

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received OCT 13 1983

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic East Parish Burying Ground, (preferred)

and/or common Centre Street Cemetery

**2. Location**

street & number Centre Street, <sup>and</sup> corner Cotton Street, N/A not for publication

city, town Newton N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts code 025 county Middlesex code 017

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Cemetery

**4. Owner of Property**

name City of Newton

street & number 1000 Commonwealth Avenue

city, town Newton Centre N/A vicinity of state Massachusetts, 02159

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Newton City Archives & Middlesex County Registry of Deeds

street & number 1000 Commonwealth Avenue & 208 Cambridge Street

city, town Newton Centre, Cambridge state Massachusetts

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Inventory of the Historic Assets of  
title the Commonwealth #800 has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston state Massachusetts

# 7. Description East Parish Burying Ground, Newton, MA

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>n/a</u>

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The East Parish Burying Ground covers about three acres at the corner of Centre and Cotton Streets in Newton Centre. It was established in 1660 on the site of the City's earliest settlement area, and was added to in 1701, 1803, and 1834. In continuous use from the 1660's to the mid-nineteenth century, it aptly documents the evolution of the city. Because the site was added to over the centuries, it is of irregular shape, the whole being surrounded by a chain link fence supported by a dry stone wall. There are two traffic gates, one onto each street, which are kept locked, and a pedestrian entrance facing Centre Street. The land slopes steeply towards a brook which flows through the densely wooded property of the Franciscan Sisters which abuts to the north and east. Part of the latter parcel may have been town property before the colonial boundaries were finally settled in the 1760's.

The cemetery was enlarged in 1834, and there is a marked difference in elevation between the nineteenth-century addition and the original section. In the 1660 and 1701 sections, 340 west-facing slate markers remain, some standing in clusters but mostly in relatively straight lines with numerous gaps, interspersed with occasional tombs and a few sandstone or marble memorials. The oldest remaining marker, dating from 1672, is located in this area (photo #2). A row of tombs, now all sealed, was dug into the toe of the western slope in 1803; four sealed tombs remain in this area. At the highest point a marble obelisk marks the site of the first Meeting House which stood there from 1660 to 1697. The school, the training field, and possibly the pound were also in this vicinity, but to date no evidence of specific locations has been found.

In the 1834 addition, family plots are laid out in a grid pattern on relatively flat terrain. Most were at one time enclosed, probably with iron chains, and many of the granite supports, some with hooks still in place, remain.

This section of the burying ground now contains 75 markers. Gravestone carvings in the burying ground reflect the way attitudes towards death have changed over the centuries. Designs include death's head (photo #3), winged cherub (photo #5), "portrait" (photo #6), and classical standardized urn and willow memorials (photo #9). A hearse house stood in the northwest corner of the cemetery. The original drive and walkways are overgrown and barely discernable, and it is impossible to be certain which of the mature trees were part of some attempt at landscaping and which just grew naturally.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1660-mid 1800's Builder/Architect N/A

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The East Parish Burying Ground possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association. It serves as the only existing physical link with the 17th century origins of the City of Newton and its early families. It also provides an excellent record of New England funerary art as portrayed from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, including the work of several notable stonecutters. The cemetery meets criteria A, B, and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

To provide the inhabitants of Cambridge living south of the Charles River with a site for a burying place and a meeting house, an acre of ground was given to the outlying community in 1660. In 1688, Newton was incorporated as a separate town and just over a decade later a further grant provided room for the school, the training ground, and possibly, the pound. In the 1720's all of these facilities, except the burying ground, were moved to the present Newton Centre where no trace of them remains, so that the burying ground is the sole connection with the City's beginnings.

This was the only burial ground in Newton until 1781. Therefore, almost without exception, every early family has at least one member buried here. These include many village firsts: the first Town Clerk (died 1693), the first school teacher (died 1740), the first Deputy to the General Court (died 1708), and the first Minister, John Eliot, Jr., son to the Apostle to the Indians. He was probably the first to be buried there (1668), although his present tomb is not original, having been repaired by the Town in 1822. In addition, there are men who, in their times, were known beyond the Town limits for their military exploits. Among these are Captain Thomas Prentice who moved the Praying Indians to Deer Island during King Philip's War (1675), General Michael Jackson, prominent in the War of Independence, and General William Hull, whose actions in the War of 1812 still furnish matter for debate. The gravestones honoring these people, and those marking later burials, are a valuable adjunct to the written records at City Hall.

The cemetery remained in continuous use from the 1660's well into the nineteenth century. Thus it is possible to trace the development of Eastern Massachusetts gravestone carving without leaving its confines. Examples of the artistry of over a dozen carvers who worked in the Greater Boston area may be found here, including markers by the well known but un-named "Boston Stone-Cutter" (f. 1653-95) and the notable local carver Daniel Hastings (1749-1803) (photo #'s 7 & 8).

In addition, there are interesting differences indicative of changing cultural attitudes between the almost random placing of graves in the oldest section, the tombs popular at the turn of the nineteenth century, and the systematic grid pattern of an area added in 1834—only one year before the incorporation of the country's first garden cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, less than 10 miles away.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Forbes, Harriet Merrifield, Gravestones of Early New England and the Men who Made Them. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1927. Particularly pages 28 ff., 56, 62 ff., 67. Located in the Newton Free Library, Main Branch, Newton Corner.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3 acres

Quadrangle name Newton

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

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

B 

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

C 

1	9	3	1	9	4	0	0	4	6	8	9	8	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Bounded south by Cotton Street, east and north by land of the Franciscan Sisters, west by Centre Street and City-owned Loring Park. Please refer to attached map, Plan of Centre Street Cemetery, January 1901 as amended November 13, 1918 and field checked June/July 1983.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state	N/A	code	county	code

state	N/A	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mari L. Myer, Program Assistant, with Thelma Fleishman, Newton Historical Commission

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date June, 1983

street & number 294 Washington Street telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state Massachusetts

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Peter H. Westwood 9/30/83

title State Historic Preservation Officer date  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature] date 11/23/83  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet East Parish Burying Ground

Item number 9

Page 1

Jackson, Francis, History of the Early Settlement of Newton, County of Middlesex, Mass., from 1639 to 1800, with a Genealogical Register of its inhabitants prior to 1800. Boston, 1854. Pages 71 ff. Located in the Newton Room, Newton Free Library, Main Branch, Newton Corner.

Middlesex Country Registry of Deeds and Registry of Probate.

Newton Town Records, unpublished. Located in the City Clerk's vault, City Hall, Commonwealth Avenue. Particularly Town Meeting Records for 1701 (Book 1A), 1757-58 (Book 1), 1765, 1771 (Book 2) and the decades of the 1820's and 1830's (Book 3).

Newton Town and City Documents, printed, located in the Newton Room, Newton Free Library, Main Branch, Newton Corner. Bound Volumes for the years 1853 to 1939.

Smith, Samuel Francis, A History of Newton, Mass., Town and City from its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time, 1630-1880. Boston, 1880. Pages 273-277. Located in the Newton Room, Newton Free Library, Main Branch, Newton Corner.

Personal Communication with Mrs. Laurel Gabel of the Association of Gravestone Studies.

83004010

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

East Parish Burying Ground  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Substantive Review

Working No. OCT 13 1983  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/5/83  
Date Due: 11/10/83 - 11/27/83  
Action:  ACCEPT 11/23/83  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

The East Parish Burying Ground is locally significant for its historical associations with the development of Newton and for its well-preserved examples of funerary art from the 17th to the early nineteenth centuries.

Recom./Criteria Accept A, C  
Reviewer Bushong  
Discipline Historic  
Date 11/23/83

see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for:  technical corrections cited below  
 substantive reasons discussed below  
JUSTIFICATION FOR B IS WEAK BECAUSE I BELIEVE THEY THINK THAT STONE CUTTERS ARE THE INDIVIDUALS WHICH CONVEY THE ASSOCIATIONS. ACTUALLY THEY QUALIFY IT UNDER CRITERION C AS THE MASTERS.

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category Ownership Status Present Use  
Public Acquisition Accessible

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated  ruins  unexposed  unaltered  altered  original site  moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

**8. Significance**

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_ Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

East Carolina University Grounds  
 4100 Main Building  
 14700 S.W. 11th St.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Form Prepared By**

**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national    \_\_\_\_ state    \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Property name: East Parish Burying Ground  
Centre and Cotton Streets,  
Newton Centre, Mass.

Photographer: Thelma Fleishman, 1981

Negative : Jackson Homestead, Washington St. Newton.

Photograph # 1 of 9.


General view looking north-east; Settler's Monument  
in middle background.

*Middlesex County MA*

MARY HIDES  
THE WIFE OF  
JONATHAN HIDES  
AGED 39 YEARS  
DYED MAY 27  
1670

Property name: East Parish Burying Ground  
Centre and Cotton Streets  
Newton Centre, Mass.  
Photographer: Edwina Seeler, 1982  
Negative: Jackson Homestead, Washington Street.  
Newton.  
Photograph #2 of 9

MARY HIDES was the first wife of Jonathan Hyde who settled in Newton (thenCambridge) in 1640. The carver is unknown. It appears to be the oldest surviving marker in the burying ground.



HERE LYES <sup>e</sup>y  
BODY OF  
ISAAC FULLER  
AGED 26 YEARS  
DIED OCTOBER <sup>e</sup>6  
1691

Property Name: East Parish Burying Ground  
Centre and Cotton Streets  
Newton Centre, Mass.  
Photographer: Thelma Fleishman, 1981  
Negative: Jackson Homestead, Washington Street,  
Newton.

Photograph #3 of 9

ISAAC FULLER was the youngest son of John and Elizabeth who came from Lavenahm, England, in 1644. The death's head is typical of the work of William Mumford of Boston (fl. 1681-1718) to whom it can with confidence be attributed.


IN SACRED MEMORY  
OF THE BROTHER OF  
RECEIVED BY THE  
THE WIFE OF  
I WIFE

14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

Property Name: East Parish Burying Ground  
Centre and Cotton Streets,  
Newton Centre, Mass.  
Photographer: Edwina Seeler, 1982.  
Negative: Jackson Homestead, Washington Street,  
Newton  
Photograph #4 of 9

One of the three "primitives" in the burying ground.  
It has been deciphered thus:

M.S Aged 28  
dyed the 28 of  
December 28  
The Wife of Jos St  
1701/2.




The gravestone is made of dark stone and features a prominent arch at the top. Inside the arch is a relief carving of a face with large, expressive eyes and a slightly open mouth, flanked by two large, feathered wings. Below the arch is a decorative border with intricate scrollwork and floral patterns. The central text is engraved in a classic serif font. A ruler is visible at the top left of the stone, showing measurements in inches and centimeters. The stone is set in a cemetery with other headstones visible in the background.

To the *Memory* of  
M<sup>rs</sup> MEHITABEL MERIAM,  
who departed this Life, greatly  
lamented, APRIL 22<sup>d</sup> AD. 1770. E. 47  
Daughter of the late Hon<sup>ble</sup> FRAN.  
FOXGROFT, Esq. and Consort of the Rev<sup>d</sup>  
M<sup>r</sup> JONAS MERIAM. and in Testimony  
of great respect for the deceased, this

Property Name: East Parish Burying Ground  
Centre and Cotton Streets  
Newton Centre, Mass.  
Photographer: Edwina Seeler, 1982  
Negative: Jackson Homestead, Washington Street,  
Newton  
Photograph # 5 of 9

MEHITABEL MERIAM was the wife of the fourth Minister.  
The marker is the work of Henry Christian Geyer  
who worked in Boston between 1761 and 1791. The  
popularity of the winged cherub followed that of the  
death's head.



HERE LIES BURIED  
THE BODY OF M<sup>RS</sup> SARAH  
WIFE TO THE REVEREND  
M<sup>R</sup> NEHEMIAH HOBART.  
AGED 62 YEARS DEC  
FEB<sup>R</sup> 23 1741.

Property Name: East Parish Burying Ground  
Centre and Cotton Streets  
Newton Centre, Mass.  
Photographer: Edwina Seeler, 1982  
Negative: Jackson Homestead, Washington Street,  
Newton, Mass.  
Photograph #6 of 9

SARAH HOBART was the wife of the second Minister.  
This is an early example of a "portrait" stone, which  
generally followed the winged cherub as a popular  
motif. The carver could possibly be James Gilchrist  
of Boston (1689-1722)



IN MEMORY OF

THOMAS GREENWOOD ESQ  
who died Aug 31 1774 Aet 79

He was a Gentleman deservedly  
esteemed not only in private Life  
but for the faithfull Discharge  
of Duty in the various pub-  
lick Offices he Sustained in  
Church & State.

The memory of the Just is  
(Blessed.

Property Name: East Parish Burying Ground  
Centre and Cotton Streets  
Newton Centre, Mass.  
Photographer Steve Rosenthal, 1981  
Negative Steve Rosenthal, 59 Maple Street,  
Auburndale, Mass. 02166

Photograph #7 of 9

THOMAS GREENWOOD was Town Clerk and Treasurer for many years. This is a "probated stone". i.e. Greenwood's estate account makes provision for payment to the Newton stone cutter Daniel Hastings (1749-1803). The so-called portrait stones were not true representations of the deceased.

© Steve Rosenthal  
59 Maple Street  
Auburndale, MA 02166  
617 244 2986  
All rights reserved  
Not for reproduction without written permission

In Memory of

MRS MINDWELL FULLER

Wife of

CAR. JOSEPH FULLER

who died Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> 1777

Aged 46 Years.

In thy fair Book of life Divine,  
Oh God! inscribe my name.  
There let it fill some humble place,  
Beneath the Haughty & Lamb

Property Name: East Parish Burying Ground  
Centre and Cotton Streets,  
Newton Centre, Mass.  
Photographer: Edwina Seeler, 1982  
Negative: Jackson Homestead, Washington Street,  
Newton.  
Photograph # 8 of 9

MINDWELL FULLER's stone is an example of one of the  
standardised designs produced by Daniel Hastings or  
some-one else in his workshop.



MISS  
BETSEY STONE,  
DIED

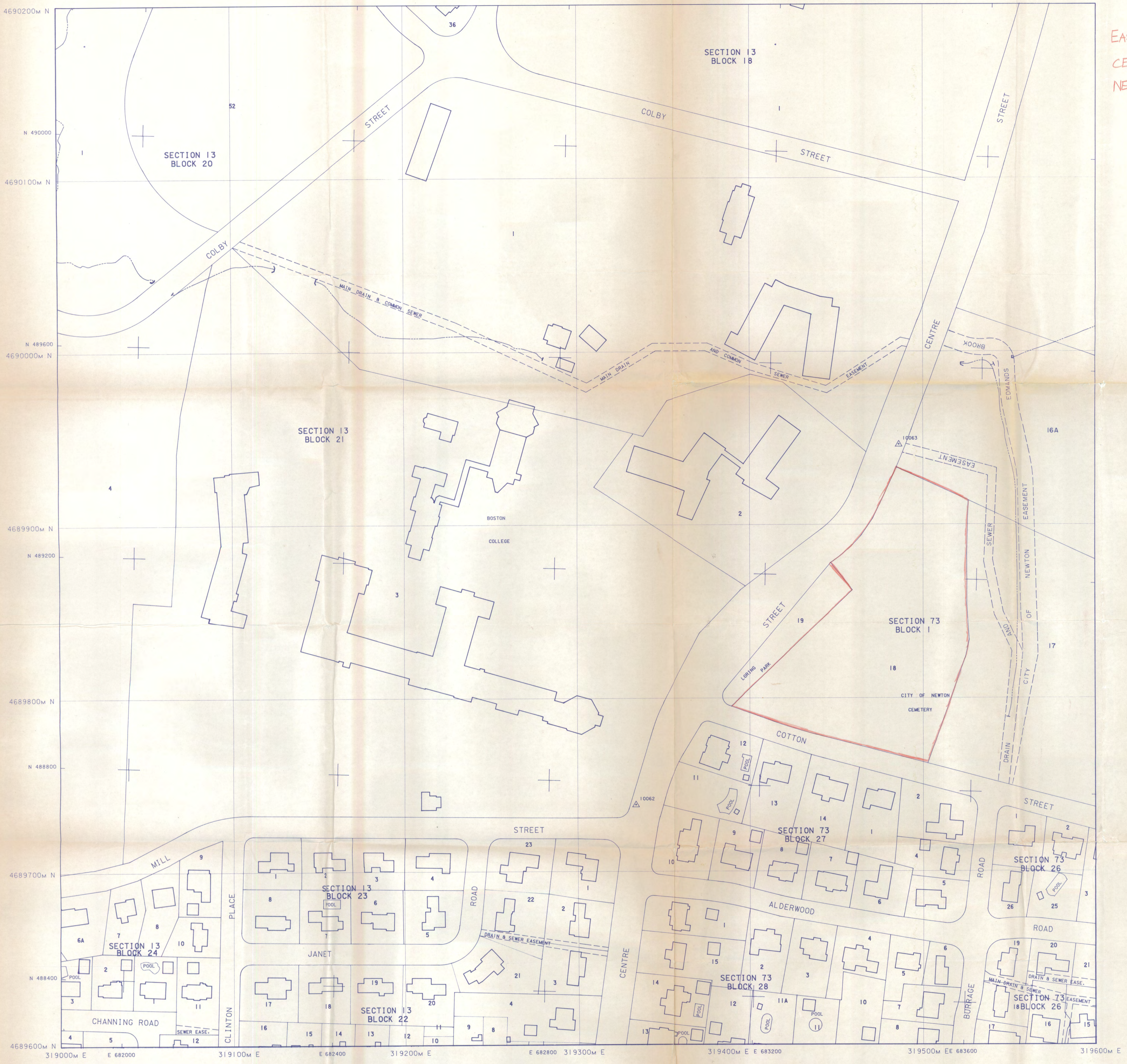
Sept. 7, 1843,  
Æt. 78.

*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.*

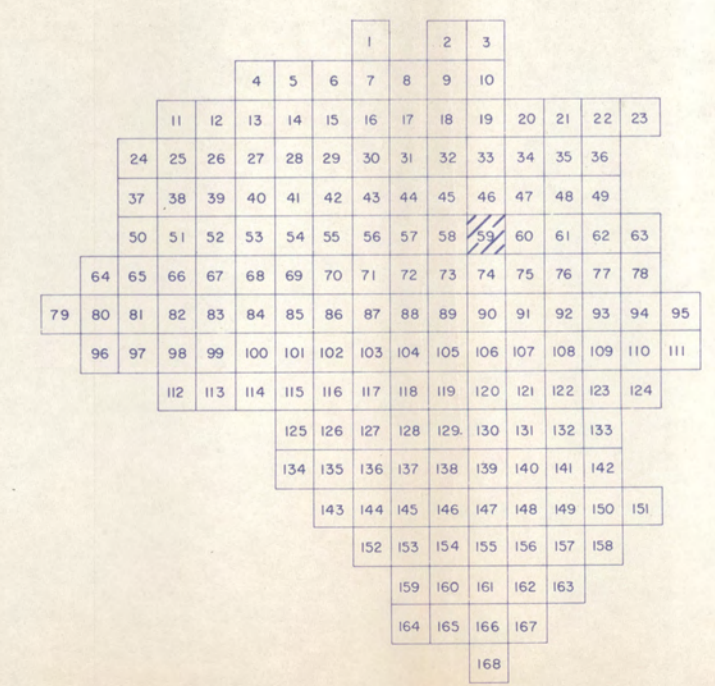
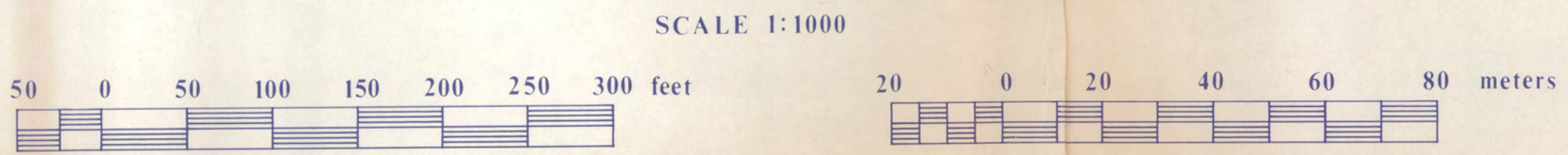
Property Name: East Parish Burying Ground  
Centre and Cotton Streets  
Newton Centre, Mass.  
Photographer Edwina Seeler  
Negative Jackson Homestead, Washington Street,  
Newton.  
Photograph #9 of 9.

BETSY STONE's marker is typical of the classical  
urn and willow designs of the nineteenth century.

EAST PARISH BURYING GROUND,  
CENTRE + COTTON STREETS  
NEWTON CENTRE, MA.



Orthophoto mapping and topographic mapping prepared by BERGER ASSOCIATES, Columbus, Ohio, from aerial photography dated March 22, 1979. These maps meet national map accuracy standards for orthophotos and topographic maps.



CITY OF  
NEWTON  
MASSACHUSETTS  
CENTRE STREET CEMETERY

ENGINEERING DEPT.  
1000 COMMONWEALTH AVE.  
NEWTON CENTRE, MASS. 02159



■ Markers still standing  
 in original (1669, 1701)  
 area. c. 340.  
■ Tombs still in tact  
 in 1863 addition.  
■ Markers still standing  
 in 1834 addition ± 75.

**PLAN OF**  
**CENTRE ST. CEMETERY**  
 SCALE 1"=20'

Newton Mass. January 1901.  
 OFFICE OF STREET COMMISSIONER

Amended to Nov. 13, 1918.

Charles A. [Signature] Ch. Engineer of Newton

Checked in the Field,  
June/July 1983

RECEIVED

JUL 21 1983

MASS. HIST. COMM.

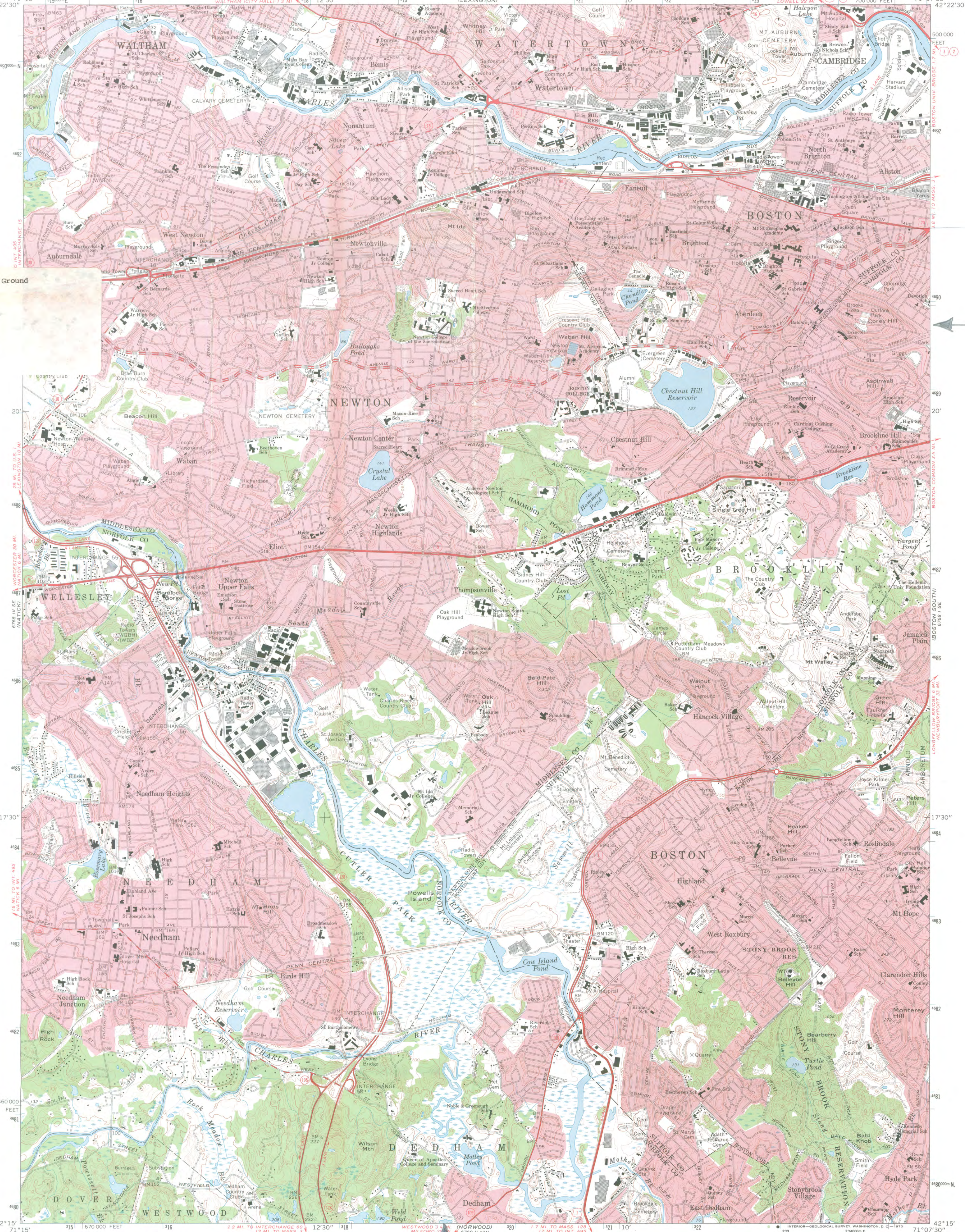


Newton East Parish Burying Ground

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

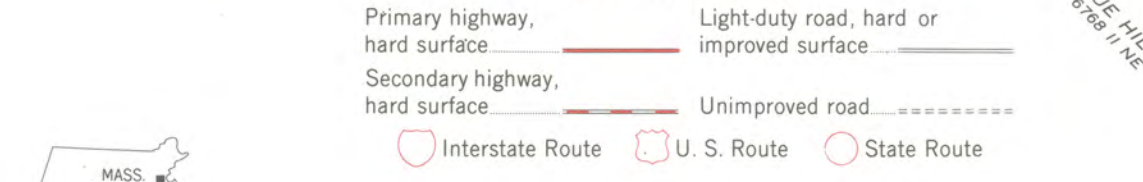
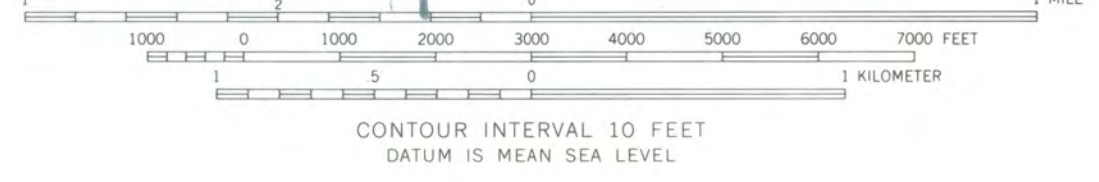
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

NEWTON QUADRANGLE  
MASSACHUSETTS  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



East Parish Burying Ground  
Newton, MA  
UTM References:  
A 19 319540 4689900  
B 19 319530 4689770  
C 19 319400 4689800

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1939. Topography by plane-table surveys 1943.  
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts datum system,  
mainland zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 19, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



NEWTON, MASS.  
N4215-W107.5/7.5  
1970  
AMS 6768 I SW-SERIES Y814

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST