

The Sutton Historical Society restoration project for Sutton Center Cemetery started in August of 2019 and was completed in July of 2022. Below are before and after photos of the Sibley family obelisk that was one of 384 stones that were cleaned.



As found – north side



After cleaning



One year later
North side that receives no
direct sunlight



South and west sides that receive direct sunlight

Mold, lichens and moss are the vegetation commonly found on the surfaces of all stones. Mold, in particular, fouls the more porous surfaces of weather-worn marble and brownstone.

After wetting and scraping to remove the lichens and mold, this obelisk was sprayed with D/2 cleaner. After a few minutes of contact time, the surfaces were well brushed with a plastic brush and thoroughly rinsed. No metal scraper or metal brush was used as these can permanently damage the surfaces.

The still gray tone surfaces were then left to let sunlight finish the process.

Lichens can be difficult to remove from the denser surfaces of slate and granite. A variation of the cleaning process is to spray those surfaces with the D/2 and leave it on the surfaces to stop the growth of the lichens. Return a few days or weeks later to complete the cleaning process. Also, wooden skewers or picks can be useful to remove debris from the inscriptions without damaging the stone surface.

No bleach, acidic or highly alkaline material is used for cleaning as those can chemically damage or absorb into and crystallize within the stones causing structural damage.

As of 2023, the project continues at other cemeteries and burial sites. If you would like to ask about or see the process, we can be contacted through the Sutton Historical Society website or through the Blackstone River Valley Heritage Corridor Cemetery Conservation Ambassadors.