

Seven if by Fire Truck

by Katherine Bryant

In order by photograph (left to right, top to bottom), the missing words from the gravestones are:

HOLLOWELL

BLACK

INTERR'D

GERRISH

GARDNER

THWING

NATHANIEL

USHER

LINDALL

NICHOLAS

GEORGE

INDICOTT

These match to the clues as follows:

- Begins with a woman's first name : **LINDALL** (LINDA)
- Becomes a word meaning "less clean" if you change the second letter to be the same as the first letter and rearrange all the letters: **INTERR'D** (becomes DIRTIER)
- Becomes a conjunction if you delete all its repeated letters: **GEORGE** (becomes OR)
- Contains only the letters in a word meaning "unbroken" (used multiple times): **HOLLOWELL** (from WHOLE)
- Could be something you'd find on Sylvester's playground?: **THWING**
- Can be anagrammed into two synonyms if you delete the second letter: **NATHANIEL** (THIN and LEAN)
- Could be represented by the word DANDRUFF in a cryptogram: **INDICOTT**
- If you add an A, can be anagrammed into the names of two Asian countries: **NICHOLAS** (becomes LAOS and CHINA)
- Can be reversed to get a phrase meaning "tear scrap": **GARDNER** (becomes REND RAG)
- Becomes an expression of dismay if you shift its first letter one back in the alphabet: **BLACK** (becomes ALACK)
- Consists of two pronouns in a row: **USHER** (US/HER)
- Sounds like a word meaning "gaudy": **GERRISH** (GARISH)

Reading the first letters in this order gives the answer **LIGHTNING BUG**.