

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLANDDEPARTMENT OF FOLKLORE

There is very little information available about the old gravestones and cemeteries in Newfoundland. Each community usually has an old cemetery where the early settlers were buried. By answering the following questions, you can help piece together some of the evidence of the early history, settlement and burial in the Province.

The answers to some of the questions will be obtained from the gravestones themselves, simply by reading the name, date and verses. This should take very little time, and will provide both of us with a historical record of your community.

If you are not able to return to your community, perhaps you can send these questions home to someone who would be willing to answer them. The answers can be sent directly to the Department of Folklore.

Please answer each question fully, giving details whenever possible. Write the answers in the spaces provided. If you need more space, and want to add some further comment, use separate sheets of paper. Number each extra page in the upper right hand corner. If possible, please use ink. All information will be permanently filed in the Folklore and Language Archive.

YOUR NAME:

BIRTH DATE:

HOME COMMUNITY:

PRESENT ADDRESS:

RELIGION:

TODAY'S DATE:

1. Where did the original settlers in your community come from?
2. What are the religious denominations that are found in your home community? Please list them all.
3. If there is more than one denomination in your community, does each have its own cemetery?  
Has this always been the case? If not, explain.
4. Are there cemeteries in your community that are no longer used? If so, please give details of location, name, etc.
5. Are there cemeteries in your community located in out-of-the-way places? Describe briefly where these are located.
6. Are the cemeteries in your community always cared for? If so, in what ways?

7. Are there special days set aside for cleaning the cemetery? If so, describe when this occurs, special services that occur, and how the cemetery is prepared for this day.

8. Are the graves in the cemetery decorated? If so, please describe the normal decorations, such as the placing of rocks or shells around the border, putting flowers on the grave, etc.

9. Are there cemeteries or small burial plots located in or near your community that contain no markers? If so, please give details of the location, name of the area, etc.

Who is buried there?

10. Were people ever buried in a garden, meadow, small family plot, or other place apart from the larger cemeteries? Please give location and any other details.

The remaining questions deal specifically with the cemetery of your own denomination. Information concerning this cemetery and its gravestones should be the easiest for you to obtain. If you are familiar with other denominations in your community, any information you can give about their gravestones and cemeteries will be very helpful. This extra information can be given on additional sheets of paper.

11. What are the stones that mark the grave called in your community? (gravestones, headstones, tombstones, markers, monuments, some other name.)
12. What are the oldest gravestones in the cemetery? (Please give the name on the stone and the date of death. The more dates you can give, the better, especially of gravestones dated before 1860.)
13. Do you know whether these are the oldest gravestones in your community?
14. How many gravestones are in the cemetery dated before 1860?
15. What is the colour of these gravestones?
16. Do any of the older people in your community remember having gravestones sent from England, Ireland, or elsewhere outside the Province? If so, please give details of where the stones came from, and the dates when they arrived. Give your informant's name, age, community, religion, and relationship to you.

17. Are there any reports of markers being made by a local resident? If so, please give details of construction, such as who made the marker, the materials used, how it was made, etc.
18. Were wooden markers ever placed on a grave? Are they still being used now? Describe these markers, giving shape, colour, how the inscriptions were placed on the marker, and the approximate dates when these markers were used.
19. What are the typical shapes of the older gravestones found in the cemetery. Please draw an outline of the typical shapes in the space below, or on separate sheets. Give the date of each gravestone copied.

20. Were there verses that were used over and over again on gravestones? If so, please give these verses.
21. Did anyone in your community have a list, either written or printed, that contained verses that were used on gravestones? If so, please give the name of this person, age, occupation and religion. Briefly describe this list, its contents, and where it was obtained.
22. Please write down any unusual gravestone verses which you see in the cemetery. Include the name and date of the stone from which they come.
23. Many gravestones have a cross, heart, hands or some other type of symbol at the top. Who decided which symbol would be placed on the stone? Where did these symbols come from?

24. What typical symbols are used on the gravestones in the cemetery? Please make simple drawings of these symbols and designs in the space below, and include the name and date of the stone from which they are copied.
25. Do older people remember old gravestones in your community that are no longer there? If so, how old were these stones, and what happened to them?
26. Are there any gravestones which contain strange writing, symbols or marks? If so, please describe and provide a drawing.
27. What direction(s) do the gravestones in the cemetery face? (mainly east, west, etc., or in all directions.)

28. Are there gravestones which seem unusual? (For example, a large size, strange colour or shape, etc. If so, please provide details.)
29. Are there burial vaults in the cemetery? If so, please describe them. Who is buried there?
30. Where are the gravestones obtained now? Who makes them?
31. Are there stones marking graves within your church? If so, please describe these markers.
- Who is buried there?
32. Does anyone in your community have photographs of gravestones found in the local cemetery? If so, please provide name, address, age, occupation and religion.



33. Please add any further information which you think may be helpful. This may include stories about particular stones or cemeteries, accounts of burials, people buried in an unusual way or place, etc.