

# EPITAPHS.

---

It need scarcely be said that an epitaph presupposes a monument upon which it is said to be engraven. Almost all nations have wished that certain external signs should point out the places where their dead are interred. Among the savage tribes this has mostly been done by rude stones placed near their graves, or mounds of earth raised over them. As soon as nations had learned the use of letters, epitaphs were inscribed upon such monuments, and doubtless proceeded from the presage of immortality implanted in all men naturally. Three thousand years ago the doleful verses sung at burials were called "epitaphia" because they were first sung at the burial and subsequently engraven upon the sepulchers. Without the principle of immortality in the human soul, man could never have had awakened in him the desire to live in the memory of his fellows; mere love, or the yearning of kind towards kind, could not have produced it. In this same spirit we collect epitaphs. Epitaphs are not without general interest, as is evidenced by the number of collections of them which have been published in book form.

A quaint inscription found upon a slab in St. James' Church, Piccadilly, London, and, in fact, the oldest one found there, reads:

"Beneath this Pillar lies the body of Elizabeth, wife of Colonel Benjamin Fletcher, late Captain General and Governour in Chief of his Majesty's Province of New York, in America, and daughter of Doctor John Hodson, late

Bishop of Elphin, in Ireland, who, after her return from that long voyage, in which she accompanied her husband, departed this life the fifth day of November, A. D. 1698, leaving one son and two daughters behind her, and a sweet and lasting monument in the memories of all that knew her."

Shreiner's Cemetery, in this city, has many very interesting and suggestive inscriptions. We will note a few, and that of Thaddeus Stevens, the great Commoner, will ever challenge attention. The inscription is of his own dictation, and reads:

"Thaddeus Stevens, born at Danville, Caledonia county, Vermont, April 4, 1792. Died at Washington, D. C., August 11, 1868.

I repose in this quiet and secluded spot, not from any preference for solitude, but, finding other cemeteries limited as to race by charter rules, I have chosen this that I may illustrate in my death the principles which I advocated through my long life—Equality of man before his Creator."

Another inscription which deserves more than passing notice reads:

"Sacred to the memory of Mary Jackson, died 1859, aged 50 years.

"Dear mother, be thou still the watchful  
guide  
In honor's path of him who was thy  
pride;  
So shall my feet, from snares of error  
free,  
Tread only paths of truth toward Heaven  
and thee.

"This tomb is erected to perpetuate the memory of a devoted mother, by an only son."

Still another stone sets forth briefly, "Caroline Horstman, died June 24, 1865; aged 74 years. She taught me to pray."

A visit to the Moravian Churchyard at Lititz repays itself in the large number of aged tombstones there found, among which we cull the following:

Gottfried Heinrich, geboren in Thumhart, zu grofeurode in Thuringen, 1745; verscheid, 1819.

Samuel Rancke, born in Earl township, 1742; died, 1815.

Benjamin Chitty, born in Frederick, Maryland, 1743; died, 1822.

Heinrich Gottfried Rauch, born in Lititz, 1781; died, 1822.

Johann Eichler, geboren, 1758, zu Neider Oderwitz an des Lansitz; gestorbt, 1821.

Johannes Rudolph, geboren in Arneburg, in der Alter Mark, Brandenburg, 1763; bestorb, 1825.

Johann Gottfried Zahm, born at Bethlehem, Pa., 1753; died, 1782.

Gottfried Keller, geboren in Welteras, 1721; died, 1782.

Heinrich Rudy, geboren in Herzogthum, Wurtembourg, in 1708; gestorbt, 1802.

Daniel Christ, geboren in Pfalz, 1744; gestorbt, 1815.

Joseph Sturgis, born in Philadelphia, 1738; died, 1817.

Johann Philipps, born in Lower Sancy, 1769; died, 1817.

Polycarpus Kuhn Kreiter, born in Lititz, 1811; died, 1819.

Orlando Washington Eichler, born in Lititz, 1812, died in 1820.

Jacob Schoenlein, geboren und entschieft an der tage seiner; gebort, 1821.

John Peterson, geboren in Taustensuss, im Amte Kinpocking, in Jeutland, 1763; died, 1825.

Johann Fraezer, geboren in Joerhitz, 1769; gestorbt, 1825.

Joseph Payne, born in Twickenham, England, 1708; died, 1779.

Greenburg Pettycourt, born in Georgetown, Maryland, 1748; died, 1846.

John Paul Hemming, born in Bohemia, 1715; died, 1789.

Johann Adolph Meyer, geboren in Firstenthum, Halberstadt, 1714; verscheid, 1781.

Johann Heinrich Gottlob Heine, geboren, in Rennebourg, an Vogtland, 1755; verscheid, 1782. "Ich liege und schlauf in friede."

Johann Philip Bachman, geboren, in Kreuzburg, Thuringen, 1741; verscheid, 1813.

William Lanius, born in York, Pa., 1748; died, 1814. (York county was at that time part of Lancaster county.)

Samuel Steinecke, geboren in Oberode, Preuzen, 1743; verscheid, 1819.

Anna Rosina Tannenbergin, geboren Kernin, 1715; am Schoflatz; entscheif, 1792.

Anna Christina Fraunken, geboren Bezolchins, 1710; gestorb, 1781.

Anna Berkardin, geboren, Callin, 1769; gestorb, 1799.

Clous Colin, geboren, in Herzogthum, Bohemia, 1724; died, 1808.

Nils Tillofsen, born in Bohemia in 1753.

Johann Hamm, geboren in Elscheim, bei Mannz, 1798.

The earliest interment at Lititz is that of "John Baumgaertner, aged three years, died November 8, 1758," at which interment Matthew Hehl, the Moravian Bishop, consecrated the graveyard, the assembled congregation kneeling on the ground.

Author: Zell, Lydia D.

Title: Epitaphs / by Mrs. Lydia D. Zell.

Primary Material: Book

Subject(s): Sepulchral monuments--Pennsylvania--Lancaster County.  
Cemeteries--Pennsylvania--Lancaster County.  
Epitaphs--Pennsylvania--Lancaster County.

Publisher: Lancaster, Pa. : Lancaster County Historical Society,  
1897-98

Description: [244]-247 p. ; 23 cm.

Series: Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society ; v. 2,  
no. 8

Call Number: 974.9 L245 v.2

Location: LCHSJL -- Journal Article (reading room)

+++++

Institution Name  
Institution Address  
Institution Phone Number  
Institution E-mail Address