

Gershom Bartlett (1723-1798) was a native of Bolton but carved hundreds of stones for burying grounds throughout eastern Connecticut. He is represented by 6 works in the Columbia graveyard.



His style is one of the most distinctive of any of the 18th century carvers, characterized by a face with a bulbous nose, deep, round, closely-set eyes, down-turned mouth, arched eyebrows, and teeth along the bottom edge. The head has a four-lobed crown above and either three comma-shaped wings on either side of the face or a pair of strawberry shaped wings. The finials are usually pinwheels or four-leafed clovers, and there is a heart present near the bottom of the stone. The footstones often have three or four diamonds incised.

Bartlett's work can be seen in the stone for Sarah Maltby (1746) - a "rare instance of early piety", and that of Joseph Paine (1767).

In 1772 Bartlett moved to Vermont where, after serving in the Revolutionary War, he continued to carve, but on slate instead of granite.



Jonathan Loomis (1722-1785) was born in Columbia, but after his marriage he moved to Coventry where most of his work is found. His stone came from a quarry in Bolton Notch that he purchased in 1749 from Gershom Bartlett's brother Edward.



He and his son John had a style that is an interesting blend of Wheeler and Bartlett elements. He used an oval face with long narrow nose and a central heart and stemmed six-rayed rosettes in the horizontal panel below, as did Wheeler. The wings are the same comma-like curls used by Bartlett, as are his side panels of double anchors. However, Loomis used his own distinctive three-lobed crown, sleepy eyes with heavy joined eyebrows, and small smiling mouth.

He is represented in the Columbia Old Yard by only two stones, those of Ichabod Freeman (1782) and Dan Carpenter (1784).

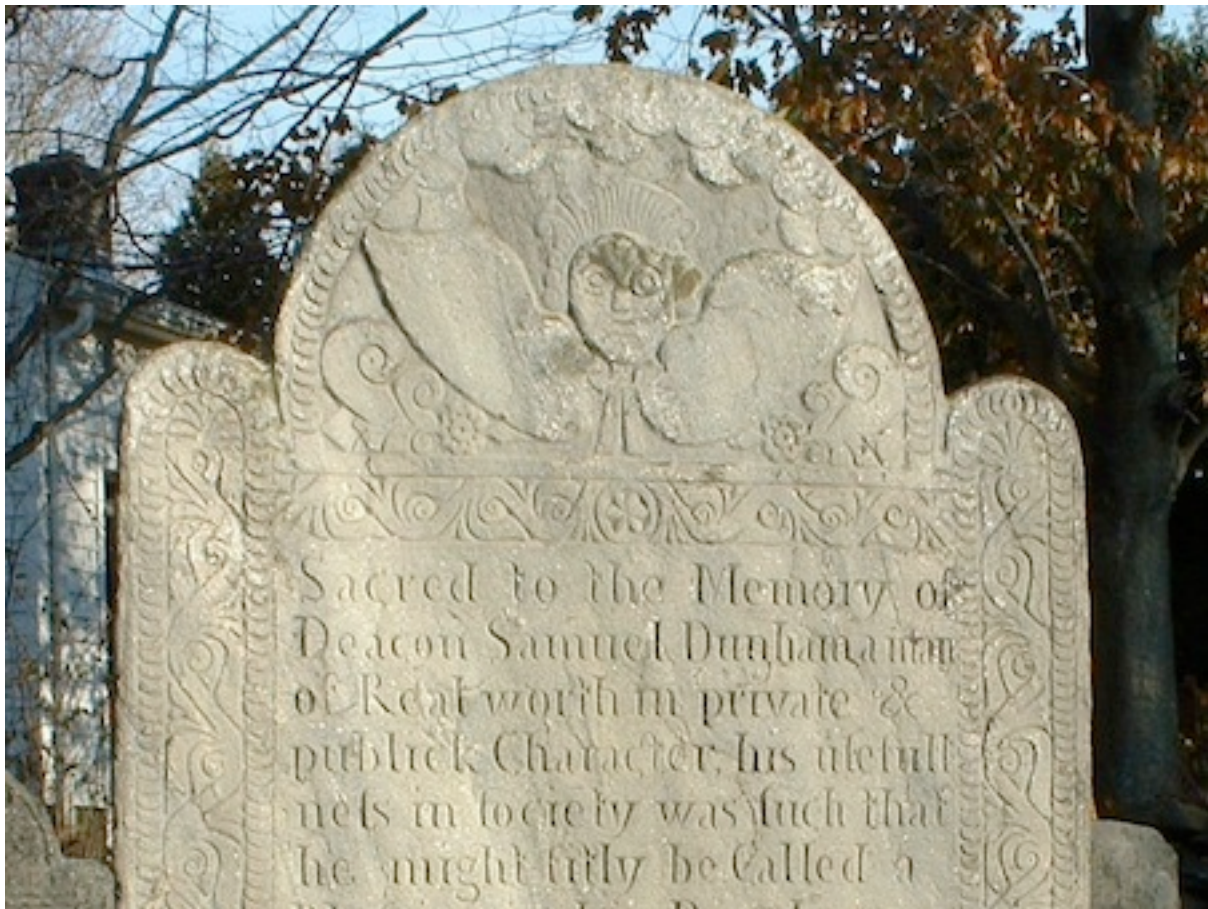




## The Mannings

Josiah Manning (1725-1806) and his two sons, Frederick (1758-1810) and Rockwell (1760-1806) together created a carving style that remained dominant in eastern Connecticut for fifty years. Gravestones done by them are found in virtually every 18th century burial ground in eastern Connecticut, and even in a few in southern Massachusetts and west of the Connecticut River. Between them, they carved over two thousand stones.

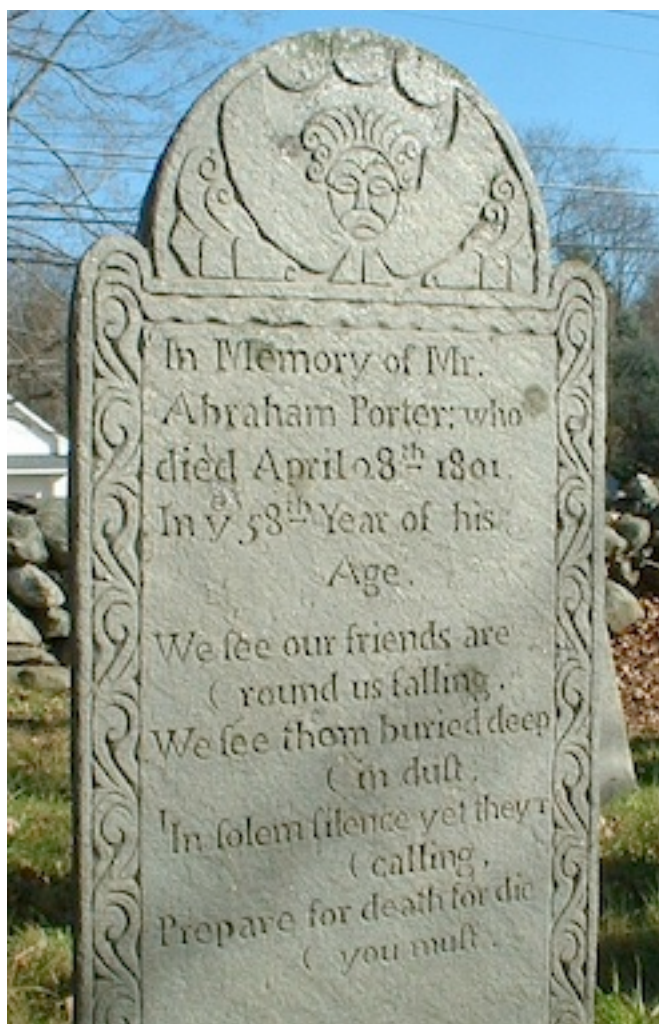
They were not only prolific, but versatile. Although most of their stones fall into five main styles, they also created other styles which show their inventiveness and skill. The stones found in Columbia, however, are of a style found in 80% of their work. The face has a frowning mouth, goggle-like eyes, and an upswept hairdo. There are a series of half circles above their face and an elaborate scroll below the wings. The wings are solid and sweep strongly upward. This style is typified in the stone for Deacon Samuel Dunham (1779) which has a beautiful footstone as well.



Aaron Haskins (1752-1795) While there are only 8 stones by the Mannings in the Old Yard, there are 24 quite similar-looking stones by Aaron Haskins of Bolton. His work was largely imitative copying stylistic elements of the Mannings ( and in some cases of Zerubabel Collins), but much more simply cut.



His work can be recognized by the heavily carved mouth, a clownlike downward turned pout. The eyes are heavily lidded and shut. The hairstyle is simplified with fewer curls on the sides. The floral elements are more flatly carved and less artistic. A good example of Haskins work is seen in the stone of Abraham Porter(1801).



It is interesting that he seemed to not compete with the Mannings, as his stones are common where the Mannings are scarce and vice versa. Haskins work is found mainly in the western part of eastern Connecticut.



Amasa Loomis (c.1773-1840) was a third generation Coventry stonecarver, the grandson of Jonathan and son of John Loomis. While he inherited his father's tools (six chisels, two compasses, a large and small stone hammer, a broad chisel and three augers), he did not follow his style. Instead, he first imitated the Mannings and then conformed to the new style of urn and willow designs.



Amasa Loomis is represented by 5 stones in Columbia. The hair and wings of his figures are much like Haskins, but the face lacks the exaggerated mouth, instead having a simple thin down-turned one. The face is framed with a series of large half-circles, and the floral borders are of a narrow vine with three-lobed clovers on alternate sides. His work is well illustrated on the stone of Mary Loomis (1799).

