

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

176

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: **Oak Grove Cemetery**

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)



2. Location

Street & number: Parker Street

City or town: New Bedford State: MA County: Bristol

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<i>Brona Simon</i>	<i>March 6, 2014</i>
Signature of certifying official/Title: Brona Simon, SHPO	
Date	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr/>	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
<hr/>	
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Jon Edson H. Beall 4-28-14
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>13</u>	<u>3</u>	structures
<u>60</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>81</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

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Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Oak Grove Cemetery covers 30.89 acres in the northwest part of New Bedford, MA, about two miles from the city center. It ranges along both the north and south sides of Parker Street in New Bedford's West End. It is surrounded on the north, east, and south sides primarily by 20th-century residences, and on the west side by garages and yards owned and used by the New Bedford Department of Public Infrastructure. The earliest part of the cemetery, between ten and eleven acres on the south side of Parker Street, was created in 1843. The newer section is on the north side of that street, and was acquired between about 1870 and 1896. Both sections have large deciduous and coniferous trees, though the smaller, older section is more densely vegetated; it is also hillier than the newer section. According to the city, while no undeveloped land remains within Oak Grove Cemetery, a few plots are still available.

Narrative Description

Old Oak Grove: Setting

The old section of Oak Grove Cemetery (Site #1) occupies a knoll that drops off on the south, west, and east sides (photo 1). This part of the cemetery is bordered on the north by Parker Street, on the west by Liberty Street and a city garage, on the south by Smith Street, and on the east by residential lots and a commercial building on the west side of Park Street. It is surrounded by a stone wall (#27) that curves at the intersection of Smith and Liberty Streets. The wall is backed by a chain-link fence topped with barbed wire on all sides. There are two historic entries, both now padlocked—the Smith Street entrance (#2), the more formal of the two (photo 2), and the Parker Street entrance (#3), marked by simple granite columns (photo 3). The Smith Street entrance was clearly the cemetery's main entry before the city acquired the new section, no doubt because it faced the developed part of what was then the town of New Bedford.

The old section is now accessible at its northwest corner through the parking area in front of a city maintenance building. This entry provides access to the single paved road, called Circuit Avenue on maps, within the cemetery. Circuit Avenue encircles the old cemetery, though it is not paved and indeed is scarcely visible on the cemetery's east side, and it connects the north and south entrances. All other ways within the cemetery feature cobblestone paving (#4), which in many areas is now wholly or partly covered with turf (photo 4). Most interior paths and ways in the old section are bordered by granite curbing. Many of the avenues in the southern part of the old section have filled in so extensively that they are barely discernible, their existence often indicated only by the fact that markers face them.

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Old Oak Grove Cemetery is heavily treed, mostly by coniferous species, and within that group are many cedars, quite common throughout the southeastern Massachusetts region. There are also deciduous trees, the most prominent among them three large European beeches, one near the center, one in Section D, and a third in its northeast corner.

DESCRIPTION

Maintenance Building: The maintenance building (#5) in the northwest corner, at the intersection of Parker and Liberty Streets, is legally part of the cemetery and is the only building associated with the old section (photo 5). The building's main section, completed in early 1927, is a two-story, brick structure in Colonial Revival style with a side-gabled roof. It replaced an old barn and sheds, which had been moved from the new part of Oak Grove Cemetery to this site in 1916 and used to store tools and provide "quarters" for cemetery workers. When built, the interior of the new building featured "lockers for the men, carpenter shop, workroom and storage for machines, wheelbarrows, rollers, headstone coverings, lowering devices, etc.," according to the 1926 cemetery report. Built by local Franco-American contractor Josephat Nault (born 1878), the new building cost \$6,000 to construct.¹ A one-story brick industrial shop building with several vehicle and pedestrian doors, built about 1960, extends south from the main block.

There are five crypts (#6) in the old section, four of them built into the slope along the west side of the Circuit Avenue (photo 6), and one further south on the opposite side of the same road. All are Egyptian Revival in style, and at least one is a public receiving tomb, built in 1844. Only one of them, constructed for a member of New Bedford's Hathaway family, has its original entry door: a smooth, massive granite slab with bronze bolts, a carved keyhole, and "A. Hathaway" engraved at center. All others have been filled with mortared cement blocks.

Most of the stones in old Oak Grove Cemetery are either marble or granite in the form of simple tablets with either straight, semicircular, or Gothic-style arched tops. Stones with Gothic arches and other Gothic details are notable; similarly, the Gothic Revival architectural form was a popular domestic building style in New Bedford in the antebellum years, when the city was in its whaling heyday. There are a handful of slate stones, many of them probably moved to Oak Grove with bodies disinterred from Griffin Street Cemetery (NR pending) in the 1850s. There are also three white-bronze (zinc) markers, one of them for Civil War veteran William Houghton (died 1897) and his wife Annie (died 1896). Most markers bear inscriptions only, and among those, many feature raised lettering; often the only other embellishment on them is a simple scored line along the inner edge of the form.

Stones with iconography often depict a given motif in relief, within recessed medallions of various shapes in the lunette. Of those with iconography, the most common motifs are the urn and willow, the weeping willow alone, the finger pointing heavenward, and, for children, the lamb and the sleeping child. The 1846 marker over the grave of Susan Cornell (see photo 18, #18) is a rectangular tablet featuring a heavy-fronded willow within a circular lunette at the top and an inscription at the base; it mirrors a form by then receding in popularity. The rectangular tablet marking the grave of Benjamin Lincoln (#47), who died eighteen years earlier and was probably reinterred here, features two willows markedly similar in form to that on the Cornell stone, but they stand atop the inscription panel and flank an urn. The markers for Alexander and Sarah Read (photo 19, #25), who sold the larger portion of the land making up Oak Grove Cemetery to the city, have scrolled sides and pointed tops with cornices. A single lily of the valley, a common symbol of purity, appears on Sarah Read's grave, while her husband's bears an image of cattails, the iconographic significance of which is unknown. Both have footstones in forms identical to the Read headstones. The markers for Laura Van Campen and John Wrightington (#49, 50)

¹ Cemetery Board Records, vol. 6; *Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the City of New Bedford, Massachusetts, for the year Ending November 30, 1926* (New Bedford: Baker Manufacturing Co., 1927), 10-11e; *Thirty-Third Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the City of New Bedford, Massachusetts, for the year Ending November 30, 1927* (New Bedford: Baker Manufacturing Co., 1928).

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both feature open books for different reasons: because Laura Van Campen died of consumption at the age of fifteen in 1858, the book, resting on a pillow with an engraved ribbon bookmark cast over it, surely signifies a story interrupted, while Wrightington's signifies his status as a deacon of New Bedford's First Baptist Church.² Wrightington died in 1832, but the marker, also carrying the name of his wife, was probably designed and installed after her death in 1862.

The old section includes perhaps a dozen table stones, either raised or nearly flush to the ground. One notable and atypical group is made up of six largely illegible marble table stones, set on top of angled granite blocks within a semicircular iron picket fence between granite posts; a massive European beech stands just east of the markers. The grouping was sufficiently remarkable to have been documented in at least one turn-of-the-century photograph (fig. 2).

There are also perhaps twenty obelisks marking the graves of individuals or family lots, the latter of which predominate. The plot for the merchant Nathaniel S. Cannon (died 1876, #37) and his two wives achieves its distinction architecturally, not only from the tall granite obelisk at its center, but also from two tiers of granite curbing and its formal granite entry marked by a walk, a step, rails, and short chamfered posts. In addition, six individual markers in pulpit form with inclined faces on a common, two-tiered granite base mark individual burials in the Cannon plot. A broken column stands as cenotaph for Captain Aaron Cushman (#20). Cushman was captain of the New Bedford whaling ship *Lancer*, which left New Bedford in early August 1856; he died at sea in late November at the age of 48. No more than five family plots retain their original fencing. Some markers, though modest in scale, are elaborately carved. The Lott and Deborah Tripp marker (#7) is in a curbed family lot and depicts the "golden gate" to paradise opened for the shipwright and his wife. The inscribed gates are flanked by columns and surmounted by a large, arched pediment containing a carved dove; carved flowers decorate the base of the gateway (photo 7). Markers with rustic motifs exist in both the old and new sections of Oak Grove, usually in the form of rustic lettering, carved branches framing inscription panels, or logs set on top of markers with scrolls bearing a family name draped across them.

Old Oak Grove Cemetery is densely populated, though a largely undeveloped area does exist between the west side of Circuit Avenue and Liberty Street. Historic maps show a small public section along the east side of Circuit Avenue. This "public ground," for burials of indigent people, is bordered on the west and north by what research has established is an exclusively African American section, labeled Section J (#19) on cemetery maps, in the northeastern corner of the cemetery, between the main circuit road and the cemetery's eastern border, in what was the old section's original back corner. Maps show section J as three and a half serpentine areas, one shared with part of section O, and including a total of 78 plots. Cemetery records indicate 480 burials in Section J, but markers exist for eighteen persons not accounted for in records; they may be among the 164 interments for which names were not recorded. As of 2012, only 134 markers had survived for the nearly 500 persons buried in Section J.

Burials of members of the Society of Friends are also common in Oak Grove Cemetery, though they are distributed throughout the ground. Given the fact that the city's original Friends cemetery was moved to abut Rural Cemetery in the southwestern part of the city in the mid 1800s, one might have expected later Quaker burials to have been made there instead of in Oak Grove. However, Oak Grove's more picturesque setting may have appealed to some New Bedford Friends, among them William Rotch, Jr. and James Arnold, the city's most prominent horticulturists. Moreover, theological differences arising from a schism between "Old Lights" and "New Lights" may have led the latter—who either left or were dismissed from New Bedford Monthly Meeting between 1818 and the mid-1830s—to choose Oak Grove over Rural Cemetery. The marble markers on these Quaker graves are markedly simple, often bearing only the deceased's name and dates in Quaker style. James

² See [Jesse Fillmore Kelley], *History of the Churches of New Bedford* (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, 1869), 67.

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Arnold's marker is a rectilinear tablet, while William Rotch, Jr.'s raised sepulcher tomb is relatively plain for this style.

New Oak Grove: Setting

The new section of Oak Grove Cemetery, 20.19 acres, is a relatively level plain (photo 8) that slopes downward on its west side, where it is bordered by the yard of the city's Department of Public Infrastructure. The area is bounded on the south by Parker Street, on the east by residential lots on Caroline Street, and on the north by house lots on Durfee Court. A stone wall (#27) encloses the new section except in its northwest corner, where part of an iron fence is extant. As in the old section, a chain-link fence topped with barbed wire stands behind the stone wall.

The Parker Street entrance (#3), on the north side of Parker Street, is the main entrance to the new section (see photo 8). Here the stone wall curves in to a short granite post on the east side of the entry, while a curved cement curb runs from a granite entry post on the west side to the stone wall ranging west along Parker Street. An iron gate or chain once closed this entrance; today it is closed by a tall chain-link gate. On the east side of the new section is the Robeson Street entrance (#9), a now-closed gateway that opens onto a private way leading west from Caroline Street (fig. 3 and photo 9). Like the old section, a main, paved Circuit Avenue loops through the cemetery. All of the ways leading into parts of the cemetery from this loop road seem to have been paved at one time in a very rough macadam composed of large fieldstones and an asphalt binder.

Office Building: Just inside the Parker Street entrance on the west is a one-story wood office building #10), constructed in 1917 by local contractor C. O. Brightman according to plans drawn by the New Bedford architectural firm Smith and Howland (Nat. C. Smith and Myron P. Howland, photo 10). It has a hipped roof, an entry porch in the Colonial Revival style, with a Palladian window over the entry door, and tongue-in-groove siding.

Along the easternmost drive is a public receiving tomb (#11), built in 1892 of rough-faced sandstone ashlar with granite trim (photo 11). Gable parapets have a single step midway along the raking edge, and the side walls have granite buttresses. A stone porch with arched apertures is centered on the front and is surmounted by a pointed window, segmented in a circular pattern. Some historic cemetery maps show a large public section along this southeast side of the new section between the public tomb and the entrance. However, whether this section, just north and east of the Parker Street entrance, was ever used for the burial of indigent people or contains unmarked graves is not apparently known.

On the west side of the new section is an unmarked, private Gothic crypt (#6), set into the slope and built of granite, and several family tombs in Greek temple style.

Overall, roughly half of the markers in new Oak Grove Cemetery are marble, most of the rest are granite, and there are also a few slate and white-bronze (zinc) markers. The A. Davis Ashley family markers, among them the marker for W. Clifford Ashley (#21), are slate and emulate early 19th-century markers in material, form, and inscription style. The vast majority of markers bear only inscriptions—generally only the name, birth and death dates, and relation to others in their lots. Most of the stones in the northernmost part of the new section are more recent, and typically in block form. A few stones, substantially more recent than most, are interspersed among older stones and are either of the flush, lawn type, or are in unusual shapes with modern iconography and inscription styles.

Masonic symbols are somewhat common among stones with imagery. Only one or two depict a finger pointing heavenward, and none bear the neoclassical urn and willow or earlier symbols. One relatively common motif is the crown or the cross and crown, supposed to symbolize the sovereignty of God. In some configurations, the

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cross and crown is a marker of membership in the York Rite of Freemasonry or Knights Templar.³ The iconography on the Hersom-Weeks monument (#29)—the cross and crown within a Maltese cross backed by crossed swords, and with the Latin slogan “In hoc signo vinces” (“In this sign, conquer”) on each point of the cross—probably denotes the membership of at least one of those interred here in that Masonic order. Unlike the gravestones in the Ashley family lot, those in the Charles H. Church family lot (#12) vary greatly in form. The marker for Church, a New Bedford druggist, and his wife Sarah is atypical: nearly the entire face of the monument shows in relief a bunch of iris and lilac, and their names are inscribed on the back (photo 12).

One highly decorative obelisk is the white-bronze Calvin K. Turner marker (#30, died 1879), which stands in a family plot. Bands of elaborate Gothic-style detail run around the base and beneath the finial of the obelisk. Above the lower band are floral motifs in different styles on each side of the obelisk, and each side also features different iconography: on the side bearing Turner’s inscription are clasped hands, a rose, and a crown; a rose appears on the side inscribed for Turner’s wife Caroline (died 1873); an anchor and chain is depicted on the panel for Turner’s second wife Hannah; and on the west, uninscribed, side is a bound sheaf of wheat with a sickle, an ivy-covered cross, and a draped cross at which a draped woman prays. Made of pure zinc, so-called “white bronze” markers were fabricated and sold exclusively by the Monumental Bronze Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut, between 1874 and 1914. The manufacturer’s intent was to produce and offer at low cost elaborately decorated monuments that could withstand inevitable weathering: galvanizing had earlier shown that zinc was corrosion resistant. The markers were marketed by illustrated catalogs made available to agents—whether undertakers or stone carvers is not known—and offered with a broad selection of interchangeable parts. The simplest white-bronze markers sold for as little as two dollars.⁴

Symbolism in the new section tends to be expressed in three-dimensional form, either constituting the essential form of the marker or carved as an integral part of it. Some of these monuments resemble public statuary more than they do traditional grave markers. The David B. Kempton monument (#22), atop the graves of this whaling merchant and manufacturer (died 1899) and his two wives, Sarah (died 1847) and Susan (died 1927), is in altar form and features a nearly full-sized wheat sheaf carved at its top. A sheaf of wheat was commonly associated with long life: David Kempton was 80 years old at his death, and his second wife 88 at hers. The marble William E. Sykes monument (#23) features a broken fluted column, symbolizing life cut short, and an eagle perched on its top, probably representing rebirth.⁵ Sykes, a member of the Ambulance Corps during World War I, died in 1919 at the age of 23. The Hersom-Weeks monument (#29) is in Greek-temple form, with freestanding Doric columns between the inscription panel (resting on the base) and entablature, and a hipped roof. The marker for Sarah L. Wood Church (died 1896; see photo 12), Charles Church’s mother, is a cast-concrete tree stump, and one among several markers with rustic motifs. The white-bronze Read monument (#13) bears no other inscription, but is topped by a praying angel and replete with iconography—the rustic, ivy-covered cross, an anchor and chain, acorns and two crossed oak branches in the pediment, and a praying angel at the top (photo 13). The cross is a sign of Christianity, the anchor one of hope, the acorns of prosperity, and the oak branches of the power of faith. In this instance, the anchor may be an occupational symbol: the individual marker inscribed “Father” may designate the grave of George P. Read, a blacksmith from Newport, Rhode Island, who came to New Bedford about 1849 and worked for James Durfee, one of the largest manufacturers of iron whalecraft in the city. By 1869, Read was partner in the shipsmith firm of Sawyer and Read, which also produced ironwork for the whaling industry.

³ Douglas Keister, *Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2004), 113.

⁴ Bill Plak, “Known Tombstone Carvers of Pennsylvania: Monumental Bronze Company,” <http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/pa/1pa/cemeteries/tscarvers/monumental-bronze.txr>; Barbara Rotundo, “Monumental Bronze: A Representative American Company,” in *Cemeteries & Gravemarkers: Voices of American Culture*, ed. Richard E. Meyer (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1989), 263-91.

⁵ Keister, *Stories in Stone*, 80.

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Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known in the Oak Grove Cemetery or in the general area (within one mile), sites may be present. Environmental characteristics of the cemetery locale represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are generally unfavorable for the presence of ancient sites. The cemetery occupies level to moderately sloping topography in close proximity to wetlands. An elevated knoll in the area of the wheatfields is also mentioned in ca. 1842 historical documents that deal with the purchasing of land for the cemetery. Soil types are characterized by well-drained and generally sandy udorthents and urban land. While the physical characteristics of udorthents and urban land are difficult to determine, documentary evidence and regional soil surveys indicate that some areas of poorly drained and stony soils were also present. The physical characteristics of udorthents are extremely variable. They are formed by cutting and filling for construction projects. Urban land soil types consist of areas covered by structures including industrial areas, shopping centers, parking lots, and roads. Burials and cemeteries can be included with these structural types. Ground-water drainage is characteristic of the area. The only surface drainage in the area was a small artificial pond, now filled, created in poorly drained soils just east of the Parker Street entrance. The entire city of New Bedford lies within the Massachusetts coastal drainage. Given the above information, the size of the cemetery (30.89 acres), the availability of undeveloped land, known patterns of ancient Native American settlement in the region, and by, 1914, the excavation of more than 13,786 burials, a low to moderate potential exists for locating ancient sites in the Oak Grove Cemetery.

A high potential exists for locating significant historic archaeological sites at the Oak Grove Cemetery. Additional historical research, combined with archaeological survey, testing, and monitoring of grave excavations, may locate archaeological evidence of buildings no longer extant associated with the administration, maintenance, and operation of the cemetery. While several structures associated with these functions are extant at the cemetery today, the earlier sites for these and other buildings may also survive. For example, the current maintenance building, built in 1927, located at the northwest corner of Parker and Liberty Streets, replaced an old barn and sheds that had been moved from the new part of Oak Grove to this site in 1916. Structural evidence of these buildings may survive at this site, and at their original location in the new part of Oak Grove. Structural evidence from at least two greenhouses, built in 1899 and 1900 or 1901, may also survive at the southwestern end of the new section of the cemetery. In 1902, the Caswell farmhouse (19th century, possibly earlier) was sold and moved away from the cemetery. Structural evidence may survive from the farmhouse and related barns, agricultural and domestic related outbuildings, and occupational-related outbuildings.

Additional historical research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, can help locate unmarked graves and grave markers and document the associations between existing gravestones and actual graves. Known and unmarked graves represent the most common archaeological resource in the cemetery. Individual graves may include skeletal remains, in addition to clothing and other personal items interred with each individual. Funerary objects, including coffin remains and artifacts associated with the initial interment(s) and later memorials, may also be present with individual and multiple interments. Commemorative graves may lack below-ground burial features and contain burial monuments only. Archaeological testing may also identify headstones and footstones that are overgrown and presently not visible on the surface. Post molds and buried courses of stone may also be present from older fence lines and stone walls that marked the boundaries of each cemetery and groups of graves over time.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ART
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1843-1964

Significant Dates

1843 (founding)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Nat C. Smith and Myron P. Howland (architects, office building)
C. O. Brightman (builder, office)
Josephat Nault (builder, maintenance building)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Founded in 1843, Oak Grove Cemetery is significant at the local level according to National Register Criteria A and C and Criteria Consideration D. It meets Criterion A because it was the first publicly owned cemetery in the city, is the site of graves of many of its most influential citizens, reflects the city's extensive maritime past, contains a significant African American section, and demonstrates the influence of Quaker thought on burial practices. It meets Criterion C because it is a largely intact reflection of the two main traditions in American cemetery theory and design of the 19th and early 20th centuries: the Rural Cemetery movement and the Lawn-Park movement. The cemetery appears to have been created both because existing cemeteries were privately owned and because the city's first rural cemetery was viewed as insufficiently "rural" in character. Oak Grove Cemetery is also eligible under Criteria Consideration D because it contains information about both ordinary and extraordinary New Bedford people that cannot readily be found elsewhere. The period of significance ranges from the cemetery's founding in 1843 to 1964, the standard 50-year cutoff for historical significance.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Oak Grove Cemetery arose from the impulse of a group of leading New Bedford citizens to create a public burial ground in the town. In 1832, when the subject was first discussed at town meeting, there were three cemeteries in the village: the 1793 Friends Burying Ground, on the edge of the Acushnet River south of the commercial core; the 1802 Old South (or Common) Burying Ground, just west of the Friends cemetery at the intersection of South Second and Griffin Streets (later called the Griffin Street Cemetery; NR pending); and a cemetery that is now part of Acushnet, the next town to the north, that separated from New Bedford in 1860.⁶

The two cemeteries close to the most densely settled part of the town, Friends and Griffin Street, were owned privately by a group of proprietors, though in practical terms the latter burying ground was open to anyone wishing to buy a plot. One of the arguments proffered in support of a public cemetery was the belief that the Griffin Street cemetery was reaching its capacity. In a remarkably detailed account of the actions of the town with respect to the issue, James Bunker Congdon, longtime Merchants' Bank cashier, town selectman, and promoter of many of the city's institutions, noted that a committee appointed by the 1834 town meeting "ascertained that not more than 600 additional interments can be made in the common burying ground, situated in the southerly part of the village . . . which is the only public Burying place in town. They have also ascertained that the number of interments therein for each of the last 4 years has been as follows—1836, 136, 1837 109, 1838 157, 1839 106 making an average of 127 during each of said years. At this rate the whole ground will become completely occupied in less than five years."⁷

According to Congdon, the town authorized the purchase of a five-acre tract for a public cemetery in 1832, but a committee appointed by town meeting in 1834 found the site unsuitable and could not agree on a better one. While the matter lay in abeyance, a fourth cemetery, Rural Cemetery (NR pending), was founded in 1837 on the

⁶ Leonard Bolles Ellis, *History of New Bedford and Its Vicinity, 1602-1892* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason and Co., 1892), 724; Zephaniah W. Pease, *History of New Bedford* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1918), 1:22; on the removal of Quakers, see "Municipal," *New-Bedford Mercury*, June 8, 1849, 2:6; April 26, 1855, 3:1; and May 3, 1855, 3:1; and "Fifty Years Ago," *New Bedford Sunday Standard-Times*, December 27, 1953, 16.

⁷ [James B. Congdon], "Proceedings of the Town on the Subject of a Public Burying Ground," James Bunker Congdon Papers, New Bedford Free Public Library. Unless otherwise noted, the account of the cemetery's development is taken from this manuscript.

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southwestern edge of the growing town, but it too was initially privately owned and operated. Thus by 1841 the matter of a new public cemetery was revived.

After a survey of a range of possible sites, a town committee that year recommended two contiguous parcels near the so-called "Wheat Fields," west of the settled section of the town. The committee described the first piece, six acres owned by physician Alexander Read, as a "beautiful knoll" with "fine vigorous trees"; the second parcel, two acres, was by 1842 owned by the grocer and butcher Bethuel Penniman, and lay between the first tract and what was then a private way leading from County Street opposite the mansion of whaling merchant John Avery Parker. The town, however, continued to debate the cemetery's siting, and deferred acting upon the matter until the next year's meeting. A committee appointed by the 1842 meeting again recommended the Wheat Fields location. This "elevated knoll . . . gradually falling off on three sides" offered sites on the slopes "very eligible for the construction of tombs," the committee noted, and it advised that the best of the "native forest trees, some of large size" be kept to provide shade. Both Read and Penniman agreed to open streets to the proposed cemetery; Read's right-of-way became Smith Street, and Penniman's became Parker Street.

The committee told the town meeting that Read and Penniman offered the land at a combined price of \$1,300, slightly more than both would have cost in 1841. Another \$600 would be needed to develop Smith and Parker Streets, \$770 to build a five-foot wall "capped with large stones extending around the lot," and \$330 to lay out and prepare the ground and create carriageways. The total projected expense was \$3,000. The committee's report expressed doubt that the sum requested for improving the grounds would satisfy what citizens thought best, and advised that later meetings authorize funding for "such other matters of an ornamental character as in conformity with a correct taste." The town authorized the full funding request, and by the 1843 meeting, Congdon, then chair of both the cemetery committee and the town's board of selectmen, reported that the work had been completed for \$24.50 less than the appropriated sum.⁸ The committee also arranged to purchase a right-of-way from Kempton Street to Smith Street, where the main entrance was constructed. A town meeting later that year reported that 200 lots had been laid out over less than one quarter of the cemetery. If the city hired a landscape architect to design the cemetery, no account exists of it in municipal records.

When Oak Grove Cemetery was opened to the public, it contained eight acres and three-tenths of a rod between Parker and Smith Streets. It was then, according to James Bunker Congdon, a "quiet and secluded" spot in the northwestern and still largely rural part of the town. It was surrounded by a "substantial and tasteful fence," and in his view its "natural features" were "beautifully adapted" for use as a cemetery.⁹

The sort of cemetery Congdon and others had in mind was the rural cemetery, which, unlike earlier urban graveyards, was typically sited in a suburban location with rolling terrain. Inaugurated by the creation of Mount Auburn Cemetery (NHL) in Cambridge in 1831, the rural cemetery movement was inspired by the proximity of earlier graveyards to dense urban populations, the widespread perception that decaying remains gave off effluvia that could transmit infectious disease, and the transition from a morbid to a sentimental view of death. One contemporary observer wrote in the *Christian Review* that "the idea of death, so full in itself of dreariness and terror, is in Scripture, and particularly in the New Testament, softened down into the graceful and peaceful idea of sleep" in the rural cemetery.¹⁰ Despite the prominence of Oak Grove Cemetery, no record has been found that specifically identifies its landscape architect.

⁸ Congdon stated that purchasing the eight acres and twenty-three rods of land cost \$1382.50, building a "fence" and ways \$1475, drawing up a plan \$51.50, and paying the committee's expenses \$16.50. See Alexander and Sarah Read to the inhabitants of New Bedford, July 27, 1842, Bristol County Registry of Deeds book 7 page 156 (BCD 7:156), and Bethuel Penniman to the inhabitants of New Bedford, July 26, 1842, BCD 7:154. If the plan, drawn by Seth Ingalls, exists, it has not been located.

⁹ Congdon, Address, 5.

¹⁰ David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 73.

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These spaces were also touted as places of rest and retreat from the city. Landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing, a proponent of the form, declared that the rural cemetery aimed “to soften and allay some of the feverish unrest of business which seems to have possession of most Americans, body and soul.”¹¹ Congdon viewed the new Oak Grove Cemetery in much the same light. “Here, set apart from common use, far from the danger of encroachment from the increasing demands for tenements for the living, have we found a habitation for the dead,” he stated at the dedication. “This place, the all-grasping spirit of gain can never disturb.”¹² An unusual marker, the five-part monument to the children of Henry Walker (#31), is a concise expression of Victorian notions about the innocence of children and the particular value of the rural cemetery as a remove from the perceived disorder of the urban world. The Walker children all died before they were four months old, between 1832 and 1843. The form of the markers—rectilinear tablets with stepped, pointed tops—is identical to that of the larger stones marking the graves of their parents. On the base supporting the children’s conjoined markers are two epitaphs—“Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven” and “Saved from the pollutions of the world.”

The rural cemetery featured curving roadways and plantings of shrubs and trees that were designed not only to offer picturesque views but to encourage what historian Blanche Linden-Ward has termed “meditative promenades”; the naturalistic appearance was designed to “elicit specific emotions, especially the so-called pleasures of melancholy that particularly appealed to contemporary romantic sensibilities.”¹³ Congdon declared that the Oak Grove site had “rare natural beauty” in perfect accord “with the sentiments which have allied themselves with our ideas of a fitting resting-place for the dead.” But the rural cemetery was not simply an exhibition of nature; it was a place where, as Congdon put, “the hand of taste has labored in harmony with the arrangement of nature.” At the cemetery’s dedication ceremony Congdon noted that while the town had laid the avenues and otherwise prepared the tract for burials, it would be left to lot owners to embellish the cemetery, as he hoped, “in harmony with the lavish provisions of nature and the tasteful embellishments of art, which now characterize the spot.” Oak Grove’s regulations, published in the dedication booklet, stated that owners could plant and fence their lots “subject to the control of the Selectmen” and under the supervision of a cemetery superintendent, who was to handle installation and maintenance according to “his own views.”¹⁴ Such artificial elements as fences, hedges, curbs, and urns defined family lots and reflected the inward Victorian emphasis on home and family.

Congdon, who delivered the main address at Oak Grove’s dedication in October 1843, intimated that another motivation for creating the cemetery was the perception that the city’s Rural Cemetery (1837, NR pending) fell short of the ideal “rural cemetery.” “We may be allowed to express our regret, that in making the selection” of the site for Rural Cemetery, “no regard was paid to that universal sentiment that allies the beauties of nature with our ideas of an appropriate resting-place for the departed,” he noted at the dedication. Indeed, the original Oak Grove Cemetery resembled Mt. Auburn much more closely than did Rural Cemetery. The initial section of Rural Cemetery was laid out in 1837 on a strict grid, while there was almost nothing linear in Oak Grove. An 1848 plan of Rural Cemetery showed trees lining one carriageway and several of the ground’s borders, not planted or preserved in such a way as to offer views designed to inspire the sort of contemplation rural cemetery proponents touted.¹⁵

¹¹ Sloane, *Last Great Necessity*, 88.

¹² Congdon, *Address*, 7.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 66, 70, 76; Blanche Linden-Ward, “Strange but Genteel Pleasure Grounds: Tourist and Leisure Uses of Nineteenth-Century Rural Cemeteries,” in *Cemeteries & Gravemarkers: Voices of American Culture*, ed. Richard E. Meyer (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1989); 293, 295; Thomas Bender, “The ‘Rural’ Cemetery Movement: Urban Travail and the Appeal of Nature,” *New England Quarterly* 47, 2 (June 1974): 196.

¹⁴ Congdon, *An Address*, 23-25. Congdon stated that Zephaniah Eddy, “a worthy citizen of this town,” was the first burial at Oak Grove and that noted residents Alfred Gibbs and George W. Baker had since passed away, but town vital statistics document that Eddy died October 29, 1843 while Baker and Alfred Gibbs died on the same day exactly one month earlier. Eddy and Baker are buried at Oak Grove, and Gibbs was interred at Rural Cemetery.

¹⁵ “Plan of Rural Cemetery 1848 . . . City of New Bedford December 27, 1848, Approved by the Joint Standing Committee on Burial Grounds./Wm H Taylor Chairman,” private collection.

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In the design of the original section, the widest way was Central Avenue, which began at the Smith Street entrance as a straight road, and then split into a rotary around sections H and A in the southern and middle sections of the cemetery; it then resumed its straight course to meet with Circuit Avenue just west of the Parker Street entrance (see photo 2). A grid of two east-west streets and one north-south street was laid out between Circuit Avenue and Central Avenue on both the east and west sides in the southernmost section. Every other avenue and path in the old section is curved according to the rural cemetery model. Originally the old section was surrounded by a picket fence (in bad repair by 1915, and replaced by the stone wall beginning in 1935). Historic photographs show that at one time the Parker Street entrance to the old section had granite columns with pyramidal caps identical to those that are extant at Smith Street, and between these columns and the smaller ones adjacent to the wall were two pedestrian entrances. Arched cast-iron gates enclosed both the vehicular and two pedestrian entrances in the old section of Oak Grove (fig. 1).

In an era before urban parks had been developed, Oak Grove Cemetery was immediately popular both as a park and a burial ground. The New Bedford *Republican Standard* reported in 1851 that between six and seven hundred people had visited it in the space of only one Sunday evening hour.¹⁶ And it attracted many others in addition to the friends and family of those interred there. Upon learning that the city (New Bedford became a city in 1847) had appropriated funds to plant trees and install seating, one citizen calling himself "Amans Quietus" argued in a letter to the editor of the *New-Bedford Mercury* that providing benches "shall tend to make these spots, consecrated to the last offices of love and affection, *places of public resort*. . . . Regarding as we do privacy as the almost indispensable requisite of these lovely places, we regret that any measure should be taken which will thus invade these sanctuaries of the mourner." The correspondent declared that among the one to two thousand people who visited Oak Grove "every pleasant Sunday" were "large numbers of young men and boys, who go there to spend their time as they best can in smoking and boisterous converse. . . . If we are not mistaken, the direct effect of measures of the kind just passed, will be to encourage the class of idlers alluded to above, to the discomfort of all those who go there from worthier motives." The writer also recommended closing the footpath entrance from Parker Street so that townspeople could no longer use the cemetery as a shortcut between the central and north parts of town. He added,

We look upon the cultivation of these rural Cemeteries as one of the most beautiful features of our national character, and while we would not be so selfish as to wish the exclusion of all but sincerer mourners from their precincts, we feel that it is no part of their purpose to gratify an idle and listless curiosity. Their higher and more legitimate object is to wean us from the corrupting tendencies of the world, to remind us that our stay here is transient, that we may gather from the visible mementos of the loved ones who have gone before us, fresh strength to pursue our way onward and upward in the path of virtue and religion.¹⁷

The popularity of Oak Grove Cemetery and its diverse uses were issues at numerous other American rural cemeteries. Commentators noted that a fair share of the thousands who visited them had no interest in quiet contemplation. Downing bemoaned "the gala-day air of recreation" prevalent in the rural cemeteries of his day, on the grounds that it inhibited "serious recollections or regrets." In 1861, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted declared that rural cemeteries were "a constant resort of mere pleasure seekers, travelers, promenaders, and loungers." Linden-Ward has pointed out that only two years after the founding of Mt. Auburn, its managers complained that visitors damaged trees, shrubs, and fences, trespassed on lots by both foot and carriage, picked flowers, and rode horses down footpaths, all to the detriment of the "solemnity and quiet" that was supposed to characterize the place.¹⁸

¹⁶ *Republican Standard*, August 7, 1851, 2:4.

¹⁷ *Mercury*, 30 June 1848, 2:3.

¹⁸ Sloane, *Last Great Necessity*, 88, 90; Linden-Ward, "Strange but Genteel Pleasure Grounds," 317-18.

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Rural cemeteries also invited a growing number of critics who charged that they had come to replicate the social and physical order of the city, the very place from which the rural cemetery was to offer relief and escape. That the lot owners were permitted to embellish and ornament their lots as they saw fit not only emphasized the primacy of the family, but was also believed to enhance the beauty of the cemetery landscape. Yet the profusion of plain and ornamental fencing, curbing, seating, monuments, and family plantings began to clutter and obscure the naturalistic rural cemetery landscape from an early point. Downing complained particularly of “ironmongery, in the shape of vulgar iron railings, posts and chains, balustrades, etc., all belonging properly to the front-door steps and areas of Broadway and Chestnut-street,” not to “the aspect of nature, the repose, and the seclusion of a rural cemetery.” In 1848 the *Christian Review* deplored “a desire for singularity, and for a display of expense, in monuments”; thirteen years later, Olmsted charged that the rural cemetery had become “a place . . . of the grossest ostentation of the living.”¹⁹ The fences, curbs, and cemetery furniture once viewed as picturesque were now regarded as “incongruities” that obscured, confused, and “defaced” the landscape.

City cemetery officials had an opportunity to manifest new thinking about cemeteries when the city, by 1871, added about two acres to Oak Grove Cemetery south of Parker Street, as well as acreage on the north side of Parker Street. The southernmost two thirds of the new section was laid out with the serpentine drives characteristic of the old section, and of rural cemeteries generally, but the northernmost third of this initial parcel emulates the so-called “lawn-park” cemetery model. Initially developed in the late 1840s, the lawn-park cemetery promoted itself as “more rational and efficient” than the rural cemetery, with its “crowding and spatial confusion,” and what had come to be viewed as “promiscuous and tasteless decoration.” The lawn-park design replaced the hilly and heavily shaded terrain of the rural cemetery with vast expanses of relatively flat lawn, lower and more uniform grave markers, no fencing, fewer trees and shrubs, and, as Sloane has put it, “gently flowing lines, roundness and regularity, balance and symmetry, perfection and repose.” It was pastoral rather than picturesque, “reflecting not a carefully calculated balance between art and nature but ‘nature subordinated to civilization.’”²⁰

The New Bedford Cemetery Board, founded in 1895, stood firmly in favor of the new concept. As the development of a textile economy triggered a large increase of population by 1890, the board’s second annual report (1896) noted that it had purchased the William H. Caswell farm, slightly more than thirteen acres with its buildings,²¹ to expand Oak Grove further north, and that new sections had been opened in all three municipal cemeteries—seven in Oak Grove alone. According to a 1902 cemetery board report, the “park or lawn system” was “immediately applied” to the Caswell Farm. The 1896 report stated, “It is the intention of the Board to lay out the remainder of the cemetery grounds (including the recent additions of the Caswell Farm to the Oak Grove Cemetery) on the ‘Lawn’ system which is coming so much in use in cemeteries. This will result in a large saving in land, the avenues being so arranged as to require no paths to connect the same.”²² The cemetery board declared the new model so superior that “when the two methods, or systems, are brought into direct contract [*sic*] no one can fail to see the immense superiority of the new.” The report continued, “Cemetery experts claim that the erection of high headstones and massive curbing of lots are entirely subversive to all landscape beauty; that no matter how judiciously, or elegant, a cemetery may be planted, if these are permitted, they hide the planting so effectually and are so obtrusive that they entirely efface all the better features and give the sections (particularly

¹⁹ Sloane, *Last Great Necessity*, 88-90.

²⁰ Sloane, *Last Great Necessity*, 2, 103.

²¹ William B. Caswell to City of New Bedford, June 23, 1896, BCD 182:47. The 1896 cemetery board report indicated that the city had authorized the purchase of the Caswell farm and had allocated \$5,188.06 to that end, but the deed documents that the city paid Caswell \$13,216.74. *Second Annual Report of the Cemetery Board for the Year 1896* (New Bedford: E. Anthony and Sons, 1897), 7. The purchase had been contemplated since at least 1893; see Superintendent of Burial Grounds annual report, March 1, 1892-March 1, 1893, reprinted in unidentified newspaper, September 16, 1893, Cemetery Board Scrap Book #1, New Bedford Cemetery Board Records, Rural Cemetery. At that time the parcel had an estimated value of \$5.50 a rod for 13 acres and \$8.00 a rod for 8 acres; the board bought the first parcel for \$13,202. See *Eighth Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners New Bedford, Mass., for the Year Ending December 3 1902*.

²² Cemetery commissioners’ report reprinted in “Graves of Pioneers Lost,” *Evening Standard*, January 31, 1898, 1:3; *Eighth Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners New Bedford, Mass., for the Year Ending December 3 1902*.

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when viewed from a distance) more the appearance of a marble dealer's yard than portions of a properly planted cemetery." Achieving the "harmonious, systematic treatment of each constituent part" required the attention of professionals, and the board urged owners to place their lots under the city's care so that an "air of subdued beauty, together with neatness and perfection in keeping" might be achieved.

Beginning in the late 1890s, cemetery officials began to condemn poorly maintained fencing and hedges that had grown "unsightly" to realize the lawn-system model piecemeal in those sections of both Oak Grove and Rural cemeteries designed according to earlier models. "While the Lawn Plan system is being closely followed in the new extensions," the cemetery board's seventh annual report stated in 1901, "the older portions of our cemeteries have been much improved by the removal of fences, hedges and railings, and the substitution of grass walks for those of other materials, and the planting of shrubbery and flowering trees, so that a wonderful improvement is shown in the whole area of the grounds."²³

In mid-November 1897 the cemetery board explicated its new approach to cemetery development in the newspaper. The article showed the design of the old section and contrasted it with a proposed design for the new Caswell farm section, prepared by city engineer William F. Williams, which showed one gently curving circuit drive, two connecting drives, and three connections to the lower part of the new section. All burial lots were simple squares to be separated by grass walkways. The newspaper described the difference between the new and old plans:

It may be described briefly, as aiming to produce a "park effect" rather than the usual "cemetery effect," as exemplified by the cemeteries now in use. This is accomplished by substituting for the many small plats of various designs, with narrow and winding drives, and an entire absence of trees and shrubs, large tracts of wide expanses of greensward with a few wide avenues lined with trees and shrubs, and with trees and shrubs placed at suitable points over the larger tracts, producing as a whole the effect . . . of a quiet little park, rather than a burying ground.²⁴

The new section was laid out almost exactly as Williams designed it. After the new section opened, a reporter for the *New-Bedford Mercury* described his visit there in company with the chair of the cemetery board:

The cemetery was approached by the Robeson street entrance [fig. 3]. This street, by the way, from Shawmut Avenue to the cemetery line, has recently been macadamized, and a good job it is, too. About this entrance are several piles of stones, which will later form part of a gateway. It is proposed to curve the wall inward with an easy sweep, and to make rubble stone gate posts. . . . The system of grading lots now in vogue is especially noticeable in this section of the cemetery. In times past the custom was to rise from the level of the avenues with two terraces, one a few feet in width, and the other embracing the whole of the lot. The plan now being followed out calls for but one rise from the avenue.

A gang of laborers is now at work on the west boundary wall of this part of the cemetery, which it is calculated to complete to the northwest corner of the enclosure, making a continuous boundary wall along the west line.

The stones cleared from the new land were used in walls, and crushed in the foundations of the new avenues (fig. 4).²⁵

The ascendancy at Oak Grove of the lawn-park plan was motivated not only by the perception of unseemly clutter, but also by population pressure and ease of maintenance in a new era of professional cemetery

²³ *Seventh Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners New Bedford, Mass., for the Year Ending December 3 1901*, 8.

²⁴ "The Cemeteries," unidentified newspaper, November 16, 1897, Cemetery Board Scrap Book #1.

²⁵ "Cities of the Dead," *Mercury*, n.d., Cemetery Scrap Book #1.

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management. When the new section was designed, city engineer Williams pointed out that the "park plan" would permit 25% more lots because the many winding avenues would be eliminated. Creating more lots in the space was no small consideration at a time when the city's population was exploding with the rapid growth of its textile economy: between 1890 and 1910 the resident population more than doubled, from 40,733 to 96,652 persons. Not since the 1820-1840 period had it experienced such rapid growth. "Few people realize how rapidly the cemeteries controlled by the city are filling up," the newspaper noted.²⁶ Williams also explained that the new lawn plan would save the city money in labor costs. "The care of large tracts, of uniform grade and finish, will naturally be very much less expensive than the care of a great number of small lots of varying grades and finish of surface," he told the reporter. Caring for "a few wide avenues" instead of a "large number of graveled walks and drives" would be easier and cheaper.

In 1899 the city built a greenhouse at the southwestern end of the new section of Oak Grove, the first of several built to supply plantings for New Bedford cemeteries and open spaces. The cemetery board's report for 1903 states that the cemetery had two "large span-roof houses," one being the 1899 greenhouse at 18 by 12 feet and the other, 75 by 16 feet, built in either 1900 or 1901. There was also a palm house, twenty feet square and eighteen feet high, where palms, tree ferns, and other "large specimen plants" were kept in the winter. West of the southernmost greenhouse was a potting house, space for 50 cold frames, and a storage pit for "half-hardy" plants.²⁷ Historical photographs show a vast array of plantings that were grown in the houses at both Oak Grove and Rural cemeteries (fig. 5); in 1901-1902 some 20,000 plants were being cultivated within them. In those years, cemetery workers created an artificial pond just east of the Parker Street entrance, a site considered too wet for burials, and stocked it with goldfish and aquatic plants. In spring 1902 four hydrangeas, five large palms, three large oleanders, two century plants, one banana and one orange plant, three ablutions, 25 umbrella plants, twenty dracaenas, and 42 grevillia robusta were planted around the pond.²⁸ In the spring of 1905 the pond was reconstructed. The bed was deepened, widened, and lined with mortared granite blocks, and on top of the granite retaining wall was a mortared cobblestone border.²⁹ It is not yet known when this pond was filled.

In 1902, the city sold and moved the Caswell farmhouse from the new section and moved the toolhouse to the west end of the cemetery to create an attractive entrance to the new section.³⁰ As at Rural Cemetery, where the name and founding and current dates were spelled out in a pansy border, "1843 Oak Grove 1902" was worked out in pansies near the Parker Street entrance.

The 1911 Walker atlas plate including Oak Grove Cemetery documents the application of the lawn cemetery model. It shows eight oval sections bordering the Caswell tract, laid out within a grid of three east-west lanes. The Caswell farm section was shown partly developed and laid out, as it is today, with one gently curving outer roadway connected to the old section by two smaller ones.³¹ In this section, markers were placed in long north-south rows, rather than facing out along the carriageways as in the rest of the cemetery. The 1911 plate also shows the Caswell tract laid out for burial purposes west of its current boundary, land that today is part of the grounds of New Bedford High School. In that year, in fact, the cemetery board report stated that Oak Grove was slightly more than 41 acres, about ten acres larger than it is today. City cemetery officials spoke of it as "practically a closed cemetery" in 1915, though burials still are made within it. As of December 1, 1914, 13,786 bodies had been interred at Oak Grove Cemetery.

²⁶ "The Cemeteries," unidentified newspaper, November 16, 1897, Cemetery Board Scrap Book #1.

²⁷ "New Bedford's Cemeteries," *Evening Standard*, May 7, 1903, Cemetery Board Scrap Book #1; *Ninth Annual Report . . . for the Year Ending December 3, 1903*.

²⁸ *Tenth Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissions New Bedford, Mass. for the Year Ending Dec. 3, 1904*, 37.

²⁹ "Improvements at Oak Grove," 8 May 1905, Cemetery Board Scrap Book #1.

³⁰ ["New Bedford's Silent Cities: Cemetery Board Presents Its Fourth Annual Report," January 13, 1899, Cemetery Board Scrap Book #1; *Seventh Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners New Bedford, Mass. for the Year Ending Dec. 3, 1901*]

³¹ "The Cemeteries," unidentified newspaper, November 16, 1897, Cemetery Board Scrap Book #1, notes that 3.5 acres of the Caswell farm "at the west end is low and swamp, and will require drainage before it will be available for development."

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Improvements continued at Oak Grove in the 1910s. By 1911, the granite wall along Parker Street on the north side of the old section had begun to deteriorate—"badly thrown by the frosts and weather actions," the board reported—and was completely rebuilt in 1913.³² In 1916, the barn, toolhouse, and cold frames were moved "to a location west of the boundary wall" (the site of the current maintenance building) to make room for more burials.³³ In 1917 the sexton's "lodge" was moved from the grounds, probably to the site of the current maintenance building, and the firm of Smith and Howland designed a new building to stand just west of the Parker Street entrance in the new section. The cemetery board described it as "a modern building of Colonial style, and type of the old New England period," and noted that it contained a "comfortable waiting room for the public," a space for burial services in bad weather, restrooms, and an office for the sexton. Built by Charles O. Brightman, the new office cost \$3,950.³⁴ In 1918, cemetery workers altered the Parker Street entrance to the new section by removing the iron gates (identical to those extant at the old section's Smith Street entrance) and "old stone enclosure" on the west side of that gate. Assistant superintendent Hurlbert E. Thomas recommended that "an ornamental privet hedge" be put in place of the wall, "with recess lines at the entrance, and terminating at stone abutments"; in place of the gates should be "heavy chains." The stone piers remain, and contain evidence of the existence of these chains. The wall at the east side of the entrance was curved in to the abutment, and parts of the privet that marked the west side remain.³⁵

Thomas had hoped that the stone removed from the wall in the new section could be used to extend the wall along the east end of the old section of Oak Grove, then enclosed by an old picket fence that was "fast going to decay." But in 1919 the New England textile economy entered a severe slump from which it never truly recovered, and neither funds nor personnel were available for the stone work. The only significant change in the 1920s was the construction of the brick maintenance building at the southeast corner of Parker and Liberty Streets (see photo 4). The city demolished the barn and shed on the site, and built a new two-story building containing lockers for cemetery workers, a carpenter shop, a work room, space for "machines, wheelbarrows, rollers, headstone coverings, lowering devices, etc." Built by Josephat Nault, the maintenance building was finished in early 1927 and cost roughly \$6,000.³⁶

In the 1930s Oak Grove was part of a large-scale cemetery improvement project, sponsored and largely funded by the Civil Works Administration (CWA), Emergency Relief Administration (ERA), and, in 1935, Works Progress Administration (WPA). In the old section relief workers built a "new rubble faced wall" to replace existing picket fences on both the east and west boundaries, and later, on the south (Smith Street) side, straightened the granite pillars at the Smith Street entrance so that the "heavy iron gates" there could once again be closed.³⁷ Federal workers also improved avenues within the cemetery, probably in the new section.

By 1955, apparently only one greenhouse remained at Oak Grove Cemetery. In that year cemetery board member Samuel Higginbottom recommended closing the building to save the city money based upon the fact that "all the geraniums that are needed each year for the decoration of soldiers and sailors graves on Memorial Day" could be grown at the greenhouse in the city's Buttonwood Park. Higginbottom's comment makes clear how greatly

³² *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissions for the Year Ending December 4, 1910* (New Bedford: A. E. Coffin Press, 1911); *Nineteenth Annual Report . . . 1913*.

³³ *Twenty-Second Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners for the Year Ending December 3, 1916* (New Bedford: J. E. Budlong Press, 1917).

³⁴ "Proposals for Sexton's House," *Morning Mercury*, July 2, 1917; *Twenty-Third Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the City of New Bedford Massachusetts for the Year Ending November 30, 1917* (New Bedford: E. Anthony and Sons, 1918); Cemetery Board Records vol. 4.

³⁵ *Twenty-Third Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the City of New Bedford Massachusetts for the Year Ending November 30, 1917* (New Bedford: E. Anthony and Sons, 1918), 11e.

³⁶ Cemetery Board Records vol. 6; *Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the City of New Bedford, Massachusetts, for the year Ending November 30, 1926* (New Bedford: Baker Manufacturing Co., 1927), 10-11e; *Thirty-Third Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the City of New Bedford, Massachusetts, for the year Ending November 30, 1927* (New Bedford: Baker Manufacturing Co., 1928).

³⁷ *Forty-First Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners for the Year Ending December 31, 1935* (New Bedford: Bradbury-Waring, 1936).

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reduced cemetery planting had become since its turn-of-the-century heyday. In 1956, at the mayor's urging, the Oak Grove greenhouse was razed.³⁸ In more recent decades, vandalism took its toll on Oak Grove. Between 1965 and 1985, vandals damaged or destroyed more than seven hundred markers; some, police held, had been using the grounds for "drinking sprees."³⁹

The Social World of Oak Grove Cemetery

The tendency to display earthly status in cemeteries that so irked lawn-park advocates is evident at Oak Grove Cemetery, though not nearly to the degree that it is manifest at the city's Rural Cemetery. It is at least possible that the presence of a number of graves of wealthy persons who were birthright Quakers tends to moderate the display of status here. The William Rotch, Sr. and Elizabeth Rotch markers (died 1824, #14) are plain, in keeping with the Quaker testimony of simplicity; Elizabeth Rotch's marker is inscribed only with her name (photo 14). Rotch was New Bedford's preeminent whaling merchant up to the time of his death in 1828, but he was also a steadfast and conscientious Quaker. Even the Oak Grove markers for men and women born into Quaker families, but who resigned membership or were disowned during the 1820s schism in the New Bedford Meeting—among them William Rotch, Jr., Samuel Rodman, Cornelius Grinnell, Jr., James Arnold, Andrew Robeson, and Charles Waln Morgan, all leaders in the whaling industry—are markedly plain.⁴⁰ Like the William Rotch, Sr. gravestone, the Samuel and Elizabeth Rodman markers (#32), across Circuit Avenue from the Rotch family lot, show birth and death dates in Quaker fashion. All of these families had grown remarkably wealthy, chiefly through whaling and maritime trade. One historian has termed the Rotches "the architects of New Bedford and the force which changed the village of 'Bedford' into the whaling capital of the world. . . . The Rotches were to whaling what Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller were to steel and oil."⁴¹ James Arnold (#33), whose fortune created Boston's Arnold Arboretum, married a daughter of William Rotch, Sr. and is buried on the same lot; in 1851 his estate was estimated at \$600,000. William Rotch, Jr. left an estate worth roughly one million dollars when he died in 1850.

The display of status is evident, however, within Oak Grove's old section. Members of the William Rotch, James Arnold, Samuel Rodman, and Andrew Robeson families—all of them leaders in local society and economy—are buried west of the Smith Street entrance, where Central Avenue branches into its first rotary. Within that circular section are the graves of Alexander Read, whose land formed the greater part of the burial ground, and the family of Isaac Howland, Jr., one of the wealthiest of all New Bedford whaling families. The Rotch and Rodman family lots appear never to have been fenced, but the unadorned markers of the family of James Howland (34), a birthright Quaker, are still partly surrounded by an iron picket fence. William Rotch, Jr. (died 1850), his first wife Elizabeth Rodman Rotch (died 1828, #14), and two of their infant children are interred in a tomb in altar form just south of Rotch's parents. Many of the markers in the large Grinnell family lot (#36) are simple tablets with semicircular tops, but the lot is curbed and heavily planted with yews and rhododendron, both said to symbolize immortality because they remain green all year; the vegetation and curbing combine to create an isolated, though picturesque, setting within the larger cemetery setting.

The most elaborate markers and family plots designate persons who were not members of the Society of Friends. The plot for the flour, grain, and provisions dealer Nathaniel S. Cannon (died 1876, #37) and his two wives is

³⁸ "Higginbottom Seeks to Close Greenhouse at City Cemetery," nd but 1955, Cemetery Scrap Book #4.

³⁹ *Standard-Times*, December 20, 1965, 13; "Loss Exceeds \$4,400 in Seven Breaks Here," *Standard-Times*, February 2, 1967, 1; "Vandals Tip 400 Stones in Cemetery," *Standard-Times*, June 6, 1978; "Cemetery Vandalism Estimated at \$250,000," *Standard-Times*, July 14, 1978; "140 Gravestones Vandalized at City's Oak Grove Cemetery," *Standard-Times*, April 2, 1985, 1.

⁴⁰ Disownments and withdrawals during the schism are recorded in New England Yearly Meeting of Friends Records, New Bedford Monthly Meeting, vol. 401 (1808-28), vol. 402 (1828-50), Rhode Island Historical Society.

⁴¹ Joseph McDevitt, "The House of Rotch," iii-iv, 1-2. The average wealth of New Bedford agents who managed twenty or more voyages before 1856 was \$112,642, which made them among the richest people in the United States at the time.⁴¹ Davis, et al., *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 401, 412-13.

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demarcated with two tiers of granite curbing, perhaps the tallest obelisk in the old section of Oak Grove Cemetery, and six individual markers in pulpit form that bear the initials of the deceased on their inclined faces.

The austere marker over the Sylvia Ann Howland (#24) grave was the focus of repeated lament and controversy. Born in 1806, Howland was the daughter of Gideon Howland, Jr., who then operated the company of his father-in-law, Isaac Howland Jr. and Company, one of the most successful whaling firms in 19th-century New Bedford. When her mother died in 1809, Sylvia and her younger sister Abby became the sole heirs of the Isaac Howland, Jr. estate, then valued at \$271,527.21. When Isaac Howland, Jr. died in 1833, his will left Sylvia \$130,000 of that estate; when her father died in 1847, his large estate passed to Sylvia and Abby. By the time she died in July 1865, Sylvia Ann Howland was worth more than \$2 million, half of which she left in trust to her niece Hetty Howland Robinson Green, the daughter of her sister Abby and Edward Mott Robinson. Hetty Green, later the richest woman in the country, had just inherited her father's \$5.7 million estate barely two weeks earlier. Yet in 1868 she contested her aunt's will by producing a signed addendum in which Sylvia Ann Howland purportedly invalidated all wills prepared after her 1862 will, which, through Hetty's persuasion, left nearly her entire estate to Hetty. In *Robinson v. Mandell* the court invalidated Green's claim and declared the signature on the addendum a forgery. For many years, if not for the rest of her life, Green resented her aunt for changing the 1862 will and for consigning that part of the estate left to her to trustees.

Sylvia Ann Howland's will left a great deal of money to the city of New Bedford, largely for the public library, the city's indigent widows, and "liberal education," and to increase the supply of water for manufacturing. She was rightly viewed as "the city's greatest benefactress," and by 1915 the neglected condition of her Oak Grove cemetery marker was publicly deplored. According to a *Boston Globe* reporter, the lot where Howland, her father, her sister Abby, and her brother-in-law Edward Mott Robinson were buried was covered in moss, the iron fence around it was rusted and in poor repair, and the grave markers were discolored. In its defense, the cemetery board pointed out that no perpetual care agreement covered the family lot, and the board was not legally allowed to use public funds to improve privately owned lots. All it could do was alert lot owners to their condition and urge their improvement. The board told the local newspaper that it had repeatedly sent special delivery letters to Hetty Green asking her to care for the lot, but every communication was ignored. Not until 1939 did Green's daughter, Hetty Sylvia Ann Howland Green Wilks (1871-1951), address the problem; she cleaned the lot, removed the fence, and installed granite curbing in its place. Wilks, at the time the only heir to Hetty Green's estate, also placed the lot under perpetual care, but the condition of the Howland lot remained an issue at least into the 1960s.⁴²

The intricate and long-lived connection between New Bedford and the maritime world is evident in many markers, not only in the anchor iconography shown on numerous markers, but in inscriptions as well. The marker for Captain Benjamin W. Tilton (#38) notes that he was "lost in Steamer Croton on the passage from Charleston to New York May 10th, 1867; Aged 48 Years." Tilton, born about 1818 and the son of New Bedford ship rigger James Tilton, was master of the *Croton* on that voyage. On the evening of May 10, the steamer, carrying heavy machinery, collided with the schooner *Two Marys* near Hampton Roads, Virginia, and sunk immediately; all on board were lost.⁴³ The marker for Aaron C. Cushman, a broken marble column, is probably not a cenotaph like Tilton's: Cushman was master of the ship *Lancer*, which left New Bedford for a Pacific whaling voyage in early August 1856; he died on November 22 after a short illness while the vessel was cruising between the Azores and the Brazilian state of Pernambuco. Authorities there refused to allow the crew to bring Cushman's body aboard,

⁴² "Cemetery Board Not Responsible for Condition," *New Bedford Times*, March 29, 1915, and untitled article, *Boston Sunday Globe*, April 4, 1915, Cemetery Board Scrap Book #3; Robert J. Barcellos, "Famous Plot an Eyesore," *Standard-Times*, April 11, 1965; for background on Sylvia Ann Howland and Hetty Green, see Charles Slack, *Hetty: The Genius and Madness of America's First Female Tycoon* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2004).

⁴³ "Loss of the Steamer Croton and Her Entire Crew," from the *Savannah Herald*, June 5, 1867, reprinted in *New York Herald*, June 9, 1867.

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and some days later Cushman's widow convinced the master of the brig *Thomas Walker* to bring the body to its home port of Philadelphia; it was likely shipped to New Bedford from there.⁴⁴

The marker for Captain William Worth (1761-1824, #39) and his seventeen-year-old son Columbus Worth (1808-24) provides enough information to connect it to the mutiny on the Nantucket whaling ship *Globe*, which industry historian Alexander Starbuck termed "the most diabolical, cold-blooded mutiny ever perpetrated upon the deck of any whaleship." Columbus Worth's marker states that he was "killed by the natives at Mulgrave Island February 1824." Born on Martha's Vineyard in 1808, Columbus Worth signed on as a seaman in the crew of the *Globe*, commanded by his first cousin Thomas Worth, in December 1822. After the captain brutally punished a member of the crew in late January 1824, one of the boatsteerers organized a mutiny, killed Thomas Worth and the ship's mates, and took the vessel to the Mulgrave Islands. While there, six crew members assigned to guard the ship cut its cable and escaped to Valparaiso; they left at least ten of the crew, including Columbus Worth, behind. Among those left were the mutineers, who antagonized the island's residents to the point that they killed all but two of the stranded whalers. Strangely, Columbus Worth's father William, a former master mariner and customs official, died in the same month and year, some three weeks before his son's murder, in Charlton, Massachusetts.⁴⁵ Buried alongside the two is another of William Worth's sons, John Worth, who became the United States vice consul to Hawaii and lived in Hilo in the 1860s; his wife, New Bedford native Eliza Sampson Worth, died in Hilo in 1867, as her Oak Grove marker indicates.

Burial records, extant stones, and censuses establish that Section J in the old part of Oak Grove Cemetery is exclusively African American. This section ranges roughly along the north half of the eastern section, between the main circuit road and the cemetery's eastern border, in what was the old section's original back corner. Cemetery records indicate that 480 graves exist within Section J. Of those 480 interments, names are identified for only 216 persons, and markers were recorded on only 120 graves. Today, markers exist for 134 burials, but no cemetery record exists for eighteen of those. Few granite curbs or other forms of family lot markers exist in this section. Whether the city's African Americans chose this segregation or cemetery officials created it cannot be known, but because almost no people of African descent are buried elsewhere in the old section, the latter seems likely. There is also evidence that the deterioration of this section was long standing. "In the old part of Oak Grove Cemetery, Sections J and Q have remained much as the ground originally appeared before general improvement was taken up by this department," the 1920 cemetery superintendent's report stated. "Many of the mounds still remain and the whole is cared for only as neglected ground. As these sections are near the Parker street entrance, I would suggest that they be filled in, and graded, seeded and properly embellished."⁴⁶

In the African American section of old Oak Grove Cemetery, markers are extant for William and Amelia Piper (#40), who came to New Bedford from Alexandria, Virginia, and may have been fugitives from slavery. In the 1930s Henry Carroll, also buried here but for whom no marker exists, was identified as a fugitive whom Harriet Tubman had brought North. Many others buried here were antebellum, southern-born migrants to the city. And the graves of descendants of renowned Afro-Indian mariner and abolitionist Paul Cuffe (1759-1817, #41) exist in this section as well—Freelove S. Jones (1823-1903), daughter of Cuffe's son William; Freelove Jones Howland

⁴⁴ Charles Boardman Hawes, *Whaling* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1924), 208-12.

⁴⁵ Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery* (1878; reprint, Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989), 134-35, 243; William Lay and Cyrus M. Hussey, *A Narrative of the Mutiny, on board the Ship Globe, of Nantucket, in the Pacific Ocean, Jan. 1824* (New-London, CT: Wm. Lay and C. M. Hussey, 1828); William M. Worth, "Descendants of John Worth of Nantucket, Part 3," <http://history.vineyard.net/worthw3.htm>. Whether this stone was moved, with the body of William Worth, from another cemetery, or was erected later as a cenotaph is unknown.

⁴⁶ *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the City of New Bedford Massachusetts for the Year Ending November 30, 1920* (New Bedford: A. E. Coffin Press, 1921). Thanks to Sylvia Gomez of the New Bedford Cemetery Board for providing records of Section J burials, which I checked against my own database of New Bedford people of African descent and against vital records.

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(1845-1864), Freeloove Jones's daughter; and Paul C. Phelps (1818-1851), son of Paul Cuffe's daughter Mary and her husband Alvan Phelps.

The only group of African American burials outside Section J in Oak Grove's old section are those of the family of abolitionist and caterer Nathan Johnson (1795-1880, #15). Probably born in Virginia, Johnson was living in New Bedford by 1819 and is best known for having provided Frederick Douglass not only the name by which he was later known, but his first home in the free states. Johnson appears to have been a committed integrationist—as his epitaph, "Freedom for All Mankind" suggests—and his choice to site his family plot outside Section J may have been quite deliberate. The Johnson family lot also contains the graves of his wife Polly, his mother Emily Brown, and some of his stepchildren (photo 15).

The racial divide that exists for the most part in old Oak Grove Cemetery is not replicated in the new section, as the Carney family plot (#16) exemplifies. This plot contains the grave of William H. Carney (died 1908), the first African American to earn the Congressional Medal of Honor, for his valor during the Union Army's unsuccessful 1863 siege of Fort Wagner in South Carolina. Carney, his parents, and his siblings were fugitives from slavery who escaped to and settled in New Bedford in the late 1850s. Carney, his parents, one of his sisters, his wife Susannah Williams, and her parents are buried in the family lot, and Carney's grave is marked by a marble obelisk as well as a headstone (photo 16).

Aside from people of color, ethnic and racial minorities are thinly represented in the Oak Grove's old section. A small group of markers designates the burial places of the Langguth-Habicht family (#42), who had immigrated before 1853-54. The marker for Eliza (died 1857), the widow of Conrad Langguth, shows her birthplace as Neustadt, Kingdom of Bavaria; she may have emigrated only with her children. Her daughter Margareta married John B. Habicht, who initially worked as a stonecutter and later ran New Bedford's Germania House hotel through at least the early 1880s. He may have taken over the proprietorship of the hotel from George Langguth, another child of Margareta and Conrad. These families were among fewer than 100 German-born people in New Bedford in the 1850s and 1860s. A lone grave in the southeast corner of the old section is that of Lucy Sepit Francis (#43) (1800-1882), whose parents were Wampanoag Indians of the Middleboro tribe; she was the widow of the Madeiran mariner Antone Francis.

Just as Oak Grove's new section is more integrated in racial terms, it is more diverse in ethnic terms, representing the post-1890 city, just as the old section represents the relatively homogeneous character of New Bedford before its post-Civil War textile boom. The northernmost section includes markers for people of Polish, Irish, Greek, German, Austrian, Scandinavian, and Portuguese descent (photo 17). A group of markers along the east circuit road designates the graves of the intermarried Blecha-Krafka families (#44), natives of Bohemia; the men buried here were all textile workers. Another Bohemian, seventeen-year-old Anna Sestak (#45), died 1906, is buried in the north end of the cemetery, which, as the last section to be developed, tends itself to be more ethnically diverse than the rest of the new section. Here, too, is the grave of Rosa S. Rezendes (#17), photo 17, a native of the Azorean island of St. Michael; born Rosa da Silva in 1887, she was working in a New Bedford cotton mill in 1910 when she married teamster Manuel Rezendes, also from St. Michael; she died of tuberculosis three years later, at the age of 26.

Other persons of national and local renown are buried in new Oak Grove Cemetery, including Clifford W. Ashley (#21, died 1947), a well-known illustrator and painter; many of his works document the last days of New Bedford whaling. His *Ashley's Book of Knots* (1944) is the standard guide on that subject. Richard Canfield (1855-1914, #26), the so-called "Prince of Gamblers," was the son of New Bedford restaurateur and trader William Canfield. He began his working life as a hotel clerk, but in 1879 he opened a gambling parlor in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. A profitable venture, it was shut down after a police raid in 1885, and Canfield served six months in jail in Cranston as a "common gambler." He then moved to New York City and established elite gaming rooms behind

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Delmonico's restaurant. In 1892, in Saratoga Springs, his Casino at Congress Park helped establish the town as "the Monte Carlo of America." The *New York Times* called him "the best known gambling resort proprietor in this country" and "the wealthiest individual gambler in the world." After repeated raids, Canfield closed his casinos in the first decade of the 1900s and became a manufacturer of glass bottle stoppers, as well as a significant collector of antiques and paintings. A close friend of James McNeill Whistler, he assembled the second-largest collection of Whistler's works in the world, and Whistler's last, unfinished portrait, "His Reverence," was of Canfield. He died in 1914 after fracturing his skull in a fall on the steps of a New York subway station,⁴⁷ and his ashes are interred at Oak Grove in a family lot.

Few stones in either section of Oak Grove Cemetery bear the signatures of their carvers, but several bear close resemblance to the known work of men who worked in this region. The willows and style of inscription on the Susan Cornell (died 1846; photo 18, #18) and Sarah Hammond (died 1851, #46) markers bear a close resemblance to markers carved in this region by Zebulon Thompson (1813-1895). Thompson was the third generation of his family to work as a gravestone carver, and he took over his father Isaac's business at the latter's death in 1830. Their shop was in Rochester, but Isaac Thompson, Jr. had worked in New Bedford in 1812-1814, and Zebulon Thompson's gravestones are found throughout the region. The marker might also have been carved by Elisha Hinman Everett (born 1803 in Wareham), who is shown as an "ornamental stone cutter" working for Joseph Allen, Jr. in the 1849 New Bedford directory.⁴⁸ Everett probably carved the Oak Grove marker for Benjamin Lincoln (died 1828); the depiction of two willows flanking an urn and the combined roman and italic lettering in the inscription are almost identical to the Falmouth marker for Abigail Hatch (died 1827) that historian James Blachowicz has attributed to him. Joseph Allen, Jr., who signed at least one marker at New Bedford's Rural Cemetery in 1837, may have carved the marker for Harriet Harrison (died 1835, #48) at Oak Grove, which bears a similar inscription style; its distinctly different willow may have been carved by someone in Allen's shop. Of these known carvers, Joseph Allen, Jr. was in business in New Bedford the longest: directories show him as a stonemason from at least 1836 to the time he died in 1879, and his business was carried on into the 20th century by Frederick Allen, probably a nephew, and then by Frederick's son, Frederick E. Allen.

A notable early group of interments at Oak Grove Cemetery includes the remains of Diah Trafford (marker not extant), one of three men killed in the British raid on New Bedford in September 1778, and some of the 22 sailors killed in the May 1779 battle between the U.S. Naval sloop *Providence* and the British brig *Diligent* during the Revolution. Originally interred at "Burying Ground Hill" north of the former Friends Cemetery on the waterfront, an untold number of skeletons were unearthed in 1830 when William Coffin built a carpenter shop on the site. Coffin reinterred them a few feet north of the new shop, and moved them again in 1841 when he built an addition onto the building. In September 1889 they were dug up yet again when Edmund Grinnell excavated the site for an addition to his iron foundry, and they were then permanently reinterred at Oak Grove Cemetery; the location of these graves is unknown.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ "Richard Canfield Killed by a Fall," *New York Times*, December 12, 1914; George Patzer, "Saratoga Opens Centennial Recalling Famed NB Gambler," *Standard-Times*, July 30, 1963, Cemetery Board Scrap Book #1.

⁴⁸ On both the Thompsons and Everett see James Blachowicz, *From Slate to Marble: Gravestone Carving Traditions in Eastern Massachusetts, 1770-1870* (Evanston, IL: Graver Press, 2006), 94, 99, 101, 333.

⁴⁹ An earlier state-level inventory form for Griffin Street Cemetery (Ben Ford, Public Archaeology Laboratory, October 30, 2001) mistakenly stated that these Revolutionary war fatalities were buried at Griffin Street Cemetery. See Leonard Bolles Ellis, *History of New Bedford and Its Vicinity, 1602-1892* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., 1892), 102, 102 n. 1, and Zephaniah W. Pease, *History of New Bedford* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1918), 1: 17. Ellis noted that medical examiner William Gordon asserted "emphatically" that the bones were those of white men, though Indians had also been buried there; in "New Bedford Burial Place," appended to Congdon, Address, 35, James Bunker Congdon stated that workmen had come across "Indian bones" at Rotch's Hill, near the current Double Bank Building in downtown New Bedford, and that William Rotch, Jr. reinterred them "in a spot now covered by the carpenter's shop built by William Coffin," after an Indian woman refused to leave the bones upon learning they had been excavated. Whether these Indian burials were reinterred at Oak Grove is unknown, and local historians have not so asserted.

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No land remains for development within Oak Grove Cemetery, and though it has been declared virtually closed for nearly a century, some recent interments have been made there and are interspersed among older burials in the new section. The city cemetery board has stated that "only a limited number of plots [are] left for sale." Some family plots and individual markers are in serious disrepair; none of the markers in the family lot shown in figure 2, for example, are legible, and the inscription tablets themselves are broken many times over.

In recent years there has been resurgence in the public's interest in New Bedford's cemeteries as important historic resources. The New Bedford Preservation Society hosts annual cemetery tours, with a living history program in which residents in period costume represent past residents, both well known and obscure, at their gravesites. These tours attract hundreds of residents and visitors to the city's cemeteries, and in 2012 the society conducted tours in two different cemeteries that focused on the Civil War era. In addition, cemetery workshops and tours were part of the New Bedford Whaling Museum's first genealogy symposium in September 2001. The cemetery tour was so popular that the museum conducted a second session.

Still, New Bedford's cemeteries have experienced continued vandalism, and city cemetery staff have begun an aggressive effort to restore damaged stones and monuments. Cemetery employees have recently been placed under the direction of a new city department, which has enhanced resources available to maintain the vast acreage of city cemeteries. In November 2011, cemetery staff attended the Historic Cemetery Preservation Workshop hosted by the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, and the Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust.

Another restoration effort is conducted by Stone by Stone, a decade-old summer youth program that puts teens to work repairing deteriorated or damaged gravestones in the city's cemeteries. The program is a collaboration between New Directions, a local nonprofit that runs career centers and youth work programs, and the New Bedford public school system. Last year, the New Bedford Historical Society joined this collaborative effort by identifying graves of historically important people whose markers need repair.

The city's Cemetery Board is comprised of five members who are appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council for three-year terms. The board meets monthly to oversee spending of monies collected from Perpetual Care and the sale of lots. It also votes on and establishes rules and regulations pertaining to city cemeteries. A local historian who has been instrumental in bringing public attention to vandalism in the cemeteries has recently been appointed to the Cemetery Board.

Listing of the cemeteries in the National Register of Historic Places will enable the city to seek Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund support to repair several public burial tombs.

Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of ancient Native American subsistence and settlement in New Bedford are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Additional historical research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may contribute important evidence that explains why ancient sites are absent throughout most of the city, especially in the area west of New Bedford Harbor from Clark's Point north to the vicinity of Route 195. Documentary research, environmental reconstruction, and potential Native sites in this area may contribute evidence that identifies 19th-century urban development, underreporting, and/or environmental factors as responsible for the absence of ancient Native sites in this area. By comparison, Apponagansett Bay, located in the town of Dartmouth approximately one mile west of Clarks Cove, and slightly smaller, is surrounded by at least seven ancient sites in a suburban and rural area. Ancient Native American sites in the district locale may also contain important information related to site type and function in the area, as well as the relative importance of marine versus upland resources in Native subsistence patterns.

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Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to contribute detailed information on the social, cultural, and economic patterns that reflect much of New Bedford's community history throughout most of the 19th and 20th centuries. Archaeological resources can be especially important by contributing information on New Bedford's resident population, from its working class to more affluent citizens. The earliest part of the cemetery was created in 1843 on the south side of Parker Street. Additional documentary research, combined with archaeological survey and testing within and around the current boundary of the cemetery, may identify the full range of graves present at the Oak Grove cemetery. Unmarked graves may exist, and the current pattern of the gravestones may not, in every instance, reflect their actual placement. Gravestones were frequently removed from older cemeteries, then later replaced, at times in different locations. Discrepancies between headstones and footstones has also been explained by their relocation, possibly in the course of replacing vandalized stones. Gravestones were also erected as commemorative markers by descendants of individuals after their deaths. This scenario has been observed at other burial grounds in Massachusetts, and may have been used for some burials at the Oak Grove Cemetery. Archaeological research can help identify these graves, as well as later, unmarked graves resulting from stolen, damaged, and overgrown stones. Nineteenth- and early 20th-century unmarked graves representing paupers and unknown persons may also be present. Archaeological research can also be used to help test the accuracy of existing boundaries at each cemetery. Existing bounds may not accurately represent the actual boundaries of each cemetery. Some burials, possibly those of unknown persons, paupers, or other indigent persons, may have been intentionally buried outside the cemetery boundary. Artifact distributions may also be present associated with funerary or memorial services for specific individuals at their time of death, or individuals and groupings of individuals (possibly families) at a later date.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NBE.807

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 30.89 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 41.647417 | Longitude: -70.945858 |
| 2. Latitude: 41.647745 | Longitude: -70.942782 |
| 3. Latitude: 41.643284 | Longitude: -70.941091 |
| 4. Latitude: 41.640894 | Longitude: -70.940265 |
| 5. Latitude: 41.640778 | Longitude: -70.941729 |
| 6. Latitude: 41.642981 | Longitude: -70.942966 |

[1: near Liberty/Durfee Streets intersection; 2: near Caroline/Austin Streets intersection; 3: near Parker/Caroline Streets intersection; 4: near Smith/Park Streets intersection, SE corner; 5: near Smith/Liberty Streets intersection SW corner; 6: near Parker/Liberty Streets intersection]

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 19 | Easting: 337959 | Northing: 4612469 |
| 2. Zone: 19 | Easting: 338221 | Northing: 4612492 |
| 3. Zone: 19 | Easting: 338340 | Northing: 4611995 |
| 4. Zone: 19 | Easting: 338407 | Northing: 4611732 |
| 5. Zone: 19 | Easting: 338284 | Northing: 4611716 |
| 6. Zone: 19 | Easting: 338151 | Northing: 4611974 |

Oak Grove Cemetery
Name of Property

Bristol, Massachusetts
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Oak Grove Cemetery is bounded on the south by Smith Street, on the north by two short streets and their houselots running south from Durfee Street, on the east by houselots on the west side of Caroline Street (new section) and several institutional properties on the west side of Park Street (old section), and on the west by City of New Bedford Department of Public Infrastructure facilities on the east side of Liberty Street.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are the historical and legal boundaries of the cemetery.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kathryn Grover, consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC
organization: Massachusetts Historical Commission
street & number: 220 Morrissey Boulevard
city or town: Boston state: MA zip code: 02125
e-mail betsy.friedberg@sec.state.ma.us
telephone: 617 727-8470
date: February 2014

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Oak Grove Cemetery

Bristol, Massachusetts

Name of Property

County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Oak Grove Cemetery

City or Vicinity: New Bedford

County: Bristol State: MA

Photographer: Kathryn Grover

Date Photographed: March 22, 2009; April 27, 2009; June 7, 2009; August 27, 2009;
March 15, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 19. Oak Grove Cemetery, old section, view from southeast (March 22, 2009)
- 2 of 19. Smith Street Entrance, old section (March 15, 2012)
- 3 of 19. Entrance to old section from south side of Parker Street (August 27, 2009)
- 4 of 19. Old cobblestone paving and granite curbing, old section (March 22, 2009)
- 5 of 19. Maintenance building (1927), southeast corner Parker and Liberty Streets (August 27, 2009)
- 6 of 19. Crypts, old section, view from west (March 15, 2012)
- 7 of 19. Lott and Deborah Tripp marker, old section, view from east (June 7, 2009)
- 8 of 19. Entrance to new section from Parker Street, view from southeast (March 15, 2012)
- 9 of 19. Robeson Street entrance, view from east (March 15, 2012)
- 10 of 19. Oak Grove office building (1917), new section (April 27, 2009)
- 11 of 19. Public receiving tomb (1892), new section (April 27, 2009)
- 12 of 19. C. H. Church family lot, new section (April 27, 2009)
- 13 of 19. Read family monument, new section (April 27, 2009)
- 14 of 19. William Rotch Sr. and Elizabeth Rotch markers and William Rotch Jr. crypt (June 7, 2009)
- 15 of 19. Nathan Johnson family markers (March 15, 2012)
- 16 of 19. William H. Carney obelisk, new section (March 15, 2012)
- 17 of 19. Rosa S. Rezendes marker, new section (April 27, 2009)
- 18 of 19. Susan Cornell marker, old section (June 7, 2009)
- 19 of 19. Alexander and Sarah Read markers, old section (June 7, 2009)

Oak Grove Cemetery

Name of Property

Bristol, Massachusetts

County and State

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

OAK GROVE CEMETERY
 New Bedford (Bristol County), Massachusetts
 DATA SHEET

Note: Locations are indicated on attached site map.

Site #	Image #	Feature	Date	Material	Description	Resource Type	Status
1	1	Oak Grove Cemetery, old section, view from southwest	1843	N/A	N/A	Site	C
2	2	Smith Street Entrance, old section	1843	Granite, iron	Granite posts with pyramidal caps and embedded iron rods; chain-link gate noncontributing	Structure	C
3	3	Parker Street Entrance, old section	Ca.1902	Granite	Short granite posts abutting stone wall; chain-link gate noncontributing	Structure	1 C 1 NC
4	4	Original paving and curbing, old section	1843	Cobblestone, granite	Remnants of cobblestone paving and example of granite curbing	Structure	C
5	5	Maintenance Building	1927, ca. 1960	Brick	Two-story Colonial Revival main block with side-gabled roof; attached one-story brick garage and shop	Building	C
6	6	Crypts, old section (5)	1844	Earth, granite	Earthen berms with facades of granite slabs; trabeated entrances with slab doors	Structure	5 C
7	7	Lott and Deborah Tripp Marker	1885	Marble	Gateway form with one door slightly ajar, framed by architrave of columns supporting arched pediment; raised carving of flowers and dove	Object	C

OAK GROVE CEMETERY
 New Bedford (Bristol County), Massachusetts
 DATA SHEET

Note: Locations are indicated on attached site map.

Site #	Image #	Feature	Date	Material	Description	Resource Type	Status
8	8	Entrance to new section, Oak Grove Cemetery, from Parker Street	1918	Granite, cement	Short granite posts flanking curved entry way; cement curb; chain-link gate noncontributing	Structure	1 C I NC
9	9	Robeson Street Entrance, new section	Ca. 1900	Stone, mortar	Mortared rubblestone posts with crenellated tops	Structure	C
10	10	Office Building, new section	1917	Wood, asphalt, brick	One-story, three-bay building with gable-end entry porch and arched pediment, Palladian window	Building	C
11	11	Public receiving Tomb	1892	Sandstone block, granite, brick	One-story masonry receiving vault, rough-faced sandstone ashlar, granite trim, front gable roof with stepped parapets, sandstone porch with granite trim	Building	C
12	12	Charles H. Church family lot (4 markers)	Ca. 1850	Granite, marble, concrete	Terraced plot with granite curbing and four varied markers	Objects Site	4 C C
13	13	Read Monument	1874-1914	Zinc ("White bronze")	Baldachin form with gable roof supported by engaged columns flanking arched panel; angel statue at top	Object	C
14	14	William Rotch, Sr. and Elizabeth Rotch Markers (2)	1828-50	Marble, granite	Rectilinear tablets with dates in Quaker style	Objects	2 C

OAK GROVE CEMETERY
 New Bedford (Bristol County), Massachusetts
 DATA SHEET

Note: Locations are indicated on attached site map.

Site #	Image #	Feature	Date	Material	Description	Resource Type	Status
15	15	Nathan Johnson Marker	1880	Marble	N Johnson tablet with rounded top, molded edge across top and partially down sides terminating in pendants; name arched and carved in relief	Object	C
16	16	William H. Carney Obelisk	1916	Marble	Obelisk with rounded top amid six grave markers in lot with granite curb and semicircular entry step	Object	C
17	17	Rosa S. Rezendes Marker	1913	Marble	Tablet with rounded top surmounted by carved cross; inscription in Portuguese	Object	C
18	18	Susan Cornell Marker	1846	Marble	Rectilinear tablet with willow in circular lunette	Object	C
19		Section J	Various	N/A	African American section in northeast part of old section	Site	C
20		Aaron Cushman Cenotaph	1856	Marble, granite	Octagonal obelisk broken off at top to represent life cut short; stepped marble base on granite base	Object	C
21		W. Clifford Ashley Marker	1947	Slate	Tablet with semicircular top and rounded shoulders in early 19 th -century style	Object	C
22		David B. Kempton Marker	1927	Marble, granite	Sepulcher with lid carved in large wheat sheaf	Object	C
23		William E. Sykes Monument	1919	Marble	Broken Doric column festooned with wings and surmounted by carved eagle	Object	C

OAK GROVE CEMETERY
 New Bedford (Bristol County), Massachusetts
 DATA SHEET

Note: Locations are indicated on attached site map.

Site #	Image #	Feature	Date	Material	Description	Resource Type	Status
24		Sylvia Ann Howland Marker	1865	Marble	Rectilinear tablet with rounded top	Object	C
25	19	Alexander and Sarah Read Markers (2)	1849, 1874	Marble	Pair of tablets with scrolled sides, pointed tops, and raised floral carvings	Objects	2 C
26		Canfield family Monument	1914	Granite	Greek temple-form block with incised pillars and stepped base	Object	C
27		Stone wall, old and new sections	Various	Granite, mortar	Walls of granite block in three courses, squared top, some with additional course of granite block on top	Structure	C
28		Gothic crypt, new section	n.d.	Granite	Crypt set into hillock, with granite face featuring pointed, arched pediment and door opening; scalloped granite shoulders flank entrance	Structure	C
29		Hersom-Weeks Monument	1894-97	Granite	Greek temple form with freestanding Doric columns between inscription panel (resting on base) and entablature; hipped roof; icon in center of frieze showing cross and crow within Maltese cross	Object	C
30		Calvin K. Turner Marker	1879	Zinc ("white bronze")	Obelisk with patterned bands at top, bottom, and central panel; mounted on two-stage base with cross and wheat motifs	Object	C

OAK GROVE CEMETERY
 New Bedford (Bristol County), Massachusetts
 DATA SHEET

Note: Locations are indicated on attached site map.

Site #	Image #	Feature	Date	Material	Description	Resource Type	Status
31		Walker children Marker	1832-43	Marble	Low horizontal tablet with five peaked tops and squared shoulders	Object	C
32		Samuel and Elizabeth Rodman markers (2)	1835, 1856	Marble	Rectilinear tablets with dates in Quaker style	Objects	2 C
33		James Arnold Marker	1851	Marble	Rectilinear tablet with arched top	Object	C
34		Fence, James Howland family lot	ca. 1850	iron	Iron picket fence on granite curb; side entrance to lot; cast-iron posts at gate, and corners with caps broken or missing	Structure	C
35	14	William Rotch Jr. Tomb	1850	Granite	Raised sepulchre with stepped pediment and base on granite base; recessed inscription panels with Gothic detail	Object	C
36		Grinnell family lot	Various	N/A	Irregularly shaped lot with granite curbing, rhododendrons, yews	Site	C
37		Nathaniel S. Cannon lot (5 markers)	1876-7	Granite	Obelisk mounted on plinth and base, date on shaft, set within curbed plot with five identical, low lectern markers on single, long base	Objects Site	5 C C
38		Capt. Benjamin Tilton Marker	1867	Marble, granite	Rectilinear marble tablet with rounded pediment on marble base atop granite base; anchor and name in low relief within recessed medallions	Object	C

OAK GROVE CEMETERY
 New Bedford (Bristol County), Massachusetts
 DATA SHEET

Note: Locations are indicated on attached site map.

Site #	Image #	Feature	Date	Material	Description	Resource Type	Status
39		Worth family markers (3)	1824-67	Marble	Rectilinear tablets with rounded pediments, one with oak branch in round, recessed medallion	Objects	3 C
40		William and Amelia Piper markers (2)	1856	Marble	Broken and reset rectilinear tablet	Objects	2 C
41		Cuffe descendant markers (5)	1817-1903	Granite	Low, rectilinear tablets, some broken	Objects	5 C
42		Langguth-Habicht family markers (6)	1857-85	Marble	Rectilinear tablets with rounded pediments; three have finger pointing heavenward in low relief in lunette, two with rounded and inclined pediments and inclined squared shoulders on single base	Objects	6 C
43		Lucy Sepit Francis Marker	1882	Marble	Rectilinear tablet with rounded top on marble base	Object	C
44		Blecha-Krafka family markers (4)	1883-96	Marble, granite	Tablets with arched, semicircular, and slanted tops; inscriptions in Polish and English	Objects	4 C
45		Anna Sestak Marker	1906	Marble	Tablet on stepped base with rounded top, band of leaves at base of inscription panel, and rope molding flanking inscription	Object	C
46		Sarah Hammond Marker	1851	Marble	Rectilinear tablet with arched top; willow arching over urn in bell-shaped recess; name in relief	Object	C

OAK GROVE CEMETERY
 New Bedford (Bristol County), Massachusetts
 DATA SHEET

Note: Locations are indicated on attached site map.

Site #	Image #	Feature	Date	Material	Description	Resource Type	Status
47		Benjamin Lincoln Marker	1828	Marble	Rectilinear tablet with urn at top, flanked by two willows in low relief; moved from another cemetery	Object	C
48		Harriet Harrison Marker	1835	Marble	Rectilinear tablet with willow in low relief in square recess; first name in relief in rectangular recess; moved from earlier cemetery	Object	C
49		Laura Van Campen Marker	1858	Marble	Squat block tablet surmounted by carved open book, resting on carved pillow, and carved ribbon bookmark	Object	C
50		John and Ruth Wrightington Marker	1862	Marble	Squat block tablet surmounted by carved open book on two-tiered plinth	Object	C

SUMMARY:

Buildings	Contributing	3	
Sites	Contributing	5	
Structures	Contributing	13	Noncontributing 3
Objects	Contributing	60	
TOTAL	Contributing	81	Noncontributing 3

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Figures Page 1

Oak Grove Cemetery
Name of Property
Bristol, Massachusetts
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

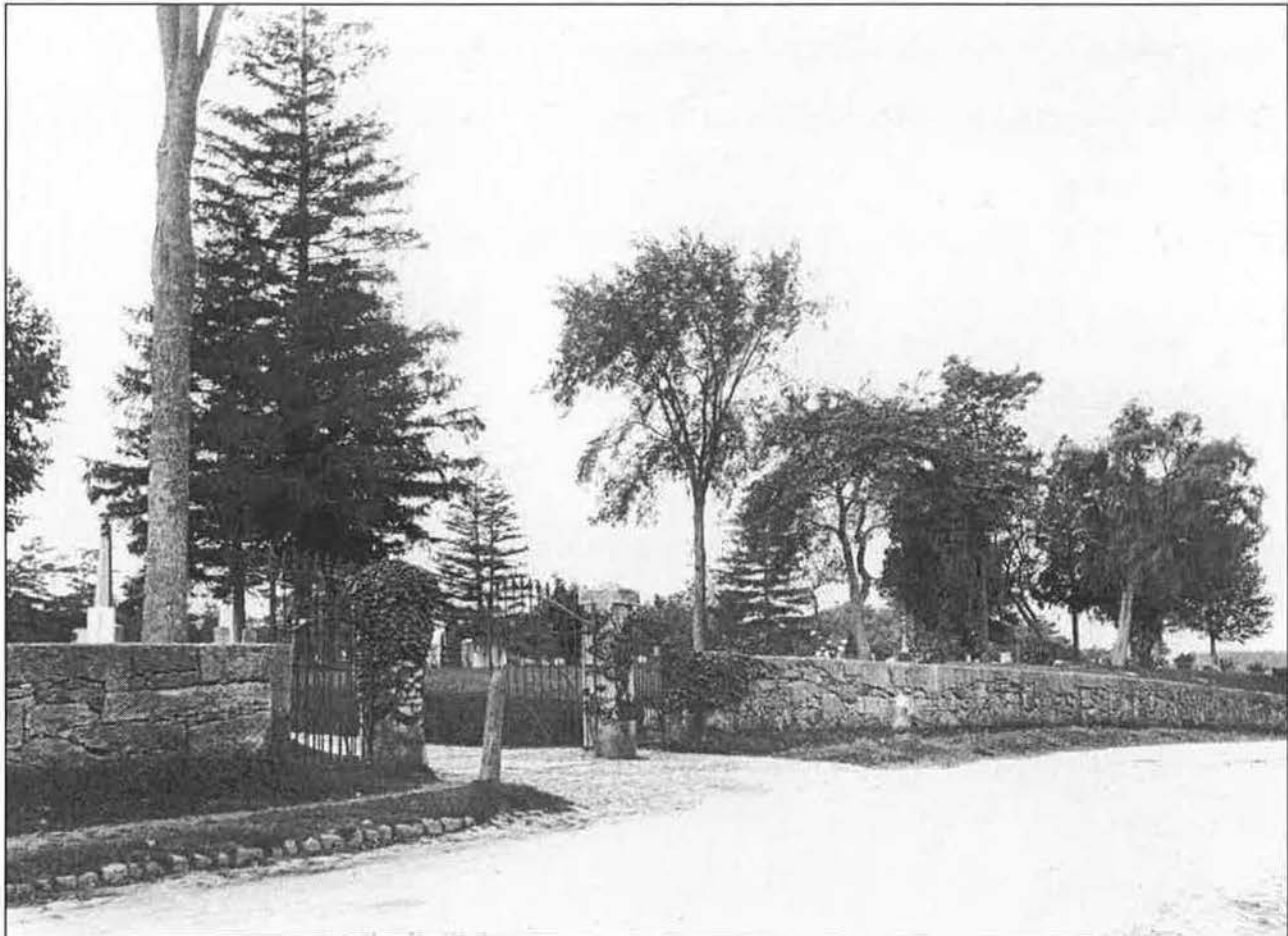


Fig. 1. Entrance to old section of Oak Grove Cemetery from south side of Parker Street, about 1900. The larger granite posts and the iron gates are not extant.

Courtesy New Bedford Cemetery Board.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Figures Page 2

Oak Grove Cemetery
Name of Property
Bristol, Massachusetts
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

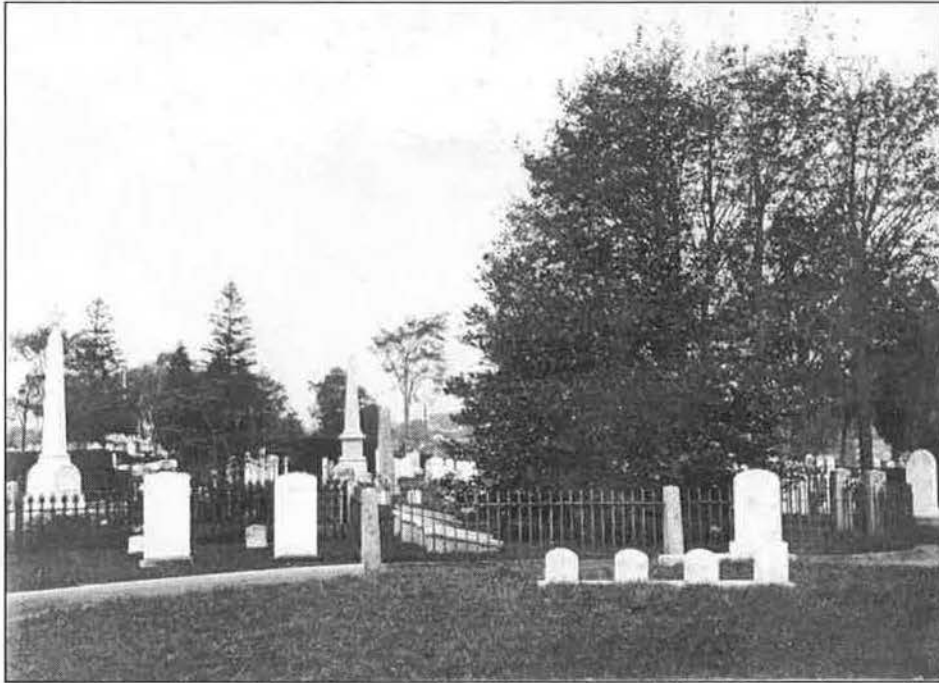


Fig. 2. Fenced lot in old section with six tablestones on inclined granite bases (center) and large European beech; granite posts and a step mark entrance on east side. Markers today are broken and almost entirely illegible.

Both images Courtesy New Bedford Cemetery Board.

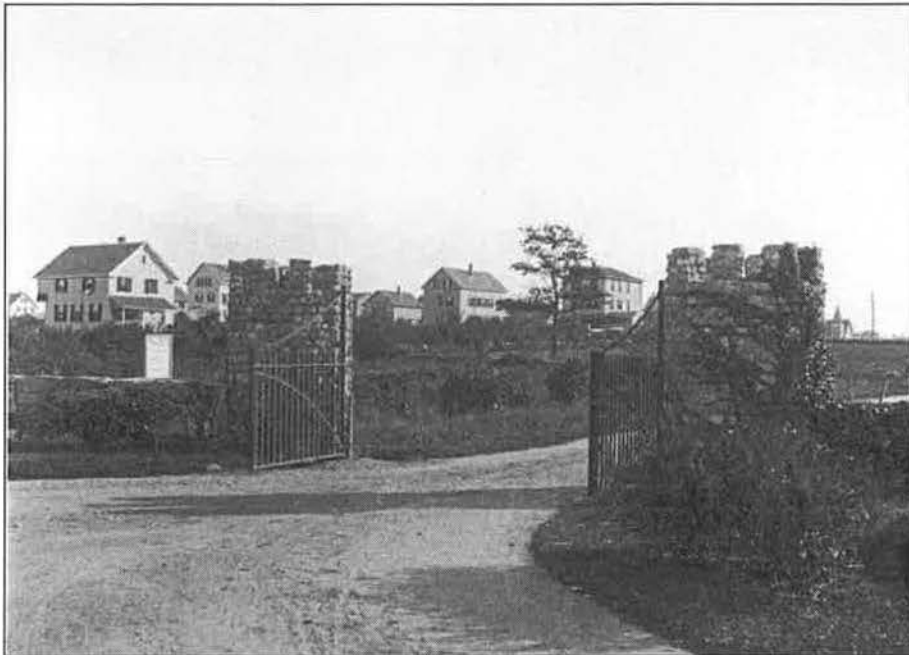


Fig. 3. Robeson Street entrance to new section, about 1900, looking east from inside the cemetery

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Figures Page 3

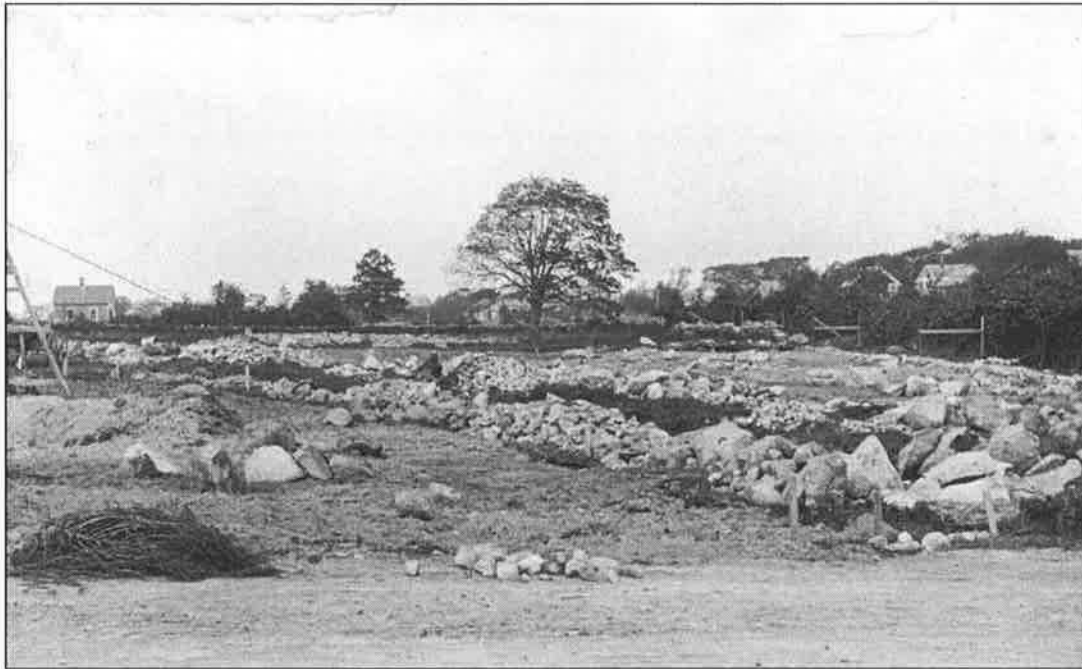
Oak Grove Cemetery

Name of Property

Bristol, Massachusetts

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figs. 4 & 5. Preparing new burial ground in new section, 1902-3 (above); new section looking south toward old section, about 1900. *Both images courtesy of New Bedford Cemetery Board.*





Oak Grove Cemetery
New Bedford (Bristol Co.), MA



Legend

- Easement
- Planned Subdivision
- Combined Parcels
- Master Parcel Linking to Assessing DB
- Associated Parcels
- Water Bodies
- Town Boundary
- Engineering Lot Number
- Lot Area

1 inch = 40 feet
 0 20 40 80 Feet

Map: 76

File: Year 2011
 This parcel map should be used for planning and assessment purposes only.

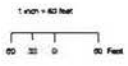
Map Prepared By:
 City of New Bedford
 Management Information Systems
 January 2011

**City of New Bedford
 Massachusetts**



Legend

- Easement
- Planned Subdivision
- Combined Parcels
- Master Parcel Linking to Assessing DB
- Associated Parcels
- Water Bodies
- Town Boundary
- Engineering Lot Number
- Lot Area



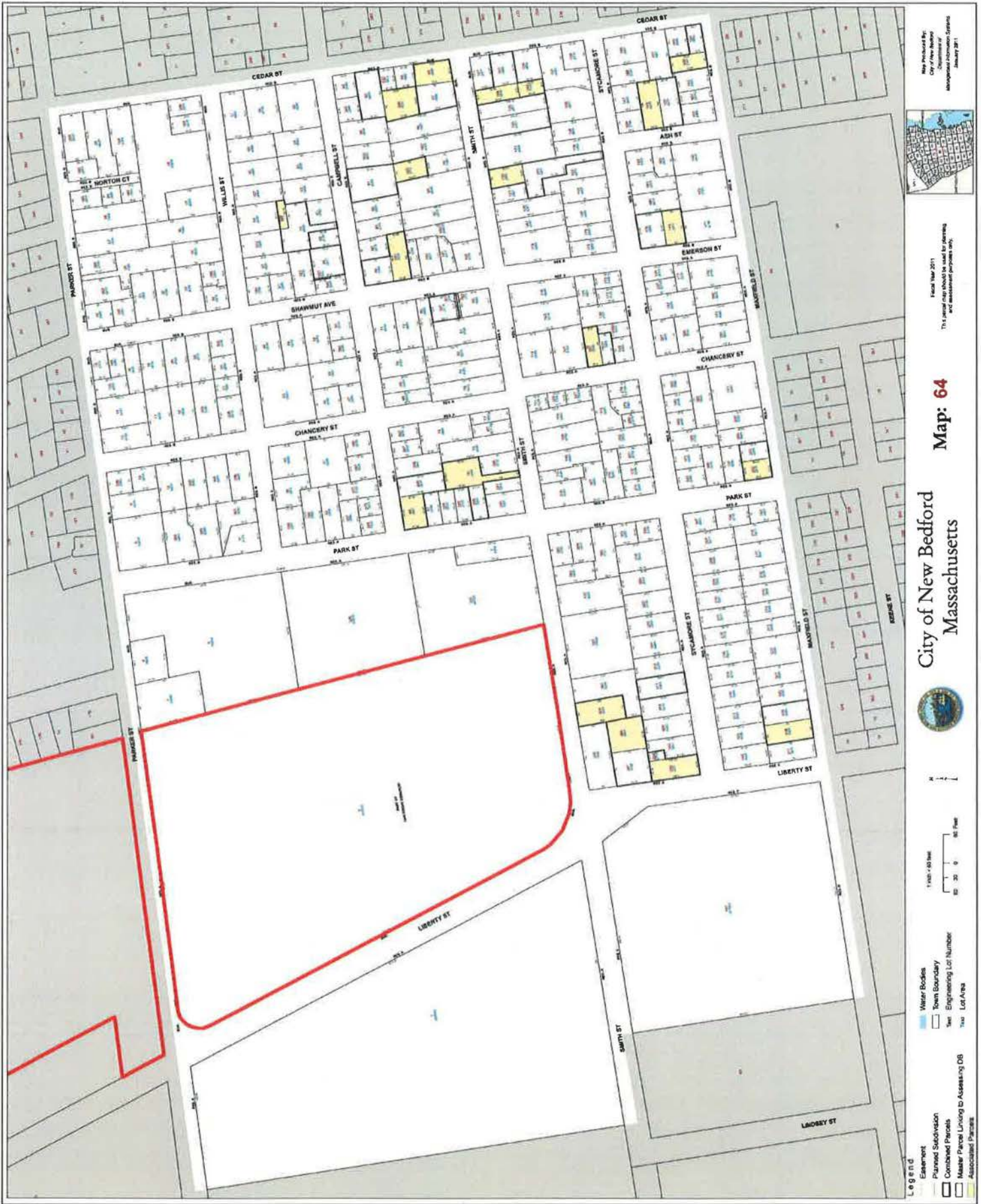
City of New Bedford
Massachusetts

Map: 70

Fiscal Year 2011
This parcel map should be used for planning and assessment purposes only.



Map Produced By:
City of New Bedford
Department of
Management Information Systems
January 2011



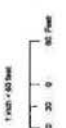
Map Produced By:
 City of Bedford
 Department of
 Municipal Information Systems
 January 2011



Final Year 2011
 This map was made to assist the residents
 and businesses of Bedford, MA.

Map: **64**

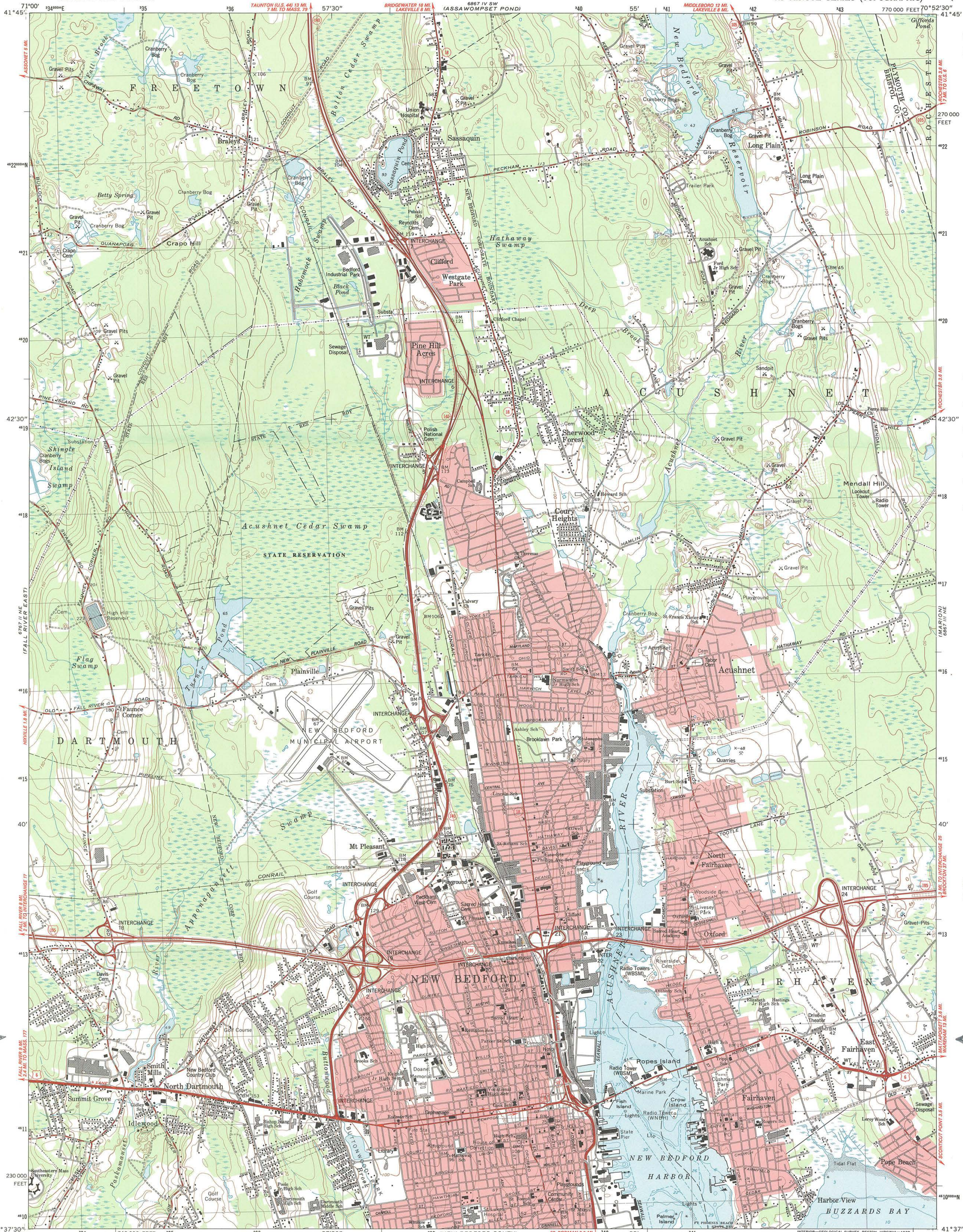
City of New Bedford
 Massachusetts



Water Bodies
 Town Boundary
 Engineering Lot Number
 Year Lot Area

Legend:
 Element
 Planned Subdivision
 Combined Parcels
 Master Parcel Linking to Assessing DB
 Associated Parcels

OAK GROVE
CEMETERY
NEW BEDFORD
(BRISTOL) MA



CONVERSION
SCALES

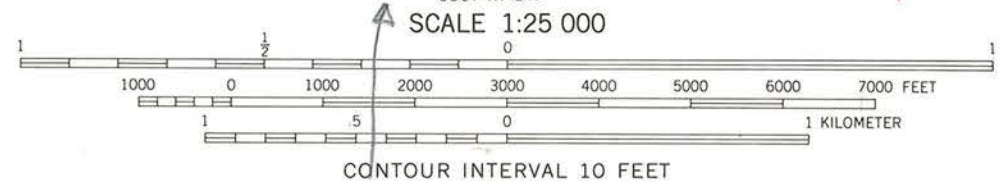


Feet	Meters
1	3048
2	6096
3	9144
4	12192
5	15240
6	18288
7	21336
8	24384
9	27432
10	30480

To convert feet to meters
multiply by 3.048

To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1936. Revised 1964
Revised 1975 from aerial photographs taken 1974
Field checked 1975. Map edited 1979
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS 353 (1973)
This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 6 meters south and
42 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Boundaries in tidewater areas from information furnished by
Massachusetts Department of Public Works
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map



DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET— DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 3.7 FEET

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

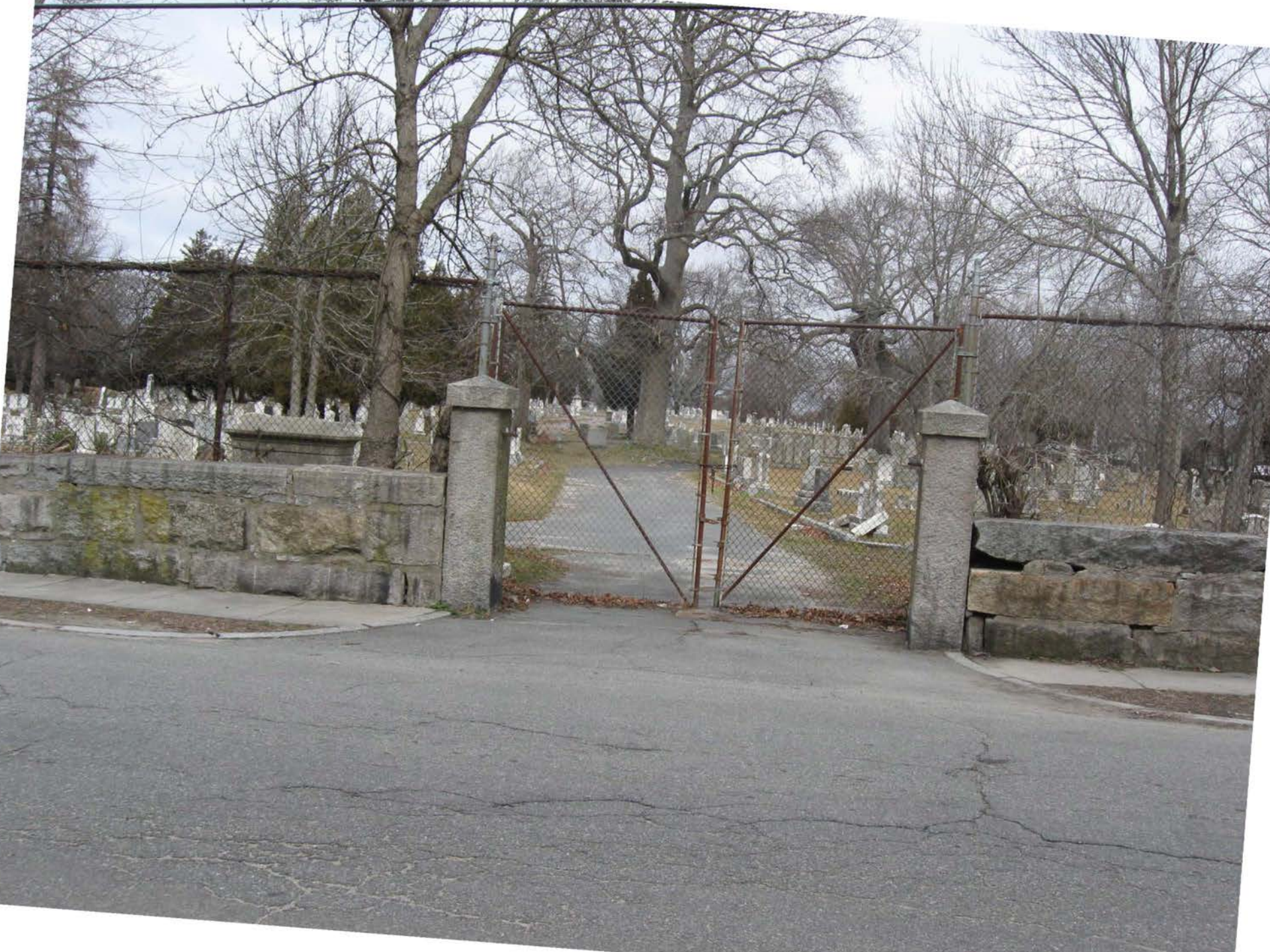
NEW BEDFORD NORTH, MASS.
N4137.5—W7052.5/7.5

1979

DMA 6867 III NW—SERIES V814











NOTICE
NO TRESPASSING FROM
SUBSET TO SUBSET
NO DOGS ALLOWED
POLICE TAKE BEHOLD
PER ORDER
N.B. CEN. BOARD

24 HOURS







Father
Mother

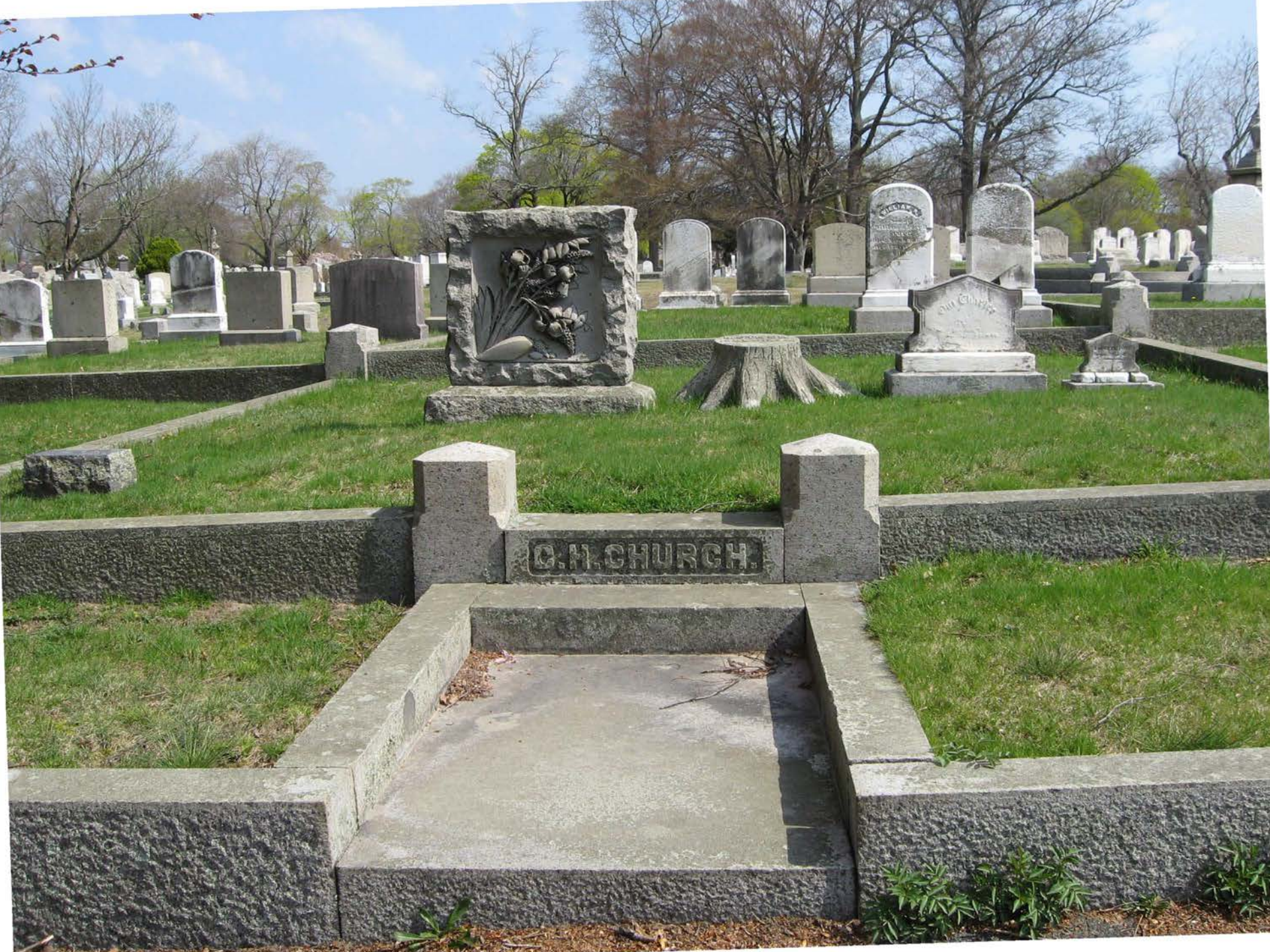
PASSED THROUGH GLORY'S GOLDEN GATE
AND WALKED IN PARADISE











C. H. CHURCH





READ

OUR
BABY

IN MEMORY OF
STEPHEN H. BROWN
JULY 12 1866 - JULY 24 1948



ELIZABETH BOTTCHER
BORN 1754
DIED 1814

ELIZABETH BOTTCHER
BORN 1754
DIED 1814

ELIZABETH BOTTCHER
DIED 1814
AGE 60 YEARS

Reverend
NATHAN JOHNSON
Died
Oct. 11, 1880
Aged 67 yrs.
Buried in the
Cemetery of the
First Church of
Christ, in
this City.

MARY
Wife of
NATHAN JOHNSON
Died Nov. 18, 1881
Aged 65 yrs.

WILLIAM W. LEACH
1829 — 1854
His Wife
GLADYS G. LEACH
1825 — 1858

EMILY BROWN
Died Nov. 18, 1881
Aged 65 yrs.



WILLIAM H. CARNEY

Serg. U.S.A. 54th Mass. Inf.

DIED DEC. 9, 1908.

AGED 68 YEARS

9 MONTHS.

SUSANNA CARNEY

DIED JAN. 21, 1916.

AGED 69 YEARS

9 MONTHS.

CARNEY

ELIZABETH A.
JOHNSON
1903 - 1983

175

AQUI JAZ

ROSA S. REZENDES

NASCEU 10. NOV.
1886

FALLECEU A 2. SET.
1913

DESCANCA EM PAZ

SMITH
BUZZELL

DUERDEN
LEEMING



SUSAN H.
daughter of
John E. M. &
Eliza W. Cornell
died Mar. 15 1846
Aged 10 Mo



MEMORIAL OF
ALEXANDER BEATT
The first
and most successful
of his kind
Born April 23, 1814
Died Dec 25, 1874
Aged 60

SARAH WILLIS
Wife of
ALEXANDER BEATT M.D.
Born April 23, 1814
Died Dec 25, 1874
Aged 60

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Oak Grove Cemetery

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Bristol

DATE RECEIVED: 3/13/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/07/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/22/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/29/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000176

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 4.28.14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

March 6, 2014

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Oak Grove Cemetery, Parker Street, New Bedford (Bristol), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property in the Certified Local Government community of New Bedford were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 60 to 90 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure

cc:

Diana Henry, New Bedford Historical Commission
Mayor Jon Mitchell, City of New Bedford
Kathryn Grover, consultant
Anne Louro, New Bedford CLG Coordinator
Arthur Glassman, New Bedford Planning Board
Ron Labelle, Department of Public Infrastructure