

1372

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



OCT 25 2005

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 Wright Cemetery

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Groton Road not for publication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, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission

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 H. Beall

Date of Action

12/6/05

Wright Cemetery
Name of Property

Middlesex, MA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing

Noncontributing

_____ building
1 _____ sites
3 _____ structures
3 _____ objects
7 _____ 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)

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____
walls _____
roof _____
other granite, slate, limestone, marble

Narrative Description

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number *Z* Page 1

7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Introduction

The landscape layout, appearance, and gravestone art of the Wright Cemetery derives from design characteristics of the pre-industrial burial grounds. These characteristics consist mainly of the slate markers and the utilitarian, formerly agricultural landscape. The burial ground was owned until the 20th century by one of the many nearby farm families named Wright. In 1909, the town Cemetery Commissioners suggested the private cemetery be cared for by the town as were Fairview, Westlawn, and Hillside Cemeteries. The parcel of land including the cemetery was later given to the town. Cemetery occupants influenced the town's history and appearance and continue to do so by virtue of their artfully carved gravestones. War veterans, mill operatives, farmers, and business people occupy the approximately 150 visible historic burials.

Markers are made mostly from slate as well as from other materials. The earliest gravestones are from the Federal Period and appear in the form of shouldered-arched and flat-topped stelae (rectangular or arched tablets or slabs), the largest of which belongs to Lieutenant Nahum Wight. (Note: There are occupants named both Wight and Wright.) Monuments from the Victorian Period take the form of an obelisk and carved marble stelae. Slate continued to be used until 1854 although marble and granite were becoming more common at that time. Grave markers are mostly arranged in rows oriented east to west with inscriptions on older stones typically facing south.

Landscape

Land comprising the Wright Cemetery belonged in 1836 to Bela Wright who was granted, with some neighbors, permission by the town to keep a burial ground. The appearance at the time was likely that of a field of grass with a few small slate gravestones. The nearly square, flat, grass-covered parcel is located along the north side of a straight segment of Groton Road (MA Route 40).

Boundaries of the cemetery are lined on the north, east and west with a fence four feet in height consisting of granite posts and 4"x4" rails. The Groton Road (south) boundary has a two- to four-foot high mortared fieldstone wall with a split granite capstone. Entrance to the cemetery is thorough an opening in the wall at about the mid-point where a pair of stout, low, granite posts support a wooden gate. Pedestrian access is through gaps beside the gate and secondary granite post. A modern flagpole occupies a site just inside the east entry. Historic burials occupy approximately ½ acre while the remaining four acres of reserve ground are in an undeveloped farm field outside the historic granite post and wood rail fence. Granite elements may have been quarried locally given the prominence of that industry in the north part of town.

Plot definition occurs in three instances with simple granite curbs. The most pronounced is approximately 24 inches in height and encompasses the Albion Wright family plot. Steps to access the plot are flanked by low

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number *I* Page 2

pyramidal piers, which also mark the corners of the plot. Other plot-defining curbs lack corner piers and rise only slightly above ground level. Curbs enclose square and rectangular plots of from eight to twenty feet per side.

Markers

The Wright Cemetery reflects trends in gravestone development in its variety of slate, marble, and granite markers. Slate and marble are the oldest surviving materials used for marking burials. Slate is frequently carved in shouldered arches that range in height from one foot to approximately five feet. They 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, well thought out organization relative to the shape of the stone, and a tooled finish to set off the inscription panel, ornament, and banding at the edge of the stone.

Slate markers from the earliest period appear in a variety of shapes. Many are rectangular with an arched top, which may be 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 and endured into the early 19th century. Eighteen slate markers exist in Wright Cemetery and have dates from 1819 to 1854. Miss Sally Stevens (d. 1848 at 43 years of age) has a typical shouldered arch-topped slate marker. It is inscribed with urn and willow motif above a central oval panel for inscription of her name and dates. Flanking the inscription are classical columns of the Doric order. This was the work of B. Day, gravestone carver from Lowell, Massachusetts.

Prior to the Federal Period, the event of death was considered a common reality whose dim portent reflected the stern view of life as a struggle for survival. Subsequently, New Englanders' 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. Urn and willow designs begin to appear on gravestones in the late 18th century and are based on classical influences exerted by the spreading glow of the Enlightenment. Both slate and marble markers exhibit this late 18th and early 19th century motif that is an icon of sorrow and grief. A highly ornamented slate marker is that of Lucy Osgood from 1854. The arched top is decorated with an urn and willow motif carved with a high level of detail including the oval background which has a hatched or tooled finish. The use of classically inspired columns in gravestone design, frequently of the Doric order, is evidence of the pervasive influence of classical imagery popularized by the Enlightenment. The stone of Nahum Wight has a design similar to Lucy Osgood's and includes Doric columns beside the inscription panel as well as tooled finish and geometric rounds, symbols of the eternal nature of death.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number *I* Page *3*

Additional marker types in the form of an obelisk, Gothic designs and marble tablets with biblical and classical symbolism appeared during the Victorian Period. The single obelisk in Wright Cemetery is carved from gray granite and commemorates the lives of Joel Wright (1782-1834) (**Photo 2**) and his wife Sally (d. 1869 at 79 years of age). This is the cemetery's tallest marker at around 10 feet. Gothic themes are carved into some markers, including the pointed arched stone of Mary Wright who died in 1871 at the age of 21. (**Photo 2**) Her marker has a recessed circle with inscribed flowers. Beside her grave is a small slant marker inscribed with the word "baby," a common Victorian marker for those who died very young.

Marble markers from the mid 19th century are usually rectangular with a flat top but sometimes have a cambered (segmental arched) or pointed top. Asa (d. 1877 at 78 years of age) and Bathsheba Wright (d. 1869 at 68 years of age) have matching marble stelae with cambered tops. These three-foot-high stones, which have edges set off by moldings, pendants and chamfers, are set on plinths and pedestals. Other marble tablets have tops articulated by a gradually sloping point that were erected in the mid 19th century. For example, Abbie M. Edes (d. 1859 at 15 years of age) and her relative Elvira (d. 1876) have this type of stone, as does Nathan Wright who died in 1846 at 57 years of age.

20th century military stones exist in the Wright Cemetery. A small rectangular bronze marker mounted flush with the ground marks the resting place of Albert Picking (1915-1994) who served in the U. S. Army as a sergeant in World War II.

Carvers

Gravestones in the Wright Cemetery bear some identifying inscriptions by their carvers. B. Day is by far the most frequent name, appearing in around six instances. Markers for Sally Stevens (1848), Abigail Wight (1850), Nathan Wright (1846), Walter Wright (1830) and Abigail Wright (1835) were carved by Mr. Day. He worked in Lowell and craved gravestones now in cemeteries in many surrounding communities. Carvers T. Warren and D. Nichols, both of Lowell, carved the marble pointed arched stelae of Caleb Wight and Hannah Ryan from 1864 and 1863. (**Photo 1**) A. Sawtell of Groton carried out the shouldered arch form with urn and willow design on Lucy Osgood's slate marker from 1856. (**Photo 1**) The Lowell shop of Andrews and Wheeler has one stone to its credit in the Wright Cemetery.

Existing Conditions

Repairs have been carried out in the cemetery on a regular basis since the 19th century, altering only slightly the appearance from its Federal Period beginnings. Slate stones are particularly susceptible to cracking and toppling given the weak structural nature of the material. Several different methods have been used to stabilize markers. There are some which have been re-set in concrete footings poured at ground level. Others have been re-attached at severed points with metal braces and bolts or cemented or glued across fractures. Both these measures were taken in order to conserve the 1846 marble marker for Nathan Wright. Most stones remain in

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number *I* Page 4

good to excellent condition. Some slate markers are difficult to read due to erosion. While very little vandalism appears to have taken place, damage has been sustained in many cases due to scraping by lawn-mowing equipment. Few ornamental plantings remain from past landscaping efforts.

Aside from routine maintenance, repairs, and some deterioration over time, few changes have occurred in the Wright Cemetery. While records do not indicate as much, it is possible that, since few remain, footstones were removed as part of past efforts to tidy the grounds. However, the large number of remaining 19th century markers makes it possible to get a clear sense of historical burial and gravestone carving techniques in Westford.

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 cemetery represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native American sites. The cemetery is located on a well drained, level to moderately sloping glacial outwash landscape in close proximity to wetlands. Wetlands associated with Snake Meadow Brook and Keyes Pond are located approximately 1,000 feet from northwest to northeast of the cemetery respectively. A small pond that feeds a tributary stream of Stony Brook is located approximately 1,000 feet to the south. In spite of the above information, however, the potential for locating significant ancient Native American resources within the cemetery is low. Any ancient resources that were present were destroyed by excavation of at least 150 graves in the small (0.5 acres) cemetery lot.

A moderate potential exists for locating significant historic archaeological resources at the Wright Cemetery. Additional documentary research combined with archaeological survey and testing may help locate unmarked graves and accurate boundaries of the cemetery that have been lost over time. The Wright family, owners of a farm in the area since the 18th century and the cemetery until the 20th century was granted with some neighbors, a privilege to keep a burial ground in 1836. The earliest death date is 1819 based on a gravestone date. Unmarked graves may indicate earlier graves, possibly dating to the 18th century, and the establishment of the Wright farm. Unmarked graves may contain stratigraphic evidence of a burial shaft, coffin, and human remains, and artifacts related to the interred individual, memorial offerings, and cemetery maintenance. Gravestones and footstones may exist below ground. Post holes, granite posts, and other evidence of fences, boundary markers, and gates may also exist.

(end)

Wright Cemetery

Name of Property

Middlesex, MA

County and State

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art

Community Planning and Development

Social History

Period of Significance

1819-1955

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

B. Day (carver) T. Warren D. Nichols

A. Sawtell Andrews & Wheeler

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

J.V. Fletcher library

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 8 Page 1

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Wright Cemetery retains integrity of materials, setting, design, location, workmanship, 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 distinctive design features and association with historic events. The cemetery is significant under Criterion A for its association with historical events in the community such as service in the Revolutionary War and establishment of family burial grounds during the early 19th century. It is eligible under Criterion C as an example of a burial ground containing gravestone carving representative of techniques commonly used in the period. The period of significance for the cemetery begins at its establishment in 1819 and extends to 1955. It has been in continuous use.

Introduction

Westford's Wright Cemetery first came into use around 1819, which is the time of the earliest death date on a gravestone. The town of Westford granted the privilege of a burying ground on Groton Road (then called the North Road) in 1836. Approximately two dozen stones survive from the first half of the 19th century. Gravestone ornament at the time was restrained and the surrounding landscape was allowed to appear as a grassy plot marked by slate headstones. The most basic of maintenance schedules has allowed the cemetery to retain much of its historic appearance by virtue of the densely grouped slate markers near the road, the small scale of markers and the simple landscape unencumbered by modern paths and furniture. Burials are ongoing in the Wright Cemetery.

The Wright Cemetery was the fourth of the town's historic cemeteries to be established. Westford's earliest cemetery was originally called the East Burying Ground and is now called Fairview Cemetery. (NR 2005) This is on Main Street east of the town center and came into use around the turn of the 18th century. The second burial ground was the former North Burial Ground established in 1753, now called Hillside and located at the corner of Depot and Nutting Roads. The West Burial Ground or Westlawn (NR 2005) was established in 1761 on Concord Road at Country Road. Nearly all of those interred here belonged to the First Parish Church until 1829, the time of the founding of the Congregational Church.

1819-1900

The Wright Cemetery occupies land that had been in use in the 18th century as farmland belonging to one branch of the large Wright Family. Among the founders of the cemetery was an area resident named Bela Wright to whom, in 1836, the town voted to grant "the privilege of a burying ground on the North Road, between Caleb Wright's and Reuben Wright's, which is to be free of expense to the town."

Records from an early meeting of Wright Burying Ground proprietors held on June 3, 1837 and recorded in the *Records of the Proprietors of the Wright Burying Ground* indicate the full list of founding residents as follows:

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 8 Page 2

Caleb Wright, Horatio Wright, Bela Wright, Walter Wright, Martin Wright, Asa Wright, Benjamin L. Wright, Jesse L. Wright and Joel A. Wright. Votes were taken at the meeting to name Caleb Wright as moderator and Jesse Wright as clerk. Caleb Wright was determined to have care of the burying ground. A single lot was voted to be kept for burials of strangers. Caleb Wright was chosen as agent to sell lots.

There are eight gravestones with dates prior to the privilege granted by the town. These include Lieut. Nahum Wight (d. 1834 at 89 years of age), Abijah Wright (d. 1834 at 54 years of age), his wife Mary (d. 1831 at 55 years of age), Ellen Wright (d. 1830 at 28 years of age), and her children Francis and Henry who both died at less than one year of age in 1827 and 1828. Also, a single rectangular stele exists for two brothers, Jotham and Edmund Wright, whose deaths occurred in 1828 and 1819. However, this stone may be a cenotaph (a stone commemorating the death of a person interred elsewhere) since the Wright Brothers died in Dayton, (spelled Daton) Ohio and Mobile, Alabama. Jotham was a graduate of Harvard College in 1817. Other burials whose markers do not survive may also have occurred before the official establishment of the Wright Cemetery.

Gravestones from the first half of the 1800s are typically located very close together. 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 presumably the responsibility of a Wright family member.

Nineteenth century residents of Westford who are buried in the Wright Cemetery consist mostly of farmers, several of whom were military veterans. Cemetery founder Bela Wright (d. 1859 at 62 years of age) worked as a farmer and lived 1/2 mile to the south on the current North Main Street. He also served in the War of 1812 according to notes to that effect printed in the 1896 Town Report. His relative Asa Wright (d. 1877 at 78 years of age) was also a farmer but lived in the village of Westford Center. His death was brought about by a suicide drowning according to the historian Marilyn Day in her 1998 book Westford Days. Parker Wright (b. 1791) was another person buried at the cemetery to have served in the War of 1812.

Lieut. Nahum Wight was born in Medfield, Massachusetts and served in the Revolutionary War. Lieut. Wight (also spelled White in Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War) served as a corporal under Captain Benjamin Bullard from Sherborn and marched on Concord in April, 1775. He also served in the Continental Army at Fort Ticonderoga, among other campaigns. After living most of his life in Medfield and Sherborn, he moved to Westford, possibly to be near his son Caleb and his family. Nahum is buried next to his wife Abigail (d. 1850 at 90 years of age). Caleb Wight (d. 1864 at 77 years of age) lived in Westford Center, worked as a farmer and served as a deacon, probably in the Union Congregational Church of which both he and his parents were founding members in 1828. Caleb Wight also served in the War of 1812. Mr. Wight is buried next to his wife Mary (d. 1869 at 80 years of age) and daughters Joanna (d. 1837 at age 24) who died at Plymouth, Michigan, Harriet (d. 1854 at age 37), Lucy Osgood (1821-1856); and Caroline (1819-1882). (Photo 1)

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 8 Page 3

The largest grave marker in the Wright Cemetery is that of Joel Wright (1782-1834) and his wife Sally (d. 1869 at 79 years of age). **(Photo 2)** The grey granite obelisk is approximately 10' high. Mr. Wright served in the War of 1812 at Boston's Fort Warren under Lieut. Col. Jonathan Page. Approximately 100 markers from the period exist in the cemetery.

During the mid 19th century, the Burial ground had a white picket fence at its edge. The *Records of the Proprietors of the Wright Burying Ground*, kept from the time of the founding of the burial ground has a small number of sporadic entries thereafter. One entry indicates Ansil Davis was paid \$7 for whitewashing the fence in 1847.

1900-1960

During the 19th century, the Wright Cemetery was privately owned and maintained. This is in distinction to the East (now Fairview) West (now Westlawn) and North (now Hillside) Cemeteries, which since at least 1840 had received care by a neighbor at the expense of the town. In 1909, the Cemetery Commissioners noted in the town report that "Parties interested in the private cemetery called the Wright Cemetery at the north part of the town have expressed a wish that the town assume the care. Your commissioners recommend it be done". No caretaker is specified in town reports for the Wright Cemetery, as was done for other cemeteries, until the middle of the 20th century. However, military veterans in the cemetery did receive commemorative markers at the expense of the town starting around 1909. Since scant mention is made in public records, it is difficult to determine the date of construction for the ashlar granite wall that separates the cemetery from the road or names of those who may have built it. This is also true of the granite post and wood rail fence surrounding the cemetery.

World War II veterans are buried in the Wright Cemetery, at least one of which has a military marker. Albert H. Picking (1915-1994) served in World War II and is buried under an arched granite slab. His military service as a sergeant in the Army is remembered by an adjacent bronze tablet mounted flush with the ground. He is buried with his wife Bernice Picking (1915-1996). Mrs. Picking lived her entire life at the farm ¼ mile to the west of the Wright Cemetery.

Interments continued throughout the period with granite being the gravestone material of choice. 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 the Cemetery Commission, served to stem the installation of new ornament in cemeteries and to encourage removal of furnishings that may have been installed in the Victorian Period, although no such activity is documented. Sebastian Watson, Fred Blodget, and Axel Lundberg served the town as cemetery commissioners from at least 1937 though 1949. Town employees performed work at the cemetery in 1960 that included painting and repairing the fence, cutting brush, and planting new shrubs. Few ornamental plantings remain.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 8 Page 4

Conclusion

Colonial, Federal, and Victorian period historical associations of the Wright Cemetery are largely intact despite interruptions by the small number of modern markers and the smaller amount of documentation compared to the town's other cemeteries. The possibility remains, by observing the rows of arch-topped slate stones carved with urn and willow designs, classical columns, and by recalling names so important to the development of the community, to get a strong sense of how 19th century residents of the Town of Westford experienced their burial places.

A diseased elm tree was cut down in 1963. The existing gate was installed with original hinges and nails in 1975 during the Bicentennial period when all of Westford's cemeteries were recognized as important resources for the historical appearance they retained and for the accomplishments of the Westford residents interred there. The stone in the wall with the inscribed name was given to the town by Carl Wright in 1977. Burials continue to take place.

Archaeological Significance

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to the evolution of a rural neighborhood cemetery from the early 19th century or earlier to municipal care in 1909 and later town ownership. While the town of Westford granted a privilege for a burial ground to several local farmers in 1836, gravestone dates indicate burials began as early as 1819. Additional documentary research combined with archaeological survey and testing may contribute historical and archaeological evidence that burials began even earlier, possibly during the 18th century when farms were established in the area. A wide variety of documentary sources may indicate the presence of burials in the cemetery prior to 1819. Buried gravestones and artifacts associated with unmarked graves may also document earlier use of the burial ground. Documentary and archaeological information may also help reconstruct the overall boundaries of the cemetery and smaller subdivisions within its limits. Unmarked graves may exist in a single lot reserved in 1837 for the burial of strangers. Earlier burials of unknown persons or paupers may exist in other areas, possibly around the periphery of marked graves. Post holes and other archaeological evidence of fence lines, stone walls, and boundary markers may also contribute evidence of cemetery boundaries and smaller subdivisions. The latter evidence may corroborate or refute the belief that Wright Cemetery lacks segregation based on ethnicity, occupation, military service, or wealth.

Osteological study of skeletal remains associated with known and unmarked graves combined with detailed analysis of associated artifacts may contribute important information relating to the health and pathologies of residents in this area of Westford and their social, cultural, and economic background. Artifact scatters within the cemetery limits and the contents of backdirt, frequently stockpiled from grave excavations, may contribute similar information related to the characteristics of the Westford population and maintenance activities at the Wright Cemetery.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 9 Page 1

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number 9 Page 2

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Symmes, Edward. *Plan of New Cemetery*. 1876.

Town Records. Annual Town Reports, 1840-1950.

Town Records. Town meeting minutes. May 15, 1761.

Westford. Map. Edward Symmes. 1855.

Westford. Map. Atlas of Middlesex County, MA. New York: Beers, 1875.

Westford. Map. Atlas of Middlesex County, MA. Walker, 1889.

(end)

Wright Cemetery
Name of Property

Middlesex, MA
County, State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 19 297600 4720120
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 Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

Section number **10** Page **1**

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description:

Wright Cemetery comprises all of the land within the boundaries of the cemetery. It is bounded by Groton Road on the south. The cemetery encompasses 4.5 acres, described by the assessor's office as parcel 5 on map 35.

Boundary Justification:

Boundaries include all gravestones, burial-related buildings, structures, circulation paths and ornamental plantings within parcel 5, map 35. Stone walls encircle the cemetery and mark all boundaries.

(end)

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographer: Sanford Johnson

Date: September 2002

Negatives: on file with Westford Historical Commission

1. South wall and gate, view facing north
2. Mary Wright marker, Joel Wright obelisk, facing northeast

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

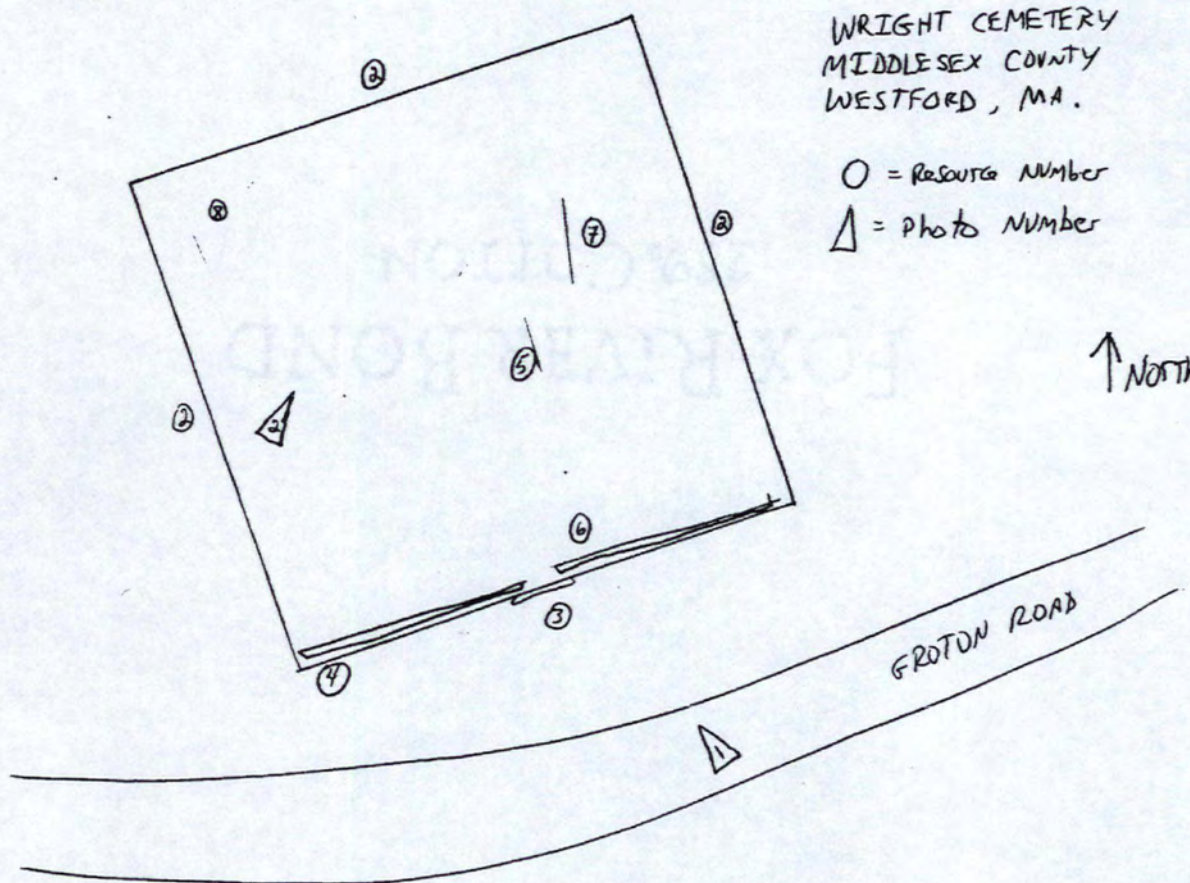
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 10 Page 2

Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex Co.), Massachusetts

SKETCH MAP

NORTH TOWARD TOP



**Wright Cemetery
Westford (Middlesex), MA
Data Sheet**

Map #	Name	Resource Type	Dates	Material	Status
1	Wright Cemetery	Cemetery	1836	N/A	SI/C
2	Fence	Fence	ca. 1900	Wood, stone	ST/C
3	Gateway	Gateway	ca. 1900	Stone, wood	ST/C
4	Wall	Wall	ca. 1900	Stone	ST/C
5	Edmund Wright marker	Gravestone	1819, 1828	Slate	O/C
6	Lt. Nahum Wight marker	Gravestone	1834	Slate	O/C
7	Joel Wright marker	Obelisk	1834	Granite	O/C
8	Albert Picking marker	Military Gravestone	1994	Granite	O/NC
	Flagpole	Flagpole	late 20 th c.	Wood	O/NC

Markers listed are notable examples of the types of gravestones found at Wright Cemetery.

TOTALS: 1 contributing site, 3 contributing structures, 3 contributing objects, 2 noncontributing objects

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Wright Cemetery
NAME:

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: 05001372

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.



Wright Cemetery

Westford, Middlesex Co. MASS

photo: S. Johnson 9/02

negs on file w/ Westford Hist. Comm.

view to north

photo 1

South wall & gate

also Caleb Wight, Mary Wight, Joanna Wight

Harriet Wight, Lucy Osgood markers



Wright Cemetery
Westford, Mass, Middlesex Co.

Photo: S. Johnson 9/02

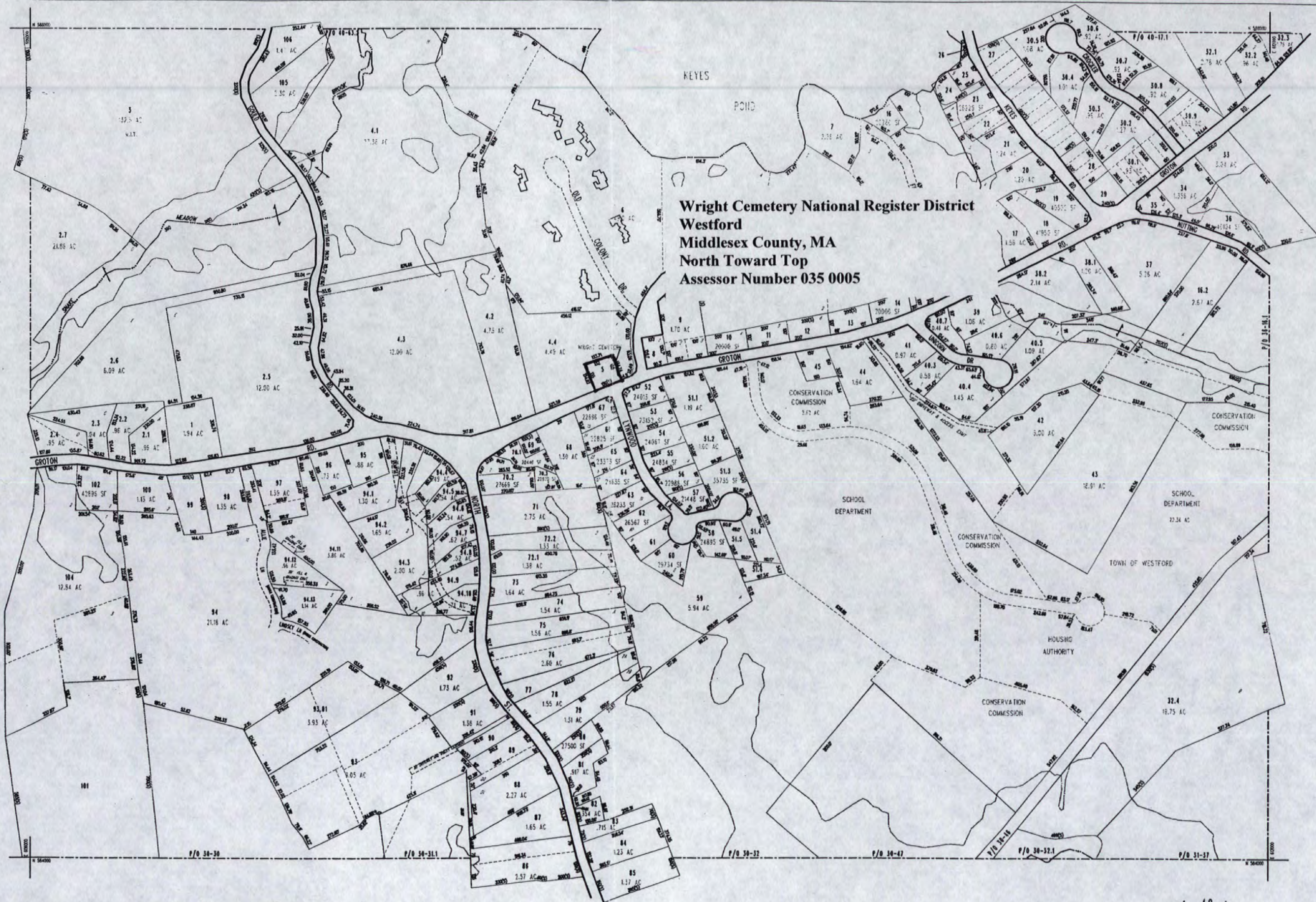
Negs on file w/Westford Hist. Comm.

view to NE

Photo 2

Mary Wright marble marker

Joel Wright obelisk



Wright Cemetery National Register District
Westford
Middlesex County, MA
North Toward Top
Assessor Number 035 0005

LEGEND
PARCEL NUMBER 2
MATCH LINE

DATE OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY 4-28-87
DATE OF COMPLETION 6-2-88
DATE OF REVISIONS
1-1-89 1-1-89
1-1-89 1-1-89
1-1-89 1-1-89
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1-1-89 1-1-89

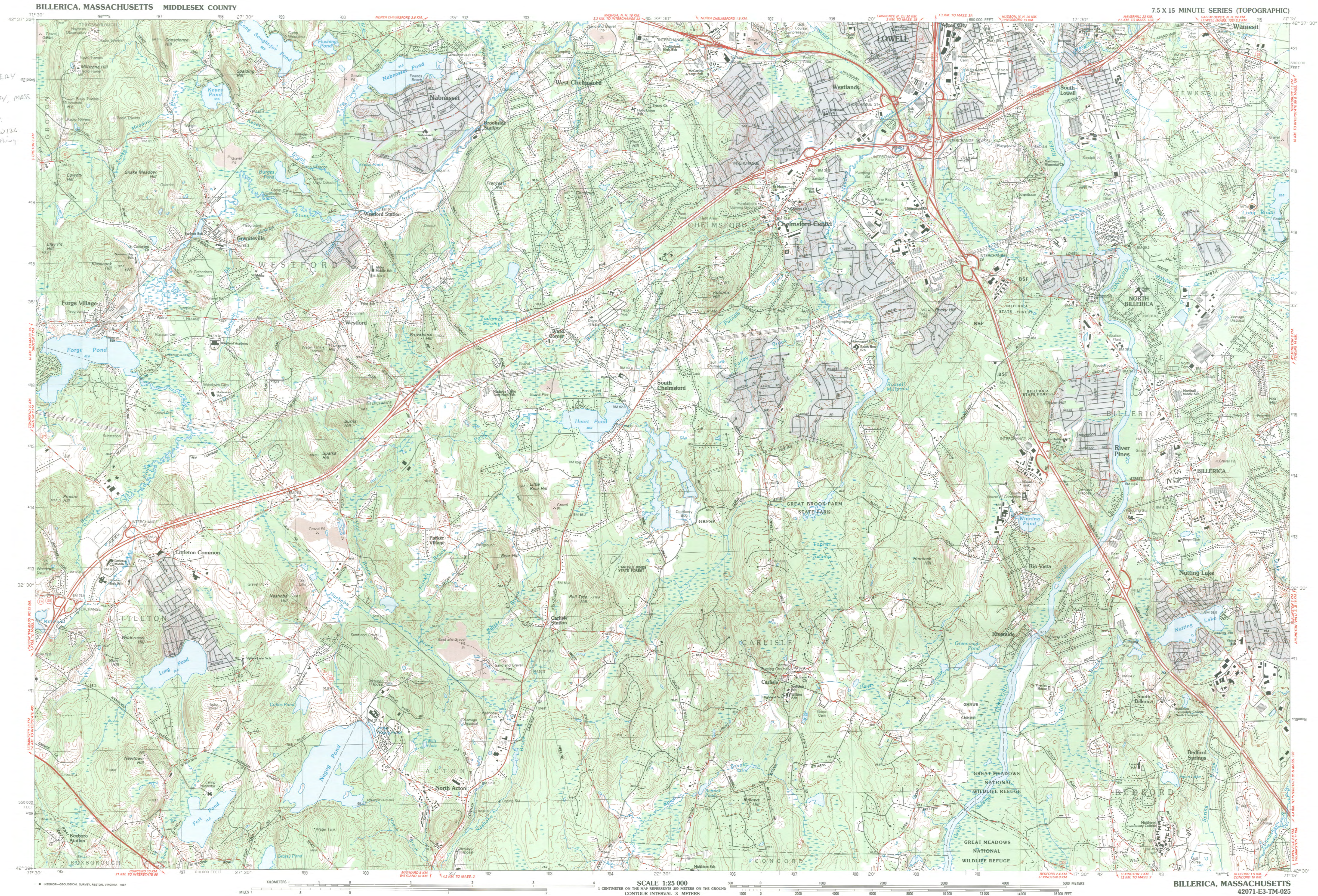
For Assessment Purposes
Not To Be Used For Conveyances

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

34	40	36
	MAP NUMBER	
	35	
	30	

WRIGHT CEMETERY
WESTFORD
MIDDLESEX CNTY, MASS

UTM REFERENCE:
19 0297598 4920126
Easting Northing



42071-E3-TM-025

Wright Cemetery

Westford

Middlesex County

MASS

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, mainland 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	3.2808	1 Townsend
2	6.5617	2 Lowell
3	9.8425	3 Lawrence
4	13.1234	4 Ayer
5	16.4042	5 Reading
6	19.6850	6 Hudson
7	22.9658	7 Maynard
8	26.2467	8 Boston North
9	29.5275	
10	32.8084	

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

UTM grid convergence (GCM) and 1983 magnetic declination (MMD) at center of map
Diagram is approximate

1983
1984
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2025

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 gage; narrow gage

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; land section corner

U.S. public lands survey: range, township, section

Range, township; section line: location approximate

Fence or field line

Power transmission line: located cover

Dam; dam with lock

Cemetery; grave

Campground; picnic area; U.S. location monument

Windswept water well; spring

Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave

Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation

Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression

Distorted surface: steep slope; bare; sand

Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate

Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream

Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small

Sandy marsh

Submerged marsh; land subject to controlled inundation

Woodland; scattered trees

Scrub; mangrove

Orchard; vineyard

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request

BILLERICA, MASSACHUSETTS
42071-E3-TM-025
1987



OCT 25 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:

Wright Cemetery, Groton 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