

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	ABI.816
<b>Historic Name:</b>	Ministers' Corner - Mount Vernon Cemetery
<b>Common Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	Central St
<b>City/Town:</b>	Abington
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	Abington Center
<b>Local No:</b>	
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	1853
<b>Architect(s):</b>	
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	
<b>Use(s):</b>	Burial Ground
<b>Significance:</b>	Religion
<b>Area(s):</b>	
<b>Designation(s):</b>	
<b>Building Materials(s):</b>	



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

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FORM E - BURIAL GROUNDS  
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

Religious affiliation Congregational

Owner Town of Abington

Who has further information about burial ground?

Mrs. ~~Nancy~~ Nancy B. Reid, 75 Plymouth St.  
Sec/ Mt. Vernon Cemetery Assn  
(Address)

What type information: lot plans inscriptions  
gravestone descriptions other

Sale of lot to Town of Abington

2. HISTORY OF BURIAL GROUND

The Minister's Corner at the intersection to the east of the Perry Tomb was purchased by the Town of Abington from the Mt. Vernon Cemetery Association in 1853, just a year after the association had been formed at the instigation of Rev. Nathaniel Gunnison of the Universalist church.

The Town Report of 1853 states, on page 17, that \$61.00 was paid for 4 lots on "one square," and that an additional \$11.50 was expended for "fitting up the lot" and transferring the bodies.

The four adult bodies which were moved were:

Rev. Samuel Browne (1st minister), d. 19 Sep 1749, ae 62 yrs, 7 days

Rev. Ezekiel Dodge (2nd minister), d. 5 June 1770, in 48th year

Mrs. Mary (Goddard) (Dodge) Torrey, w/Josiah Torrey Esq, d. 9/29/1777 (53d year)

Josiah Torrey Esq. (who studied for ministry), d. 24 Sep 1783, ae ca. 63

(continued)

3. MONUMENTS-Overall condition: upright fallen (approx. no.) \_\_\_\_\_ inscription legibility good

4. MAP: Footage from street not applicable

(see attached)

RECEIVED  
FEB 16 1979  
MASS. HIST. COMM.

Name of Recorder Leola M. Jobert, chm

Organization Ab HistCom

FEB 13 1979  
Date

For MHC use: USGS

Form #

## 5. INDIVIDUAL STONES

## A. Architectural or Sculptural Monuments

Family Name	Date of Monument	Type	Sculptor/Artist	Photo

## B. Pre-1830 Stones

Key Words	Status	Last Name	First Name	Sex	Death Date	Age	Stone Shape	Design	Condition	Photo
<b>FRONT ROW</b> (stones face west)	L to R #1	BROWNE	Rev SAMUEL	M	9/19/1749	62	slate	portrait	good	
	#2	DODGE	Rev EZEKIEL	M	6/5/1770	48th	"	Noah Pratt Sr	good	
	#3	DODGE	Mrs MARY	F	9/29/1777	53d	"	"	good	
	#4	TORREY	Josiah Esq	M	9/24/1783	63	"	"	top half gone bottom half good	
	#5	footstone/Mrs. Mary Dodge								
<b>BACK ROW</b> (stones face E)										
	L to R #1	DODGE (footstone)	Jabez						good	
	#2	NILES (footstone)	Rev. SAMUEL						"	

(continued)

5M-2-68-946859

## Burial Ground

## FORM E - BURIAL GROUNDS

AB1.816

[illegible]

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: ABINGTON, MA	Form No: 816
Property Name: "Ministers' Corner" Mt. Vernon Cemetery	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

## (2. History of Burial Ground) continued:

A few other stones include footstones, and small headstones of children of Rev. Dodge and Rev. Samuel Niles, (the 3d minister), on the back row, facing out to the east.

Rev. Samuel Browne's stone was undoubtedly erected by his son, Woodbridge Browne, after the minister died a sad death following heated controversy between him and a vociferous element in the town who accused him of being too lenient in his views. The inscription states:

In y<sup>e</sup> gift of Preaching & y<sup>e</sup> Paftoral Office  
He was Faithful & Vigilant  
Among y<sup>e</sup> Controuerfies of Divines  
Moderate & Pacifick  
Ever ready for all the Dutys of Piety  
Among Hufbands, Fathers, Friends  
he had Few Equals  
And his Carriage to all Mankind was  
Eminently Benevolent....

The unknown stonecutter portrayed the minister in his wig, dressed in his clerical gown with stock at neck, behind the ambo with his Bible in hand. The heads of his pleasant-faced deacons show below in front of the pulpit.

Rev. Ezekiel Dodge's stone was erected by the town. The people voted in town meeting on 16 March 1772 to "get the Late Mr. Dodge's grave Stones." His inscription reads:

In Memory of  
Rev<sup>d</sup> EZEKIEL DODGE  
y<sup>e</sup> Second Minifter of Ab=  
ington who was Seiz'd with  
an Apoplexy on y<sup>e</sup> 5th of June 1770  
in y<sup>e</sup> Morning & died at night in y<sup>e</sup>  
48 y<sup>r</sup> of his Age having y<sup>e</sup> day befo<sup>r</sup>  
his Death compleated y<sup>e</sup> 20th Year of  
his Miniftry Pious & faithful as a Min=  
ifter Well accomplished as a Scholar  
truly benevolent as a man & amiable  
in y<sup>e</sup> Relations of Husband & Parent  
He left y<sup>e</sup> World respected & beloved

The design of the stone, by stonecutter Noah Pratt Sr., is similar to that of Rev. Browne's with the exception that a cloth with design of grapevines covers the pulpit. Rev. Dodge wears wig, clerical gown with Geneva bands at the throat, and his deacons have much more serious expressions.

Squire Josiah Torrey (see item #41 in this inventory) was originally buried in the family plot on his own farm. Old people could remember seeing his table tomb in the

(continued)  
(over)

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

NW corner of the intersection of High and Green Streets. The burial ground is marked on the 1848 Map of Old Abington. The inscription was on the top surface of the stone table above his grave.

Eventually the stone was broken and the upper half was lost. The bottom part, however, was moved and placed standing upright alongside the first two ministers of the Abington religious society. The inscription states that the Squire graduated in Cambridge (i.e., Harvard) and preached for several years, but he was never ordained in the Abington church. His inscription reads:

He descended from an ancient, and reputable(?) [family] (broken)  
 of Weymouth and was born November ye 6 [1720]  
 He was educated at the Univerfity in Camb(broken)  
 And at the ufual time recived the honors of the (broken)  
 Having finifhed his Collegiate studies,  
 He fpent feveral Years in preaching the Gofpel  
 And though warmly impurtuned to Settle in the miniftry,  
 declined prefering the tranquility of retirement  
 to the trials and dangers of public life  
 Was a zealous advocate for the chriftian religion, and  
 exemplified its precepts by circumfpection in his walk  
 Sobriety in his conversation and Patience and Suffering  
 At the close of a long and diftreffing Sicknefs  
 He met the approaches of death with appearent fortitude  
 And in firm hope of a joyfull refurrection  
 he fell afleep Sep<sup>t</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> 1783  
 Aged 63

The vertical panels of primitive acanthus design beside the inscription on Squire Torrey's stone show that it was cut by Noah Pratt Sr.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ABINGTON, TOWN OF. Minutes of Town Meetings, 1713-1840. Transcription by Ezekiel R. Studley of Rockland (former East Ward of Old Abington) as it appeared in Rockland Standard (weekly) from 23 Aug 1884 through 13 Sep 1901. Bound galley prints in Dyer Memorial Library, 30 Centre Avenue, Abington
- CAMPBELL, MARTHA G. Abington and the Revolution and Earlier Wars. Published by the Abington Bicentennial Committee for the Town of Abington, 1975. 123p illus index Copies available from Town Clerk
- MT. VERNON CEMETERY ASSOCIATION. Records in custody of secretary Nancy B. (Mrs. Curtis) Reid, 75 Plymouth Street, Abington
- Yesteryears of Abington, Rockland, and Whitman. Published by Tri-Town Committee for celebration of Old Abington's 250th anniversary, 1962. 100p picture book Copy in Burton L. Wales Public Library, Abington

AB1.816

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: ABINGTON, MA	Form No: 816
Property Name: Ministers Corner Mt. Vernon Cemetery	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued b

(Pictures):

From Yesteryears booklet  
(1962), p. 30



Detail from stone of first minister, Rev. Samuel Browne, d. 1749.



Detail from stone of Rev. Ezekiel Dodge, his successor, erected by vote of the town in 1772.

Staple to Inventory form at bot