



Col Thomas and Mrs. Lucy Marshall. Their gravestones are typical of Daniel Hastings, carver



Above: Monument to the Cutter brothers

Below: Example of granite curbing.



Above: In 1937 the town received a gift of \$5000 from Miss Josephine Merriam of Minneapolis to build the wrought-metal and stone gateway, which was designed by Weston resident Harold B. Willis, Sr. of the firm Allen, Collens, and Willis.

Prepared 2013, updated 2019 by Pamela W. Fox

### *Central Cemetery - What to Look For*

**Look for family plots with granite curbing. Do you see curbing in the Farmers' Burial Ground? What about at Linwood?**

**How many different varieties of stone are used in making markers in Central Cemetery? Compare this to Farmers' Burial Ground. What new types of monuments are found here.**

**Look for the section with the oldest gravestones, made of slate.**

**Compare the entrances into Central and Farmers' cemeteries. What does the more ornate appearance of Central Cemetery say about life in Weston in the 18th vs. the 19th century?**

**Find the six connected mound tombs. These are a major element in the landscape and are in immediate need of repair.**

**Find the monument to the Cutter brothers, Frederick and Edmund. They both died in the Civil War. Ralph Jones is also buried here. He was only 17 when he was killed in the Civil War.**

**Find these symbols:**

***Wreaths:* eternal life, with no beginning and end**

***Wheat sheaves, sickle, scythe:* Death is linked symbolically with autumn and harvest. Wheat is reaped with a sickle or scythe.**

***Oak leaves, acorns:* long life, strength, prosperity**

***Ivy:* hardy evergreen leaf denoting immortality or regeneration.**

**Also symbol of friendship, fidelity, attachment, undying love**  
***Rose:* Beauty and triumphal love. Open rose signified death in prime of life**

***Lily:* Innocence and purity. *Ferns:* humility and sincerity**

***Chain with three links:* Independent Order of Odd Fellows**

***Hand pointing down:* Hand of God descending from heavens; also mortality and sudden death. *Hand pointing up:* righteous reward of life after death.**

# Central Cemetery

*“Although it is just two blocks from the Farmers’ Burial Ground, Central Cemetery has a completely different atmosphere. Here one finds a nicely maintained Victorian Cemetery with defined roads and paths, granite curbing around many lots, which contain large, handsome marble and granite monuments and gravestones. In the center area of the southern portion of the cemetery stands the “Old Section,” eleven rows of mostly slate gravestones, which appear to have been carefully lined up at some time in the past.” (from the 2007 consultant’s report) The elaborate wrought iron gate provides an unusually beautiful entrance to the cemetery. A large six-chamber mound tomb stands at the southeastern side, near the wrought iron gate that provides vehicular access to the cemetery*

## History

The first burial was Deacon Thomas Russell, on May 7, 1792, making Central Cemetery Weston’s third oldest burying ground, after Farmers’ (1703) and South Burying Ground on South Avenue (1790)

## Important people buried here

George Warren Cutting (d. 1885), owner of G.W. Cutting & Sons general store; Isaac Jones, prominent citizen and builder of the Golden Ball Tavern; Ebenezer, Isaac, and Nathan Hobbs, members of the family that ran the Hobbs Tannery on North Avenue; Jonas Hastings, builder of the “Hastings Homestead” on North Avenue; John Flagg, builder of the Flagg Tavern, where George Washington spent the night.

At least 25 veterans of the Revolutionary War are buried here, along with many who served in the Civil War. Members of Weston’s early families include Viles, Merriam, Hews, Kingsbury, Seaverns, Fiske, Hagar, Warren, Cutter, Sibley, Stratton, Coburn, Hastings, Whitney, Conant, Harrington, Peirce, and Roberts.

## Aesthetics and Gravestone Art

Many family plots are surrounded by granite curbing, a style popular in the Victorian period, later replaced by the easier-to-maintain “landscape lawn” style (example: Linwood Cemetery) Tombstones are made with a variety of materials including slate, marble, sandstone/brownstone, and granite of different colorations, sometimes polished. Types of markers include monuments and obelisks. The slate markers are grouped in the southwest corner of the parcel. Several well-known carvers are represented including the Hastings Shop (gravestones of Thomas and Lucy Marshall) and Samuel Kilburn (gravestone of Abraham Harrington). The cemetery is known for its rhododendrons, some of which were brought from the South by Rev. Calvin Topliff, minister of First Baptist Church, who traveled there to bring back the body of Ralph Jones.

## Condition

In 2007, the Town of Weston commissioned a report on the condition of gravestones and monuments in Farmers’ Burying Ground and Central Cemetery. At Farmers’, the consultants found 240 gravestones and footstones requiring conservation, including 151 in the numbered lots and 89 in the Old Section. Slate stones required resetting or repair, marble headstones were loose or had fallen, and curbing needed to be reset. Some of the plantings were overgrown, disturbing the markers. The front wall of the large mound tomb had failed and was tilting outward at the top. The cemetery is surrounded by stone walls that require rebuilding and realignment in places. At the May 2013 Town Meeting, residents voted funds to begin the process of restoring Central and Farmers’ cemeteries. Most of the the \$125,000 in Phase I was spent on Farmers’ Burying Ground. In November 2017, Town Meeting voted \$205,000 for Phase II, most of which was spent restoring monuments at Central Cemetery. At the May 2020 Town Meeting will be asked to approve funds for Phase III, which will address stone walls, gates, steps, and posts at both cemeteries, along with the tomb at Central Cemetery.

## Reference

*Farmers’ Burial Ground, Central Cemetery Weston, Massachusetts, Gravestone/Monument Condition Assessment Report, May 2007, Prepared for the Town of Weston.*