



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff

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Telephone: 617-727-9180

**WINSLOW CEMETERY, MARSHFIELD, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO
THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Winslow Cemetery, Marshfield, for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at a recent meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of Marshfield’s ancient Winslow Cemetery in the National Register will help to raise awareness of this remarkable historic site.”

The Winslow Cemetery, also known as the Pilgrim Burying Ground, is a 6.1-acre greenspace located on Winslow Cemetery Road. The cemetery dates to 1651, with the first documented burial being that of William Thomas, who had donated the earliest section of the burying ground to the new community. It is also the likely site of the first meetinghouse that had been established a decade earlier, in 1641.

There are more than 600 gravestones and monuments, with many fine examples of gravestone art. The oldest surviving stone marker is that of Deborah Thomas, who died in 1696; her slate stone features carvings of large lilies and is marked by the initials of a Boston carver known only as “J.N.”

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Several early Marshfield families are represented in the cemetery, but the most prominent burial is undoubtedly Daniel Webster, American senator and Secretary of State to three presidents, whose connections with the community are extensive. Originally, Webster and his family visited the town en route to his summer vacations in Sandwich, but he eventually bought the John Thomas farm and moved to Marshfield in 1832, where he farmed and fished, maintained a fleet of sailboats, and attended church.

Between 1817 and 1848, Webster's wife and four children died and were buried in a tomb under St. Paul's Church in Boston. Following the last burial, Webster oversaw creation of a final resting place for his family along the southern boundary of Winslow Cemetery, adjacent to his farm. The family plot included a central monument and tomb. Upon Webster's death in 1852, his family's remains were relocated to Marshfield to be interred alongside him in Winslow Cemetery.

Webster's prominence, enhanced by his notable oratorical skills, meant that Winslow Cemetery began to receive a large number of visitors paying their respects. Consequently, efforts in cemetery improvement were undertaken, which included putting a decorative iron fence around the Webster plot and erecting a monument to Pilgrim Peregrine White, the first child born in Massachusetts. Other early settlers of Marshfield are also buried here, representing the town's agricultural and maritime history. The cemetery is still in active use today.

The Winslow Cemetery is one of five historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting. The nomination was prepared by consultant Barbara Donohue.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

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The National Register is the nation's official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are more than 75,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

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