

Uxbridge Historic Cemetery Committee
Town of Uxbridge

How to Read a Gravestone Inscription



For gravestones that are difficult to read...

Go to the cemetery when the sun is behind the stone and the inscription is in shadow. Holding a large mirror at about 90 degrees to the side, reflect the sun off the face of the tombstone. This reflects “raking light” onto the surface that reveals the light and shadows of the inscription making the letters stand out.



Sometimes standing farther away and reflecting the light at an angle enhances the inscription. When the light is right, you will see the inscription “jump out”.

If more clarity is needed, spray a bit of plain water on the stone. If needed, use a soft nylon bristle brush to lightly clear away moss or mold. Lichen may be removed with a Popsicle or cuticle stick.

Thank you for documenting our historic cemeteries for the appreciation of others.



DO NOT use bleach, shaving cream, soap or any other product.

DO NOT use a wire or stiff bristle brush.

DO NOT use force or scrub.

DO NOT use metal instruments that could scratch the surface.

www.uxbridge-ma.gov

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