



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name North Bellingham Cemetery and Oak Hill Cemetery

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Hartford Avenue

<input type="checkbox"/>	not for publication
<input type="checkbox"/>	vicinity

city or town Bellingham

state Massachusetts code MA county Norfolk code 021 zip code 02019

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon SHPO Date August 1, 2012

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

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): _____

Signature of the Keeper Mr. Edson H. Beall Date of Action 9.25.12

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

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
-	-	buildings
2	-	sites
4	1	structures
14	1	objects
20	2	Total

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

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.)

NA

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: _____
 walls: _____

 roof: _____
 other: _____

SECTION 7 DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

This nomination includes two adjacent cemeteries in Bellingham, Massachusetts. **North Bellingham Cemetery** is the community's oldest burying ground. The earliest burial was in 1712, and the most recent was in 1888. The one-acre cemetery contains approximately 130 headstones, two tombs, three monuments, and some footstones. The headstones trace the evolution of funerary art in the 18th and 19th centuries, and include the work of at least one well-known gravestone carver, Joseph Barbur, Jr. Many of the founding families of the town are buried here. **Oak Hill Cemetery**, established in 1849, abuts North Bellingham on the west. It is still an active cemetery and has about 800 headstones and monuments. The 2½-acre cemetery reflects 19th- and 20th-century funerary styles with its rectilinear layout, curbed family lots, and predominantly marble headstones and monuments. These two cemeteries illustrate changing burial practices within the community, and retain strong associations with the 300-year history of the town.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Bellingham is located in the southwestern corner of Norfolk County, Massachusetts. It is a community of 18.55 square miles with a population of 16,332 in 2010. The town, until recently a small rural community, has grown rapidly in recent years because of its proximity to Interstate Route 495. It now includes a mix of industry, distribution centers, and retail, as well as extensive new residential development. The nearest city is Woonsocket, Rhode Island, which abuts Bellingham on the south. The two cemeteries included in this nomination are located on Hartford Avenue (MA Route 126) in North Bellingham, just east of Route 495. The cemeteries are on a hill above Hartford Avenue, and are surrounded on the other three sides by trees which screen the adjacent land uses: a big box shopping center to the west, wetland to the north, and power lines to the east. Oak Hill Cemetery is up to eight feet above Hartford Avenue, while North Bellingham Cemetery slopes gradually down to street level at the eastern end.

North Bellingham Cemetery was established in the early 1700s and is town owned, while Oak Hill Cemetery was established in 1849 and is owned by a private cemetery association. Despite their different histories and ownership, they are considered a single parcel on the town assessor's map, and are treated as a district for the purpose of this nomination. Elements that are common to both cemeteries are discussed first, followed by descriptions of features within each cemetery.

Common Elements

The **perimeter wall** (Photos 1 & 3) that runs along the front of both cemeteries is considered a single unit for the purpose of this nomination, although its construction varies reflecting the evolution of the site. The oldest section of the wall along Hartford Avenue is at the eastern end of North Bellingham Cemetery where it is a piled fieldstone farm wall about 3' tall. The height of the wall gradually rises as it moves west along Hartford Avenue, becoming a fieldstone retaining wall about 8' tall at the western end of North Bellingham Cemetery. About midway along the front of North Bellingham Cemetery, the wall curves inward to create a shallow niche for the two adjacent receiving tombs. The wall associated with this niche is of varied construction, including some large cut-granite blocks, so it post-dates the construction of the first receiving tomb, built in 1804.

The perimeter wall continues along the front of Oak Hill Cemetery as a tall, dry-laid fieldstone retaining wall, surmounted in places by a low wooden guardrail. At the western end, Hartford Avenue has been widened, and the old wall has been replaced by a late 20th-century concrete retaining wall with stone facing. On the sides and rear of both cemeteries there is a tall chain-link **security fence**. In some areas along the sides and rear there are also remnants of earlier fencing, which includes fieldstone farm walls on the east side of North Bellingham, and a few granite posts along the western edge of Oak Hill.

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The two adjacent **tombs** (Photo 3) are built into a niche in the retaining wall along Hartford Avenue. They were built as receiving tombs, for use during the winter months when in-ground burials could not occur. Over the right-hand tomb, which has a vertical-board door, the inscription reads: "Built 1804 by Daniel Penniman, John Allen, Stephen Metcalf." However, since the facing on both tombs is of large granite blocks, they were almost certainly rebuilt in the late 19th century. Neither tomb is in use today, although the right tomb was used until recently by Oak Hill Cemetery. There is a modern steel **flagpole** (noncontributing) adjacent to the tombs.

Part of the **circulation system** is also shared. There is a single vehicular access point to the two cemeteries, with the one-way entry road entering west of the receiving tombs at North Bellingham, and then continuing west along the front edge of Oak Hill to the exit onto Hartford Avenue. There is no internal circulation in North Bellingham Cemetery, which is typical of older burial grounds. Oak Hill Cemetery has a well-defined internal circulation system that is discussed below.

North Bellingham Cemetery

The topography of North Bellingham Cemetery is gently sloping, with the lowest point at the southeastern corner and a gentle rise of about eight feet to the western end where it meets Oak Hill. Unlike some older burial grounds, there is no clear evidence of subtle topographic variation, such as mounding, that might indicate unmarked graves. Other than the wooded areas around the perimeter, there is only a small cluster of deciduous trees along the Hartford Avenue edge of North Bellingham Cemetery, which do not appear to have been deliberately planted.

The spatial organization of North Bellingham Cemetery evolved over a nearly 200-year period as the burial ground grew slowly, beginning at the eastern end and expanding gradually westward as new burial space was needed. In the oldest section the headstones are sparse, as many have been lost over time, and their organization appears random, which was typical of early cemeteries (Photo 1). Towards the western end, where the later burials occurred, the headstones are in rough rows, which are at a diagonal to Hartford Avenue (Photo 2). Many of the headstones in rows also show evidence of earlier conservation work, so it is likely that at least some may have been moved in the 20th century to create a more orderly arrangement than originally existed. Due to the age of the burial ground and the large areas where no burial markers occur, it is likely that there are also many unmarked graves.

At North Bellingham Cemetery there are three family monuments, which commemorate multiple family members. Adjacent to the tombs, also along Hartford Avenue outside the perimeter wall, is the **Adams/Barber monument** (Photo 3), a granite obelisk on granite base and pedestal with four marble inscription panels. Among those honored on it are General Eliakem Adams (d.1807), who served in the Revolutionary War, and members of his family. The monument is granite with marble inscription panels. The **Smith monument**, which commemorates three children who died at a young age in the 1840s, is located along the southern edge of the cemetery. The Gothic style monument is made of reddish brown sandstone and is unusual in its design and ornateness. The third monument, the marble **Bryant obelisk** near the southern edge of the cemetery, is in one of two enclosed family lots (as opposed to individual burials) in North Bellingham Cemetery, reflecting a transition from individual graves to family lots that is more fully expressed at Oak Hill Cemetery.

North Bellingham Cemetery has roughly 130 headstones overall, which reflect a wide range of funerary styles. Roughly 60% are slate, while 40% are marble. About a quarter of the slate headstones have footstones. There are several styles of slate carving found at North Bellingham Cemetery. The earliest are the rough stones of the early 18th century, with crude lettering and no imagery. Five headstones of this type were documented in the 1970s by gravestone experts Daniel and Jessie Lie Farber, who considered them significant examples of early New England funerary art. Photographs taken at that time indicate that the rough slate of the stones was delaminating, and the stones were already in poor condition. Today there is only one extant stone from this period, which is illegible, as well as various fragments.

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The second group of headstones is skillfully carved, early to mid 18th-century stones, several of which include the soul effigy or winged head motif. At least two of these, the **John Partridge headstone** (d.1791) and the **Polly Coombes headstone** (d.1795, Photo 4), are similar in style. Although neither stone is signed, both are considered to be the work of Joseph Barbur, Jr., a well-known carver from West Medway, Massachusetts. The Polly Coombes headstone and footstone, which honor a young woman who died at age 25, remain in fairly good condition, but the John Partridge headstone is now broken in two. Also from roughly the same period are the **Grace Holbrook headstone** (d.1791) and the **Joseph Holbrook headstone** (d.1785), both of which have skillfully carved abstract floral motifs. These have not been attributed to a specific carver, but display a high level of artistic talent. Most of the later slate headstones display the willow-and-urn motif, which was popular in the 19th century. There is also at least one sunburst motif, that on the **Luke Holbrook headstone** (d. 1775).

By the 19th century, marble was the primary material for headstones because it was easier to carve into elaborate designs. The marble headstones at North Bellingham reflect standard shapes and motifs of the period, rather than the work of individual carvers. Most are rectangular slabs with machine-made, incised panels for the names of the deceased, which appears as raised lettering.

There are currently approximately eighteen veterans markers at North Bellingham Cemetery. These include Revolutionary War soldiers, such as General Eliakem Adams (d.1807), whose family is commemorated in the monument in front of North Bellingham Cemetery, near the receiving tombs.

Many of the headstones and footstones at North Bellingham Cemetery are from the 18th century and have suffered from more than 200 years of exposure and wear. Some are already missing or broken, while others are vulnerable to damage because they are lying on the ground or severely leaning. There is evidence of earlier repairs, including some headstones reset on concrete foundations, while others have been patched. Many of the marbles are badly stained and difficult to read, while the majority of the slates have extensive biological growth, which obscures the inscriptions.

Oak Hill Cemetery

Several factors distinguish Oak Hill Cemetery from North Bellingham Cemetery. The first is the difference in age. North Bellingham was active from 1712 to 1888, while Oak Hill was established in 1849 and is still an active cemetery. The spatial organization at North Bellingham developed incrementally and haphazardly over nearly two centuries, while Oak Hill is a planned cemetery, neatly laid out in family lots (Map 5). Oak Hill, at about 2½ acres, is substantially larger than its neighbor, and is privately, rather than publically, owned.

The rectilinear circulation system and pattern of family lots are the main organizing features of Oak Hill. The original eight burial sections, interspersed with seven narrow roads, run perpendicular to Hartford Avenue. The new section at the rear of the burial ground, which is perpendicular to the older sections, was established in the mid-20th century. Many of the lots throughout the cemetery are enclosed by granite, marble, or concrete curbing, and are slightly raised. Others are mounded and have remnants of earlier curbing. The overall sense is one of order and clearly defined spaces, in strong contrast to the randomness of North Bellingham.

The entrance is at the southeast corner of the cemetery, via the paved access road that runs along the front of North Bellingham Cemetery and continues along the front of Oak Hill parallel to Hartford Avenue. The major internal roads within Oak Hill are gravel surfaced, while the others, which function primarily as paths, are turf. Most of the cemetery is turf, with only three large trees in the original eight sections of the cemetery: an oak, an arborvitae, and a white pine. The newer section at the rear of the cemetery is partially shaded and has more vegetation than the rest of the cemetery, with scattered ornamental shrubs and perennials as well as large trees.

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Burial markers at Oak Hill include a mix of family monuments and individual headstones (Photos 5 and 6). In many cases there is a family monument in the center of a lot, surrounded by smaller burial markers that indicate the names of individuals, or their relationship to the person named on the monument. About two-thirds of the monuments and headstones, including most of the older ones, are marble. About one-third, mostly recent burials in the new section, are of polished granite.

There are 27 death dates at Oak Hill that predate the establishment of the cemetery, the earliest of which is 1787. These are most likely re-interments from North Bellingham Cemetery that occurred so that those who died before the cemetery was established could be buried in perpetuity with their family members. One of these is the slate **Nathan Penniman headstone** (d. 1839) with willow-and-urn motif.

Family monuments, which are typically found in the older lots, include marble and granite obelisks (which were popular in the third quarter of the 19th century because of their classical shape), as well as a smaller number of marble or polished granite pillars. One of the tallest is the granite **Slocumb monument** (ca. 1870s), which is about fourteen feet high with granite base and pedestal, topped by a gray granite obelisk with an inset cross.

Headstones include a large number of marble headstones, which function as the sole burial marker for an individual, as well as smaller burial markers, which are used in conjunction with a family monument. The marble headstones are typically single, with a few double ones as well. Some are rectangular, while others have rounded or slightly curved tops. Some are on bases, while other are placed directly in the ground. Images found on the marble headstones include willows and urns, two hands joined, finger pointing upward (to heaven), harps, and many floral motifs.

The headstones for women and children are particularly expressive of Victorian sentimentality. A typical example is the marble **Olive A. Benedict headstone** (1817-1869), with a distinctive curvilinear silhouette as well as a book motif and inscription at the top, "She always made home happy." Children's headstones from the late 19th century are typically small and sentimental, with images such as lambs and flowers. Often the only inscription is the first name, as in the tiny marble headstone for "**Elmer**" (ND) with eroding floral motif. There are four white bronze markers, three small box-like ones and one that is larger and slightly more elaborate, the **Asa Hill headstone** (d. 1892 at age 83) is a small, upright, white bronze stone set on a white bronze base, with inscription on an inset panel of darker white bronze.

There are also a number of military headstones, including Civil War and World War veterans. The earliest military headstones are marble, while more recent ones are bronze or polished granite. Many contain information about military service that may not be readily available elsewhere. The military headstone of **Harold F. Stearns** (1886-1960), who served as a sergeant in the military police during World War I, is a bronze plaque on polished granite base.

The most recent headstones, which are primarily in the new section at the rear of the cemetery, are of polished granite in a variety of colors and forms. They are typically upright slabs about 30 feet tall, with slightly curving tops. Most are single, but there are also some double headstones as well.

Nearly all names in the older part of Oak Hill are of English descent, with more diverse European heritage reflected in newer sections. Many of the family names found at North Bellingham are also found at Oak Hill.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites have been identified within the district, sites may exist. Ten ancient sites are known in the general area (within one mile), including one site, the West Terrace Site (19-NF-413), which nearly abuts the northern boundary of the district. Most known sites in the area are located on upland terraces bordering the Charles River, its tributary streams, and related wetlands. A site examination level survey (Leveillee and Waller 1998) has been

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completed for the West Terrace Site. That survey identified two loci, Locus 1 (100 square meters) and Locus 2 (250 square meters), at the site. Locus 1 was determined to be a small, short-duration, limited-activity campsite, containing a moderate to low density of chipping debris and a projectile point tip. In the opinion of MHC staff, Locus 1 was considered ineligible for National Register listing. Locus 2 was determined to be a small- to moderate-sized Transitional Archaic lithic workshop, containing a dense concentration of chipping debris in all stages of lithic manufacture, a broad blade tool fragment, and a broken Orient projectile point. In the opinion of MHC staff, Locus 2 of the West Terrace Site was considered eligible for National Register listing. Neither Locus 1 and Locus 2 are located in the district; however, additional similar small campsites and workshops could exist in the nearby nominated area.

Environmental characteristics of the district represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of ancient sites. Both cemeteries occupy a level to moderately sloping glacial outwash plain landform in close proximity to wetlands. Soils in the area are excessively drained and sandy. The upper Charles River, portions of which are now dammed, lies within 1,000 feet east of the district. An unnamed swampland lies a similar distance to the northwest. The entire district and surrounding locale lies within the Charles River drainage, which drains to the northeast and Boston Harbor. The Blackstone River drainage lies approximately two to three miles south of the district, and drains south to Narragansett Bay.

Given the information presented above, the size of the district (3.577 acres), grave excavations, and known patterns of Native American subsistence and settlement in the region, a moderate to high potential exists for locating significant ancient Native American resources in the district. The presence of the West Terrace Site in close proximity to the district, and in a similar environmental setting as the district, supports this prediction.

A high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources in the district at both the North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries. Historic documentary sources indicate the district locale was unused until both cemeteries were developed. Eighteenth- and 19th-century cartographic sources available for the area do not show any historic land use in the district. Structural evidence may survive from outbuildings or shacks associated with cemetery operation and maintenance in the district. The only structures currently known and located in the district are two adjacent tombs located at the North Bellingham Cemetery. Further 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 should represent the most common archaeological resource in the district. 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 individuals or groups of graves. A grave shaft discernable in the soil stratigraphy should be present with individual and multiple interments. Commemorative graves may lack below-ground burial features, and contain burial monuments only. Post molds may also be present from older fence lines that marked the boundaries of each cemetery and groups of graves. Archaeological testing may also identify head and footstones that are overgrown and presently not visible on the surface.

(end)

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.)

Property is:

- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Art _____
- Community Planning and Development _____
- Social History _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

1712 - 1962

Significant Dates

- 1712 First reported death date at North Bellingham cemetery _____
- 1719 Town of Bellingham established _____
- 1849 Oak Hill Cemetery established _____

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA _____

Cultural Affiliation

NA _____

Architect/Builder

Joseph Barber/Barbur, stone carver

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance extends from 1712, the date of the first reported burial, to 1962, the 50-year cutoff.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Criteria consideration D applies to both cemeteries in this nomination.

SECTION 8 - SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. They meet National Register Criteria A and C, as well as Criteria Consideration D for cemeteries, with a local level of significance. Together the two cemeteries reflect the broad patterns of the town's history, from settlement in the early 1700s to the present. They meet Criterion A as the burial place of many of the town founders, as well as veterans of multiple wars and nearly 300 years of Bellingham residents. Both cemeteries meet Criterion C and Criteria Consideration D as representatives of evolving styles of burial ground design and cemetery development, from the Colonial period through the 19th century at North Bellingham, and the Victorian period to the present at Oak Hill. The gravestones at North Bellingham include examples of 18th- and early 19th-century funerary art on predominantly slate headstones, while at Oak Hill, the headstones and family monuments are primarily marble and include late 19th- and 20th-century styles and motifs.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Areas of Significance

Criterion A: Broad Patterns of History

North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries, which are treated as a single district in this nomination, meet Criterion A as a rich repository of the history of the community and its residents. North Bellingham Cemetery is the town's oldest burying ground, predating the incorporation of the town in 1719, with the earliest reported death date of 1712. Although their headstones are no longer extant, many of the settlers of the community were buried at North Bellingham including: --- Johnson (d.1715), Bennoni Tomson, (d.1719), Dr. John Corbet (d.1727), and Pelatiah Smith (d.1727).

Pelatiah Smith was typical of the founding members of the small community. His will lists his as a blacksmith by trade, but he was also the first town clerk of Bellingham and owned 200 acres of land near the cemetery. Several physicians who were prominent in the community were buried at North Bellingham, including Dr. John Corbet and his son of the same name, buried in 1794, as well as Dr Samuel Scammell (d.1805). Elnathan Wight (d. 1761) was one of Bellingham's early Baptists, who became the first Baptist minister of Bellingham.

The epitaphs at North Bellingham provide a poignant window into early life in the community. There are a large number of infant deaths—often multiple infants within a single family, as in the Smith family, whose Gothic monument commemorates the death in the 1840s of three children at a young age. Lois Holbrook died in 1799 at age 27, and was buried with her child in her arms. Diseases such smallpox were a constant danger. Silas Penniman, who died in 1777 at age 26, was one of many Revolutionary War soldiers who succumbed to the disease. In many cases, those who survived beyond infancy lived into old age, such as Mary Hayward, who died in 1814 at the age of 102.

North Bellingham Cemetery is the oldest and largest historic cemetery in the community, a rare surviving remnant from the early years of a town that has recently undergone rapid growth and change. Other historic cemeteries in Bellingham include: South Bellingham Cemetery on Centre Street (1717, and accepted by the town in 1756); Center Cemetery (1778); Rakeville Cemetery (ca. 1830); and Scammell Cemetery on Grove Street, a small cemetery with the earliest extant stone dated 1839.

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Oak Hill Cemetery was established in 1849 as a private cemetery, and remains active today. Many of the family names found at North Bellingham are also found at Oak Hill. They include: Adams, Cook, Hayward, Hill, Holbrook, Partridge, Penniman, Scammell, Smith, Thayer and Thompson. Most are Anglo-Saxon, with a small number from other European countries that came to Bellingham in the early 19th century to work in the mills. Oak Hill, as a private rather than public cemetery, represents an important social idea of citizens assuming responsibility for a function that had previously been the domain of the town. Private cemeteries were common in urban areas by the mid-19th century, but were unusual in small towns like Bellingham, where cemeteries were typically town-owned. Oak Hill was a surprisingly sophisticated undertaking for a small group of citizens in the mid-19th century, and has continued to fulfill its intended mission for over 160 years.

Criterion C: Design

The one-acre North Bellingham Cemetery contains roughly 130 gravestones, three monuments, and two tombs, as well as a number of footstones and fragments. It is an early 18th-century burial ground where burials were initially arranged in a random manner. The clearly defined rows of headstones in the western section of North Bellingham Cemetery may represent relocation of earlier headstones, perhaps as part of an early "burial ground improvement" project.

Most significant at North Bellingham is the design of the early gravestones, which represent a range of carving styles and motifs. Seven headstones from North Bellingham were photographed in the 1970s by gravestone experts Daniel and Jessie Lie Farber, and were included in the Farber Gravestone Collection, an online photographic collection based at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, that documents thousands of distinctive early gravestones in southern New England. Five of these were early 18th-century headstones with crudely carved lettering, which were deteriorated at the time and are no longer identifiable.

The other two, the John Partridge (d.1791) and Polly Coombes (d.1795) headstones, are still extant and display the soul effigy, or winged face that was popular at the end of the 18th century. The Partridge and Coombes stones were carved by Joseph Barbur, Jr.(1731-1812), a prolific stone carver from West Medway, just north of Bellingham. Barbur is particularly known for his soul effigies and for his skilled treatment of the abstract frondlike designs in the side panels of the gravestones, carved in a more personal style.

Michael Cornish, in his article "Joseph Barbur Jr., the Frond Carver of West Medway," describes Barbur's mature work as having two major influences. He describes Barbur's soul effigies as representing the mainstream of gravestone design, while the frondwork was an original interpretation of the use of abstract designs that displays a unique personal style of frond patterns that display a unique interplay of figure and ground. Cornish cites the Polly Coombes headstone as a particularly good example of Barbur's mature work. He also indicates that in 1983 there were twelve headstones carved by Barbur at North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries. However, due to the extensive biological growth that covers many of the stones at Bellingham North illegible, it is difficult to evaluate how many of these are extant.

Oak Hill Cemetery clearly illustrates mid-to-late 19th-century cemetery design and development in its rectilinear spatial organization, and the presence of family lots rather than the individual graves found in early burial grounds like Bellingham North. Oak Hill is modest, well-maintained private cemetery where the original layout is still clearly evident. At Oak Hill, most of the headstones and monuments are machine made, and are representative of a type and period rather than unique works of art.

Period of Significance

The period of significance extends from 1712, when the first burial is reported to have occurred at North Bellingham,

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through 1962, which corresponds with the 50-year cut-off established by the National Register. These two cemeteries represent nearly 300 years of town history and are among the oldest extant physical evidence of the community.

Level of Significance

North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries are both are significant at the local level. North Bellingham contains early documentation of the history of the community, as well as examples of a wide range of funerary art. Oak Hill is a mid 19th-century private cemetery with a well-articulated rectilinear plan organized around the original 50 family lots, with later additions at the rear.

Summary/Conclusions

Burial grounds and cemeteries such as the two described in this nomination are among the oldest and richest cultural and historic records of a community. They provide information about past generations and tell the story of evolving attitudes towards death and burial. The diversity represented by these two cemeteries reflects the unique and identifiable quality special to Bellingham.

The significance of these two adjacent cemeteries rests on their ability to convey the essence of a specific type, period, and style; the high quality of some of the headstone designs; the variety of headstones and monuments; and their harmonious relationship to each other and their surroundings. Despite diminished integrity caused by loss of older stones at North Bellingham, these two cemeteries are significant artifacts in the history of Bellingham. Oak Hill Cemetery is still in active use, but the recent burials are concentrated in two new sections at the rear of the cemetery and do not have an impact on the overall integrity of the district.

CONTEXT: CEMETERIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

The earliest New England burial grounds were literally bone yards that reflected the austerity and difficulty of life during the Puritan era. They were often located on infertile or leftover land, and some were used as pastures, adding to their unkempt appearance. Many early graveyards had only a few graves, which often faced west towards the setting sun, but were otherwise laid out with little formal organization. The overall appearance was barren, with uneven topography, rough grass, few trees, and no attempt at embellishment.

As towns grew beyond a few families, they began to establish municipal burial grounds. Some were located adjacent to meetinghouses or on commons, while others, like North Bellingham, were situated in more isolated locations. As communities became more established, burial markers, which had initially been rough fieldstones with crudely carved inscriptions, became more refined. During the 18th century, New England established a growing tradition of slate carving by skilled artisans. Markers during this period often had images of winged skulls, known as soul effigies, and hourglasses. Inscriptions typically read, "Here lies the body of . . ." reflecting the rejection of bodily resurrection.

Towards the end of the 18th century, ideas about death and burial began to change as Unitarianism replaced rigid Puritan beliefs. Attitudes towards death and the afterlife began to reflect a cautious optimism that became evident in the burial grounds of New England. Burials no longer faced west but were oriented east towards the rising sun. Gravestones remained mostly slate, but the iconography changed to reflect the new optimism. Soul effigies and angels offered more positive images and were soon supplemented by urns, willows and other symbols of hope. Inscriptions took on a different tone as well. "Dedicated to the memory of . . ." implied a permanent legacy, even though the body was departed.

(continued)

By the early 19th century, burial grounds became larger than they had been a century earlier and began to reflect the orderliness that was valued in New England during the Federal period. They were no longer fields with a few scattered graves, but contained rows of headstones and sometimes footstones. The landscape remained rough and unadorned, although the burial ground might have been enclosed by a fieldstone wall or wooden fence.

In the 19th century, the population of Massachusetts increased dramatically. The growth of urban areas contaminated the air and water, with a resultant rise in epidemics that caused high death rates. The crisis became particularly serious in Boston, where the burial grounds were seriously overcrowded with no space remaining for burials. These issues were also reflected in other cities and towns, prompting a new approach to the design of burial grounds, called the rural cemetery movement, which provided assurance that the dead could be interred and their remains would not be disturbed.

One of the earliest and most successful examples was the Mount Auburn Cemetery (NHL), established in 1831. A private cemetery spanning the Cambridge-Watertown line, it created a new business model as well as a new landscape aesthetic. While most cemeteries were not as large or sophisticated as Mount Auburn, many of the principles soon spread to small cemeteries such as Oak Hill, where the idea of family lots, burial in perpetuity, and private, rather than public, ownership were clearly reflected. A central premise of this movement was that burial grounds were no longer considered desolate places to be avoided, but places of solace to the living as well as permanent resting places for the dead.

In the latter part of the 19th century, marble began to replace slate as the preferred material for headstones and monuments because it was easier to carve into more complex and sophisticated designs. Iconography evolved as well, with classical forms such as obelisks, and imagery that reflected the sentimentality of the Victorian era. By the late 19th century, granite, often with a polished surface, replaced marble as the preferred material, a trend that continued through the 20th century, and which is evident in the newer sections at the rear of Oak Hill.

TOWN AND SITE HISTORY

Bellingham, which is located at the far southwestern end of Norfolk County in east-central Massachusetts, was part of the Dedham land grant of 1636. The remote area was rocky and difficult to farm, so it remained unsettled until after King Phillip's War, which ended in 1676. The land was divided between Mendon and Wrentham in 1714, although there were few transportation routes and only about 40 families in the Bellingham area at the time. Many were Baptists and Quakers who rejected the rigid Puritan religion that prevailed in more settled parts of Massachusetts. Bellingham was established as a town in 1719, and was named for Sir Richard Bellingham (1591-1672), third governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

North Bellingham Cemetery, the oldest and largest historic cemetery in Bellingham, pre-dated the founding of the town. George Fairbanks Partridge, in his 1919 history of the town, reported that in 1712 the Hayward family owned farmland near North Bellingham Cemetery and that "The one [cemetery] at North Bellingham was in use in 1718, for it is mentioned in a deed as "the burying place." There were eight headstones by 1727. The first Congregational meetinghouse was built in 1720 but it was disbanded in 1756 due to poor location and Baptist /Quaker resistance. In 1744, Baptists built their own meetinghouse, one of the few Baptist meetinghouses in Massachusetts at the time, and was also used for town meetings.

Bellingham was primarily agricultural during its early years, and remained small and struggling through the Colonial period. There were 462 inhabitants listed in the 1765 census, with much of the early settlement in the northern part of town along Hartford Avenue. Rufus Fairbanks, author of an 1884 history of the town, wrote: "The public business up to the time of the Revolution appears to have been the settlement of town lines and the consideration of church affairs."

(continued)

In 1784, there were there were two gristmills, two sawmills, and one fulling mill, but there was little waterpower available. Roads were poor so there was little trade, and residents depended on the land and small home-based businesses. By this time, the inhabitants were about equally divided between Congregationalists, most of whom attended church in the West Parish of Medway, and Baptists, who had a church and minister in Bellingham.

In many Massachusetts communities, early residents identified more strongly with their village or neighborhood than with their municipality, so it was not unusual to have multiple burial grounds in a small community. This was the case in Bellingham, where the community was fragmented by sectarian differences and there was no clear village center, resulting in small cemeteries scattered throughout the community. North Bellingham, the oldest cemetery in town, was followed in 1717 by South Bellingham Cemetery, which became town-owned in 1756; land for Center Cemetery was given in 1788; Rakesville Cemetery was established in 1830; and in 1839 land was given for Scammell Cemetery. All of these later cemeteries are smaller than North Bellingham.

Partridge wrote a description of the town in 1784:

“The trade is very small; people depend on the land and some mechanical employments. Almost every family is provided with a pair of looms by which they make nearly enough clothing for themselves. The number of farms is about 80. The inhabitants are about equally divided between the Congregational and Baptist persuasions. The latter have a house and a settled minister. The principal part of the Congregationalists in 1747 was incorporated with the West Parish of Medway.”

The population grew during the Federal period with establishment of small-scale mills at North Bellingham and Caryville, followed by boot and shoe production by 1830. Hartford Avenue, where North Bellingham Cemetery is located, became a major east-west route through the community. By the mid-19th century, population of the town was about 1,300, and included a small Irish population. Boots, shoes, and small tools were produced in the town’s factories. A Universalist Society was formed by 1794, and a Congregational Society in 1821, which merged with the Universalists in 1825. A Universalist meetinghouse was begun in the 1790s but not completed, and a Federal-style Baptist meetinghouse was built in 1826, with a Baptist chapel built by the mill owners in North Bellingham in 1847 continuing the tradition of relatively liberal denominations in town.

In the 1840s, as North Bellingham Cemetery began to fill up, a group of residents from the northern part of town established Oak Hill Cemetery, and laid out a very different type of cemetery than the town’s older burial grounds, which grew organically in an informal way as burial space was needed. In addition to being private, Oak Hill was a designed cemetery, based on the notion that families should be buried together in family lots rather than in random locations within the cemetery. A secondary benefit was that the private owners might remain more actively involved in the care of the cemetery. Many of the original family names found at North Bellingham also occur at Oak Hill. These include: Adams, Cook, Darling, Hill, Holbrook, Partridge, Scott, Thayer, and Thompson.

The charter signed on May 7, 1849 summarized the purpose of the new cemetery.

“We the undersigned being desirous of forming an association for the enlargement of the Burial Ground in the northerly part of Bellingham, jointly and severally agree to pay for the payment of land, fencing and fixing the same, in such manner as is thought proper by said association or by a Committee chosen by said association hereafter, the several assessments made by said association or by their Committee to a treasurer hereafter chosen by said association to accomplish the above named purpose.”

Early tasks of the cemetery association were to clear the site of trees and level the grounds, to lay out the cemetery in 50

(continued)

family lots, to enclose the cemetery with a fence, and to transact the business of the association, including selling of lots. The style of Oak Hill was very different than that of North Bellingham. Many of the lot owners chose to build curbing around their lots to define the area. There were some family monuments, as well as individual headstones. Marble was the predominant material during the early years of the cemetery.

After the strong start that is well documented in the Oak Hill Cemetery Association's early records, the cemetery fell into disrepair in the late 19th century. It was reorganized in 1893, with a new constitution establishing governance by a board of three trustees to be chosen at the annual meeting of the association. Their charge was "to attend to proper management" of the cemetery. The three trustees each had a specific position: the secretary was responsible for record keeping and notice of meetings, the treasurer received funds and paid bills, and the superintendent of grounds was responsible for maintenance and upkeep.

As with many small organizations run by volunteers, Oak Hill records are scarce for much of the 20th century. By the mid-1900s, most of the land in the original eight lot sections at Oak Hill had been sold. In 1949, the cemetery association acquired a small sliver of land at the rear of the cemetery, and a new section was laid out perpendicular to the original eight sections (see map 5). The first burial in the new section occurred in 1961.

In early 20th century textile mills continued production but remained the only industry in town, drawing an increasingly diverse labor force. By late 20th century, the town's historic settlement patterns were heavily impacted by suburban development along the many highways, including Hartford Avenue. In the late 20th century, Interstate route 495 was built a short distance to the west of North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries, with resulting development of large box stores immediately to the west and widening of the road in front of Oak Hill. Despite these intrusions, the two cemeteries are buffered by vegetation on three sides, which somewhat helps to preserve the rural ambiance.

There is evidence of some gravestone repairs at North Bellingham that probably took place in the late 20th century. Since the Farbers documented gravestones at North Bellingham in the 1970s, there has been a significant loss of headstones. There are many broken stones lying on the ground at North Bellingham Cemetery and others that are severely leaning and at high risk of being damaged. Oak Hill, which is still owned by a private cemetery association, has had varying levels of care over the years, but currently is in good repair.

Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of ancient Native American settlement in Bellingham and the interior Charles River Basin are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Several sites have been identified in these areas; however, most lack information pertaining to content, internal configuration, cultural affiliations, and integrity. Systematic cultural resource assessments since the 1970s have contributed more intrasite information for known sites in the area, particularly in upland zones characteristic of the Bellingham locale. As a result of recent research, it is evident that upland zones played an important role in the ancient Native subsistence and settlement patterns of the region. Ancient sites found in the district may help document the internal composition of upland sites and their local and regional importance. Native sites in this area may play an important role in land-use patterns based in more coastal areas to the east and northeast or to the west in the Worcester Plateau area. Ancient Native American sites in this area may also contain information that could help clarify or test the importance of river drainage basins to Native settlement and subsistence models. The North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries lie at the headwaters of the Charles River drainage, near its border with the Blackstone River drainage flowing southerly to Narragansett Bay. The Concord and Sudbury drainage which drains northerly to the Merrimack River, and the Neponset drainage that flows northeasterly to Boston Harbor are also located in this region. Ancient Native sites in the district locale may contribute information that demonstrates the extent to which these drainages influenced the social, cultural, and economic systems of their Native inhabitants.

(continued)

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to provide detailed information on the social, cultural, and economic patterns that reflect much of Bellingham's community history from the 18th through 19th centuries. Archaeological resources located at cemeteries in the district can be especially important by providing information on Bellingham's settlement history in the early 18th and 19th centuries. Many of the town's early founders were still living during this period, agriculture was still important, and 19th-century changes in cemetery design had yet to take hold. The North Bellingham Cemetery, including its monuments and graves, represents an intact example of a municipally owned, early settlement period burial ground, and is one of the few surviving landscape features associated with Bellingham's founders and their families. It is the earliest cemetery located in Bellingham. Many of Bellingham's earliest settlers, town leaders, and war veterans are buried in the North Bellingham Cemetery. Most of the cemetery's earliest stones are located at the eastern end of the cemetery. Additional documentary research, combined with archaeological survey and testing within and around the current boundary of the cemeteries, may identify the full range of graves present at both the North Bellingham Cemetery and Oak Hill Cemetery. Unmarked graves may exist, and the current pattern of the grave stones may not, in every instance, represent their actual placement. Gravestones were frequently removed from older cemeteries, then later replaced, at times in different locations. The discrepancies between some head 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 burying grounds in Massachusetts, and has been suggested for some burials at the Oak Hill Cemetery. Archaeological research can help identify these graves as well as later unmarked graves resulting from stolen, damaged, and overgrown stones. Eighteenth- and 19th-century unmarked graves may also be present, representing paupers and unknown persons. Archaeological research can also help test the accuracy of the existing boundaries at each cemetery. These bounds may not accurately represent the actual cemetery boundaries. Some burials, possibly those of unknown persons, paupers, or other indigent persons, may have intentionally been 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 later dates.

Much of the above information can be obtained through unobtrusive archaeological research. That is, information can be obtained by mapping artifact concentrations and the locations of features such as grave shafts and post molds, without disturbing actual skeletal remains. Remote-sensing research techniques might also contribute useful information. Social, cultural, and economic information relating to the 18th- and 19th-century Bellingham settlement can be obtained in this manner; however, more detailed studies can be implemented through the actual excavation of burials and their analysis. Osteological studies of individuals interred at the burial ground have the potential to offer a wealth of information relating to the overall physical appearance of the town's inhabitants, their occupations, nutrition, pathologies, and causes of death. This information can also be used to determine the actual number of individuals interred at the burial ground. Osteological information can also provide detailed information about the inhabitants of the community during a period when written records are rare or non-existent. The paucity of written records is especially true for minority members of the community including Native Americans, African Americans, and early Irish American immigrants. The overall context of the grave, including material culture remains, can provide information on burial practices, religious beliefs, economic status, family structure, and numerous other topics relating to the individual, their socio/economic group, the overall settlement, and, the early Congregational society.

END

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Walker-Kluesing Design Group. *Preservation Guidelines for Municipally Owned Historic Burial Grounds and Cemeteries*. Boston: Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, Second Edition, 2002.

MAPS

1919 *Map of the Town of Bellingham, Massachusetts in 1919*. In *Bellingham 1719 - 1919* by George Fairbanks Partridge.

1995 *Oak Hill Cemetery* by K. Stockton. Map showing layout of burial lots, headstones and burials. (In files of Oak Hill Cemetery Association)

2011 Bellingham Assessors Map, showing parcel 0019-0002-000.

2011 Google Maps Aerial Photos of North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries.

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 # _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

BEL.800, BEL.801

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government Town of Bellingham
 University
 Other Oak Hill Cemetery Association
Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.577 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1
Zone Easting Northing

3
Zone Easting Northing

2
Zone Easting Northing

4
Zone Easting Northing

Lat/Lon Oak Hill cemetery 42.116407 -71.460036
North Bellingham cemetery 42.116827 -71.459631

Verbal Boundary Description

This nomination includes land in the northern part of Bellingham, Massachusetts, that comprises Assessors Parcel 0019-0002-000. The nomination includes the entire 3.577-acre parcel, which is occupied by two cemeteries: North Bellingham, which is town owned, and Oak Hill, which is privately owned. The area is located on Hartford Avenue just east of Interstate Route 495, and is surrounded by big box stores on the west, wetlands on the north, and a power line right-of-way on the east.

Boundary Justification

North Bellingham Cemetery, about one acre, was established ca. 1712 and has been town owned for nearly 200 years. Oak Hill Cemetery, about two and a half acres, was acquired by the Oak Hill Cemetery Association in 1849, and remains in private ownership. Burials no longer occur at North Bellingham, but Oak Hill remains an active cemetery. The two cemeteries share a single access drive that runs along the front of the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shary Page Berg, preservation consultant with Betsy Friedberg, MHC NR Director
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date August 2012
street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125-3314
e-mail betsy.friedberg@state.ma.us

North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries
Name of Property

Norfolk, MA
County and State

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Bellingham, Bellingham Attn: Town Administrator Denis Fraire (for North Bellingham Cemetery)
street & number Municipal Center, 10 Mechanic Street telephone 508-657-2802
city or town Bellingham state MA zip code 02019

name Oak Hill Cemetery Association Attn: Julie Thompson, President (for Oak Hill Cemetery)
street & number 1051 South Main Street telephone 508-928-2862
city or town Bellingham state MA zip code 02019

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemetery

City or Vicinity: Bellingham

County: Norfolk State: MA

Photographer: Shary Berg

Date Photographed: May 2011

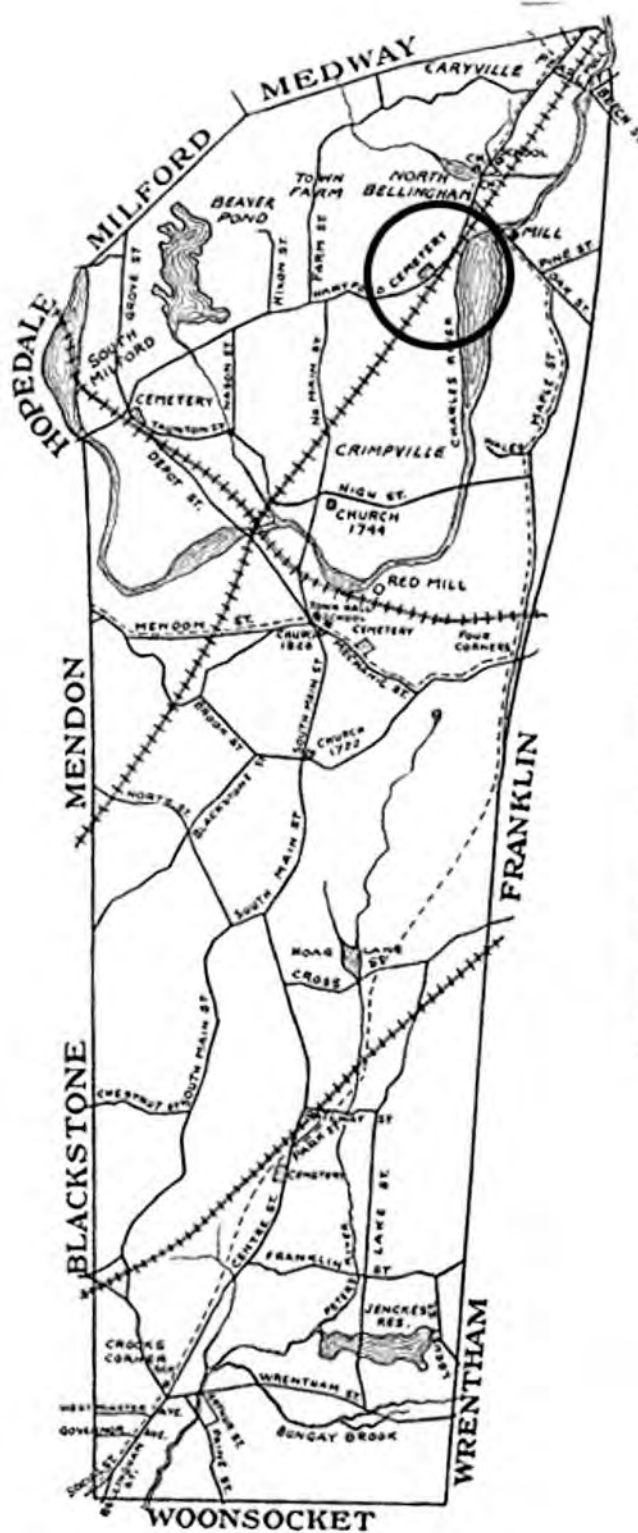
1. North Bellingham Cemetery, overview, eastern section, looking NW
2. North Bellingham Cemetery, overview, western section, looking NE
3. North Bellingham Cemetery, perimeter wall, toms, monument
4. North Bellingham Cemetery, Polly Coombes headstone, looking E
5. Oak Hill Cemetery, overview looking NE
6. Oak Hill Cemetery, typical headstones, looking NE



THE NORTH BELLINGHAM CEMETERY, OLDER THAN THE TOWN ITSELF

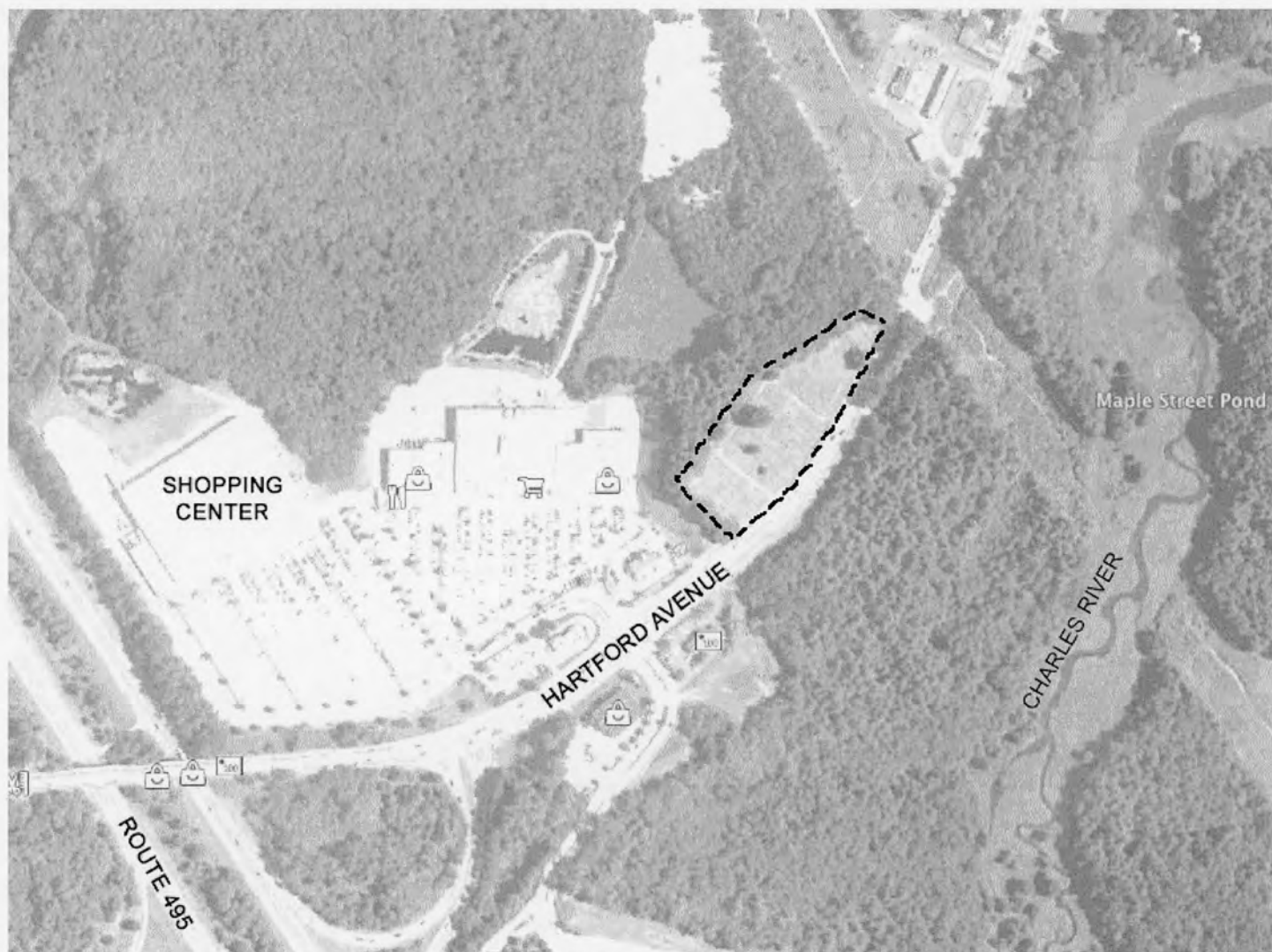
North Bellingham Cemetery in 1919, from Partridge's *Bellingham 1719 - 1919*. The density of headstones was much higher then than it is today and the landscape was more open, with rougher grass and uneven topography.

MAPS

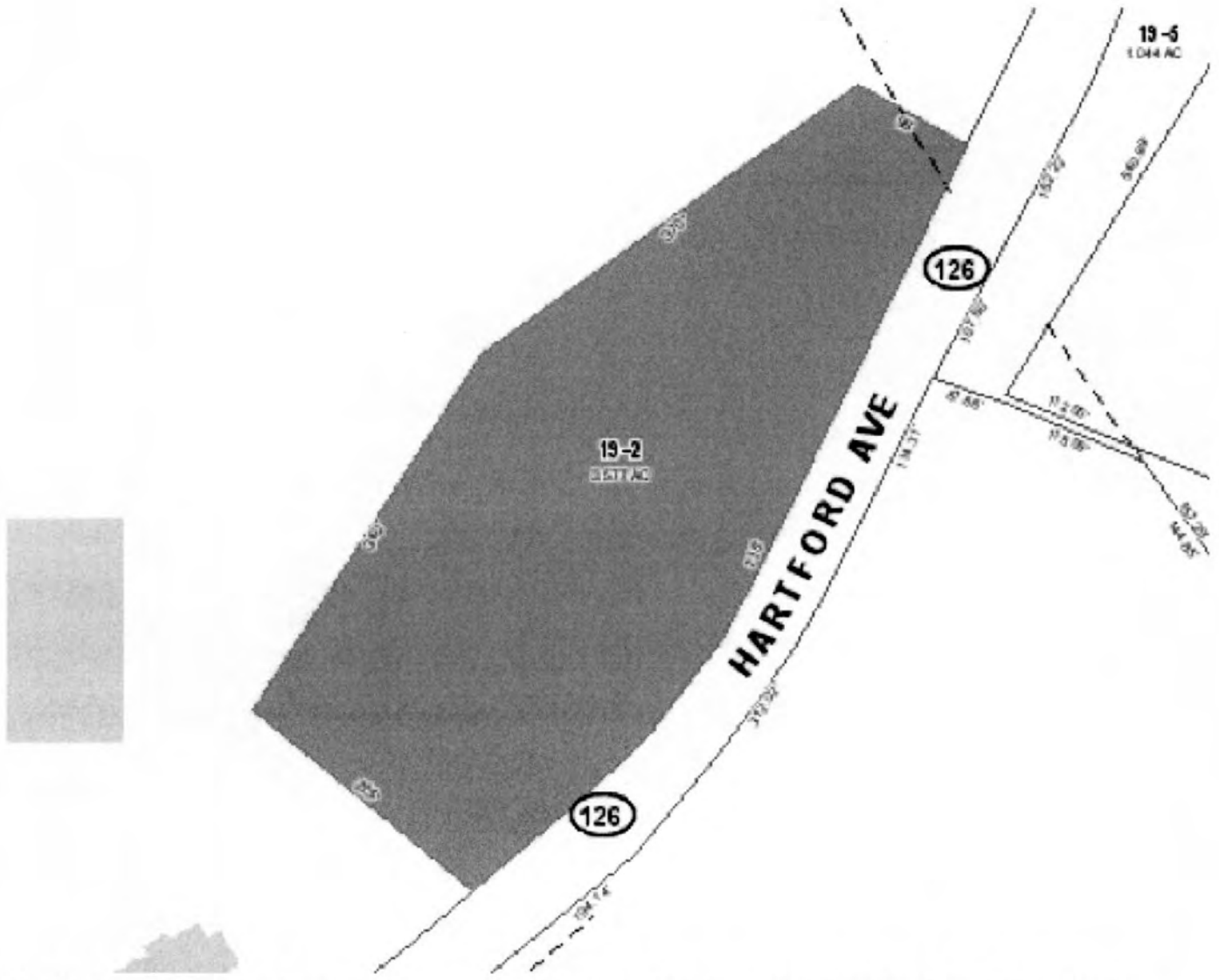


MAP OF THE TOWN OF BELLINGHAM IN 1919
SHOWING THE STREAMS, STREETS, STEAM RAILWAYS, ELECTRIC RAILWAYS (---),
CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, MILLS AND CEMETERIES
SCALE: ONE INCH TO MILE

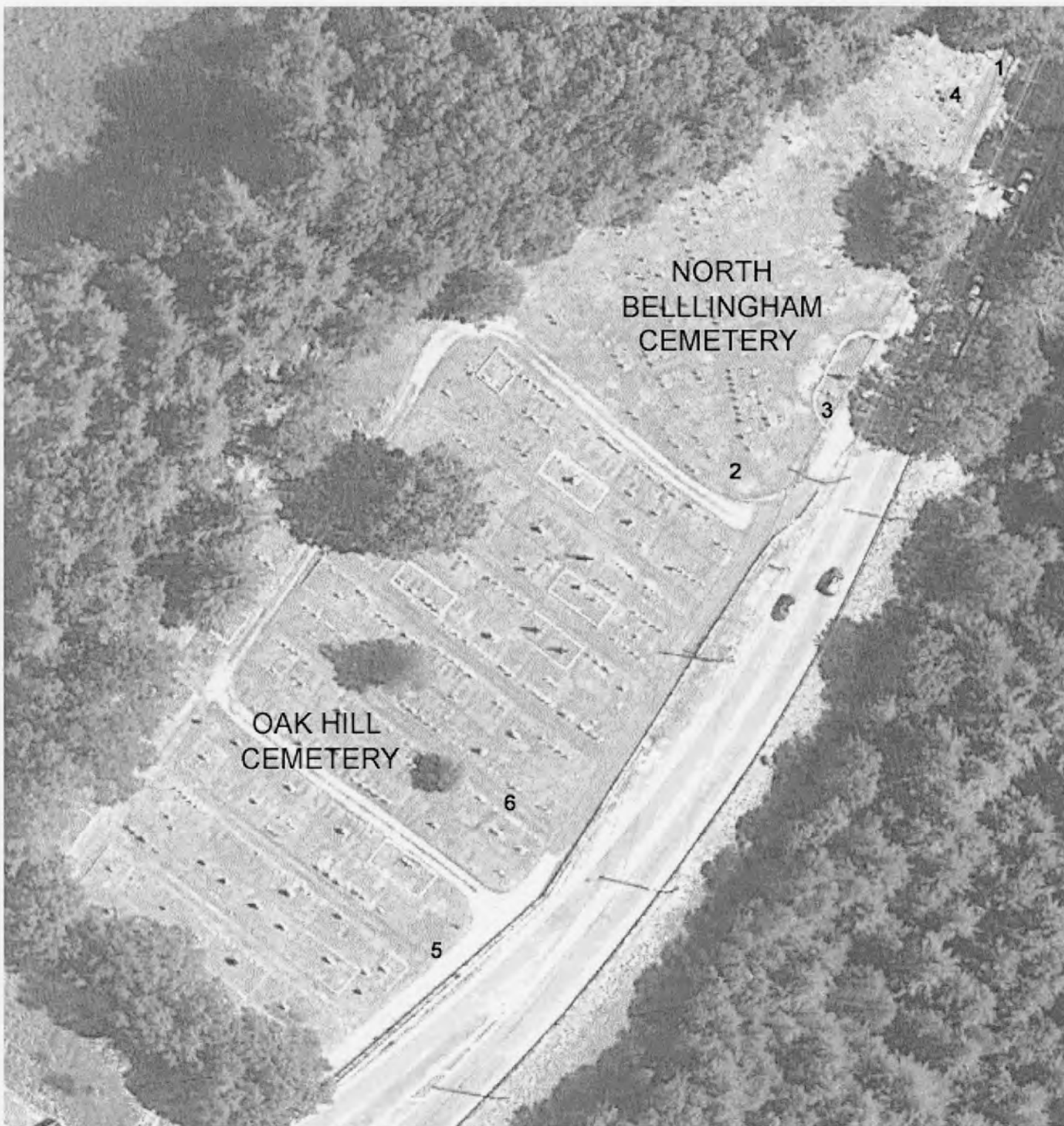
Map 1 – Bellingham in 1919, from Partridge's *Bellingham 1719 - 1919*. Circle shows location of North Bellingham and Oak Hill Cemeteries.



Map 2 – Aerial photo showing cemetery setting. Dotted dark line indicates the area included in this nomination. Google Earth, 2011.



Map 3 – 2011 Assessors Map of Parcel 0019-0002-000, which includes both cemeteries. Town of Bellingham.



Map 4 - Aerial view of cemeteries and Hartford Avenue. Google Earth, 2011. Numbers refer to the photographs that accompany this nomination. Note: newer sections at Oak Hill are at the upper left and are partially obscured by trees.



Photo 1 - North Bellingham Cemetery – Overview, eastern section, looking northwest. 5/2011.



Photo 2 - North Bellingham Cemetery – Overview, western section, looking northeast, 5/2011.



Photo 3 - North Bellingham Cemetery – Perimeter wall, tombs and monument, looking northeast, 5/2011.



Photo 4 - North Bellingham Cemetery – Polly Coombes Headstone, looking east, 5/2011



Photo 5 - Oak Hill Cemetery – Overview, looking northeast, 5/2011.



Photo 6 - Oak Hill Cemetery – Typical headstones, looking northeast, 5/2011

North Bellingham Cemetery and Oak Hill Cemetery National Register Nomination Data Sheet

<i>Photo</i>	<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Description/Material</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Status</i>
1-4	North Bellingham Cemetery (MHC#801)	Eastern part of district	One-acre cemetery	Ca.1712	Site	C
5,6	Oak Hill Cemetery (MHC#800)	Western part of district	Two and a half-acre cemetery	1849	Site	C
1,3	Perimeter Wall	Encompasses both cemeteries	Stone wall, various construction.	1700s - present	Structure	C
	Security Fence	Sides and rear of cemeteries	Approx 8' tall chain link.	Late 20 th century	Structure	NC
	Circulation System	Encompasses both cemeteries	Entrance and internal road system	Ca. 1850	Structure	C
3	Tombs	North Bellingham Cemetery	19 th century tombs	One is ca. 1804	Structure	C (2)
3	Flagpole	Along Hartford Avenue	North Bellingham Aluminum	Late 20 th century	Object	NC
3	Adams/Barber Monument	North Bellingham Cemetery	Granite with marble panels	c.1807	Object	C
	Smith Monument	North Bellingham Cemetery	Sandstone monument	19 th century	Object	C
	Bryant Obelisk	North Bellingham Cemetery	Marble obelisk	19 th century	Object	C
	John Partridge Headstone	North Bellingham Cemetery	Slate headstone with winged face, attributed to Joseph Barbur, Jr.	1791	Object	C
4	Polly Coombes Headstone	North Bellingham Cemetery	Slate headstone attributed to Joseph Barbur, Jr.	1795	Object	C
	Grace Holbrook Headstone	North Bellingham Cemetery	Slate headstone with abstract floral motifs	1791	Object	C
	Joseph Holbrook Headstone	North Bellingham Cemetery	Slate headstone with abstract floral motifs	1785	Object	C
	Luke Holbrook Headstone	North Bellingham Cemetery	Slate headstone with abstract floral motifs	1775	Object	C
	Nathan Penniman Headstone	Oak Hill Cemetery	Slate headstone with willow and urn motifs	1839	Object	C

	Slocomb Family Monument	Oak Hill Cemetery	Tall granite obelisk	c. 1870s	Object	C
	Olive Benedict Headstone	Oak Hill Cemetery	Marble headstone	1869	Object	C
	"Elmer" Headstone	Oak Hill Cemetery	Small marble headstone with floral motif	19 th cent.	Object	C
	Asa Hill Headstone	Oak Hill Cemetery	White bronze headstone	1892	Object	C
	Harold F. Stearns Headstone	Oak Hill Cemetery	Bronze military headstone on granite base	1960	Object	C

Note: The district datasheet lists representative examples of headstones and monuments but does not include every feature within the district.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY North Bellingham Cemetery and Oak Hill Cemetery
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Norfolk

DATE RECEIVED: 8/10/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/07/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/24/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/26/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000819

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 9.25.12 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.



Photo 1 - North Bellingham Cemetery,
Bellingham, MA S-2011. Overview of
Eastern section, looking northwest

MA-BELLINGHAM(NORFOLKCOUNTY)-CEMETERY01.tif



Photo 2 - North Bellingham Cemetery,
Bellingham, MA 5-2011 Overview of
Western Section, looking northeast

MA - BELLINGHAM (NORFOLK COUNTY) - CEMETERY (02. kf



Photo 3 - North Bellingham Cemetery
Bellingham, MA 5-2011 Overview
of Perimeter Wall, Tombs, Monument

MA - BELLINGHAM (NORFOLK COUNTY) - CEMETERY 03.tif



Photo 4 - Polly Coombes headstone,
looking east, North Bellingham
Cemetery, Bellingham, WA 5-204

MA - BELLINGHAM (NO. FOLK COUNTY) - CEMETERY04.tif



Photo 5 - Oak Hill Cemetery
Bellingham, MA. Overview Looking
Northeast 5-2011

MA - BELLINGHAM (NORFOLK COUNTY) - CEMETERY05.tif

EPSON

EPSON

EPSON



Photo 6 - Oak Hill Cemetery,
Bellingham, MA. Overview looking
northeast, typical headstones
5-2011

MA - BELLINGHAM (NORFOLK COUNTY) - CEMETERY06.tif



She
plan

NORTH BELLING CEMETERY
BELLINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

DISBURS ROAD

DAV HILL CEMETERY BELLINGHAM
MASSACHUSETTS

RECEIVED
MAR 29 2010
MASS. HIST. COMM



GENERAL
NORTH BENTON
KANSAS JIM YHO

30-50

30-11

30-05

30-08

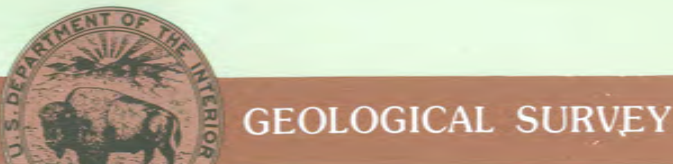
30-04

MASS. HIST. COMM
Assessor's Map



7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE
SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names



GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

1987

Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works.

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and State of Rhode Island agencies.

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1981. Field checked 1982. Map edited 1987.

The west half of this area also covered by 7.5-minute, 1:24 000-scale map: State Line dated 1973.

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19 Universal Transverse Mercator

10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone, and Rhode Island coordinate system 1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 6 meters south and 41 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map.

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTour ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER

THIS MAP COMPLEYS WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

Meters	Feet	DECLINATION DIAGRAM		ADJOINING MAPS		
1	3.2808			1	2	3
2	6.5617			4	5	
3	9.8425			6	7	8
4	13.1234					
5	16.4042					
6	19.6850					
7	22.9659					
8	26.2467					
9	29.5275					
10	32.8084					

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808
To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

UTM grid convergence (0.81 m per km) is shown in diagram
Diagram is approximate

1: Millis
2: Medford
3: Norwood
4: Ludlow
5: Brockton
6: Georgetown
7: Attleboro
8: Taunton



Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface	
Secondary highway, hard surface	
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	
Unimproved road, trail	
Road marker: international, U.S. State	
Railroad: standard gage, narrow gage	
Bridge, drawbridge	
Footbridge, overpass, underpass	
Railroad: only selected landmark buildings shown	
House; barn; church; school; large structure	
Boundary: National, with monument	
State	
County, parish	
Civil township, precinct, district	
Incorporated city, village, town	
National or State reservation; small park	
Land grant with monument; found section corner	
U.S. public lands survey; range, township, section	
Range, township, section line; location approximate	
Fence or field line	
Power transmission line, located tower	
Dam; dam with lock	
Cemetery; grave	
Campground; picnic area; U.S. location monument	
Windmill; water well; spring	
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave	
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation	
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression	
Distorted surface: strip mine, levee, sand	
Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate	
Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream	
Rapid, large and small; falls, large and small	
Submerged marsh; marsh; swamp	
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	
Soak; mangrove	
Orchard; vineyard	

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available, on request

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1987

LAT / LONG

OAK HILL: 42.116407 -71.460036

N. BELL: 42.116927 -71.459631





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

August 1, 2012

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:

North Bellingham and Oak Hill cemeteries, Bellingham (Norfolk), 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 were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Four letters of support have been received.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure

cc: Michael Connor, Chair, Bellingham Board of Selectmen
Marcia Crooks, Bellingham Historical Commission
Julie Thompson, Oak Hill Cemetery Association
James Haughey, Bellingham Cemetery Committee & Sextons
Shary Page Berg, consultant
Stacy Wetstein, Patricia Buckley, Bellingham Planning Board

Town of Bellingham
CEMETERY COMMITTEE

And

SEXTONS

26 Blackstone Street / DPW Building
Bellingham, MA 02019
508-966-5813

RECEIVED

MAR 29 2010

MASS. HIST. COMM

James Haughey, Chairman
Francis E. Cartier, Vice Chairman
William A. Spear, Jr.

August 11, 2009

Ms. Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02015

RE: Bellingham North Cemetery – Historical Registry

Ms. Friedberg:

The Bellingham Massachusetts Cemetery Committee wishes to express their support of the efforts of its citizens to get our North Cemetery under the protection of the National Register of Historic Places.

This cemetery was in existence as "The Burying Place" before the town was formed in 1719, and, contains the remains of the founding families and Revolutionary War Soldiers who answered the Alarm of April 19, 1775. The Town took over the cemetery in the 1700's and has continued to maintain its grounds.

An October 2009 Town Meeting capital request to rehabilitate some of the easily repairable grave markers at North and other Town cemeteries is being co-sponsored by this Committee as well as the Historical Commission and Office of the Veteran's Agent.

This Committee and the Town acknowledge the debt of gratitude we owe to those soldiers interned in our cemeteries, and our responsibility to maintain and protect their final resting place.

Thank you for considering the Bellingham North Cemetery as a Historic Place.

Sincerely,



James Haughey
Chairman Bellingham Cemetery Committee & Sextons

RECEIVED

MAR 29 2010

Bellingham Historical Commission

MASS. HIST. COMM

Town Hall
Bellingham, MA 02019

Frank Haley
4 Arapahoe Road
Bellingham, MA 02019

September 5, 2009

To; Betsy Friedberg
*National Register Director
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 0212*

Dear Director Friedberg,

The Bellingham Historic Commission certainly supports Mr. Haley's efforts to put the "North Bellingham Cemetery" located on Hartford Avenue on the Massachusetts Historical Register.

NORTH BELLINGHAM CEMETERY

This cemetery was in use in 1718 and is mentioned as "the burying place" in early deeds. Many of Bellingham's early settlers are buried here. In this cemetery is the famous Polly Coombs grave stone. This grave stone rubbing has been featured on television and has been written about in books because of its unusual markings on top of the stone. This cemetery also contains many graves of Revolutionary War Veterans. There are many gravestones at the cemetery that consist of slate quarried locally.

Any further information that you may need, please contact me at the Bellingham Historical Commission, 3 Common Street, Bellingham, MA 02019 or call me at 1-508-966-5838.

Sincerely,


Ernest Taft
Chairman
Bellingham Historical Commission

RECEIVED

JUL 26 2010

MASS. HIST. COMM

OAK HILL CEMETERY ASSOCIATION
HARTFORD AVENUE
BELLINGHAM, MA 02019

July 6, 2010

Ms. Betsy Friedberg
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

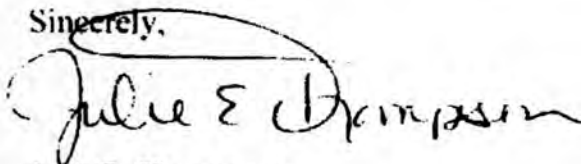
Dear Ms. Friedberg,

The Association members of Oak Hill Cemetery voted on March 29th at our annual board meeting to allow Mr. Frank Haley to gather the information needed for Oak Hill Cemetery to be listed in the National Registry of Historical Places. He has researched our records and conducted many interviews as well took a full inventory with pictures of the grave markers. He worked with the Bellingham Historical Commission to capture information on the lives of the people resting on our cemetery.

Since 2003 when this current board took over the private cemetery we have worked diligently to clean the grounds, update records and recently clean the grave markers. The last seven years of volunteers have made a huge difference to our appearance. The National Registry would validate those efforts.

Please consider Oak Hill Cemetery for the National Registry.

Sincerely,



Julie E. Thompson
President, Oak Hill Cemetery Association



RECEIVED

Town of Bellingham ^{MAY 14 2012}
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MASS. HIST. COMM
10 Mechanic Street
Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019
Tel: 508-966-5800 * Fax: 508-966-4425

May 10, 2012

Ms. Betsy Friedberg
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

Dear Ms. Friedberg:

On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, I am pleased to support the nomination of the North Bellingham and Oak Hill cemeteries to the National Register of Historic Places. The Bellingham Historical Commission has worked with the Cemetery Trustees for several years to complete the application for consideration by your Commission. Our community is proud of these cemeteries and the stories they tell relative to the first families to settle in our Town.

Unfortunately, we are unable to attend your hearing on June 13; however, we want to assure you of our full support of this nomination and our commitment to the preservation of these cemeteries.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to your decision.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Soter
Chairman

MJS/cfc

cc: Stacey Wetstein, Planning Board
Marcia Crooks, Bellingham Historical Commission
Julie Thompson, Oak Hill Cemetery Association