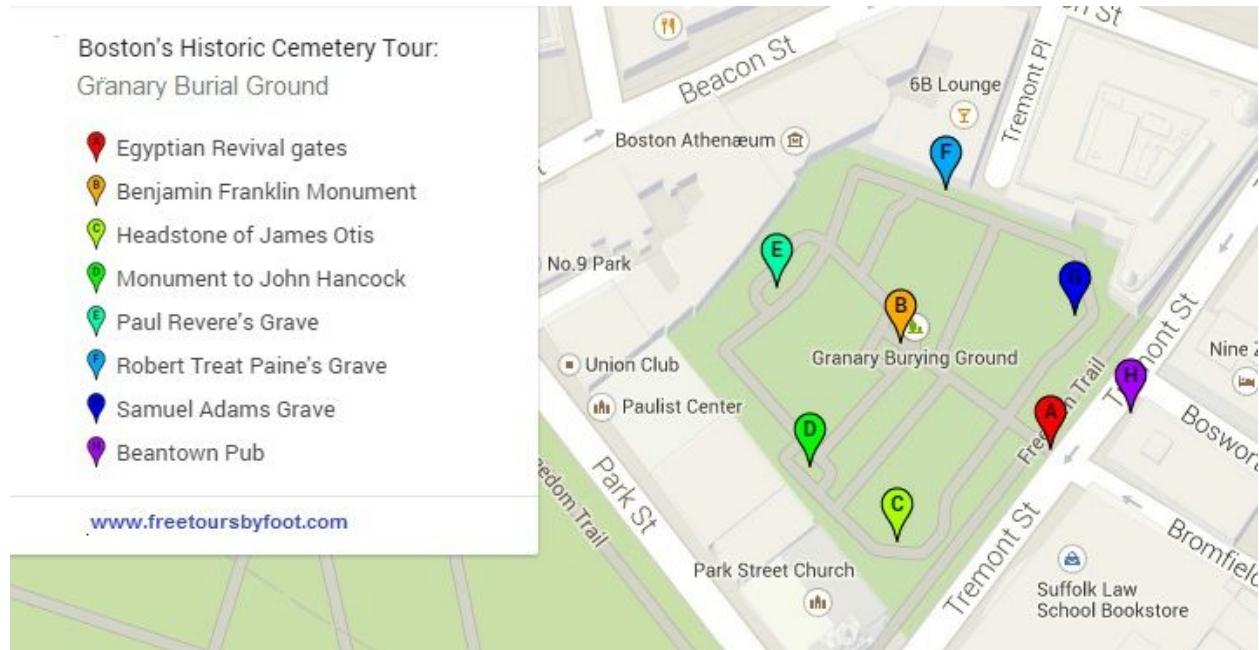


For history buffs and visitors, Boston has several historic cemeteries filled. The most centrally located historic cemetery near Boston Common, is Granary Burial Ground, and it is worth exploring. Boston's Granary Burial Ground is the third oldest burial ground in the City of Boston and within lays the DNA of the American Revolution. There are over 5000 bodies buried there, but only an estimated 2300 headstones. The reason for this is that many of the graves have multiple bodies buried under one headstone, something that was common in most old burial grounds to save money and space. Among regular citizens who rest inside are three signers of the Declaration of Independence: John Hancock, Samuel Adams and Robert Treat Pain. In addition, the great and most famous Patriot Paul Revere and one of the least know but one of the greatest, James Otis are buried there as well. The burial ground was name Granary (opened in 1660) in 1737 for the Old Town Granary which stood on the current site of the Park Street Church (1809) which makes up one of its borders. Be sure to take a look at our full selection of [self-guided walking tours of Boston](#), and for more ways to save, consider a [tourist discount pass](#).

How to get to Boston's Granary Burial Ground?

The burial ground is on the Freedom Trail and is tucked between the Park Street Church and Suffolk University. If you are arriving by public transportation, take the T to Boston Common and walk northeast on Tremont Street towards the Park St Church (do you see the white church steeple?). Past the church you'll find the Granary Burial Ground. It is a major Freedom Trail site and is open to the public for free, every day from 9:00am to 5:00pm. It is also a stop on our [Freedom Trail tour](#). Here is a quick, self-guided tour to help you find the "big graves" as you meander your way along its paths. In order to keep the burial ground protected, please make sure you stay on the designated paths.

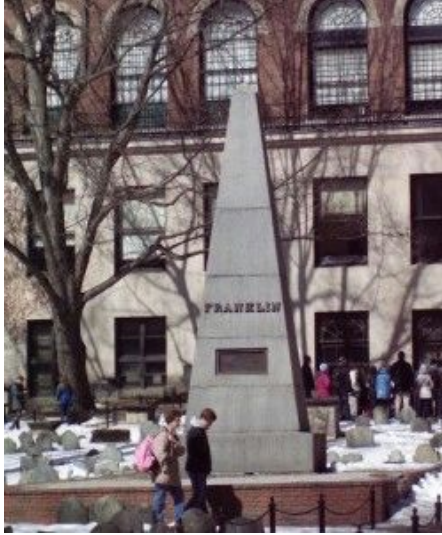
Click map to enlarge and click [here](#) for movable map.



**Boston's Historic Cemetery
Tour: Granary Burial Ground**

(A) - As you enter the Granary Burial Ground on Tremont Street, notice the Egyptian Revival gates? They were designed by Isaiah Rogers who was a supervising architect for the Ohio State House and who also played a role in designing and patenting four burglar-proof vaults built in the northwest corner of the

U.S. Treasury Building.



(B) The first and largest monument you will see when entering the Granary is the Franklin Monument. Don't be fooled though, Ben is not buried there (his final resting place is at Christ Church Burial Ground in Philadelphia, PA). Most folks see that monument and think it is Ben Franklin's grave, but it is actually Ben's Family Tomb where his parents and siblings rest. Ben was born in Boston but left the city the age of 17-years-old for a new start in Philadelphia.

(C) Facing the Franklin Monument take a left up the path closest to the Tremont Street and follow to the bend where you will see a bolder stone which is the headstone. This is the headstone of James Otis, a lawyer in Boston and one of the least known, but most important patriots. James Otis is credited with coining the phrase "*Taxation without representation is tyranny!*" during a speech in 1761. He also stated that African Americans had inalienable rights. The idea of racial equality also is talked about in his "*Rights of the British Colonies*" in 1764. He was involved in a scuffle in 1769 with Tories that left him with a fractured skull. Otis suffered from what many believe was bi-polar disorder and that the blow to head contributed to his losing battle with this disease and forced him into retirement after the 1769 attack. James Otis was struck and killed by lightning in 1783 at the age of 58-years-old. What are the odds of that?

(D) Continuing up the path you will see the monument to John Hancock (you cannot miss it, as it is about as big as the man's ego). Hancock, the richest man in Boston at the time and first elected governor of the Commonwealth, also served as President of the Second Continental Congress and was first person to sign the document *The Declaration of Independence* in 1776. His signature is so well known that it inspired an often used phrase when signing a check or other document which says, "put your John

Hancock on that." John Hancock help fund the American Revolution with his wealth and was deeply loved by the people in Boston. John Hancock died in 1793 at the age of 56 years, while serving as Governor. His name also adorns the tallest building in New England, the John Hancock Tower in Copley Square.



(E) Follow the path to the most famous of all graves in Boston, Paul Revere's. You cannot miss it as it is directly behind the Franklin Monument and is in the shape of a pedestal. Paul Revere was made famous with a poem written in 1860 by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow "*The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere*" (a poem many students have read or memorized in school) which tells the tale of his ride to Lexington and Concord on April 18, 1775 that resulted in the first shot fired in the American Revolution on April 19, 1775. Paul Revere

was a silversmith, a bell maker and was also appointed coroner for Suffolk County. His company sealed the dome of the Massachusetts State House in Copper (it is gilded in gold today). They also made the bell and bolts for the USS Constitution and lined the keel of the Ship with copper. Paul Revere died in 1818 at the age of 83.

(F) Continue your loop around the Monument and follow the path to the side brick wall and you will see another signer of the Declaration of Independence: Robert Treat Paine. He is the lesser known of the Fab Three (Hancock, Adams, Paine) who rest here. A Harvard Graduate like both Hancock and Adams, he was the first Attorney General of Massachusetts and in 1770 he prosecuted the 9 soldiers who were charged with firing on the crowd during the Boston Massacre on March 5, 1770. He also signed the *Olive Branch Petition* in 1775, which was the final appeal to the King George III for peace in the colonies. Robert Treat Paine died in 1814 at the age of 83.



(G) Continue down the path to the final stop to the late great Samuel Adams. His headstone looks just like James Otis'. The bolder like headstones are the only two bolder like stones in the Burial Ground and serve almost like bookends in the Granary. Many visitors associate Samuel Adams with the beer named for him and while he was a maltster for a while (he worked in his father's business a malt-house used to brew beer), he has nothing to do with the Sam Adams Brewery in Boston. Samuel Adams is known as the Mob-master of Boston

stirring up much of the discontent in the Boston against the Crown, and was a founding member of the Son's of Liberty. He was a charismatic, fiery speaker who whipped up dissent and wrote petitions against the British Crown. He signed the *Declaration of Independence*, and at the age 73-years-old took over the office Governor after John Hancock died in 1793 He is the oldest person to serve as Governor in the Commonwealth. Unlike John Hancock, Samuel Adams spent most of his life in poverty. Samuel Adams died in 1803 at the age of 81.

(H) Now turn and look out through gates across Tremont Street and you will see the Beantown Pub. As you leave the burial ground you can cross the street, go into the Beantown and order a Sam Adams beer. The Beantown Pub is the only place in the world where you can enjoy a cold Sam Adams, while sitting across the street from another famous cold Sam Adams. Cheers!

+++**To learn more about Boston, come and join our many [pay-what-you-like walking tours](#). The Granary Burial Ground is also part of our pay-what-you-like [Freedom Trail tour](#).**+++

Written by Brian Burgess