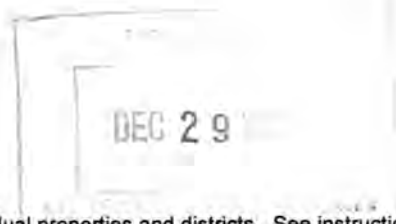


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 Ringville Cemetery  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number Witt Hill Road N/A not for publication  
city or town Worthington N/A vicinity  
state Massachusetts code MA county Hampshire code 015 zip code 01098

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.)

Betsy Friedberg, National Register Director 12/22/03  
Signature of certifying official/Title Cara H. Metz, State Historic Preservation Officer Date  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

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):

Edward H. Beall 2/11/04  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Ringville Cemetery  
Name of Property

Hampshire County, Massachusetts  
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	
1	0	building
1	0	sites
3	0	structures
12	0	objects
17	0	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**

NONE

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

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Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA

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7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Ringville Cemetery lies along the south side of Witt Hill Road, approximately ¼ mile west of Route 112 in the Worthington hamlet of Ringville. Once a busy mill and dairy production center, Ringville today is covered in second-growth forest – forest that surrounds the Cemetery on three sides. Watts Stream flows along the southern and eastern Cemetery borders, at the base of a steep incline. A few single family residences stand across Witt Hill Road, an unpaved way.

Perched several feet above the road, the Cemetery is supported along its northern edge by a fieldstone retaining wall, topped with a massive cut stone granite cap (Photo #1). Oral history claims that stones for the wall come from the Chesterfield Gorge, a deep cleft channeling the Westfield River through the neighboring town of Chesterfield. The legend holds that oxen pulled the stones to the Ringville site in the early to mid-1800s.

When building the stone wall, residents created four entries into the Cemetery, at the eastern and western ends, at the wall's mid-point, and in front of the Blair Vault. Each is marked by a break in the wall. The eastern entrance lies at the wall's end, and provides vehicular access to the Cemetery via an unpaved, dirt and turf cart path. The western entrance, at a break in the wall offset by two stone posts, offers a second vehicular entrance via a second, unpaved cart path. Stone steps, set into the stone wall form the central entrance, allowing pedestrian access only (Photo #2). A simple iron gate, still intact, was added to the central pedestrian entrance in the 1900s. A second set of steps leads through the wall to the Blair Vault, discussed below.

The stone wall wraps around what was once the Cemetery's western boundary, forming a secure edge. In the late 1900s, Worthington added approximately one acre of land to this edge beyond the wall. One additional vehicular entrance leads visitors into this new section from Witt Hill Road.

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Ringville Cemetery  
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Mature rows of sugar maple trees line the inside of the Cemetery walls. Between 30" and 36" in caliper, these trees stand 60 to 75 feet high and branch far into the Cemetery. Along with the stone walls, they provide a strong edge to the Cemetery, obscuring views from inside the walls outward. After passing through the walls and under the tree canopies, visitors feel an immediate sense of protection and privacy.

Slopes across the Cemetery roll from a low point at the eastern end, to the highest point in the newest section. Grades in the oldest section (towards the east) are steepest, and then level to a gentle roll in the newer section (towards the west) (Photo #4). Along the east and south Cemetery edges, the land appears to have been leveled to accommodate a cart path, although no other traces of the route remain.

Cart paths lead visitors from the eastern and western entrances to the south edge of the Cemetery and appear to stop. A curved roadway leads through the new section, and connects to the western cart path. It is possible the two cart paths once connected via the level area along the Cemetery's southern edge, but no written documentation exists to confirm this. A pedestrian path may have connected the central pedestrian entrance to a second set of steps within the Cemetery, however the path does not appear on historical maps or in town records. The second set of steps, constructed of stone, remain in the Cemetery core.

Ringville Cemetery's earliest graves appear in the lowest lying section, and decrease in age as the slopes incline. Of its 300 stones, 47% are granite and 43% are marble. Other materials include local schist, brownstone and bronze. The eastern end of the Cemetery contains mostly single graves marked almost entirely with marble. Of particular note in this area is the grave of Jonathan Higgins (d. 1869), likely related to the Higgins Farm at 709 Huntington Road (Route 112). Constructed of marble, the stone displays a crudely-carved central motif and border. Other graves in this early section feature decorative images typical of the Victorian period, including the hand of God point downward and clutching a broken chain on the stone of Hiram Taylor (d. 1872), and hand of God pointing upward on the stones of Maranda Taylor (d. 1877) and Martin Taylor (d. 1874).

Family plots dominate the Cemetery's central section, and central marble and brownstone

(continued)

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Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA

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obelisks and monuments mark several. Notable among these are the simple brownstone Thomas Ring obelisk (ca. 1863), and classically-detailed marble stela of the Pease family (ca. 1872). A marble monument (ca. 1879) topped with an urn and detailed with scroll patterning marks the Cowing family plot. The Adams family plot features an Egyptian-detailed marble monument topped by an urn (ca. 1894).

Ringville Cemetery's most prominent feature is the brick and granite Blair Vault (Photo #3), sitting above a break in the perimeter wall, atop a set of four stone steps. It stands in the Cemetery's northwest corner. Built ca. 1927, the structure's front elevation is constructed of rough-faced granite with two pyramidal pylons supporting a carved lintel. The flat face of the granite lintel is polished and cut with a memorial inscription, "PRESENTED BY CLARA D. BLAIR IN MEMORY OF HER HUSBAND DAVID BLAIR." A low triangular pediment above the lintel is formed by the low-pitched granite slab roof. The sole entry, framed by the granite pylons, is defined by a pair of steel doors with tab hinges and strap handles. Each door has a single wire-mesh panel in the upper section to admit light and ventilation. The side and rear walls of the vault are constructed of red brick laid up in common bond with occasional headers. Two steel vent panels are incorporated in the back wall. The interior is unfinished with a rough dirt floor with iron cross bars set at various heights to store burials.

One of Ringville Cemetery's most unusual features is a set of graves reputedly moved from Ireland Street in South Worthington. No known documentation exists as to the original location of these graves, why they were moved, and when. Only a Cemetery map, dated 1974, labels them as the "Graves Moved From Ireland Street." Several of the graves are marked with schist stones, and at least three – Consider Cole (d. 1814), Rosanna Cowing (d. 1818), and Ansel Cole (d. 1818) may have been carved by the Sikes family, although the stones are not signed. The Sikes family carved stones in Western Massachusetts between 1770 and 1820.

While the Town of Worthington continues to bury at Ringville Cemetery, the original Cemetery layout remains intact. The Town has retained the stone wall along the Cemetery's western edge, and planted rows of trees on the new Cemetery land. Tree Hydrangeas, planted several decades ago, have been allowed to mature, adding color and texture to the older sections. Complementing the headstones, monuments, stone walls, trees, and paths, are many perennial

(continued)

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**Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA**

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plantings. Iris, Buttercup, Wild Strawberry, Phlox, and Violet flourish amongst the turf, furthering the beauty of this historic cemetery.

**Archaeological Description**

While no ancient Native American sites are located in the cemetery or in the general area (within one mile), sites may be present. Environmental characteristics of the cemetery and surrounding locale represent many locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, distance to wetlands) that indicate the presence of Native American sites in this area. The cemetery is located on a well drained, level to moderately sloping stream terrace on the north side of Watts Stream approximately one-quarter mile west of Ringville. The confluence of Watts Stream and the Westfield River lies approximately 5 miles southeast of the cemetery. The area is located within the Connecticut River drainage. Given the above information, regional Native American settlement patterns, the relatively small size of the cemetery (approximately 2.4 acres) and disturbance resulting from grave excavations, a moderate potential exists for locating ancient Native American resources in the cemetery.

A high potential exists for locating significant historic archaeological resources in the Ringville Cemetery. Additional documentary research combined with archaeological survey and testing may help locate evidence of outbuildings, boundary markers, unmarked graves, and funerary related artifacts in the cemetery. Any surviving archaeological resources in the cemetery may be especially important since no written records presently survive that document the early founding and evolution of the cemetery. Structural evidence of outbuildings may exist related to the maintenance and functioning of the cemetery. Post-holes and other evidence of walls, gates, and fences may also survive that marked early boundaries of the cemetery and family burial areas. Open spaces between graves in the cemetery are often said to mark unmarked graves, possibly the result of lost markers or intentionally unmarked burials. Marked and unmarked graves may contain stratigraphic evidence of grave shafts, coffins, human remains, and other funerary related artifacts. Gravestones and artifacts may also be randomly scattered below surface in the cemetery and related with specific activities such as memorials.

(end)

Ringville Cemetery  
Name of Property

Hampshire County, Massachusetts  
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
- Social History
- Landscape Architecture
- Community Planning & Development

**Period of Significance**

1847-1953

**Significant Dates**

1847

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Worthington Assessor's Office

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA

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## 8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Ringville Cemetery, Witt Hill Road, Worthington, MA possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and meets National Register Criteria A and C. Perched on a rise on the south side of Witt Hill Road, Ringville Cemetery may have begun as the family burial ground for the Ring Family, mill owners and manufacturers of window curtains, baby carriages, sleds, and bedsteads in the local hamlet of Ringville. While the exact date of the Cemetery's founding is unknown, it was likely sometime in the 1840s, the years of the earliest burials and the coming of the Rings to the area. The Cemetery also contains at least ten graves moved from Ireland Street in neighboring Chesterfield. While these date as far back as 1814, they likely appeared at the Ringville Cemetery much later.

The farmers, mill owners, manufacturers of the Ringville area account for many of the burials at the Cemetery. Included are brothers Elkanah (d. 1864) and Thomas (d. 1868) Ring and their descendents, businessmen, and civic leaders. Martin and Maranda Conwell (d. 1874 and 1877 respectively), parents of Temple University founder Russell H. Conwell (1843-1925), are buried near the Cemetery core. Both strongly opposed slavery, and their South Worthington home provided a stop on the Underground Railway. Ringville Cemetery contains 35 veterans, eight of whom fought in the Civil War.

Ringville Cemetery meets Criterion C through its many landscape features and locally-carved gravestones. A fieldstone retaining wall, topped with a granite cap, supports the Cemetery's northern edge along unpaved Witt Hill Road. Local legend claims the stones came from the nearby Chesterfield Gorge, hauled to the site by oxen. Openings in the wall allow visitors access at four points, two of which serve pedestrians with stone steps. Mature sugar maple trees stand

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**Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA**

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alongside the wall, their limbs arching far into the Cemetery. Watts Stream, in a ravine along the southern border, provides a constant sound of rushing water.

In addition to the many Victorian-era markers and monuments, Ringville contains two features of particular note. The Blair Vault, ca. 1927, the most dominant Cemetery feature is constructed

of rough-faced granite and brick and sits atop four stone steps at a break in the Cemetery wall. Its façade consists of two pyramidal pylons supporting an inscribed lintel. The work of 19<sup>th</sup> century stone carvers appears on the stones of several Ringville graves, including those moved to the Cemetery from Ireland Street.

While Ringville Cemetery expanded in 1989 to include one additional acre at its western edge and the Town continues to bury in the Cemetery to this day, the original design has been preserved. The Town of Worthington has retained the historic walls and maintained the mature maples, preserving its historical integrity and its place in the Town's history.

**A Brief History of Worthington**

*Establishment and Early History (1700s)*

The land that comprises the Town of Worthington today was purchased on June 2, 1762 from the Province of Massachusetts Bay. It was sold at auction as 'Plantation Number 3' along with several other land tracts in the area. Aaron Willard Jr. of Lancaster made the purchase for himself and four other buyers: Selah Barnard, Josiah Dwight, Timothy Dwight, and John Worthington, for whom the Town was named. These five people were the original proprietors of Plantation Number 3, and the earliest settlers purchased land from them. The proprietors donated land for the settlement's first meetinghouse, grist mill, and school, and also financed the construction of the meetinghouse and grist mill.

**(continued)**

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Ringville Cemetery  
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Many of Worthington's first settlers came to the area from Preston, Connecticut, arriving and establishing homesteads by the late spring of 1764. Other early settlers came from central and eastern Massachusetts, drawn to the area because of its large tracts of land for agriculture and streams for the powering of grist and lumber mills.

The Town of Worthington was officially incorporated on June 30th, 1768. Following incorporation residents began to establish important community amenities including the meetinghouse (1760s), two taverns (1760s), a church (1771), and a school (1773). By 1776 the Town's population had reached approximately 639.

The first meetinghouse was constructed near the intersection of today's Sam Hill Road and West Street. By all accounts it was a somewhat primitive and uncomfortable building which was constructed over a period of many years. The Town's First Congregational Church, organized in 1771, appears to have used the meetinghouse for its services as well. The Townspeople may have established a cemetery behind this structure in 1771, the same year they hired Reverend Jonathan Huntington, the Town's first minister. In the early 1790s the meetinghouse was dismantled, redesigned, and rebuilt near the intersection of Harvey and Huntington Roads, responding to an eastward shift in the Town's population.

During the Revolutionary War, Worthington provided troops and supplies whenever requests were made. Captain Ebenezer Webber of Worthington led 71 Minute Men from Worthington and Ashfield to the Boston area in 1775. At least 42 Worthington soldiers participated in the Revolutionary War.

*Growth of the Town (late 1700s and 1800s)*

Worthington's early settlers engaged primarily in agriculture, producing flax, corn, hay, wheat, tobacco, rye, butter, cheese, barley, potatoes, oats, maple molasses, maple sugar, buckwheat, peas, beans, beeswax, and honey. Many Worthington residents raised sheep and exported the wool, but lower prices from abroad during the 1800s led to the decline of sheep farming in the Town.

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**Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA**

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The Westfield River and the numerous streams in Worthington provided power for many different mills and factories. Beginning in the 1700s and throughout the 1800s a wide variety of goods were produced in Worthington, including lumber and wood furniture, sleds and children's toys, tool handles, leather saddles, harnesses, baskets, shoes, cider, and cheese.

During this period the settlers of the Town established several small villages or hamlets, many of which had their own municipal amenities including post offices, schools, and cemeteries. These hamlets included: West Worthington, Christian Hollow or Sampsonville, Worthington Corners, Worthington Center, Ringville, the Kinne/Pease District, and South Worthington. Worthington Corners historically was a crossroads, containing amenities like stores, taverns, a post office, and the North Cemetery. During the 1800s a cheese factory and basket shop also operated in this part of town.

In 1797 the Albany-Boston Turnpike was constructed through Worthington, resulting in a constant flow of people, traffic, and news through the Town. During this period there were five taverns in Worthington, accommodating the public and private stagecoaches using the Turnpike. The advent of the railroad in 1841, which did not run through Worthington, greatly reduced the traffic along the Turnpike and substantially altered the character of the Town. According to historian and author Clifton Johnson, "Worthington became an inland town", and "the stores and taverns along the line of the old road disappeared."

Approximately 24 Worthington soldiers served in the War of 1812, including William Ward and William Rice as commissioned officers. Between 62 and 102 men served in the Civil War, of whom 21 were killed or died during service.

In 1825, the first meetinghouse, which had been moved from its original location in the early 1790s, was abandoned and a new building constructed on the site of today's Congregational Church. During the 1800s two other churches were established in Worthington, both of Methodist Episcopal denomination. One was in South Worthington and was established in 1828, and the other was in West Worthington and was established in 1849.

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Continuation Sheet

Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA

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In 1810, the Town population reached a high point of 1,391. However, with the opening of the railroad in 1841 along the Westfield River several miles to the south, Worthington's population began to decline. By 1900 only 675 resided in Worthington.

*Worthington in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*

During the early 1900s dairy farming became an important part of the local economy, but like sheep farming during the 1800s it had declined by mid-century. Similar to most communities across the state, agriculture as a source of employment has declined steadily in Worthington over the past century. The mills and factories of the 1800s have also closed, no longer providing local employment. The hamlet of Ringville, for example, once supported the Ring and Hayden Mills as well as its own school, post office and stores. By the late 1900s it consisted of a small number of homes and the Ringville Cemetery. Today many Worthington residents commute to neighboring towns and cities for employment and shopping.

Twenty-six Worthington men served in World War I and 52 served in World War II. Their names are listed on a boulder within the town common, and include four who lost their lives: William J. Coffey, Norman C. Eddy, Donald W. Mollison, and Russell B. Shaw.

In 1950 local citizens established the Worthington Health Center to replace the country doctor who retired in that year. A private enterprise, the Health Center receives funding from annual dues paid by members and from donations, as well as fees charged to patients. It is a unique system that serves citizens from the Town of Worthington as well as many surrounding towns.

Because of its position at the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains, Worthington has become something of a summer colony, with many people maintaining seasonal residence. After reaching a low of 462 just after World War II, the Town's population has been increasing with each passing decade. By 1990, 1200 resided in Worthington, operating local businesses, owning home-based enterprises, and commuting to jobs in nearby Northampton and Amherst. The population remains stable to this day.

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**Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA**

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**Ringville Cemetery**

Ringville Cemetery lies in the hamlet of Ringville, once the busiest mill and agricultural center in Worthington. The Cemetery's oldest graves, dating as far back as 1814, were moved to this site from the Ireland Street Cemetery in Chesterfield. It is not known with certainty why the ten were moved, although it may have been part of a flood control project. It is also possible that the Ring family, originally from Chesterfield, arranged for the move, as genealogical data from Chesterfield indicates that members of the Ring, Cole, and Cowing families intermarried.

Other than the "Ireland Street Graves" and their stones, the earliest burials in Ringville Cemetery date from the 1840s, which is likely when this land initially began to be used for burial. At least fifteen burials took place in the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s from at least five different families. At this time, the land was in private ownership, and likely shared by nearby families for private burial.

Four known land transactions between 1866 and 1887 resulted in Ringville Cemetery as it exists today. The first occurred in 1866, when Ethan Ring of Boston sold approximately 3/4 of an acre of land to the Town of Worthington for "the purpose of a cemetery of graveyard." In 1870, the Pease family sold a tract of land adjacent to the Cemetery on its western side to Lyman Ring to be used privately by his family for their burials. Three years later (1881) the Pease family sold another tract of land west of the Lyman Ring parcel to the Town for the expansion of the Town cemetery. At this point Lyman Ring owned a piece of land between two parcels owned and used by the Town as a public cemetery. It is not surprising that in 1887 he sold much of his tract of land to the Town for public cemetery use, keeping just one plot for his family. The first four land transactions amounted to approximately two acres of land.

The Cemetery appears to have remained at two acres until the 1970s, when the Town purchased approximately one acre of land to the west of the existing Cemetery from Eric Lagerstrom for further expansion. Today the Cemetery is 3.1 acres in size, the second largest of Worthington's six cemeteries.

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**Ringville Cemetery  
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Town histories and site visits have revealed that the remains of several people of local significance lie in Ringville Cemetery. These include many members of the Ring family, for whom the hamlet was named in the 1800s. Elkanah and Thomas Ring were brothers born in the neighboring town of Chesterfield in the early 1800s. In 1830 they purchased an existing but unused mill in the central part of Worthington, converting it to a factory which produced window curtains. The business was successful, and the Rings expanded into the manufacture of baby carriages, sleds and bedsteads. According to *Papers on the History of Worthington*, "the business prospered, the little hamlet grew, and was the center of activity." The area came to be known as Ringville in honor of the brothers, who had created an economic prosperity enjoyed by many other Worthington citizens. In addition to his entrepreneurial success, Elkanah Ring also served as a town selectman and a representative to revise the State Constitution in 1860. Multiple members of this highly significant local family, including Elkanah and Thomas Ring, are buried in Ringville Cemetery.

One of Worthington's most famous citizens is Russell Conwell, a minister and educator who founded Philadelphia's Temple University and Samaritan Hospital. Russell was born in Worthington in 1843 to parents Martin and Maranda Conwell. The second of four children, Conwell's parents instilled in him the value of education as well as the importance of racial tolerance. Martin Conwell was a staunch supporter of the anti-slavery movement, and the Conwell house in Worthington was a stop on the Underground Railway. Both John Brown and Frederick Douglass also visited Martin Conwell in his Worthington home. While Russell Conwell is buried in Philadelphia, his parents, Martin and Maranda, and older brother Charles, are buried in Ringville Cemetery.

The Thrasher family has long inhabited and shaped the Ringville/South Worthington area. Initially settling here during the 1800s, members of the Thrasher family owned most of the land that today comprises South Worthington. Thrasher Hill Road, which runs through this area, is a reminder of their strong presence in South Worthington. During the 1800s multiple members of the family farmed their South Worthington holdings, and Isaac Thrasher owned and operated a saw mill, both typical occupations of Worthington residents during this time period. In the early 1900s Hattie Thrasher served as the Town's postmistress and operated a store out of her home, a tradition carried on by subsequent members of this family well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The last of

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation Sheet****Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA**Section number 8 Page 8

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the Worthington Thrashers, Hattie's son Guy, ran a roadside stand in Ringville into the 1990s. Multiple generations of Thrashers have shaped the history of this community for the past two hundred years, and are buried at Ringville Cemetery.

Ringville Cemetery holds 35 veterans, representing Worthington's participation in the Civil War, World War I, and World War II. Elkanah Ring, discussed earlier, served as a Captain in the Civil War.

While the earliest days of Ringville Cemetery remain something of a mystery, its historical significance lies in the fact that it reflects the growth of the hamlet itself in the mid-1800s. This was the era during which Ringville came into existence, a result of the successful mills and businesses established here during the 1800s. The many marble and brownstone obelisks of Ringville Cemetery reflect the economic success of the Rings and Thrashers and other entrepreneurial families. These families, along with the abolitionist Conwell family, have contributed significantly to shaping the history of Worthington.

**Archaeological Significance**

Since patterns of ancient Native American settlement in Worthington are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Ancient sites in this area may contribute important information relating to patterns of Native American subsistence and settlement activities in the Berkshire uplands of Western Massachusetts in general and specifically along tributary streams of the Westfield River. Ancient Native American sites in this area may contain information that indicates the extent that this area was exploited by Mohican groups and their predecessors from the New York locale or by the Woronoaks and Nonotucks and their forbearers in the Connecticut River Valleys. The above information can be used to test the extent that river basin boundaries were analogous with Native socio-political boundaries at different points in ancient history and the Contact Period.

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to contribute important information relating to the evolution of the Ringville Cemetery and detailed information on the changing social, cultural and economic characteristics that typified many of the inhabitants that lived in a rural New England agricultural and mill village that evolved in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>

**(continued)**

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**Continuation Sheet**

**Ringville Cemetery**  
**Worthington (Hampshire), MA**

Section number 8 Page 9

---

centuries in a river valley in the foothills of the Green Mountains of western Massachusetts. Structural evidence from outbuildings may contribute information relating to maintenance activities at the cemetery and facilities associated with funerary activities such as a hearse barn or mausoleum. Archaeological testing might also recover evidence of post-holes, walls and gates which, when mapped may help reconstruct cemetery boundaries and family burial areas. Archaeological evidence of unmarked graves may help reconstruct burial patterns within the cemetery and the treatment of deceased paupers and other indigent persons by the town and local community. Osteological studies of skeletal remains in marked and unmarked graves may contribute important information on the general health and pathologies that effected inhabitants in the town from the period of initial settlement and later. This information may reflect differences in health and medical treatment based on social, cultural or economic groupings. Artifacts recovered from graves and their general proximity may also contribute information relating to the social, cultural and economic characteristics of individuals and groups. Fragments and complete gravestones may contain stylistic traits that represent particular religious, ethnic or other social groupings. Other characteristics of gravestones may indicate the economic class of individuals. Artifacts related to memorial services or grave offerings can also contribute much of the above information. Taken as a whole, the above information can contribute a wealth of information on the evolution and inhabitants of the Ringville Cemetery. Information obtained through archaeological research may also help fill the documentary void that exists relating to when the cemetery was founded and its early evolution.

(end)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA

Section number 9 Page 1

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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(continued)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet**

Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA

Section number   9   Page   2  

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(continued)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA

Section number 9 Page 3

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(continued)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA

Section number 9 Page 4

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Unidentified black & white photograph, Ringville Cemetery. Date unknown, Collection of the Worthington Historical Society.

(continued)

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA**

Section number 9/10 Page 5/1

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Worthington Cemetery Notebook (contains maps and gravestone inventories for the Parker Four Corners and Almon Johnson Road Cemeteries.

**(end)**

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Verbal Boundary Description

Town of Worthington Assessor's Map #412, Lot 5.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire 3.1-acre parcel assembled by the Town of Worthington that it historically associated with Ringville Cemetery.

**(end)**

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Ringville Cemetery  
Worthington (Hampshire), MA**

Section number photo Page 1

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**LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS**

- #1: The fieldstone wall retaining the north side of Ringville Cemetery. Photograph taken looking east.
- #2: Stone steps leading from Witt Hill Road to Ringville Cemetery. Photograph taken looking south.
- #3: The Blair Vault, constructed of granite, brick and iron, c. 1927. Photograph taken from Witt Hill Road looking south.
- #4: The interior of Ringville Cemetery taken from the western edge, looking east.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number Photos Page 2

Ringville Cemetery

## PHOTOGRAPH LOCATIONS

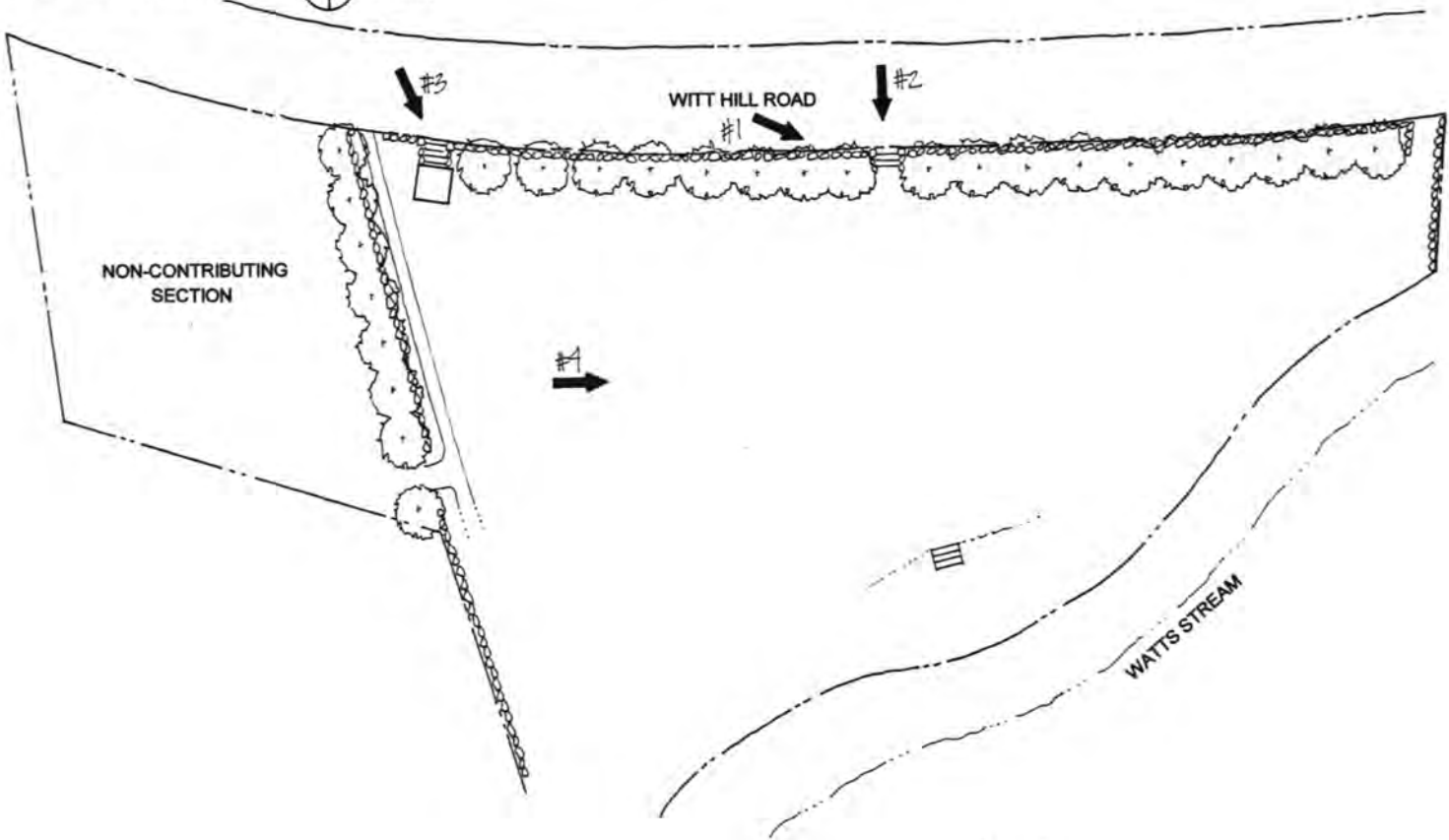
**RINGVILLE CEMETERY**  
WORTHINGTON, HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS  
3.1 ACRES

**CEMETERY PHOTOGRAPHS**

APPROXIMATE SCALE: 1" = 100'



NORTH



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Ringville Cemetery

DATA LOCATIONS

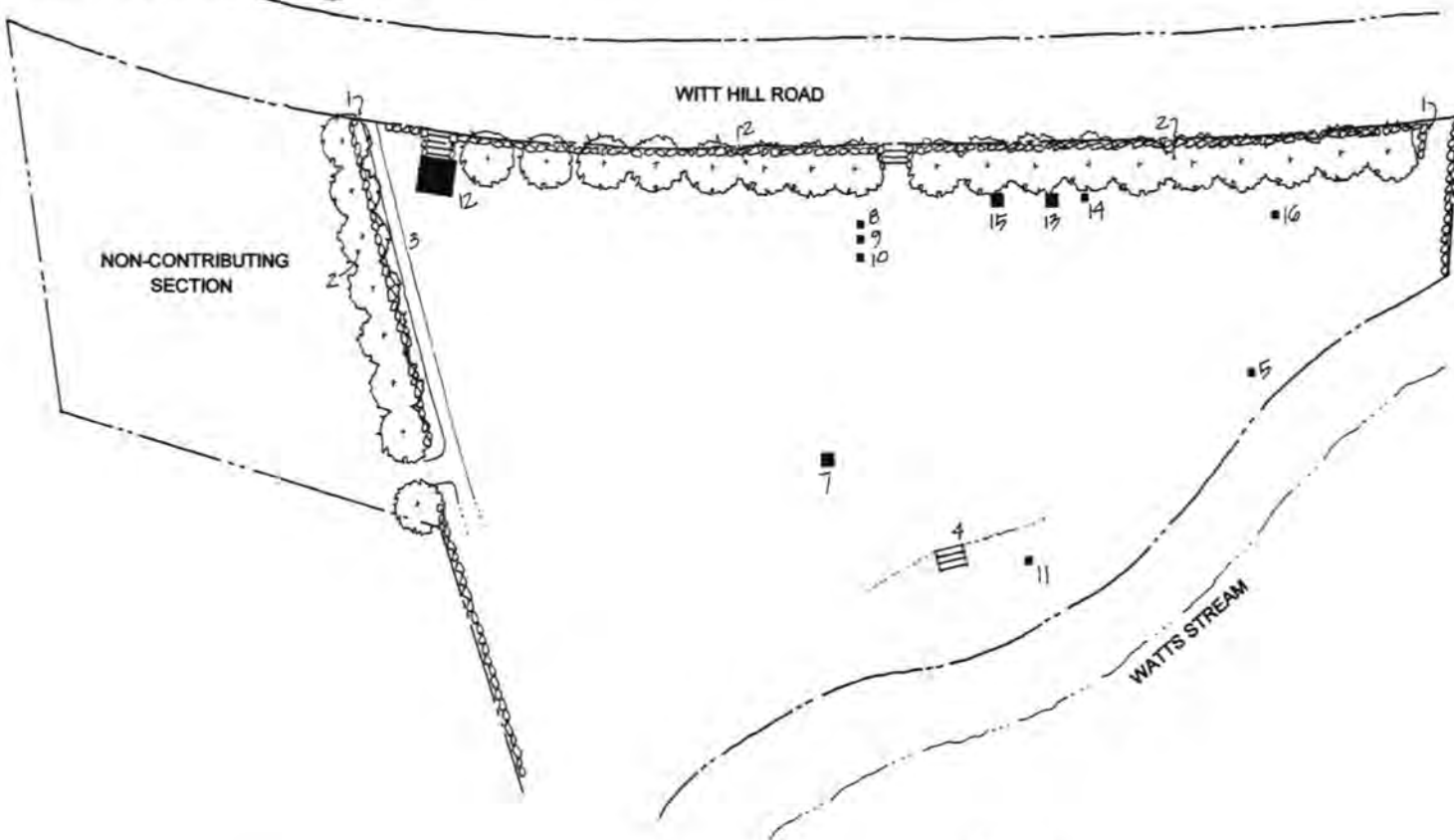
RINGVILLE CEMETERY  
WORTHINGTON, HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS  
3.1 ACRES

CEMETERY DATA

APPROXIMATE SCALE: 1" = 100'



NORTH



**RINGVILLE CEMETERY**  
 WORTHINGTON, HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS

**DATA SHEET\***

Number	Historic Name	Type	Material	Resource	Date	Status
1	Perimeter Wall	Landscape Feature	Field Stone	Structure	Unknown	C
2	Sugar Maple Allee	Landscape Feature	Plant	Objects	Unknown	C
3	Circulation System	Cart Path	Turf/Dirt	Structure	Unknown	C
4	Stone Steps (area of Ireland Street graves)	Landscape Feature	Stone	Structure	Unknown	C
5	Jonathan Higgins	Headstone	Marble	Object	1869	C
6	Hiram Taylor	Headstone	Marble	Object	1872	C
7	Thomas & Elkanah Ring	Monument	Brownstone	Object	1868	C
8	Martin Conwell	Headstone	Marble	Object	1874	C
9	Maranda Conwell	Headstone	Marble	Object	1877	C
10	Charles H. Conwell	Headstone	Marble	Object	1869	C
11	Consider Cole	Headstone	Marble	Object	1814	C
12	Blair Vault	Structure	Granite/Stone/Iron	Building	c. 1927	C
13	Thrasher	Monument	Granite	Object	1885	C
14	Guy Thrasher	Flush Marker	Granite	Object	1985	C
15	Cowing Family	Monument	Marble	Object	1879	C
16	Adams Family	Monument	Marble	Object	1894	C

*\*Data Sheet provides a representative sampling of features at Ringville Cemetery.*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Ringville Cemetery

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Hampshire

DATE RECEIVED: 12/29/03      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/27/04  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/11/04      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/11/04  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 04000024

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    2.11.04 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.



PHOTO #1

RINGVILLE CEMETERY

WORTHINGTON, HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS

PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTHA H. WYON, JULY 2001

FIELDSTONE WALL RETAINING THE NORTH SIDE OF  
RINGVILLE CEMETERY. PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN LOOKING  
EAST.



PHOTO #2

KINGVILLE CEMETERY

WORTHINGTON, HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS

PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTHA H. UYON, JUNE 2001

STONE STEPS LEADING FROM WITT HILL ROAD TO KINGVILLE  
CEMETERY. PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN LOOKING SOUTH.

PRESENTED BY CLARA D. BLAIR  
IN MEMORY OF HER HUSBAND DAVID BLAIR



PHOTO #3:

KINGVILLE CEMETERY

WORTHINGTON, HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS

PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTHA H. LYON, JULY 2001

THE BLAIR VAULT, C. 1927. PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN LOOKING SOUTH.



PHOTO #4

RINGVILLE CEMETERY

WORTHINGTON, HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS

PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTHA H. LYON, JULY 2001.

THE INTERIOR OF RINGVILLE CEMETERY, TAKEN FROM THE  
WESTERN EDGE LOOKING EAST.



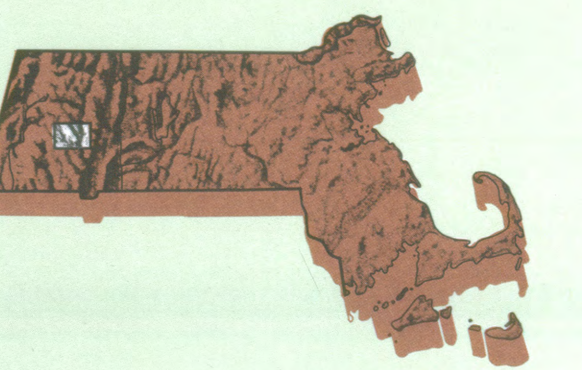
CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

7.5 X 15 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



# Chester

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
  - Wood
  - Geog

U.S. Department of the Interior  
U.S. Geological Survey  
1997

Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
Derived from imagery taken 1980 and other sources. Photospotting using imagery taken 1997; no major culture or drainage changes observed. Survey control current as of 1981. Boundaries revised 1999.  
Supersedes Chester and Westhampton 1:25,000-scale maps dated 1972.  
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 1000-meter grid. Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 18. 10 000-foot ticks. Massachusetts coordinate system, maintained zone.  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software.  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map.

CONTOUR INTERVAL 6 METERS  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
CONTOUR ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER  
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM		ADJOINING MAPS		
Meters	Ft.	1983	1972	1	2	3
1	3.281	12° 00'	12° 00'	1	2	3
2	6.562	11° 59'	11° 59'	4	5	
3	9.843	11° 58'	11° 58'	6	7	8
4	13.124	11° 57'	11° 57'			
5	16.405	11° 56'	11° 56'			
6	19.686	11° 55'	11° 55'			
7	22.967	11° 54'	11° 54'			
8	26.248	11° 53'	11° 53'			
9	29.529	11° 52'	11° 52'			
10	32.810	11° 51'	11° 51'			

UTM grid convergence (GN and 989 magnetic declination (MO) at center of map. Diagram is approximate.

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

ISBN 0-607-92651-3  
9 780607 926514

### 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 gauge; 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
  - City, township, precinct, district
  - Incorporated city, village, town
  - National or State reservation; small park
  - Land grant with monument; bound section corner
  - U.S. public lands survey; range, township, section
  - Range, township; section line; location approximate
  - Fence or field line
  - Power transmission line; sagged tower
  - Dam; dam with lock
  - Cemetery; grave
  - Campground; picnic area; U.S. location monument
  - Wellhead; water well; spring
  - Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave
  - Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation
  - Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression
  - Contour interval: 100 m; 50 m; 20 m
  - Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate
  - Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream
  - Marsh: large and small; tall, large and small
  - Swamp; marsh
  - Submerged marsh; land subject to controlled inundation
  - Woodland; scattered trees
  - Sand; mangrove
  - Orchard; vineyard

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1999  
SCALE 1:25 000  
1 CENTIMETER ON THE MAP REPRESENTS 250 METERS ON THE GROUND  
CONTOUR INTERVAL 6 METERS  
MILES 1 2 3 4  
KILOMETERS 1 2 3 4  
500 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 METERS  
10000 12000 14000 16000 FEET  
CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

**RINGVILLE CEMETERY**  
**WORTHINGTON**  
**HAMPSHIRE COUNTY**  
**MASSACHUSETTS**



**CHESTERFIELD**

<p>THIS MAP IS FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES. IT IS NOT VALID FOR LEGAL DESCRIPTION OR CONVEYANCE.</p> <p>THE HORIZONTAL DATUM IS THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM.</p> <p>PHOTOGRAPHY DATE: MARCH 21, 1985</p> <p>COMPLETION DATE: MARCH 9, 1986</p>	<p>PRODUCED BY</p> <p><b>CARTOGRAPHIC ASSOCIATES, INC.</b></p> <p>MUNICIPAL MAPPING CONSULTANTS          P.O. BOX 267 LITTLETON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03861</p>	<p><b>LEGEND</b></p> <p>AREA CALCULATED Ac</p> <p>AREA SURVEYED Ac</p> <p>BLOCK LIMIT</p> <p>BLOCK NUMBER</p> <p>COMMON OWNERSHIP</p> <p>EXEMPT PROPERTY</p> <p>SUBDIVISION LOT NO. (⊙)</p> <p>MATCH LINE (M.L.)</p> <p>RIGHT OF WAY (R/W)</p> <p>RECORD DIMENSION 100'</p> <p>SCALED DIMENSION 100'S</p> <p>WETLANDS (W)</p>	<p><b>SCALE</b></p> <p>1 INCH = 400 FEET</p> <p>FEET: 0, 100, 200, 300, 400</p> <p>METERS: 0, 101.92, 203.84, 305.76</p> <p>REVISED TO <b>January 1, 2001</b></p>	<p>ASSESSORS MAP</p> <p><b>WORTHINGTON</b></p> <p>MASSACHUSETTS</p>	<p>INDEX DIAGRAM</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>408</td><td>413</td></tr> <tr><td>409</td><td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td></tr> <tr><td>410</td><td>411</td></tr> </table> <p>MAP NO. <b>412</b></p>	408	413	409		410	411
408	413										
409											
410	411										

NO PARCEL 2, 10, 22, 1, 23, 42, 48



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

December 23, 2003

Ms. Carol Shull  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005



Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Ringville Cemetery, Worthington (Hampshire Co.), 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: Beverly Smith, Worthington Historical Commission  
Christopher Powell, Chair, Select Board  
Martha Lyon - Paysage, Preservation Consultant  
J.P. Welch, Worthington Cemetery Commission  
Jack Millman, Planning Director