

# FORM E – BURIAL GROUND

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

66-72

Salem

BEV.801  
(update)

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

Town: Beverly

Place North Beverly

## Photograph



Photo 1. Looking southwest from north end of burial ground. Houses on south side of Conant St in distance.

Address or Location: 27 R Conant Street

Name: Conant Street Burial Ground  
(North Beverly Cemetery)

Ownership:  Public  Private

Approximate Number of Stones: 45

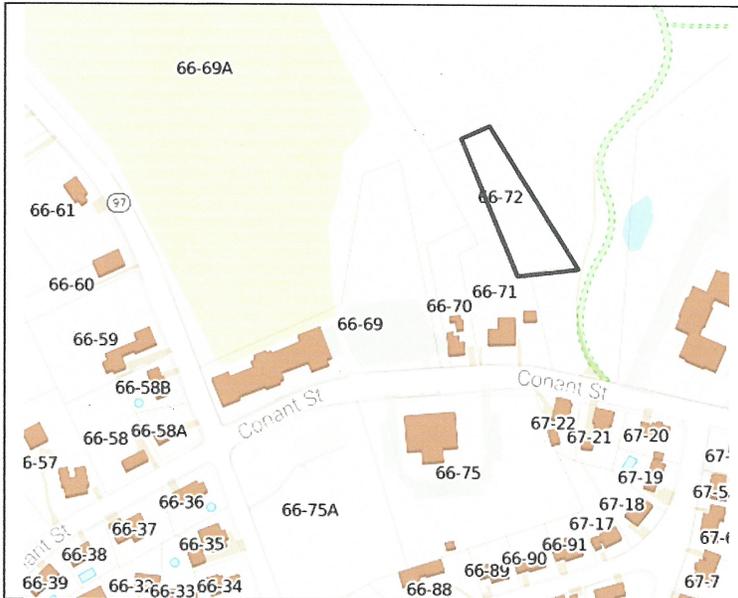
Earliest Death Date: 1717

Latest Death Date: 1805

Landscape Architect: NA

Condition: Good

## Locus Map (north at top)



Acreage: 0.84 acres

Setting: Located in a small village setting at the intersection of Conant and Cabot streets, a short distance east of the Second Parish Church. Bounded by wooded valleys on the west and north and by the Moraine Farm estate on the north and east; residential development and an early 20<sup>th</sup> century school building located nearby on Conant Street.

Recorded by: Pamela Hartford and Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Beverly Historic District Commission

Date: September 2016

# INVENTORY FORM E CONTINUATION SHEET

BEVERLY

27 R CONANT STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT

*Describe landscape features, gravestone materials, designs, motifs, and symbols that are either common. Note any known carvers.*

The Conant Street Burial Ground, 27R Conant Street (1713) is a one acre cemetery that served the Second Parish Church congregation for seventy five years in the eighteenth century (1715-1800). It is isolated physically and visually from Conant Street and contains a small but significant collection of stones representing a cross section of carving styles within a limited historical period.

The Burial Ground stands on the north side of Conant Street, about midway between Dodge Street (Route 1A) and Cabot Street (Route 97). It is located a short distance east of the Second Parish Church (North Parish Church – North Meeting House, 35 Conant Street, (1714, BEV.1099)). Between the church and this burial ground on the north side of Conant Street are two early houses, the Abner Coffin House, 29 Conant St (1802, BEV.466), and the John Fluant House, 27 Conant St, (1760, (BEV.262). The Conant Street Burial Ground is bordered on the east, north and south by Moraine Farm (BEV.K), and on the west by a ravine located on the deep narrow lot of the Fluant House. On the south side of Conant Street, opposite the burial ground, are several mid-20<sup>th</sup> century houses, as well as a large garden-apartment complex developed in the 1970s, and an early 20<sup>th</sup> century school .

The landlocked Conant Street Burial Ground is accessed by a graded gravel entrance path that traverses a ten-foot wide, 150-foot long easement on abutting land of Moraine Farm. This entrance path begins on Conant Street, where the street frontage is bordered by a fieldstone wall along Moraine Farm property. A rusted iron gate leans on this wall. A six foot high cedar board fence with post caps runs along the eastern property line of 27 Conant Street on the west side of the path, and woods of Moraine Farm border the path on the east. (Photo 2) The Burial Ground is not visible from the street and cannot be seen from most of the entrance path, due to dense woodland between the street and the burial ground. About twenty feet south of the Burial Ground, however, the trees along the path have been thinned considerably, opening a view directly into the burial ground property. The ground under these trees on the east side of the entrance path, on Moraine Farm property, is covered in a monoculture of lily of the valley, which provide a marked contrast to the Burial Ground's turf. A rough-cut, three-foot high granite post with rusted gate pins is located at the northern end of the entrance path. (Photo 6)

The Burial Ground parcel is a long, narrow trapezoid measuring approximately 300 feet north/south, 120 feet at the southern boundary, and 70 feet at the northern boundary, The Burial Ground is surrounded on all sides by dense woods. Its east and west boundaries are marked by dry-laid fieldstone walls. At the northern end of the Burial Ground, the land falls steeply away, with no boundary marker. (Photo 4) The only trees in the Burial Ground are nine large red oak trees (*Quercus rubra*), all more than seventy feet tall that have been limbed up, creating a high canopy as well as striking vertical columns. (Photo 5) The high canopy lightly shades the space in the growing season, allowing a ground cover of low growing, sparse grass interspersed with large patches of moss. (Photo 3)

Scattered across the Conant Street Burial Ground are forty-five gravestones, some with footstones, nearly all facing west. There is a concentration of stones in the southwest area of the Burial Ground; the rest of the Burial Ground is open with stones spaced relatively far apart. (Photo 6) Fifteen of the gravestones have been encased in concrete. The burial stones are predominantly of slate, with a few of sandstone, and show the workmanship of numerous carvers working in the region (Photos 11 through 13). Most have the traditional 'portal' shape favored in the eighteenth century that features a rounded tympanum on top of a rectangular tablet, with round-headed shoulders and decorative finials on either side. The Reverend John Chipman's stone (d. 1775) is located south of the entrance to the burial ground. His large stone indicates his importance to the Second Parish

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community. Set facing east instead of west, it is a portrait stone with a very densely inscribed epitaph in Latin. (Photos 8, 9) Another unusual stone is that of Deacon Joshua Dodge (d. 1772), which features a tympanum with a winged cherub framed by scrolls over an uncarved lunette. (Photo 10) The Burial Ground include examples of numerous carvers working in the region (Photos 11 through 13). Representing the change in attitude toward death (the "Great Awakening) toward the end of the eighteenth century are three stones with the urn and willow motif. (Photos 14,15)

The Conant Street Burial Ground is now owned by the City of Beverly.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Explain religious affiliations, major period of use, and evaluate historical association of this burial ground with the community.*

Although in use for less than a century, the Conant Street Burial Ground is significant for its role in the early historical development of North Beverly. Until 1713, Ryal Side and North Beverly were part of Salem. The 'Precinct of Salem and Beverly' was incorporated in 1713, allowing the formation of a second, or north, parish in Beverly. Members of the committee who supported the new parish and contributed to the building of its first meetinghouse along and their spouses and immediate descendents, are represented in the Conant Street Burial Ground, along with their spouses and immediate descendents. The family names of Herrick, Raymond, Trask, Dodge, Rea, Creasey and Brown are long associated with the development of North Beverly and are well-represented in this burial ground.

In 1715 the new parish ordained Reverend John Chipman, a native of Barnstable and a 1711 graduate of Harvard as their first minister, Chipman presided over the parish for 59 years, the longest duration of any minister in Beverly. He was married first Rebecckah Hale (d. 1751), sister of Col. Robert Hale, with whom he had fifteen children, and second to Hannah Warren (d. 1769). Chipman exerted a controlling force over the parish and was often called upon to mediate disputes outside of his parish (Stone, 1843). The burial stones of Rev. Chipman, his two wives, and his daughter Sarah stand in the southwest corner of the Conant Street Burial Ground, close to the entrance.

The remains of Eleanor Dodge, child of John Dodge Jr., and of Elizabeth Trask, wife of John Trask, were the first buried here when the burial ground opened in 1715, but neither of these have a stone of their own. The earliest surviving stone is that of Joseph Herrick, d. February 14, 1717/18. Harriet Forbes, who conducted one of the earliest substantive surveys of burial carvers in New England (1927), identified John Holliman as the carver of a stone for John Herrick (1738), and contended that it "was perhaps his masterpiece and shows extremely well his use of the chisel and his idea of the human face." Carved in a similar style is the burial stone of John Herrick (d. 1725), two years old, with a winged death mask surmounted by an hourglass. (Photo 12) The gravestone of Mary Jones (d. 1747/8) appears to be the work of a carver from the Merrimack School, based on the abstract decorative finials and circular shaped head of the winged death mask. (Photo 11) Nathaniel and Rebecckah Raymond, who died 20 years apart, share a double stone with identical decoration on their tablets. (Photo 13) Interments at the Conant Street Burial Ground ceased in 1803, when a large new burial ground was established immediately to the north of the Second Parish Meetinghouse, along Cabot Street.

In 1931 a new access road was constructed into the Conant Street Burial Ground, forming the present entrance path. In 1937, a survey supported by Works Progress Administration funds was conducted on the Burial Ground property. The access road is shown in this survey, as well as a narrow gated entrance to the Burial Ground at its northern end. In the 1960s and 70s, fifteen stones were encased in concrete by the Beverly Historical Society. In 1979, Robert Lovett, owner of 27 Conant Street, conducted a survey of the burial stones and copied their inscriptions. He removed many of the stones that had fallen or were in disrepair or stored them in his barn and cellar

Further research is recommended to identify known carvers associated with this collection of burial stones in addition to John Holliman.

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### Maps and Atlases

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### Archives and Repositories

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Stone, Edwin M. *History of Beverly, Civil and Ecclesiastical, from its Settlement in 1630 to 1842*. Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1843.

**SUPPLEMENTAL IMAGES**

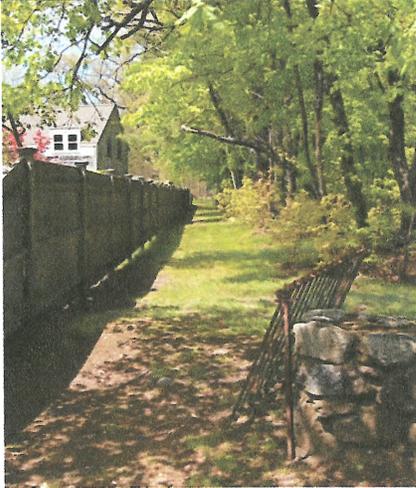


Photo 2. Entrance to Conant Burial Ground through easement on Moraine Farm land. Moraine stone wall right foreground, 27 Conant Street on left.



Photo 3. Looking north across Burial Ground.

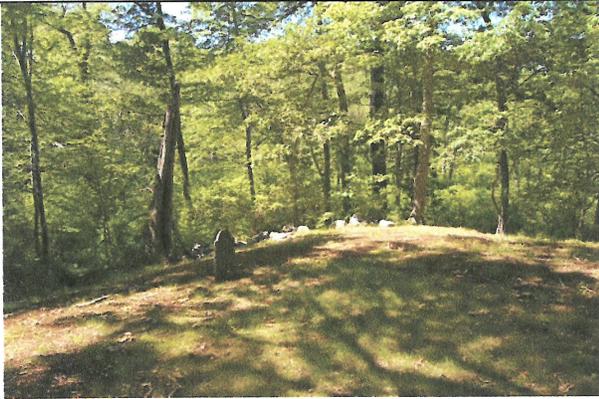


Photo 4. View looking toward northwest corner of Burial Ground.



Photo 5. Red oaks along west side of Burial Ground, looking south.

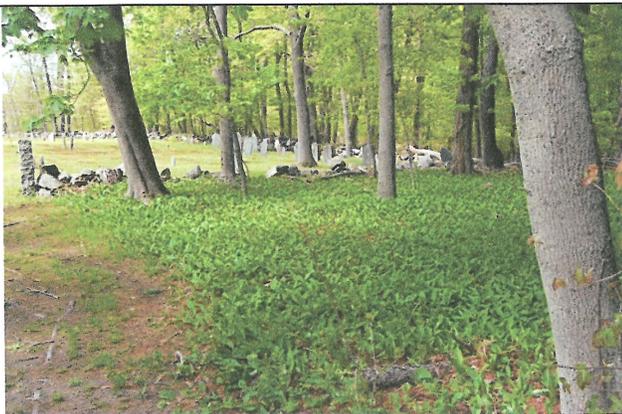


Photo 6. Entrance path looking north toward Burial Ground, open woods on east.



Photo 7. Cluster of stones in southeast of Burial Ground; Moraine Farm stone wall in background

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Photo 8. Portrait of Rev Chipman (d. 1775) on tympanum



Photo 9. Rev Chipman (d. 1775), with Latin inscription on tablet



Photo 10. Deacon Joshua Dodge (d. 1772), with double tympanum



Photo 11. Mary Jones (d. 1747/8)

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Photo 12. John Herrick (d.1725)



Photo 13. Nathaniel (d. 1749) and Rebecca (d. 1760) Raymond



Photo 14 Willow and urn motif.



Photo 15 Huldah Woodberry (d.1773) urn with stylized willow, and simplified, abstract borders

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## National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- 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 Wendy Frontiero

*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The Conant Street Burial Ground is significant for its associations with the early agricultural history and development of North Beverly during the 18th century. Many of the area's prominent citizens, including the first minister of the nearby Second Parish Church, are buried here. The Burial Ground is also important as a distinctive display of primarily vernacular New England funerary art in the 18th century. Its well-preserved collection of gravestones is maintained within a setting distinguished by its isolated location and a stand of mature red oak trees.

Retaining integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, setting, and association, the Conant Street Burial Ground is recommended for listing in the National Register, with significance at the local level under Criteria A and C. The property meets criterion Exception D because of its age, distinctive design features and craftsmanship of its gravestones, and its association with the history of Beverly.