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by

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**Coffin Hardware Analysis and Chronology
of the Head Cemetery, Robertson County, Texas**

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by

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Report

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

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for the Degree of

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Dedication

To the Headsville community, past and present.

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Abstract

Chronology and Coffin Hardware Analysis, of the Head Cemetery, Robertson County, Texas

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2013

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Atkins performed an archaeological relocation of a nineteenth century cemetery on behalf of Luminant Mining Company, within the Kosse Mine in Robertson County, Texas, between the years of 2011 and 2012. The Head Cemetery offers unique opportunities to examine views of death and burial in rural, central Texas during the period of the early statehood until around 1900. The Head family and other members of the settlement were part of a pioneer community exhibiting clear expressions of family and community affiliations through spatiality and the material culture of burials. An analysis of coffin hardware and burial practices provides suggestions for dating and identifying unknown interments and exploring changing sentiments towards death by Anglo American settlers within the broader sociohistorical context of the nineteenth century.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	ix
List of Figures	x
List of Illustrations	xi
Introduction	1
Head Cemetery Overview	7
Spatial Organization.....	7
Headstones & Footstones	9
Burial Shaft Morphology and Vaulting.....	26
Burial Container.....	27
Summary.....	28
Methods	30
Laboratory Methodology	32
Analytical Results	34
Grave Tending Goods	34
Coffin Hardware.....	34
Functional Hardware (n=2,923).....	35
Nail (n=2,436).....	35
Screw and Washer (n=15).....	37
Internally Embedded Latch and Fastener (n=4).....	37
Tack (n=466).....	39
Functioning Decorative Hardware (n=492).....	40
Caplifter and Caplifter Base (n=1)	41
Coffin Screw (n=349).....	42
Thumbscrew and Escutcheon (n=64)	42
Cabinetry Hardware.....	44
Handle (n=44).....	44
Lining Tack (n=28)	48
Decorative Hardware (n=500).....	48
Coffin Tack (n=368)	48
Handle (n=4)	49
Coffin Lining.....	50
Ornamental Tack (n=101).....	50
Ornament (n=14)	51
Indistinguishable Ornaments and Ornamental Tacks (n=9).....	51
Plaque (n=2)	51
Viewing Window (n=2).....	52
Indeterminate Use Hardware (n=12).....	53
Interpretations	54
Stylistic Trends.....	54
Proposed Interment Dates	59
Summary.....	62
Implications	63
Conclusions	67
Works Cited	68

List of Tables

Table 1	Attributed Grave Markers at the Head Cemetery.....	21
Table 2	Stylistic Variations in Coffin Hardware Types.....	55
Table 3	Proposed Interment Dates and Style Intervals at Head Cemetery	61

List of Figures

Figure 1	Photograph of James Alfred Head circa 1860 (Courtesy of the Texas Ranger Museum, Waco, Texas).....	2
Figure 2	Ebenezer Cemetery grounds	3
Figure 3	Photograph of Nancy Ophelia Head Irwin	3
Figure 4	Rufus B. Bullard Headstone	5
Figure 5	Relocated Headstone of J. Oscar Lown.....	6
Figure 6	Head Cemetery Interment Map	8
Figure 7	Brick Crypt No. 101 over Burial 100.....	10
Figure 8	Relocated Headstone of M. McCoy	11
Figure 9	Relocated Headstone of James Alfred Head	12
Figure 10	Relocated Headstone of Isaiah Greer	13
Figure 11	Relocated Headstone of J.T. Head.....	14
Figure 12	Relocated Headstone of James F. & William A. Head	15
Figure 13	Displaced Headstone of Susan Seale	16
Figure 14	Displaced Headstone of A. Jackson Seale	17
Figure 15	Displaced Headstone of J. Walter and L. Oscar Seale	18
Figure 16	Silicified Wood Grave Marker	20
Figure 17	Headstone of J.D. Bailey	25
Figure 18	Grave Marker for F.P. Wright	25
Figure 19	Historic iris near the Grave of J.O.L.....	26
Figure 20	U.S. Utility Patent 237,806 for a Box Joint Fastener	38
Figure 21	Caplifter from Burial 94.....	41
Figure 22	Coffin Screw from Burial 97.....	42
Figure 23	Thumbscrew from Burial 89	43
Figure 24	Burial 30 Handle	45
Figure 25	Burial 31 Handle	46
Figure 26	Handle from Burial 110	46
Figure 27	Handle from Burial 52.....	47
Figure 28	Diminutive Handle from Burial 58.....	47
Figure 29	Ornamental Tack from Burial 55.....	51
Figure 30	Plaque type recovered from Burial 58 (Author's Personal Collection)	52
Figure 31	Proposed Interment Dates and Lid Closure Style.....	60

List of Illustrations

Illustration 1	Headstone for Elenza Bird	24
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Introduction

Relocation of a rural, central Texas cemetery allowed an exploration of how the people of a small, emerging community treated death and burial during the nineteenth century. When placed within a larger context of the social history of Texas and the southern United States, these burial practices may reflect changing attitudes toward memorializing the dead. In the course of investigations, intrasite comparisons of spatial organization, burial shaft morphology, memorials, and coffin hardware shed insight into the chronology of the cemetery. These dates may then aid in the identification of many unknown interments as well as offer an understanding of past constructions of community and familial affiliations, and how these ties were signified and maintained after death.

The Head Cemetery (41RT409) was located on the Kosse Mine, in Robertson County, Texas. Atkins performed an archaeological relocation of the graveyard at the request of the Luminant Mining Company between the years of 2011 and 2012. Analyses at the Head Cemetery identified 114 interments including 56 marked burials and 58 unmarked burials. Among the interments is believed to be the mortal remains of James Alfred Head, the patriarch of the Head family, as well as the namesake of Headsville and the area of Head's Prairie (Figure 1).

Headsville was a small, apparently successful community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but went into a rapid decline and has all but disappeared. At its peak in the late nineteenth century, the community included a cotton gin, gristmill, two stores, a blacksmith shop, post office, school, and several residences (Harris 2012). After the closing of the post office in 1905, the community's population numbered 75 in



Figure 1 Photograph of James Alfred Head circa 1860 (Courtesy of the Texas Ranger Museum, Waco, Texas)

1915 (Freeman Carson 1954). The only currently visible remains of the community include the Ebenezer Baptist Church and associated cemetery (Figure 2).

Although the Head family owned the property containing the Head Cemetery by 1835, it was not until later that J.A. Head and other family members began to take up residence in the area. Nancy Ophelia and Epfatha Head and their husbands were the first members of the family to settle in the Robertson and Limestone County area arriving in the late 1840s (Figure 3). Their father, J.A. Head, did not arrive in Head's Prairie until around 1851 to 1853 after retiring as Chief Justice of Brazos County, Texas. Prior to this, Head and his close associate, business partner, and brother-in-law, Eli Seale, had served in the Creek Wars in Alabama as well as enlisting in one of the three Ranger companies authorized by the General Council of Texas on October 17, 1835. Head later became the captain of the company, and went on to serve in the Republic of Texas Congress of 1842 (Harris 2012).

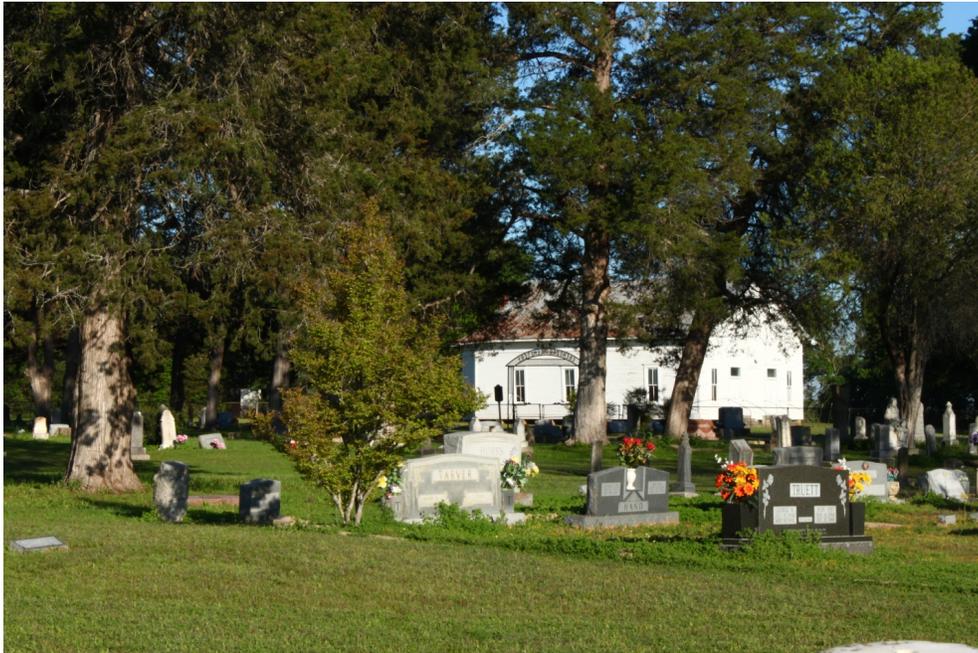


Figure 2 Ebenezer Cemetery grounds



Figure 3 Photograph of Nancy Ophelia Head Irwin

Upon his arrival to Robertson County, J.A. Head quickly began to divide his land holdings in the Headsville area among other family members, some of whom had already been living there. Land was granted to his nephew James Bullard, his son-in-laws Miles King, John Wilson, and Lockhart J. Irwin, as well as his brother-in-law, Arnold Seale. With the exception of Seale, all of the families established adjoining households and farmsteads in the vicinity. J.A. Head resided in the household of his daughter, Lucinda Wilson, with his young sons, James and Edmund, after the passing of his wife, Elizabeth Seale, in Brazos County (ibid).

As illustrated above, the larger “community” of dispersed, rural farmsteads primarily consisted of family members and acquaintances of the Head family who had migrated to Texas. Though all of their farms were in the general area of the future community of Headsville, the name “Headsville” does not appear in the archival record until circa 1880 when residents are noted as residing in the Headsville Precinct (ibid). “As a result, early residents, including the extended Head family, likely identified themselves as residents of Head’s Prairie if they self-identified as a community at all” (ibid). There were few local facilities including the lack of a church or school in the earliest years of Headsville. The nearby community of Eutaw served as the center for the Head family’s religious and social gatherings including a Masonic Lodge chartered by Head and his nephew, James Bullard, in 1858. The family began to attend church nearer their homes after the Civil War, and a history of the Ebenezer Church identifies members of the Head family among its founders in 1876. J.A. Head died in 1872 when the community would have included little more than a collection of farmsteads, the church, and what became known as the Head Cemetery, where he was laid to rest (ibid). Around the time of Head’s death, other settlers began acquiring land in the area, however, it is unknown how they imagined the emerging community of Headsville.

Archival and archeological evidence indicate that despite its historic name, the Head Cemetery actually served a broader community of local residents, some of whom had no documented relationship to the Head family. Various families known to have used the cemetery, based on the presence of inscribed grave markers, include the related Head, Bullard, Seale, and Wilson families (Figure 4). Families unrelated by marriage include the Greens, the Birds, the Baileys, the Wrights, and the Lowns (Figure 5).



Figure 4 Rufus B. Bullard Headstone

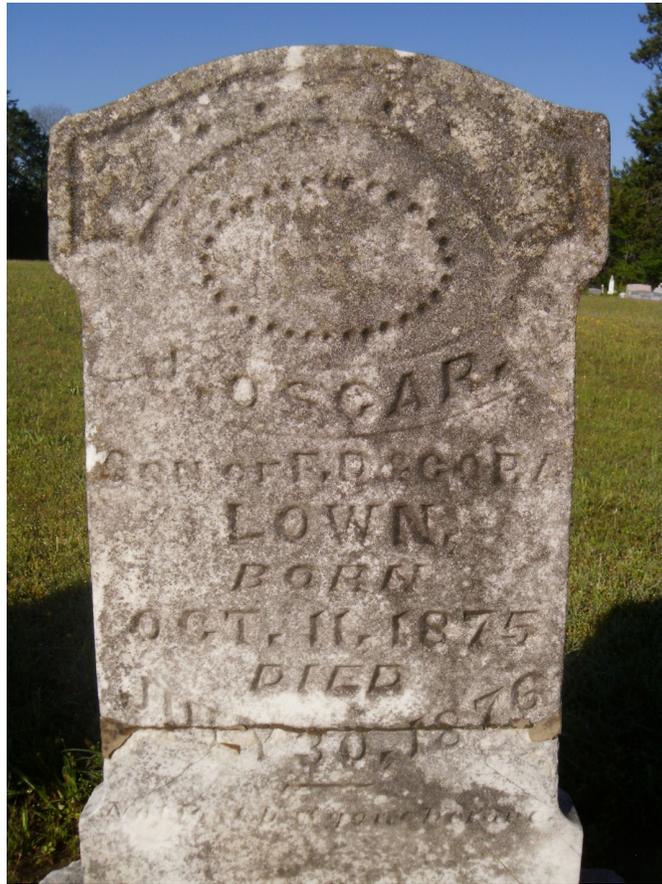


Figure 5 Relocated Headstone of J. Oscar Lown

Unfortunately, due to the poor preservation, lack of written records and inscribed grave markers, it was impossible to definitely identify some interred individuals. At the Head Cemetery approximately 94 men, women, and children remain unknown. Therefore, analysis and interpretation of the interred remains may aid in the identification of these unknown individuals. The goal of this report is to establish a chronology of the Head Cemetery with the aid of coffin hardware seriations to provide dates of interment for these deceased individuals. In addition, the implications of coffin hardware use at the Head Cemetery may also reflect wider trends as well as specific choices in the deathways of a rural, central Texas community.

Head Cemetery Overview

A brief description of the Head Cemetery includes a discussion of the spatial organization, recovered headstones and footstones, burial shaft morphology and vaulting, and burial containers. This overview serves as the overall context for the coffin hardware recovered from the site as well as a general setting for the interments.

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

The Head Cemetery was located on the side slope of a gentle rise occupied by secondary growth of trees and shrubs. The overall organization is roughly rectangular measuring approximately 27 meters north-south by approximately 19 meters east-west (Figure 6). The graves were generally evenly concentrated across the site with the exception of the southern half, specifically the southeastern quadrant, which contained fewer interments. All of the interments are oriented on a rough east-west axis so that the head was resting in the west and the feet in the east. This is a common feature of what Terry Jordan refers to as a traditional southern cemetery, which may be associated with the Christian belief of rising to face the morning sun on Judgment Day (1982:30). Other traditional features at the Head Cemetery include rows, staggering, and clusters.

The overwhelmingly visible pattern at the cemetery was the use of rows. From east to west there appear to be about 10 general configurations of rows aligned approximately north to south. As the “rows” extend farther across the site, they become more diffuse and begin to appear more as clusters of rowed and staggered burials rather than rows themselves. This is especially the case in the southeastern quadrant of the site. This loose orientation of rows can be broken down into short linear groupings of burials of more than two individuals. Under these conditions there appear to be 16 identifiable groupings. The number of interments in these rows ranges from three to seven graves.

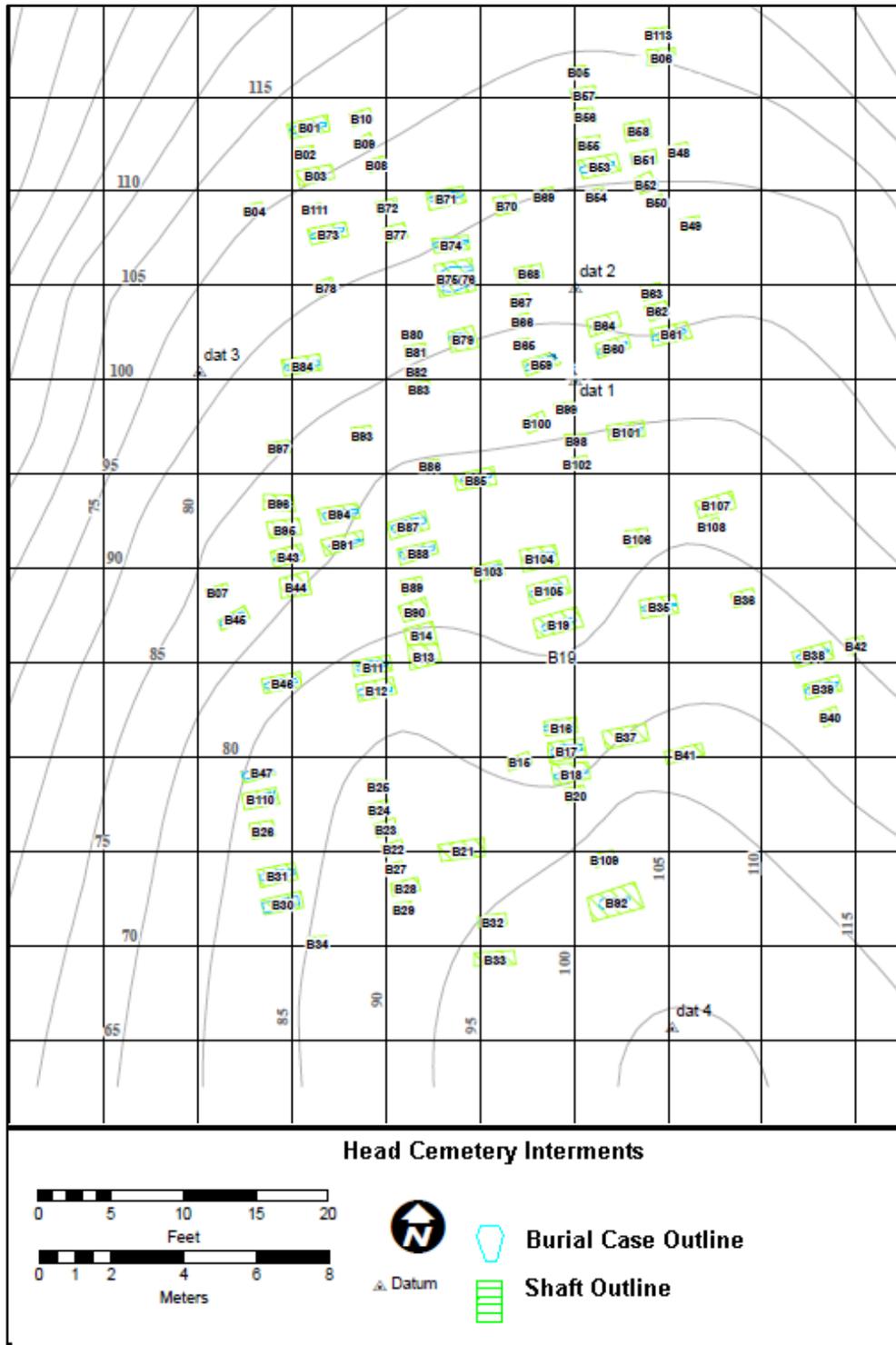


Figure 6 Head Cemetery Interment Map

A specific row of burials in the southwestern quadrant contained relatively small-sized interments interpreted to be infants and small children. This may represent a distinctive grouping of deceased youths or perhaps the children from a single family. Groups of two interments in a linear fashion number seven, and may represent smaller relational units. However, if staggering of burials is taken into account these groupings might be considered larger and more cluster-like in form. The recognized linear pattern might also hold connotation for not only north-south columns but also east-west rows. In this case these apparent longitudinal groupings might be expanded by the addition of the burials in latitudinal axis giving them the appearance of clusters. Only a few burials within these perceived patterns could be termed relatively isolated, yet these burials still maintain the overall organization of the cemetery and can be seen as part of larger rows or clusters.

In summary, the spatial patterning of the Head Cemetery seems to represent groupings of relational burials in an overall linear pattern from north to south. These relational groupings are interpreted as evidence of familial or kinship bonds between the interments as evidenced by the inscribed headstones, which will be discussed below.

HEADSTONES & FOOTSTONES

At the Head Cemetery, a total of 56 burials were attributed to 83 permanent stone markers, marker fragments, and brick crypts (Figure 7). The remaining 57 graves did not contain attributable markers or remnants of markers. Indications of temporary markers such as wooden crosses or floral arrangements were not observed during archaeological investigations in either marked or unmarked burials. Many of the markers were broken, fallen, tipped, displaced, covered with detritus, and/or scattered about the graveyard. A total of 48 markers and marker fragments were determined to be in situ, while another 35



Figure 7 Brick Crypt No. 101 over Burial 100

were ex situ, loose, or unearthed during mechanical scraping. Additionally, 6 headstones were thought to have been moved to the nearby Ebenezer Cemetery. A genealogical document suggests that in 1986 several markers were removed from the abandoned and neglected Head Cemetery and placed in the still maintained local cemetery (Cook 2009:338). The headstones of James Oscar Lown, J.T. Head, M. McCoy, Isaiah Greer, and James Alfred Head, the double headstone of James A. and William F. Head, an illegible marble footstone, as well as a limestone headstone base fragment were all relocated (Figures 8–12). It might also have been at this time that the headstone of Susan Seale, A.J. Seale, and the double headstone of J. Walter and L. Oscar Seale were moved to another area of Head Cemetery with the possible intention of one day moving them to Ebenezer Cemetery (Figures 13–15). Luckily, most of the inscribed footstones were still



Figure 8 Relocated Headstone of M. McCoy



Figure 9 Relocated Headstone of James Alfred Head



Figure 10 Relocated Headstone of Isaiah Greer



Figure 11 Relocated Headstone of J.T. Head



Figure 12 Relocated Headstone of James F. & William A. Head



Figure 13 Displaced Headstone of Susan Seale



Figure 14 Displaced Headstone of A. Jackson Seale



Figure 15 Displaced Headstone of J. Walter and L. Oscar Seale

in situ or recovered near the original grave locations, so that they could be firmly ascribed to individual burials.

At the Head Cemetery, a total of 41 individuals were marked with headstones or headstone fragments, 34 individuals were marked with footstones, and 2 individuals with brick crypts. Of this number, both headstones and footstones currently marked 19 graves, headstones alone marked 18, and 11 were marked by footstones only. With the addition of the dislocated headstones of the Seale family, the number of burials marked by headstones and footstones increases to 23, and with the addition of the relocated Ebenezer headstones and one footstone, this number increases to 30. In the particular instance of James Oscar Lown (Burial 49), more than two markers were located: one footstone was identified in situ, another footstone in the shaft fill of a grave across the cemetery known to be Isaiah Greer (Burial 88), and yet another headstone was located in the Ebenezer Cemetery. James Oscar Lown was the sole burial to yield three individually inscribed markers.

The markers observed at Head Cemetery consisted of both locally available hematitic sandstone (n=59), silicified wood (n=1), commercially carved marble and limestone (n =18), and locally produced handmade brick (n=2) (Figure 16). The 8 markers identified at Ebenezer Cemetery all consisted of commercially produced marble and limestone, and all exhibited inscriptions save the limestone headstone base fragment. A total of 27 inscriptions were attributed to 19 individuals at the Head Cemetery (Table 1). Identifiable individuals include F.G. Wilson (Burial 77), J.D. Bailey (Burial 45), F.P. Wright (Burial 47), James Oscar Lown (Burial 49), Susan Seale (Burial 53), Andrew Jackson Seale (Burial 54), J. Walter Seale (Burial 55), L. Oscar Seale (Burial 56), John T. Head (Burial 59), James Alfred Head (Burial 71), Rufus B. Bullard



Figure 16 Silicified Wood Grave Marker

Table 1 Attributed Grave Markers at the Head Cemetery

Burial No.	Attributed Individual(s)	Brick Crypt #	Headstone #	Footstone #	Inscription
2			92		none observed
3	M?		83	74	M__?
4			81	91	none observed
9			73?		none observed
10			93		none observed
11	Rogers?			23	E.(?)R. (?)
12	Rogers?		28	25	M.L.(?)R. (?)
14			22		none observed
30			114	115	none observed
34			116	117	none observed
35			102		none observed
36			18		none observed
41			118?		none observed
43	Wilson?		37		M__Wilson(?)
44			36		none observed
45	J.D. Bailey		34	35	J.D. Bailey
47	F.P. Wright		32	31	F.P. Wright
49	=James Oscar Lown			9, =130	J.O.L., J.O. Lown
50				121?, 122? (fitters)	none observed
53	=Susan Seale		=38	4	S.S.
54	=Andrew Jackson Seale		=45	5	A.J.S.
55	=J. Walter Seale		=46, 94	3	J.W.S.
56	=L. Oscar Seale		=46, 94	95	L.O.S.
59	=John T. Head			60	J.T.H.
60			61		none observed
61				123?	none observed
64			62		none observed
65	James A.		59, 58		none observed
66	William F.		56, 58	57	none observed
68				64	none observed
71	=James Alfred Head		124	69	J.A.H.
72			76		none observed

Table 1, concluded.

Burial No.	Attributed Individual(s)	Brick Crypt #	Headstone #	Footstone #	Inscription
73	Rufus B. Bullard		89	80, 126	Rufus B. Bullard & R.B.B.
74				68	none observed
75			127?	67	none observed
76				66	none observed
77	F.G. Wilson		85	77	F.G(?) Wilson (?)
78			86	78	none observed
79					
80			54	87	none observed
81			53		none observed
82			51	52?	none observed
83			49	50	none observed
84			48		none observed
88	=M. McCoy			21	M.M.
91	=Isiah Greer			39	IG/WWB
92		103			none observed
96			96		none observed
100		101			none observed
101				13	none observed
106			104	19	none observed
107	Elenza Bird		14, 128?	119, 120	Elenza Bird
108	Preston Bird		15	16	Preston Bird
112			36		none observed
113			112		none observed

Note: “=” indicates that burial or headstone is attributed to related name.

(Burial 73), M. McCoy (Burial 88), Isiah Greer (Burial 91), Elenza Bird (Burial 107), and Preston Bird (Burial 108). These inscriptions occurred mostly on marble (n=16), and the remaining on hematitic sandstone (n=9).

Interments dated at Head Cemetery from inscribed death dates range from 1867 to 1888. The earliest inscribed headstone is that of F.G. Wilson (Burial 77) from 1867. The

headstone of Burial 77 exhibits a crude, scratch-like etching onto a smoothed hematitic sandstone cobble face. Elenza, and son, Preston Bird, (Burials 107, 108), also had hematitic sandstone markers, which were elaborated carved in carefully planned lines of serif script (Illustration 1). Both Elenza and Preston's markers contain a characteristic lettering indicating they were carved by the same individual of some skill. Dated markers from 1871 until May of 1888 were all made from a white marble of professional craftsmanship (Burial 49, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59, 71, 73, 88, 91). Gravestones of this type were commercially available and likely ordered and shipped to the site or nearby merchants in Kosse or Mexia. The final two dated and inscribed markers from individual burials are both of hematitic sandstone carved into semicircular arches (Burials 45 and 47). J.D. Bailey and F.P. Wright both died in October of 1888 and their markers reflect a smoothly polished surface, which carries a heavily punctuated, capitalized script (Figures 17 and 18). Interestingly, both the headstones and footstones received the same treatment and carry the full name of the deceased, birth date, death date, and characteristic backwards "N." In this instance, all four stones can be attributed to the same stone carver by the style of the engraving.

Overall, extant permanently marked burials at the Head Cemetery accounted for roughly 50 percent of the graves. While the remaining 57 graves currently reflected no observable evidence of marking, it is possible that at one time some if not many of these graves may have exhibited less permanent monuments. Upon the author's first visit to the site, a single iris bulb sprouted near the grave of James Oscar Lown as a reminder that not all memorials are made of stone (Figure 19).

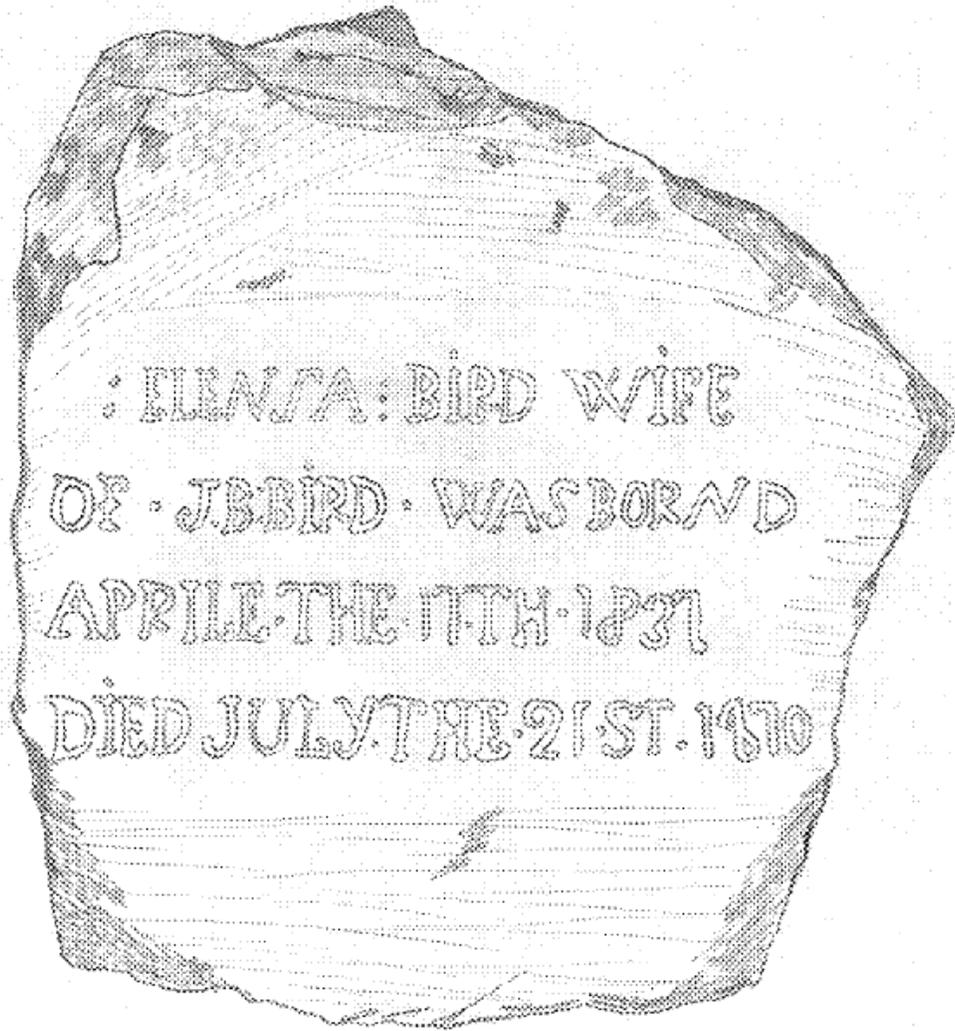


Illustration 1 Headstone for Elenza Bird

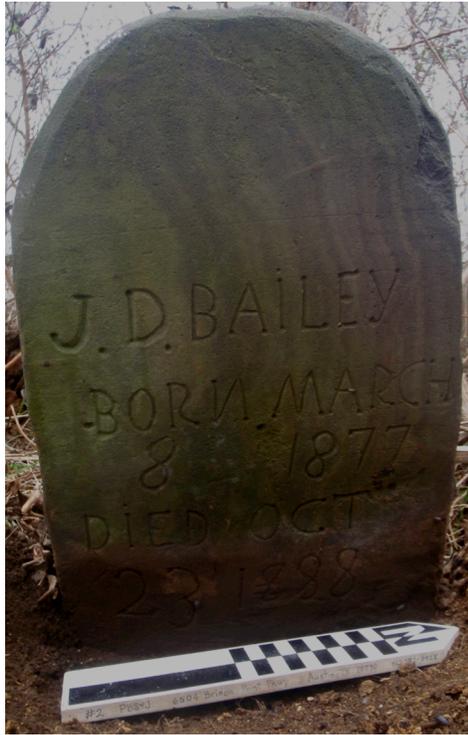


Figure 17 Headstone of J.D. Bailey



Figure 18 Grave Marker for F.P. Wright



Figure 19 Historic iris near the Grave of J.O.L.

BURIAL SHAFT MORPHOLOGY AND VAULTING

Grave shafts observed at the Head Cemetery consisted of rectangular stains, which manifested several centimeters below the current ground surface. The stains consisted of vertical columns, which contracted in their horizontal dimensions at greater depths. By the termination of the shaft and level of the burial container, the dimensions consisted of a height and width slightly greater than the burial container itself. This tapering was noted as the construction of a niche, or a truncated hole to nest the burial case. In 84 cases, a secondary cover of wooden planks covered the niche forming a vault.

A vaulted lid is also referred to as grave arch (Bell 1994: 400). Although vaults have been employed since at least the late 1700s in the eastern United States, they are primarily observed in Texas during the mid to late nineteenth century (Davidson 1999:214, Crow 2004: 186-189). Vaults were constructed of latitudinal boards resting

upon a shelf on either lateral side of the niche. Due to the vertical compression of the heavy clay matrix, vaults were primarily identified as wood or wood staining containing no nails located above the burial at a depth in which the vertical shaft was consistently wider than the niche. In a total of 3 cases the presence of a vault could not be ascertained.

Vaulting is generally carried out in a single grave shaft of a solitary burial. However, at the Head Cemetery, two cases were identified in which two coffins shared a single vault. The adult Burials 75 and 76 were interred within the same vertical shaft containing two separate niches covered by the same vault. In addition, Burial 41 contained an adult burial, as well as an infant burial at the northwest corner (Burial 113), which shared the same vault. This likely indicates that Burials 75 and 76, and Burials 41 and 113 occurred at the same time, and may illustrate a strong familial or relational bond or ease of interment.

BURIAL CONTAINER

Burial containers at the Head Cemetery were constructed exclusively from wood (n=113). They were classified according to shape as hexagonal (n=92), rectangular (n=18), square (n=1), and indeterminate (n=2). Although the terms coffin and casket can be used interchangeably, hexagonal containers are generally considered to be coffins, while rectangular cases are referred to as caskets. In addition to a primary burial container, such as a coffin or casket, an exterior container, known as an outerbox, was also observed at the Head Cemetery (n=9). Outerboxes were utilized in the transportation of a burial container, which had to be shipped from its manufacturing location to the purchaser or secondary party, such as an undertaker or merchant. Outerboxes may also have served as another form of insulation or protection for the coffin as they were interred in the ground (Davidson 1999). Within the excavated burials at Head Cemetery,

hexagonal coffins were observed in conjunction with outerboxes in 2 cases, while rectangular caskets were observed in conjunction with outerboxes in 7 cases.

These inner burial containers contained the mortal remains of 114 individuals. Most coffins and caskets represented a single person (n=110). However Burials 75A and 75B enclosed the skeleton of an adult, as well as the skeleton of an infant, Burial 50 was anomalous in that only the amputated left leg of an adult was interred within a small, rectangular box, and a single grave was determined to contain only ephemeral evidence of a burial. At a depth commiserate with other interments in the cemetery, the shaft stain became obscured, wood fragments ceased, and a solitary nail fragment was recovered (Burial 99). It is questionable whether this burial was too degraded to offer any visible recognition or was devoid of other cultural materials.

Burial cases provide broad chronological indicators due to their wide temporal usage as well as considerably temporal overlap. Although hexagonal coffins have been the standard form of burial case in the United States for hundreds of years, it was not until around the middle of the nineteenth century that rectangular caskets were introduced (Davidson 1999: 211).

SUMMARY

The Head Cemetery illustrates elements common to other rural, southern cemeteries regardless of class or race (Crow 2004, Jordan 1982:30-35). The spatial organization of the site demonstrates linear groupings of north to south patterns oriented along an east to west axis delineated by both commercially manufactured and locally produced memorial markers suggesting familial associations in a growing industrial and consumer context. By 1869, the nearby town of Kosse had become the terminus for the Houston and Texas Central Railway, which drew in business from the one-time rural center of Eutaw, frequented by the Heads and likely others. (Panus 2013). At this time

the people of Headsville likely had increased market access, which is reflected in aspects of commercial material culture. The burial containers and vaulting also mirror these transitions with rectangular shapes and shipping containers occurring later and in conjunction with hexagonal coffins. In summary, the Head Cemetery contains aspects of an overall pattern suggesting a sustained plan over an extended period of time, while still engaging with individual needs and requests, and the changing culture of death as the community of Headsville had greater access to mass-produced goods.

Methods

Burials were removed in a zonal system according to the anatomical positioning of an extended, supine burial. Both skeletal and artifactual remains were carefully excavated, mapped, and photographed the same day as exposure, and transported to a secure, temporary laboratory located on the Kosse Mine, and later the Atkins' Environmental Laboratory in Austin, Texas. Since most of the bone was degraded or fragile, it was removed with the surrounding matrix according to a modified zonal system as the positioning of each individual burial was recognized. Artifacts were also provenienced according to the zonal system, and collected individually or according to type. After removal, the collected matrix was carefully screened through incremental matrices of ¼", 1/8", or 1/16" to recover both skeletal remains and artifactual remains according to the perceived level of preservation. All collected materials were bagged and placed into individual burial boxes lined with unbleached cotton batting.

Upon arrival at the field laboratory or the Austin laboratory, remains were secured within a locked facility with limited personnel access. Laboratory personnel inventoried the remains and paperwork for tracking purposes. After initial inventory, all non-skeletal remains were separated for artifact specific processing by the laboratory director. As the remaining matrix was screened, any observed artifacts were bagged according to provenience and placed with the other artifactual remains from the burial.

Artifacts recovered from each burial were dry brushed or cleaned with distilled water at the discretion of the laboratory director. As a general guideline, fragile materials were lightly brushed or not treated due to fear of further damage. After air-drying all artifacts on a 1/8" hardware mesh rack, artifacts from individual burials were sorted into gross typological categories. Excluded from this processing were the remains of collected wood, which was stored for subsequent reinterment, after an examination for

any decorative elements such as paint, fabric, or ornamental oxidation. However, no further analysis was performed.

Laboratory Methodology

An analytical database was utilized to record the material, class, category, item, and type by item or item unit allowing for comparisons between individual burials. The terminology and semantics utilized in describing the coffin hardware was in part developed by James Davidson from A Primer of Coffin Hardware (1998). Other terms use the standard vernacular of historic artifact analysis.

Material type was identified as the basic constituent of the item, such as metal, glass, or composite, if more than one primary element was observed. Material type was further classified according to the specific variety utilized. For instance, metals were specified as an iron alloy, copper alloy, white metal, etc.

The class of the artifact refers to the context in which it was employed. Nails, handles, and such were classified as coffin hardware, a button as clothing, and a ring or hair comb as a personal effect included at the time of interment.

Artifacts were further categorized as to their inferred function within the burial complex. For example, nails were differentiated from handles as being purely utilitarian in that they were utilized in the construction of the burial container, while handles were usually both utilitarian in that they were used to carry the container yet still decorative in that they ornamented the exterior of the box. Therefore, most handles were considered a functional decorative object.

Handles, nails, buttons, rings, and so forth were identified as specific items or item units within a burial. An exception is illustrated by thumbscrews and escutcheons, which are usually employed together as a unit. However, thumbscrews can be utilized without the benefit of an escutcheon, therefore, they are considered as an item unit when located within the same burial.

Type refers to the particular attributes of an item or item unit. For instance, nails were typed by manufacturing technique (e.g. cut or wire), and buttons were typed according to attachment style (e.g. sew-thru or shank).

Other characteristics were recorded according to the necessities of each item, such as decoration, color, manufacturer's mark, etc. Temporal information was also assigned according to stylistic and utilization trends, patent dates, catalog matches, and so forth when available.

Non-quantifiable artifacts include the remains of wood in coffin or vault construction, paint, and textiles. These items were recorded as presence or absence, but otherwise excluded from detailed analysis. Specimens that were identifiable as fragments of a larger item were assigned the minimum number of items identified within the sample (n). For example, the singular pieces of a broken copper ornament were counted individually as specimens, and quantified as units as they were determined to be parts of a larger, distinct item.

As analysis and photography were completed, artifacts were placed into their respective bags from an individual burial. All bags from each burial were returned to their individual burial boxes. An effort was made to keep all burial remains from a single burial together within as few boxes as possible. During and after analysis, all skeletal and non-skeletal material remained in the secured facility until the time of reinterment.

Analytical Results

A total of 11,470 artifactual specimens were recovered from the Head Cemetery. Of these specimens, 4,697 individual items or item units were identified. Artifactual items that will be discussed in detail in this report include grave tending goods (n=69), possible grave tending goods (n=2), and coffin hardware (n=3,927). The categories of clothing, personal effects, and unknown items will be discussed in the Atkins' report on the Head Cemetery.

GRAVE TENDING GOODS

Grave tending goods refer to the assorted items that may be placed at the ground level of a burial, and sometimes atop the coffin lid before the interment process commences. Grave tending goods are similar to grave markers in that they denote a certain place for memory. They usually consist of items, which may appear miscellaneous, such as flowers, personal items, shells, ceramics, bottles, and so forth. At the Head Cemetery, grave tending goods consisted of shells of common *rangia* located at the top of the shaft of Burial 94 (n=66). In addition, several shells were found in the vicinity of Burials 16 and 21 (n=2), as well as a third unprovenienced shell. Other possible grave tending goods include 10 fragments of an ironstone vessel depicting a bold, red floral transfer print and molding, which were likely part of two vessels located near Burial 92.

COFFIN HARDWARE

Coffin hardware is defined as the items which are utilized both to construct the burial container as well as the elements used to secure and decorate it for transportation, viewing, and later interment, and which are permanently affixed to the container. At the Head Cemetery, coffin hardware was broadly categorized as functional, functioning

decorative, and purely decorative according to the perceived use within each burial complex. The following is a presentation of the results of each of these analytical categories.

Functional Hardware (n=2,923)

Functional hardware recovered from the Head Cemetery includes items such as nails, screws, washers, internally imbedded latches, tacks, and unidentified wood fasteners. A total of 2,923 functional items were identified from 8,273 individual specimens.

Nail (n=2,436)

Nails provide a broad chronological indicator for historic burials and can be classified into three general production methods: wrought, cut, and wire. Hand forging was the first production method for nails and produces a distinct nail shaft, which tapers on all sides. Wrought nails have been produced for thousands of years, but were succeeded by cut nail production in America beginning in the 1790s. However, it was not until around 1815 that technological advances allowed cut nails to replace wrought nails in the construction industry. The manufacturing technique for cut nails can be further classified according to the directions from which the flat, iron sheet-blanks were cut. Cutting from opposite sides of the iron blank has occurred since about 1810, while cutting from the same side has occurred since about 1830. Although cut nails are still manufactured today as a specialty item, wire nails began supplanting cut nails in 1885 with the development of Bessemer steel which allowed for a cheaper and more durable wire nail (Edwards and Wells 1993).

In the urban, coffin industry of Texas it has been suggested that cut nails were still used sporadically until around 1905 (Davidson 1998:21). At the Freedman's Cemetery in

Dallas, Texas, wire nails did not replace cut nails in coffin construction until around 1895 or 1900 due in part to economic necessity (ibid 158). Furthermore, Nelson states that although wire nail production had been established on the east coast of America and even earlier in Europe, wire nails did not come into common usage until the 1890s (1968). Edward and Wells project an even later date of circa 1900 concerning the predominance of wire nails within an architectural context in Louisiana. It could be suggested that due to the rural character of the community of Headsville that the introduction of wire nails may be even later. Therefore, cut nails of indeterminate sides at the Head Cemetery were assigned a summary date of 1815 to circa 1905, and wire nails were assigned a summary date of 1885 to present.

Nails from the Head Cemetery were classified according to production method, head type, size, and treatment. From the 7,634 nail specimens, 2,436 individual nails were identified according to the minimum number of heads present. The majority of individual nails recovered were cut (n=2,402), few were wire (n=24), while the remaining could not be identified (n=10). Due to overwhelming poor preservation of the nail shafts, no burials contained nails of identifiable sides.

Nail head types from the Head Cemetery include common (n=93), finishing (n=34), and indeterminate (n=2,309). Common nails and finishing nails are regularly used in wood and frame construction. Finishing nails, as the name implies, have heads only slightly larger than the shafts, and can be easily concealed for cosmetic purposes. Therefore, evidence of finishing nails within a burial could be an indication of decorative moldings and advanced carpentry.

The size of the nail was measured for complete specimens only (n=162). The United States penny size system was utilized wherein penny is abbreviated with a “d” and an increasing number indicates a longer nail. Penny sizes at the cemetery ranged from 1d

(n=13), 3d (n=22), 4d (n=11), 5d (n=3), 6d (n=22), 7d (n=36), 7d to 9d (n=33), 8d (n=8), 9d (n=18), 10d (n=3), and 12d (n=3).

At the Head Cemetery, treatment of nails consisted of clinching only. Clinching is identified by the bent shaft of a nail whose angle is usually uniformly identified with other specimens from the same burial. The bending of the shaft prevents the nail from becoming dislodged and loosening. Clinching is usually performed on wire nails rather than cut nails, however, at the Head Cemetery five cut nails were clinched whereas ten wire nails exhibited evidence of clinching.

Screw and Washer (n=15)

A total of 146 iron screws and screw fragments were recovered from within 41 burials at the Head Cemetery. Of this number, the majority (n=131) are likely associated with other fragmented hardware elements such as handles, coffin screws, or thumbscrews. The remaining 15 items represent screws with intact heads from within four burials (15, 44, 75, 84). Only the screws recovered from Burial 75 were intact and exhibited a slotted head (n=6). The remaining screws were identified by the presence of a gimlet shaft. A single washer was observed adhered to a screw within Burial 84. Washers are generally used to distribute the load of a threaded fastener, but may also have functioned to prevent marring of the wood.

Internally Embedded Latch and Fastener (n=4)

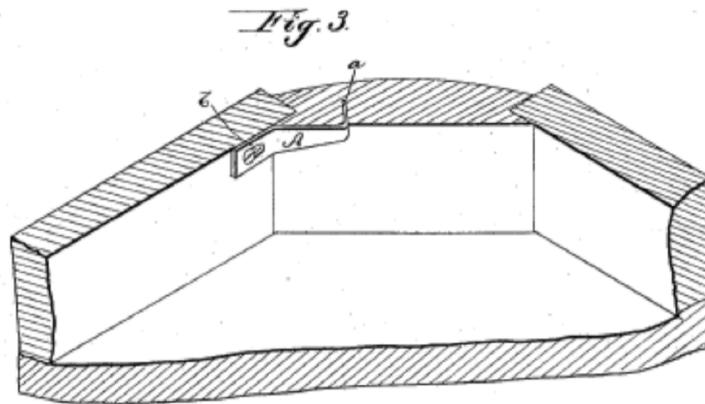
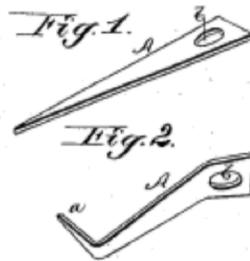
A total of 6 internally embedded latches and fastener fragments were recovered from a single grave at the Head Cemetery (Burial 94). A total of 4 specimens consisting of at least 3 Freedman's Type 1 Iron Closures of the looped wire variety were identified (Figure 20). Davidson classified this type of fastener at the Freedman's Cemetery in

(No Model.)

H. H. BROWN.
Box Joint Fastener.

No. 237,806.

Patented Feb. 15, 1881.



Witnesses:
W. C. Milburn,
John C. Rogers

Inventor:
H. H. Brown,
per *J. H. Alexander*
Attorney

H. PETERS, PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHER, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Figure 20 U.S. Utility Patent 237,806 for a Box Joint Fastener

Dallas as consisting of an iron screw with a wire looped around the top of the head terminating in a projecting, pointed tip. This type of iron closure was hypothesized to secure the internal corners of the burial container (1998:18). Davidson suggests this type of internally embedded fastener was utilized in coffin construction after 1890; however, patent information suggests that it may have been introduced as early as 1881 for general wooden box corner construction (U.S. Patent 237, 806). At the nearby Adams Cemetery, Iron Closure Type 1 was also employed in a single burial dating to 1888 as indicated by an inscribed headstone (Anderson et al 2011: 107). Therefore, a terminus post quem of 1881 is assigned to Freedman's Type I Iron Closures for the Head Cemetery due to their possible availability, although it is likely that 1888 serves as an introduction date for the area.

Two fragments of an Internally Embedded Latch likely comprising a single latch also came from Burial 94. The fragmented latch is comprised of a japanned, ferrous alloy in a disc shape with a protruding oval-shaped thumb lever. This type of compound closure was likely embedded in the coffin to secure closure and operated on a spring action, which was released by applying pressure to the thumb lever. This closure was located in a burial containing a possible sliding or pivoting viewing window, therefore, it likely operated as a catch for the glass pane. Similar closures are still employed today, consequently, a summary date of 1888 to present is suggested for Internally Embedded Latch Type 1.

Tack (n=466)

At the Head Cemetery, 483 plain, iron alloy tack specimens consisting of 466 complete tacks were recovered from 47 individual burials. The vast majority of tacks (n=459) were cut with common heads, while only seven tacks were wire with common heads. Tacks are not considered highly temporally diagnostic and were, therefore, not

assigned a summary date range; however, they provide excellent indicators as to the presence of a fabric lining in a burial container. Tacks found in larger quantities from a single grave imply that the coffin was lined with fabric and the tacks secured its placement (Davidson 1998:20). Relatively few tacks found in conjunction with ornaments, ornamental tacks or coffin tacks suggest that they were utilized to secure the ornamentation. At the Head Cemetery, 9 burials contained relatively large quantities of tacks with no possibly associated hardware, which conclusively suggests fabric lining was present in these burials (Burials 1, 10, 15, 72, 75, 76, 78, 81, 108). A single burial contained tacks which could have been utilized in other hardware or lining (Burial 7). The tacks from nineteen burials were attributed to other ornamentation and were likely not lined (Burials 5, 17, 18, 22, 30, 33, 45, 47, 52, 56, 60, 73, 88, 92, 94, 96, 97, 100, 104), while 18 burials contained anomalous tacks of unknown function (Burials 14, 19, 27, 28, 29, 31, 38, 49, 55, 64, 66, 67, 93, 98, 101, 102, 109, 112). Tacks with ornamental heads will be discussed in the following section.

Functioning Decorative Hardware (n=492)

Functioning Decorative hardware is considered ornamental but also served a utilitarian purpose. Such hardware recovered from the Head Cemetery includes caplifters and caplifter bases, coffin screws, thumbscrews and escutcheons, cabinetry hardware, handles, and lining tacks. A total of 608 specimens consisting of 492 items were identified from 66 individual graves. Functioning decorative hardware types are discussed further below.

Caplifter and Caplifter Base (n=1)

A caplifter and associated base are related to the wooden cover placed over a viewing window (Figure 21). Cast of white metal in a decorative form, caplifters function as a knob or handle to remove and replace the viewing window cover. Although caplifters were utilized in conjunction with viewing windows until the latter fell out of favor in the 1920s, they were more commonly employed in the 1870s and 1880s (Davidson 2004: 396). A single caplifter and base were recovered from Burial 94 at the Head Cemetery consisting of a three-dimensional urn embossed with a diamond and fleur-de-lis pattern. The corresponding base was round but too degraded to ascertain any decorative details. Interestingly, the base appears to be diminutive which may indicate that the caplifter and base were stylistically mismatched. A summary date of 1870 to 1920 was supplied for the single caplifter due to a lack of catalog matches.



Figure 21 Caplifter from Burial 94

Coffin Screw (n=349)

The most common decorative element at the Head Cemetery consisted of coffin screws (Figure 22). A total of 41 burials contained a slotted, white metal screw head or cap with a threaded ferrous alloy shaft. The decorative white metal head usually



Figure 22 Coffin Screw from Burial 97

exhibited a finely embossed pattern of cross-hatched lines or small debossed circles, but could also be plain or carry an ornate scrolling line design on the skirt. Coffin screws were usually employed as a means of lid closure by screwing the lid onto the top of the sideboards of the burial container. Although coffin screws were less popular after the introduction of thumbscrews in 1874, they can still be found on burials dating to around 1900 (Davidson 1998:6). Therefore, coffin screws within the Head Cemetery were given a summary date range of 1840 to 1900.

Thumbscrew and Escutcheon (n=64)

Thumbscrews are the second type of decorative coffin lid closure represented at the Head Cemetery. They were both technologically easier to use as a means of lid closure than coffin screws, and ornamentally more variable. Thumbscrews only required

a thumb and forefinger to secure the lid of a coffin. Available in such motifs as a draped pillar, “At Rest,” a pulled curtain, or a funerary urn, thumbscrews had a wide variety of stylistic appeals (Figure 23). Thumbscrews are frequently used in association with a stylistically matched escutcheon in order to protect the underlying wood, therefore, a thumbscrew and escutcheon are considered a single unit when observed within the same burial complex (Davidson 1999:8). Thumbscrews were first introduced in the early 1870s as a means of lid closure, which require only manual dexterity as opposed to coffin screws, which require tools such as a screwdriver. Their design quickly evolved from three-dimensional urn shapes, to flat-bodied urns, and other highly stylized funerary motifs and designs (ibid). As thumbscrews replaced coffin screws they became the normative form of lid closure.



Figure 23 Thumbscrew from Burial 89

Thumbscrews (n=53) and escutcheons (n=11) were recovered from 11 burials at the Head Cemetery (Burials 30, 45, 47, 51, 52, 58, 59, 88, 89, 94, 110). While escutcheons always occur alongside thumbscrews, thumbscrews were employed

exclusively in five burials (n=27). The disparate quantitative difference in escutcheons may be attributed to relative poor preservation of sheet copper escutcheons utilized at the cemetery, which may have been recovered in lower proportions to their white metal counterparts. In general, thumbscrews and escutcheons were in use as late as the 1920s, and as early as their introduction in 1874 (Davidson 1998: 26). However, three dated burials from the Head Cemetery (Burial 45 in 1888; 47 in 1888; 59 in 1883; 88 in 1888) containing thumbscrews reveal that they were in use by 1883 and common if not predominant by 1888. Furthermore, two dated burials from the nearby Adams Cemetery contained exclusively coffin screws (Mary Adams in 1882) and exclusively thumbscrews (J.R. Adams in 1888) suggesting that thumbscrews had been introduced to the area between 1882 and 1883 and by 1888 became the normative type of closure in this community (Anderson et al 2011: 109). Therefore, a summary date range of 1883 to 1920 was assigned to thumbscrews and escutcheons.

Cabinetry Hardware

Burial 76 was the only burial to contain a decorative lid closure that was not a coffin screw nor thumbscrew. A total of six ironstone knobs encircled by a plain copper alloy ring were recovered from the lid. This unique instance may represent a lack of available coffin hardware, and the use of cabinetry hardware as a means of decorating the coffin.

Handle (n=44)

Handles were recovered from nine graves at the Head Cemetery (Burials 30, 31, 51, 52, 58, 59, 88, 94, 110). Historically, handles were usually decoratively cast from white metal and attached to the coffin or casket via iron screws so that the container could be carried more easily. Nine styles were observed which were unique to each

burial. The predominant type consisted of double lug swingbails (n=36), four of which were diminutive, ten medium, and twenty-two of a regular size (Figures 24–26). A single set of four handles from Burial 52 were of the diminutive, double lug swingbail variation with tips attached to the bails made to look like a more expensive short bar style (Figure 27). In addition, a single set of four diminutive, single lug swingbail handles were observed within Burial 58 (Figure 28). Swingbail handles were in use on burial containers prior to the nineteenth century, but became gradually less popular with the introduction of the more complex, bar-type handles in the late 1860s and early 1870s. By around 1890 bar-type handles were more common than bails, and replaced them

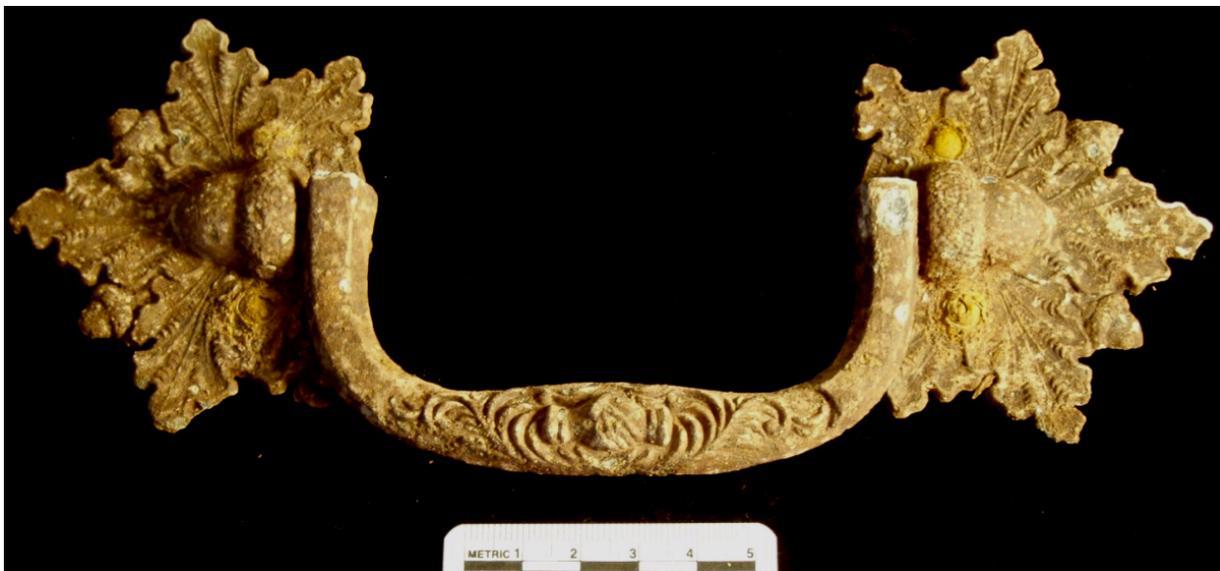


Figure 24 Burial 30 Handle



Figure 25 Burial 31 Handle



Figure 26 Handle from Burial 110



Figure 27 Handle from Burial 52



Figure 28 Diminutive Handle from Burial 58

sometime after 1900 (Davidson 1998: 13). Therefore, swingbail handles from the Head Cemetery were assigned a summary date range of 1840 to 1900.

Lining Tack (n=28)

Lining tacks are distinguished from standard tacks within the burial complex in that they have decorative heads attached to the tack shaft. The decorative head may be white metal, ferrous alloy, or even fabric covered. At the Head Cemetery, a single grave (Burial 8) contained 28 domed, ferrous alloy tacks enameled with black. These lining tacks supported an interior fabric lining although no fabric was observed. Like common tacks, lining tacks are not considered highly, temporarily diagnostic and were therefore not assigned a summary date range.

Decorative Hardware (n=500)

Decorative hardware consists of purely ornamental coffin embellishments, which do not serve any utilitarian purpose within a burial complex. Examples of decorative hardware categorized at the Head Cemetery include coffin tacks (n=368), handles (n=4), ornamental tacks (n=101), ornaments (n=14), ornamental tacks or ornaments (n=9), plaques (n=2), and viewing windows (n=2). Each decorative artifact type will be discussed further below.

Coffin Tack (n=368)

Coffin tacks are similar to coffin screws, but differ in that they have a tack shaft rather than a threaded, gimlet shaft. Coffin tacks are made to serve the same decorative appearance of coffin screws, but would have functioned merely as ornament due to their lack of screw shafts. In this manner, coffin tacks would be considered purely decorative, and assigned the same popularity date range of coffin screws from 1840 to 1900 (Davidson 1999:7).

At the Head Cemetery, 32 burials contained coffin tacks. In six cases coffin tacks appeared without identifiable coffin screws suggesting another means of lid closure was utilized (Burials 7, 22, 27, 32, 67, 92). In 26 graves coffin tacks were utilized in conjunction with identifiable coffin screws while in 27 burials coffin screws appeared without identifiable coffin tacks. This suggests that a normative coffin using this type of hardware at the Head Cemetery might appear with coffin screws only, coffin screws and coffin tacks, or very rarely with just coffin tacks. The highest frequency of identifiable coffin tacks (n=26) was observed within Burial 22, and the highest frequency of identifiable coffin tacks and screws (n=37) were observed within Burials 46 and 60. The relative high frequency of coffin tacks in some burials may be due to their use not only in a decorative manner, but also to secure a fabric lining. Textiles were observed in 26 burials which could not be definitively attributed to either coffin lining or clothing remnants. Of these 26 burials, 10 graves did not contain other evidence of lining such as tacks or lining tacks (Burials 5, 18, 29, 33, 37, 56, 61, 71, 73, 97). This may be due to differential preservation or collection bias because of their small size, but this may also indicate that coffin tacks were utilized for fabric lining due to their decorative heads. However, this cannot be definitely ascertained due to the severe vertical compression of the graves, and without further provenience data, all coffin tacks were considered solely decorative for the purposes of analysis.

Handle (n=4)

A single grave at Head Cemetery contained handles, which were likely purely ornamental in appeal. Burial 33 contained an adult-sized individual buried within a full-sized coffin and four diminutive, double lug swingbail handles of cast white metal. Due to the small size of the handles, which would normally be utilized for a child's coffin, they were considered to be decorative in that they would likely not be load bearing for a

burial container of much larger size. A summary date range of 1840 to 1900 for double lug swingbail handles was assigned to these items.

Coffin Lining

Coffin lining is a non-quantifiable aspect of a burial complex, and was recorded as presence or absence according to the observation of preserved lining, large numbers of tacks, and/or lining tacks. In some cases, textiles within a grave could not be positively ascertained as clothing remnants, lining, or both. A total of ten burials contained textiles believed to be coffin lining (Burials 1, 8, 10, 15, 72, 75, 78, 81, 108), while 38 other burials had inconclusive evidence of coffin lining.

Ornamental Tack (n=101)

Ornamental tacks consist of a small, stamped copper alloy sheeting attached to the coffin with a ferrous alloy tack. They are purely decorative in manner and designs most commonly consist of finely embossed diamonds, floral motifs, and starbursts (Figure 29). They differ from other coffin embellishment, such as ornaments and plaques, in that they are relatively small, without text, and were usually employed to decorate the edges of the coffin lid and sides in a greater multitude. At the Head Cemetery, ornamental tacks were not well preserved and severely degraded. As many as 125 and as few as 101 ornamental tacks were identified from a total of 315 possible fragments within 11 burials. In most cases a minimum number was established from the number of preserved tack centers, but when stylistic elements incongruent with the tacks centers were observed, an additional item was included in the analysis. Ornamental tacks were in wide use from circa 1850 to 1910 (Davidson 1998:22).



Figure 29 Ornamental Tack from Burial 55

Ornament (n=14)

Ornaments are similar to ornamental tacks in that they are both made from stamped copper sheeting and attached to the coffin via iron tacks. Ornaments differ in that they are relatively large, which generally entails a much more elaborate design. Styles recovered at the Head Cemetery were floral, and generally recovered from the longitudinal axis of the coffin lid. Ornaments were distinguished from plaques by the lack of an epigraph. A total of 14 ornaments were identifiable within 7 graves at the Head Cemetery, and assigned the same temporal range as ornamental tacks.

Indistinguishable Ornaments and Ornamental Tacks (n=9)

An additional 9 copper elements could not be positively attributed to an ornamental tack nor ornament from Burials 51, 58, and 59. These burials carried a mixture of both items with the exception of Burial 51, which contained identified ornamental tacks only.

Plaque (n=2)

Plaques are another form of decoration commonly found in late nineteenth century burials composed of either stamped copper alloy or cast white metal (Figure 30). They vary in shape from rectangular to oval, and usually bear a personalized inscription

or a standardized message, such as “Rest in Peace” or “Mother”. At the Head Cemetery, two plaques were recovered in a rectangular and shield motif reading the common inscriptions of “At Rest” and “Our Darling,” respectively (Burials 58, 94). Both plaques were recovered from the longitudinal axis of the coffin on the lower half of the lid.



Figure 30 Plaque type recovered from Burial 58 (Author’s Personal Collection)

Viewing Window (n=2)

A viewing window is a plate of glass placed within the lid of the coffin in order to facilitate “viewing” of the deceased. Viewing windows could be either static or sliding, and were usually structurally incorporated into the lid itself. In either case, a wooden

cover was likely employed to shroud the deceased for burial. The cover offered further protection from the elements, as well as shielding the mourners from the act of covering their loved one with earth. The covers often exhibit elaborately designed caplifters and caplifter bases to aid in removing and replacing the viewing window cover. Viewing windows grew in popularity from the 1850s until the early to mid 1900s when they fell out of favor, which may correspond with attitudes towards displaying the dead (Bell 1990:58). Two viewing windows were recovered from the Head Cemetery (Burials 88, 94). While the viewing window from Burial 88 was static or held in one position, the window from Burial 94 is believed to be sliding or pivoting due to the presence of a small, drilled hole at one end. Burial 88 contained an egg-shaped window, and Burial 94 contained a tapering octagonal window. Bell suggests that the more angular viewing windows may be later, however, both viewing windows were supplied a summary date range of 1850 to 1920 (ibid).

Indeterminate Use Hardware (n=12)

Due to poor preservation of some metallic elements at the Head Cemetery, a total of 12 items could not be distinguished as either coffin screws or coffin tacks (Burials 33, 53, 100, 103, 106). The iron shaft of these items had degraded to the point wherein a tack or screw shaft could not be identified. Coffin screws and coffin tacks presumably would have served differing uses within a burial complex, and are therefore considered to be of indeterminate function. The same date ranges apply for these items as the above coffin screws and coffin tacks.

Interpretations

STYLISTIC TRENDS

The most frequently occurring hardware type at the Head Cemetery, with the exception of nails, was the coffin screw type with a white metal slotted head (Table 2). This category includes coffin tacks, which are of the same stylistic type, but function differently within the burial complex. The coffin screw type occurred in 59 of the 113 burials and was the almost exclusive means of decoration in just over 50 percent of the burials. This type usually appeared as the sole means of decoration on coffins with the exception of two graves, which also contained handles (Burial 31, 33), and five other graves, which contained some type of copper ornamentation other than a plaque such as ornaments or ornamental tacks (Burials 53, 54, 55, 56, 57). The former graves were unmarked and remain unidentified, while the latter graves represent a Seale family grouping comprised of Susan (d. 1873), Andrew Jackson, son of Susan, (d. 1873), J. Walter Seale (d. 1876), L. Oscar Seale (d. 1878), and possibly an unidentified child of Lewis Bluford Seale and his first wife, Susan, or more likely his second wife, and Susan's sister, Lydia Virginia. Along with 26 other graves, J. Walter and L. Oscar Seale's coffins (Burials 55, 56) may also have been lined with fabric, however, the evidence is inconclusive. In addition, the coffin screw type was used almost exclusively with cut nails with the exceptions of Burial 7 and 26, which contained nails of an indeterminate shaft, and Burial 31, which contained both wire and cut nail types. This could be indicative of the gradual introduction of wire nail types in the late 1870s or early 1880s or these burials could be considerably later into the 1890s with relatively anachronistic decorative hardware types. Additional interment dates are known for Burial 49 (James Oscar Lown d. 1876), 71 (James Alfred Head d. 1872), 73 (Rufus B. Bullard d. 1878), 91 (Isiah Greer d. 1871), and 107 (Elenza Bird d. 1870).

Table 2 Stylistic Variations in Coffin Hardware Types

Burial	Nails*	Coffin Screw Type	T&E	Handle	VW	Caplifter	Cu Ornament	Plaque	FeCl	Lining	Screw	Year
31	C / W	x		x						?		
33	C	x		x						?		
56	C	x					x			?		1878
55	C	x					x			?		1876
54	C	x					x					1873
53	C	x					x					1873
57	C	x					x					
5	C	x								?		
14	C	x								?		
18	C	x								?		
29	C	x								?		
38	C	x								?		
64	C	x								?		
73	C	x								?		1878
97	C	x								?		
7	C / I	x								?		
17	C	x								?		
22	C	x								?		
27	C	x								?		
28	C	x								?		
49	C	x								?		1876
60	C	x								?		
67	C	x								?		
92	C	x								?		
96	C	x								?		
98	C	x								?		
101	C	x								?		
104	C	x								?		
100	C	x								?		
1	C	x								x		
10	C	x								x		
76	C	knob								x		
11	C	x										
13	C	x										
26	C / I	x										
37	C	x										
61	C	x										
46	C	x										

Table 2, continued.

Burial	Nails*	Coffin Screw Type	T&E	Handle	VW	Caplifter	Cu Ornament	Plaque	FeCl	Lining	Screw	Year
71	C	x										1872
85	C	x										
6	I	x										
16	C	x										
21	C	x										
23	C	x										
32	C	x										
34	C	x										
35	C	x										
36	C	x										
41	C	x										
43	C	x										
62	C	x										
69	C	x										
70	C	x										
87	C	x										
91	C	x										1871
95	C	x										
103	C	x										
105	C	x										
106	C	x										
107	C	x										1870
94	C/I/W		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	?		
88	C		x	x	x		x			?		1888
58	C/I/W		x	x			x	x				
30	C/I		x	x			x			?		
52	C/I/W		x	x			x			?		
51	C		x	x			x					
59	C		x	x			x					1883
110	C		x	x			x					
47	C		x				x			?		1888
45	C		x				x			?		1888
89	C/I		x				x					
19	C									?		
93	C									?		
66	C									?		

Table 2, concluded.

Burial	Nails*	Coffin Screw Type	T&E	Handle	VW	Caplifter	Cu Ornament	Plaque	FeCl	Lining	Screw	Year
102	C									?		
109	C									?		
112	C									?		
15	C									x	x	
75	C									x	x	
72	C									x		
78	C									x		
81	C									x		
108	C									x		1870
8	C									x		
44	C										x	
84	C										x	
2	C											
3	C											
4	C											
9	C											
12	C											
20	C											
24	C											
25	C											
39	C											
40	C											
42	C											
48	C											
63	C											
65	C											
68	C											
74	C											
77	C											1867
79	C											
80	C											
82	C											
86	C											
90	W											
111	C											
113	C											

* C = cut nail; W = wire nail.

The second most common type of lid closure at the Head Cemetery were simply nails and/or screws driven into the lid of the coffin. A total of 42 graves account for just over 37 percent of the lid closures by means of nails. Burials 15, 44, 75, and 84 also contained iron screws and were most probably the type of lid closure in these coffins. These graves all contained cut nails with the exception of Burial 90, which contained wire nails. No external ornamentation was documented, however, five burials contained definite evidence of fabric lining (Burials 72, 75, 78, 81, 108), while five other burials contained a small number of tacks but were likely lined (Burials 66, 93, 102, 109, 112). Burials 77 (F.G. Wilson) and 108 (Preston Bird) are the only graves with known interment dates of 1867 and 1870, respectively.

Thumbscrews were the least common type of lid closure at the Head Cemetery accounting for just eleven graves or just over nine percent (Burials 30, 45, 47, 51, 52, 58, 59, 88, 89, 94, 110). Thumbscrews and escutcheons always occurred with other decorative hardware within the interments at the cemetery, and never occurred without additional copper ornamentation. Thumbscrews and escutcheons were almost always present with handles. The only burials to not contain handles were Burials 45, 47, and 89. Just over half of these burial containers were possibly lined with fabric as well (Burials 30, 45, 47, 52, 88, 94). The only two viewing windows (Burials 88, 94) and only two plaques (Burials 58, 94) recovered from the Head Cemetery were also found in graves containing thumbscrews. In addition, Burial 94 was the sole interment to contain every decorative element identified at the cemetery including thumbscrews, escutcheons, handles, viewing window, caplifter, plaque, copper ornamentation, and possible fabric lining. Although the grave of Burial 94 was marked by the simple ornamentation of marine shells and remains unidentified, the burial definitely dates to after 1881 and likely

after 1888 or 1889 due to the presence of the only internally embedded closures located in the cemetery.

Nail usage with thumbscrews appears to be the most varied within this group. Six burials contained exclusively cut nails (Burials 45, 47, 51, 59, 88, 110), two graves contained cut nails and indeterminate nails (Burials 30 and 89), while three graves contained cut, indeterminate, and wire nails (Burials 52, 58, 94). Known interment dates from this group also comprise the latest known years of the cemetery. John T. Head was buried in 1883 (Burial 59), while J.D. Bailey, F.P. Wright, and Isiah Greer were buried in 1888 (Burials 45, 47, 88).

PROPOSED INTERMENT DATES

The above three categories for coffin lid closure represent three distinct stylistic categories as well as temporal ranges when viewed in conjunction with the known interment dates (Figure 31). Therefore, it is suggested that lid closure type represents a distinct yet not unique periodization at the Head Cemetery. The following proposed interment dates are meant to give a more precise interment date for aid in identifying individuals. However, considerable overlap due to stylistic preference, availability, age, gender, economic resources, and individual selection may present anachronistic disruptions to the seriation.

The earliest group of interments, or Early Interval, at the cemetery likely took place sometime before 1867 with the settling of the Head and extended families in the area and took place until sometime around 1870 (Table 3). These burials are characterized by cut nail or iron screw closure with a lack of external ornamentation, and the possibility of coffin lining. The only exception is Burial 90 containing wire nails, which may be a later burial.

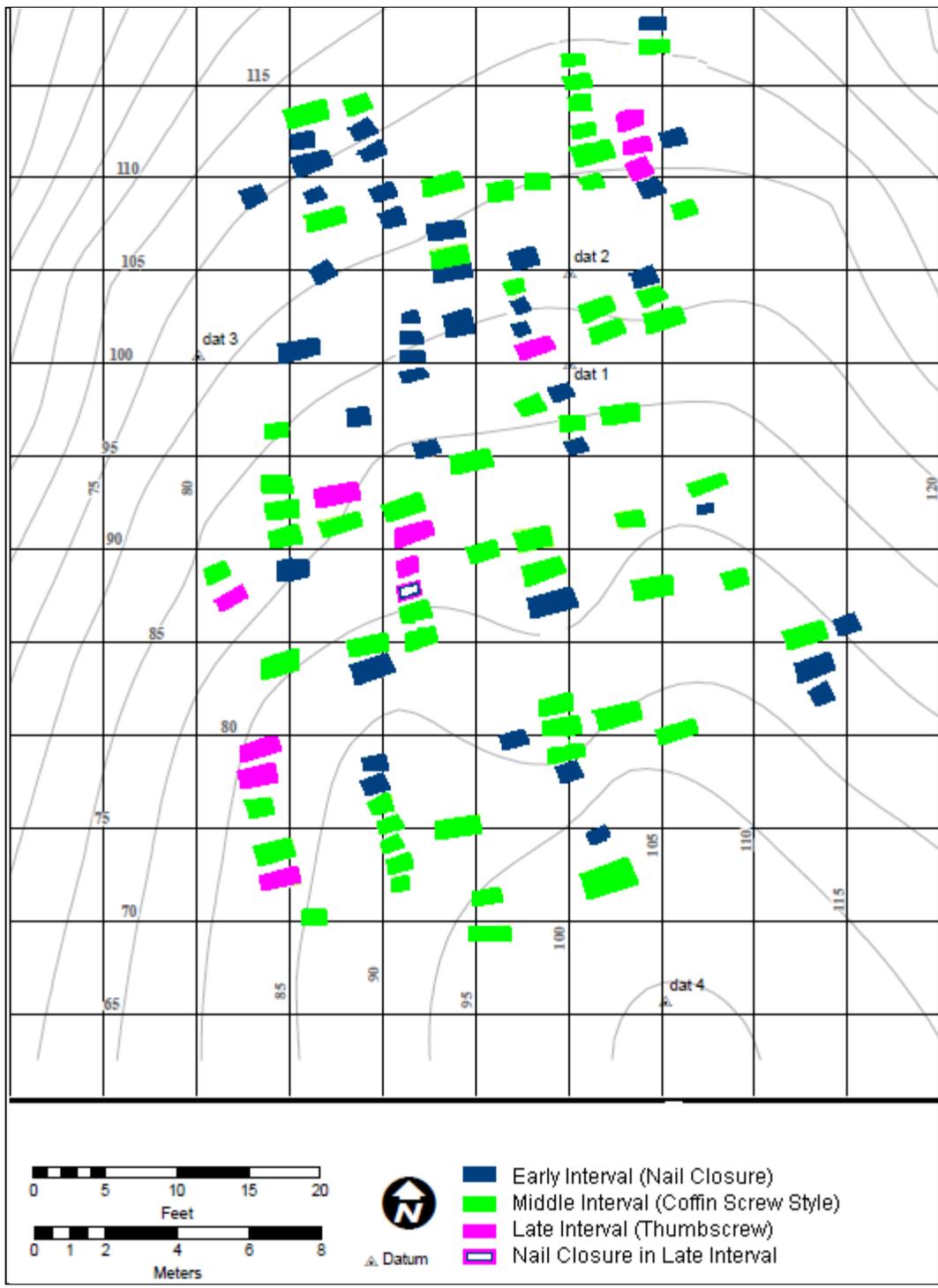


Figure 31 Proposed Interment Dates and Lid Closure Style

Table 3 Proposed Interment Dates and Style Intervals at Head Cemetery

Style Interval	Proposed Interment Range	Burial Nos.
Early	1867 to 1870	2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 12, 15, 19, 20, 24, 25, 39, 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 63, 65, 66, 68, 72, 74, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 86, 93, 99, 102, 108, 109, 111, 112, 113
Middle	1870 to 1883	1, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 41, 43, 46, 49, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 60, 61, 62, 64, 67, 69, 70, 71, 73, 76, 85, 87, 91, 92, 95, 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107
Late	1883 to 1900	30, 45, 47, 51, 52, 58, 59, 88, 89, 90*, 94, 110 *likely a later burial, but stylistically Early Interval

The second group of interments, or Middle Interval, is characterized by the use of the coffin screw type as a means of lid closure and decoration. Other ornamentation was not included with these burials with the exceptions of copper ornamentation, fabric lining, and less likely coffin handles. Although coffin handles have appeared in archaeological contexts in Texas since the 1820s at locations such as the Mission San Juan Cemetery, the lack of handles at the Head Cemetery is interpreted as a reflection of early limited market access as well as preference and circumstance (Crow 2004: 186-189). While cut nails are still predominant, instances of wire nail use was observed. This style of interment appears to have begun to occur from around 1870 to 1876 and as late as around 1883.

The latest assemblage of burials, Late Interval, is categorized according to its almost prolific use of decorative hardware. Combinations of thumbscrews, escutcheons, plaques, handles, copper ornamentation, fabric lining, viewing windows, caplifters, and compound closures were identified within the last group. While cut nails were still more commonly utilized, wire nails appear more frequently than in the first or second

assemblages. This group of interments likely dates from around 1883 until the disuse of the graveyard around the turn of the century.

SUMMARY

In summary, the burial containers at the Head Cemetery demonstrate three distinct lid closure styles, which also correspond to three broad interment stages when viewed with corresponding dated headstones. In addition to these correlations, burial container types also correspond to different eras at the cemetery. While hexagonal and rectangular caskets appear in all three interment periods, outerboxes only appear in the middle and late periods, in particular, two of the later Middle Interval. This likely indicates that these caskets were shipped to the area. This also corresponds to the use of more intricately decorated burial containers, which required commercial availability and production. Therefore, it is likely that these burial containers were purchased and constructed off site and decorated in the prevailing fashion of the time. Vaulting is similarly present in each phase of interment, therefore, it is likely that this type of shaft construction relates to particular circumstances of the compact soil matrix and protection of the interment.

The three phases of interment also spread across the site according to patterning other than chronology. While the majority of early interments are located on the northern half of the cemetery, middle phase interments are distributed almost evenly, and later burials are singly or doubly grouped along existing rows across the site with the exception of the southeastern quadrant. This lends credence to the observation that the cemetery is oriented around clustered relational groups on cardinal axes. As illustrated through the position of known interments, these likely represent family groups tied to the greater community of Headsville.

Implications

“Deathways encompass the whole cultural system of mortuary behavior, involving emotion, ideology, symbolism, technology, and economy” following etiquette, innovation, and customs for the appropriate treatment of the dead (Bell 1990: 55). At the Head Cemetery, evidence from the exhumation of 114 burials represents the deathways for a small, emerging community in central Texas.

The spatial and temporal organization of the Head Cemetery suggests that the burial ground not only served members of the family and extended family, but also individuals related by a common bond of settlement in the vicinity. Although the nearby Ebenezer Cemetery adjacent to the church meeting house was established by at least 1876 by the interments of the Brooks and Owen families, mourners for those interred at the Head Cemetery still chose to bury their dead separately. This may be due to a choice to maintain family unity even after death. As illustrated through the different interment phases spread across the site, it is likely that strong relational ties persuaded continued use of the Head Cemetery even though there were other options available.

This is best exemplified by the graves of the Seale family clustered in the northeastern quadrant of the cemetery. Susan Seale nee Irwin was interred alongside her infant son, A. Jackson. After her husband, L.B. Seale, remarried her sister, Lydia Virginia, their deceased children were buried alongside of Susan. It is also likely that the row of burials behind Susan also represent other children of L.B. and L.V. Seale due to the ages of those interred and dating of these graves. However, neither L.V. nor her husband were interred with their previously deceased children. Beginning with the death of L.B.’s mother, Susan B. Seale, in 1903, members of the Seale family were interred in the nearby Ebenezer graveyard. Similarly, known interments of the Head family occurred beginning in 1900 at Ebenezer. This date also corresponds to the latest possible

interments at the Head Cemetery. This suggests that for a period of roughly 25 years mourners choice to continue utilizing the Head Cemetery rather than a church-affiliated yard or their own small family cemeteries. With other options available, why did the Head Cemetery remain in use for this period of time, and then fall out of favor around the turn of the century?

This may be in part due to the fact that the community itself was on the decline. By 1905 the post office had closed, and the population was waning. In turn the deathways for interment of the dead were also changing. As people migrated to cities, municipal and private cemeteries were being utilized more and more. In addition, certain types of coffin hardware were no longer as popular as during the nineteenth century, such as thumbscrews and viewing windows. Most importantly, those interring the deceased may not have had as strong a kinship bond to those who had died upwards of 50 years before. The community itself was changing, younger, and the relationships previously maintained through association at the Head Cemetery were transferred to the Ebenezer Cemetery. It may not be known if this was for religious purposes or perhaps even just access to plots, but a definite shift was made at the turn of the last century by the community of Headsville.

However, the interments at the Head Cemetery do point to a sense of community exercised by the mourners. While it was common practice in early, rural Texas to maintain a family plot (Jordan 1982), this cemetery also consisted of individuals known to be associated only by proximity such as the Birds, Baileys, Wrights, and Lowns. What was it that tied these people together even in death? This perhaps demonstrates that through settlement in a relatively isolated area, non-kin related households developed alliances and networks, which extended beyond daily practices and influenced their decisions for what were seen as eternal resting places.

No matter which burial ground was chosen, the inhabitants of Head's Prairie were part of a larger social and historical structure of the deathways of the nineteenth century. Mourners at the Head Cemetery chose to bury their dead according to a similar pattern laid out across America of rows and clusters of east to west orientation (Habenstein and Lamers 1985). This was likely accepted as the Christian practice, and had been witnessed prior to the settlement of the area in the 1840s. Burial containers also reflect the prevailing sentiments towards appropriateness at the time. Hexagonal and rectangular boxes sealed with nails had been utilized for centuries to inter the deceased in America. Later, use of mass-produced and commercially available coffin hardware, may reflect a tendency within the emerging community to also associate themselves with a broader cultural trend. The Beautification of Death Movement associated with Romanticism of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ideologically habituated the behaviors and material culture of grieving, remembrance, and funerals. Death and the culture of death were increasingly sentimentalized and marked by elaborate interment services, adorned coffins, and prolonged periods of mourning. These ritualized behaviors idealized death and heaven while memorializing the dead (Bell 1990: 57). By the 1870s specially made coffin hardware was ever reflecting this evolving philosophy, and met with popular acceptance and proliferation. A well-known example of this trend is the funeral procession of the first embalmed President, Abraham Lincoln, whose funeral procession lasted 16 days and crossed 7 states. This movement continued into the beginning of the twentieth century, and is still reflected in some present-day burial practices, such as post-mortem photography.

A selection of romantic and sentimental coffin hardware, such as coffin screws and thumbscrews, may reflect later interments as well as a choice to identify with a particular aspect of death, mourning, and culture greater than the local and regional

community. At the Head Cemetery, 13 individuals exhibited remarkably decorative elements on their coffins. Interestingly, only four of these burials were marked with permanent, inscribed headstones. The earliest death was that of John T. Head, grandson of J.A. Head, in 1883 marked with a marble headstone and footstone. The other three burials all occurred in 1888, and were marked by predominately carved fieldstones with the exception of one massive marble marker attributed to M. McCoy. All of these individuals were male. An examination of coffin hardware from the other marked burials dating from 1867 to 1878 illustrates a prevailing use of coffin screws and coffin tacks associated with an earlier burial tradition. These markers all exhibit a mix of locally available hematitic sandstone as well as commercially available marble headstones and footstones. This would seem to indicate that the material and standardization of markers did not necessarily change with popular cultural trends at the cemetery; however, choices of coffin hardware reflect quite quickly the changing sentiments of memorializing the dead with elaborate coffins and caskets. Another possibility is that the marble stones were a later addition to the grave decorations, as availability and perhaps affordability increased. Regardless, these examples illustrate that by the early 1880s the people interring family members in the Head Cemetery were engaging and expressing broader popular trends through coffin hardware.

Conclusions

In many ways, the Head Cemetery is the last vestige of a way of life that disappeared in Texas after the arrival of the railroad as private cemeteries associated with particular groups connected by blood, marriage, or social status gave way to public and/or municipal facilities open to those of the same race during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its subsequent abandonment and deterioration are also reflective of both the depopulation of the region itself during the railroad era and of the transition from independent family farms to large cattle ranches during the twentieth century. This transition dramatically reduced the population of the already rural area and scattered descendants so that there was no longer anyone living in the area to care for the graves.

This is where the true benefit of archaeology is recognized, as without archaeological exploration and excavation, these individuals and their information would have been lost to all of us. Their contributions to creating the Headsville community, and their decisions to rely both on locally available resources and engage with broader commercial markets, suggests they were committed to identifying themselves as part of families, a developing Texan community, and broader nineteenth century American ideologies. A spark of that sense of local community remains, now in the form of reintering and marking the graves containing the known and unknown individuals previously lost to history.

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