work with a “grammar” or rules and guidelines which can be adapted and influenced according to certain demographic factors such as age and sex (Watters 178). Harold Mytum of the University of York, UK has accomplished great progress and work in developing gravestones studies within the field of archaeology with surveys throughout Britain. My participation in one of his survey’s at St. Mary in the Wood at Morley, UK served as the inspiration for this survey and study of Pennsylvania German Gravestones. Moreover, the Association for Gravestones Studies and its annual journal *Markers* served as an excellent source of material for both background reading and comparative studies for this survey. The Association’s dedication to the study and preservation of gravestones and cemeteries is greatly applauded and appreciated.

## Theory

The study of gravestones, such as this survey and analysis of Pennsylvania German memorials, can be approached via various theoretical backgrounds. A cultural-historical perspective focuses on the description of each gravestone within the context of local history or the most dominant style of that era. This theory treats memorials as pieces of material culture through the context of art history (Mytum 2004 5-6). This perspective will be partially adopted in order to explain any local variations among the different cemeteries and the role of the gravestones in Pennsylvania German Folk Art. A functionalistic approach includes some cross-cultural comparisons and highlights social, ethnic, and cultural variation and distribution (Mytum 2004 7). Marxist theory looks at the production and distribution of memorials as part of the economic pattern especially the “outliers” of these trends such as the memorials of the elites. While a Marxist approach may neglect certain important aspects and contributions of a graveyard study, the theory does highlight the unique and possible contradiction between the lives and the memorials of the deceased (Mytum 2004 8-9). For an example, an ostentatious monument does not always accurately reflect the lifestyle of the deceased. The relatives of a poor person could have invested in a large memorial; moreover, the memorial reflects the beliefs of the mourners as much as the lifestyle and wishes of the deceased. A person following the Structuralist theory would approach a graveyard study with an interpretation of death influenced by an unconscious set of rules that are culturally constructed and controlled (Mytum 2004 8). A holistic approach would study each element of a gravestone and especially the effect each element plays as part of the whole emotional and cultural expression of death. Each gravestone is affected by a complex pressures and attitudes including someone’s feelings towards death and the availability, price, and fashion of gravestones during that specific time period (George and

Nelsen 85). Each theory discussed above recognizes that cemeteries and gravestones provide us with a cultural resource into past attitudes and lives (Baker and Farber 99). This survey will utilize different ideas borrowed from various theoretical approaches.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Preliminary research on gravestone studies and the history of Berks county and Pennsylvania Germans commenced the survey process and provided the necessary background information. I chose to limit the survey to seven Berks Country churchyards in order to establish parameters for the study and to create a reasonable and practical sample size. Limiting the survey to Berks Country churchyards allows the study to address questions concerning the wider German community and expression of identity that may have been neglected if the study focused on small family plots or private secular cemeteries. After the churches were selected, permission letters were sent to the concerned peoples of the churches asking for access and explaining the nature and purpose of the study. The letters also stressed the surveyor's respect of the sanctity of the setting and of the wishes of any other visitors. Before the survey began, additional research of any church or graveyard records was completed. Previous cemetery studies of the selected churchyards did not reveal too much information; for the surveys, conducted in the 1930's, focused only on surnames and genealogies.

Upon first arriving at the churchyard, a general survey was taken in order to estimate the number of gravestones and the condition of the cemetery and its memorials. A rough sketch of the cemetery was completed in order to understand the general history and development of the cemetery. Except for the Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House, the smallest churchyard, none of the churchyards were 100% surveyed; and only a sample of gravestones was studied in each

churchyard. In order to preserve any spatial and temporal patterns, every third gravestone was surveyed leading to roughly 30-40% sampling rate. Under time constraints and a limited number of surveyors, it immediately appeared to be impractical to survey every gravestone for this study. Tombstones displaying a “death date” of after 1910 were also excluded as the modern community and preferences are not relevant to this survey concerning the past folk culture. Sampling was also exercised due to the lack of “staff” and the nature of the research design objectives which required surveying the maximum number of churchyards in order to observe any similarities, differences or patterns throughout the greater geographical area of Berks County and the Pennsylvania German community.

For each gravestone, information was recorded according to specific categories as listed on the recording form (see Appendix). The recording form was adapted from a recording system created by Harold Mytum of the University of York, UK (Mytum 2000 80-81). The form allowed all of the pertinent information to be recorded effectively from each gravestone. In order to facilitate uniformity and efficiency, certain categories, such as condition and material, were assessed according to fixed guidelines. These guidelines were found on a sheet accompanying the survey form. In the first category, the surveyor listed the graveyard name, each of which possessed its own numerical code for abbreviation and the memorial number assigned at the beginning of the survey. Memorial numbers were also recorded on the rough sketch of the graveyard. The next category described the condition of the monument in two parts: the stone and the inscription. This category served an important role in the later analysis by contributing to an understanding of a lack of information contributed by each memorial of poor condition leading to the possible exclusion from the survey. For an example, a memorial with a very poor inscription condition would not be included in the analysis of epitaphs if none

of the inscription could be deciphered. Moreover, perfect condition for a stone which displays a death date in the eighteenth-century can lead to the suspicion that the gravestone may have replaced during the modern period and may not accurately reflect the ideals and preferences of the date of the original construction.

The next category entailed dating the stone. Accurate dates for the gravestones provide an integral service for this study in determining any temporal trends of Pennsylvania German gravestones; however, ascertaining the correct date of a gravestone is a difficult process. The definition of a “date” of a gravestone must be first determined. The date of the erection of the stone is rarely mentioned on the stone itself. The date of death of the individual may not necessarily be the age of the memorial as stones could be carved and erected some time after a person’s death and burial. For this study, the year of death of the memorialized individual was used as the date of the memorial itself and the possibility of elapsed time between death and erection of the stone is considered during analysis. Likewise, a stone listing the names and death dates of several individuals memorialized should be taken in consideration. In this case, the death year of the last memorialized individual is recorded as the date of the stone, although this assumption may not be accurate in every case; therefore style and inscription technique should be observed for any differences in order to determine and to understand the date of the stone more accurately. Due to the complexity of dating the stone, the reason of the date inferred by the surveyor always accompanied the estimated date on the survey form (Mytum 2000 127).

After establishing the date and condition of the memorial, the surveyor then described the structure of the memorial itself. First the type of the memorial was recorded by sketching the shape of the memorial on the sheet. After the entire survey was completed, the sketches were compared and distinct memorial types were established and categorized. The material of the

memorial was then determined in addition to the orientation of the memorial, the direction which it faces. The surveyor determined the orientation with a compass. Additional features such as a memorial flag, plaque, or other type of structure that served as part of the memorial, besides the stone itself, were mentioned on the form.

Motifs served as the next description category. The surveyor recorded the motif by either writing a simple description or a drawing a sketch if words themselves would not provide a sufficient indication. The motif category was divided into two parts: motifs central to the memorial or motifs located around the border.

The last category addressed the inscription or epitaph on the memorial. The features of the inscription recorded include script, the shape of the text panel, and transcribing the inscription itself. Many of the inscriptions were either partially or completely illegible; therefore, substituting for parts of the inscription which the surveyor could not read, an ellipsis “...” was placed as a symbol of illegible text. Inscriptions were transcribed exactly line by line so that any peculiarities of the organization and content of the inscription could be preserved and studied. Likewise, inscriptions on different faces were noted on the survey form. The survey of a memorial concluded with a sketch of the overall shape, motif, and additional features of the memorial and a photograph. Photographs of the churchyard landscape were taken as well.

After the surveys of the seven churchyards were completed, the data from the survey were organized into a typology for each category. The survey recorded data from 550 memorials in total. The dates of the gravestones ranged from 1719-1910. The different forms or types of each feature recorded were assigned numbers, and data was entered into an Excel database so that specific features of each memorial could be compared within each cemetery and among the

different churchyards. The excel database also facilitated sorting the large amount of data during analysis.

The first part of analysis included comparing the frequency of certain features within each cemetery and the overall survey demonstrated through graphical representations. For each feature, seriation analysis was completed. Seriation analysis serves as a dating technique developed by the archaeologist James A. Ford to observe the increase and decrease in popularity of a style over time (Deetz 93). The analysis attempts to show for each feature and style a bell or “battle-ship” curve of popularity: starting slowly, growing to a peak and then dying away as another style becomes popular. During this part of analysis, the relationship between each type or style and its development over time will be examined. For each decade, the count data will be converted into percentages to compare which type is the most popular for that period of time. The information derived from analysis will be displayed both with graphics and written text. Seriation contributes to the understanding of the evolution and the temporal relationship and context of the memorial features and may be used to answer questions concerning the factors causing the preference and abandonment of a specific style in certain context.

## **RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

### **MEMORIAL TYPE**

#### **Results**

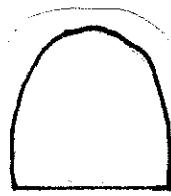
The survey recorded forty-four different memorial structures ranging from simple, nondescript pieces of stone to ornately carved sculptures. The following description of the results of this aspect of the survey will occur according to groupings of memorial forms during

analysis based on style similarities in order to condense and to understand more clearly the numerous styles of memorial forms and shapes.

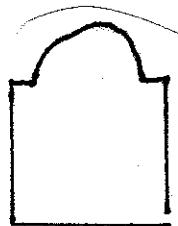
The memorials in Group A all share round tops. Memorial Form One displays a rounded top emerging from the sides as opposed to Form Sixteen which has straight sides (See Photograph 1 and Photograph 2). Forms Two and Three are similar except in the shape of the shoulders as Form Two has squared shoulders and Form Three has round shoulders (See Photograph 3). Form Thirty-Five displays a square base; however, this base is unlike the "additional feature" base discussed in a later section as a separate construction added to the headstone. The base with Form Thirty-five is part of the shape of the headstone. Form Twenty-one looks like Form Sixteen, but this form has a significantly broader width. This Group includes the majority of the memorials recorded in this survey with about 56% of the memorials having the traits that qualify for membership into Group A. Moreover, the most popular memorial form in this Group and the entire survey as well is Form One. The basic and simple shape of this memorial probably constitutes for the reasons of this form being so popular throughout the geographical span of the survey as well as through time.

Group A Forms:

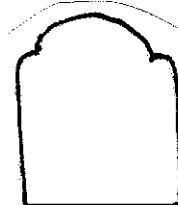
Form One



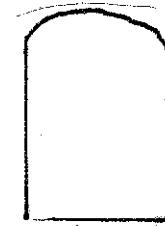
Form Two



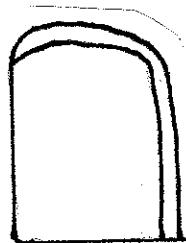
Form Three



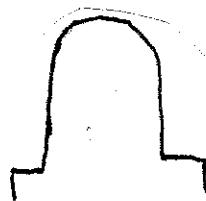
Form Sixteen



Form Twenty-One



Form Thirty-Five





Photograph 1: Memorial Form Sixteen,  
Mohn's Hill



Photograph 2: Memorial Form One, Alleghany  
Mennonite Meeting House



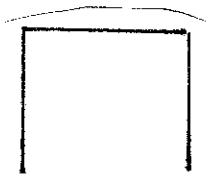
Photograph 3: Memorial Form Two, Plowville Lutheran

Group B is distinguished by memorials with flat tops. Form Five and Form Eight are similar with a basic rectangle form except for squared or rounded shoulders. Likewise, Forms Twenty and Forty-one in Group B appear very similar with raised flat tops; but their shoulders lie in different directions. The shoulders of Form Forty-one are raised while the shoulders of Form Twenty lie horizontally. Compared to Group A, memorials in Group B constitute as only a small minority of the memorial types in the survey which includes about 6% of the memorials.

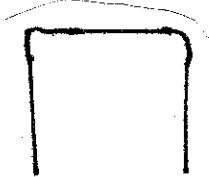
Comparing these statistics, a certain preferences for round tops exist over flat tops despite that both groups display a simple and basic form and design.

Group B Forms:

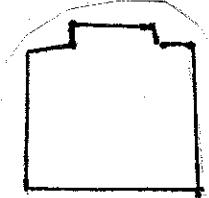
Form Five



Form Eight



Form Twenty



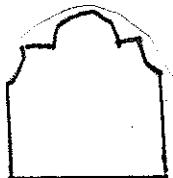
Form Forty-One



The memorials that belong in Group C all possess a small semi-circular top, and their differences are based on the shape of the shoulders. Form Thirty-one has horizontal square shoulders while both Form Fourteen and Form Twenty-seven display "dipped" shoulders. Form Thirty-eight also has dipped shoulders but is enhanced with small "extensions" protruding from the sides. Only two percent of the memorials recorded have this design.

Group C Forms:

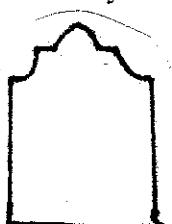
Form Fourteen



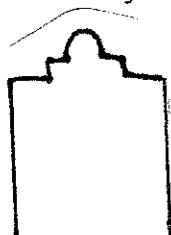
Form Thirty-Eight



Form Twenty-Seven



Form Thirty-One



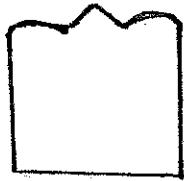
Group D contains memorials with pointed tops as opposed to the round tops in Group A.

The differences among the memorials involve the direction and shape of the shoulders

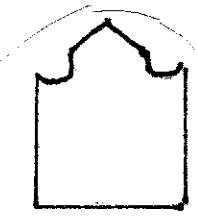
supporting the pointed top. Form Four has round convex shoulders while the shoulders of Form Ten and Twenty-six are concave. Form Twenty-six, like Form Thirty-eight of Group C, display "extensions" protruding from the shoulder. Form Forty-two serves as the only form that does not have shoulders in Group D. Group D includes four percent of the memorials in the survey.

#### Group D Forms:

Form Four



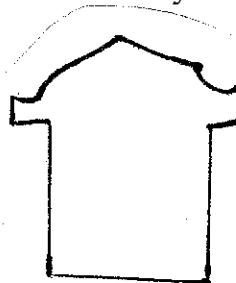
Form Ten



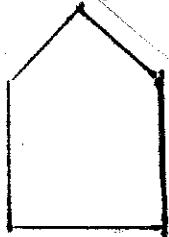
Form Twenty-Five



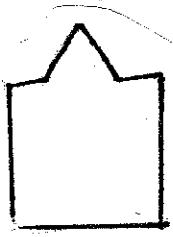
Form Twenty-Six



Form Forty-Two

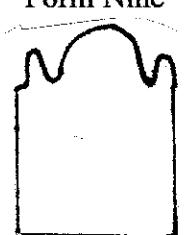


Form Forty-Four

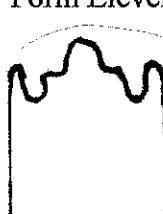


#### Group E Forms:

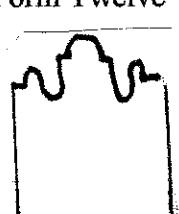
Form Nine

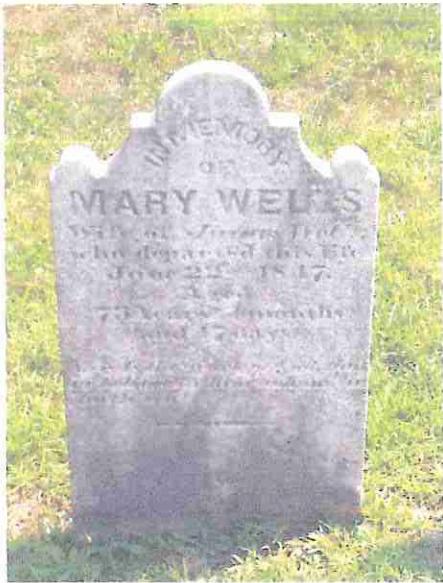


Form Eleven



Form Twelve



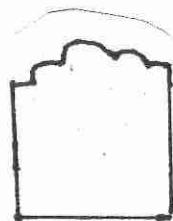


Photograph 4: Memorial Form Twelve of Group E, Harmony

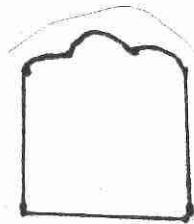
The memorials in Group F share similarities with those in Groups A and C. All of the memorials in this group, which included Forms Thirteen, Fifteen, and Thirty-six, display multiple round-tops on top of the memorial (See Photograph 5). With a similar proportion to Group E, Group F contains about 12% of the memorials of the survey. Groups E and F respectively include the largest number of memorials besides Group A.

Group F Forms:

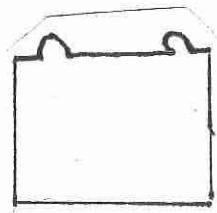
Form Thirteen

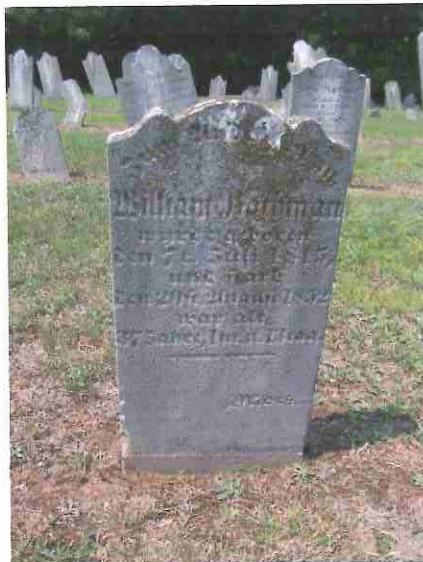


Form Fifteen



Form Thirty-Six





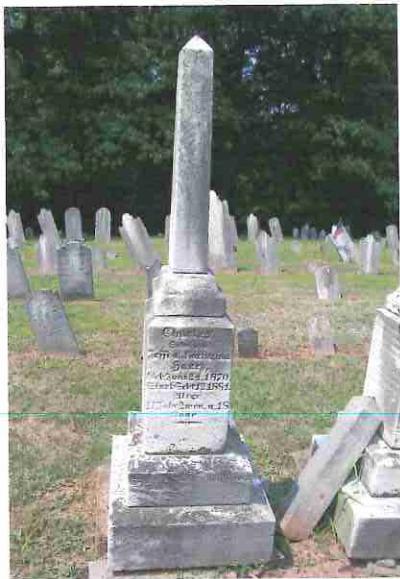
Photograph 5: Memorial Form 13, Allegheny Union

Group G memorials share a completely different shape than those in other groups. Forms Seventeen and Twenty-eight appear in the shape of a cube as with Form Seventeen or as a rectangle such as those of Form Twenty-eight. Less than 1% (count of 5) of the memorials have the “box” shape as shared by those in Group G. This form is very popular during the twentieth-century (Mytum 2000 16); therefore, the survey recorded only the first appearances of this type of memorial.

The memorials in Group H include different variations on the “table-top” memorial in which a flat headstone lies on the support of a base. The typical table-top, such as Form Forty-three, lies horizontally while Forms Twenty-nine and Thirty-nine lie at an angle but still have the flat top supported by some structure underneath. The inscription always appears on top of the “table.” Less than 2% of the memorials are “table-tops;” therefore, this form probably acted as a symbol of high socio-economic status in the graveyards.

Group I contains memorials in the shape of an obelisk. A general description of an obelisk is a tall, thin monument of four sides that tapers towards the top which is in the shape of

a pyramid (See Photograph 6). Each obelisk conforms to these basic traits but with some architectural variation. The obelisk not only indicates a greater financial and emotional investment by the mourners but also serves as a more ostentatious act of remembrance as it shapes and dominates the landscape. Like the table-top memorials, the obelisks constitute a very small minority of the survey with only six memorials possessing this shape. The obelisk also probably represented those of high socio-economic status.



Photograph 6: Obelisk, Form Twenty-Four, Allegheny Union

Memorials in Group J appear in the cemeteries as conjoined doubles of memorial forms found in other groups. Form Twenty-two appears as a combination of two memorials of Form Twenty. Likewise, Form Thirty resembles two memorials in the shape of Form Eleven joined together (See Photograph 7); and Form Forty is a union of two memorials similar to Form Sixteen. Although it appears two “separate” memorials were united to create one of the memorials in Group J, these memorials were not literally constructed by joining two memorials together but were deliberately carved as one. These forms, which occur throughout the survey,

usually demarcate the burials of young children who were siblings that died around the same time period. Group J represents the smallest of the groups with only four memorials recorded.



Photograph 7: Memorial Form Thirty, Harmony

Group K contains memorials of a miscellaneous shape and style. Form Six resembles a triangle, although this shape may have appeared due to an original rectangle shaped headstone sinking into the ground. Form Seven resembles a person with arms protruding from the sides and a round head. The creator of memorial Form Nineteen carved the memorial to resemble a stack of logs; likewise, Form Thirty-four clearly resembles a scroll. Forms Eighteen, Twenty-three, Thirty-two, Thirty-three, and Thirty-seven serve as a assortment of memorials of different shapes and styles of which are difficult to describe with words. These specific forms occurred rarely in the survey and will be observed more closely when necessary. While Group K represents about 2 % of the memorials, which is a bigger proportion than other groups, the individual forms included in this sub-category represent an even greater minority as most of the memorials only appear once or maybe at the maximum occurrence of twice throughout the whole survey. These forms certainly represent individual wishes and tastes of the deceased or the mourners.

## Analysis/Discussion

The study of the various styles of form can reveal certain ideals and cultural preferences when motifs or a detailed inscription may be absent. The discussion above stated that Group A memorials included most of the memorials in the survey. According to raw numbers, Forms One, Two, Twelve, Thirteen, Sixteen, and Twenty-one serve as the most popular in the general survey and represent Groups A, E, and F, the groups with the highest proportion represented (Table 1). Reflecting its high numbers, Group A displays the preference for simplicity and basic shapes contrary to the complex design of Groups E and F. Besides personal preference and choice, some external reasons may have caused these trends and numbers.

Group A probably includes the greatest proportion of the memorials due to its simplicity and basic design. In certain cemeteries, such as the Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House, Form One memorials and other Group A forms represent most of the cemetery (See Photograph 2). With the small homogenous community that this cemetery attended, a need to exert one's identity or status did not exist; therefore, simple memorial forms achieved their purpose of just designating the burial. On the contrary, cemeteries such as St. Gabriel's and Harmony which serve a large community including those of various socio-economic status and backgrounds, contain a variety of forms especially those of a more complex and unique form and style in order to designate an individual's identity more clearly from the rest of the community and to accommodate the various tastes and preferences of many individuals.

This simple distribution between basic and complex design only partially explains the differences in distribution of forms among the cemeteries. Only one form, number Thirteen of Group F, appears in every cemetery surveyed. Forms Eight, Eleven, Twelve, and Sixteen occur in six out of the seven cemeteries (See Photograph 4 and 5). The universal popularity of these

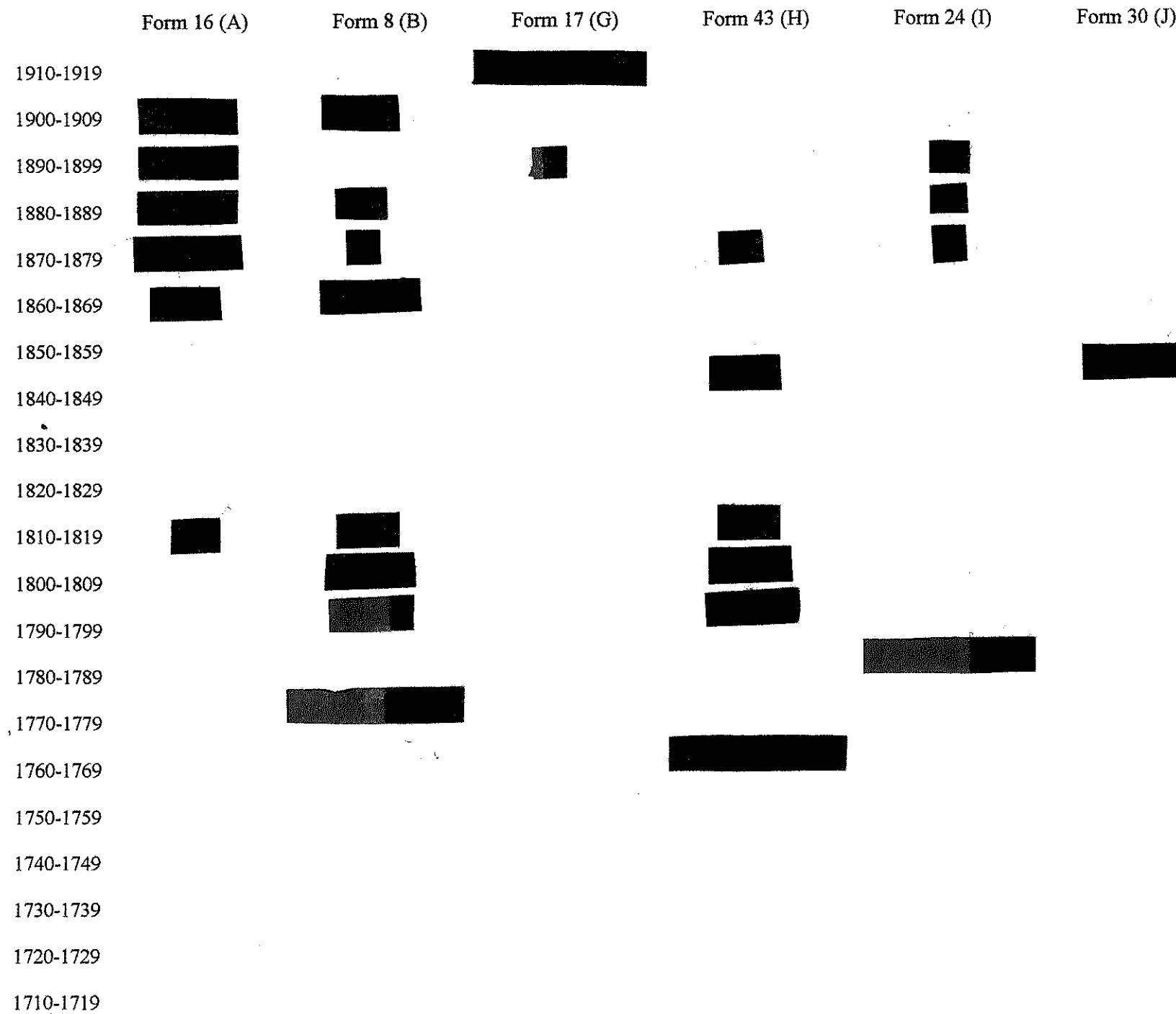
forms probably does not result from the simplicity of design as forms Eleven, Twelve, and Thirteen display some comparatively complex styles. The populations serving these cemeteries included in the survey probably obtained the memorial forms from a single carver or shop. The uniformity of styles across the survey leads to the conclusion that a single industry produced these forms and sold them to the local community of Berks County.

Seriation analysis shows a distinct developmental pattern of style throughout time (See Figures 1a and 1b). Memorial Form Two (of Group A) appears earliest in the survey and dominates most of the memorial form styles during the eighteenth-century with a few occurrences of other forms such as Form Four and Eight first appearing during the 1770's. While Form Two peaks in popularity around the decades of 1780 and 1790, Forms One, Eleven, and Twelve begin to emerge. Form One, the most popular form throughout the entire survey, appears throughout the nineteenth-century into the twentieth-century and peaks around 1880; however, Forms Eleven and Twelve are found in the survey only during the first half of the eighteenth century. After 1860, they are no longer recorded in the survey and have been "replaced" in popularity by Form Thirteen which peaks in popularity during the same decade in which Forms Eleven and Twelve discontinue. This pattern differs from the usual style development from basic to complex as Form Thirteen seems to be simpler in style than Forms Eleven and Twelve. This anomaly can represent a change in industry or collective style preference. Forms Eleven and Twelve represent a more Gothic style while Form Thirteen resembles a more closely Classical or Baroque; however, these associations do not correspond in time with the more universal trends in art and style as the Classical and Baroque Revivals typically precede the Gothic. During the rise in frequency of Form Thirteen, Forms Sixteen and Twenty-One begin to appear in the survey and continue throughout the rest of the nineteenth-

Figure 1a: Memorial Form By Decade



Figure 1b: |Memorial Form By Decade



century. Both these forms adhere to a simple design; therefore, the popularity of Form Thirteen probably serves as part of this tendency for the plain and basic. With Forms Seventeen and Twenty-One gaining popularity during the end of the nineteenth-century and beginning of the twentieth-century, one can predict that had the survey included more memorials dating to the twentieth-century these forms would have been the more dominant style and shape. During the later half of the 1800's, other forms do appear but at a low frequency; therefore, no distinct chronological trends coincide with these forms.

Some scholars associate certain memorial shapes and trends with contemporaneous art styles. The early Forms One, Two, and Three follow the Baroque and Rococo influence of the eighteenth-century with curvilinear lines and shapes (Graves 72). In contrast, forms such as Eleven and Twelve, do not appear until the beginning nineteenth-century yet remain as the most popular forms until the twentieth-century. These types represent the Gothic style prevalent during this time period (Mytum 2000 3). Nineteenth-century Egyptian Revival introduced the obelisk form, but this style preference does not gain as much popularity as the other revivals (Mytum 2000 36). However, this analysis cannot necessarily be applied to the eighteenth-century gravestones recorded in this study. Usually other Baroque forms of art are more stylish and ornate; however, these "Baroque" gravestones are somewhat primitive in execution. The gravestone makers may not have intended to carve the curvilinear form as a model of the Baroque style (Graves 63). A possible conclusion could address the lack of desire to follow a strict style code during the early history of the cemeteries. Difficulty in lifestyle or even the situation of establishing a community might have diminished the need of elaborately marking graves or remembering deaths. With such a small community, one can easily remember the deceased with a simple gravestone. Gravestones do grow in size and complexity during the

nineteenth century in order to attract attention in growing cemeteries and communities (Mytum 2000 10). Perhaps high mortality led to a need for an efficiently produced and basic gravestone in the early community

The presence of certain forms represents a display of socio-economic status of the individual or his or her own family. The size and shape of forms such as the obelisk and table-top (Group I and H respectively), symbolize status and prominence in the community. Likewise, the financial investment needed to construct these memorial forms indicates a higher socio-economic place within the community of the cemetery. The table-top memorials in St. Gabriel's cemetery mark the burials of the Douglass and Bird family members. According to historical plaques placed on the gravestone, the Douglass family owned a stage coach stop and a local tavern of historical importance during the Revolutionary War. The local town of Douglassville is named after this Douglass family. Likewise, the Bird family operated Hopewell Furnace and whose surname serves as the inspiration for the town name of Birdsboro. The height of the obelisk also towers over the other forms and monopolizes the image of the landscape for the visitor and any mourners (See Photograph 6).

Besides a person's socio-economic status, memorial form can also represent the age of the deceased as certain memorial forms tend to mark the burials of children. The "double" memorial form of Group J always designates the burial of children (See Photograph 7). With high mortality rates, parents often buried siblings who both died within a short period of time from each other; therefore, the "double" memorial designates the burials of two people probably during the same funeral ceremony. Likewise, the "high-status" memorials such as the obelisk often designate the burials of children. The obelisk in Mohn's Hill marks the burials of several children from the same family while an obelisk in Harmony memorializes only one child. These

deceased are memorialized with complex forms as the mourners, who in these cases are the parents, desire to invest financially and emotionally in a large monument. On the contrary, the graves of the elderly who lived to be over eighty or even ninety years old, often have simple graves such as those in Group A or B.

## MATERIAL

### Results

The survey documented five different gravestone materials. About 20% of the gravestones studied during the survey were composed of red sandstone (See Photograph 8). This type of stone can be found locally throughout southern Berks County especially in the areas with high iron content in the soil. The red sandstone of the memorials never displayed a refined finished but appeared crude and coarse. Depending on the age, weathering, and condition of the sandstone, the color of the sandstone varied from a deep red to a dark brown. Grey limestone comprised of the majority of memorials throughout the survey (See Photograph 9). The limestone could appear to be white or even a darker grey; however, most of the, memorials were of a light grey color. The less frequent materials include marble and granite. These materials illustrated a higher quality and finish than the limestone and red sandstone; likewise, the carvers of the memorial did not acquire this material locally. The marble and granite gravestones appear in many different hues with black being the most common.



Photograph 8: Red sandstone  
Plowville Lutheran



Photograph 9: Limestone  
Plowville Lutheran

A few of the gravestones serve as a composite of different materials. The table-top memorials, located in the cemetery at St. Gabriel's are comprised of both red sandstone on the bottom half which supported the "table-top" comprised of limestone. A table-top memorial found at Allegheny Union was constructed with a brick base and a limestone top as well.

#### **Analysis/Discussion**

Usually clustered together in the churchyard, the red sandstone memorials stand out against the cemetery landscape and the other grayish hue memorials; yet the red sandstone and its unfinished appearance project a natural and home-made quality attached onto the stone. However, it is difficult to conclude if this was the intention of the mourners and the deceased or a modern interpretation of the material and image. The mourners probably utilized local materials due to availability and for simplicity and efficiency of the burial process.

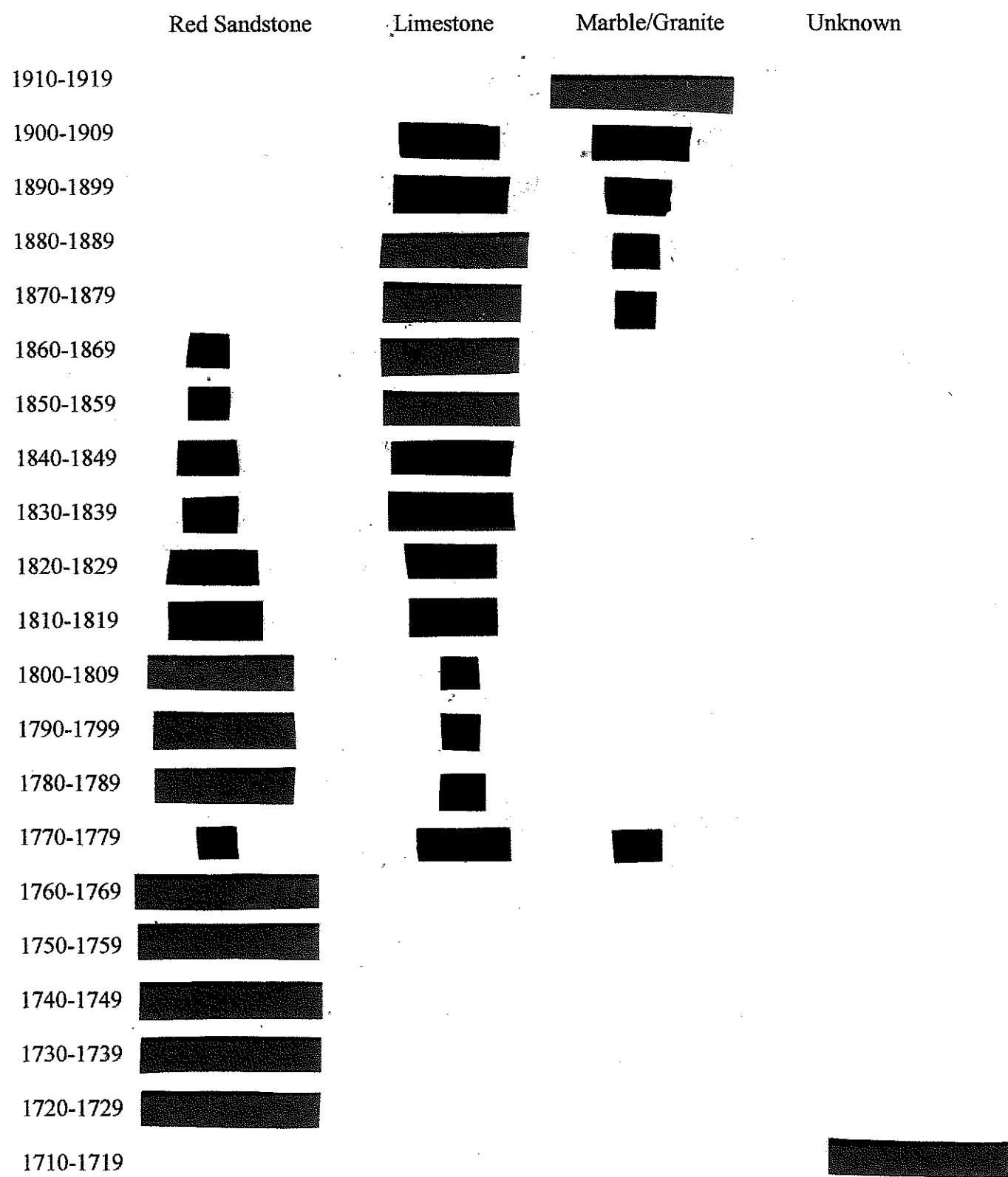
While this material was used throughout the nineteenth-century, red sandstone served as the primary material for memorials in the eighteenth-century. Red sandstone usually appeared in the memorial forms of One, Two, Three, Four, and Five which represent in the survey the most plain and basic memorial types. This relationship between material and style contribute to a better understanding of the memorial industry in the eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-

century. The families themselves probably used local stone to create the memorial for their deceased; or local craftsmen, skilled in several other different trades, made the memorials for the local community.

Seriation analysis reveals distinct chronological trends with materials and supports the conclusions above (See Figure 2). Red sandstone is the earliest identifiable material present in the survey and peaks in popularity around the beginning of the nineteenth-century. The Pennsylvania German community during this period probably remained localized and centered around the assembly of a few families. The absence of a developed memorial industry at this time forced people to seek local materials and craftsmen. Red sandstone was used very rarely during the later half of the nineteenth-century with only three recordings in the survey. All of these later red sandstone graves appeared in the Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House cemetery where people were probably still using local materials and chose not to buy mass-produced gravestones.

Unlike the red sandstone, the grey limestone served as the material for a greater variety of memorial forms. The most popular forms including Forms Eleven, Twelve, Thirteen, and Sixteen, as discussed in earlier paragraphs, were comprised of this material. Corresponding with the higher skill of the carvers for these forms, the material of these memorials also exhibited a more refined and finished appearance. This material first appears at the end of the eighteenth-century and peaks during the second half of the nineteenth-century. This limestone material began to be more popular than the red sandstone around the 1830's. The relationship between the two materials signifies the development of more uniform and mass-produced gravestones and the advancement of the memorial industry in the area. Although the limestone material can be

Figure 2: Material By Decade



locally found in Berks County, the use of this material required transportation of the material over greater distances requiring a larger industry and clientage.

The marble material of gravestones does not emerge in the survey until the second half of the nineteenth-century. If the survey extended farther into the twentieth-century, then results would have probably shown that this material would have taken over popularity from the grey limestone. The most common forms that are comprised of this material are Forms One and Twenty-one which are very similar in shape but with a greater thickness for Form Twenty-one. The distance to acquire this material indicates a greater investment on behalf of the mourners. The material most frequently appears in the cemetery at St. Gabriel's where many members of a higher socio-economic class, such as the Douglasses and the Birds, were buried. The graveyard also contains a greater variety of ethnic groups than the other cemeteries.

The composite memorials also indicate a greater investment as the forms were typically larger in size than the other memorials in the graveyard. A bi-material gravestone attracts more attention especially if two different colors like the gray limestone and the red brick are juxtaposed together. Like memorial form and other features, material can indicate investment on behalf of the mourners and the carver in addition to contributing to the visual image of the landscape with different textures and colors.

## ADDITIONAL FEATURES

### Results

"Additional Features" is a category created to record any graves that have been distinguished by an associated object or structure besides the headstone itself. These objects have been added to the memorial either contemporaneously of the erection of the headstone or

even several decades later. Moreover, this category includes features that are not necessarily affixed to the memorial but have been placed in close proximity in order to be associated with the headstone of the deceased. Although this category contains a broad range of objects, each one enhances the memorial of the deceased and provides more information about the individual and burial practice.

During analysis, this feature category was divided into different groups based on the different temporal relationship with the headstone. All of the features in the first group were added to the headstone during the same period of the initial construction of the memorial. The most common feature in this group and of the entire category is the basic base upon which the headstone stands. This base is usually comprised of the same material as the headstone. The base of the headstone was recorded separately from the memorial type or form because the presence of the base did not consistently appear with a specific memorial type and was constructed separately from the headstone. For example, only about 40% of the memorial Form One was observed with a headstone in the survey. Likewise, about half of the recordings of memorial Form Sixteen appeared with a base. The popular Forms of Eleven, Twelve, and Thirteen rarely possessed a base in the survey.

Similar to the base described above, some memorials share a base with other memorials and usually demarcate the burials of family members; however, only eighteen memorials in the survey share this feature. Like the individual base, this large base usually is comprised of the same type of material as the headstones that it supports. Although this feature occurs infrequently in the survey, it is associated with Form One the majority of the time. The memorials sharing a base usually mark the burials of husband and wife symbolizing the bond of

marriage that survives even in death. In Allegheny Union cemetery, the burials of siblings of one family share a common base which similarly indicates the importance of family ties.

A less common additional feature recorded during the survey is the footstone. This feature resembles a small memorial that is placed at the opposite end of the headstone. Some of the footstones resemble Form One and Form Sixteen with a rounded or squared top; however, compared to these memorial types, the footstones are considerably smaller in size. Often they do not display any markings or carvings except for the initials of the deceased, and any inscriptions appear on the side of the footstone facing the headstone. In the survey, footstones are associated with a variety of memorial forms; however, they do tend to mirror the headstone, of which they are placed opposite, in material and generally style and shape. An exception to this trend is a footstone in a shape of a tureen that is associated with a memorial in St. Gabriel's cemetery. All of the footstones recorded during the survey are present in the cemetery at St. Gabriel's. This concentration of footstones will be discussed later in this section.

One memorial in the survey displays a pair of columns which flanks the headstone as an additional feature of the memorial (See Photograph 10). This memorial appears in the cemetery of Harmony Church as a part of memorial in the shape of Form Thirty-three. Form Thirty-three appears very rarely in the survey as well and exhibits high quality carving with its unique shape and design. The columns contribute to the classical design of the headstone and also exhibit the possible high socio-economic status of the deceased. With the columns, the memorial appears as a substantial monument in the overall cemetery landscape.



Photograph 10: Columns, Harmony

Like the columns, a few memorials are distinguished by a piece of sculpture added to the headstone. The sculpture typically lies on top of the headstone. In Plowville, a memorial displays a sculpture of a book lying open upon the top of the headstone. The shape of the memorial in addition to this sculpture resembles an altar (See Photographs 31 and 32). Another memorial, in Plowville cemetery, has a sculpture of a sleeping lamb lying on top of the gravestone (See Photograph 11). A sleeping lamb usually marks the graves of children and will be discussed as an important motif in later sections.



Photograph 11: Sleeping Lamb Sculpture, Plowville Lutheran

One gravestone at St. Gabriel's also exhibited the presence of a kerb in which the burial of the deceased is outlined on the surface of the ground with roughly three-inch wide blocks of stone. Kerbs visually outline the burial on the surface. Kerbs appear in cemeteries throughout

the world; however, only one memorial in the survey has been recorded with this feature possibly due to the small size of the community served by these cemeteries. A great need does not exist to mark off the burials on the ground, for the cemeteries are not crowded and possess land to expand and to spread their plots for future generations.

The other group of features in this category includes objects that have been added to the memorial at a different time than the burial or original construction of the headstone. This category primarily includes American flags and plaques indicating the deceased's service in war. Most of these markers have been placed next to the appropriate graves during a recent period, probably within the second half of the twentieth-century; however, the historical society and the churches have not kept available records of the actual dates; therefore, observing the good condition of most of the flags, it has been determined that they have been placed near the headstones rather recently.

American flags with small plaques attached to the flag pole accompany the graves of those who have served in American wars. The plaque usually indicates in which war the individual fought; however, many plaques just display the words "SOLDIER." Revolutionary war flags and plaques are more elaborately decorated with a relief of a Colonial militia soldier on the plaque. Civil War plaques are in the shape of a star with GAR 1861/1865 written in the center (See Photograph 12). GAR stands for the "Grand Army of the Republic" which indicates the Union army and coincides with the location of the survey being in Pennsylvania and the North. There are also a few plaques for individuals who fought in the War of 1812. Although these memorials were not recorded, a few plaques and flags did appear in the cemeteries marking the burials of individuals who fought in WWII.



Photograph 12: GAR star, Alleghany Union

Other modern additional features include historical plaques added to the memorial. These plaques highlight the lives of famous individuals buried in the cemetery. The cemetery at St. Gabriel's contains the burials of the Douglass and Bird families of local fame. Dr. Bodo Otto, the surgeon of the Continental Army at Valley Forge during the Revolutionary War, is buried in the cemetery at Trinity Lutheran Church. His grave contains additional memorials erected by the DAR, Daughters of the American Revolution. Plaques placed on top of their memorials share information regarding the achievements of these individuals.

#### **Analysis/Discussion**

With the wide variety of objects included in this category, it is difficult to conclude any broad generalizations about the meaning and use of “additional features” of a memorial. Although an object or feature may possess a different meaning, each enhances the memorial of the individual either visually by increasing its size or height or emotionally by indicating different relationships or beliefs beyond just those expressed by the headstone.

With its simplicity, the individual base first described in this section can exhibit very little additional meaning to the gravestone except a possible increase in financial investment for the mourner than if he or she chose not to have a base added to the tombstone. The base does add to the height of the tombstone but only slightly. A base does provide a sense of solidity to

the memorial; however, it does not mean that those memorials without a base (which include the majority of those recorded in the survey) do not lack this sentiment.

A base which is shared by several memorials does indicate some additional meaning. As stated in an earlier paragraph, the most of the memorials that share a base indicate the burials of husband and wife. This feature serves as one method of indicating marriage and other relationships in the burial setting. Although not all married couples share a common base, this feature does highlight the meaning of marriage between these individuals and the endurance of the relationship even in death. A considerable time span separates the deaths of many of the spouses; therefore, the decision of constructing a shared base as part of the memorial was probably accomplished by the surviving spouse. This choice could have served as part of the grieving process for the surviving spouse as well.

Less than half of the memorials recorded in the survey exhibit one of the “additional features.” The scarcity of these features indicates the greater financial investment required for some features such as the footstone, sculpture, or kerb or perhaps an exclusive meaning or context for these features. These features required more material at the expense of a greater cost to the mourner or the deceased. On the contrary, the low proportion of memorials with a memorial flag do not indicate a difference in investment but just reflect the small proportion of the population who fought in American wars or have been distinguished by the local historical groups. These features exist as highlights of specific individuals and do not reflect the entire community or population.

The concentration of footstones in the cemetery of St. Gabriel’s and the absence of footstones in other cemeteries may be an issue of socio-economic differences across the survey and Berks Country or ethnic differences. A footstone may require more financial investment in

burial and indicate a greater social status. St. Gaberiel's cemetery includes the burials of many famous individuals who were important in their time and held a valuable position in society. It may have been necessary for a greater and more obvious indication of status with the footstone than in any other cemetery where people may have been members of the same socio-economic group such is probably the case in the Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House cemetery. St. Gabriel's cemetery also contains the burials of those of many different nationalist backgrounds. The footstone may be an ethnic identity marker; however, its presence in cemeteries across the world where the populations are somewhat ethnically homogeneous somewhat negates this conclusion.

Certain features also present specific religious or cosmological beliefs and sentiments. The kerb and footstone with a headstone contribute to the resemblance of the memorial to a bed (Deetz 121). This image compares death to sleep and serves as a typically nineteenth-century and romantic view of loss and sadness. This sentiment may have also provided some solace to the mourners. The association of a grave with a "bed" parallels the prominent German epitaphs that stress sleep and the body at rest. This correspondence with death and sleep will be discussed in following sections concerning inscriptions. Likewise, the memorial in Plowville cemetery that resembles an altar with the open book sculpture may emphasize the memorial as a place to pray for the dead to ensure their salvation. These features stress the sanctity of the cemetery and the importance of remembering death and salvation.

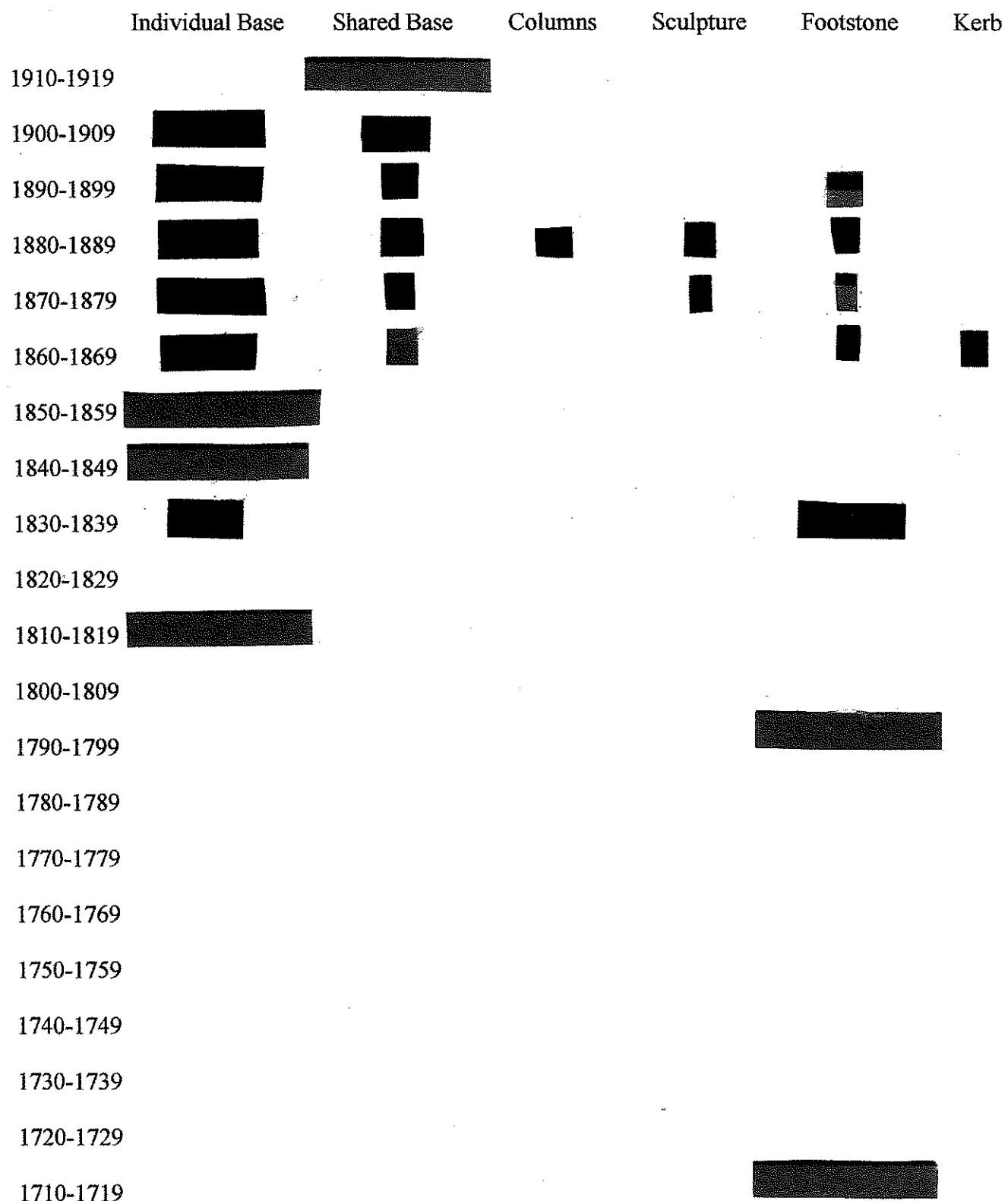
The twentieth-century additions to the memorials such as the plaques and the various soldier flags serve as a unique addition to the memorials and establish the role of memorials in modern and society and life. The presence of the flags indicates that the recognition of a person's life and achievements may extend beyond the lifespan of the mourners present at the

time of burial. Moreover, the act of placing the flag contributes to the extension of the life of the cemetery as a place of education and of history and its presence in modern society beyond just a place of burial.

Seriation analysis does not reveal any specific trends among the relationship and popularity of these features (See Figure 3). One cannot necessarily compare the popularity of the individual base with the presence of the American Flag and Soldier's plaque; therefore, this part of the analysis will continue studying these features according to the different sub-categories described above. The category pertaining to twentieth-century additions follows restricted and predictable chronological trends. The frequency of the different soldier's memorials is limited to a realistic period after the relevant war.

This type of analysis did not reveal much information pertaining to the contemporary "Additional Features." Besides the footstone, the rest of the additional features did not appear in until the nineteenth-century. The individual base, with 130 recordings in the survey, is extremely more popular than any other additional features. Moreover, the individual base displayed the biggest temporal range by appearing throughout the entire nineteenth-century. The shared base gained popularity during the beginning of the twentieth-century. With these results, one can conclude that the simplicity of the single, individual base led to its frequency and popularity. The other features such as the columns and sculptures required too much financial investment from the mourners for these features to appear more frequently and have a greater presence in the survey.

Figure 3: Additional Features (Contemporaneous to Headstone) By Decade



## MOTIFS: CENTRAL

### Results

Motifs contribute aesthetic value to the memorial as well as symbolize identity, religious beliefs, status and ethnicity; however, only about half of the memorials recorded exhibited some type of motif. In a similar fashion with the other memorial forms, the motifs have been organized according to groups based on certain similarities (See Appendix). Group A of motifs include basic lines and shapes. Motif One is a simple engraved line while Motif Three is a small circle. Motif Five resembles two arrows pointing towards each other. Motif Two is a combination of two triangles pointing in opposite directions with a circle in the center (See Photograph 14). Motif Four appears as a triangle with a concave circle for one of its ends. The other motifs included in this group serve as more complex and abstract line designs. Motif Twenty-two looks like a figure with several arms and heads. Motif Thirty and Thirty-One may have been intended to look like an abstract flowers. Motifs such as Twenty-Six and Thirty-Six include other abstract line decorations (See Photograph 13). Group A encompasses the majority of motifs present on memorials in the survey. Motif Two, the triangle/circle combination, serves as the most popular motif overall in the survey, and this motif is the only motif to be represented in every cemetery. Likewise, Motif One is present at all cemeteries except one in the survey.



Photograph 13: Abstract Line Motif,  
Alleghany Union



Photograph 14: Motif Two, Plowville  
Lutheran

Group B contains motifs that represent flowers or leaves. Motif Ten includes leaves of various types while Motif Sixteen is a grapevine. Included in this Group B are also specific types of flowers such as Motif Eleven: a rose, Motif Twenty-Four: a tulip, and Motif Twenty-Nine: a lily. Motifs Twenty-Five and Twenty-Eight are distinguished by either multiple or a single flower present respectively. Group B is the second most popular group behind Group A with forty-six of its motifs present on memorials. Motif Eleven serves as the most popular motif in this group and occurs in every cemetery except one.



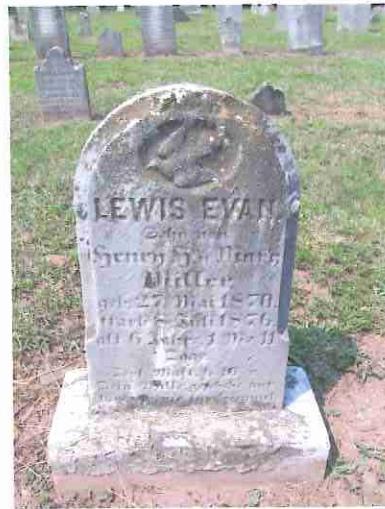
Photograph 15: Tulip and Hearts Motifs, Alleghany Union

Motifs in Group C are variations around the theme of the “book.” Motif Seven is an open book with a hand pointing upwards above the book (See Photograph 18). Motif Thirteen appears as an open book as well but with a rose. Motif Nine is only an open book without any other objects accompanying it. Group C motifs occur a little over twenty times in the survey.

Group D Motifs are grouped together due to some relationship with an animal. An unknown sleeping animal is Motif Twelve (See Photograph 16). Motif Nineteen includes doves in various poses and forms (See Photograph 17). Group D motifs do not appear as often as the others with only about eleven of these motifs present, and Motif Twelve is the most common in this group and was recorded to be present in every cemetery but one in the survey.

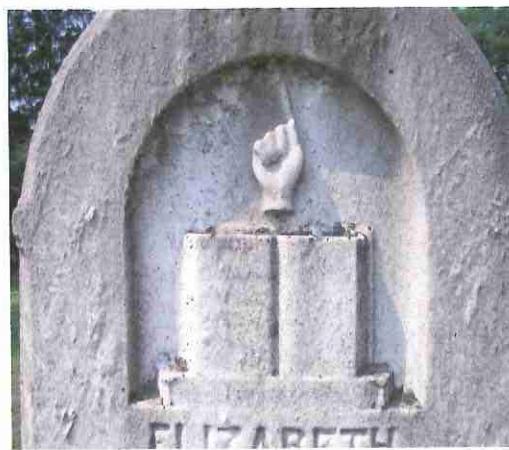


Photograph 16: Sleeping Lamb Motif,  
Harmony



Photograph 17: Dove Motif  
Alleghany Union

All of the motifs in Group E are associated with the human hand. Motif Fifteen shows human hands holding or clasping each other. Motif Thirty-Three displays a hand pointing up similarly to Motif Seven with the hand above the book (See Photograph 18). Motif Forty-Two is a hand holding drooping flowers. This motif is placed in Group E and not Group B as the hand appears at the center of the motif as the largest and most prominent figure. Group E motifs appear rarely with each motif appearing once except for Motif Fifteen which occurs twice.



Photograph 18: Motif of Hand pointing above a Bible, Alleghany Union

Motifs in Group F include motifs of angels and cherubs. Motif Fourteen pictures angels in various poses (See Photograph 19) except for an image of an angel crying falls under Motif Thirty-Eight in order to highlight the important emotion associated with this action and motif. Motif Forty-One describes cherubs in various shapes and forms. Group F also does not appear often throughout the survey with the motifs only appearing eight times in total. The angel motif is the most popular in this group.



Photograph 19: Motif Fourteen, Alleghany Union

Group G includes only crosses of which is represented just by Motif Forty-Five which is a cross and a crown (See Photograph 20). This group serves as the rarest with the motif only appearing once.



Photograph 20: Motif Forty-Five, Plowville Lutheran

Group H includes a wider variety of motifs which share in the theme of face and figures. Motif Six shows a profile of a face enclosed in a circle while Motif forty-six includes just any version of a face (Photograph 21). The gender of this person is unknown. Motif twenty-seven appears to be a women reclining on a settee. Motif Forty broadly deals with any figures. Group H does not occur as many times as some of the others with only five occurrences.



Photograph 21: Motif Forty-Six, Plowville Lutheran

Group I includes versions of crossbones. Motif Forty-Three shows skull and crossbones while Motif Forty-Four includes just the crossbones. Like Group G, Group I also occurs infrequently with only two displays of the crossbones motifs.

Group J serves as a broader category that encompasses motifs representing a broad range of objects. Motif Seventeen is a heart of any size of shape while Motif Thirty-Four is a linked chain. The presence of scrolls as a motif is labeled as Motif Thirty-Five while an American Flag is labeled Motif Thirty-Seven. Group J appears more than many of the groups with ten occurrences. The heart motif and the scroll motif are the most popular in this group.

Motifs dealing with farming are included in Group K. Motif Eight depicts a sheath of wheat and a rake or scythe. Motif Thirty-Two includes just a sheath of wheat alone. Like Group I, motifs in Group K were recorded only twice in the survey.

Group L Motifs share a celestial theme. Motif Twenty appears as a rising sun while Motif Twenty-One includes various shapes and numbers of stars. Motif Twenty-three is a crescent moon (See Photograph 22). Compared to most of these groups, Group L displays higher numbers with eighteen occurrences in the survey.



Photograph 22: Crescent Moon Motif, Alleghany Union

#### **Analysis/Discussion**

Continuing the medieval tradition of icons as practiced in their native land, the Pennsylvania Germans applied symbols and allegories across their art and architecture and especially their gravestones (R 103). The motifs, described above, symbolize both a spiritual interpretation and secular meaning; therefore, the following discussion of motifs will address this dichotomy of connotation by first analyzing the various sacred meanings of these motifs and then the less obvious secular interpretation.

Although the location of the memorial and motif already convey some spiritual significance, displaying a certain motif on a gravestone serves as an act of proclaiming a specific belief of that individual or the collective ideas of the community, for all eternity. In the late seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century America, the most common motif on gravestones was the skull representing mortality (Deetz 95). The skull, with a grin, hollow eyes, and sometimes even with wings, served as a “memento mori,” a reminder of death (George and

Nelsen 86). However, in Pennsylvania German cemeteries, the motif appears very rarely (Licthen 130). The survey recorded one grave exhibiting this motif (Motif Forty-Three and Forty-Four) belonging to Andrew Robeson in St. Gabriel's cemetery. Although achieving the notoriety of Berks County's oldest grave dating to 1719/1720<sup>1</sup>, Robeson did not possess German background but had Swedish and English ancestry. Besides this tombstone, the survey did not record any other skull and crossbones motif; therefore, the Pennsylvania Germans must have been exhibiting other religious sentiments with different methods.

Throughout the time period covered by the survey, the most dominant religious sentiment exhibited by the Pennsylvania Germans is of salvation and joy represented by motifs such as the cherub (Motif Forty-One), the angel (Motif Fourteen), and the flower motifs in Group B. Cherubs and angels, sometimes pictured with trumpets, proclaim rebirth and resurrection (Hardy 51) as they fly and lead the deceased to salvation (See Photograph 23).



Photograph 23: Flying Angle Motif, Harmony

The Bible includes many references to the rose, tulip, and lily (Motifs, Eleven, Twenty-four, and Twenty-nine respectively) when conveying resurrection, hope and faith in addition to

<sup>1</sup> Both 1719 and 1720 are listed on the tombstone as Robeson's date of death due to discrepancies between the English calendar and other calendars prior to 1752 (Bicentennial Committee 11).

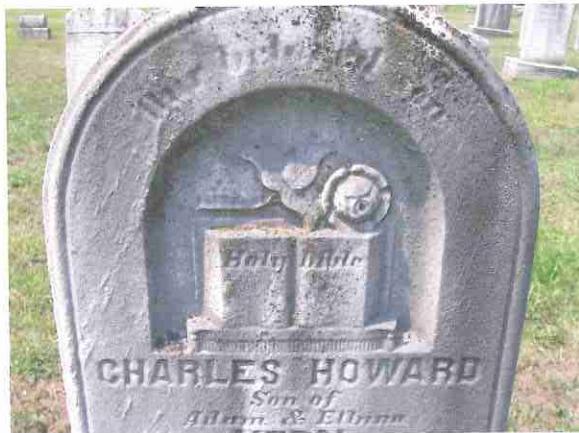
expressing a basic joy in religious life (Graves 76). The Pennsylvania Germans utilized many different versions of the rose motif on their gravestones. During the early period, roses were shown as being geometrical and flat (Hardy 57). However, in the nineteenth-century, the rose displayed a more realistic form and usually embodies Jesus and faith (Stoudt 1948 36). A rose, depicted on the gravestone as blooming symbolizes the blossoming of the spirit is being portrayed (Stoudt 1948 107). The magnitude of the rose blossom varies with age of the deceased as children's graves tend to display a small rose with a tightly closed bud while the graves of adults picture roses in full bloom (See Photographs 25 and 26). The tulip tends to symbolize the Holy Trinity when carved on gravestones as the more abstract and stylized image of the flower (see Photograph 24) (Gilbert 46). The lily possesses a wider variety of interpretations as a symbol of new age or spiritual passage in addition to a period of rebirth and knowledge (Stoudt 1948 44, 104). A flower does not uniformly represent salvation and joy as a motif of cut or dying flowers (Motif Forty-Two), portrays sadness and death rather than resurrection and hope (Graves 80).



Photograph 24: Abstract Tulip,  
Allegheny Union



Photograph 25: Closed Bud Rose,  
Plowville Lutheran



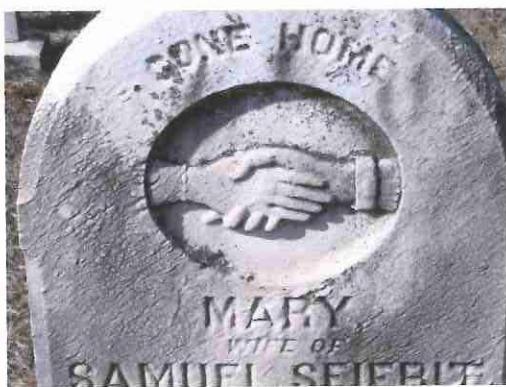
Photograph 26: Full Bloom Rose lying on top of Bible, Allegheny Union

The motifs in Group C convey an even more religious symbol by portraying the Bible. The open book motif (Motif Nine) represents the Bible even if the words “Holy Bible” are not written across it as depicted on some other gravestones. Sometimes the Bible is accompanied by a hand pointing up (Motif Seven, See Photograph 18) which is reminding and directing the audience towards heaven (Patterson 202). With the rose lying on top of the Bible as with Motif Thirteen, the ideas of resurrection and salvation are being highlighted as lessons in the Bible in order to remind mourners and other visitors of these important doctrines for a source of solace and comfort during the period of mourning (See Photograph 26).

While many motifs included an image of the Bible, one of the more obvious Christian symbols, the cross, only materialized once as a motif during the survey. Motif Number Forty-Five (See Photograph 20) appears as a cross accompanied by a crown, probably the “crown of God” (Mytum 2000 33). The relative absence of this important Christian symbol among the motifs on the memorials in the survey is difficult to justify and to understand. The prevalence of the cross in other religious contexts may have prevented the desire to include the cross on these memorials. Also, the Pennsylvania Germans, who predominantly practiced Protestant faiths, may have deliberately avoided the Catholic icon of the crucifix. Like the Puritans in New

England or the neighboring Quakers in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Germans may have been “iconophobic” and shunned such icons (Deetz 96).

The hand in various forms and actions has been accompanying many of the other motifs discussed above and can sometimes represent contrasting ideals depending on the context of the motif. The hand holding the drooping flowers symbolizes sadness and despair while emphasizing the loss of life. On the other “hand,” a hand pointing upwards, either above a Bible or alone, signifies heaven (Mytum 2004 172) and reminds the mourners of salvation and resurrection as a source of comfort instead of emphasizing the loss. Likewise, the clasping hands motif (Motif 15) provides a more reassuring gesture accentuating brotherhood, remembrance, or friendship and not mourning or separation (See Photograph 27). Linked or clasping hands can also symbolize marriage and the endurance of the bonds beyond death (Patterson 191). Likewise, the linked chain (Motif Thirty-Four) denotes the same sentiments by emphasizing the continuance of relationships and life beyond death while a broken chain would mean separation (Mytum 2004 172). This hand motif not only symbolizes the different emotions concerning death but also serves as an interaction or an expression of the relationship between the human and the divine and the living and the dead. The hand pointing upwards constantly reminds the living of heaven and the possibility of a heavenly reunion (Patterson 182, 202).

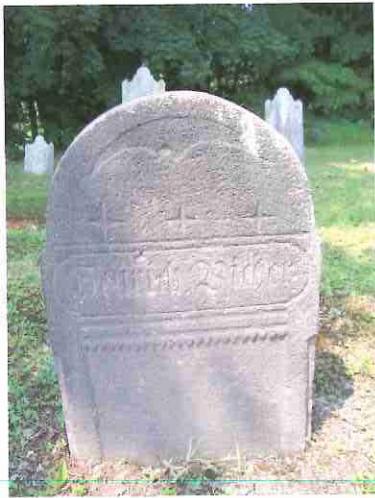


Photograph 27: Motif 15, Plowville Lutheran

In the Bible, animals often conveyed important meaning in different contexts. The dove has different meanings in the Old and New Testaments. The dove, in the Old Testament, represents peace and hope while in the New Testament, the dove symbolizes Christ and the descending of the Holy Spirit (Mytum 2004 172; Stoudt 1948 109). On the two memorials with this motif, the dove appears to be in flight and may be interpreted according to this later meaning. The other animal motif appears on several graves throughout the survey. This motif usually occurs on graves belonging to children and is carved sometimes in relief, similar to a sculpture, on top of the memorial. The animal always appears to be sleeping as well. Because of weathering and the poor condition of some memorials, it was difficult during the survey to identify the type of the animal. A comparison of the different motifs among the cemeteries concluded that the animal is a sleeping lamb (See Photograph 16). Equating death with sleep can also serve as a method of comfort for the parents who are burying their children; likewise, the symbol of the baby lamb emphasizes the youth who lived a prematurely shortened life and died.

The celestial motifs of Group L convey religious meaning as well in the Pennsylvania German community. According to Pennsylvania German folk art terminology, the sun, moon, heart, and stars are referred as the “trees of life” (Graves 76). The crescent moon motif associates death with night and reminds the mourners of the natural processes of life and death (Graves 76). The rising sun motif (Motif 20) on gravestones can symbolize Jesus as interpreted as the son or “sun of righteousness” (Stoudt 1948 116), and the rising of the sun refers to the resurrection of Jesus and the rising of the spirit (Stoudt 1948 117). Pennsylvania German scholars question the direction of the sun and stress the ambiguity of the rising or setting sun and the more pagan, non-Christian meaning of the motif. The sun motif represents the German *Ur-bogen*, the descending arc of the sun during the winter solstice, a time of death and rebirth.

(Graves 76). Although this acts as a more “pagan” interpretation of the sun motif, the meaning still highlights the journey of the spirit and life. Although not a “celestial” motif, the heart emerges throughout Pennsylvania German art and on several memorials in the survey. The heart also has a natural association as well as a religious symbolism of God’s regard for man (Stoudt 1948 108). (See Photographs 15, 22, 28)



Photograph 28: Crescent Moon, Stars Motifs, Allegheny Union

Motifs such as those in Group K can signify a more secular than sacred meaning. While many of motifs represent death and heaven, motifs can also depict a person's trade or occupation in life (Mytum 2000 39). The sheath of wheat with the scythe may symbolize the deceased's occupation as a farmer in life. The Pennsylvania German economy in Berks County was focused on farming, and most of the population participated in some sort of agricultural activity. An American Flag motif (Motif Thirty-Seven) emphasizes the patriotism of the deceased. This motif appears only once in the survey on a memorial of a man who served in the army. The memorial displays his service to the nation with the American flag motif and a written description of his history in the army.

As Group H motifs occur very rarely, their meaning and context may be difficult to interpret. The face and the woman reclining on a settee (Motif Six and Twenty-Seven) may only represent a personal choice or preference for this motif. As a piece of art, the motifs may have carried a specific meaning for the individual and his or her family. This meaning and context may no longer survive beyond the generation of the mourners. These unique motifs signify emotions and memories that the mourners ascribed to the gravestone for consolation and comfort. Unfortunately, the meanings of these personal motifs are intangible and do not survive beyond personal memory.

The abstract motifs in Group A do not convey a specific secular or sacred message. The motifs such as Motif Twenty-Two, Twenty-Six, and Thirty resemble motifs in Pennsylvania German folk art (See Photograph 13), specifically line drawings in the illuminated manuscripts called *fraktur* (Stoudt 1973 126). Created up until 1850, *fraktur* manuscripts preserve the stylized Pennsylvania German art and script. The survey recorded many “line decorations” which were broadly categorized under motif Thirty-Six. Some of these “line decorations” could be labeled as rosettes or “hex signs” according to the Pennsylvania German Folk Art style and design. Although more famously known to mark barn fronts in Berks County, these “hex signs” appear in other forms of art and functioned as an old tradition of style and art that the Pennsylvania Germans continued from Germany. *Gliickstern*, the lucky star, is the German name for these designs; and they symbolize the wheel of fortune. Associated with “memento mori” (Graves 78) with the same ideals and ideological purpose, these motifs represented the cyclical pattern of life and death. The presence of these designs in the gravestone motifs probably explains the absence of the typical “memento mori,” the skull and crossbones, in the survey.

Motif Number Two appears to be a simple combination of two triangles and a circle; however, this motif appears most frequently and in every cemetery of the survey (See Photograph 14). This motif does not symbolize any obvious religious or secular sentiment. The motif does appear most frequently on the Memorial Forms Twelve and Thirteen which were recorded in every cemetery at a high frequency as well. Appearing across Berks County on the same type of memorials, this association leads to the conclusion that this motif was the creation of a specific carver and served as an identity marker of that specific memorial industry or shop. The memorial form with this motif contributes to the overall finished and uniformed appearance of the gravestone as a mass-produced product.

Fortunately, the presence of dates on tombstones provides some temporal context for the range of motifs. Only very few motifs were recorded to belong to eighteenth-century graves (memorials with a date of death in the eighteenth-century). These motifs include flowers, the cherub, and the skull and crossbones. While the flowers appear later during the nineteenth-century at a higher frequency in numbers, the concurrent appearance of the cherub and the skull and crossbones represents an important shift in religious thought. The skull and crossbones and other “memento mori” symbols usually do appear during the early part of the eighteenth-century as a response to the church’s emphasis on death and mortality (Deetz 96). However, with the Great Awakening during the 1740’s, optimism permeated throughout religious thought; and motifs shifted from the skull to more angelic icons such as the cherub (George and Nelsen 87). Although small in numbers, the survey results do indicate the presence of these changes in religious ideas. In the survey, many of the gravestones did not display a date; however, comparing style, material, and other features, one can presume that most of these memorials without a date belonged to the eighteenth-century. The most popular motif in this sub-category

is the crescent moon which usually appears on Form Two of red sandstone memorials. This correspondence in form and date leads to the conclusion that this motif represented the early German settlers in the area because the motif belonged to the “trees of life” group of icons representative of Pennsylvania German Folk Art (See Figure 4a).

Most of the motifs do not appear until the 1800’s (See Figure 4a and 4b). They all follow similar trends with a peak in popularity between the period of 1850 and 1880 and resemble patterns discovered during other surveys. The flower motifs, which others have concluded to signify “remembrance,” usually appear during the later half of the nineteenth-century (Graves 80). This chronological trend corresponds to the Victorian obsession with death and flowers (Hobbs 241). Motif Two, with the highest numbers, first appears at the very beginning of the nineteenth-century and peaks in popularity around 1860. The motif stops appearing on memorials after 1880 with one exception in the decade of 1900 (not shown on Figure 4a). This abrupt end for this motif was probably due to some changes in the industry as it was concluded above that this motif almost serves as a “signature” for a specific memorial business that may have declined around the end of the nineteenth-century.

Motifs provide an important service in the Pennsylvanian German community as method and means of distinguishing and emphasizing identity. The community, intentionally or unintentionally, agreed on the common ideas and iconography to develop the concepts behind these motifs (Stoudt 1948 5). The motifs act as a collective expression of culture and identity; and according to a more Structuralist perspective, cultural rules control and enforce the meaning, use, and context of these motifs. Each member of the community possessed the knowledge in order to interpret the meaning of these motifs. This collective knowledge includes an understanding of the Bible in order to recognize and appreciate the Christian motifs such as the

Figure 4a: Motif By Decade

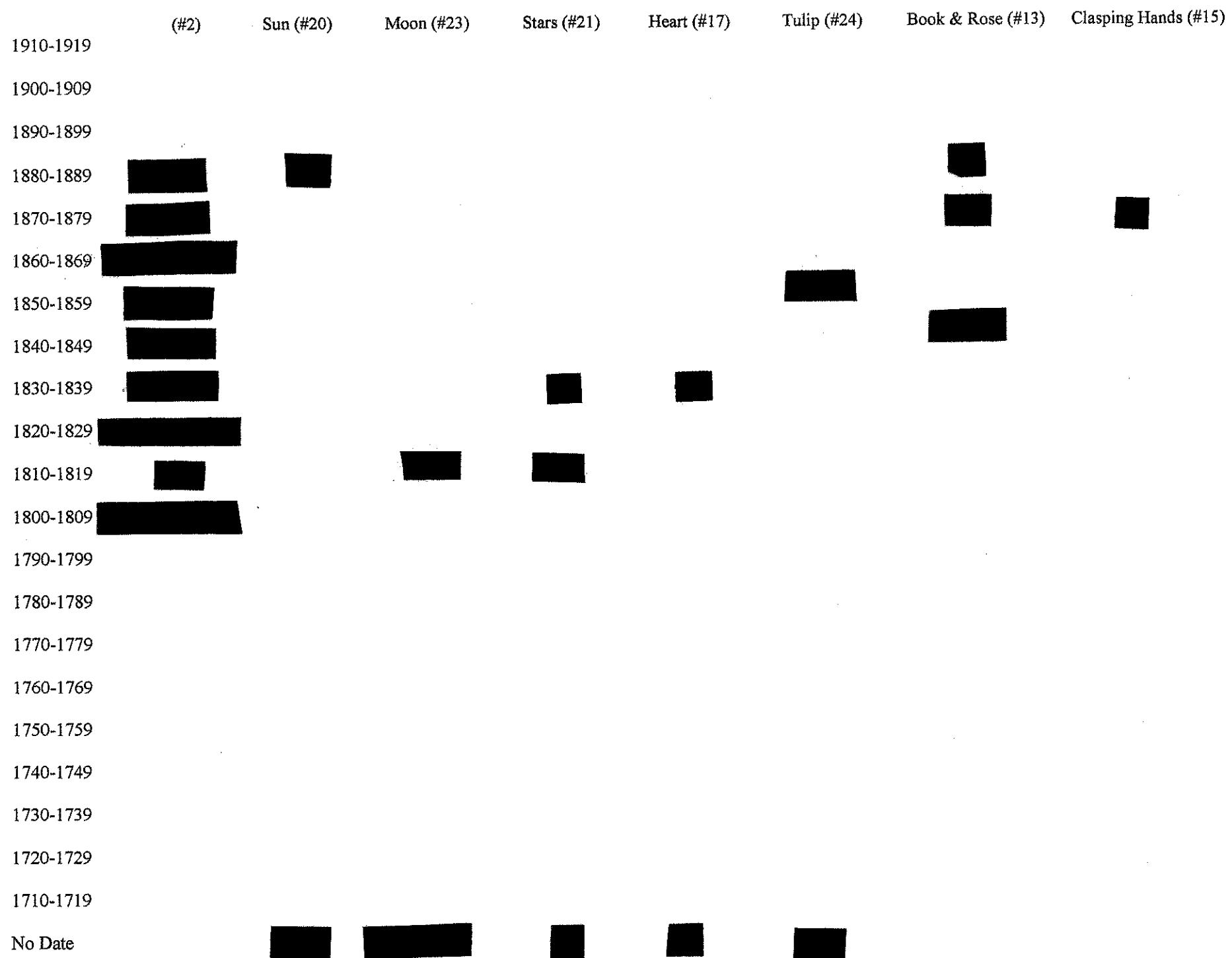


Figure | 4b: Motif By Decade



dove and the rising sun (Stoudt 1948 14). Although in a community where everyone may not be literate, the understanding of the motifs is disseminated through cultural knowledge and is practiced through the presentation of the memorials.

## MOTIFS: BORDER

### Results/Discussion

Only sixty-eight memorials in the survey displayed motifs around the border of the gravestone. These border motifs included duplicates of motifs found in the center of the memorial such as leaves, scrolls, flowers, ivy, and tulips. The other border motifs resembled architectural features such as engraved columns, a gothic arch, and plain incised edges around the memorial. These motifs appear on a variety of tombstones although they appear infrequently during the survey. These specific motifs can be interpreted as a more aesthetic feature than the other motifs. The columns on the side of the memorial represent a Classical style, popular during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Likewise, the Gothic arch corresponds to the Victorian and nineteenth-century preference for the ornate and the revival of this medieval style and may indicate an acknowledgement of German heritage. The examination of border motifs and their corresponding dates does not reveal any dominant or apparent trends in popularity for a specific border motif due to the low frequency for many of the motifs in this category. All of the motifs generally appear during the second half of the nineteenth-century. The most popular motif can be best described as plain “incised” sides in which the edges of the memorial are carved away and the material removed. The simplicity may explain the greater popularity of this motif than the other motifs.

## INSCRIPTION SCRIPT

### Results/ Discussion

Before examining the words of the inscription, the survey observed the style of the script. With many slight variations between each script and inscription among the memorials, only a few script types will be discussed. The first category included scripts written crudely and do not have uniform lettering. The inscription appeared to be engraved by an amateur with simple tools. This script typically appeared on Memorial Forms One, Two, and Three of the red sandstone material. These forms are the earliest memorials; therefore, the communities which these memorials served and represented were small yet expanding. The mourners themselves probably created the memorial and carved the inscription for the deceased.

Other scripts presented Roman type characters and appeared on various types of memorial forms throughout the period recorded by the survey. The other more conspicuous script is Gothic, an ornamental and elaborate script style. All of the German inscriptions were written in the Gothic script. This script type requires knowledge and skill in order to carve the letters legibly and uniformly (Lichten 132). The script resembles the *fraktur*, illuminative writing, which functions as an icon of Pennsylvania German Folk Art (Gilbert 48). Therefore, this script clearly signals German identity and background of the deceased.



Photograph 29: Fraktur Script, Alleghany Union

These script types follow a distinct chronological pattern. The crude script appears throughout the eighteenth-century and peaks at the beginning of the nineteenth-century. This pattern follows the same popularity trend as the red sandstone material; moreover, this script always appears on the memorials made of the red sandstone. This correlation further supports the conclusions concerning the memorial industry and the amateur production of memorials in small communities. As the crude handwritten script declined, the Roman type characters and Gothic script emerged and peaked during the later half of the nineteenth-century. This pattern corresponds with the greater quality of tombstones during the nineteenth-century compared to those in the eighteenth-century.

## **INSCRIPTION INTROUDCTIONS**

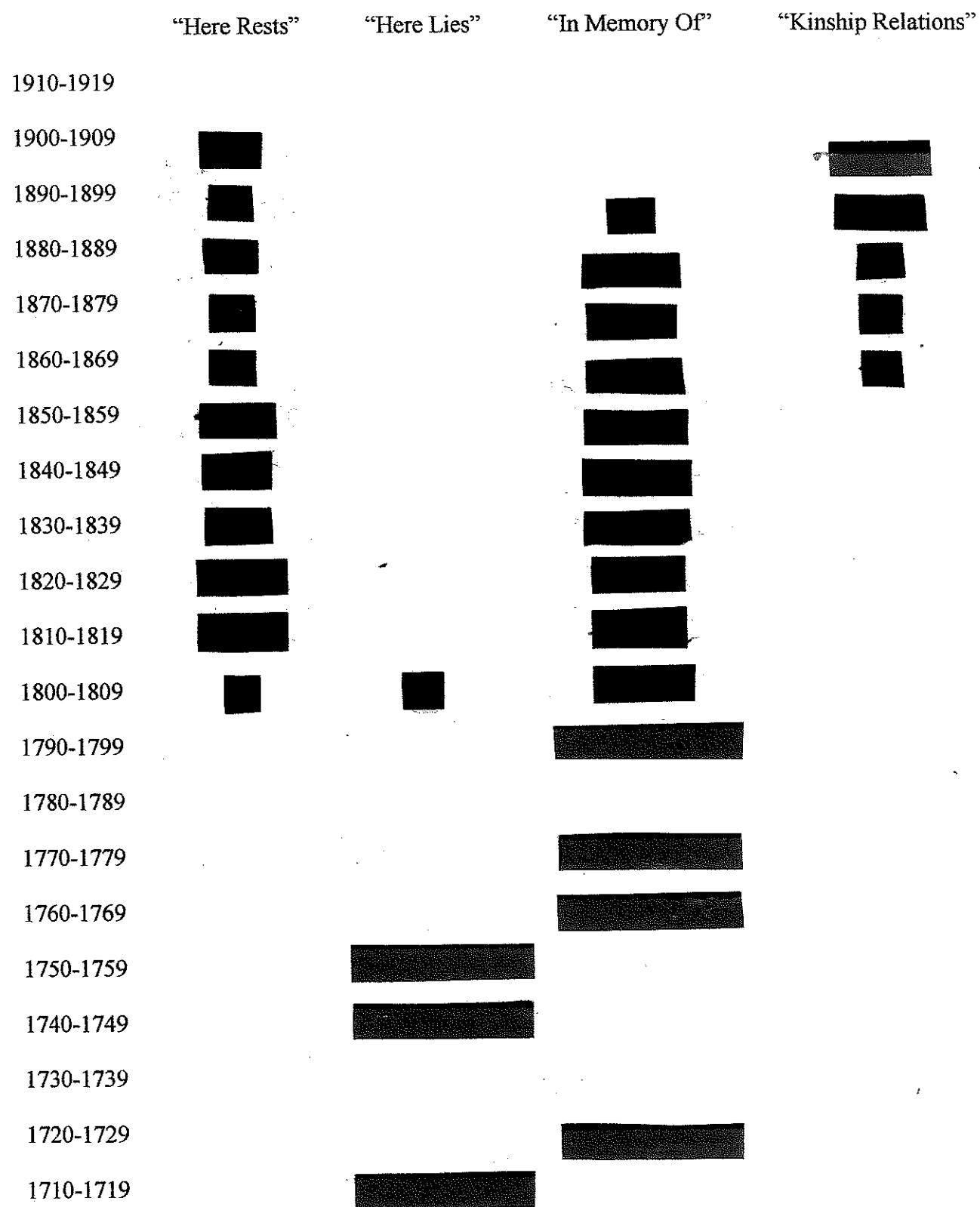
### **Results/Discussion**

In addition to motifs and other features, the inscriptions of gravestones contain a wealth of information to contribute to an understanding of the ideology, context, and ritual involved with death and memorials. About half of the inscriptions on the gravestones begin with a short “introduction” which sets the tone of the memorial and proclaims the attitude towards death of the mourners. The most popular introduction centers around the memory of the deceased such as “In memory of” or the German equivalent “Zum Andenken An” which translates as “to the memory of” (Hardy 4). On a few gravestones “sacred to the memory of” appears providing a more religious tone to the introduction. The next popular group of introductions involves the body at rest such as “Here Rests” or “Here lies.” The German equivalents are “Hier ruhet” and “Hier luget” respectively. These introductions acknowledge a greater focus on death and the inanimate body while “in the memory of” places more emphasis on the individual and life.

Another group of introductions does not involve death but focuses on relations in life such as kinship titles like “Mother” or “Father.” Some introductions read “Children of” or an even more sentimental version: “I am the Little Savior of.” Obviously, the memorials with these introductions mark the graves of children whose parents have made the decision to include these introductions on the graves. Less frequent introductions include “SLEEP” or “Sweetly Sleep,” “To Testify” and “Peace.” Some introductions acknowledge an early death or a long life including “In the Bloom of Life” and “I Have Finished My Course,” but these introductions appear rarely and seem to be a unique wish of the deceased individual or the mourners.

Due to the overwhelming popularity, over a long period of time, of a few inscription introductions, seriation analysis does not reveal any obvious or distinct “battle-ship curves” or trends (See Figure 5). “In memory of” occurs throughout the date span of the entire survey from the eighteenth-century to the twentieth-century at a rather consistent frequency although this introduction type does decline at the end of the nineteenth-century. The next popular introduction ‘Hier ruhet’ appears steadily during the nineteenth-century while the “title” introductions happen primarily during the later half of the nineteenth into the twentieth-century. The infrequency of the other introductions prevents observing any chronological trends. The simplicity of the popular introductions probably affected their popularity. Conspicuously, the German version of “In memory of,” (Zum Andenken An) does not correspond with the popularity of the English version; likewise, a the correlation in frequency between the English version of “Hier ruhet” does not occur as well. For unknown reasons, a difference in preference arose between the two language groups.

Figure 5: Inscription Introductions By Decade



## INSCRIPTION

### Results/Discussion

Following the introduction or beginning the inscription if an introduction is absent appears the “vital” or biographical information of the deceased. The most basic inscriptions reveal very little information of the deceased beyond the name and date of death. Some memorials display only initials or a year. These inscriptions typically appeared on Memorial Forms One and Two and were sculpted from red sandstone; moreover, they tend to be carved in the crude, “handwritten” script mentioned above. The little skill or training of the carver probably limited the amount of information carved on the tombstone. These tombs appeared during the 1700’s and early 1800’s and in small cemeteries such as the Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House; therefore, a need to display elaborately the biographical information probably did not exist as the community was small and in its early stages. The mourners could collectively remember the deceased without the record of the date of birth and death and familial relations being displayed.

Other inscriptions contained more information about the deceased including date of birth and date of death. One of the most common inscription formats included an introduction, name, date of birth, and date of death in that order. However, the most popular inscription format also served as the most complex with the greatest amount of information present. The inscription included an introduction, name, date of birth, date of death, age of death, and descriptions of any pertinent familial relations such as “wife of...,” “husband of...,” and “parent of...” including many others. These two inscription formats appeared in every cemetery and on a variety of memorial forms and types. This additional information compared to the basic inscriptions served

as a necessary tool for demarcating family plots within large cemeteries and also individual identity in the larger communities.

The most complex inscription included the biographical information of multiple people. On eleven graves in the survey, the information relating to multiple people appears on one gravestone indicating their burials. These single stone for multiple burials emphasizes the importance of family relationships in the community. The mourners must have believed in continuing their identity and association with close family members even in death to mark several burials with one gravestone. Often these multiple burial stones marked the burials of siblings who died within a short time span of each other and were of a young age. This type of inscription was most often inscribed on obelisk form and the “double” memorial type. With the high mortality rate for children, parents often buried more than one child; therefore, burying the children under one marker may have been more efficient with finances and time.

During analysis, some chronological patterns were exposed with a basic trend appearing of the evolution from simple to more complex text formats. Although these memorials did not display any dates, one can assume that the inscriptions of only initials or a name date from the eighteenth-century. Their location and proximity to early memorials with dates support this claim. Likewise, the initials and date format dominates the late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century. In the nineteenth-century, formats displaying the information: introductions, name, relations, date of birth, date of death, and age at death, clearly serve as the most popular formats consistently throughout the century with no clear peaks in frequency.

## ADDITIONAL TEXT

### Results/Discussion

On about 125 memorials, additional text appears underneath the main inscription and biographical information. This additional text includes a great variety of details relating to religious ideals, the person's life, poetry, and extra information about the memorial itself. This additional information contributes to a better understanding of the feelings surrounding death and the loss by the mourners or the deceased who chose to include these details engraved forever on the tombstone. Although addressed to the memory of the dead, these epitaphs benefit and serve the living who usually write the epitaph (George and Nelsen 88).

The religious text added includes a simple "Amen" underneath the vital information or a Bible verse or other phrase relating to religion. The Bible verses are indicated by the Name of the Book, Chapter, and Verse and may not include the verse itself. The absence of the text indicates that the members of the community had strong knowledge of the Bible in order to recognize the verse numbers. Verses from the New Testament tend to be more common, and the most popular Book to quote from is John. The verses tend to address issues of resurrection and salvation similarly to the symbolism of the flowers, the most popular motifs. As the Bible verses appeared on the graves of both children and adults, no distinct patterns according to age and other demographics have appeared. In addition to Bible verse epitaphs, the category of religious phrase includes a variety of phrases dealing with Heaven, God, and the Resurrection. None of the individual phrases in this category appear more than once in the survey; therefore, they were probably written by specific individuals in order to preserve the memory and life of that person. The phrases probably carried some personal emotion and memory which have not survived. The phrase "Meet me at Heaven's Gate" is perhaps the most impersonal of the phrases while "Church

is my home" portrayed this individual's dedication to his church during his lifetime. One of the gravestones displayed the phrase "Sleep on dearest husband, sleep on until the resurrection- And then we will be together- to meet Jesus in the skies." The phrase poignantly portrays the bereavement of a wife who lost her husband. Her choice to engrave this on her husband's memorial probably consoled her sadness with the hope of meeting her husband again. Some of the phrases acknowledge the suffering in life and the hope of peace in heaven such as the phrase "While on earth I have suffered. But now I am safe in the arms of Jesus." This phrase marked the burial of the girl who died at the age of 16 presumably due to illness as implied by this phrase.

In addition to sacred phrases, many gravestones include poetry and more secular verse. Unfortunately, many of these poems and verses were illegible and unable to be recorded. Those that the surveyor could read clearly followed a few distinct themes. The first theme deals with "memory" and includes "Gone but not forgotten." Unlike the religious phrases described above, this phrase was found verbatim on several graves. This phrase serves as a simple act of mourning in which those living can express their loss and memory of the deceased. Other phrases and poems address loss and tend to produce feelings of emotion from even the modern reader. The mourners of Mary Ann engraved on her tombstone the following poem:

*We miss thy kind and willing hand,  
Thy fond and earnest care,  
Our home is dark without thee,  
We miss thee everywhere*

A poem such as this clearly demonstrates the grief and the loss of Mary Ann's family due to her passing. Displaying a poem on a relative's gravestone clearly exhibits the feelings of bereavement and sadness around death and provides a personal touch to the gravestone and aids the family's mourning as a form of comfort and solace (George and Nelsen 90).

Another sub-category within this group reveals additional biographical details in addition to the information provided in the main inscription. This will include the particulars about an individual's army assignment such as the regiment or his title and position in the army if an officer. The tomb of Simpson Ruth, in Mohn's Hill Cemetery, reveals his army assignment in the 167<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the PA Infantry. Likewise, John M. Hyneman's grave includes his title of Adjutant General of the Militia of Pennsylvania underneath his name. Other biographical information includes place of birth and place of death. Place of birth is usually included in the inscription on the gravestone if the individual was born outside of the United States. Frederick Blimline's tomb reveals his place of birth as Bavaria, Germany. Although this individual was of German origin as clearly stated on his tombstone, the inscription is surprisingly written in English. Likewise, place of death is revealed if the person died outside of the community. For an example, Daniel Buckley died while in the U.S. Army in the Battle of Petersburg. Additional biographical information such as military information and place of birth and death commends individuals for their successes and noteworthy lives in addition to preserving information for later generations.

About fifty gravestones were recorded with the signature of the carver. While several carvers created the memorials in the survey, only one carved the signature on the gravestone. The signature appeared as "MOERS" or "MORS" on the lower right corner of the memorial. Sometimes "Reading" referring to Reading, Pennsylvania, the county seat of Berks County appeared underneath "MOERS." The presence of this signature adds more conclusive evidence of a local memorial industry in Berks County. Moreover, the signatures usually appear on forms Twelve and Thirteen. These memorials were mass-produced by the shop in Reading designated by "MOERS" and distributed over the county. These signatures and the memorial industry

indicate a secularization of the burial ritual as the carvers usually included their signatures for marketing and commercial benefits in the form of an advertisement (Kelly and Williams 3; Hardy 8).

Seriation analysis showed that memorials with additional text occur exclusively in the 1800's (See Figure 6). Signatures and poetry, the most popular features in this category, are located on memorials rather consistently during the nineteenth-century. The other types of additional text, especially those conveying biographical information, tend to appear during the later half of the 1800's. These trends reflect the growth of the industry and need to express individualism and identity as discussed earlier in this section. Additional text serves as a unique feature reflecting the specific and individual features of the deceased and/or the mourners.

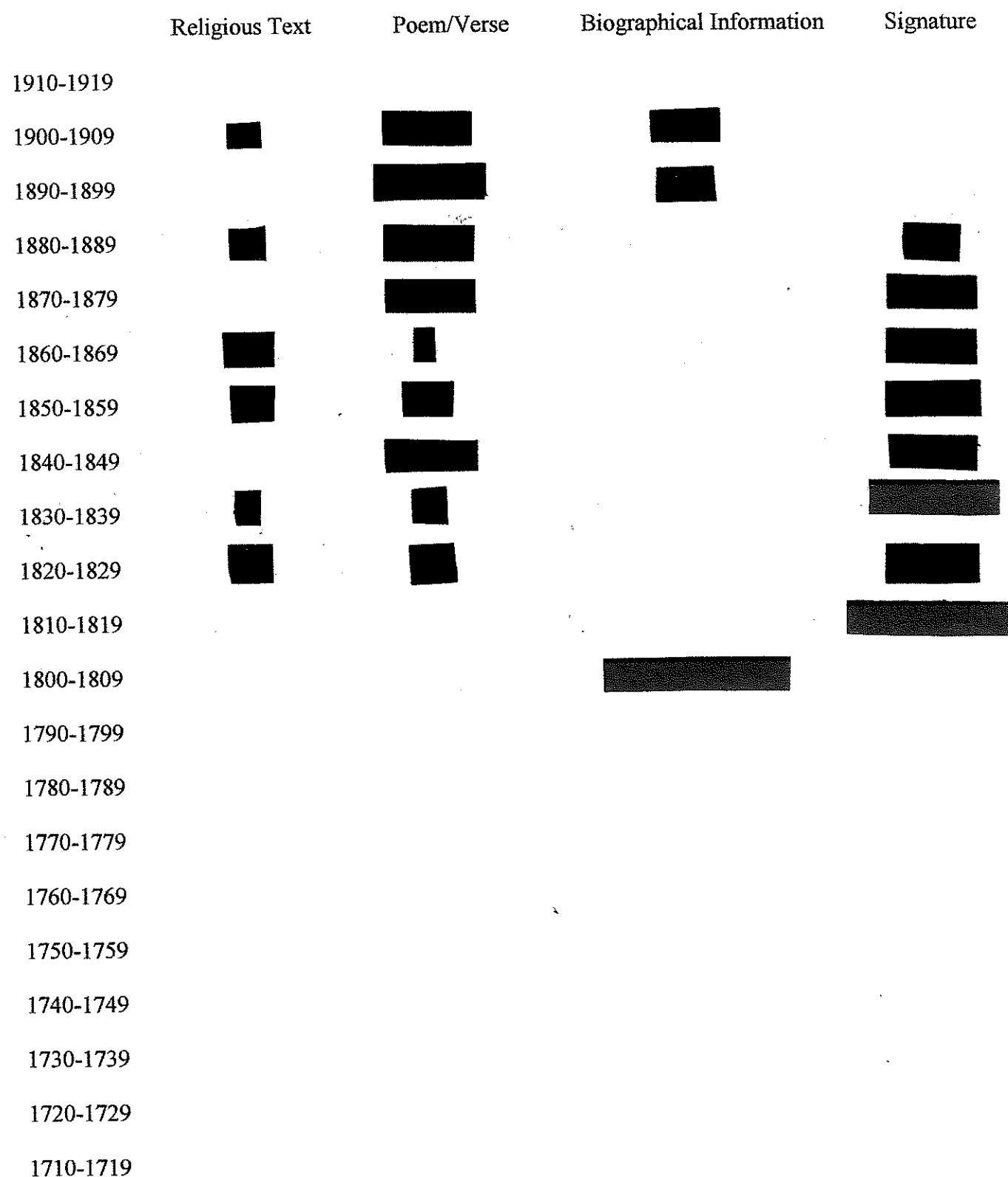
## **DISCUSSION**

Previous discussion has focused on specific aspects of memorials and the meaning and context of these individual features. Following a more Holistic theoretical approach, further discussion will observe the memorial more as a whole and the collective meaning of each feature to demonstrate a specific identity.

## **GENDER**

The gender of the deceased marked by a particular memorial is usually determined by the name of the deceased and the pronouns used in the inscription. Therefore, the memorials with little information besides initials and a date do not contribute much information about gender differences. Likewise, the Pennsylvania Germans did not clearly designate a specific design or style of gravestones to be associated with either men or women. Both women and men shared

Figure 6: Additional Text By Decade



the same memorial forms, materials, additional features, motifs, and inscription forms throughout the survey. Besides a few exceptions which will be discussed, a clear distinction between men and women in the cemetery does not occur.

Men and women tend to share the same style and design of gravestones; however, certain features do only appear on the graves marking burials of men. Obvious gender differences begin with additional features. The various types of American flag and soldier's plaque appear only with male graves due to the historical tendency of only men fighting in war. Besides the base and the footstone which belongs to both male and female graves, the other additional features of sculpture, columns, and the tureen footstone belong to male graves signaling a possible bias in investment based on gender. However, with the low frequency of these features, one cannot conclude the existence of an overall trend towards male graves displaying extra architectural features.

Women may have tried to display their gender through motifs. Certain motifs, such as Motif Twenty-Seven, the women reclining on the settee, appear only on female graves probably due to the gender of the image itself. The motif creates an image of the deceased being wealthy with the motif association of leisure; however, besides this motif, no other factors clearly signal high socio-economic status. A more subtle expression of gender concerning motifs appears in the hand motifs. On memorials displaying motifs with hands pointing upwards, the graves of females display a left hand while men have a right hand pointing. This simple yet clear gender difference provides a simple expression of gender identity and symbolizes a possible difference in social roles corresponding with those motifs. While it is difficult to confirm or deny any possible relationships from this simple difference, the Pennsylvania German community may have acknowledged gender role differences.

In this survey, certain gender differences or associations do not occur according to some previous associations or presumptions. Some scholars have labeled the flower motifs, especially the rose, with a more feminine meaning due to its values of delicacy and beauty which it may represent, in addition to the more sexual associations (Hobbs 242). However, graves belonging to both men and women exhibit the flower motifs in relative equal proportions.

Besides a few differences between graves of men and women, the memorials themselves do not indicate any specific gender roles in the Pennsylvania German community of Berks County. For the results of this survey, one would conclude that Pennsylvania German men and women did not live according to different social rules or possess a certain status based on gender. A few distinctions do appear in the memorials indicating that gender may have been acknowledged in the community; but any specific gender differences, roles, or meanings did not translate onto the memorials.

## AGE

With the high mortality rates during the early history of the Pennsylvania German community, many children unfortunately died at a young age and were buried by their mourning parents and family members. Unlike the different gender groups, the memorials of children (under thirteen years) tend to appear conspicuously different from the rest of the cemetery of adults. Strong differences did not exist, however, between the memorials of infants and those of older youths. The memorials of infants tended to be smaller with less ornamentation; however, the infant memorials did not always follow this style and form. While the memorials of children can take a variety of forms, Form One predominantly appears the most frequently; moreover, the form tends to be of a smaller size almost like a miniature of the normal memorials belonging to

adults. In the cemetery landscape, these memorials appear to be only half the size of the other memorials and always belong to children. Likewise, Memorial Forms Twenty-Two and Thirty of Group J always mark the burials of children. Siblings, who died closely in time, are buried together underneath these types of forms. This “efficiency” in burial probably aided the parent’s mourning and adjustment to the loss of two children. Although these motives are certainly intangible, the double forms certainly express and preserve in death the relationships in life among young siblings. Moreover, about half of the “high-investment memorials” such as the obelisk (Form Twenty-Four) mark the burials of children. These memorials do indicate financial and emotional investment by the parents (See Photographs 6 and 7).

As some memorial forms only mark the burials of children, many motifs are also reserved for memorials belonging to this group. The rose motif (Motif Eleven) appears frequently on memorials for children. The rose appears in the form of a small bud or blossom to symbolize the “young life cut short in blossom” (Hobbs 248). The motif of the sleeping animal appears exclusively on memorials belonging to children. The animal, probably a lamb, also represents youth and innocence and equates death with sleep and rest. Broken symbols, such as a broken chain, sometimes appear on burials of children to symbolize a “life cut short” (Mytum 2000 57). Likewise, some inscription introductions only belong to memorials for children such as “Children of”, “In the Bloom of Life,” “I am the Little Savior of.” The wording naturally describes the death of children; however, these introductions emphasize their youth, relations with parents (as with “Children of” and “I am the Little Savior of”) and also the shortness of life (“In the Bloom of Life”).

Age at death serves as an important part of an individual’s identity in the cemetery community. As discussed above, some features and designs are reserved to designate the burials

of only young children. These memorials also capture important emotions of the parents mourning the sometimes unexpected death of their children (Lynch 146). As a comfort for the tragedy of a young life lost, the mourners, the surviving family members, emphasize the youth of the deceased on the graves and attempt to communicate this personal quality and to immortalize the young person (Lynch 149).



Photograph 30: Child's Memorial, Rose Motif, Mohn's Hill

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

In addition to gender and age, memorials can also demonstrate the socio-economic status of the deceased. A high financial investment with the material, size, and complexity of the memorial typically indicates a high socio-economic status of the deceased in life. However, a contradiction may exist between the image projected by a person's memorial and socio-economic status in life. A poor person may have saved money to invest in a large memorial and to create, in death, an impression of high status in life (Farrell 125); likewise, the mourners may have contributed money for the memorial if the deceased could not afford such an ostentatious gravestone. Therefore, the projection and interpretation of socio-economic status and investment of a memorial must consider these possibilities and ambiguities.

Low-status burials are usually indicated by plain and low tombstones with minimal information given or little ornamentation (Fenza 144); however, with the early tombstones, these characteristics may not serve as accurate indicators of low status as the simplicity of the gravestones may have resulted from the size of the community, the dominant style, or the lack of availability of materials or skilled carvers. The most obvious form of high financial investment appears in the form of the memorial especially Forms Twenty-Four, the obelisk, and Forms Forty-Three, the table-top memorials. These memorials probably cost significantly more than the simple rounded-top memorials like Form One with greater need of material and skill by the carver. With their great size, these memorials also dominate the cemetery landscape and symbolize the possible importance of the individual in life. The table-top memorials in St. Gabriel's cemetery support this conclusion as many of the table-top memorials are accompanied by plaques describing the contributions of the individual to the community and any accomplishments in life. The plaques on the Bird burials describe their high status in the community as owners of the local iron furnace. Likewise, the additional features such as sculpture or additional columns probably required a greater financial investment and may be used to indicate a higher socio-economic status of the individual or the mourners. A memorial of a high-status individual usually also has a greater grade of material such as a finer quality of limestone or marble due to the higher cost of these materials.

Motifs do not provide good markers of socio-economic status. Various memorials depict a great variety of motifs, and the many meanings and contexts of the motifs usually describe religious sentiments or other aspects of identity, not socio-economic status. Moreover, the memorials of those individuals with known status, like the Douglasses or the Birds, do not exhibit any motifs. The markers of socio-economic status are very complex and not as easily

deciphered as with other aspects of identity due to the possibility of inconsistencies between the life and impressions of life on the memorial.

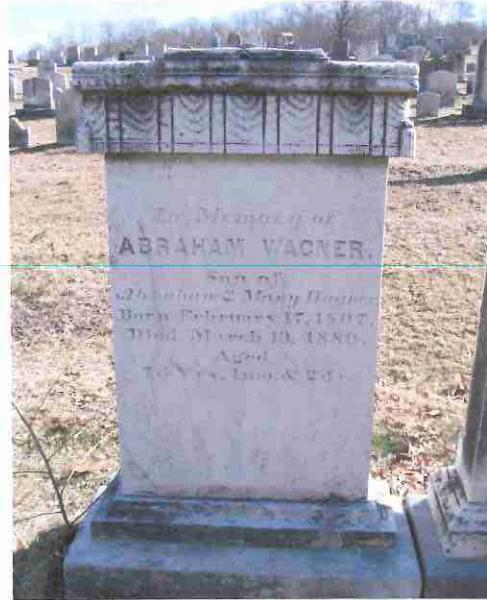
## GERMAN ETHNIC IDENTITY

The Pennsylvania Germans utilized gravestones to demonstrate their heritage and “ethnic identity” within the community; however, modern interpretation of the role, context, and meaning of the German identity and its presence in cemeteries may not appear as visibly or obviously defined as other forms of identity such as age and gender. This section will address specific features and preferences the Pennsylvania Germans possessed in their cultural repertoire. The first part of this discussion will determine which features of the gravestones discussed above decidedly portray Pennsylvania German identity or possess German origins. These features will serve as primary “markers” of German identity. Some Functionalist perspectives will be briefly utilized as presumed German heritage stones are compared to English memorials to determine possible ethnic differences and characteristics.

Inscriptions written in German probably serve as the most obvious indications of German identity. In an area inhabited by both English and Germans, a German inscription excludes English members of the “audience” of tombstones while reinforcing German identity and community boundaries. Usually written in the “*fraktur*” style lettering, German inscriptions reveal the same types of information compared to English inscriptions (Graves 82, 86).

A few bilingual stones appear throughout the survey with inscriptions written in both English and German. The bilingual mixture includes various patterns including just the biographical information, kinship terms, family names, epitaphs in German with other features in English. Other bilingual tombstones exhibit duplication of the inscription in English and

German located on the same face or the reverse. Sometimes one language appears in an abbreviated version of the inscription. These two variations may demonstrate different conditions within the German community and the relations with non-German neighbors. The first version described addresses two different cultures with which the deceased identified. Scholars do not believe that this bilingual mixture indicates the community learning one language and gradually discarding the other (Graves 89). The version of duplicate inscriptions serves family and friends who could only read German and preserves the German language during times of threat (Graves 88).



Photograph 31 and 32: Bilingual Gravestone Duplication of Inscription on Two Faces, Plowville Lutheran

As the German language can serve as a distinct indicator of German heritage, other features associated with gravestones exhibiting the German language can provide secondary markers of German identity. Some of these features are exclusively used on “German gravestones” while other aspects appear on German inscription and non-German inscription gravestones. Like the general trends found in the survey, German memorial types include the

popular Forms One, Eleven, Twelve, Thirteen, and Sixteen. These forms serve as the main memorial types; however, unlike the general survey observations, German gravestones constitute a smaller variety of memorial forms. Groups G and J, the box forms and “double” memorials respectively are not represented. The most popular “German” form is Form Thirteen which constitutes about a third of the forms; and Groups A, E, and F serve as the more frequent German forms. While the other groups are represented with German inscriptions, the forms appear too infrequently (usually only once in the survey) to contribute to a better understanding of German memorials. However, because of the popularity of Groups A, E, and F with non-German inscriptions, these form types cannot exclusively indicate German identity.

With only a few exceptions, most of the German inscription memorials are composed of the limestone material. Only one memorial with a German inscription appears as a red-sandstone gravestone. This discrepancy represents one problem of attempting to use the German language as an indicator of identity. As the red sandstones memorials appear as the dominant material during the early periods of the survey coinciding with the beginnings of the German community in Berks County, the German settlers must have used this material for their gravestones. However, due to many of the red sandstone memorials lacking an inscription, these red sandstone memorials are not included in this part of the analysis. Therefore, the role of gravestones without inscriptions in the identification of ethnic identity will be discussed later.

Surprisingly, motifs associated with German language stones do not adhere to any outstanding trends different than those of the general survey. The most common motif is Number Two which was concluded to be a signature mark of a local memorial industry. Like the memorial forms, some motifs do not appear on German gravestones; moreover, the motifs mentioned in the discussion above in the results section to have been labeled as typical “German

motifs” by other scholars do not appear on the German language gravestones including motifs such as the crescent moon, rising sun, and certain abstract line motifs. This absence of correlation probably has occurred due to these motifs appearing on early gravestones with which the inscription is absent or difficult to decipher.

Three motifs appear only on memorials with German inscriptions. The first motif is Motif Six, the profile of a face inscribed in a circle. This motif only appears in the Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House cemetery; therefore, probably serves as an indicator of more individual choice than ethnic group identity marker. Motif Twenty-One, stars, occurs on both German and non-inscription memorials. The star motif, part of the “Cosmological Group” of Motifs does serve as a good indicator of German identity due to its exclusive appearance on German gravestones and the association in the scholarship with German heritage and signs of nature which appear on other German forms of art. Likewise, Motif Twenty-Six resembles a hex sign, an important feature of Pennsylvania German Folk Art.

With one exception, all of the German inscriptions are written in the Gothic style. As discussed in the previous section, this inscription styles resembles the “*fraktur*” illuminated manuscripts of Pennsylvania German Folk Art (See Photograph 29). Moreover, the Gothic style of lettering does not appear on English inscription memorials; therefore, this lettering style provides a strong marker of identity and German heritage within the community.

The most popular German inscription introductions are “Hier ruhet” and “Zum Andenken An” which translates as “Here rests” and “To the memory of.” The English translations of these German introductions do not appear at the same rate in the survey as the German versions. “Hier ruhet” appears more frequently than “Here lies;” and correspondingly, “In memory of” appears more frequently than the German equivalent “Zum Andenken An.” The introductions written in

German focus more on the body while the English introductions address the memory of the individual. While these different languages may or may not be representing two different and distinct communities, German or English, it cannot be concluded that the Pennsylvania Germans were exclusively portraying a specific sentiment through the inscription introductions. Moreover, the same trends do occur between English and German inscriptions and the format of the text. Therefore, the information portrayed in the body inscription does not vary between the two languages and probably did not serve as an indicator of identity.

Language cannot be used as the only indicator of identity as some German peoples may have chosen to write their inscription in English although they belong to the Pennsylvania German ethnic group. Moreover, the Pennsylvania Germans did not memorialize their deceased with only gravestones that include inscriptions; therefore, the many memorials recorded in the survey without inscriptions cannot be ignored in this part of the analysis. The memorials recorded not to have an inscription due to poor condition or illegibility will not be included in this part of the analysis as these memorials were intended to exhibit an inscription. Some memorials do exist that appear not to have had an original inscription and will be discussed here. Likewise, the memorials with only a date or initials will be included in this discussion with the presumption of a strong possibility of the association of these memorials with the early Pennsylvania Germans due to their crude form and motifs. To better ensure the German origin of the deceased represented by these ambiguous tombstones, the memorials of the Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House, Allegheny Union, and Plowville Lutheran Cemetery only will be analyzed due to the historical predominance of Pennsylvania German culture and the high frequency of these memorials appearing in these cemeteries compared to others. Because of an absence of a need to present a lot of biographical information on a tombstone as discussed in the

"Text Format" section of results, many gravestones during the eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century did not have elaborate inscriptions but still can reveal important information concerning the early history of the Pennsylvania German community. As the presence of the German language on a tombstone cannot be used as a primary indicator of identity in this case, the combination of other factors including last names and proximity to other German stones will be used as collective indicators of identity. Other surveys have recorded these memorials that have elaborately carved motif but no apparent inscription or textual material. The inscription area is usually smooth and the motifs deeply carved into the stone; therefore, the inscription probably has not weathered away (Graves 74). Some scholars have speculated that these gravestones were originally painted and resemble memorials in the Palatinate of Germany (Graves 76).



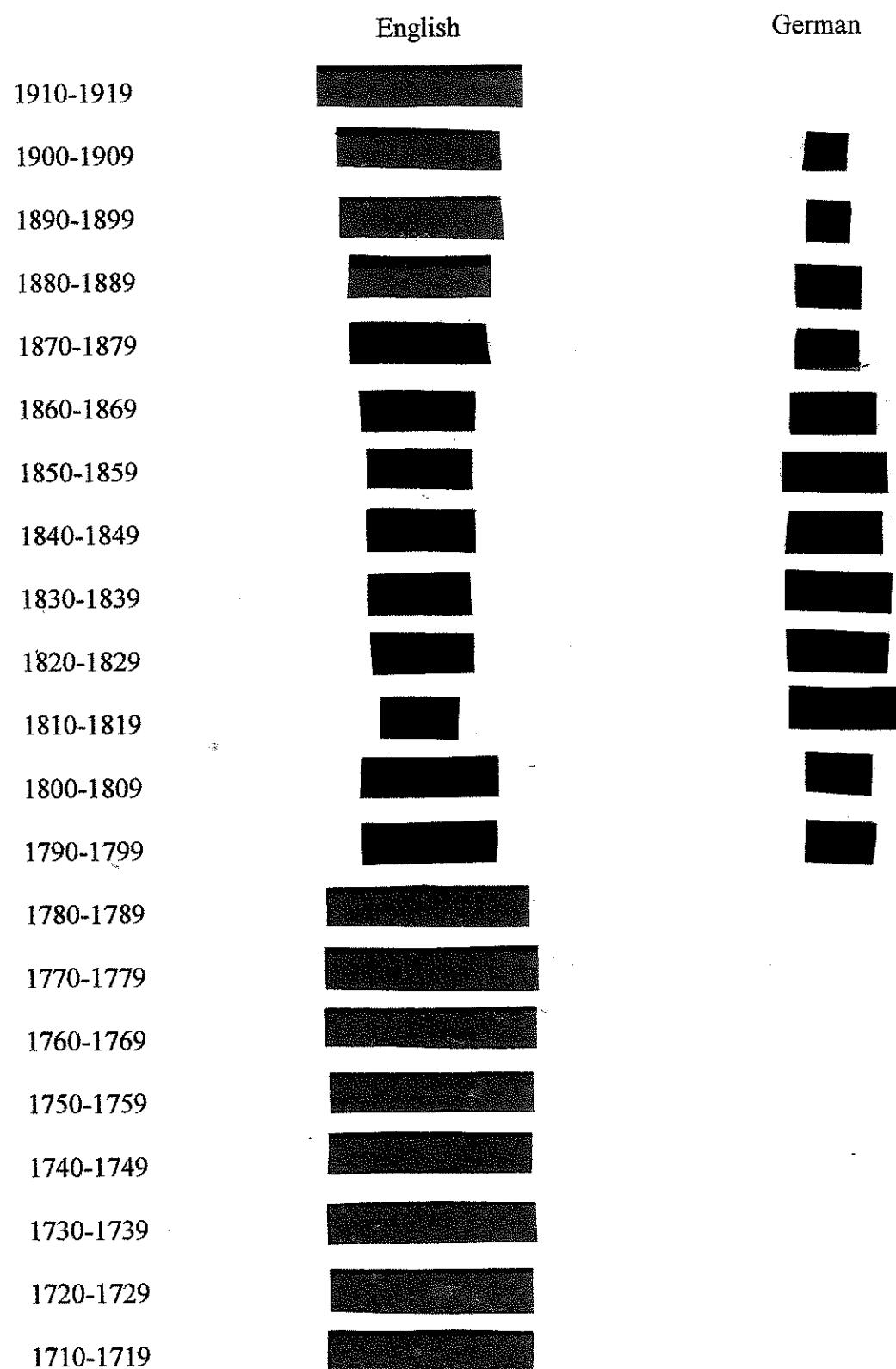
Photograph 33: "Absent" Inscription German Memorial, Alleghany Union

With the limitations established above, this group of memorials can be analyzed for an attempt to conclude a possible German identity marker. Like the German language memorials, Form One appears as the most popular form probably due to the simplicity of shape and style. Form Two serves as another frequent form without inscription and shares with Form One a

rounded top and plain style. These two forms are typically constructed of red sandstone material. The presence of the red sandstone material in this group partially explains the absence of the material in the previous group of German-language inscription memorials. The minimal format of the inscription corresponds in time with the early dominance of the red sandstone material. Contrary to the simple shape of the form and the absence of an inscription, many of these memorials display complex and intricate motifs and design. These motifs primarily belong to Groups B (flowers) and Groups L (celestial) in addition to the heart motif of Group J. In the previous discussion, these motifs have been compared to Pennsylvania German Folk Art. The moon motif appears as the most common motif in this group. Besides a few exceptions, the moon motif is found only on this group of memorials (See Photograph 28). With the combination of these factors, the simple shape, material, and predominance of Pennsylvania German Folk Art motifs, this group of materials with the absent inscription probably represents German heritage during the early history of the Pennsylvania German community.

Seriation analysis reveals distinct trends concerning the presence and role of the German language on tombstones (See Figure 7). The first German language inscription appears in 1790, and grows in popularity gradually during the early part of the nineteenth-century. During the decade of 1810, the German tombstones first outnumber the English tombstones; however, the English and German inscriptions remain in equal numbers until after the decade of 1850. Although the English tombstones have the high frequency in raw counts, during the decades of 1860, 1870, and 1890, the German inscription tombstones increase in number as well. However, during the decade of 1890, only a very small percentage of tombstones with German inscriptions appear and only two tombstones of the survey have German inscriptions in the twentieth-century. The basic trend of German inscription tombstones follows the first introduction in 1790; and in

Figure 7: Language By Decade



the first half of the nineteenth-century, German gravestones occur in low numbers but with equal proportion compared to English gravestones. During the later half of the nineteenth-century, German and English gravestones increase in numbers; but the English gravestones appear at a higher frequency than German gravestones although German numbers have also increased. By the end of the nineteenth-century and the beginning of the twentieth-century, German inscriptions appear only rarely while the German ethnic identity and community dissipates.

The exclusion of gravestones with only a year, initials, name or deliberate absence of inscription from the German language inscription collection of memorials probably explains the absence of German gravestones until the 1790's; for the early tombstones exhibited very sparse inscriptions and information on the tombstones. The small size of the community could have prevented the need to record biographical information in addition to the strength of the collective social memory within the community or possibly just due to the lack of skill of the carvers. With previous analysis and conclusions that the combination of factors including the style, material, and motifs of these early gravestones represents Pennsylvania German style, we can conclude without the presence of the German language that most of these early tombstones of the eighteenth-century belonged to those of German heritage. This coincides with the first wave of German immigrants arriving in Pennsylvania and the establishment and early history of the Pennsylvania German community. In order to exhibit their identity during this early history, the Pennsylvania Germans utilized local stone but transferred their German art traditions and preference for the natural icons and Rococo forms to the gravestones. These gravestones most resemble the style and design of Pennsylvania German Folk Art. The Pennsylvania German icons such as the moon and heart appear most frequently in larger cemeteries such as Plowville Lutheran and Allegheny Union, for the Pennsylvania Germans displayed these icons and

distinguish themselves from their English neighbors. In the Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House Cemetery, which served a small and primarily German community during the eighteenth-century, the early German forms do not exhibit many icons or details but appear to be cruder forms. These people may have not sensed any external pressure to exhibit their German identity but constructed very crude forms to serve a basic purpose of marking a grave.

During the beginning of the early nineteenth-century, the Pennsylvania German Folk Art motifs no longer serve as the primary indicator of German identity with gravestones. German inscriptions appear more frequently than English inscriptions as observed in this survey, and both English and German tombstones do not exhibit many motifs and also appear in similar forms. The people, represented by these early German memorials, could have spoken only German. The eighteenth-century and the early nineteenth-century represent the height of the solidity of the Pennsylvania German community. As the nineteenth-century progressed, members of the Pennsylvania German community were beginning to experience external pressures to assimilate into the wider English-dominated community for economic and social reasons. During the 1840's, the last services were conducted in German at Trinity Lutheran; and more Germans began to learn English in order to communicate, trade, and associate with their English neighbors (Stoudt 1973 122).

During the later half of the nineteenth-century, the numbers of German and English inscriptions do increase but at different rates. The German inscriptions no longer represent exclusively a community that speaks only German. As external pressures grew to assimilate and to minimize displays of Pennsylvania German culture, the members of the Pennsylvania German community who have been American citizens now for decades, may have chosen to inscribe their mortuary inscriptions in German as an expression of their German culture in defiance of

other threats and pressures. The increase in number of the German inscriptions in the later half of the nineteenth-century can also represent the second wave of German immigrants who arrived in the United States during this period but still remain as a smaller minority group. However, these new immigrants do not mark their memorials with German motifs such as the “trees of life” category of motifs or those that resemble Pennsylvania German and German folk art. These new immigrants pattern their tombstones after the English gravestones in form, decoration, and style. This pattern probably occurred to a faster assimilation process during the later half of the nineteenth-century compared to the development of the Pennsylvania German community in the eighteenth-century. Likewise, other aspects such as of Pennsylvania German culture such as art, language, and literature were declining during this time. The practice of *fraktur* illuminated manuscripts, on which the Gothic inscription script is based, ends around 1850 (Gilbert 48). However, the Gothic script continues to appear on gravestones until the end of the nineteenth-century. This lingering of the script probably occurred due to the second wave of German immigrants or the existence of the memorial industry that perpetuated the script. By 1850, scholars have concluded that the Pennsylvania German Folk Art also had died (Lichten 7). This decline probably explains the absence of the Pennsylvania German “trees of life” motifs in the later half of the nineteenth-century.

The bilingual stones appear only during the decades of 1840, 1870, and 1880. The appearance of the bilingual stones occur during the period in which the Pennsylvania German community was gradually declining and experiencing external pressures to adapt to the dominant culture. The bilingual stones could have provided different responses to these changes in the community. With both English and German inscriptions, the bilingual stones were serving family and friends who may have been speaking English while many members were still speaking

only German. The bilingual stones may have also served a more assertive purpose of demonstrating German heritage during a period of decline of German culture and association with two cultural groups.

## **COMMUNITY/CEMETERY**

While previous discussions have addressed trends shared by all the cemeteries, the survey revealed some differences among the different communities and churchyards. Upon first visiting the cemeteries, the most obvious differences include the spatial organization of the cemetery. Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House and Mohn's Hill Cemeteries are arranged in long rows with the oldest memorials on the Northern end of the graveyard. Likewise, both Harmony and Allegheny Union churchyards are organized in rows with the older red sandstone memorials scattered throughout the cemetery. The churchyard by Trinity Church includes a few more crowded rows due to the limited space in the urban setting. The cemetery at Plowville Lutheran Church is located on the hillside with the oldest burials in the center. St. Gabriel's follows the most unique spatial pattern with a cyclical organization of the gravestones. Moreover, the organization of St. Gabriel's cemetery reflects family structure as the cemetery is divided according to dynastic burials. The burials of one family of several generations extend from a single burial usually of the founder of the family "dynasty" (Fenza 140). St. Gabriel's cemetery contains the burials of old families such as the families Jones and Yocum both of which have over 50 individuals of nine generations buried in the cemetery ("Saint Gabriel's 2005).

Besides small and expected differences among the cemeteries, each cemetery shared memorials that adhered to a basic format and form. These memorials include Forms Twelve and Thirteen constructed in limestone with Motif Number Two. These memorials also display the

signature "MOERS"; therefore, all of the communities represented by these cemeteries probably acquired their memorials from the same industry or shop in Berks County.

## **CONCLUSION**

During an event when loss and emotion may appear to be personal, the creation and erection of memorials in churchyards serves as an act spread across the entire community. Specific forms of memorials appear throughout churchyards across Berks County as a few industries served the needs and desires of the citizens. The members of the community communicated the meaning of their religious beliefs and secular identity through motifs which represented the ideals to future generations preserving the social memory and identity. Likewise, the inscriptions serve as records of the lives of its inhabitants and provide a demographic history of the community as specific features of the memorial were highlighted to mark the burials of children, men or women. The memorials of the Pennsylvania Germans evolved and developed according to the changes of the community itself. The styles, designs, and forms reflect the pressures and threats on their identity and served as tools to preserve their heritage and to portray their tastes and values during a period in which the solidity of the community was deteriorating.

By utilizing concepts practiced in Historical Archaeology, the features of the gravestones and the memorials themselves convey a social and cultural history of the Pennsylvania Germans. Upon first arriving to America, the Pennsylvania German settlers marked their burials with simple memorials of local stone ornamented with motifs and decoration styles from their homeland. During the beginning of the nineteenth-century, a local memorial industry develops and the display of German motifs declines in importance as the Pennsylvania German community becomes more assimilated into their new country and lifestyle. An increase in

German inscriptions and bilingual stones represents the new wave of German immigrants during the later half of the nineteenth-century. However, by the end of the nineteenth-century and the beginning of the twentieth-century, the motifs, forms, and other mortuary features associated with Pennsylvania German identity and preference do not appear as the community no longer feels to express their identity as a dominant and distinct minority group in the Berks county area.

While this study has exposed an interesting history of the Pennsylvania Germans, the data and survey can be supplemented with further surveys and research in order to address other questions that have developed during the course of the study. In order to understand the personal preference or choices for gravestones and the motifs, wills left by the decedents can be studied to reveal any possible personal instruction concerning burial. Broadening the range of the study to survey gravestones in neighboring counties and in Germany may yield more conclusions about Pennsylvania German identity and cultural history.

While a churchyard or cemetery may represent individuals and communities of the past, these memorials can still provide important services for the modern society and community. Like other artifacts, they reveal about past lives and lifestyles that have not survived in the documentary record in the same manner and provide important details concerning relations, art, cultural history, and the economic aspects of both society and the memorial industry. Likewise, they provide an intimate perspective into important events such as life and death shared by all people. More importantly, the human emotions embodied by the memorials depicting the loss, sadness, and hope of love ones transcends time and connects the past with the present.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **Survey Sheet**

#### Pennsylvania German Graveyard Survey

Graveyard Name:

Memorial #:

Condition:

Stone:

Inscription:

Date:

Reason for Date:

#### **Memorial:**

Type:

Material:

Orientation:

Additional Features:

#### **Motifs:**

Central:

Border:

#### **Inscription:**

Script:

Shape of Text Panel:

Inscription:

**Sketch:**

**Survey Codes:**

Graveyard:

1. Alleghany Mennonite Meeting House
2. Allegheny Union (old)
3. Harmony
4. St. Gabriel's
5. Mohn's Hill
6. Trinity Church
7. Plowville Lutheran Church

Condition:

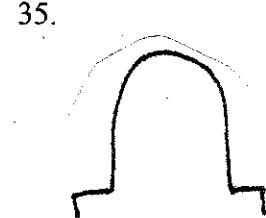
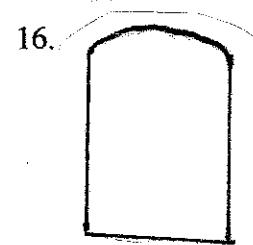
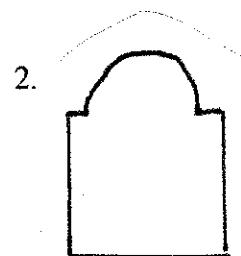
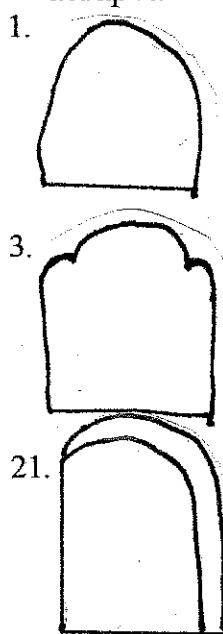
1. Excellent
2. Good (some wear)
3. OK: inscription partially worn, pieces broken off
4. Bad: collapsed, inscription completely worn/cannot be read

Date:

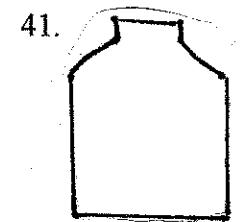
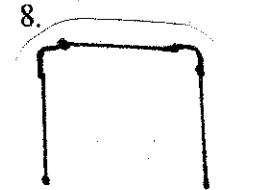
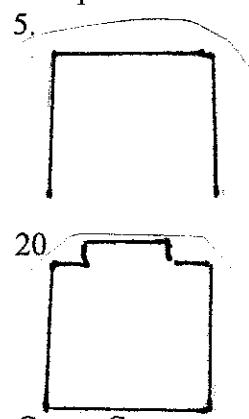
1. Date of erection of stone
2. Date of death of the only memorialized individual
3. Date of death of the last person of a group of individuals
4. Other

Memorial Type:

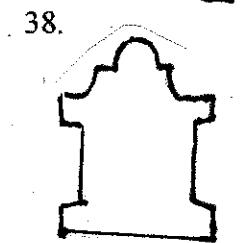
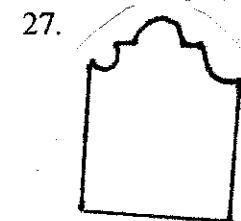
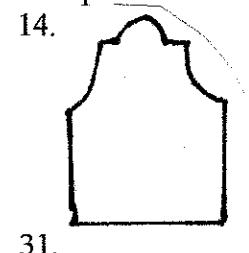
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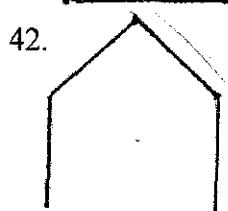
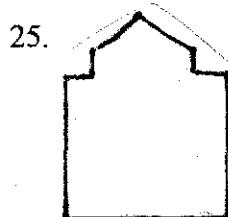
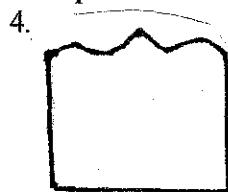
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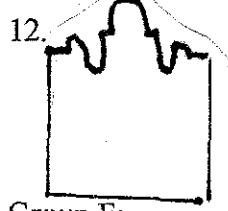
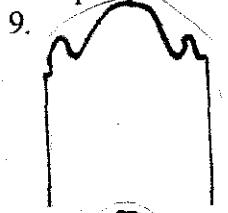
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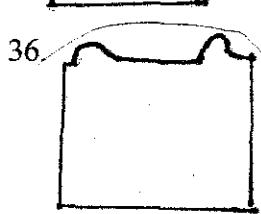
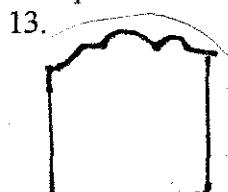
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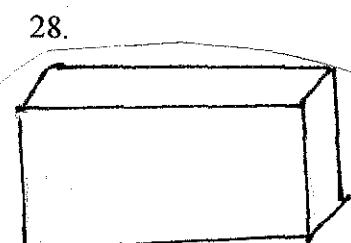
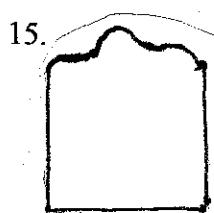
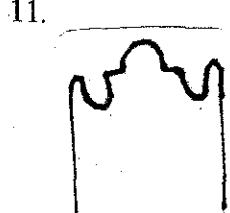
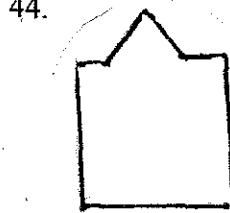
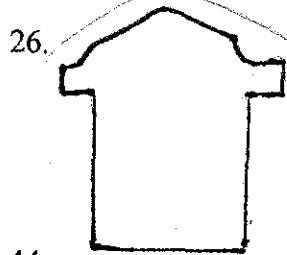
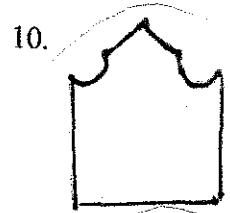
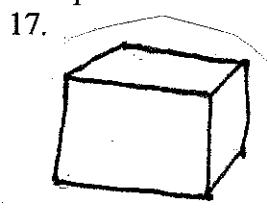
Group E:



Group F:



Group G



Group H:

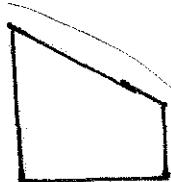
29.



43.

Horizontal Table-Top

39.



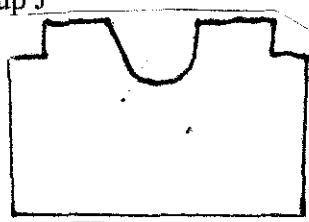
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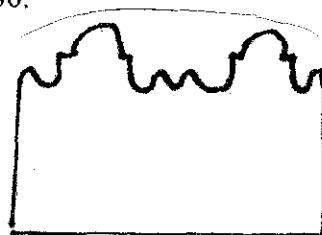
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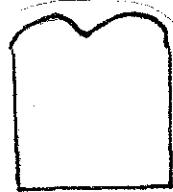
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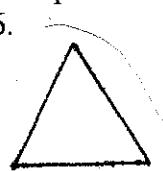


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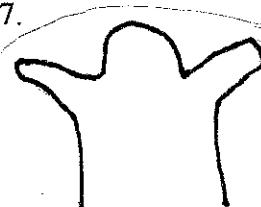


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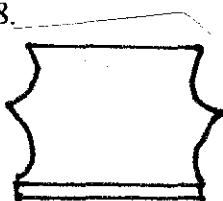
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7.



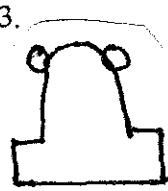
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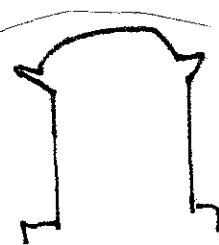
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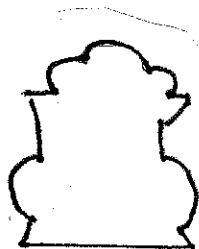
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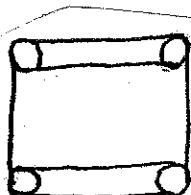
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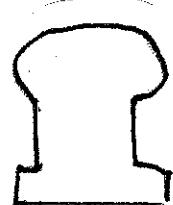
33.



34.



37.

**Material:**

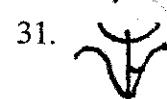
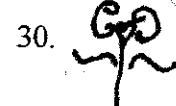
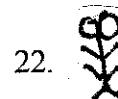
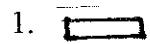
1. Unknown
2. Red Sandstone
3. Limestone
4. Marble
5. Granite
6. Brick

**Additional Features:**

1. On Individual Base
2. On base with other memorials
3. American Flag and Soldier's Plaque
4. American Flag and GAR 1861/1865 Star Plaque
5. American Flag and Revolutionary War Soldiers Plaque
6. Pair of Columns
7. Sculpture
8. Plaque
9. Footstone
10. American Flag Veteran 1812 1814
11. Historical Plaque
12. Kerb
13. Tureen Footstone
14. American Flag and WWII Plaque
15. American Flag and DAR Plaque

Motifs Central:

Group A:



36. Line Decoration

Group B:

10. Leaves

11. Rose

16. Grapevine

18. Wreath

24. Tulip

25. Flowers

28. One Flower

29. Lily

Group C:

7. Hand Pointing up and Open Book

9. Open Book

13. Open Book and Rose

Group D:

12. Lamb

19. Dove

Group E:

15. Holding/Clasping Hands

33. Hand Pointing

42. Hand Holding Drooping Flowers

Group F:

14. Flying Angel

38. Weeping Angel

41. Cherub with Wings

Group G:

45. Cross and Crown

Group H:



27. Women Reclining on Settee

40. Figures

Group I:

43. Skull and Crossbones

44. Crossbones

Group J:

17. Heart

34. Linked Chain

35. Scroll

37. American Flag

Group K:

8. Rake and Sheath of Wheat

32. Sheath of Wheat

Motifs Border:

1. Incised Edges
2. Leaves and Scroll
3. Columns
4. Flowers
5. Ivy
6. Gothic Arch
7. Tulips
8. Cord

Script:

1. Hand/Crude
2. Print/Type
3. Gothic

Inscription Introduction:

1. Hier ruhet
2. In memory of
3. Title (Mother, Father etc)
4. Children of (son of Daughter of etc.)
5. At Rest
6. Hier luget
7. Zum Andenken An
8. Sweetly sleep
9. In the Bloom of Life
10. Meet Me in Heaven
11. I Have Finished My Course
12. Sacred to the Memory Of
13. I am the Savior of Little....
14. Here Lieth
15. To Testify...
16. Here lies the body of
17. Peace

Language:

0. German
1. English

**Text Formatting:**

0. No text seen
1. Date
2. Initials
3. Name
4. Initials and Date
5. Name and Date
6. Beginning, Name, Date of Death
7. Beginning, Name, Date of Birth, Date of Death
8. Beginning, Name, Relations, Date of Birth, Date of Death
9. Name, Age at Death
10. Name, Date of Death, Age at Death
11. Name, Relations, Date of Death, Age at Death
12. Beginning, Name, Relations, Date of Birth, Date of Death, Age at Death
13. Beginning, Name, Date of Birth, Date of Death
14. Name, Relations, Date of Birth, Date of Death, Age at Death
15. Name, Date of Birth, Date of Death, Age at Death
16. Beginning, Name, Relations, Age at Death
17. Name Year-span
18. Multiple People
19. Beginning, Name, Relations, Date of Death, Age of Death
20. Name, Date of Birth, Date of Death
21. Name, Date of Birth, Age at Death
22. Name, Relations, Date of Birth, Date of Death
23. Beginning, Name, Date of Death, Age at Death
24. Beginning, Date of Birth, Date of Death, Age of Death
25. Name, Relations, Date of Death

**Additional Text:**

1. Amen
2. Signature
3. Army Information
4. Place of Birth
5. Poem
6. Bible Verse
7. Small Phrase Dealing With Death
8. Phrase
9. Religious Phrase
10. Place of Death
11. Erected By
12. Historical Information

**Tables:**

Table 1 : Count of Memorial Form (Selected, in Bold) By Decade (See Survey Codes in Appendix for Key)

Decade	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>43</b>
1910-1919									2	1				
1900-1909	9			1			1	3		4				
1890-1899	19						2	8	1	8	1			
1880-1889	39	1		3			4	18		1	3	1		
1870-1879	28			4			8	13		2	1			1
1860-1869	6		1	2		3	22	8		4		1		
1850-1859	2	1	1		1	1	10							
1840-1849	3	4			7	6	3					2	1	
1830-1839	3	4			4	11								
1820-1829	8	1	1		3	8	1							1
1810-1819	3	2		1	2	3	1	1						1
1800-1809	4	2		1		3								1
1790-1799	1	6		1	1	2								1
1780-1789		2								1				
1770-1779			1	1		1								
1760-1769													1	
1750-1759		1												
1740-1749		2												
1730-1739		1												
1720-1729														
1710-1719		1												

Table 2: Count of Material by Decade

Decade	Red Sandstone	Limestone	Marble/Granite	Unknown
1910-1919			3	
1900-1909		12	12	
1890-1899		29	11	
1880-1889	1	61	17	
1870-1879		48	14	
1860-1869	1	50	5	
1850-1859	1	21	3	
1840-1849	4	23		
1830-1839	9	15		
1820-1829	13	12	1	
1810-1819	8	7	1	
1800-1809	8	3	1	
1790-1799	9	4	1	
1780-1789	2		1	
1770-1779	1	2	1	
1760-1769				
1750-1759	1			
1740-1749	2			
1730-1739	1			
1720-1729	2			
1710-1719				1

Table 3: Additional Features (Contemporaneous to Headstone) By Decade

Decade	Individual Base	Shared Base	Columns	Sculpture	Footstone	Kerb
1910-1919		1				
1900-1909	12	2				
1890-1899	20	4			1	
1880-1889	47	2	1	1	2	
1870-1879	32	5		2	1	
1860-1869	16	1			1	1
1850-1859	5					
1840-1849	2				2	
1830-1839	1					
1820-1829						
1810-1819	1					
1800-1809						
1790-1799					1	

Table 4: Count of Motifs (Selected, in Bold) By Decade (See Survey Codes in Appendix for Key)

Decade	2	9	11	12	13	15	17	19	20	21	23	24	25	29	41	43
1910-1919																
1900-1909			2												1	
1890-1899		1	2	1											1	
1880-1889	5	4	1	2					1				2	3		
1870-1879	2	2	6	1	1	1		2							1	
1860-1869	21	1	1	2	2								2			
1850-1859	13	1	2	1									1			
1840-1849	13				1											
1830-1839	12						1			1						
1820-1829	3															
1810-1819	1									1	1					
1800-1809	1															
1790-1799																
1780-1789																
1770-1779																
1760-1769																
1750-1759																
1740-1749													1		1	
1730-1739																
1720-1729																
1710-1719														1	1	
No Date			2					3		2	3	9	4	2		

Table 5: Count of Inscription Introductions By Decade

Decade	“Here Rests”	“Here Lies”	“In Memory Of”	“Kinship Relations”
1910-1919				1
1900-1909	1		1	10
1890-1899	6		5	12
1880-1889	12		14	9
1870-1879	10		10	5
1860-1869	11		23	2
1850-1859	5		11	
1840-1849	7		9	1
1830-1839	4		6	
1820-1829	3		5	1
1810-1819	4		3	
1800-1809	1	1	2	
1790-1799			4	
1780-1789				
1770-1779			1	
1760-1769			1	
1750-1759		1		
1740-1749		1		
1730-1739				
1720-1729			1	
1710-1719		1		

Table 6: Count of Additional Text By Decade

Decade	Religious Text	Poem/Verses	Biographical Information	Carver’s Signature
1910-1919				
1900-1909			2	
1890-1899	3	2	2	1
1880-1889	6	7	3	8
1870-1879	3	5	2	9
1860-1869	7	2	3	14
1850-1859	1	4		11
1840-1849		6		8
1830-1839	1	2		4
1820-1829	1	1		2
1810-1819				1
1800-1809			1	