

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Riverside Cemetery

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Riverside Street, from Sunnyside to Summit Sts. not for publication N/A

city, town Waterbury vicinity N/A

state Connecticut code CT county New Haven code 009 zip code 06708

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>2</u>	_____ buildings
<u>1</u>	_____ sites
<u>6</u>	_____ structures
<u>23</u>	_____ objects
<u>32</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

August 3, 1988

Signature of certifying official

Date

Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain: _____)

Peter L. Searge

9-20-88

for Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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elaborate Gothic tracery and pinnacles (Photograph 7); and romantic - statues and tombs using sculpture to depict or represent emotions or nature (Photograph 8). Granite was the most commonly used material, followed by brownstone and marble. The larger monuments tend to be concentrated along the main drives and at the summits of major hills, and several are noteworthy for the style and artistry of their designs. Among these are the Benedict monument (Photograph 9), which features a large bronze figure of Wisdom seated on a pedestal of granite; the Chatfield monument (Photograph 10), a bronze figure of a Civil War officer; and the Robert Wakeman Hill monument, a fluted Tuscan column of black granite, approximately 18' in height, flanked by two bronze oil lamps.

The cemetery is surrounded on three sides by a late 19th-century neighborhood of triple-decker houses. Interstate 84 and Route 8 converge above the Naugatuck River east of the cemetery.

Inventory of Buildings, Structures, and Objects

Contributing Buildings

Hall Memorial Chapel, 1885, late Victorian Gothic granite church designed by Robert Wakeman Hill. Photographs 2,4,5,6.

Garage, c. 1900, 96' x 26', asphalt siding over clapboard.

Contributing Structures

Willow and Fountain Ponds, c. 1852. Photographs 1,3,8,16. The third pond (no name given) along the western edge of the cemetery appears to be a native feature.

System of avenues and paths, c. 1852. Avenues resurfaced in asphalt in the 20th century. Photograph 1.

Front fence enclosure and main gate, 1888. Wrought iron with coursed ashlar granite piers. Photograph 2.

Stone wall, c. 1900, irregularly coursed granite rubble stone. Borders cemetery along north, west and south.

Bridge wall, 1908, granite, erected to the memory of Augusta Steele Elton.

Brown monument and mausoleum, 1874, granite obelisk upon raised ground surrounded by concrete wall and crowning Summit Hill. See letter "x" on site plan.

(continued)

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Contributing Objects

There are approximately 2000 monuments erected between 1853-1920 in Riverside Cemetery. Below is a listing of the more outstanding examples of monuments which make significant contributions to the cemetery's architectural and artistic quality. Letters preceding individual listings are keys to the monument's location on the site plan.

- a. Memorial to John and Olive Elton, 1905, carved bronze urn on granite pedestal flanked by two sitting bronze figures. Sculptor: George E. Bissell. Cast in Florence, Italy. Located at entrance to the cemetery. Photograph 3.
- b. M.J. Welton mausoleum, c. 1880, granite with Gothic tracery.
- c. Smith monument, c. 1885, bronze figure of woman writing upon granite pillar. Photograph 11.
- d. Steele monument, c. 1885, granite representation of a neo-classical monument being reclaimed by the earth.
- e. Kindregan monument, c. 1900, granite figure of sitting woman on neo-classical tomb. Photograph 12.
- f. Welton monument, c. 1870, granite sculpture of grieving girl consoled by robed figure, on neo-classical pedestal. Photograph 12.
- g. Spencer monument, c. 1870, granite crenelated tower with bronze portrait plaque.
- h. White monument, c. 1890, marble figure of woman standing on granite pedestal. Photograph 13.
- i. Chatfield monument, c. 1880, bronze figure of Civil War officer standing on granite pedestal. Sculptor: George E. Bissell. Cast in Paris, France. Photograph 10.
- j. Booth monument, 1878, granite figure of woman standing on granite pedestal. Sculptor: George E. Bissell. Photograph 10.
- k. Prichard monument, c. 1870, granite entablature supported by Corinthian columns.
- l. Chase monument, c. 1890, pink granite tomb encircled by band of bronze flowers.
- m. Merriman monument, c. 1870, neo-classical brownstone column. Photograph 14.
- n. Farnel monument, c. 1860, elaborately carved marble tomb with urn.
- o. Memorial to the unknown dead, 1912, large polished granite urn with bronze plaque.
- p. Edward Leach monument, c. 1930, bronze elk on granite base with bronze plaque. "Harvey" marked on foot of elk. Photograph 8.
- q. Holmes monument, c. 1890, marble figure of woman holding large cross.
- r. Kendrick monument, c. 1870, brownstone Gothic spire with tracery. Photograph 7.
- s. Leavenworth monument, c. 1880, neo-classical brownstone tomb. Photograph 7.
- t. Benedict monument, c. 1871, bronze figure of Wisdom seated on granite base. Sculptor: T.H. Bartlett. Cast in Rome, Italy. Photograph 9.
- u. Elton monument, c. 1865, Gothic brownstone tomb.
- v. Robert W. Hill monument, c. 1900, black granite column flanked by bronze lamps.
- w. Atwood monument, c. 1900, granite figure of woman with baby.

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)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

other: natural landscape style

foundation granite

walls granite

Late Victorian

sandstone

Gothic

roof slate

other marble

iron

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Riverside Cemetery is located along Riverside Street on the west bank of the Naugatuck River, approximately one-half mile southwest of the center square of the city of Waterbury. The cemetery lies on the eastern slope of Town Plot Hill and has a frontage along Riverside Street of 1600'. It is bounded on the north by Sunnyside Avenue, on the west by Draher Street, and on the south by Green and Summit Streets. Its total area is 36.4 acres (see sketch map).

The landscape of the cemetery is rolling, lightly wooded terrain with four primary hills, the highest of which rises 105' above river level. A small spring-fed stream flows through the center of the cemetery via a series of culverts, and broadens out at three points into small ponds. Narrow avenues wind through the cemetery in curvilinear patterns following the terrain (Photograph 1).

An iron fence with stone posts borders the cemetery along Riverside Street on the east (Photograph 2). A high wall of irregularly coursed rubble stone surrounds the cemetery on the north, west, and south. Beyond the main entrance gate is Hall Memorial Chapel and Fountain Pond. At the foot of the pond stands a memorial with a molded bronze urn and two bronze statues (Photograph 3).

Hall Memorial Chapel is a small grey granite church in the late Victorian Gothic style with a cross-gable plan and slate roof (Photographs 2,4). The chapel features three pointed-arched stained glass windows with Gothic tracery and a granite eight-sided spire which rises to a height of 67'. Its interior is highlighted by polished oak trusses, a wainscot of glazed colored bricks, and a large brick fireplace (Photographs 5,6). The only significant alterations to the church since its construction have been the removal of a conservatory wing and the addition of a small storage room on the west side. Directly north of the chapel is a long gable-roofed garage with asphalt siding.

The monuments in the cemetery are arranged in varying patterns dictated by the direction of the winding paths and drives. The vast majority of the monuments date from 1870-1920 and are family monuments surrounded by the small headstones of individual members. Some gravestones predate the cemetery and were moved to Riverside from the city's old burying ground prior to the erection of a library on the site in the 1890s (Photograph 7).

Riverside's pre-1920 monuments can be classified generally into three major styles: neo-classical - obelisks, tombs, pillars, and pedestals with Greek or Roman detailing, often topped by urns or torches (Photograph 14); Gothic - spires and tombs with

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape Architecture

Architecture

Art

Period of Significance

1850-1920

Significant Dates

1852

1885

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Daniels, Howard

Hill, Robert Wakeman

(see below)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Architect/Builder (continued):

Bissell, George E.

Bartlett, Truman H.

Statement of Significance:

Riverside Cemetery is architecturally significant in three respects: for its landscape architecture, which is an excellent example of the natural landscape style and rural cemetery design introduced in the 1830s; for the design of the Hall Memorial Chapel, the work of noted Waterbury architect Robert Wakeman Hill; and for the design of its monuments, a collection of objects possessing high artistic values. In totality, the Riverside Cemetery represents a unique Waterbury resource with superb integrity that reflects the architectural and artistic ideals of the second half of the 19th century.

Historical Context

Until the mid-19th century, the chief place of interment in Waterbury was the old burying ground on Grand Street. The suggestion for a new cemetery was made in 1849 by Dr. Amos S. Blake, a local dentist who believed that a new burial place away from the center of population would be better for the public health and sensibilities. His explorations for a new site led him to a parcel of land owned by the Scovill family lying immediately west of the Naugatuck River. Blake started a subscription drive and by 1850 sufficient money was secured to purchase 31 acres. The Riverside Cemetery Association was formed in March of that year.

Preparation of the grounds for use as a cemetery began in 1852. The grounds were surveyed and designed by architect Howard Daniels of New York City, and the work executed under the superintendence of John North, a landscape gardener from Bridgeport. Daniels, who also advertised himself as a landscape gardener, previously served as Superintendent for improvements to the grounds of Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati, Ohio, another rural cemetery.(1)

The Hall Memorial Chapel was erected in 1884/85, the result of a bequest from Samuel W.

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Hall upon his death in 1877.

Architecture - Criterion C

Riverside Cemetery is an intact landscape designed in the "natural" style, popular in English garden design and introduced to the United States in the 1830s. The style was a reflection of 19th-century romantic values stressing the integration of man with his natural surroundings and popularized in this country by the writings of Andrew Jackson Downing. Characteristic of the style was the use of winding walks, undulating terrain, ponds, trees, and vistas to create a picturesque effect.

The rural cemetery movement, which began with the construction of Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1831, provided the first real opportunity in America for the natural style to gain expression in landscapes accessible to and enjoyed by the public. As with Riverside Cemetery, Mount Auburn Cemetery was created to provide an alternative to the overcrowded and unsanitary burial grounds of the city. Located on a rural site selected for its natural beauty, and with the designed improvements of ponds, meandering drives, and selective plantings, Mount Auburn became a model for similar cemeteries in cities across the nation.(2)

Like that of Mount Auburn, the design of Riverside Cemetery was intended to take best advantage of the existing landscape. The scenic drives accentuate the irregular terrain, winding around and over hills and affording excellent views of the surrounding landscape, while providing easy access to the burial lots (Photographs 8, 15). Willow and Fountain Ponds, created from the site's natural brook, provide a central focus. The site originally was heavily wooded, and many of the trees were retained in the design. Shrubs were strategically planted to reinforce the park-like atmosphere.

The placement of the monuments was integral to the design. Large family monuments surrounded by individual headstones create an uncluttered, open quality. A number of family lots were sited on low mounds, adding to the undulating effect of the landscape (Photograph 14).

The collection of monuments of Riverside Cemetery is an excellent representation of the styles of funerary art popular in the latter half of the 19th century. Unlike the marble or brownstone slabs of earlier periods, Riverside's monuments were designed to have an appearance of security and permanence, and, like the landscape, a romantic quality. The public taste for classicism and the Gothic is clearly evident in the hundreds of obelisks, tombs and pedestals dotting the cemetery's landscape, and the finely sculptured statues of women and allegorical figures add to the cemetery's romantic aura (Photographs 11,13).

Riverside was the burial place for the wealthy families of Waterbury, and several of

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the family monuments are notable for their quality and workmanship. Among the best are the Booth and Chatfield monuments (Photograph 10), sculpted by George E. Bissell (1839-1920). Bissell is best known for his design of several Civil War monuments, including those in Waterbury, and Winsted, Connecticut. Bissell also sculpted the bronze memorial to the Eltons located at the entrance to the cemetery (Photograph 3). One of the cemetery's best known monuments is that sculpted for Aaron Benedict, a Waterbury industrialist who commissioned Truman H. Bartlett (1835-1923) to create a giant figure of Wisdom for his family monument (Photograph 9). Bartlett earned his reputation as a sculptor in Europe, and his designs also appear in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn.

The Hall Memorial Chapel is an excellent example of a late Victorian Gothic-style church, and displays a high level of architectural integrity. Its irregular massing, quarry-faced granite, and soft color blends with the natural landscape and stone monuments of the cemetery (Photographs 2,4,5,6). The chapel's designer, Robert W. Hill (1828-1909), was a Waterbury architect who studied with Henry Austin in New Haven. Hill served as architect for the State of Connecticut under four governors, and his many commissions included the former Waterbury City Hall, several state armories, and the Thomaston Opera House.

Riverside Cemetery has undergone few changes since the turn of the century. Modern gravestones in uniform rows have been restricted generally to the fringes of the cemetery, which has effectively retained the cemetery's overall 19th-century design and ambience. The original landscape design appears to be essentially unaltered, and its contributing structures, buildings and objects retain excellent integrity. Overall, Riverside Cemetery represents an excellent example of a designed landscape in the natural landscape style as well as a classic example of mid-19th century rural cemetery design (Criteria Consideration D). It remains the first and best cemetery of its type in the city of Waterbury.

End Notes

(1) Howard Daniels is best known for his Greek Revival design of the Montgomery County Court House in Dayton, Ohio.

(2) The beauty and tranquillity of rural cemeteries became a public attraction and sparked public interest in the establishment of city parks with similar picturesque qualities. Frederick Law Olmsted designed the first of these, Central Park in New York City, four years after the dedication of Riverside Cemetery in 1853.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Anderson, Joseph, ed. The Town and City of Waterbury, Connecticut, from the Aboriginal Period to the Year 1895, Vol. III. New Haven: Price and Lee Co., 1896.
- Clouten, Neville H. "The Old Montgomery County Court House, Dayton, Ohio." Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, vol. 26, no.4, December 1967, pp. 294-300.
- Curl, James Steven. A Celebration of Death. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980.
- "Dedication of River Side Cemetery." Waterbury American, 9 September 1853, p.2.
- Jackson, Charles O. Passing: The Vision of Death in America. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977.
- Riverside Cemetery Association. Book of the Riverside Cemetery. Waterbury: Waterbury Printing Co., 1889.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Waterbury Public Library

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 36.4 acres

UTM References

A

1	8	6	6	2	7	2	0	4	6	0	0	9	3	5
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

1	8	6	6	2	6	2	0	4	6	0	1	4	4	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

1	8	6	6	2	4	4	5	4	6	0	1	3	7	5
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

1	8	6	6	2	9	7	5	4	6	0	1	1	6	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is described in the land records of the City of Waterbury, Vol. 99, page 601.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the full parcel of land containing the Riverside Cemetery and all resources by which the site derives its significance.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title Janice L. Elliott, David Ransom/Consultants

organization for: Riverside Cemetery Association date March 10, 1988

street & number c/o Ransom, 33 Sunrise Hill telephone 203 521-2518

city or town West Hartford state CT zip code 06107

RIVERSIDE CEMETERY
Waterbury, Connecticut

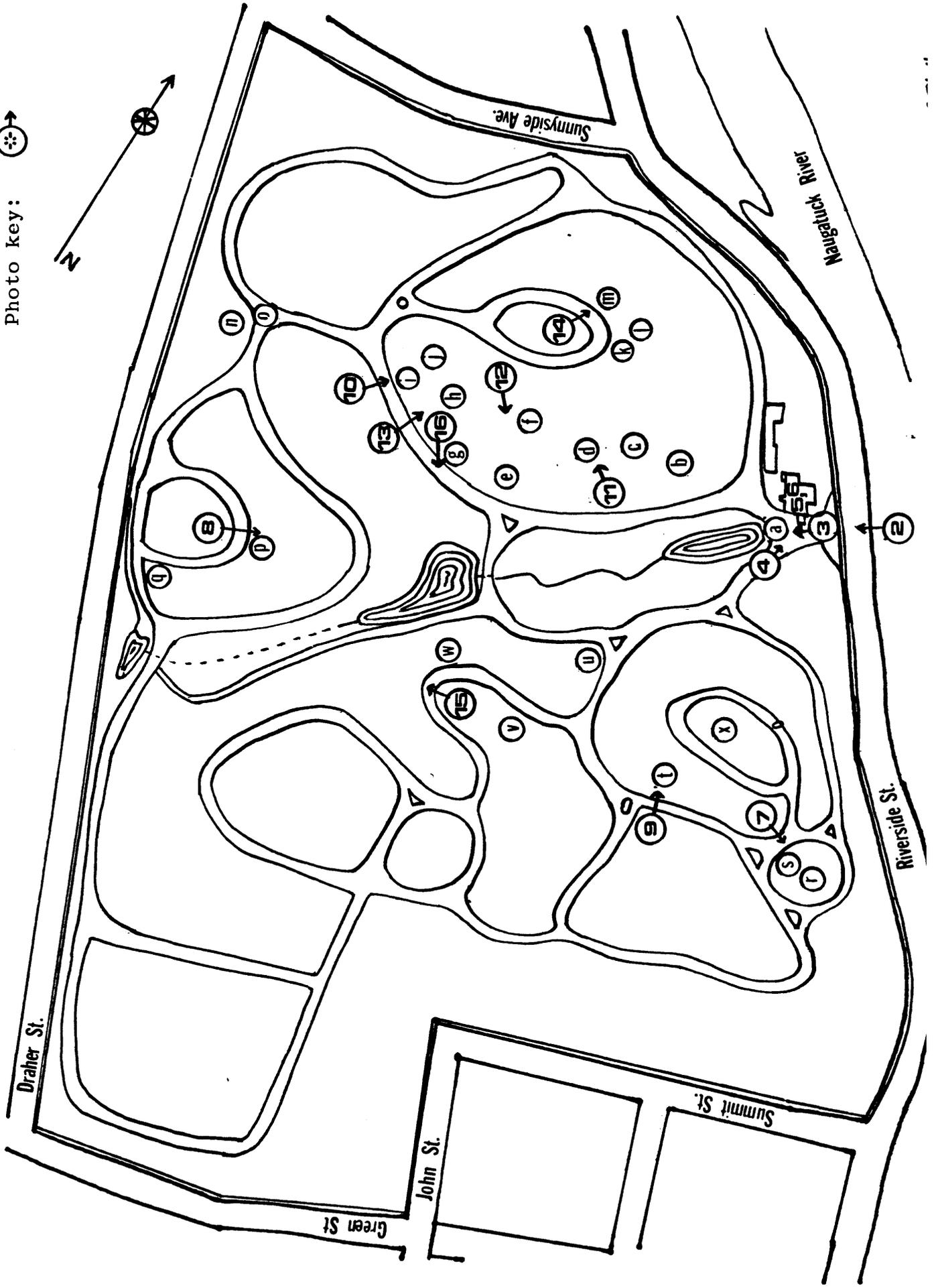
Sketch Map - not to scale

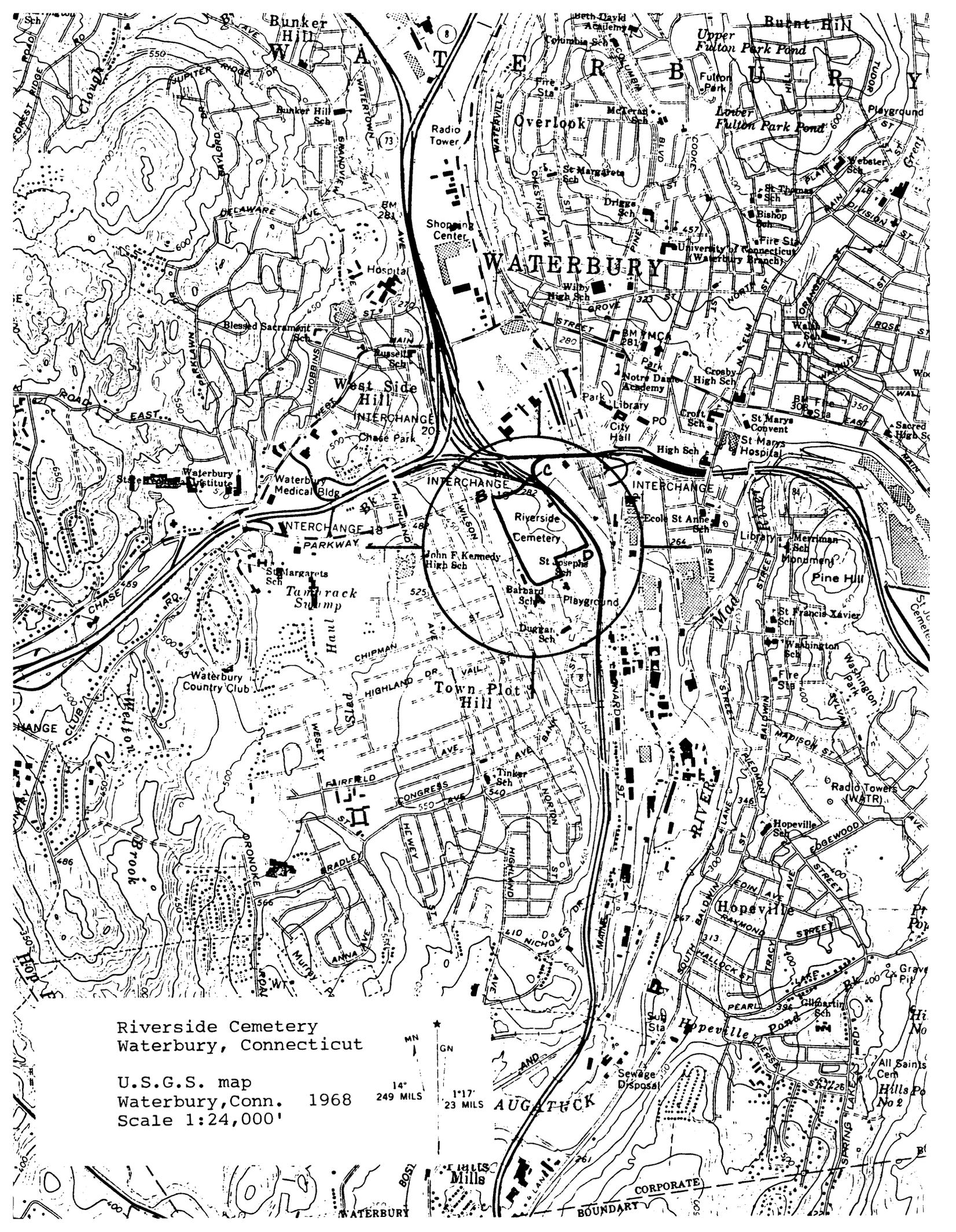
Approximate scale:



Monuments: (Z)

Photo key: (Z) with arrow





Riverside Cemetery
Waterbury, Connecticut

U.S.G.S. map
Waterbury, Conn. 1968
Scale 1:24,000'

14" 249 MILS
1"=17' 23 MILS

AUGATUCK

HILLS Mills

CORPORATE BOUNDARY

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Waterbury, ConnecticutSection number Photos Page 1Photographs

All photographs are of Riverside Cemetery in Waterbury, Connecticut, and were taken by Janice L. Elliott in January and February, 1988, unless otherwise noted. Negatives for all photographs are on file with the Connecticut Historical Commission.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>View</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1	Wall map of cemetery plan, 1923.		
2	Entrance gate and chapel.	West	David Ransom photo
3	John and Olive Elton memorial.	West	David Ransom photo
4	Chapel, south and west elevations.	Northeast	
5	Chapel interior.	East	
6	Chapel interior.	North	
7	Kendrick (left) and Leavenworth monuments. Early gravestones in foreground moved from old cemetery.	Southeast	
8	View from Evergreen Avenue. Edward Leach monument (elk) in foreground, Willow Pond (frozen) at left.	East	
9	Benedict monument.	North	
10	Booth (rear) and Chatfield monuments.	Northeast	
11	Smith monument.	Northwest	
12	View from Forest Hill. Welton monument at left, Kindregan right of center.	Southeast	
13	White monument.	Northeast	
14	Merriman monument.	Northeast	
15	View from Linden Avenue.	West	
16	View from Forest Hill. Willow Pond is at center.	South	David Ransom photo