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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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name North Burying Ground

other names/site number Hillside Cemetery (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Depot, Nutting Roads not for publication

city or town Westford vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Middlesex code 017 zip code 01886

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brona Simon

10/14/05

Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon,
Massachusetts Historical Commission, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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):

Signature of the Keeper

Edson A. Beall

Date of Action

12-6-05

Hillside Cemetery

Name of Property

Middlesex, MA

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

☐ private

☒ public-local

☐ public-State

☐ public-Federal

☐ building(s)

☐ district

☒ site

☐ structure

☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

_____ building

_____ 1 _____ sites

_____ 3 _____ 2 _____ structures

_____ 27 _____ 3 _____ objects

_____ 31 _____ 5 _____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary: cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

n/a

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____

walls _____

roof _____

other granite slate limestone marble

zinc iron sandstone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Hillside Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

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7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Introduction

While its name implies existence of picturesque characteristics of the Rural style cemetery design movement inspired by construction of Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge in the 1830s, the landscape, layout, appearance, and gravestone art of Hillside Cemetery adhere more closely to design characteristics from the Colonial Period. Acquired by the town by 1753 from local farmers as a burial ground, it was originally called the North Burying (also Burial) Ground. Many of those interred here are significant in the history of the Town of Westford. War veterans, mill operatives, farmers, and business people occupy the approximately 300 visible burials. Members of the Wright, Bates, Nutting, Keyes, and other families influenced the town's history and appearance and continue to do so by virtue of their artfully carved gravestones. The landscape is nearly flat with some grade changes to accommodate the slightly rolling topography. The burial ground is located at the northwest corner of Nutting and Depot Roads and remains in use. Markers, oriented in north-south rows, are made primarily from slate although other materials are present. Colonial and Federal Period grave markers appear in the form of shouldered-arched and flat-topped tablets. Granite and marble markers also exist.

Landscape

Land comprising the old North Burying Ground belonged in the Colonial Period to Ebenezer and Thomas Wright, local residents who were probably farmers. The appearance at the time was likely that of a field of grass with a few small slate gravestones, a description still largely applicable.

Boundaries of the cemetery are lined on the south edge with a **granite slab retaining wall** capped with split coping stones and on the east by a granite fieldstone wall, also with split capstones. West and north boundaries are low dry-laid fieldstone walls. Entrance to the cemetery is thorough openings in the stone wall along the Depot Road (east) side and in the southern stone wall along Nutting Road. The Depot Road **cobblestone gateway** is articulated by round piers built of cobblestone about five feet in height. Additional entry is via **stone steps to Nutting Road** in a gap in the wall at the southern side. A modern **flagpole** occupies a site just inside the east entry. Circulation within the cemetery is via an **asphalt pathway** along the northern edge.

Plot definition occurs in approximately four instances with simple granite curbs which are located either flush with the ground or as much as 18 inches in height. **(Photo 2)** The **Smith family plot** has granite curbing approximately a foot in height with granite steps to access the slightly elevated plot. Single steps on the east and west are flanked by low octahedral piers. The step is inscribed "T. Smith" in memory of Thomas Smith (d. 1829 at 91 years of age). The **William and Rhoda Chandler Family plot** has slightly taller curbs with tooled edges. **(Photo 1)** Curbs enclose square and rectangular parcels of from eight to twenty feet per side. A single asphalt path traverses the cemetery from east to west near its northern edge. There is no evidence of outbuildings.

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Markers

Hillside Cemetery reflects trends in gravestone development in its variety of slate, marble and granite markers. Slate is the oldest surviving material used for marking burials and is carved in shouldered-arched and flat-topped stelae (rectangular slabs or tablets). Ranging in height from one foot to five feet, this type of marker can demonstrate a relatively crude, hand-cut appearance, a well-designed and possibly machine-cut sharpness and several levels of workmanship in between. Quality of workmanship of the slate marker is sometimes obscured by the fact that the stone has deteriorated or been broken. Inscriptions also vary in quality and detail. The simplest have fine, narrow letters with little relief or depth. Later slate stones from the 19th century are more likely to demonstrate clear, deep, stylized letters with a pronounced serif and well thought out organization relative to the shape of the stone.

Markers appear in a variety of shapes. Those from the earliest period are most commonly cut in a rectangular form with an arched top, representative of the figurative portal between life and death. The shape is also considered an abstraction of the human head and shoulders. This form of marking the passage from life is a Puritan concept brought from Boston and elsewhere during the region's period of first settlement. Eighteenth century stones are typically carved with one of a variety of motifs. One of the earliest markers in Hillside, the **Jacob and Abigail Wright double arched marker (Photo 4)**, commemorating a husband and wife who both died in 1761 at the age of 65, exhibits winged death's heads with the legend "Memento Mori", an encouragement to the living to remember that death is imminent. The **Thomas Wright slate marker** from 1769 is edged with floral trim flanking a central panel with name and dates. The arched top bears the image of a winged death's head. The symbol of winged death, in the form of either a skull or abstracted human head flanked by a pair of feathered wings spread wide, occurs frequently on stones carved in the 18th century. This is a representation of the belief that the human spirit was released at the time of death for the flight heavenward. **Henry** (d. 1793 at 78 years of age) and **Priscilla Richardson** (d. 1776 at 63 years of age) are remembered by arched stones with death's heads in portals. Representative of the spirit of the deceased glancing back into the world of the living while simultaneously offering the living a preview of the afterlife, the portal is rich in Puritan symbolism and attitudes toward the transcendent nature of death. In addition to the portal and death's head on the Richardson stone are abstracted leafless trees, also symbolizing death.

Based on classical influences exerted by the spreading glow of the Enlightenment, new images for gravestone ornamentation rapidly made the older Puritan themes seem outdated. Urn and willow designs appear frequently on gravestones from the Federal through the Victorian Period. Both slate and sandstone markers exhibit this late 18th and 19th century motif that is an icon of sorrow and grief. Change from the Puritan death's head to the classically inspired urn and willow marked a change in the way death was viewed by New England society. Previously, the event was considered a common reality whose dim portent reflected the stern view of life as a struggle for survival. The Post-Puritan view of death adopted a sentimental quality that spoke more of the emotional state of those left behind than of the journey of the deceased, causing the replacement of darkly spiritual carvings with abstract sorrowful imagery. The use of columns in gravestone design, frequently of the

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Doric order, is evidence of the pervasive influence of classical imagery popularized by the Enlightenment. Within the **Smith Family Plot** are Thomas Smith's (d. 1829 at 91 years of age) and his wife Molly Smith's (d. 1835 at 92 years of age) arched slate markers are two of the several that have urn and willow designs with Doric columns at the borders of the inscription panel. Approximately 43 gravestones have dates before 1830. Most are shouldered arched forms carved from slate.

Additional marker types in the form of obelisks and tablets with biblical and other symbolism appeared during the Victorian Period. Obelisks are made mainly from gray granite with one example exhibiting only three sides. The example commemorating the death of **Asia Nutting** in 1880 is of split granite without ornament and is around six feet tall. Others, from the late 1800s, have capstones and smooth, polished granite faces. The 1871 **William and Rhoda Chandler Family pedestal**, a stouter form resembling an obelisk, is cut from granite and has an inlaid marble inscription panel. **(Photo 1)** Religious symbolism appears on the **marble slab of Jacob Wendell** (d. 1809 at 45 years of age) in the form of a hand with finger pointing heavenward recessed in an oval. Oak leaf clusters serve to articulate the **markers for James M. Wright** (d. 1867 at 67 years of age), **and his wife Sarah** (d. 1897 at 91 years of age). Carved ballflowers appear on the **stone for their daughters, both named Mary** (one who died in 1839 at three years of age and one in 1853 at 13 years). **Sarah** (d. 1870 at 36 years of age) **and Hezekiah Cummings** (1828-1904) were husband and wife and have oak leaf clusters on their marble stones. **(Photo 3)** Victorian Period designs include other biblical references. Those interred in the **Chandler Family plot** have matching scroll tablets carved from marble. These low tablets are otherwise unadorned.

Two examples of zinc grave markers from the late 19th century exist in Hillside Cemetery. One **monumental bronze (zinc) marker** commemorates posthumously the lives of **Imla Keyes** (d. 1861 at 68 years of age) and his son **Edward** (d. 1865 at 38 years of age). According to the Westford historian Edwin Hodgman, Edward Keyes is buried in a Catholic cemetery in Sumter, SC, the location of his death during the Civil War. The second **zinc marker** is for George and Imla's relative **George Keyes** (1817-1898). This unusual marker type is the product of the Monumental Bronze Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut which operated from the 1870s until after WW I. The two-foot high imitation stone is made to resemble quarry-faced granite in the form of an arched tablet. These are the only known zinc monuments in Hillside Cemetery but they are commonly found in small numbers in cemeteries across the nation.

At least three 20th century military stones exist in Hillside. A small rectangular marble marker with cambered top marks the resting place of **Elbridge Reed** (d. 1908) who served the country in the Civil War in Company G, 7th Vermont Infantry. No dates are inscribed on this stone. **Harry E. Nixon Jr.** (1920-1969) served during World War II in the U.S. Naval Reserve and is remembered with a marble marker carved with a cross inscribed in a circle. The stone is flush with the ground. A similar stone commemorates the life and military service of **Wendell L. R. Perry** (1916-1968) who was a private in the U. S. Army in World War II. Both World War II veterans have separate civilian gravestones for themselves and their families. The most recent burial occurred in 2001.

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Gravestone Carvers

Gravestone carvers who signed their work in Hillside Cemetery include the Lowell, Massachusetts craftsmen Andrews and Wheeler who created the arched marble tablet for **Joseph W. Keyes** (d. 1879 at 58 years of age). D. Nichols also worked as a gravestone carver in Lowell and made the arched marble stone for **Rebecca** (d. 1848 at 70 years of age) **and Samuel Tenney** (d. 1863 at 89 years of age).

Information about communities with which Westford residents maintained trade relationships can be learned from gravestones. Stone carvers signed their names at around ground level on some markers, occasionally including the name of their towns. By far the most frequent community noted on signed markers is Lowell, city of origin for stones carved by Andrews & Wheeler and D. Nichols, the only carvers to sign their work in Hillside. Newspapers from the end of the period support the assertion that, when traveling out of town for commercial purposes, residents of Westford usually went either to Lowell or Ayer, typically on the Stony Brook Railroad.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known in the cemetery or in the general area (within one mile), sites may be present. Environmental characteristics of the area represent some locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of ancient sites. The cemetery is located on a well drained, level to moderately sloping terrace, both favorable characteristics. The nearest wetlands, however, are located over 1,000 feet from the cemetery, a factor that reduces the overall ancient site sensitivity for this location. Keyes Brook, a tributary of Stony Brook and the Merrimack River, is located southwest of the cemetery. Given the above information, the small size of the cemetery (1 acre), and excavation of over 300 graves, a low potential exists for locating significant ancient Native American resources at the Hillside Cemetery.

A high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources in the Hillside Cemetery. Unmarked graves containing stratigraphic evidence of a burial pit, coffin, skeletal remains, and personal items of the deceased may exist dating to the pre-1753 period before the North Burying Ground was established and later. Older burials are grouped in the southeast corner of the cemetery where slate markers are concentrated. Archaeological evidence including buried objects, artifacts, and post holes from old fence lines, stonewalls, gates, and other boundary markers may also survive. Archaeological features and/or artifacts related to 18th century agricultural structures, methods and techniques might also exist. The cemetery land was farmland prior to its 1753 acquisition by the town from local farmers.

(end)

Hillside Cemetery

Name of Property

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 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Middlesex, MA

County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art

Community Planning and Development

Social History

Period of Significance

1753-1955

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Andrews & Wheeler (carvers)

D. Nichols

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

J.V. Fletcher Library, Westford Hist. Commission

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hillside Cemetery retains integrity of materials, location, design, workmanship, setting, feeling and association. It is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C at the local level and meets Criterion Consideration D as a cemetery which derives its significance from age, distinctive design features and association with historic events. The cemetery is significant under Criterion A for its association with events in the community such as epidemics of illness and military service in the Revolution. It is eligible under Criterion C as an example of a Colonial Period burial ground containing examples of gravestone carving representative of techniques commonly used in the period. The period of significance for the cemetery begins at its establishment in 1753 and extends to 1955. It has been in continuous use.

Introduction

Westford's North Burying Ground (the original name of Hillside Cemetery) first came into use as a public burial ground in 1753 when the parcel was given for the purpose to the town. Approximately a dozen stones survive from the 18th century. Burials at that time were conducted in the Protestant vein with a minimum of ceremony. Gravestone ornament was restrained and the surrounding landscape was allowed to appear as a grassy plot marked by slate headstones. Treatment of burial places in Westford remained austere until the mid-19th century when townspeople began efforts to improve the burial ground landscapes. This appears to have been motivated by the popularity of more exuberant funerary ornament as at Mount Auburn Cemetery founded in Cambridge in 1831, and by the antiquarians' interest in recording and stewardship of historic artifacts.

While other local cemeteries, including Fairview on Main Street in Westford (NR 2001), show signs of imitating Mount Auburn Cemetery in their complex plot plans, curving circulation paths, and ornate entrance gates, the North Burying Ground acquired only a picturesque new name, "Hillside", around the end of the nineteenth century. It was not the subject of any structural improvements or pathways among burial plots. Slate markers from the 18th century remain largely unchanged, although they are surrounded by Victorian and later period markers of granite and marble.

The most basic maintenance schedule has allowed the cemetery to retain much of its historic appearance by virtue of the densely grouped slate markers near the southeast corner, the small scale of markers and the simple landscape unencumbered by modern paths and furniture.

1753-1830

The North Burying Ground occupies land that had belonged in the 18th century to the brothers Ebenezer (b. 1693) and **Thomas Wright** (1707-1769). Ebenezer's name appears on a list as one of the town's 89 original tax payers. Ebenezer resided on Chamberlain Road and served in 1726-1727 as treasurer for the West Precinct of Chelmsford which became the town of Westford in 1729. Thomas Wright is buried in Hillside Cemetery

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beneath a slate marker. The parcel was accepted by the town on March 5, 1753 according to town meeting records from that date. Those at the meeting voted to accept for a "Buring Place a Peace of Land att a Place Called Tarkil hill Being one acer more or less Bounding near where Two Rodes meet...", thereby creating the North Burying Ground, the town's second. The first, originally called the East Burying Ground, is now called Fairview Cemetery and came into use around the turn of the 18th century.

Burials whose markers do not survive may have occurred before the official establishment of the North Burial Ground. Gravestones from the 1700s and early 1800s are typically located very close together in the southeastern portion although some gaps exist. Family members tend to be adjacent to one another, frequently aligned in the order in which they died. No segregation based on ethnicity, occupation, military service or wealth is apparent. Most stones are around the same size, two to four feet high by one to three feet wide. Maintenance of the burial ground during this period was the responsibility of a nearby resident. Duties consisted of mowing grass which was remunerated by the town on a yearly basis and digging graves for which the caretaker was paid piecemeal. Approximately 50 markers from the period exist in the cemetery.

Eighteenth century residents of Westford who are buried in the Hillside Cemetery include industrialists, Revolutionary War veterans, local politicians and farmers. Around 1725, a miller named William Chandler (b. ca.1690) built a fulling mill in nearby Brookside Village (NRDIS 2002) and began its 200-year history of industrial activity. The senior William Chandler is buried in Westford's Fairview Cemetery but his son and grandson, who both continued to operate the fulling mill according to the 1883 town history, are interred here. His great grandson who is buried beneath an 1871 marker worked as a farmer according to the 1855 census. The Chandlers made a large impact on the town by engaging in industrial activity at Brookside and maintaining a family interest for several generations. **William Chandler** (d. 1826 at 71 years of age), grandson of the town's first fulling miller, was a Revolutionary War veteran who served as a private in Captain Timothy Underwood's company that marched on Concord in April, 1775 and later on Bunker Hill according to the 1908 publication Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War. He served intermittently through 1778 in several other units and is buried beside his wife **Joanna** (d. 1842 at 87 years of age). The Chandlers have matching marble stelae carved by D. Nichols of Lowell. Private William Chandler's son is interred here and was a Westford selectman in 1836 and 1837. **Captain Oliver Bates** (1721-1775) is interred in the old North Burying Ground and is another of the people interred here who served in the Revolutionary War. Captain Bates died as a result of wounds shortly after the battle of Bunker Hill in June, 1775. He commanded companies of men in the regiments of Colonel James Prescott and Colonel William Prescott. He also served as selectman in 1764, 1774 and 1775.

Five additional veterans of the Revolutionary War are interred in Hillside Cemetery including Sergeant **Solomon Spaulding** who marched on Concord and Bunker Hill, **Pelataiah Wright** who served at Concord and Fort Ticonderoga, **Ephraim Wright** who participated at Concord, and Daniel Nutting who fought at Bunker Hill. **Joseph Wright Jr.** marched on Concord and White Plains and died in the service of his country in New

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York according to the inscription on his gravestone. This is also the final resting place of **Roswell Reed** and **Imla Keyes** who both served in the War of 1812. Roswell Reed died in 1856 of consumption according to Marilyn Day in Westford Days.

Farming was the most common method of earning a living in Westford throughout the 18th and well into the 19th century. As a result, many of those interred at Hillside worked the land including **Thomas and Ebenezer Wright** who gave the town the land for the cemetery. Thomas lived on the opposite side of Nutting Road approximately ¼ mile west of the cemetery. Their relative **Jacob Wright** worked a farm at the corner of Groton Road and North Main Street with his wife **Abigail**, both of whom died in November, 1761 at 65 years of age. The Wrights share a double slate stele with carving of a death's head. **(Photo 4)**

Three grave markers have poignant ability to reveal potential hardships of 18th century existence. A slate double gravestone with a single arched top marks the burial place of children of Ephraim and Abigail Wright, **Hannah and Jotham Wright**, who died on August 23rd and August 22nd, 1775 at the ages of five and seven years. A nearby stone marks the burials of **Thomas and William Smith** who died on September 13th and September 19th, 1775. An additional shouldered arched slate marker commemorates the lives of three children of Joseph and Dorothy Wright. Children of Joseph (d. 1823) and Ruth Keyes (d. 1785 at age 36) named **Rebecca, Stephen and Joseph Wright** died between August 30th and September 1st, 1775 and were between the ages of 10 months and four years. The proximate date of the deaths of these children is the more saddening when one considers that buried in Westlawn Cemetery are two children of Colonel John Robinson who died the same year, also in the late summer, and that there may have been an epidemic of disease throughout the town. Evidence exists of burials of victims of smallpox during the 18th century. Anonymous handwritten notes added to a map specify no date or names but suggest the northwest corner of the cemetery as the site of such burials, although no documentary evidence is available. Nearly all of those interred here belonged to the First Parish Church until 1829, the time of the founding of the Congregational Church.

1830-1900

Changes in the appearance of the cemetery began to occur after 1830 when slate was less frequently used for gravestones. Marble and granite gradually replaced slate, probably for their improved resistance to delamination and exfoliation. In addition to their superior durability, these materials present a very distinctive appearance in comparison to slate. Previously unavailable colors, shapes, inscription types and increased scale were all possible with the new materials. Also, the art of the gravestone carver was advancing in the face of modern imagery drawn from Victorian period biblical and iconographic sources.

Improvements to the grounds occurred on several occasions. The first to be recorded was in 1844 and notes that Oliver Woodward was paid a small amount for a gate and a pair of stone posts. The gate and posts do not survive but their installation marks the beginning of cemetery maintenance chores documented in town reports. In 1846, Asia Nutting was paid \$98 for re-building 26½ rods of **stone walls** (approximately 430 feet). This

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length is corresponds roughly to the length of the existing walls along the south and east sides of the cemetery. Mr. Nutting lived across the street from the cemetery and cut grass and brush in the burial ground from around 1846 until 1878 when he was 82 years old. In 1868, he was paid \$101.50 for "stone work" in the East Burial Ground (now Fairview Cemetery), suggesting he had some skill as a stone cutter or mason. Mr. Nutting's sons Stephen and Benjamin were largely responsible for maintaining the cemetery from 1878 until the turn of the 20th century. The local surveyor Edward Symmes was retained by town officials to create a plan of the North Burial Ground in 1871, which has not yet been located.

In 1893, the town voted to adopt the provisions of the state law regarding selection of a Cemetery Commission. The first members were the industrialist Allan Cameron, the mill owner George Heywood, and the Westford Academy headmaster William E. Frost. Their goal was the improvement of the appearance of the town's burial grounds which they effected at the Hillside Cemetery by re-setting head stones and tidying the grounds in 1895. Markers for gravesites were purchased to commemorate military service in all conflicts up to that time and avenues were laid out. In the North Burial Ground this amounted to a handful of marble stones for veterans of the Civil War such as the undated low **arched tablet of Elbridge Reed**. Landscape improvements consist of a single straight **path along the north edge**. Improvements of a more picturesque nature took place at the former East Burial Ground, now Fairview Cemetery. Changes there included construction of curving avenues, a summer house (gazebo), and large gateways that attracted most residents of the town in search of a burial plot including all three original Cemetery Commission members. During the period 1894-1897, Hillside was the site of only 12 burials compared to 103 for Fairview. A similar relationship existed between Fairview and Hillside in terms of the growing number of funds established for perpetual care of burial plots. Hillside was not entirely neglected, however. According to town reports from 1900, the south wall along what is now Nutting Road was re-laid, pointed, and improved with a course of split granite capstones which formalized the previous dry-laid stone wall. The wall continues to exist in this condition.

The concept of Perpetual Care came into use in Westford in 1893. For a deposit of \$50-100 to the perpetual care fund, Westford residents could provide themselves with a permanent program of plot maintenance. Also around this time, residents were requested to pay an amount of one to five dollars per year to defray maintenance costs. Rising expenses may have been due to increasing numbers of plot-defining features such as granite curbs and the several types of fence that may have been in use in the Victorian period. No plot-defining fences survive.

Interments during the period include that of the farmer **William Chandler** who died in 1874 and is buried with his wife **Rhoda** beneath a stout granite pillar with cap. **(Photo 1)** He was the great grandson of the miller William Chandler who began fulling woolen cloth at Brookside in 1725 according to the 1883 town history. He is buried with some of his family. **James Wright** (d. 1876 at 67 years of age) and **Sarah Wright** (d. 1897 at 91 years of age) are interred beneath matching marble stelae with pointed arched tops. **(Photo 3)** Both are articulated with clusters of oak leaves recessed in an oval. Children of the Wrights interred in adjacent plots include two daughters, both named Mary, who died in 1839 and in 1853.

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Civil War veterans include **Edward Keyes** who died in 1865 while serving in the military at Sumterville, South Carolina. He was 38 years old serving his fourth year in Company C of the 30th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. Other Civil War veterans include **R. W. Cummings**, also of Company C, 30th Massachusetts Infantry, **Charles M. Cummings** (1838-1910) of Company C of the 16th Massachusetts Infantry, and **Elbridge Reed** who served in Company G, 7th Vermont Infantry and died in 1908.

1900-1960

Interments in Hillside slowed during the period from 1900-1960. The larger, more refined Rural style Fairview Cemetery on Main Street in Westford imbued the smaller Hillside with the more primitive character of a Colonial Period burial ground. No curving avenues or were built, although Charles Farrow improved or rebuilt the existing granite east wall in 1901. Cemetery superintendent Albert P. Richardson called for suggestions to rename the burying grounds something "more euphonious" in 1895 and again in 1903, with the suggestion that Hillside be the name applied to the old North Burial Ground. There was only one respondent who apparently concurred, thus changing the name. Lack of interest on the subject is in marked contrast to the campaign to rename the former East Burial Ground. New walls, gates and avenues inspired avid voting, ultimately in favor of the name Fairview. Since Hillside lacked the Rural style improvements of Fairview, it received a new name but little of the enthusiasm for reserving plots.

Expenditures for maintenance nearly doubled after World War II, possibly due to mechanization of maintenance procedures. The 1937 town report includes a sample contract for purchase of burial plots which indicates no walls, fences, curbs or projecting corner posts were allowed, probably to simplify maintenance. This regulation, instituted by Cemetery Commission members Sebastian Watson, Fred Blodget and Axel Lundberg, served to stem the profusion of Victorian ornament in cemeteries. These volunteers served the town from at least 1937 though 1949. Mr. Lundberg operated a gravestone manufacturing and sales operation in Westford's village of Nabnassett from ca. 1910-1940.

World War I and World War II veterans are buried in Hillside, two of which have military markers. **Harry E. Nixon** served in World War II and is buried under a white marble tablet mounted flush with the ground. The legend "Main AMM2 USNR World War II" and dates 1920 - 1969 appear below a cross inscribed in a circle. **Wendell L. R. Perry** (1916-1968) resides under a white marble marker whose top is flush with the ground. He served as a private first class I the army in World War II. The stone in the south wall with the inscribed name "Hillside" was given to the cemetery by the family of Claire Westwood in 1991.

Conclusion

Colonial, Federal and Victorian period historical associations in Hillside are largely intact despite interruptions by the small number of modern markers and by the removal of some historic cemetery furnishings. However, it

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Hillside Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 8 Page 6

continues to be possible, by observing the rows of arch-topped slate stones carved with cherubs, classical columns, urn and willow designs, and by recalling names so important to the development of the community, to get a strong sense of how Colonial Period residents of the Town of Westford viewed their burial places.

Archaeological Significance

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to contribute important information related to the early settlement of Westford, the evolution of the Hillside Cemetery, and the citizens of the community. Additional documentary research combined with archaeological survey and testing may help locate the temporal and geographic limits of the cemetery through time. Unmarked graves may help determine if burials exist that predate town ownership in 1753, possibly as a family or neighborhood burial ground for the farms located in the area. Identification and mapping of fence lines, walls, gates no longer extant, and grave patterns may also help delineate overall cemetery boundaries and how they changed through time and smaller social, ethnic, and family units within the larger cemetery. Gravestone art, inscriptions, and detailed analysis of memorial offerings, coffin hardware, and personal items in graves may also contribute important information relating to the social, cultural, and economic lives of individuals and groups interred in the cemetery. Osteological study of skeletal remains may also contribute important information relating to the general health and pathologies that affected citizens of the Westford community buried at the Hillside Cemetery and the community in general.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Hillside Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 9 Page 1

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(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Hillside Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 9 Page 2

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(end)

Hillside Cemetery
Name of Property

Middlesex, MA
County, State

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property one acre

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 19 299420 4719880
Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

— See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sanford Johnson, consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date October 2005

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Town of Westford, MA

street & number 55 Main Street telephone 978-692-5515

city or town Westford state MA zip code 01886

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Hillside Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 10 Page 1

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description:

Hillside Cemetery comprises all of the land within the boundaries of the cemetery. It is bounded by Depot Road on the east and by Nutting Road on the south. The cemetery encompasses 1 acre, described by the assessor's office as parcel 35 on map 36.

Boundary Justification:

Boundaries of the Hillside Cemetery were determined by the Westford Historical Commission and by the consultant. Boundaries include all gravestones, gateways, stone steps and circulation path. Stone walls encircle the cemetery and mark all boundaries.

(end)

PHOTOGRAPHS

Taken by: Sanford Johnson, September 2002

Location of negatives: Westford Historical Commission

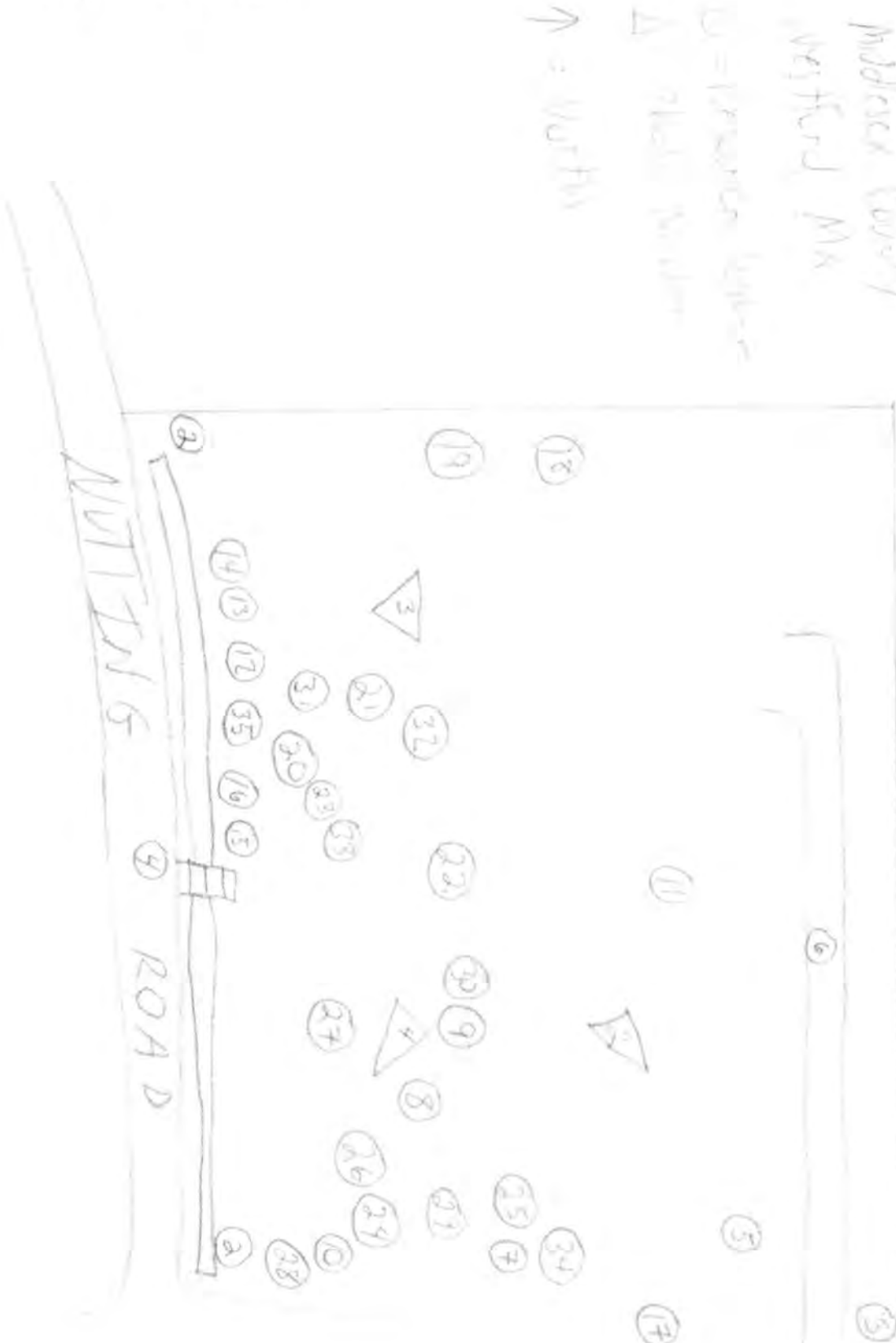
1. South wall and steps, William Chandler pedestal in center. View to north.
2. Smith family plot. View to northeast.
3. Sarah and James Wright marble gravestones. View to west.
4. Jacob & Abigail Wright marker. View to east.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Hillside Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 10 Page 3



Hillside Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts
Data Sheet

Map #	Name	Resource Type	Dates	Material	Status
1	Hillside Cemetery	Cemetery	1753	N/A	Si/C
2	Granite Walls	Wall	1846, 1900	Granite slab, fieldstone	St/C
3	Cobblestone Gateway	Gateway	1846, c. 1935	cobblestone	St/C
4	Stone Steps to Nutting Road	Steps	c. 1840	Granite	St/C
5	Flagpole	Flagpole	c. 1960	Metal	O/NC
6	Asphalt pathway	Pathway	c. 1960	Asphalt	St/NC
7	Thomas Wright Marker	Gravestone	1769	Slate	O/C
8	Hannah and Jotham Wright Marker	Double gravestone	1775	Slate	O/C
9	Smith Family Plot	Gravestones, plot defining curb and steps	1829	Slate gravestones, granite curb, steps	O/C
10	Henry and Prisillar Richardson Markers	Gravestones	1793, 1776	Slate	O/C
11	Asia Nutting Obelisk	Grave marker	1880	Granite	O/C
12	James and Sarah Wright Markers	Gravestones	1867, 1897	Marble	O/C
13	Mary Wright Markers	Gravestones	1839, 1853	Marble	O/C
14	Hezekiah and Sarah Cummings Marker	Gravestones	1904, 1870	Marble	O/C

Hillside Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts
Data Sheet

Map #	Name	Resource Type	Dates	Material	Status
15	Imla and Edward Keyes Marker	Grave marker	c. 1898	Zinc	O/C
16	George Keyes Marker	Grave marker	1898	Zinc	O/C
17	Elbridge Reed Marker	Military Grave Marker	1908	Marble	O/C
18	Harry E. Nixon Jr. Marker	Military Grave Marker	1969	Marble	O/NC
19	Wendell L. R. Perry Marker	Military Grave Marker	1968	Marble	O/NC
20	Joseph W. Keyes Marker	Gravestone	1879	Marble	O/C
21	Rebeccah and Samuel Tenney Marker	Gravestone	1848	Marble	O/C
22	Captain Oliver Bates Marker	Gravestone	1775	Slate	O/C
23	William and Joanna Chandler Markers	Gravestones	1826, 1842	Marble	O/C
24	Lt. Solomon Spaulding Marker	Gravestone		Slate	O/C
25	Pelataiah Wright Marker	Gravestone		Slate	O/C
26	Ephraim Wright Marker	Gravestone		Slate	O/C
27	Joseph Wright Jr. Marker	Gravestone		Slate	O/C
28	Roswell Reed Marker	Gravestone		Slate	O/C
29	Jacob and Abigail Wright Double Arched Marker	Double Gravestone	1761	Slate	O/C

Hillside Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts
Data Sheet

Map #	Name	Resource Type	Dates	Material	Status
30	Thomas and William Smith Marker	Gravestone	1775	Slate	O/C
31	Rebecca, Stephen and Joseph Wright Marker	Gravestone	1775	Slate	O/C
32	R. W. Cummings	Military Gravestone	1910	Marble	O/C
33	William and Rhoda Chandler Family Plot	Pedestal, gravestones, plot defining curbs	1871	Granite, marble	O/C
34	Jacob Wendell Marker	Gravestone	1809	Marble	O/C
35	George Keyes Marker	Gravestone	1898	Zinc	O/C
36	Asphalt Path	Path	C. 1970	Asphalt	St/NC

Note: Resources selected for discussion are representative (i.e. exclusion from the data sheet does not indicate a lack of significance)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY ~~North Burying Ground~~
NAME: *Hillside Cemetery*

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 10/25/05 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/21/05
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/06/05 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/08/05
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 05001373

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 *12/6/05* DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

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.



Hillside Cemetery
Westford, Middlesex Co., Mass

photo: S. Johnson 9/02

negs on file w/ Westford Hist. Comm.

view to north

photo 1

South Wall & steps; w.m. chandler pedestal at center



Hillside Cemetery

Westford, Middlesex Co., Mass.

photo: S. Johnson 9/02

Negs on file w/ Westford Hist. Comm.

view to northeast

photo 2

Smith family plot



Hillside Cemetery

Westford, Middlesex Co; MASS

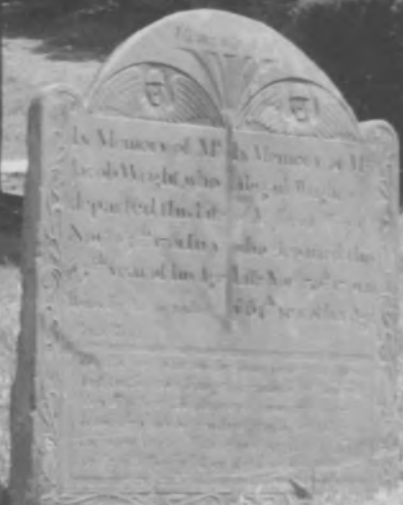
Photo: S. Johnson 9/02

negs on file w/ Westford Hist. Comm.

view to west

Photo 3

Sarah & James Wright marble grave stones
also Mary Wright, Mary Wright and Hezekiah Cummings



Hillside Cemetery

Westford, Middlesex Co, Mass

photo: S. Johnson 9/02

Megs on file w/ Westford Hist. Comm.

view to East.

photo 4

Jacob & Abigail Wright Marker



Hillside Cemetery National Register District
 Westford
 Middlesex County, MA
 North Toward Top
 Assessor Number 036 0035

LEGEND
 PARCEL NUMBERS 2
 MATCH LINE



DATE OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY	4-28-87
DATE OF COMPLETION	5-9-88
DATE OF REVISIONS	1-1-80
	1-1-80
	1-1-81
	1-1-82
	1-1-83
	1-1-84
	1-1-85
	1-1-86
	1-1-87

For Assessment Purposes
 Not To Be Used For Conveyances

TAX MAP
TOWN OF WESTFORD
 MIDDLESEX COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS
 PREPARED BY
 JAMES W. SEWALL COMPANY, OLD TOWN, MAINE
 SCALE: 1 INCH = 200 FEET

	41	
35	MAP NUMBER 36	37
	31	

Nillside Cemetery
Westford
Middlesex County, Mass.
VTM REFERENCE
19 0299418 4719887



42071-E3-TM-025

Billerica

MASSACHUSETTS

1:25 000-scale metric topographic 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, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts agencies
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1981. Field checked 1982. Map edited 1987
Supersedes Westford 1966 and Billerica 1965 1:24,000-scale maps
Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19
Universal Transverse Mercator
10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, maintained zone 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
CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.3 METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM	ADJOINING MAPS			
Meters	Feet		1	2	3	
1	3.2808		4	5		
2	6.5617					
3	9.8425					
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		UTM grid convergence (GTM and 1983 magnetic declination (MM) at center of map; diagram is approximate)				
To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048						

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface

Secondary highway, hard surface

Light-duty road, hard or improved surface

Unimproved road, trail

Route marker: Interstate, U.S., State

Railroad: standard gaps; narrow gauge

Bridge: drawbridge

Footbridge; overpass; underpass

Build-up area: 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. Indian reservation

Wells; 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, lava; sand

Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate

Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream

Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small

Sewage, marsh

Submerged marsh; land subject to controlled inundation

Woodland; scattered trees

Scrub; mangrove

Orchard; vineyard

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request



OCT 28 2005

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

October 14, 2005

Dr. John Roberts, Acting Chief
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Hillside Cemetery, Depot Rd., Westford (Middlesex), 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.

Sincerely,

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

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Sanford Johnson, consultant
Kenneth Tebbets, Westford Historical Commission
Dini Healy-Coffin, Westford Board of Selectmen
Timothy Greenhill, Westford Town Planner