

## Pain

From the mid 1700s, the so-called period of the Enlightenment, doctors increasingly used opiates to relieve pain on the death bed. Doctors were in fact better at pain relief than at curing illnesses! In the later 18<sup>th</sup> century these treatments were available mainly to the upper and middle classes, but by the 1800s several patent brands of painkiller were becoming more widely available. In 1808 one Nottingham chemist (Boots?) noted that 'upwards of 200 lbs of opium and above 600 pints of Godfrey's Cordial are retailed to the poorer classes in the year'.

18% of all epitaphs are pre 1800 and 21% of those concerned with sudden death, about the expected proportion. However, 30% of the epitaphs are from 1800 -1849 but 57% of the "pain" memorials are from that period, this high proportion could suggest that pain relief did not get to Bingham much before 1850 and that people were much concerned about painful death. Some of the victims of severe pain on these gravestones may have suffered from illnesses that were not susceptible to opiates and some may have not been able to afford the treatment. Only three stones mentioning a painful death are dated after 1850, so perhaps Bingham's doctors could be said to have had pain relief sorted out by then and that at least some of the opiate sold in Nottingham was finding its way here. On the other hand the trend by then was to have short biblical epitaphs not the longer verses typical of earlier times.

The earliest record of a druggist in Bingham is in the 1793 trade directory – Sarah Rick, whose husband George (died 1784) was probably also a druggist and is buried here at SE180. By 1848 four druggists were operating in the village and thereafter there were always at least three until the 1900s. Some combined the trade with another, usually grocery or wines and spirits although in the 1820s John Jones was also a hatter! These would have provided ample sources of supply of patent medicines for over the counter purchase as well as that provided by the several doctors in the town.

- 1705 SE015      WRIGHT      Ann      44  
With violent pain and long complaints  
I was oppres't full fore  
Till God above did me remove  
to rest for ever more  
*(on several memorial stone web sites for churches across the country and the USA)*
- 1775 SE026      TIMM      Mary      39  
In dust here lie the last Remains  
Of her who bore Death's lingering pains.  
Till God did please to give her ease,  
And on her life cold death did seize.
- 1779 SE065      JOHNSON      John      49  
With grief and pain I did complain  
And sorely was opprest,  
Till God in love did me remove  
And took me to his rest.  
*(on several memorial stone web sites for churches across the country and the USA)*
- 1803 SE044      SHEPHERDS      Daft      47  
With patience to the last he did submit  
And murmur'd not at what the Lord thought fit;  
He with Christian courage did resign  
His soul to God at his appointed time.  
*(on several memorial stone web sites for churches across the country and the USA)*
- 1812 SE087      HIND      Thomas      58  
Afflictions sore, long time we bore  
Physicians were in vain  
Till God did please to give us ease  
And free us of our pain  
*(on several memorial stone web sites for churches across the country and the USA)*

- 1817 SW119 MATTHEWS John 16  
 When pain and sickness did me seize  
 Long time I lingering lay  
 No mortal man could give me ease  
 Till God call'd me away
- 1819 SW003 MABBOTT William 78  
 Patient to the last he did submit  
 And murmer'd not at what the Lord thought fit.  
 He with a Christian courage resign  
 His soul to God at his appointed time
- 1822 SW017 STONE Thomas 30  
 Afflictions sore long time I bore  
 Physicians were in vain;  
 Till God did please for death to seize  
 And free me of my pain.  
*(on several memorial stone web sites for churches across the country and the USA)*
- 1824 SW131 GOODWIN William 19  
 Afflictions sore long time bore,  
 Physicians were in vain.  
 Till God did please to give me ease  
 And free me from my pain.
- Go home dear friends  
 And don't lament  
 For unto you I was but lent,  
 My years on earth they were but few  
 And was shed like the morning dew.  
*(First verse on several memorial stone web sites for churches across the country and in the USA)*
- 1827 NE001 GILMAN Mary 46  
 When pain and sickness did me seize  
 Long time I lingering lay  
 No help of friend could give me ease  
 Till God called me away
- 1836 SE093 STRONG Charles Dranfield 32  
 Thrice happy spirit thou hast scap'ed away  
 And left our darkness for the light of day;  
 The tumults of this life affect no more  
 For thou art landed on a peaceful shore;  
 The painful mortal conflict now is past,  
 And thou hast gained the victory at last.  
*(Amongst several religious references to being thrice happy is this:  
 As a preface to the 1611 KJV, the translators wrote a message entitled "The Translators to the  
 Reader." In it, they said, "happy is the man that delighteth in the Scripture and thrice happy that  
 meditate in it day and night)*
- 1866 NE121 NOWELL William 61  
 After a painful illness borne with exemplary patience

1868 SW053 GREEN William 34

Affliction sore long time I bore  
Physicians were in vain  
Till God did please to give me ease  
And free me from my pain.  
Go home dear friends and don't lament  
But unto you I was but lent  
My years on earthy they were but few  
And wasted like the morning dew  
*(on several memorial stone web sites for churches across the country and the USA)*

1870 NW022 HUBBARD John 81  
HUBBARD Elizabeth 82

Their winter of trouble is passed  
The storm of affliction is over  
Their struggle is ended at last  
And sorrow and death are no more