

St. Paul's-on-the-Green, Norwalk: Comparison of several transcriptions of cemetery headstones

by Paul R. Keroack

The following table compares transcriptions of these stones from several published sources. At the left (as VH) are those found in D.H. Van Hoosear's "Genealogical and Historical" column published weekly in the Norwalk Hour until 1921. This cemetery series ran from 21 September 1907 through the end of that year. To save space, I have used abbreviations, converted dates to the universal date format and slightly reordered the wording in my transcription from Van Hoosear.

In the left column, I have listed names in the order of the Van Hoosear version, except where one or more issues missing from the surviving microfilmed newspapers makes that impossible. Mr. Card's version also lacks these names, so the same issues were probably missing from the original newspapers before being microfilmed (after Mr. Card's 1953 death). A scrapbook of Van Hoosear's Hour articles in the Wilton Historical Room does not include any St. Paul's cemetery transcriptions unless mentioned in the numbered questions and answers from correspondents. In order to sort the lists alphabetically, the relevant surname, when not in the Van Hoosear compilation, has been added in italics in this column.

In the second column are any differences from the first, as published in *Cemeteries of Norwalk*, by Lester Card (1945). Card apparently copied inscriptions from the Hour articles but reorganized many into family groupings. If Card duplicates Van Hoosear, that entry is not repeated but indicated by an X.

In the third column are noted any differences from the first as published in the Hale Collection, a 1934 survey by WPA workers who followed a different path among the stones. That collection, with original page numbers cited here, is now available on Ancestry.com as well as in earlier print and microfilm versions. Hale copyists did not include inscriptions beyond names, dates and basic relationships (denoting any spouse as "wife" even if widow, relict, etc.), also converting ages to a whole number, i.e., "74," not "75th year." Entries near the end of the list, listed here only in Hale due to missing VH columns, include some with death dates after 1907.

In the fourth column are monument descriptions, a few inscriptions relevant to genealogical research taken from The Hour column, and other notes. Further epitaphs found in Van Hoosear's entries have not been included here. Additional names of persons buried in vaults which have been found in other sources are entered in italics, with explanatory notes by the compiler in brackets.

The last column lists sources of the names found in the notes. In that column also, an "f" indicates (sometimes with the surname under which it is found, if not the initial one) the headstone listing in the www.findagrave.com website which relies on volunteers to copy, photograph or elaborate on cemetery stones. These entries may benefit from the

additional personal research, or may include or perpetuate errors, and, being online, may change at any time.

Although this arrangement may inevitably introduce errors of its own, hopefully the juxtaposition of several surveys taken in this cemetery over a period of several decades will allow the reader to perhaps to identify some names missing or entered in error in one of the transcriptions. The surviving stones, prized by both the St. Paul's on the Green congregation and history-minded local residents, have been professionally reset and repaired in recent years by a professional conservator and member of the parish.

Van Hoosear's 1907 transcription is evidently preserved only in the microfilm of the *Norwalk Hour*, available both in the Norwalk Public Library and the Connecticut State Library, Hartford. A photocopy from the film of the relevant pages has been deposited in the Norwalk History Room. The print quality is not perfect, but it can be of use in examining the original order and wording of the 1907 transcription. [2015]

The lists of persons buried in the following family vaults are taken from:

Van Hoosear's Historical and Genealogical columns, Norwalk Hour, from correspondents, 11 Jan 1908- 4 April 1908, entries 406-489 - - Wilton History Room, Wilton Library.

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|---------|---------------------|
| 1/11/08 | 406 – Bishop family |
| 1/11/08 | 415 – Smith “ |
| 1/18/08 | 416 – Cannon “ |
| 2/8/08 | 428 – Nash “ |
| 4/4/08 | 489 – Belden “ |

[date unknown] - Church family:

“Buried in St. Paul's churchyard at Norwalk, Conn, in tomb of Ebenezer Church, compiled by Sherman W. Church from old records and genealogy of the Church family”
– Church family papers, Norwalk History Room (ST-2b)