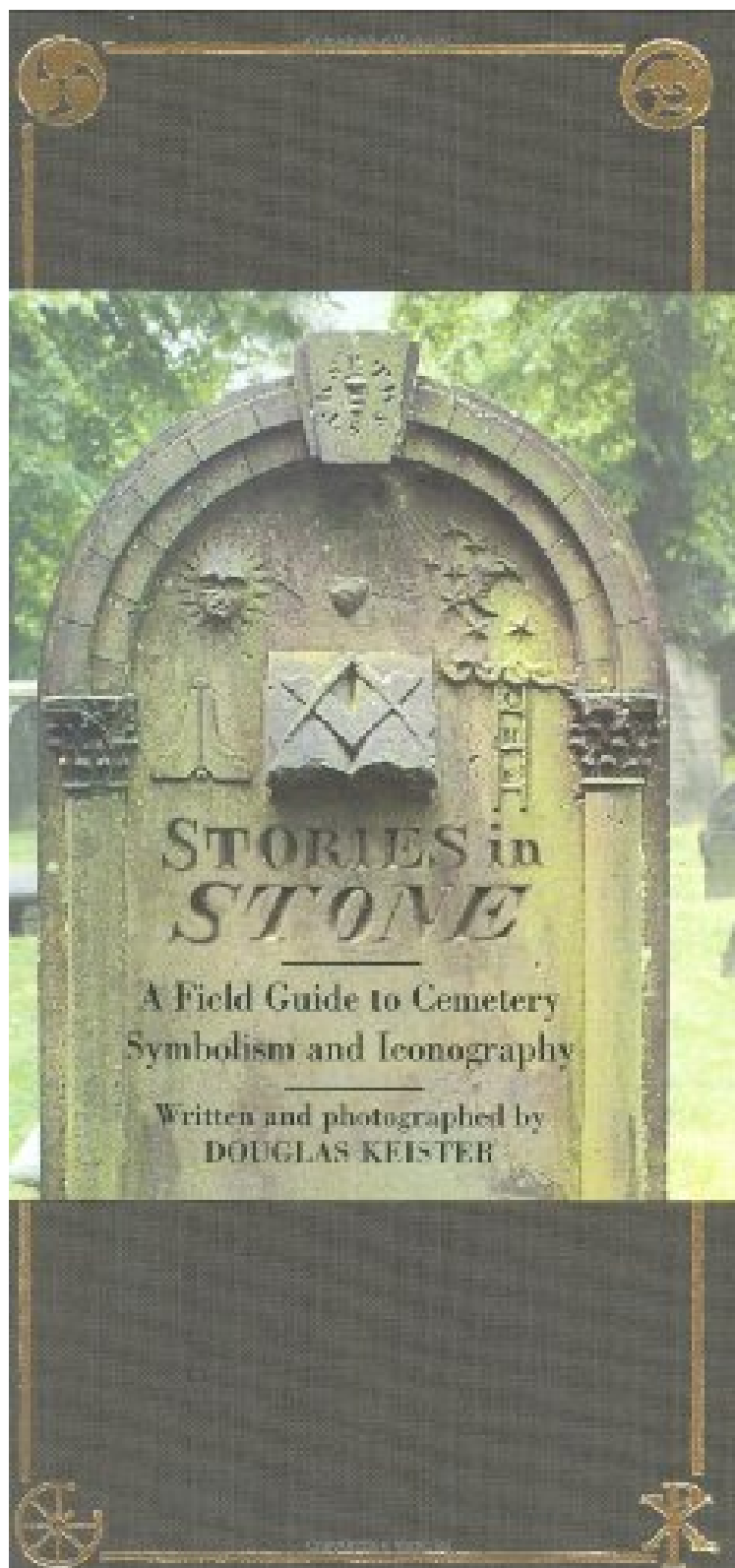


(Free download) Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography

Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography

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Certain symbols abound in modern Western culture that are instantly recognizable: the cross signifies Christianity, the six-pointed Star of David is revered by Jews, the golden arches frequently means it's time for lunch. Other symbols, however, require a bit of decoding-particularly those found in cemeteries. Cemeteries are virtual encyclopedias of symbolism. Engravings on tombstones, mausoleums and memorials tell us just about everything there is to know about a person- date of birth and death as well as religion, ethnicity, occupation, community interests, and much more. In the fascinating new book *Stories in Stone: The Complete Guide to Cemetery Symbolism* by noted author Douglas Keister, the secrets of cemetery symbolism are finally revealed. For instance, did you know that it is quite rare to see a sunflower on a tombstone? Did you know that the human foot symbolizes humility and service since it consistently touches the earth? Or the humble sheaf of wheat-while it is often used to denote someone who has lived a long and fruitful life, do you know other meanings it might carry? *Stories in Stone* provides history along with images of a wide variety of common and not-so-common cemetery symbols, and offers an in-depth examination of stone relics and the personal and intimate details they display-flora and fauna, religious icons, society symbols, and final impressions of how the deceased wished to be remembered. Douglas Keister has created a practical field guide that is compact and portable, perfect for those interested in family histories and genealogical research, and is the only book of its kind that unlocks the language of symbols in a comprehensive and easy-to-understand manner. Douglas Keister has photographed fourteen award-winning, critically acclaimed books (including *Red Tile Style: America's Spanish Revival Architecture*, *The Bungalow: America's Arts Crafts Home*, and *Storybook Style: America's Whimsical Homes of the Twenties*) earning him the title "America's most noted photographer of historic architecture." He also writes and illustrates magazine articles and contributes photographs and essays to other books, calendars, posters, and greeting cards. Doug lives in Chico, California, and travels frequently to photograph and lecture on historic architecture and photography.

From the Inside Flap*Stories in Stone The Complete Illustrated Guide to Cemetery Symbolism* The language of symbols is one that has been with us from the beginning of recorded history. Our everyday life is full of symbols. We see many of them when we are driving: arrows point us in the right direction, upside-down pyramids tell us of slow-moving vehicles, and octagons caution us to stop. There are multitudes of business symbols we encounter everyday: a stylized pair of golden arches indicates there's a McDonald's restaurant located nearby; a checkmark called a "swoosh" subtly informs that its owner is wearing a Nike product; a polychrome apple with a bite taken out of it whimsically announces that its product is an Apple computer; a storefront displaying a symbol of three balls shows that its business is a pawn shop. The meaning of most symbols has remained fairly consistent through the centuries: crosses for Christians, six-pointed stars for Jews, the yin-yang symbol for Buddhists-and hearts speak of love, lambs of innocence, and circles of completeness and immortality. But, nowhere is the language of symbols more apparent than in cemeteries. Dead men may tell no tales, but their tombstones do. Besides informing us of people's names and dates of birth and death, tombstones often tell us what religion they affiliated with, what ethnicity they descended from, what clubs and organizations they belonged to, what occupations they worked in, and what thoughts they held on the afterlife. Journey with us now into the little-known world of cemeteries. The author provides fascinating information and stunning full-color and black-and-white images of funerary architecture designed for eternal life, from mausoleums, chapels, and offices, to tombs, sculptures, and memorials. He then draws us into the very personal area of stone relics designed especially for the deceased, from likenesses of plants, animals, mankind, and mortality, to icons of religion, societies, clubs, and final impressions of how the occupant wanted to be remembered. About the AuthorChico, California-based photographer Douglas Keister has photographed twenty-two award-winning, critically acclaimed books. His seventeen books on architecture include four books on Victorian homes (*Daughter's of Painted Ladies*, *Painted Ladies Revisited*, *America's Painted Ladies and Victorian Glory*); three books on bungalow homes

(The Bungalow, Inside the Bungalow and Outside the Bungalow), a book on 1920s whimsical homes (Storybook Style) a book about cemetery art and architecture (Going Out in Style), a book on Spanish architecture, (Red Tile Style), six books on bungalow details and Classic Cottages, that will be published by Gibbs Smith Publisher in the Spring of 2004. Keister photographed and wrote an award winning children's book (Fernando's Gift), has two monographs of his personal work (Black Rock and Driftwood Whimsy), a book on classic travel trailers, (Ready to Roll) and a book on cemetery symbolism, Stories in Stone: The Complete Illustrated Guide to Cemetery Symbolism, that will be published by Gibbs Smith Publisher in the Spring of 2004. His wealth of books on architecture has earned him the title, "America's most noted photographer of historic architecture." Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. CEMETERY enthusiasts know that cemeteries are a vast treasure trove of art and architecture. The fact is, cemeteries are Americas most unspoiled resource of historic architecture. It would take many hours of strolling in a city's downtown historic district to find the number of styles of architecture that one can find in a few minutes walk in most large historic cemeteries. Most cemetery architecture is a mirror of the urban architecture of the time. Gothic cathedrals, Classical Revival city halls, Art Deco theaters, and rustic cast-iron garden furniture can all find their counterpart in the cemetery. And there are some styles of architecture that can be found only in cemeteries; we'll call this architecture uniquely funerary. Up until the Reformation in the sixteenth century, most cemeteries consisted primarily of randomly placed headstones. Wealthy folks purchased their way into being buried within the walls and floors of their church. But a series of edicts and a slowdown of church construction during the Reformation essentially put an end to burial within the church. Moneyed types started looking outside the walls of the church to erect a suitable memorial to themselves and their families. Elaborate statuary, tombs, and monuments slowly began to find their way into formerly stark churchyards and city cemeteries. When garden cemeteries with vast landscaped expanses began to be developed in the early nineteenth century, they became a new architectural frontier for Americas architects, artists, designers, and builders.