

Russian Cemetery

Description

Introduction

The landscape layout, appearance and gravestone art of Westford's Russian Cemetery derive from design characteristics of the Early Modern Period with a Russian Orthodox religious influence. These characteristics consist of the flat, utilitarian landscape and, more importantly, the markers that are made primarily of granite, approximately 15 of which have free-standing crosses on top carved from stone. Many others are inscribed with distinctive Russian orthodox crosses. Land of the cemetery was privately owned until 1918 when the need was felt for a burial place for immigrant factory laborers who were mainly of Russian origin. A small number of interments are of immigrant laborers of Polish and other origins. Many of the approximately 300 Westford residents interred here were recruited as teenagers and young adults at their Russian and European villages for work in Westford's mill villages by traveling company operatives. Approximately 50 stones bear death dates between 1918 and 1960. The immigrants influenced the town's history and appearance and continue to do so by virtue of their artfully carved gravestones. The burial ground is located on the north side of Patten Road.

Markers are made almost exclusively from grey, pink and black granite with one cast concrete example. The earliest markers are from the Early Modern Period and appear in the form of nearly square tablets on a square plinth, occasionally with crosses mounted on top. Many inscriptions, including those on the earliest and largest markers, are in the Cyrillic language. Other markers have English language inscriptions with simpler stone designs in the form of rectangular tablets which lack the free-standing cross. Grave markers are arranged in rows oriented approximately north to south with inscriptions typically facing west.

Landscape

Land comprising the Russian Cemetery belonged in the 19th century to the Blood family and later to the Read family. The flat, nearly square parcel was likely in use as farm land at that time. Entrance to the cemetery is through two gateways in the stone wall along the Patten Road (south) side. Gateways along the southerly edge are flanked by a pair of stout, low ashlar piers with cast stone pyramidal caps. The three-foot high stone wall is split granite ashlar with a capstone. Plot-defining features inside the cemetery, such as granite curbs or plot corner stones, do not exist. Circulation among graves is via a U-shaped asphalt driveway that enters and exits from Patten Road.

Markers

The Russian Cemetery is characterized mainly by its granite tablets, the most ornamental of which are topped by a free-standing Latin cross cut from granite. Ranging in height from three feet to approximately six feet, this type of marker is articulated in approximately 15 cases with a Cyrillic language inscription. Those written in English are simple in language and basic in detail. Typical inscriptions have names and dates rendered in a simple style of script. The earliest marker has a square plinth with nearly square black granite tablet on top which bears the Cyrillic inscription and the death date of 1918. Ornament consists of the free-standing Latin cross inscribed with the letters IHS. Other markers have the square tablet on the plinth with no free-standing cross. More recent markers are simple rectangular tablets with low arched tops.

Examples of grave markers with the free standing cross include that of George (1887-1946) and Annie (1896-1991) Butko. The cross on this grey granite example is inscribed with letters IHS which stand for "Jesus" or "In His Service" or "He Is Risen". Matrona (1890-1933) and Andrew (1882-1956) Prowker and their child Antonia (1912-1927) have a grey granite tablet with free standing cross inscribed in the same way. Many other such markers have Cyrillic inscriptions. Some black granite examples exist. Most others are grey and blond in color.

Markers exist which lack the free standing Latin Cross but bear the Russian Orthodox Cross as part of the inscription. The Russian Orthodox Cross is unusual because it has three bars instead of the more common single

bar as seen in the Latin Cross. The top bar is narrower than the others and bears the title board in detailed versions. The middle bar is the widest of the three and is the one on which the Lord's hands are nailed. The bottom bar is not only narrower than the middle but is oriented at an angle to the central stem. This is the bar on which the Lord's feet are at rest. Markers in the Westford Russian Cemetery with the Russian Orthodox Cross inscribed in the low arched top of the tablet include the pink granite marker of Matthew Sudak (1896-1951), the grey granite stone of Luke (1893-1974) and Mary (1891-1945) Archinski, the wider pink granite arch topped marker of Peter (1886-1956) and Alexandra (1896-1953) Talanetz as well as many other similar examples. The Latin Cross also appears as the main ornamental component in the inscription on some stones.

Military and Commemorative Markers

20th century military markers exist in the Russian Cemetery. A small rectangular bronze marker mounted flush with the ground marks the resting place of Alexander Belida (d. 2001) who served in the U. S. Army Air Forces as a sergeant in World War II. A granite example of the flush military marker is that of Nicholas Sudak Jr. (1917-1984) who served in World War II as a staff sergeant. The stone is ornamented with a cross inscribed in a circle. Approximately a half-dozen similar examples exist.

Gravestone Carvers and Manufacturers

Gravestone manufacturers identified their work in some cases by attaching metal tags to markers. Pre-1960 stones with identifying tags include the 1933 example of Matrona and Antoni Prowker which bears a bronze tag stamped "Lowell Monument Co., manufacturers, Lowell, Mass". Mary and Steve Belida's 1951 stone has a tag stamped "Luz Brothers, 1022 Gorham St., Lowell, Mass." This stone is also etched with the "Barre Guild" seal, signifying the monument as a product of the Barre Granite Association of Barre, Vermont. Locally made markers include that of Demitry and Vera Belida's 1960 stone made by the Barretto Monument Company of Groton Road in Westford. Peter and Mary Worobey's 1941 marker was sold by A. G. Lundberg of Westford. This is Axel G. Lundberg, Cemetery Commissioner in the 1930s and 1940s who had a granite shop on Brookside Road. Other stones were purchased from University Monumental Works on Berkshire Street in Cambridge. Stones from this period appear to be pre-manufactured stones with stock designs created prior to purchase.

Existing Conditions

Most stones remain in good to excellent condition. Very little vandalism appears to have taken place. The single cast concrete grave marker has no inscription and it is impossible to discern whether or not it had one that is now lost. Boundaries of the cemetery are marked by modern chain link fence on the east and west sides with a wire fence supported by stakes on the north or rear edge. A modern flagpole rises from the northern section.

Few changes have occurred in the Russian Cemetery since its inception in 1918. The large number of remaining markers with Cyrillic language inscriptions and the proximate birth dates of the occupants who arrived during a short span of time in the early 20th century make it possible to get a clear sense of local trends in immigration and factory employees' ethnicity in Westford. This is the only historic cemetery in the town dedicated to a group with particular national affiliation. A Catholic cemetery exists on Pine Ridge Road.

Statement of Significance

The Russian Cemetery retains integrity of materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association. It is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C at the local level and meets Criterion Consideration D as a cemetery which derives its significance from distinctive design features and association with historic events. The cemetery is significant under Criterion A for its association with events in the community such as immigration by factory workers. It is eligible under Criterion C as an example of a burial ground containing gravestone designs that are unusual in the community. The period of significance for the cemetery begins at its establishment in 1918 and extends to 1952. It has been in continuous use.

Introduction

Westford's Russian Cemetery first came into use in 1918, primarily to accommodate burials of immigrant mill workers from that country. Significant numbers of Russian immigrants began to arrive in Westford during the first decade of the 20th century as the result of recruiting efforts by mill company agents in Belarus as well as other regions of Europe. The cemetery remains in use today, largely by descendants of mill recruits. Some Polish immigrants accompanied the Russians to Westford's mill villages and are interred here as well. The history of Westford's mill villages includes periodic trends in immigration of several ethnic and national groups starting with the Irish in the 1840s. French Canadians also arrived in large numbers as did residents of Sweden, Italy, Scotland, England and other nations. While Catholics of many nationalities did choose to create a cemetery of their own in the town, no other ethnic or national group in Westford has as important and distinct a resource as the Russian Cemetery to symbolize their history in the town. The cemetery provides information concerning not only names and dates of individuals interred therein but contextual documentation of the typical immigrant in terms of age and marital status. The cemetery itself stands as a testament to the solidarity of Westford's Russian immigrant population.

1918-1960

Ethnicity and national origins of residents of the town underwent change during the mid-late 19th century from a mainly native-born group to one of significant foreign-born population. Residents were almost entirely of English descent until 1850 when census records show the first Canadian and Irish immigrants. In the 1865 state census, approximately 20% of the residents were foreign-born. By the end of the century the percentage of foreign-born residents was more than half according to Annual Town Reports. Federal census figures from 1910 confirm the dramatic increase in the number of foreign-born Westford residents around the turn of the century. Groups of nationalities with representatives numbering in the hundreds include Canadians, Russians, Italians and Irish. Smaller groups were Swedish, Scottish, Austrians and English. In 1907, Russians begin to appear on lists of Westford residents and in marriage records.

In 1912, agents of the Abbot Worsted Company traveled to the Russian region of Belarus and the city of Grodno in order to recruit additional laborers with the promise of steady work, good housing and prepaid travel expenses. The agents' success and a sudden increase in Russian residents is reflected in census information and is confirmed in reminiscences of former Abbot Worsted employees. Census information reveals that Russians were most likely to be listed as woolen mill employees as opposed to Italians in Westford who were most commonly described simply as laborers. Every resident in the resident directory for 1920-21 with a Russian surname was employed by either the Abbot or the Sargent mills in Forge Village or Graniteville although it is suggested by current residents that some members of the group also worked in stone quarries in the north part of town. The Abbot Worsted Company manufactured woolen yarns in Forge Village and Graniteville with machinery made in Graniteville by the C. G. Sargent & Sons machinery manufacturing company. Based on gravestone inscriptions, it is apparent that the immigrants were between 16 and 31 years of age at the time of embarkation to America.

Grodno is located in northwest Belarus, bordered on the north by Lithuania and on the west by Poland. The population was largely Byelorussian, Lithuanian, and Polish, some of whom immigrated along with their Russian neighbors. Industrial products in Grodno were diverse and included textiles. According to a Grodno municipal website, there were in 1897 over 100 residents involved in manufacture of textile fabrics which may have been influential in the Westford mill company agents' selection of the region for labor recruits. Since working conditions in the Russian factories were distasteful and included long hours and poor pay, Abbot Company employees achieved success in their efforts to swell the ranks of mill hands in Westford's modern, well-managed facilities. The Abbot Worsted Company also mounted successful efforts to entice Canadian emigrants from Trois Rivieres in Quebec and English workers from the city of Keighley in Yorkshire.

Russian Cemetery occupants appear to have been married either before they arrived in America or to have married fellow immigrants judging by the ethnic tone of the given names of many couples in the Russian Cemetery. It is noteworthy that nearly all were married one time. Residents whose spouses died earlier than themselves tended not to remarry as did members of other groups.

One of the many benefits for immigrants was the availability of English language classes, which were held in the Abbot Worsted Company-built social halls, two of which were located in Graniteville on Cross Street and on North Main Street. Other company social halls were in Forge Village on Bradford Street and in the Brookside Village (MHC) on Brookside Road. Immigrants occupied the rented single and multiple dwelling-unit houses in mill neighborhoods in increasing numbers until the mid 20th century when the wool industry in New England had entered decline. During that time, residential subdivisions had been built on Abbot, Palermo, Orchard, Pine, Lincoln, Elm, Smith and Pershing Streets in Forge Village and River, First, Second, Third and Fourth Streets in Graniteville, among others. All these residential streets were home to Russian mill employees.

Russian immigrants who occupy the cemetery and whose names can be matched to residents on voting lists and resident directories from the 1920s and 1930s include Forge Village residents Peter Britko (1894-1977) and his wife Alexandria (1894-1957) at 7 Canal Street from 1924-1928; Peter Talanetz (1886-1956) and his wife Alexandra (1896-1953) at 8 Canal Street in 1924 and 6 Palermo Street in 1928; Peter Worobey (1891-1991) and his wife Mary (1893-1941) at 2 Canal Street in 1920-1928; Michael (also Mika) Salaliko (1881-1956) and his wife Marcella (1885-1934) at 6 Canal Street in 1924; Stephen Harachko (also Harachka, 1884-1976) and his wife Dominika (1890-1969) at 21 Chestnut Street in 1924 and 25 Chestnut Street in 1928; Jacob Tereshko (1896-1987) and his wife Axzenia (1893-1965) at 15 Oak Street in 1924 and 1928. Wasil Beskalo (1890-1969) and his wife Fedora (1895-1980) lived in Graniteville at 17 First Street from 1921 to 1928.

Conclusion

The Russian Cemetery evokes the heritage and cemetery design practices of a major group of immigrants to the town. The Russian immigrants' group history can be related by observing the gravestones with their proximate birth dates and names that are so unusual compared to those of English descent in other cemeteries in the town. The unusual appearance of the gravestones with the free-standing crosses on top combined with the Cyrillic letters, altogether unusual in Westford, further distinguish the cemetery from others in the town. These differences are a reflection of part of the broad spectrum of the community's history and culture. Survival of the cemetery is the most significant reminder of this important element of local culture.

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The Russian Cemetery comprises all of the land within the boundaries of the cemetery. It is bounded by Patten Road on the south. The cemetery encompasses 1.33 acres, described by the assessor's office as parcel 27 on map 54.

Boundary Justification:

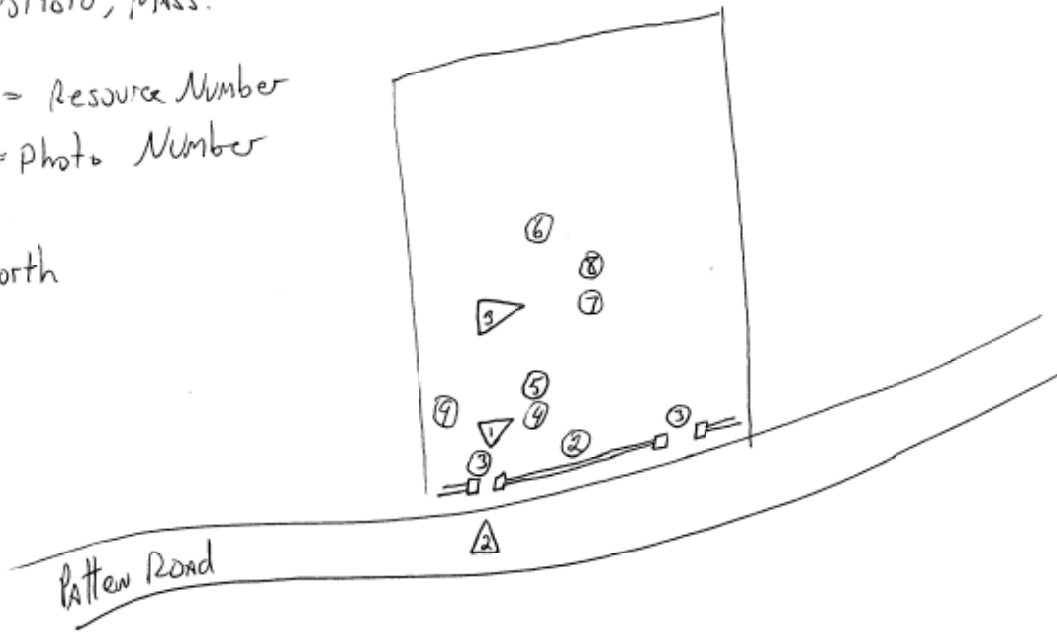
Boundaries of the cemetery were determined by the Westford Historical Commission and by the consultant. Boundaries include all gravestones, burial-related buildings, structures, circulation paths and ornamental plantings. Stone walls encircle the cemetery and mark all boundaries.

Russian Cemetery
Middlesex County
Westford, Mass.

O = Resource Number

Δ = Photo Number

↑ North



SKETCH MAP

NORTH TOWARD TOP



SKETCH MAP

NORTH TOWARD TOP

John Proctor House, 218 Concord Road

Description

The John Proctor House, Westford, Massachusetts, is a well-preserved, late First Period house of timber-frame construction (ca. 1720-1740) that has been enlarged by a two-story addition at the west elevation (ca. 1840-1870) and a one-story rear wing (ca. 1870-1910). Originally built as a center-chimney dwelling, the John Proctor House was modified in the early eighteenth century by the removal of the original western bay and now stands as a half-house.

Surrounded by fields and woods, the John Proctor House stands on its original site facing south across Concord Road, a main transportation route established prior to or during the early seventeenth century. Immediately adjacent to the house are a modern garage and a cellar hole, elements of which may date from a nineteenth century barn (although concrete facing suggests twentieth-century rebuilding). The surrounding vicinity is rural and consists of scattered former farmsteads, over 100 acres of conservation land, and some recently built homes which are not visible from the nominated property.

The John Proctor House rests upon a low fieldstone foundation. The exterior elevations are covered with wooden clapboards and are trimmed with simple flat-board friezes and corner boards. Similarly, the front entry and the window surrounds feature flat-board casing. Due to the removal of the original western bay in the early nineteenth century, the main entry is positioned asymmetrically towards the west and stands above the façade's gabled roof, and its slight eave is decorated with a boxed cornice and cornice returns. A narrow brick chimney stands at the west elevation (north of the windows), and a second chimney pierces the front-gabled roof of the north elevation addition.

The sparse fenestration of the John Proctor House façade is typical of the First Period design. It consists of one 6/6 double-hung sash window east of the entry at the first story, one 6/6 double-hung sash window at the east bay of the second story, and one smaller 4/4 double-hung sash window positioned over the entry. The top rails of both second story façade windows intersect the frieze, which may be due to the presence of earlier casement window openings, which were enlarged during the nineteenth-century installation of larger double-hung sash windows.

The John Proctor House consists of two bays, one is framed into a former chimney bay (west, approximately 9' wide) and the other is a room bay (east, approximately 18'6" square). Framing members consist of flared oak posts, large girts, and boxed plates. The floors of the main house are supported by a transverse summer beam (13" x 12'6") at the first story and a square longitudinal boxed summer beam (15'6") at the second story.

The attic is framed into three bays by principal rafters that rise to a small ridge-pole which has been replaced at the western bay (original chimney location); purlins are irregularly spaced and bear evidence of alteration with salvage materials. About 1900, a one-half story balloon-frame rear ell was added; interestingly, the ell is butted against the north elevation without altering or being tied into the house's original frame.

Most of the present interior woodwork and plaster of the John Proctor House appear to date from the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The wall thickness at the façade (10") and rear wall (11 ½") suggest that current finishes have been applied over earlier finishes. The 6" thickness of the west side wall reflects its alteration in the nineteenth century; the east side wall is only 6" thick at the first story, as a result of the replacement of its sill and studs in the first half of the twentieth century.

Richard and Alan Emmet, who have owned the house since 1970, have undertaken some basic repairs and maintenance; the John Proctor House and surrounding acreage, however, survive remarkably intact. The nominated property includes 1.16 acres of land surrounding the John Proctor House, with 247.68 feet of frontage on Concord Road and a northern lot line of 217.92 feet. The Emmets have donated the remaining acreage of the John Proctor House premises to the Massachusetts Audubon Society as part of a larger tract which is a designed wildlife sanctuary.

Historical Physical Appearance

The main house (ca. 1720-1740) was built by John Proctor II (1694-1783) of Westford, Massachusetts. Although originally constructed as a center-chimney, timber-frame house, early deeds from John Proctor II to his sons, Phineas Proctor and John Proctor III, refer to divided use and ownership among family members of the eastern and western sections.

In 1791 a Proctor descendant, James, sold a large tract of the Proctor Farm and the eastern half of the John Proctor House to a non-family member, while Sarah Wright Proctor (the widow of John Proctor II) continued to live in the western section of the house until her death in 1827. The John Proctor House was physically reduced to a half-house in 1827 when the western section was sold to Henry Fletcher, a neighbor. Two flared posts used as plates in an 1827 addition to Henry Fletcher's barn offer evidence that framing elements of the Proctor House may have been re-used in this location.

Deed references indicate that Henry Fletcher probably dismantled a large center chimney along with the western bay of the John Proctor House in 1827, requiring the owner of the remaining eastern section to undertake major changes in order to live in the divided structure. At this time, a smaller chimney (now capped below the roof line) was constructed at the west elevation and set 4' into the former hall and hall chamber area in a position slightly east of the original chimney.

A small room was created in the former center-chimney bay, and it is likely that the west elevation addition was constructed ca. 1840-1870 to create usable rooms at the first and second stories of the house's west end. Other changes made at that time probably include the enlargement of existing window openings to their present dimensions and the cutting of new windows on the house's east end. The present exterior boxed cornice was likely added between 1830 and 1850.

In 1874 Lizzie Martin of Boston purchased the John Proctor House and 12 acres of land for \$1,100. In 1881 Mrs. Martin and her husband Frederick purchased a 30-acre parcel abutting the house to the east and north. (This property adjoined the west boundary of the Henry Fletcher homestead.) In 1885 Mrs. Martin was taxed on a house, shed, barn, and 42 acres; by 1895 a henhouse existed on the premises as did 1 horse, 4 cows and 20 fowl.

As noted, the John Proctor House's balloon-frame rear addition was built ca. 1900, and it appears that John Martin, son of Lizzie and Frederick Martin, and his family lived on the premises around this time because his wife Clara was listed as the owner of record on a 1915 tax assessment. It is believed that the Proctor Barn collapsed or was torn down prior to 1951, and a low metal-roofed shed (now removed) was built over the barn's fieldstone foundations.

After Mrs. Clara Martin died in 1959, her two unmarried sons, John and Clarence Martin, lived on the premises until 1970 when they sold the John Proctor House and 42 acres to Richard and Alan Emmet. The Emmets, who have lived in the neighboring Henry Fletcher House since 1951, continue to own the John Proctor House and rent it to residential tenants.

Statement of Significance

The John Proctor House, initially constructed between 1720 and 1740, is important for its surviving elements of First Period architecture in addition to the well-preserved, mid-nineteenth-century interior finishes and exterior elements, resulting from modifications made between 1827 and ca. 1850. The house also possesses historical associations with the family of Robert Proctor, one of the first settlers of Westford. The John Proctor House retains a high degree of integrity of setting, location, feeling, design, materials, and association which are further enhanced by an architecturally significant dwelling retaining original materials and workmanship exemplifying traditional construction during Westford's earliest period of settlement and reflecting nineteenth-century building practices in Westford. The John Proctor House thus fulfills National Register Criteria A and C on the local level.

Originally the hunting ground of the Pawtucket, Wamesit, and Nashoba Indians and formerly the “West Precinct” of the Town of Chelmsford, Massachusetts, the Town of Westford is located 24 miles northwest of Boston and 7 miles southwest of Lowell in the northern section of Middlesex County. Westford’s boundaries encompass 31 square miles, comprised mainly of rolling upland terrain with numerous brooks, ponds and bogs. English colonial settlement began in the mid-seventeenth century. The first settlers came mainly from the nearby towns of Concord, Woburn, and Wenham to obtain land, clear trees, build homes, and begin farming. The Nashua Valley corridor supported an agricultural economy and the water power of Stony Brook gave rise to local mill sites. Settlement was interrupted in 1675 by King Philip’s War. Re-settlement proceeded slowly, and Westford remained part of Chelmsford, Massachusetts, until 1729 when acting Governor William Dummer signed an Act of Incorporation for the Town of Westford. Shortly thereafter, the boundaries of Westford were enlarged by the annexation of the Prescott, Kent, and Townsend family estates, which were previously part of the Town of Groton.

Between 1720 and 1800 Westford continued to exist as a farming community of scattered farmsteads situated on pre-established transportation routes. During this time, a town center also began to grow around the town common, the first Meeting house, and the town cemetery. In the early nineteenth century, the water power of Stony Brook led to development of several small-scale industrial centers (Nabnasset, Graniteville, and Forge Village), and granite quarrying began in the northeast section of Westford in 1820. In 1855 the Abbot Worsted Mills, located first in Graniteville and later in the Forge Village area of Westford, began the manufacture of worsted yarns and attracted immigrants to Westford from England, Scotland, Canada, Ireland, Russia, Poland, and Italy.

With increasing competition from large upstate New York and Mid-west farms, New England’s overall agricultural productivity began to decline in the early nineteenth century. Westford’s long-established agricultural economy improved, however, during the Civil War era, and agriculture remained one of the primary occupations of Westford residents until after World War II. Dairy farming was predominant; although fruits such as apples, peaches, and strawberries were also sold profitably at Boston markets.

Due to the eventual decline of Westford’s agricultural economy in the 1950s and 1960s, many local farmers sold land to developers who were building new homes to accommodate Boston’s suburban expansion. Although Westford’s town center, mill villages, and some agricultural landscapes presently remain intact, increased access to the Boston highway system (via the extension of Interstate 495) and industrial expansion of surrounding communities have brought extensive suburban development to Westford during the past 20 years with consequent loss of former farmsteads and agricultural lands.

The nominated property, a two-story, timber-frame house, was built ca. 1720-1740 by John Proctor II (1694-1783), husbandman. John Proctor II was the grandson of Robert Proctor, a petitioner to the General Court in 1653 for the settlement of Chelmsford Plantation. When Robert Proctor moved from Concord, Massachusetts, to the “West End” of Chelmsford with his wife Jane Hildreth Proctor; and their four children between 1650-1656, the Proctors became one of the first families to settle the area and to begin farming. Robert and Jane Proctor had seven additional children’s births indicating that they remained in Chelmsford at least until the early 1680s.

In 1692 and 1693, Robert Proctor conveyed much of his property to his son John Proctor I, including among other parcels his “home Lott with a Dwelling house, Barn and other out houses Lands, Meadows & orchards” and a “parcel of Land called ye New Lott... bounded Southerly by the Highway...” Robert Proctor’s movable property was also included in the transfer “Excepting Such Cattle and household goods... reserved in another Instrument” and the right to cut wood on the east side of “the Ry Lott.” As all other parcels are described as meadows and woodlots, it is possible that the “New Lott” was already the home of John Proctor I and his wife, Miriam Proctor, at the time of transfer.

That the “New Lott” of Robert Proctor may have been the property at 218 Concord Road is possible but conjectural due to the imprecision of property descriptions and the lack of subsequent deeds until 1760 when John Proctor II sold several parcels to his son, Phineas Proctor. Included in the 1760 sale was a parcel of land that corresponds to 218 Concord Road together with one-half of the “Dwelling House & Barn” standing thereon. As John Proctor II was married prior to 1719 and was living in Westford at the time of its incorporation in 1729, it is probable, but not documented, that the present main house was standing by the 1720s.

Subsequently, in 1761 John Proctor II sold additional parcels to his son John Proctor III, yeoman (1733-1785). This sale included one-half of the house and barn of John Proctor II but apparently not the land on which they stood, as it had already been sold to Phineas Proctor. From 1761 to 1827 the western half of the house was occupied by the family of John Proctor III and the surrounding acreage was farmed. In the initial settlement of Proctor's estate, the western half of the house and nearby land were granted to his widow, Sarah Wright Proctor; an inventory of the estate includes two sets of fire shovels and tongs with sufficient furniture to indicate that Proctor occupied at least two rooms and perhaps more. The inventory also lists the farm implements, livestock, and cooper's tools that belonged to John Proctor III.

In 1782 the eastern half of the house and the land on which it stands were sold by Phineas Proctor, husbandman, to his son, James Proctor, yeoman. This conveyance also included 76 acres of land used for "orcharding mowing, plowing and woodland." In 1798 James Proctor sold the eastern half of the house and an 80 acre farm to Abel White of Westford for \$850, subject to a \$400 Bank Mortgage. Between 1802-1819, ownership of the eastern half of the house with 12-acre tract of land changed hands several times before being acquired by in 1819 by Samuel Farwell, a cooper from Littleton.

Sarah Wright Proctor, the widow of John Proctor III, continued to live in the western section of the house until her death in 1827. Following the death of Sarah Proctor, the land that Phineas Proctor had purchased from his father was sold in 1827 to Henry Fletcher, the owner of neighboring property. Henry Fletcher also purchased the "West part of the House as far as the Senter of the chimney with the Sellar under the same—with ten feet wide in the southwest corner of the Barn Beginning at the floorway through to the West End with a privilege in the Thrashing floor."

Insofar as the description of Fletcher's purchase indicates that the John Proctor House was a full, center-chimney structure, rather than the present half-house, it suggests that Fletcher dismantled the chimney and western bay of the John Proctor House, requiring the owner of the eastern half to make major changes to the remaining structure. The use of two flared posts as plates in a 1827 addition to Henry Fletcher's barn offer evidence that framing elements of the Proctor House may have been re-used in this location.

As noted, beginning in 1819 Samuel Farwell owned the eastern section of the John Proctor House and its 12 acre parcel. Farwell had married Mary Parker in 1813 (Mary Parker Farwell was a member of the established Westford family for which "Parkerville," now "Parker Village," was named) and, as discussed above, it appears that the Farwells modified both the exterior and interior of the house during the second quarter of the nineteenth century (1830-1850) in order to render the half-house more comfortable and attractive.

Even though Samuel was a cooper by trade, the Farwell family continued the tradition of farming; Mary Parker Farwell purchased an additional, non-abutting 30 acre parcel to the west of their home for this purpose in 1850. Samuel Farwell died in 1859, survived by his wife Mary and five grown children. The inventory of Farwell's estate listed a house, barn, and land with personal property that included household furniture, dairy tools, two lots of casks, farming tools, three cows, one wheelbarrow, one lot of hay, and \$100 in cash.

Beginning in 1866, the John Proctor House and 12 surrounding acres were sold three times before being purchased in 1874 by Lizzie Martin of Boston, Massachusetts. During this time, the John Proctor House continued to be a family farmstead, and Mr. and Mrs. Martin expanded their holdings in 1881 by purchasing a 30 acre parcel which abutted their house to the east and north and adjoined the west boundary of the neighboring Henry Fletcher House premises. Additionally, chicken and egg production became commercially important in Westford during the end of the nineteenth century, and by 1895 the Martins had constructed a henhouse to for their 20 fowl.

In 1915 Mrs. Clara Martin, the daughter-in-law of Lizzie and Frederick Martin, was the property's owner of record on the local tax rolls. Successful farming continued into the early twentieth century, and the Martin family held 42 acres of land, the John Proctor House and Barn, a henhouse, a horse and cow, plus 30 fowl. The advent of the 1930s brought economic depression and a decline in farming in Westford. Active farming probably ceased on the property by the late 1940s, and it is believed that the Proctor Barn collapsed or was torn down prior to 1951. Clara Martin died in 1959, and her two unmarried sons, John and Clarence Martin, used the premises for residential

purposes. In 1970 the Martins sold the John Proctor House and 42 acres to its current owners, Richard and Alan Emmet, who rent the house to residential tenants.

The Emmets donated a perpetual preservation restriction to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in 1990 in order to ensure that the historical and architectural integrity of the John Proctor House will continue to be preserved for generations to come. The restriction protects both interior and exterior features of the house, such as the foundation, all elevations, roof profiles, structural members, interior space configuration, floors, plaster walls and ceilings, woodwork and fireplaces.

The John Proctor House is significant as a rare survivor from the early colonial period of Westford, Massachusetts, and for its associations with Robert Proctor, who was one of Westford’s first settlers. Due to its well-preserved condition, the house contributes to the understanding of late First Period design and construction practices in Middlesex County and stands as an uncommon example of an eighteenth-century, center-chimney dwelling that was reduced to a half-house more than 100 years later. Built on an early transportation route, the John Proctor House and its intact setting also exemplify the agrarian life-style of many Westford residents between the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of Parcel A (1.16 acres) with the John Proctor House thereon, as more particularly described in a survey conducted June 10, 1991, by McGlinchey Associates, Inc. (attached as a site plan):

Parcel A	Southerly by Concord Road two hundred forty-seven and 68/100 (247.68) feet; Westerly by land now or formerly of Richard S. Emmet, Jr. two hundred ninety-eight and 93/100 (298.93) feet; Northerly by land now or formerly of Richard S. Emmet, Jr. by several lines measuring together three hundred sixty-eight and 66/100 (368.66) feet; and Easterly by land now or formerly of Richard S. Emmet, Jr. one hundred forty-eight and 45/100 (148.45) feet.
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Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property include the immediate environs of the John Proctor House contributing to the historic integrity of the premises. The boundaries also reflect the creation of a 1.16-acre parcel surrounding the John Proctor House by its current owners, who have established preservation restrictions on this lot and have donated the remaining acreage to the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

Henry Fletcher House and Barn, 224 Concord Road

Description

The Henry Fletcher House, Westford, Massachusetts, is a two-story, five-bay, timber-frame dwelling of late-Georgian design with a rear ell and several twentieth-century additions. To the east of the house stands the Fletcher Barn, a two-story, timber-frame structure of two bays' length; it possesses a main core contemporary with the Fletcher House's initial period of construction (ca. 1810-1813).

Both the Henry Fletcher House and Barn stand on their original sites facing south across Concord Road, a main transportation route established prior to or during the early seventeenth century. The grounds, which include approximately 10.6 acres of land lying to the north and south of Concord Road, feature open fields, second growth woodlands, and low stone walls. The surrounding vicinity is rural and is comprised of scattered former farmsteads, over 100 acres of conservation land, and some recently built homes which are not visible from the nominated property.

The Henry Fletcher House was built in several stages and consists of a two-story main house (ca. 1810-1813); an extensively modified one-story rear ell (ca. 1810-1820, sections ca. 1860-1880, ca. 1950-1970); a two-story rear addition (ca. 1960); a bathroom addition to the west elevation (ca. 1970); and a glazed east porch (ca. 1978).

The main house rests upon a dry wall stone foundation which appears to have been re-faced with granite during the early nineteenth century. The exterior of the main house is covered with clapboards (south and east elevations) and painted shingles (west and north elevations).

The façade of the house is symmetrically arranged around a center entry. The entry consists of a raised six-panel door and a four-light transom set in a well-preserved, pilastered surround which rises to an undecorated frieze and cornice. Elsewhere, exterior details consist of narrow corner boards, a shallow molded cornice, and a wide wooden water table.

The fenestration of the main house remains as originally designed, although the current 9/6 sash is a replacement (ca. 1920-1940) for the earlier 6/9 sash, which is shown in an old photograph of the house. Dating from a similar period of alteration are the façade's dormers (now removed) and the painted wooden shingles that conceal the clapboards with which the house was previously covered.

The main house possesses a characteristic vernacular floorplan of rooms laid out around a central chimney with three fireboxes at the first story and two at the second. As originally laid out, the first story of the main house possessed two principal rooms flanking the chimney (east and west) and a kitchen with service rooms along the north side of the house; a similar original floorplan is attributed to the second story. Changes have been made to partitions and finishes in the rear (north) rooms of the first and second stories, while the principal rooms and main stairwell remain largely undisturbed.

The main house's interior retains its original fireplaces, bake ovens, paneled doors, plaster walls, raised paneling, and other finishes that bear a mixture of late-Georgian and Federalist style motifs. Especially well-preserved finishes remain at the main stairhall, with its scalloped stair treads and low railing, and at the southeast chamber, whose mantelpiece is derived from Plate 20 of Asher Benjamin's *Country Builder's Assistant* of 1797.

The one-story rear ell of the Henry Fletcher House retains the timber-frame construction of an original or early service ell and extends eastward from the northeast corner of the main house. The ell currently serves as the dining room and possesses a series of wrought-iron hooks set into its ceiling that remain from the mid-nineteenth century. As noted, the more recent additions to the house's west, north, and east elevations date from the twentieth century, and their scale and materials are compatible with the earlier fabric of the main house.

The Fletcher Barn is a two-story, timber-frame structure of two bays' length and is contemporary with the Fletcher House's initial period of construction (ca. 1810-1813). The barn's design is characteristic of an "English" barn,

with its principal door located in the side gable of the south elevation. The core of the barn has been expanded laterally by a one-bay addition to the western end. This addition is likely to have been constructed in 1827 when Fletcher dismantled a section of the neighboring Proctor House and re-used the timbers in this location. A balloon-frame hen house (ca., 1930) is located at the east gable end.

The Fletcher Barn rests upon a fieldstone foundation, and its elevations are clad with wooden shingles. In its present form, the barn retains lofts, as well as elements of cow stalls and other minor partitions from its use as a livestock barn. Alterations to the building include the installation of shingles with wide exposure to the weather (ca. 1920-1940) as well as the addition of two garage doors and internal partitions to create a separate parking area for two cars. These modifications do not interfere with the barn's original timber frame.

The nominated property includes 10.6 acres of land to the north and south of Concord Road. The northerly parcel (5.09 acres) contains the Fletcher House and Barn with 554 feet of road frontage, and the southerly parcel (5.509 acres) consists of open fields and second growth woodlands with 936.74 feet of frontage on Concord Road. The nominated property continues to be used as a private residence.

Historic Physical Appearance

The two-story main house, the one-story rear service ell and the barn were built by Henry Fletcher, yeoman, of Westford (1778-1861). Fletcher probably purchased the underlying land in 1810 when title records indicate that he bought 60 acres situated to the north and south of Concord Road; however, due to imprecise lot descriptions, it is possible that the buildings stand upon Fletcher's 1813 purchase of 12 acres of woodland, orchards, and pasture land. As noted, Fletcher enlarged the barn by constructing an additional bay at its west section in 1827.

The property was the family farmstead of Henry Fletcher and his second wife, Huldah Spalding Fletcher (formerly of Carlisle, Massachusetts) for almost 50 years, until their deaths in 1861. George Prescott, the grandson of Henry Fletcher, inherited the property in 1861 but sold it in 1866 after he returned to Westford from the Civil War.

After the property left the Fletcher family in 1866, ownership changed numerous times until William Symmes of Westford bought the premises in 1887. In 1895, Williams Symmes paid taxes on 12 acres of land which he farmed with his wife Laura and their three children (the additional Fletcher acreage was sold off by George Prescott or interim owners).

After William Symmes died in 1914, his son George continued to operate the farmstead which, according to the 1916 tax assessment, included a hen house and 100 fowl. When George Symmes left Westford in the early 1920s, his widowed mother Laura Symmes continued to live on the premises. During the 1920s, the Henry Fletcher House and Barn fell into a state of disrepair.

In 1929, George Heathcote, a lawyer from Newton, Massachusetts, purchased the property as a summer residence for his family. In later years, it became their permanent home, and the Heathcotes completed a variety of repairs and improvements including: the creation of a formal front yard; the installation of shingles over the clapboards of the house (now removed from the south and east elevations) and of the barn; the addition of an ell at the rear of the east elevation; the installation of dormers at the south and north elevations (now removed); the construction of two garage spaces inside the barn; and enlargement of the barn with a balloon-frame hen house at the east gable end.

In addition, it is said that a large rock in front of the house was painted and read, "George Heathcote Attorney-at-Law." Mr. Heathcote also constructed a separate building on the premises for use as an office. (This building has been moved to Forge Village and is used as a private residence.) Although some chickens and ponies were kept on the property after 1930, subsistence farming essentially ceased with the Heathcote purchase.

After 1945, the Henry Fletcher House and Barn changed hands twice before the current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Emmet, purchased the property in 1951. During the course of their ownership, the Emmets have undertaken thoughtful maintenance, restoration, and some new construction, but the property remains remarkably intact, and the changes do not compromise the historical or architectural integrity of the nominated property.

Statement of Significance

The Henry Fletcher House and Barn, initially constructed between 1810 and 1813, are important for their surviving elements of late Georgian style architecture and, together with surrounding land, stand as a well-preserved example of the family farmsteads which commonly existed during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Westford, Massachusetts. The nominated property is also important for its historical associations with Henry Fletcher, a descendant of William Fletcher and a member of one of the first and most prolific families to settle in Westford. The Henry Fletcher House and Barn are architecturally significant buildings that retain a high degree of integrity of setting, location, materials, workmanship, and historic associations. The Henry Fletcher House and Barn thus fulfill National Register Criteria A and C on the local level.

Originally the hunting ground of the Pawtucket, Wamesit, and Nashoba Indians and formerly the “West Precinct” of the Town of Chelmsford, Massachusetts, the Town of Westford is located 24 miles northwest of Boston and 7 miles southwest of Lowell in the northern section of Middlesex County. Westford’s boundaries encompass 31 square miles that are comprised mainly of rolling upland terrain with numerous brooks, ponds and bogs.

English colonial settlement began in the mid-seventeenth century. The first settlers came mainly from the nearby towns of Concord, Woburn, and Wenham to obtain land and to begin farming. The Nashua Valley corridor supported an agricultural economy and the water power of Stony Brook gave rise to local mill sites. In 1675, though, settlement was disrupted by King Philip’s War.

Re-settlement proceeded slowly, and Westford remained part of Chelmsford until 1729 when acting Governor William Dummer signed an Act of Incorporation for the Town of Westford. Shortly thereafter, the boundaries of Westford were enlarged by the annexation of the Prescott, Kent, and Townsend family estates which were previously part of the Town of Groton.

Between 1720 and 1800 Westford continued to exist as a farming community of scattered farmsteads situated on pre-established transportation routes. During these years, a town center also began to grow around the town common, the first Meeting house, and the town cemetery.

In the early nineteenth century, the water power of Stony Brook led to development of several small-scale industrial centers (Nabnasset, Graniteville, and Forge Village), and granite quarrying began in the northeast section of Westford in 1820. In 1855 the Abbot Worsted Mills, located first in Graniteville and later in the Forge Village area of Westford, began the manufacture of worsted yarns and attracted immigrants to Westford from England, Scotland, Canada, Ireland, Russia, Poland, and Italy.

With increasing competition from large upstate New York and mid-west farms, New England’s overall agricultural productivity began to decline in the early nineteenth century. Westford’s long-established agricultural economy improved, however, during the Civil War era, and agriculture remained one of the primary occupations of Westford residents until after World War II. Dairy farming was predominant; although fruits such as apples, peaches, and strawberries were also sold profitably at Boston markets.

Due to the eventual decline of Westford’s agricultural economy during the late 1940s through the 1960s, many local farmers sold land to developers who built new homes to accommodate the suburban expansion of Boston and Lowell. Although Westford’s town center, mill villages, and some agricultural landscapes presently remain intact, increased access to the Boston highway system (via the extension of Interstate 495) and industrial expansion of surrounding communities have brought extensive suburban development to Westford during the past 20 years with continuing loss of former farmsteads and agricultural lands.

The nominated property’s two-story main house, one-story rear service ell and barn were built ca. 1810-1813 by Henry Fletcher (1778-1861), a descendant of Robert Fletcher who sailed from England and settled in Concord, Massachusetts, in 1630. William Fletcher, the son of Robert, was among the first to settle the plantation of Chelmsford in 1653, and the Fletcher family grew to be quite numerous and influential. Although the original Fletcher homestead was in Chelmsford, family members moved into the Stony Brook valley and southwest areas of Westford during the early settlement years.

Henry Fletcher's father served in the Revolutionary War and was killed in the Battle of White Plains in 1780 at 26 years of age. Henry Fletcher and his sister Betsy, respectively two and three years old at the time of their father's death, was presumably raised by their mother, Remembrance Foster Fletcher.

In 1805 Henry Fletcher married a woman named Meriam Smith of Princeton, Massachusetts, who died in 1806; soon after, Fletcher was married to Huldah Spalding, formerly of Carlisle, Massachusetts. In 1811 Henry and Huldah Fletcher had one daughter named Mary Meriam Fletcher, later the wife of Capt. Henry Prescott of Lowell, Massachusetts. A son, Zebulon Fletcher, was born in 1814 but died a year later.

Title records indicate that in 1810 Fletcher bought 60 acres of unimproved land along Concord Road in Westford from Aaron White. After 1811, the tax assessors' increased assessments for property owned by Fletcher most likely resulted from the construction of the Henry Fletcher House and Barn. In 1813 Fletcher purchased another 12 acres of woodland, orchards, and pasture land. He enlarged the barn in 1827 by constructing an additional bay at its west section. By 1845 tax records indicate that Fletcher operated a farm of 85 acres that included a separate 10-acre meadow lot, on which he kept four cows, two horses, and a pig.

No inventory was recorded at the time of Henry Fletcher's death in 1861. His will, however, specifically granted farm tools and livestock to his wife, indicating that the property remained in use as a farm. In 1866, Fletcher's grandson, George Prescott, sold the property, known locally as "The Henry Fletcher place." It then passed through numerous owners during the late nineteenth century.

The 5 acres surrounding the Fletcher House and Barn and the 5.5 acre parcel to the south of Concord Road continued to be used for raising livestock by William Symmes, who owned the farm from 1887 until his death in 1914. George Symmes (son of William Symmes) raised poultry in the early twentieth century when this became a locally important branch of agriculture in Westford.

After 1930, the property came into the possession of George Heathcote, a lawyer from a Boston suburb, who initially used the farm as a summer home and later as a principal residence. The Heathcote family's ownership exemplifies Westford's transition from a farming community to a residential area during the Depression and post World War II years. Although the Heathcotes enjoyed gardening and kept some fowl and their children's ponies in the barn, this relatively affluent, suburban family did not continue the tradition of subsistence farming on the premises.

After 1945, the Henry Fletcher House and Barn changed hands twice before the current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Emmet, purchased the property in 1951 as their principal residence. In 1990, the Emmets donated a perpetual preservation restriction to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in order to ensure that the historical and architectural integrity of the Henry Fletcher House and Barn will continue to be preserved for generations to come.

The Henry Fletcher House and Barn are significant as well-preserved examples of late Georgian architecture in Westford, Massachusetts, and for their historical associations with one of the first and most prolific families to settle in Westford. The Henry Fletcher House and Barn contribute to our understanding of early nineteenth-century construction, including the practice of re-using timber from other structures (illustrated in the Fletcher Barn by the presence of timbers originating from a demolished section of the nearby John Proctor House). Built on an early transportation route, the Henry Fletcher House and Barn and surrounding acreage exemplify the agrarian life-style of many Westford residents during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of Parcel B (5.092 acres) with the Henry Fletcher House and Barn thereon and Parcel C-1 (5.509 acres), which are more particularly described in a survey conducted June 10, 1990, by McGlinchey Associates, Inc.:

Parcel B Southerly by Concord Road five hundred fifty-four and 00/100 (554.00) feet; Westerly by land now or formerly of Richard S. Emmet, Jr. four hundred sixty-seven and 13/100 (467.13) feet; Northerly by land now or formerly of Richard S. Emmet, Jr. by several lines measuring together four hundred eighty-three and 51/100 (483.51) feet; and Easterly by land now or formerly of Dunn, Diette and Shamah three hundred ninety-one and 30/100 (391.10) feet.

Parcel C-1 Southerly by land now or formerly of Muller, Queenan Corp., Nardone, and Richard S. Emmet, Jr. by several lines measuring together eight hundred seventy-one and 78/100 (871.78) feet; Westerly by land now or formerly of Richard S. Emmet, Jr. two hundred sixty-four and 47/100 (264.47) feet, and by land now or formerly of Cobbs Pedigreed Chicks, Inc., two hundred fourteen and 64/100 (214.64) feet; Northerly by Concord Road nine hundred thirty-six and 74/100 (936.74) feet; and Easterly by land now or formerly of Doucette and Seift two hundred eighty-five and 18/100 (285.18) feet.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property form the core of the original agricultural holdings of Henry Fletcher and reflect the legal boundaries of the property established in 1866. Parcel B contains open land with the Henry Fletcher House and Barn thereon; Parcel C-1 is situated across Concord Road and provides an open vista of fields and woodlands. The boundaries of the nominated property thus reflect its agricultural and rural setting and contribute to its historical significance

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