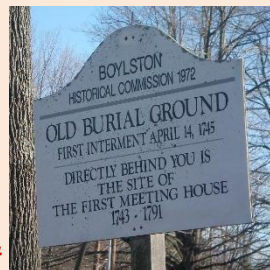


The Old Burial Ground

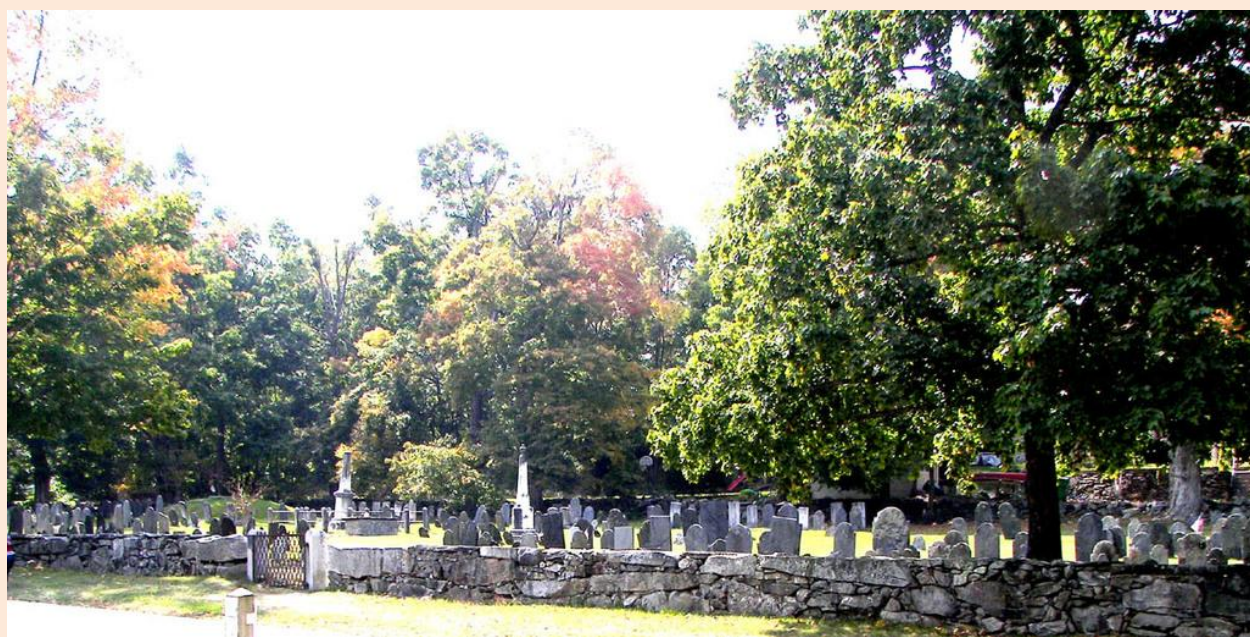
A Brief History and Photographs From Times Past

By Inga Milbauer

The Burial Ground was the first graveyard in the Second Precinct of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts located in the precinct's center on land acquired in 1742 to build a Meeting House and burial ground. Lieutenant Eleazar Taylor donated the two acres of land for this use. Eleazar Taylor was the son of Eleazar Taylor and Lydia Barrett, born in Marlboro on 3 December 1699. He married Judith Hapgood on 5 July 1721. He owned the 58-acre parcel which was originally Shrewsbury lot #43, granted on 30 December 1718 to him¹ He built his home on the southerly side of Cottonwood Place. Judith Hapgood died on 8 November 1742. Eleazar married his second wife, Hannah Keyes (widow of Gershom Flagg) on 26 March 1744. On 20 September 1753 Eleazar died. The Second Precinct of Shrewsbury would become the Town of Boylston, Massachusetts on 1st March 1786.



A stone wall surrounds what is now known as the Old Burial Ground, with a gate on School Street. The Old Burial Ground is bounded on the north by Main Street, the east by School Street and on the south and west by two private residences.² Due to the loss of earlier burial records, it remains uncertain how many people have been buried here, except for those graves where gravestones were placed. “There are believed to be at least five unmarked Revolutionary War soldier's graves, as well as the possibility other residents were buried in unmarked graves near the back wall.”³



OLD BURIAL GROUND

Established 1745

Boylston, Massachusetts

Photographer Bruce Filgate

Over the years much research and many surveys of the cemetery have been done, such as the research done by H.M. Cheever, published in December 1944, and research by Hiram Harlow. And finally, in September 2010 Bruce Filgate and Findagrave volunteers completed a full photographic survey, crosschecking the data with Massachusetts death records. The 2010 survey was published online on the www.findagrave.com website where the Massachusetts death information and photographs were posted to the appropriate memorials.

First Burial-1745

The first burial was that of Garner Maynard, the eleven-month-old son of Elisha and Huldah Bannister Maynard, on April 14, 1745.⁴ Elisha Maynard, one of the original petitioners of the North Parish, resided on Maynard's Lane with his family (what would now be in the Tower Hill area) and operated a blacksmith shop.⁵ The inscription of the footstone of Garner Maynard's grave is as follows:

*GARNER MAYNARD Ye FIRST THAT
IN THIS
BURYING PLACE
DOTH LIES*

Monuments

The Burial Ground has three family monuments and over 500 individual gravestones. The oldest monument is the early 19th century Andrews' family monument. It is a mound type monument by an unknown artist. Robert Andrews Jr. served as Captain of the 47 men from the Second Precinct

¹ Boylston Historical Series by Bruce Filgate, 2012, p. 73

² <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/1840981/old-burial-ground>

³ Ibid

⁴ Boylston Historical Series, Bruce D. Filgate, 2012, p.141

⁵ Ibid, p.22

of Shrewsbury who answered the Alarm raised by the conflict with British soldiers in Concord and Lexington on the morning of 19 April 1775. On 11 November 1789, at the age of 67 years, Captain Andrews died suddenly, according to the death certificate “crushed to death by a cart wheel.” At a Town Meeting on 1 March 1790, it was agreed to allow his heirs to erect a tomb in the Burial Ground to his memory. It now remains in his honor with the following inscription engraved.⁶

*“In memory of Captain Robert Andrews who was born
November 3, 1722 and fell asleep November 11, 1789.
Lamented as a kind and tender husband and father, an
industrious and useful member of society, a serious
professor of the Christian religion and of appointed
integrity in every station, public and private, in which
he acted*

*When thou, no friend, no dying voice could hear.
Or drop around thy bed the parting tear
Yet shall thy loving virtues come to mind
And preach to all, be just and kind.”*

In 1978, the Boylston Historic Commission placed the following words on a tablet at the foot of the tomb:

In memory of Capt. Robert Andrews 1722-1789
Commander of the local Minutemen who
responded to the call of April 19, 1775
BE KIND AND JUST

His wife, Lucy Bradstreet Andrews, (25 November 1724 – 22 December 1815), their son John Andrews (29 May 1757 – 13 February 1822), and possibly more family members are buried in this tomb.⁷



OLD BURIAL GROUND
ABBOT MONUMENT IN BACKGROUND (*on left*) BOND MONUMENT (*center*) & ANDREWS MOUND (*on right*)
Circa 1904
Boylston Historical Society Photograph Collections

The Abbot monument is a 19th century column with base monument by an unknown artist. The front, rear and right side are inscribed with the names of Capt. Jason Abbot (28 June 1772 – 19 July 1843), his wife Mary Morse (12 April 1767 – 28 August 1843) and six family members.

The Bond monument is a tapering column with a four-sided base monument by P. Nugent from 1863.

Side 1 inscription:

Capt. John Bond
Born February 5, 1770
Died October 22, 1837

Judith Bond
Born January 7, 1775
Died May 10 1844

⁶ <https://www.boylstonhistory.org/images/2024%20May/FFF%2020240510%20%20Capt%20Robert%20Andrews.pdf>
⁷ https://www.boylstonhistory.org/category/Transcription_done_by_Bruce_Filgate_with_links_to_Find_a_Grave_and_photos_/c86

Judith (Fisk) Bond was the second wife of Capt. Bond. The other sides of the column include the names of his first wife, Ruth Bond (22 July 1799 – 9 August 1822) and several other family members. Some of the Bond’s children’s names and birthyears appear, but were buried elsewhere.⁸

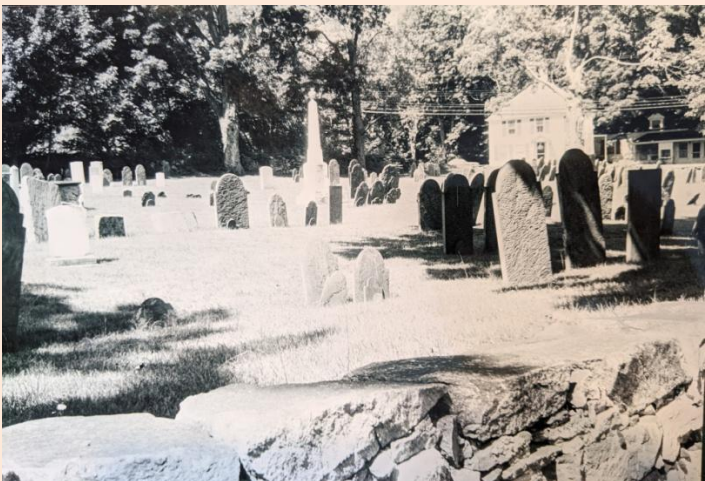
According to the Boylston Annual Report of 1960, the Old Burial Ground, also known as “Old Yard”, received a donation by from James Longley, Esq. of Boston who “gave \$500, April 30th, 1863 to be invested and the interest, at five per cent., to be spent in the repair and adornment of the spot.”⁹



VIEW OF OLD BURIAL GROUND
Date unknown
Boylston Historical Society Photograph Collections

By the early 1830’s the Burial Ground had become crowded, and a second burial ground was established in 1837. After 1837, burials in the Old Burial Ground took place infrequently with the last interment in 1928 of Mary Taylor Bush, the daughter of Deacon Jotham Bush and Hannah Fisher.^{10,11} The 2 acres for the new cemetery had been conveyed to the Boylston inhabitants by Colonel Jotham Bush, the paternal grandfather of Mary. The new cemetery, Pine Grove Cemetery, was named for the avenue of pine trees planted by Deacon Jotham Bush between 1837 and 1855.

For more information about Pine Grove Cemetery see the Friday’s Fascinating Finds article *Pine Grove Cemetery - A Brief History and Photographs from Times Past* by Inga Milbauer, published on the website of the Boylston Historical Society and Museum.



VIEW OF OLD BURIAL GROUND
Date unknown
Boylston Historical Society Photograph Collections

In 2003, a group of Boylston residents got together to restore the damaged wall of the Old Burial Ground.



OLD BURIAL GROUND - DAMAGED STONE WALL
Fall of 2003
Photographer Bill Richardson
Boylston Historical Society Photograph Collections

This group photo shows some of the financial supporters for this effort. In front of the wall (from left to right) Jean Haley, Pat Cushman-Ton, Rita Fuller, Martha Bigelow and Betty Thomas; behind the wall (from left to right) Bob Haynes, Judy Haynes, Harry Durning, Mary Dale, Richard Dale, Al Thomas and Deb Richardson.

In September 2010 all of the existing stones in the cemetery were photographed by the findagrave volunteers. These photographs were published online to the appropriate memorials on the findagrave.com website. The printed version *Old Burial Ground Boylston, Massachusetts Gravestone Photographs Summer 2010* was donated by Bruce Filgate and is now available at the Boylston Historical Society and Museum!

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⁸ https://www.boylstonhistory.org/category/Transcription_done_by_Bruce_Filgate_with_links_to_Find_a_Grave_and_photos_/c86
⁹ Annual Report of the Officers of the Town of Boylston for the Year Ending December 31, 1960
¹⁰ Boylston Historical Series, Bruce D. Filgate, 2012, p.141
¹¹ Mary Taylor Bush Memorial, Old Burial Ground, Boylston, Massachusetts, findagrave.com
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