



A Graveyard Preservation Primer (American Association for State and Local History)

Lynette Strangstad

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A Graveyard Preservation Primer has proven itself to be a time-tested resource for those who are seeking information regarding the protection and preservation of historic graveyards. It was first written to help stewards of early burial grounds responsibly and effectively preserve their graveyards. Much information found in the first edition of the book remains valid today. Still, much has changed in the twenty-five years since its first publication, and the new edition reflects these changes.

Attitudes and the understanding of historic graveyards as an important cultural resource have grown and developed over the years. Likewise, changes in treatments have also taken place. Perhaps the most dramatic change in burial ground preservation is in the world of technology. Changes in computers and the way we use them have also changed preservation practices in historic graveyards. Discussion of technological changes in the new edition includes those in mapping, surveying, photography, archaeology, and other areas of evaluation and planning.

Consideration is given, too, to maintenance and conservation treatments, including both traditional and newer treatments for stone, concrete, and metals. Metals were not discussed in the earlier editions, and protection and preservation of the landscape as it relates to graveyards is an expanded focus of this book.

The historic preservation of cemeteries and burial grounds is an aspect within the discipline of historic preservation that is unknown to many. Those whose responsibility is the care of these historic sites may be unfamiliar with appropriate approaches to such areas as documentation, planning, maintenance, and conservation. Unwitting personnel can do irreparable harm to these important cultural resources. The *Primer* is an effort to protect historic cultural resources by breaching the gap between maintenance staff, cemetery boards, friends' groups, and graveyard preservation professionals by offering readily available, responsible information regarding graveyard protection and preservation. It is also designed to assist those who would undertake a preservation project in the reclaiming of a neglected or abandoned historic cemetery.

The book is generously illustrated with diagrams and photos illustrating procedures and gravemarker and graveyard forms, styles, and materials. The appendix section is completely updated and expanded, offering a worthwhile resource in itself.

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