

Last words – or later

Some of the gravestone inscriptions collected by Peter Haining in *Graveyard Wit* (1973) – an unexpected repository of language play, especially when it comes to finding a rhyme or a pun.

Underneath this pile of stones,
Lies all that's left of Sally Jones,
Her name was BRIGGS, it was not JONES,
But JONES was used to rhyme with stones. (Blackburn)

Here lies JOHN and his wife
JANET McFEE
40 hee – 30 shee. (Edinburgh)

The wedding day appointed was
And wedding clothes provided,
But ere that day did come, alas!
He sickened and he died. (Bideford)

Here lies ANN MANN
She lived an old maid
And died an old MANN. (Barton Moss)

I am safe in saying
She's gone up higher,
Nary a devil would want Maria. (Ubley)

This deceased you ne'er heard tell on
I died of eating too much mellon,
Be careful then, all you that feed, I
Suffered because I was too greedy. (Chigwell)

Here lies JOHN ROSS
Kicked by a Hoss. (Kendal)