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Mowry Sayles Cemetery Condition Reports

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Condition Report of Headstones

Condition Report of Mowry Sayles Head and foot stone:

The location of our cemetery is Smithfield historical cemetery 15: Pole 183 Douglas Pike (Sayles Mowry Lot). The location of the Sayles Mowry head and foot stone are located in the top left corner of the cemetery with the engravings facing the woods/brush. Poison ivy is also located all around the stone with tall overgrown grass covering the base of the stone. The inscription of the head stone reads Mowry Sayles and the foot stone reads M. S. 1822.

The material used in the carving of the stone would be a dark slate carved to resemble a typical head and foot stone of the time period including many earlier religious features such as the Willow and the urn. The most obvious meaning of a weeping willow would seem to be the weeping part in relation to mourning or grieving a loved one. The saying “she is in her willows” implies the mourning of a female for a lost mate/husband in this the loss of a son at a young age. The stone does not indicate the company of origin or the carvers name though there are few carvers of stones of this caliber with the quality and material used (Slate) in Smithfield Rhode Island for the time period, but with little evidence we cannot accurately pinpoint the exact carver. The inscription on the head stone reads, In Memory Mowry Sayles Eldest Son of JONATHAN & ZERUIAH Mowry Who Died Feb. 3, 1822 23 Years of Age, 8 Weeks and 20 Days.

The condition of the stone is in rather remarkable shape for the lack of upkeep given to the object over its lifespan. The stone is made of Black/gray slate being covered by trees reducing the acid rain fall effect over time. The stone has little to no cracks or chips throughout the visible body though crude chisel markings still remain from the shaping of the slate. Lichen is spreading on both the head and foot stones, but it does not yet take away from the writing of the stone, being very legible. The stone can be seen clearly though gathering a picture of the full object is difficult due to the engraving facing the poison ivy and brush leaving only inches of space between the object and nature. That being said the stone is in good condition with a positive report all around.