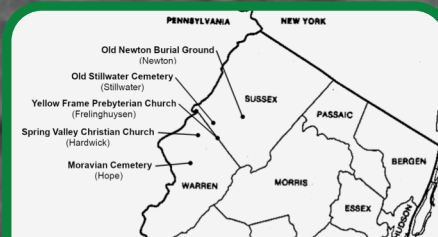


## Introduction

- Shape of headstones can reveal socioeconomic status, religious and funerary traditions, and cultural change
- New Jersey was one of the most culturally diverse colonies <sup>1</sup>
- Ethnicity may be a contributing factor gravestone shape
- Research has been conducted on iconography <sup>2</sup>, but not shape



**Fig 1.** Map of New Jersey with the locations of each cemetery labelled. <sup>3</sup>

## Materials & Methods

- Five historical cemeteries from Sussex and Warren County (Fig 1)
- Names of deceased, year of death, gravestone shape, and other notable features were recorded
- Only counted headstones dated prior to 1900
- Surnames were assigned an ethnicity after data collection <sup>4</sup>

## Results

### 5 common gravestone shapes:

Shoulder, Baroque, Half-Rounded, Pointed Arch, and All Tablets with Base

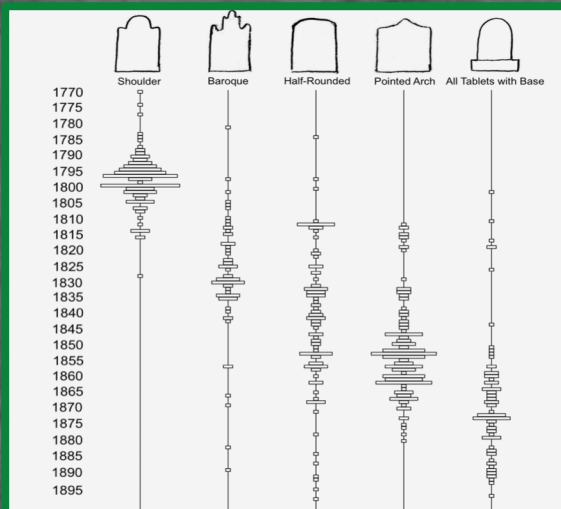
Made up 80% of total gravestones

### 4 prominent ethnic groups:

English, Scottish-Irish, German, and Other (Dutch, French, etc.)

### Expected vs. Observed Population <sup>5</sup>:

English: 55%/53%, Scottish-Irish: 10%/16.0%, German: 20%/23.5%, Dutch: 15%/<7.5%



**Fig 2.** Seriation graph showing trends of gravestone shapes from five cemeteries, dated from 1768 to 1899 (N = 549).



**Fig 3.** Photographs of the five main shapes found in the cemeteries.

## Discussion

- Shoulder* tripartite shape represented doorway into the afterlife for the Puritans <sup>6</sup>
- Shift away from Puritan ideals, where Cherubs <sup>2</sup> once were, left residual rounded space for epitaphs or monogram symbolism to fill
- Neoclassicism influenced simplistic *Half-Rounded* and subsequent *Pointed Arch* shape <sup>6 7</sup>
- Tablets with Bases* became more accessible to the average consumer <sup>8</sup>

## Conclusion

- Peak popularity of *Shoulder* design in German population c. 1800 (carver J.S. Teetzel) <sup>9</sup>
- Same trend for popularity of shape across all prominent ethnic groups over time
- However, strong temporal trends emerged with 5 common gravestone shapes (Fig 2; Fig 3)
- Most popular shapes were *Shoulder* and *Pointed Arch* (Table 1)

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**Table 1.** Headstone shape frequency for each prominent ethnic group (N = 706).

	English		Scottish-Irish		German		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Shoulder	58	15.5%	20	17.7%	46	27.7%	5	9.4%
Baroque	35	9.4%	21	18.6%	8	4.8%	3	5.7%
Half-Rounded	62	16.6%	27	23.9%	12	7.2%	6	11.3%
Pointed Arch	99	26.5%	28	24.8%	26	15.7%	17	32.1%
All Tablets w/ Base	59	15.8%	9	8.0%	18	10.8%	13	24.5%
Flat Plaque	—	—	—	—	33	19.9%	—	—
Others	61	16.3%	18	7.1%	23	13.9%	9	17.0%
	374	53.0%	113	16.0%	166	23.5%	53	7.5%