

*Volunteer growth,  
East Parish Burial Ground, Newton*



## APPENDIX

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## GRAVE MARKER INVENTORY

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### GRAVE MARKER INVENTORY

A stone by stone inventory and cataloging of grave markers and monuments is a major component of protecting the irreplaceable resources and deteriorating conditions in a historic burial ground or cemetery. An inventory project is designed to:

- Provide historic information and data on physical condition to the municipality that owns and is responsible for maintaining a burial ground or cemetery;

- Aid in the development of an outline for a master plan for the conservation, site improvement, structural engineering and other maintenance issues concerning the site;

- Serve as a planning tool for stone conservation and for other rehabilitation efforts such as path systems and interpretive signs and markers;

- Provide a carefully documented record as a safeguard against vandalism and theft;

- Provide public access to genealogical and other historical information recorded on the inventoried grave markers; and

- Encourage and support community interest in a historic burial ground or cemetery.

### **Methodology**

The inventory process involves four steps:

#### Preliminary Research

A search of available historical documents is conducted to locate earlier maps, lists of inscriptions and inventories. These sources are used throughout the survey to document existing markers in the burying grounds and to indicate markers of special historical, artistic or cultural significance.

### Field Work

Field work includes the careful establishment of a numbering system for section divisions within the cemetery and an updating of the record maps produced by a municipality. Every grave marker including each headstone, footstone, tomb, tomb marker and monument is assigned a section letter and individual number. An inventory form is completed for each marker including location number, name and date information, type of marker and physical data including type of carved ornament and motives, materials, size and condition. In addition, verbatim transcriptions of all legible inscriptions are recorded on each of the inventory forms.

### Supplemental Research

After completion of the survey forms, any historical records uncovered during the preliminary research phase can be consulted to supplement information for grave markers now damaged or partially missing. In addition, old records and epitaph collections can be used to complete inscriptions of stones that are sunken or fallen and which cannot be read in the field.

### Indexing

The data collected through field work is computer recorded and sorted alphabetically by family name as well as chronologically by date of death and by location number. Every name recorded on a grave marker is separately entered into the computer indexing.

### Description of Inventory Form

The following includes components of an inventory form developed specifically for Boston's historic burying grounds in 1983 and revised in 1985 to add a masonry conservator's expanded version of condition terminology. This form should be re-examined to insure that all pertinent information for each municipality is being recorded.

At the top of the form, the location/reference number specifies the precise location of the grave marker. The letter and number indicate section and grave marker number. For example, C-35 denotes that this marker is the 35th marker in section C. Training of inventory team members assures consistency in interpreting terminology and filling out forms.

**Record Date:** Date the form was prepared in the field.

**Weather:** Brief description of weather on recording day.

**Examined by:** Initials of recording team member.

**Name:** Name of interred. If a marker lists two or three names they are recorded here. If several names are specified on the marker, the earlier death dates or most prominently listed name[s] are recorded here and reference is made to reverse of the survey form for all additional names.

**Date:** Death date[s] as inscribed. Method of recording is similar to that used for Name.

**Motif:** Traditional decorative carvings found on Boston grave markers are listed on the form and are circled or checked off where applicable. These motifs include:

Skull [17th and 18th centuries]  
Face [18th and 19th centuries]  
Urn and willow [19th century]  
None [no figurative elements]  
Other [heraldic or other imagery]

Motives referred to on the form as primary are usually carved in the tympanum, the semicircular uppermost part of the gravestone. Secondary motives are displayed in conjunction with the primary image or elsewhere on the marker.

**Border:** The carved decorative margin around the inscription. [Typical is the leafy spiral border often displayed on Boston area grave markers.]

**Elaborate:** Unusual or rare decorative motives, sometimes including fruit and other naturalistic detail. This category also is used for foliate and other ornamentation executed with particular skill.

**Simple:** Curvilinear or geometric patterns.

**Plain:** Single or double enframing lines.

**Other:** Figurative elements, architectural forms and other designs not included in the above descriptions.

**Carving:** The condition of the carved decoration and inscription.

**Mint:** Sharp and clear. Inscription can be read easily.

**Clear but worn:** Edges are smooth, not crisp.

**Mostly Decipherable:** Areas are discolored or lost, but most of the inscription can be read.

**Illegible:** Inscription is substantially lost.

**Type:**

**Headstone:** The predominant type of grave marker usually displaying a full inscription and decorative carving.

**Footstone:** Usually smaller than headstones and may include only initials or a name and sometimes the year of death. Carved decorative detailing is infrequently apparent.

**Tomb:** Either an above ground or below grade structure which may include several chambers for multiple burials and often marked with a horizontal table top slab on a masonry base or by brick or granite walled construction.

**Orientation:** The direction the marker's primary carved surface faces. If a grave marker is horizontally placed, the direction noted is the one it would face if propped upright. For tombs, the slab's axis is noted, i.e. N-S or E-W.

**Dimensions:** Measurements for width are taken side to side at the widest point; height is measured from ground level to the highest point of the grave marker; depth is indicated as the thickness of the marker from front to back. Additional measurements for tombs and monuments also are recorded.

**Bedding:** Recording of stone bedding planes. Parallel bedding planes [i.e. slate] are indicated by the symbol + while the bedding planes at an angle to the surface are indicated by a /.

**Plot Description:** Description of the grave marker's immediate setting, i.e. grassy, bare, paved, etc.

**Material:**

**Slate:** A smooth grained stone with even bedding planes usually running parallel to the stone's face.

**Granite:** Granular looking with no discernible bedding planes. Generally gray with black, white and/or pink flecks. Often used for monuments and tombs.

**Marble:** White or gray-white, cool to the touch and often eroded. Marble is associated with 19th century headstones and monuments.

**Sandstone:** Tan or reddish-brown with a grainy surface, often eroded or flaking.

**Other:** Includes greenstone, a thick green-gray stone. Brick, concrete and metals also are recorded under this category.

**Condition:** These terms are used to describe physical condition and damage: Judgments concerning causes of damage or loss are not made.

**Soiling:** Surface deposits of fine particulate matter, generally dark in color, and modifying or obscuring the stone's appearance.

**Stains:** Discoloration by minute deposits of highly colored matter within the pores of the stone.

**Efflorescence:** White crystalline surface deposits composed of water-soluble salts.

**Graffiti:** Markings, typically paint, ink, chalk or crayon.

**Biological Activity:** Fungal or algae growth, mosses, vines or bird droppings.

**Erosion:** Gradual loss of surface material resulting in rounded and blurred edges of carving. In advanced stages, an overall granular "sugary" texture prevails and inscriptions become illegible.

**Blistering:** Swelling and often rupturing of a uniformly thin layer of stone [cf "flaking"].

**Flaking:** Detachment of a uniformly thin layer of stone.

**Scaling:** Advanced loss of stone of variable depth [cf. "Delamination"].

**Delamination:** Separation of relatively thick layers of stone among bedding planes. Early stages of delamination appear as fissures along the top edge and are recorded as "Cracks". Major detachment through this process is recorded under "Losses".

**Cracking:** Narrow fractures of variable length and direction.

**Tilted/Fallen/Sunken:** Significantly out of vertical alignment, i.e. more than 15 degrees, flat on the ground or partially buried.

**Open Joints:** Missing or defective mortar pointing usually associated with brick and granite tombs.

**Fragmented:** Broken or detached stones where the pieces still exist for reassembly.

**Losses:** Absence of original material as indicated by an incompleteness in form, decoration or inscription.

**Other Damage:** Other conditions not listed above [e.g. chipped edges] and mechanical effects such as lawnmower scrapes.

**Previous Repair:** Indications of earlier efforts of repair or restoration.

**Photo Date:** If applicable, date the stone was photographed. **Negative #:** Reference number for location of separately filed negative.

### **Reverse of Inventory Form**

The inscription always is copied from the grave marker, i.e. HERE LYES Ye BODY of Mr. PAUL PRATT not Here lies the body of Paul Pratt.

Whenever necessary, any portion of the inscription buried beneath ground level is gently excavated.

Information derived from sources other than the grave marker's presently legible inscription, whether inferred from fragments or determined from research is displayed within brackets and the source is written on the form.

Sketches of the grave marker, whenever warranted by distinctive features or losses, are recorded on the form's reverse.

**Remarks:** Includes annotations or unusual circumstances not otherwise described, i.e. on site fragment[s], rare imagery, high artistic quality, etc. Probate data, notations of carver's initials, prices or practice "sketches" and other information also are recorded here.

### **Daily Work Schedule**

Following orientation and training, members of the inventory team are assigned to specific sections of each burying ground. Inventory staff systematically check any available historical record plans for existing location accuracy. Missing stones are crossed out and new placements or changes in location are carefully added. The markers on the maps then are numbered consecutively and inventory forms for each are completed. Team members typically complete between 30 and 50 forms daily.

After each section is completely inventoried another team member rechecks the field map and inventory forms until the rechecking phase is completed. At this same time, fragment forms are prepared to indicate the location, material, dimensions, shape, inscriptions and motives, of all out of the ground marker fragments. Considerable care is taken to keep the batch of forms for each section in separate envelopes.

To ensure legibility of photocopies, only black non water soluble pens [e.g. ball point] are used. Equipment required for the inventory includes: a trowel for careful excavation of markers to recover below grade inscriptions, a soft paint brush for cleaning any surface soil interfering with inscription reading, an 8 to 10 foot retractable tape measure for marker measurements and location and a small hand mirror to reflect sunlight on shaded or worn inscriptions.

If funding permits, a photographic inventory can be added to record each marker and its identifying number [within the photograph]. Photos are then mounted directly on the completed inventory forms and the negatives filed separately.

SAMPLE GRAVE MARKER INVENTORY FORM

GRAVE MARKER SURVEY FORM Graveyard/Loc. ARMON JOHANSON RD

Brewster Hannah  
 Last Name (Deceased) First George  
 First Nannah - 3  
March 26, 1800 George - 2  
 Death Date (Earliest) yr/m/d Age

Loc./Ref.No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Row/# in row A / 3  
 Record Date 7/28/92  
 Weather FINE  
 Examined by AGB MC

Inscription: (Brackets [ ] indicate information from sources other than carved inscription, i.e., footstone information, old records, educated guess, etc.)

George Son of  
 Jonah Brewster died  
 March 26, 1800 in  
 The 2 year of his age  
 Nannah, daughter of  
 Elifha Brewster died  
 March 26 Son in The  
 3 year of her age

Marker Type: HS fs Table Mon. T Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Material: Slate Marble Sandst Granite Schist Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Orientation: N S E W Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dimensions: (inches) H 24 1/2 W 22 1/2 Thick 1

- |               |              |                       |                   |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1st Motif:    | 2nd Motif:   | Border:               | Carving:          |
| 1. Skull      | 1. Hourglass | 1. Simple Vines       | 1. Mint           |
| 2. Face       | 2. Bones     | 2. Elab.Fruit/Flowers | 2. Clear but Worn |
| 3. Urn/Willow | 3. Coffin    | 3. Geom. Shapes       | 3. Mostly Deciph. |
| 4. None       | 4. Tools     | 4. Plain Line/s       | 4. Traces         |
| 5. Other      | 5. Other     | 5. Other              | 5. Illegible      |

Condition:  
 Soiling  Stains \_\_\_\_\_ Graffiti \_\_\_\_\_ Efflor. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Moss/Lichen  Overgrown \_\_\_\_\_ Plot Descr. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tilted \_\_\_\_\_ Fallen \_\_\_\_\_ Sunken (part./all inscrl. below soil) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chipped  Mower Scars \_\_\_\_\_ Cracked  Eroded \_\_\_\_\_  
 Broken \_\_\_\_\_ # Frags \_\_\_\_\_ Frag Loss \_\_\_\_\_ CleanBreak/Weathered/Shattered \_\_\_\_\_  
 Blistered(front/back) \_\_\_\_\_ Flaking \_\_\_\_\_ Scaling \_\_\_\_\_ Delamin.(top) \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Repair:  
 Fills/Replacements \_\_\_\_\_  
 Adhesive Repair \_\_\_\_\_  
 Reinforcing \_\_\_\_\_  
 Coatings \_\_\_\_\_  
 Enframent/Footing \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: 1 (excellent) - 5 (poor)  
 General Condition 3  
 Artistic Quality \_\_\_\_\_  
 Historic Signif. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Repair Priority Index: 1  
 1 (high) - 5 (low)

Photo Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Roll/Neg.# \_\_\_\_\_

Fs 50" E of hs.  
 GB written:  
 HB - East Side  
 H 12" x W 16" 1" th  
 cond. Same as Tablet

Remarks:  
 Signed/Pract.Carving/Price on Base:  
 Probed:

ALTERNATE SAMPLE GRAVE MARKER INVENTORY FORM

Cemetery: Old Burial Ground  
 Location: Sturbridge, MA  
 Record Date: 11/22/96  
 Name: Plimpton Mary  
 Last First Middle  
 Date of Death: September 9, 1841  
 Marker Type: Headstone  
 Stone Carver: \_\_\_\_\_

Orientation: (NW) S E W  
 Dimensions: W 21 H 26 1/2 D 1 1/4  
 (in inches)  
 No. of People Commemorated: 1  
 Negative: Roll \_\_\_\_\_ Photo \_\_\_\_\_  
 Before: 2 30  
 After: 7 12 #7-5  
 Recorder: Fannin/Lehner

MATERIAL:  1. Slate 2. Granite 3. Marble 4. Sandstone 5. Schist 6. Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 CARVED SURFACES:  1. Front 2. Back 3. Top 4. Side Panels 5. End Panels

MOTIF: 1. Skull 2. Face 3. Urn/Willow 4. None 5. Other	BORDER: 1. None 2. Simple <u>Two parallel double lines</u> 3. Elaborate 4. Motif	CARVING: 1. Hint 2. Clear but worn 3. Mostly Deciph. 4. Traces 5. Illegible	BASES: 1. Marble 2. Granite 3. Sandstone 4. Other 5. None
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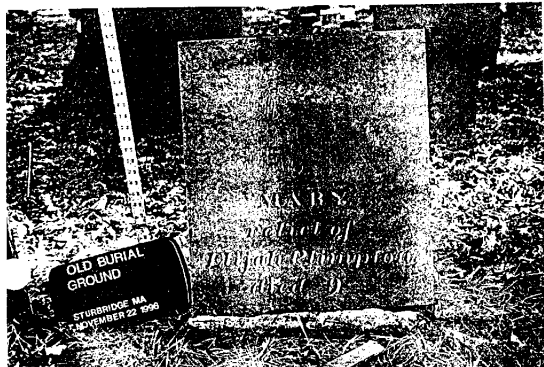
PREVIOUS REPAIR WORK: None evident

- Replacement Bases/Beds \_\_\_\_\_
- Adhesive Repair Various adhesive repairs, all failed
- Reinforcing \_\_\_\_\_
- Enframements/Footings/Beds \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

CONDITIONS:

- Sound \_\_\_\_\_
- Broken \_\_\_\_\_
- Fragments Three, plus
- Chipped very significant
- Cracked \_\_\_\_\_
- Soiling Atmospheric
- Stains ferric
- Biological Activity Algae  
small amount of white mold
- Erosion/Sugar Decay \_\_\_\_\_
- Flaking/Blistering \_\_\_\_\_
- Delamination None at present
- Fallen/Tilted/Sunken Backwards
- Losses \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



SAMPLE PERMIT FORM



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

DIRECTIONS FOR COMPLETING APPLICATION FORM

Organization: Give name of applicant organization  
Contact: Name of person to contact concerning proposal  
Cemetery: Give name of cemetery  
Size: Give dimensions of cemetery  
Owned or controlled by: Give name of owner of cemetery or town agency that has authority to provide access and approval for restoration project.  
Earliest gravestone: Give earliest known or recorded date.  
Before 1885: Total number of stones dated before 1885.  
Designated landmark: Is cemetery a designated landmark of the Massachusetts Historical Commission? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_  
Cemetery condition: Indicate whether cemetery is abandoned, overgrown, vandalized, etc., and how many stones are broken or missing.  
Proposed work: Circle all restoration tasks you are planning to undertake.  
City or town acceptance of enabling act: City or town must give date of acceptance.  
Project Approval: Indicate by check which agencies have approved project.  
Project funded by: Give name of agencies, foundations, or persons providing funds and give total.  
Technical assistance: Give name of persons or organizations who will provide technical assistance to project.  
in-kind contributions: List agencies, organizations, or individuals making substantial in-kind contributions (sweat equity) to project and estimated total value.

220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125 · (617) 727-8470  
Fax: (617) 727-5128 TDD: 1-800-392-6090



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

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT TO RESTORE AND REPRODUCE GRAVESTONES

(See attached detailed instructions before completing)

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cemetery: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Owned or Controlled By: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_  
Earliest Gravestone: \_\_\_\_\_ Designated Landmark Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_  
Cemetery Condition:\* \_\_\_\_\_  
Proposed Work:\* (General Cleanup) (De-Soil) (Replant) (Clean Stones) (Repair Stones)  
\*Use additional pages if necessary.  
Project Approval, Coordination, and Participation:  
City or Town \_\_\_\_\_ Historical Commission \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Technical Assistance From: \_\_\_\_\_  
Project Funded By: \_\_\_\_\_ Total: \_\_\_\_\_  
In-Kind Contributions By: \_\_\_\_\_ Total: \_\_\_\_\_  
Project to Start: \_\_\_\_\_ Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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SAMPLE MHC FORM E

**FORM E - BURIAL GROUND**

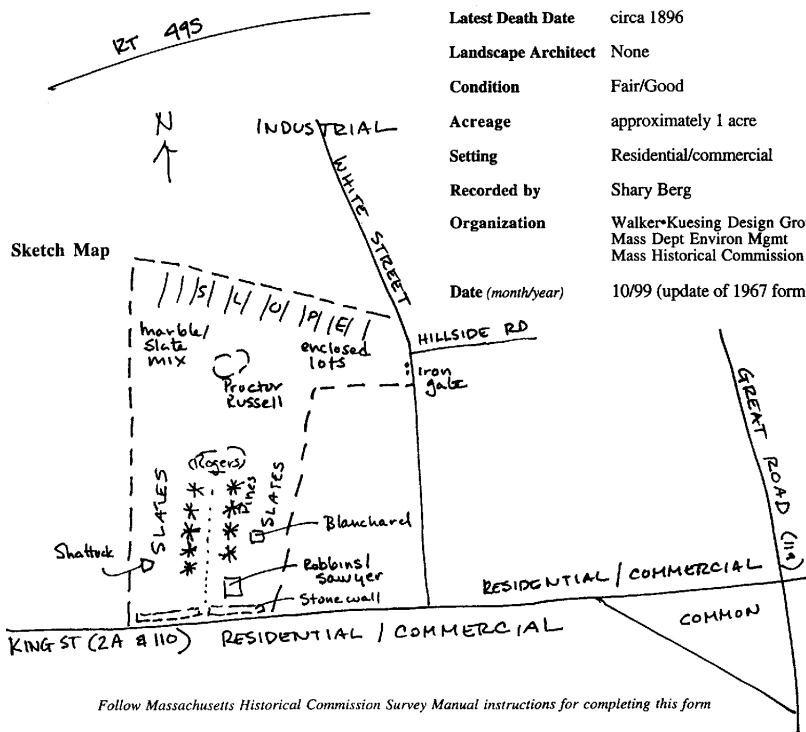
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number  
 U9-6 [ ] [ ] 800

Town Littleton  
 Place (neighborhood or village) Town Center  
 Address or Location King Street near White Street  
 Name Old Burying Ground  
 Ownership  Public  Private  
 Approximate Number of Stones 200  
 Earliest Death Date circa 1721  
 Latest Death Date circa 1896  
 Landscape Architect None  
 Condition Fair/Good  
 Acreage approximately 1 acre  
 Setting Residential/commercial  
 Recorded by Shary Berg  
 Organization Walker-Kuesing Design Group  
 Mass Dept Environ Mgmt  
 Mass Historical Commission  
 Date (month/year) 10/99 (update of 1967 form)

**Photograph**

roll negative  
 16055 1 - 9



Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town Littleton  
 Property Address Old Burying Ground, King Street (Route 2A)  
 Area(s) Form No. 800

**VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT**

Littleton's Old Burying Ground is a tranquil oasis in an increasingly suburban community. An evocative remnant of the early history of the town, it is an excellent example of a small, well-preserved municipal cemetery which retains strong historical associations and distinctive landscape features and monuments dating from the mid-eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century. It is also the burial place of many of the town's notable early citizens.

The burying ground is prominently located one block west of the town common on the north side of King Street (Route 110 and 2A). The surrounding area includes some nineteenth century farm houses, including the adjacent properties. There is also some commercial development along King Street and industrial development to the north, with Route 495 a short distance beyond.

The burying ground is a long, narrow property which is organized in a traditional rectilinear pattern with earlier graves towards the front and more recent ones towards the rear. A central path running between a double row of mature pine trees forms the main circulation route through the cemetery. Most of the terrain is relatively level except for a small hillock located just beyond the alley of pines on which the Rogers monument is located. A smaller hillock with a marble slab on it is located further to the north. Beyond it, the land drops off sharply to a steep wooded slope. Although the pines are by far the most prominent and perhaps the only deliberate plantings, there are also scattered mature trees and some shrubs throughout the cemetery, especially along the edges. Two deciduous street trees have recently been planted in front.

One of the most visible and distinctive features of the burial ground is the 100' long dry-laid granite block wall along King Street. Massive rough-cut blocks form the vertical front face of the wall while the back is battered and made up of much smaller stones. A double cast iron gate of fairly simple design located at the center of the wall forms the main entrance. Low boulder walls of typical New England farm construction form the east and west boundaries of the cemetery, with a chain link fence along the northern edge. There is a fairly elaborate cast iron pedestrian gate at the rear along White Street opposite Hillside Road. It appears to be little used and is deteriorating.

Burial markers, of which there are approximately 200, fall into several categories. The oldest and most numerous, comprising over 2/3 of the total, are slates. These are primarily located near the front of the burying ground, typically in rows facing east. A few have footstones. Many of the slates display highly skilled and detailed carvings, with motifs ranging from early death heads to later urns, willows, angels and some geometric patterns. Further back are a relatively small number of mid-nineteenth century marble monuments, primarily slabs, with a few obelisks. Many of these have fading inscriptions.

The largest and most prominently sited monument is the granite Rogers obelisk, located on the hillock near the center of the cemetery, reflecting the importance of this early town minister. Other prominent monuments include the Blanchard monument, a granite obelisk near the eastern edge of the cemetery which commemorates a notable early family; the polished granite Robbins/Sawyer monument, located near the main entrance; the marble Proctor/Russell monument, located at the north end of the burying ground on



## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town **Littleton**  
Property Address **Old Burying Ground, King Street (Route 2A)**

Area(s) **Form No. 800**

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the smaller hillock and the Benjamin Shattuck monument, a small obelisk located at the western edge of the cemetery near King Street.

There are also some remnant lot enclosures, including rough-cut granite curbing surrounding the Robbins/Sawyer monument; several sets of granite posts with evidence of earlier chains; and a few family lots, also with granite curbing or remnants of iron fencing, which are located at the northern edge of the burying ground, reflecting the later years of its development. Two historical markers located along King Street commemorate the 19 Revolutionary War veterans reportedly buried here and the cemetery itself, one of the oldest sites in town.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The town of Littleton was incorporated in 1714. Once established as a municipality, Littleton set about creating the necessary facilities, including a municipal burying ground. Unlike many communities Littleton chose not to locate its burial ground adjacent to the meetinghouse, which was located on what is now Maple Street at the common, but a short distance away. There is little record of the appearance of the burying ground prior to the late nineteenth century. Like most early New England cemeteries it was probably a rough field with a few graves marked by simple slate headstones. One of the earliest recorded improvements was a town vote of September 9, 1748 to fence the burying ground. It is unclear whether the current dry laid stone wall along King Street dates to this period or was a later improvement.

Due to the small population, which was 918 at the time of the Revolutionary War, there were relatively few burials during the eighteenth century. Among the notable early interments were many of the town's prominent settlers and 19 Revolutionary War veterans. A monument commemorates Luther Blanchard, the first man shot at the Battle of the Old North Bridge, and members of his family, but it is unclear whether he was buried in Littleton or Acton, as he had ties in both communities. Other distinguished persons buried here include the Reverend Benjamin Shattuck, the town's first minister, and the Reverend Daniel Rogers, the town's second minister, who served the community for 52 years.

There was reportedly an earlier burial ground known as the ancient cemetery or Nashoba burying grounds located on the Nashoba Plantation near the base of Nashoba Hill but it was later plowed up and cultivated as part of a working farm so nothing remains of it. The old burying ground on King Street is generally referred to as the first town cemetery. A second burial ground, now known as Westlawn Cemetery, was established by the town in 1801. Initially it was used for paupers and others who were not eligible to be buried in the municipal cemetery. Since around 1900 when the old burying ground became full, Westlawn has been the only active municipal cemetery in Littleton.

Littleton remained a small agricultural community through the first part of the nineteenth century. The advent of the railroad in 1844-5 brought a period of rapid growth followed by civic improvements. The mid-nineteenth century was also a period of changing attitudes about death and burial, with resulting efforts to beautify and improve the burying ground. In 1862 the Tree Association was formed with a

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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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Town **Littleton**  
Property Address **Old Burying Ground, King Street (Route 2A)**

Area(s) **Form No. 800**

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mission of planting street trees in public ways. An article in the Littleton Historical Society Proceedings attributes the white pines in the burying ground to this group, which was only active until 1871.

Concern for the appearance of the town became a focus in 1904 with the formation of the Improvement Society. The iron gates at the cemetery entrance date to around this time, reportedly a donation from George Cheyne Shattuck, a descendant of the town's first minister. In preparation for the town's bicentennial in 1914, a \$50 expenditure was approved by the town for the restoration of footstones. There are also several postcards dating to this period, which show the cemetery much as it is today with mature white pines and rows of well kept slates.

The old burying ground received relatively little attention during the early part of the twentieth century, until when 1939 an appropriation was made for tree removal and monument repair necessitated by a major hurricane in fall 1938. The national bicentennial of 1976 prompted another round of improvements, including a historic marker, followed by ongoing efforts to preserve and restore the cemetery. Since 1991 a series of regular stone conservation workshops have been held to increase public awareness and repair damaged stones.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Fannin/Lehner Preservation Consultants, treatment reports for Littleton's Old Burying Ground, 1991-4 (at Littleton Cemetery Commission office, Westlawn Cemetery).

Harwood, Herbert, *Littleton, Massachusetts Historical Sketch*, 1887 (at Littleton Historical Society).

Higgins, Walter, series of articles on Littleton's cemeteries in *Littleton Independent*, Spring 1999 (at Littleton Cemetery Commission office, Westlawn Cemetery).

Littleton Historical Society, cemetery files and Margaret Drury notebooks.

Littleton Historical Society, *Proceedings*, 1894-5 (includes record of inscriptions).

Town of Littleton, Cemetery Department files and *Town Reports*, 1842 - 1998 (at Littleton Historical Society).

*Town of Littleton, Massachusetts, 250th Anniversary Official Program*, 1964 (at Littleton Historical Society).

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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Town **Littleton**  
 Property Address **Old Burying Ground, King Street (Route 2A)**  
 Area(s) **Form No. 800**



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Town **Littleton**  
 Property Address **Old Burying Ground, King Street (Route 2A)**  
 Area(s) **Form No. 800**

**National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form**

- Individually Eligible  Eligible only in a historic district  
 Contributing to a potential historic district  Potential historic district

Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Statement of Significance By: Shary Page Berg 10/99

The Old Burying Ground is a historically significant and highly visible property located on King Street one block west of the town common. The site possesses integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and meets National Register Criteria A and C on the local level with a period of significance extending from 1720 to 1900. The site may also have archaeological significance.

The Old Burying Ground meets Criterion A due to its unique and intimate associations with the early settlement and history of Littleton. Nineteen Revolutionary War veterans are buried here, as well as most of the town's prominent early citizens. The evocative character of the landscape, the types of burial markers, and their inscriptions and art work eloquently bring the early history of Littleton to life. This is especially important since the burying ground is one of the few surviving resources associated with Littleton's seventeenth and eighteenth century history. The burying ground and nearby town common are the constant elements around which the town center has developed.

The Old Burying Ground meets Criterion C as a diverse and well-preserved early graveyard that illustrates the changing funerary tastes of Littleton and its larger New England context. There is a large collection of well carved and well preserved early slate headstones and a smaller number of later monuments reflecting evolving funerary styles. There are also remnants of nineteenth century lot enclosures. The dry-laid stone wall along King Street is notable for the excellent craftsmanship of its construction. The presence of mature pines reflects nineteenth century efforts at beautification.

The Old Burying Ground meets Criteria Exception D because it contains graves of persons of transcendent importance to Littleton, their age, and their distinctive gravestone design and craftsmanship.

Urn and Willow motif,  
Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord



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