



1-1-1965

An English Graveyard

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Recommended Citation

Larson, Clinton F. (1965) "An English Graveyard," *BYU Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 6 : Iss. 1 , Article 10.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol6/iss1/10>

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An English Graveyard

Once I climbed a castled hill
And saw below me in a nook of land
A village there
So neat and prim
It flickered like a diadem.

So down I went to find it real,
But well before I reached the square,
Before I shook a hand
Or saw such stony heads
As do their nodding over bowls
and boards of fare,
I found a graveyard
Topsy-turvy by a church,
Undulant with grassy mounds,
In some slow laughter of another time.

The headstones nodding wise with epitaph,
I walked along a grassy path,
By yews and elms,
Jotting down their dates and lore.

What dowager is this who mocked the poor?
What husband here with wives around?
What vixen nestled there alone?
And why?

An easy party do they keep,
As they must, abounding here,
And near a church.

I would not pry,
But if their headstones are awry,
Do they sleep?

CLINTON F. LARSON*

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