NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 8-86)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

JAN 2 9 1983

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NATIONAL REGISTER	OF	HISTORIC	PLACES
PRCTSTRATION FORM			

NATIONAL REGISTER

1. Name of Property
nistoric name: <u>Belding-Gaines Cemetery</u>
other name/site number: N/A
street & number: <u>U. S. Highway 270</u>
not for publication: N/A
city/town: Hot Springs vicinity: X
state: <u>AR</u> county: <u>Garland</u> code: <u>AR 051</u> zip code: <u>71901</u>
Ownership of Property: <u>Private</u>
Category of Property: <u>Site</u>
Number of Resources within Property:
Contributing Noncontributing
buildings sites structures objects Total
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/	Federal Agency Certification		
of 1986, request f standards Historic set forth	as amended, I hereby certify or determination of eligibili for registering properties i Places and meets the procedur in 36 CFR Part 60. In my or	that ty med n the cal and oinion	ets the documentation National Register of d professional requirements
(axth	un I Brysl		1-25-93
Signature	of certifying official		Date
	Historic Preservation Program Federal agency and bureau	n	
In my opi Register	nion, the property meets criteria See continuati	on she	does not meet the National eet.
Signature	of commenting or other offic	ial	Date
	Federal agency and bureau al Park Service Certification		
I, hereby	certify that this property i	.s:	Mational Register /
enter	ed in the National Register See continuation sheet. rmined eligible for the ional Register See continuation sheet. rmined not eligible for the ional Register ved from the National Registe		Wouspyers 2/25,
othe	r (explain):	1	
		J. S:	ignature of Keeper Date of Action
6. Function	on or Use		
Historic:	FUNERARY		Cemetery
Current:	FUNERARY	Sub:	Cemetery

7. Description
Architectural Classification:
N/A
Other Description:
Materials: foundation N/A roof N/A walls N/A other
Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.
8. Statement of Significance
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: <u>Locally</u> .
Applicable National Register Criteria: B
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):D
Areas of Significance: EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
Period(s) of Significance: <u>1828-1833</u> <u>1851-1894</u>
Significant Dates: N/A
Significant Person(s): Belding, Ludovicus Gaines, William H.
Cultural Affiliation: N/A
Architect/Builder: N/A
State dignificance of property, and justify gritoria, gritoria

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. \underline{X} See continuation sheet.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Summary

Located on the north side of Highway 270 between the communities of Hot Springs and Malvern, the Belding-Gaines Cemetery contains a total of twenty marked burials from the nineteenth century, several of which mark the resting place of the area's earliest recorded settlers of European ancestry. The gravestones, relatively common and not artistically-exceptional, are placed in three distinct groups, the central of which is surrounded by a square stone wall. All are enclosed within a plot of land historically set aside as a cemetery by the Gaines family.

Elaboration

The Belding-Gaines Cemetery is located in a wooded area on the northern side of U. S. Highway 270 approximately 5.3 miles southeast of downtown Hot Springs. The cemetery contains a total of twenty marked burials (though local informants maintain that many more unmarked burials are also located within these boundaries), all of which feature death dates of between 1833 and 1900. The marked burials are separated into three distinct groups: five burials located in the western section of the cemetery, containing members of the Bassett family; nine burials within the stone wall, containing primarily members of the Belding and Gaines families; and six burials in the northern section, reputed to be former slave burials, most of which feature the name of the Simpson family.

The headstones within the stone wall are relatively elaborate in design, though even they tend to by more simple and unadorned. Of particular note is the marker for Ludovicus Belding (though originally placed vertically, deterioration and vandalism required the resetting of the stone horizontally in concrete). Elaborate decorative relief carving adorns the top of the stone, below which is the inscription tablet that is capped with an incised trifoil. Those headstones outside the wall are all of the vertical slab type, and in some cases feature decorative carving near the top of the stone, with the inscription below. However, most of these grave markers are relatively unornamented.

By all accounts, the Belding-Gaines Cemetery has always been a family cemetery directly associated with the Bassett, Belding and Gaines families that maintained connections with the farmland surrounding the original farm of Jonathan Bassett; furthermore, it is known from deed records that David Bassett, the son of Jonathan Bassett, specifically set this plot aside to serve as a cemetery and only as such relatively soon after his father's death. Thus it is appropriate to include the entire known extent of the cemetery, a total of approximately

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one acre.

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Summary

Criterion B, local significance (Criteria Consideration D)

The Belding-Gaines Cemetery is locally significant under Criterion B through its status as the site most directly-associated with two of the earliest recorded settlers in and developers of what would come to be known as the Hot Springs area: Ludovicus Belding and Major William H. Gaines (it also contains the grave of the only known Revolutionary War veteran to be buried in Garland County, Jonathan Bassett, who was also one of the earliest settlers in the area of European descent; however, due to the fact that little else is known about his contributions to the settlement, growth and development of the Hot Springs community, the cemetery cannot also be considered significant for him). No other known sites survive with stronger associations with either of these two individuals, and this property has been set aside as a family burial plot since the Bassett family came to this area in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

Elaboration

Native Americans from throughout the surrounding region had been visiting the valley between North and West Mountains for many years prior to the arrival of settlers of European descent. Like those later settlers, the Native Americans visited the valley for the natural springs that emanated from both hillsides, and particularly the hot springs that were to give the later community its name. The Native Americans were the first to believe that the hot springs in particular -- heated through a natural process the actual physics of which remain unknown until this day -- possessed medicinal and restorative properties (though, according to legend, the abundance of distinct springs in the valley led them to believe in the almost mystical nature of the entire valley), a belief shared by the first trappers and hunters of European descent that passed through the valley. These early white travelers took stories of the hot springs back with them to civilization, and awareness of the springs began to spread widely thereafter.

The first actual white settlement took place by the second decade of the nineteenth century, though by all accounts it was sparse and of limited tenure. These earliest settlers, typically sufferers of various, poorly-understood maladies, would relocate individually to the vicinity of the springs and erect a small, temporary shelter that would serve them for the duration of their stay, and which they would then abandon when they felt that they had benefitted all that they could from the waters. There is documentation of one known early settler attempting to establish a commercial enterprise near the springs for the accommodation of

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visitors, but even these efforts were short-lived, and the structures erected were crude and insubstantial.

The first recorded successful attempt to exploit and develop the "valley of the vapors" was conducted by Ludovicus Belding, a settler from central Massachusetts who immigrated to the area with his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Jonathan and Temperance Bassett, and his wife, Lydia Bassett Belding, along with various other family members and children. Arriving to the area via what was then the principal route to the springs area from the territorial capital at Little Rock, the road that has since become the roadbed for modern U. S. Highway 270 (also known as the Hot Springs - Malvern Highway), it is thus not surprising that they settled near the first springs they encountered along the route, located approximately five miles southeast of the present site of downtown Hot Springs. This area, which became known as Lawrence Station, was mentioned by the Arkansas historian Fay Hempstead in 1911 as containing "...springs of potash-sulphur, which likewise draw crowds of visitors to receive their benefits...". The extended Bassett/Belding family settled near these springs, and established their farm near the banks of Gulpha Creek.

Jonathan Bassett was born May 24, 1764 in Sandwich, Massachusetts, and his wife Temperance Crocker, was born on January 2, 1763 in Barnstable, Massachusetts (both communities being located on Cape Cod). They were married on December 2, 1789, and proceeded to have three children before they left Massachusetts: David, Lydia and Nathaniel. Jonathan Bassett served as a Colonial soldier in the Revolutionary War (it should be noted that with a birthdate of 1764, he would have been but twelve years old at the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and only seventeen years of age at the cessation of hostilities signalled by Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown; family genealogical research maintains that he was indeed seventeen years of age when he fought), during which it is surmised that he was wounded, as he came with his family in 1828 to the springs for treatment of his wounds. He served as a private in Colonel Freeman's regiment from Massachusetts, and though it is not known exactly where he fought, it can be assumed that he served during the final battles of the war. He and his family passed through Kentucky and Indiana on the way to Arkansas; once in Arkansas he remained upon the farm he established here near Gulpha Creek until his death in 1833 at the age of sixty-nine.

Almost immediately after their arrival, Ludovicus Belding (1792-1833), Jonathan Bassett's son-in-law, initiated the permanent development of the area around the springs, first with the repair and improvement of several of the abandoned earlier structures, and then with the establishment of the first mercantile store nearby. He soon followed these efforts with the construction of the area's first hotel, and for a time this budding community became

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known as "Thermopolis." In spite of both the bad roads into the valley from Little Rock and these humble beginnings at establishing the spa community that would become known as Hot Springs, a newspaper article in the Arkansas Gazette of late 1828 already praised Belding's hotel establishment, noting that good fare and comfortable accommodations could be found here as good as at "...any public house in the territory." Belding was specifically commended for his provision of "...good fare, clean linen, silver forks and spoons, much attention to guests and moderate charges...". Belding's improvements to the springs area were of sufficient magnitude that by the next year the springs were being widely advertised throughout the east as a spa destination, and in particular for invalids suffering from chronic and paralytic affections and rheumatism.

By 1832, Belding's development of Thermopolis inspired the improvement of several of the roads leading into the valley, as well as the establishment of several other industries in the vicinity. Of especial note is a letter written by one permanent resident of the community who commented on the new permanence of the place, as opposed to the particularly transient character of the entire community that had prevailed earlier. Speaking of the community as a whole, he went on to say "Last season it was supplied every other day with vegetables; this season every day by the same man; and many others find it their interest to bring in casually, their surplus fruits, etc. etc." By this same year, another settler who was later to make his mark on the community, Hiram A. Whittington, joined the community as a permanent resident. Sam Houston reportedly came to the springs and stayed a full month. The commercial development potential of the springs area, if not yet fully exploited, had certainly become clear, and all through the concerted and persistent efforts of Ludovicus Belding. Apparently, Belding's health also deteriorated fairly soon after his arrival to the springs, as he is recorded as having relocated from the valley back to the area adjacent to his father-in-law's farm near Gulpha Creek as of 1831, and having placed his commercial enterprises in the hands of his heirs. He died on October 9, 1833, and was buried within the Belding-Gaines Cemetery.

Ironically, it was the growing recognition of the commercial potential of the springs that brought "Major" William H. Gaines to the area to settle (the origin of the title is not clear). Born June 30, 1797 in Charleston, Virginia, he was reared in Kentucky, but relocated to Chicot County in 1833 at the age of 33 to become a planter. Apparently he was rather successful, as the 1850 census records him owning 83 slaves with real estate worth \$50,000. Another account lists as many as 165 slaves. For unrecorded health reasons, Gaines began coming to the springs for some time before he settled there permanently in 1851, two years after his marriage to Ludovicus Belding's daughter Maria (his first wife, Litha Early, who he had married in Kentucky and with whom he had one child, died in 1828, just prior to his

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moving to Arkansas).

Almost immediately upon settling in the area of the springs Gaines took over a lawsuit that had previously been filed by his new wife against the United States government over the ownership of the valley. In 1832, the federal government declared the valley a federal reservation, thus throwing into question the allegedly legitimate and binding land titles held by earlier settlers that they believed pre-empted the government's claim (in fact, in 1830 Congress had passed a pre-emption act that effectively protected the rights of those with legitimate land claims filed prior to the designation of the federal reservation; nevertheless, the issue of what constituted legitimate land claims remained in dispute, and hence the subsequent lawsuits). The first such suit had been filed by another early settler, Henry Massie Rector, who claimed to have obtained ownership to the entire valley. The filing of the Belding suit initially angered Rector, as he saw it as a competing claim to his own that only complicated matters further. However, the suit was initially settled in the state courts to some satisfaction of the plaintiffs, as the state court framed a compromise that effective allowed the three plaintiffs development rights over discrete thirds of the valley as lessees until the final decision regarding ownership should come from a higher authority. This litigation would drag on for a total of twenty-four years, lasting from 1852 to 1876.

Yet it was during this "interim" period that Gaines proceeded with his own development plans for his southern third of the valley, no doubt gambling that the risk of not prevailing in his lawsuit was outweighed by the profits to be made in the commercial development of the valley, even as a lessee. On a site near the southern end of the present-day Bathhouse Row (approximately where the former Park Administration Building stands today) he erected the Hot Springs Hotel, which operated as one of several hotels in the city of Hot Springs until it burned in 1878. Part of the land he controlled near the valley also became the site of the Eastman Hotel, which upon its completion claimed to be one of the largest hotels in the world, and which he owned along with the same co-investors with whom he had earlier built the original Arlington Hotel, which, when it was built in 1875, was the premier luxury hotel in the city. It was the Arlington Hotel, in fact, which under the supervision of Gaines and his co-investors spared no expense at making every modern improvement over time to retain this distinction.

By the mid-1870's, however, the slow progress on the resolution of the lawsuits against the government induced Gaines to travel to Washington, DC and convince the Congress to pass an act allowing himself, Rector and a third plaintiff, a man named Hale (for whom the Hale Bathhouse would later be named) to sue the government over the issue of ownership of the valley. The passage of the act ultimately allowed for the settling of the claims between the

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plaintiffs and the government, even though the Supreme Court eventually upheld the earlier ruling of the federal Court of Claims which decided in favor of the government. In this manner Gaines insured that he and the other plaintiffs would receive some compensation for their lost land, instead of losing everything. The following year the federal government set up the Hot Springs Commission, which, awarded a considerable amount of acreage adjacent to the formal boundaries of the reservation to the plaintiffs, in addition to, for the first time, establishing the formal administration for the management and supervision of the reservation (Benjamin F. Kelley, the first government resident superintendent of Hot Springs, arrived in 1877). In effect, then, the filing of the lawsuit, along with the subsequent compromise legislation largely authored by Gaines, produced the effect of both resolving finally the issue of the federal government's ownership of the valley and forcing the federal government to recognize its formal responsibility to manage and to maintain the reservation in an active manner.

Gaines remained active in the community of Hot Springs as a private real estate investor and builder, a career that was only reinvigorated by the construction of the first railroad to Hot Springs from Malvern in the mid-1870's (called the Diamond Jo Railroad and named after its builder, Diamond Jo Reynolds, a steamboat magnate who frequented the springs because of his rheumatism but could not stand the jostling of the coach ride over the bad roads between Malvern and Hot Springs; in response, he built his own railroad running parallel to the coach road). Now the poor roads between the old overland highway between Little Rock and Texas (and its parallel railroad line) would not be an obstacle to those seeking the benefits of the waters, and Gaines did not fail to see the opportunities this development afforded. In 1881 he constructed a three story brick building at the intersection of Broadway and Central Avenue that he named the Gaines Block. Among other businesses, this structure housed The Citizens National Bank of which his son, A. B. Gaines, was the president. This imposing, Italianate style commercial building served as a focal point at the southern end of Central Avenue for many years, surviving until the 1980's. Major William H. Gaines died on June 1, 1894, at 97 years of age, and was buried within the Belding-Gaines Cemetery.

The Belding-Gaines Cemetery is locally significant under Criterion B by virtue of its being the single surviving site with the strongest associations with both Ludovicus Belding and Major William H. Gaines, both of whom were two of the most influential developers -- if not *the* two most influential developers -- of the spa community that would become Hot Springs, Arkansas. Through their investment of effort, money and energy, and through their vision of the commercial potential of the hot springs and the surrounding community that could result, the rough, Ouachita Mountain wilderness that was largely inaccessible to most

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of the earliest European settlers became a medicinal and recreational destination for visitors from throughout the world.

9. Major Bibliographical References
X See continuation sheet.
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 # Primary Location of Additional Data:
<pre>X State historic preservation office Other state agency Federal agency Local government University Other Specify Repository:</pre>
10. Geographical Data
Acreage of Property: Approximately one
UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
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See continuation sheet.
Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.
Beginning at a point on the northern edge of U. S. Highway 270 formed by it intersection with a perpendicular line running along the western edge of the cemetery (located approximately 5,280 feet (1 mile) east of Bench Mark 371) proceed northerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet the intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel with the pertendicular line running parallel with the pertendi

Beginning at a point on the northern edge of U. S. Highway 270 formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the western edge of the cemetery (located approximately 5,280 feet (1 mile) east of Bench Mark 371), proceed northerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel with the northern edge of U. S. Highway 270; thence proceed easterly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the eastern edge of the cemetery; thence proceed southerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to its intersection with the northern edge of U. S. Highway 270; thence proceed westerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification: ___ See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes all of the known original plot set aside by the Belding and Gaines families as a family cemetery that retains its integrity.

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Scully, Dr. Francis J., Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, (Little Rock: 1966).

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City or Town: Little Rock State: AR Zip: 72201

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

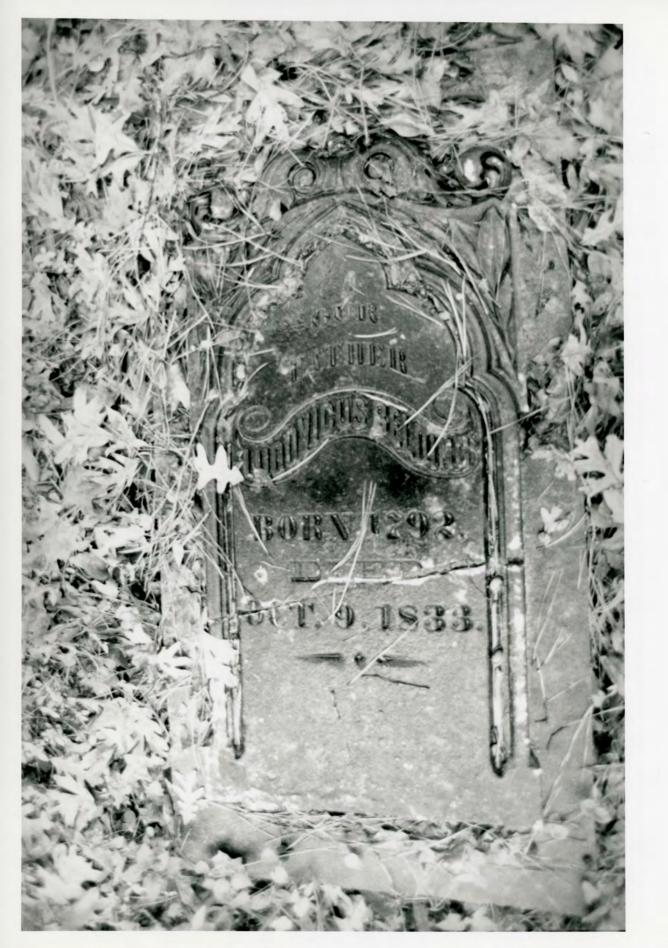
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINA	TION		historic
PROPERTY BeldingGaine NAME:			
MULTIPLE NAME:	on	ral classification e text	architectu materials descriptiv
STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS	, Garland		
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REFERENCE NUMBER: 930000			
NOMINATOR: STATE			summary pa
REASONS FOR REVIEW:			clarity
APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: OTHER: N PDIL: REQUEST: N SAMPLE:	N PERIOD: N N SLR DRAFT: N	LESS THAN 50 YEAR PROGRAM UNAPPROVINATIONAL:	YED: N leg
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Specific dates Builder/Archite Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)	ct \				
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clarity applicable criteria justification of areas checked	WE DOWN THE THE STREET				
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relationship of integrity to significancejustification of exception					
other					
BIBLIOGRAPHY					
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA					
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ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION					
sketch mapsUSGS mapsphotographs	presentation				
OTHER COMMENTS					
Questions concerning this nomination may be d	irected to				
Phor	ne				
Signed	Date				



BELDING- GAINES CEMETERY
HOT SPRINGS VIC., GARLAND CO., ARKANSAS
PHOTOGRAPHED BY K. STORY
NOVEMBER, 1992
NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP
GRAVE MARKER DETAIL



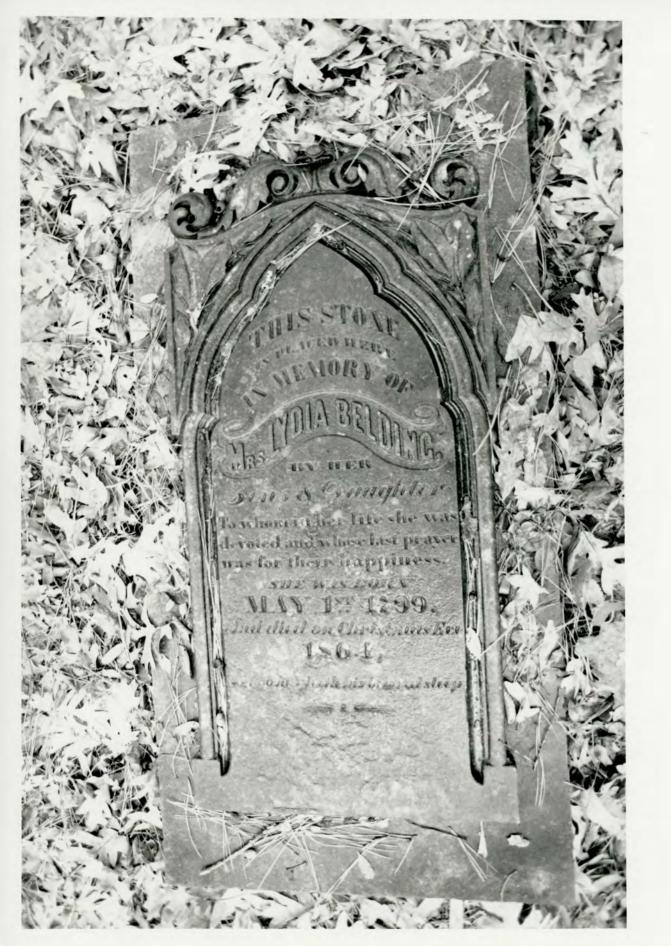
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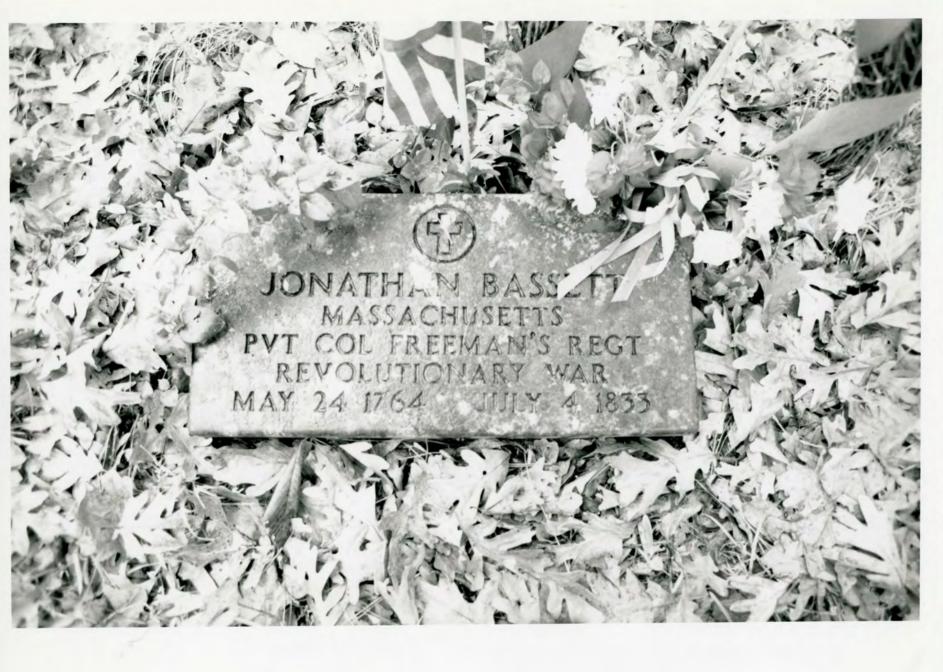
BELDING-GAINES CEMETERY
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GAINES MONUMENT DETAIN



BELDING - GAINES CEMETERY
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GAINES FAMILY MONUMENTS DETAIL



BELDING - CRINES CEMETERY
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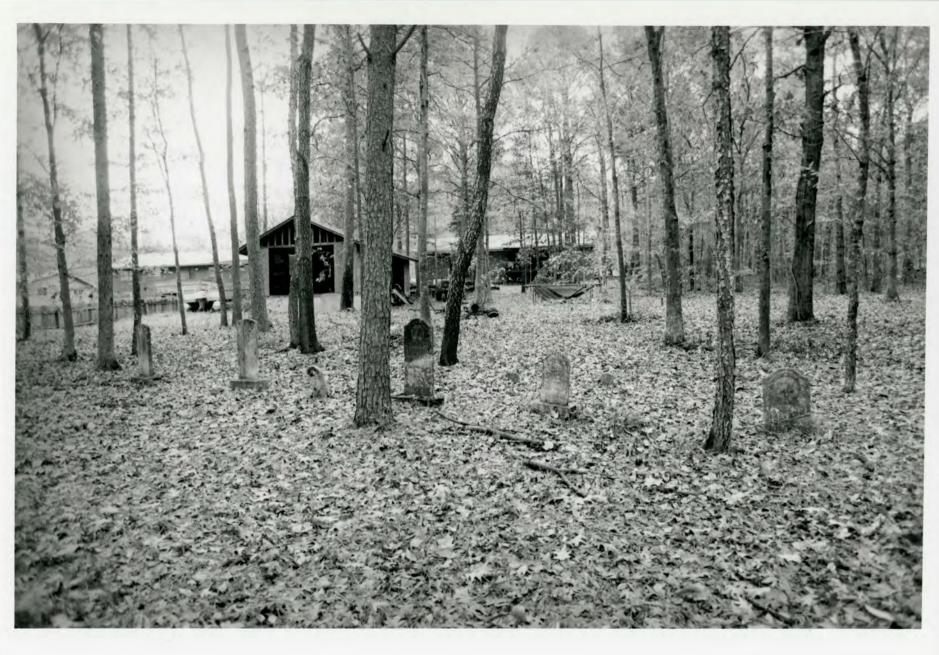
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DETAIL OF GRAVE MARKER



BELDING-GAINES CEMETERY
HOT PREINGS VIC., CHRELOND CO. ARRENSAS
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NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP
ENTRANCE GATE DETAIL



BELDING-GDINES CEMETERY
HOT SPRINGS VIC., GARLAND CO., ARKANSAS
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NOVEMBER, 1992
NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP
VIEW FROM SOUTH



BEADING - GAINES CEMETERY
HOT SPRINGS VIC. GARLAND CO., ARKANSAS
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NOVEMBER, 1992
NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP
GRAVE MARKER DETAIL





ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

JAN 2 9 1883 NATIONAL REGISTER

January 25, 1993

Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
800 North Capitol Street, Suite 250
Washington, DC 20002

RE: Belding-Gaines Cemetery

Hot Springs, Garland County

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination of the above referenced property. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathy Buford

State Historic Preservation Officer

CB:kg

Enclosures

