

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Hillside Cemetery

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 76 Walnut Street

City or town: Torrington State: CT County: Litchfield

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:	_____ Date
_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ Signature of commenting official:	_____ Date
_____ Title :	
_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Funerary: Cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Funerary: Cemetery

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Naturalistic landscape

Gothic Revival

Vernacular

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: stone, copper, brick, asphalt shingle

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Hillside Cemetery is a naturalistic cemetery in the City of Torrington, Litchfield County, Connecticut, designed by Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects¹ in 1907 for The Hillside Cemetery Association. The cemetery property consists of two lots totaling 131.812 acres, but only the 64.2-acre easternmost rectangular lot is in use and it is the only part of the cemetery designed by Olmsted Brothers. Hillside Cemetery is still active and there are currently approximately 12,000 burials, interred between 1909 and 2021. Most grave markers are modest granite headstones with a few larger and more elaborate markers scattered throughout the site. Family plots are unfenced and are grouped on the south side. The cemetery is located approximately one mile southwest of the center of Torrington at the south end of Walnut Street, which runs south approximately 0.2 miles from New Litchfield Street, U. S. Route 202. There are a few modest residences on each side of Walnut Street. McKinley Street, which runs perpendicular to Walnut Street approximately 375 feet south of the cemetery entrance, is lined on both sides with similar homes. The cemetery is surrounded by densely wooded areas. The

¹ The Olmsted Firm produced landscape design work from 1857-1979, under several names and partnerships. The firm operated under the name of Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects from 1898-1961.

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site slopes gently upwards toward the east and it has been graded into various contours throughout by the Olmsted Brothers. The southern edge of the site drops sharply away to reveal a view of the Naugatuck River valley below. The cemetery includes an Olmsted Brothers-designed stone and iron fence on part of its northern perimeter with an iron entrance gate in its center (Figures 3 and 4, Photographs 1 and 2). A one-story brick office and maintenance building designed by Olmsted Brothers and built in 1907 is inside the cemetery wall to the southeast of the main entrance (Photograph 3). A chapel in the Gothic Revival style, built in 1913 and designed by Max H. Westhoff is approximately three hundred feet south of the office building (Photographs 4-6).

Narrative Description

The Hillside Cemetery landscape was shaped by natural processes and design interventions by the Olmsted Brothers from 1907 to approximately 1962. Situated in the rocky hills of Torrington, Connecticut, the historic landscape included sunny fern-covered meadows and woodlands with naturally occurring rock outcrops. Their work highlighted native landscape features while creating an elegant landscape of arcing drives over the undulating ground plane, orchestrating successional views concealed and revealed by topography and vegetation. Over five decades the Olmsted firm shaped the land with need for new interment area, laying out the majority of the twenty of the cemetery plot sections. Each of these sections is defined by the curvilinear drives, shaping of the ground and vegetative borders. These sub-landscapes from Section A through Section S exhibit a strong Olmsted hand in the curvilinear alignment of plots and overall landscape character. Section B was developed in the early part of the 21st century and is without that character. The Olmsted-designed sections range in size with the smallest being 0.5 acres to 1.5 acres with Section E the largest at 3.87 acres. Combined plotted areas make up 28 of the original 64 acres. The active sections area arranged within the initial 64-acre cemetery property laid out by the Olmsted Brothers. The added 67 acres to the west remain largely undeveloped, providing ample expansion area into the future.

The cemetery entrance is aligned at the terminus of Walnut Street at the north perimeter of the cemetery. A service gate is located at the terminus of Bell View Street and is used infrequently. The entrance drive is softly curved providing visitors with a central view on axis with the Alvord chapel before separating into the series of drives in loops around each of the plotted sections throughout the developed cemetery. The cemetery office located just inside the gate to the east is set back out of view reinforcing the designed stone gate and the primary structures on the grounds. Plotted sections extend to the south border and southeast corner of the cemetery grounds with the steeper sloped eastern perimeter undeveloped. Although no longer accessible by a vehicle, the outlook located at eh terminus of Overlook drive is dominant feature of the landscape and a characteristic element found in other Olmsted landscapes.

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The cemetery landscape follows the Olmsted plans of Job No. 3277 from 1907 with turf covered grave sites aligned in a series of curved drives graded softly into the landscape along the ridge of the east facing slope (Figures 5 and 18). The center portion of the grounds rises slightly to the east and is traversed by curved drives that meander with the grades. The landscape in this area exhibits more tree-cover, as the area to the north is fully wooded. A series of spaces established by the arrangement of grave markers, drives, tree and shrub cover generates interest in within the western and central areas. The entry gate and drive turn around define the entry court located outside or north of the gate. Inside the gate, the cemetery office and grounds maintenance complex fill the area to the east (Photograph 3). Further along Chapel Drive, the Alvord Memorial Chapel stands at the toe² of a modest uprising slope to the east and forecourt created by the intersection of three drives (Photographs 4-7). A grove of mature deciduous trees creates the setting and a sense of place for this important spiritual building. The eastern portion of the cemetery below has dense vegetation without any constructed drives or walking paths.

Hillside Cemetery Landscape (Contributing Site, 1907-)

Views and Vistas

The positioning of Hillside Cemetery high above the Naugatuck River Valley, south of Torrington's center affords open views across the late 19th and early 20th century industrial and agricultural landscape. Pastoral scenery integrated into the grounds becomes part of the cemetery experience. Natural vegetation, grading, and drive alignment frame a broad scenic capture of the Torrington River Valley, as well as planted cemetery grave lots and natural areas depicted in the 1909 General Plan. A system of drives and walks constructed as part of the initial cemetery and subsequent expansions provide a variety of views as a visitor travels through the cemetery. from Walnut Street through the stone and iron gate where grading and heavy vegetative cover frame the view of the Chapel and continuing along Chapel Drive, Dell and Overlook Drives. Throughout the grounds, continuous curvilinear alignments present a dynamic landscape of alternating open turf-covered grave lots dappled with shade from overhead trees, planted shrub beds, alluvial set boulders, and dense woods see (Figures 7 and 9, Photographs 8-12). One of two prescribed overlooks lies to the west of the entry drive at the terminus of Knoll Drive. From this high ground, visitors view an open turf and shade tree landscape bounded by the wooded dell against which few modest large monuments stand. To the south, the landscape falls away and is seen against an open sky. Hillside Overlook, constructed as a promontory at the terminus of Overlook Drive, is the crescendo of the visitor's experience. This elevated location at the eastern edge of the high ground originally provided unobstructed views of the Torrington Valley 300 feet below (Figures 6 and 11).

The landscape is relatively unchanged since construction and unfolds as one moves through the grounds. The view of the Chapel from the entry gate remains a primary visual focus, as is the landscape of planted shrub beds, as well as turf covered lawns. The pastoral qualities of the

² Toe of the slope refers to the lowermost topographic break in the slope.

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landscape have been modestly altered by increased grave site areas, some loss of tree canopy, muted definition of the tree covered dell, and modifications and reduction of broadleaf evergreen plantings. Hillside Overlook remains at the east border of the cemetery but is closed to vehicular and pedestrian access.

Topography

Hillside Cemetery is constructed on a site selected for its suitability as a cemetery for its proximity to Torrington's urban center in the early twentieth century, the natural setting, and soils containing limited subsurface rock that would not impede internments. The Olmsted Firm completed extensive grading on the naturally unlevel topography to create a park setting that appears natural. The core area of the cemetery, which slopes gently from east to west with a low saddle central to the developed core, was established through cut and fill operations that involved moving upwards of 10,000 cubic feet of soil. At the perimeter, gravesites are arranged along the curves of the natural contours and are elevated atop rising grades. Gravesite areas, themselves, are softly graded in broad, gently sloping lawns with adjacent drives suppressed to reduce their otherwise visual dominance in the landscape see (Figure 8, Photograph 9). Natural stones laid back in the grade address areas where lawns could not be gently graded at drive shoulders. The promontory, constructed of compacted earth and gravel retained by a perimeter of large boulders, serves as a key topographic element. Seen as an extension of Outlook Drive, it gracefully curves northeast rising with continual incline to several feet above the finish grade to create a teardrop form.

The Cemetery lies approximately 300 feet above the current center of Torrington to the north and the Naugatuck River to the east. The developed area is about 640 feet above sea level with downward slopes east toward the valley floor and steep upland slopes to the west. The landscape is formed as a saddle containing the majority of internments between these slopes. Maturing trees border the ridge to the east as land drops quickly away down the slope. Improved grounds extend to the toe of the upland slope in the west. Deciduous trees cover the land to the west and south. The landscape saddle becomes narrower to the south where it blends with the natural topography of the hillside. Walnut Street enters the cemetery at the north corner of the cemetery where the grades gently resolve themselves with central saddle. Gentle grades and curved drives define grave plots, with softly graded shoulders, (Photograph 10). Two elevated overlooks remain, one in the northwest corner west of Chapel Drive at the terminus of Knoll Drive and the other being Hillside Overlook a constructed promontory to the east, however they are both overgrown.

Circulation

Movement into and throughout Hillside Cemetery follows the alignments illustrated on the 1909 General Plan design by the Olmsted Brothers, including the extension of Walnut Street as the formal approach and entry to the cemetery park. The system of drives and walks is typical of the Olmsted design style with continuous curvilinear alignments and flared intersections that avoid ninety degree "T" interactions (Figure 7, Photographs 11 and 12). Drives and walks are an

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integral part of the grading and plantings within this landscape. They form the scenic and pastoral qualities prescribed by the designers who intended for the landscape to be a continuum for pleasurable and contemplative experiences within the park-like cemetery grounds.

The drives lead the rider or pedestrian through wooded dells and sunny vales, across gently rising knolls, by wide grassy areas of burial spaces. Here and there views are obtained of the whole of Torrington lying 300 feet below.

The General Plan included a separate path system that paralleled the drives and, in some instances, provided access through wooded areas beyond vehicular access (Photographs 13 and 14). Constructed of compacted gravel fines atop angular stone base, the drives have adjacent turf shoulders that allow the turf areas to appear as a continuous field when viewed across the broader landscape.

Expansion of the cemetery during the mid-twentieth century remained under the direction of the Olmsted firm and followed the general alignments as depicted in the 1909 General Plan for sections to the southwest. Movements follow the same drive alignments presented in the 1909 General Plan as constructed over the preceding decades. Chapel, Dell, Crag, Midvale, and Ridge present the landscape as intended by providing a pleasurable experience of the cemetery park setting (Figures 9 and 10, Photograph 15). Separate pedestrian walks are not present in the landscape and several former walks may have been widened to provide vehicle access. Pedestrians utilize drives paved with asphalt. Currently, large boulders set atop turf block the ascent to Hillside Overlook, preventing vehicular access. Expansion of the cemetery to the west in 1990 resulted in the addition of a new drive that was not part of the Olmsted 1909 General Plan and lacks the characteristic alignment of the original drives. A service entry accesses the grounds at the end of Belleview Avenue.

Vegetation

Native vegetation, plantings of native trees and the creation of shrub bed mass plantings were part of the 1909 General Plan. Native trees were retained at the northern portion of the grounds and kept in a woodland condition. The areas to the southwest were planted with select deciduous shade trees, including white birch, *Betula papyrifera*, Yellow Birch, *Betula lutca* Red Maple, *Acer rubrum*, and understory trees that included Flowering Dogwood *Cornus florida* and Eastern Redbud, *Cercis Canadensis*. Eastern White Pine, *Pinus strobus*, Canadian Hemlock, and *Tsuga canadensis* are also seen in the early photographs. Downhill slopes to the east were intended to have light tree cover allowing open views from Hillside Overlook across the Naugatuck Valley to downtown Torrington. Large shrub masses, including rhododendron, were planted in sloping areas or at the edge of the woodland (Figure 12, Photograph 16). Inside the Walnut Street gate, the embankment was heavily planted with a trees and shrubs.

Tree cover in the cemetery as of 2019 is a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees. The larger, older trees stand to the north of Overlook Drive, in the area noted as the dell, a natural hollow south east of the chapel denoted on the General Plan, and throughout the gravesite areas. A mix

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of hardwood deciduous trees comprise the fully wooded areas of the eastern slopes and prevent any outward views from the promontory. Similarly, woodland cover defines the south and east perimeters of the cemetery. Masses of rhododendron are planted on several of the slopes. These masses are renewed periodically by cutting them low and letting them regenerate. Contemporary plantings of mixed ornamental shrubs replaced the evergreen rhododendron cover at the slope behind the entry gate at Walnut Street. Contemporary ornamental shrubs are also planted in the newly created cremains area south of Hillside Overlook.

Retaining Walls

Stone walls in the cemetery are limited. Hillside Overlook is constructed with a stone retaining wall that mirrors the curve of Overlook Drive. During the ascent to the promontory, the wall blends into a stone rip rap system laid against the compacted earth and gravel that make up the Promontory Overlook and is constructed with the initial cemetery development (Figure 11, Photograph 17). Within the dell area, a semicircular stone wall provides partial enclosure of low grave markers. This low semi retaining wall constructed of natural granite field stone is not apparent on the General Plan of 1909 (Photograph 18). A third retaining stone wall constructed south of the promontory slope is laid in two straight sections creating a rectilinear area for interment of cremains. Constructed later in the 20th century, the semicircular wall and rectilinear wall are not part of the Olmsted design.

Markers and Monuments

The general overview of the philosophy of the markers is subordinate to the landscape with the larger markers and most family plots tucked into the landscape perimeters. Among those moved from Center Cemetery were members of the committee that established the cemetery and members of several of Torrington's other prominent families, including:

Alvord: Originally from Bolton, Connecticut, the Alvord family played an important part in the history of Torrington. Charles Alvord was one of the founders of the Excelsior Needle Company (later known as the Torrington Company) and his nephew and namesake, Charles H. Alvord, was involved with the Hendey Machine Company. The Alvord name is also associated with recreation areas and parks in Torrington.

The Alvord plot is marked by a granite sarcophagus designed by the Olmsted firm in 1909. The Name "Alvord" is incised on a cartouche flanked by inverted torches at each end of the monument. The sides are decorated with similar inverted torches at each end. They are connected by swags of magnolia with pendent berries at each end. The plot and monument were designed by Olmsted Brothers (Photograph 19).

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Brooks: Brothers Isaac W. and John W. Brooks founded the banking house of Brooks Brothers in 1872 and both men were also involved in the insurance industry with John W. serving as Insurance Commissioner at one time. Isaac held political offices locally and sat on several directory boards of local concerns.

Bryant: Thomas W. Bryant was born in New Haven (CT) and came to Torrington in 1888 where he served as secretary and manager of the Union Hardware Company. He was elected president of Union Hardware in 1903 and served in that office until his retirement after which he chaired the company's Board of Directors. He was also on the board of the Torrington Printing Company, director of the Torrington Electric Light Company and a director of the Y.M.C.A., where he was instrumental in the construction of its Prospect Street building.

The Bryant family plot, designed by the Olmsted Brothers, is dominated by a marble sarcophagus. The sides of the sarcophagus have three Gothic arches supported by pilasters with acanthus capitals. Names, birth and death dates of deceased family members are incised into the stone within the arches. There are similar arches without names at its ends. Flat marble grave markers surround this monument in rows (Photograph 20).

Coe: Lyman Coe, a Torrington native, was the son of Israel Coe who, in the 1840s, established the Wolcottville Brass Company in Torrington. In 1863, Lyman organized the Coe Brass Manufacturing Company, a concern that would make Torrington a major brass manufacturer well into the 20th century. Lyman was also a State Senator in 1862 and 1877-81. The site of the Lyman Coe house in downtown Torrington was donated by Coe's family to the citizens of Torrington as a park in 1906.

The Coe monument is a granite exedra with a central stele flanked by engaged Tuscan columns on each side with freestanding Tuscan columns at each end. The columns are topped with a dentil cornice and the plaque has a similar cornice with a triangular pediment. The name "Coe" is incised in a cartouche centered above a laurel wreath in the upper third of the stele. A row of seven low granite markers with triangular pediments in front of the exedra commemorate members of the family. The plot was designed by Olmsted Brothers (Figure 14, Photograph 21).

Fuessenich: Frederick Fuessenich was born in Germany and came to the United States as a child with his family. As an adult, Fuessenich found employment at the Hendey Machine Company and eventually served as its president. In 1918, he donated a tract of land to Torrington in memory of his wife and it is now known as Fuessenich Park.

Hendey: Henry Hendey, born in England, began the manufacture of machinery in Torrington in 1870. Within a few years, the Hendey Machine Company had grown to a large, new factory building and had earned an international reputation for the quality of its products. While the Hendey Machine Company closed in 1954, many of the machines – lathes, planers, and shapers – are still in use.

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Hotchkiss: In 1917, Edward H. Hotchkiss became president of Hotchkiss Building Company, a business started by his grandfather Charles Hotchkiss in Torrington in 1841. The Hotchkiss Building Company constructed the grand Hotchkiss-Fyler House on Main St. in Torrington which was bequeathed to the Torrington Historical Society by Edward's widow, Gertrude Fyler Hotchkiss, in 1956.

This is the most exuberant monument in the cemetery. It is a large exedra with a tall center stele. Inscribed on the base are the words, "When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid..." to the left of the stele and, "...yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet" to its right. It features elaborate paired balusters and evening primrose scrollwork on the upper rail. The center stele has a large cross in low relief behind a female figure in relief gesturing upward toward another figure in bas-relief that is in the plume of smoke emanating from an urn at the base of the stele. The stele has floral scrollwork in its frieze band, which is surmounted by a row of dentils and has a hipped top. Despite the large monument, the lot and monument were designed by the Olmsted Brothers (Photograph 23).

Migeon: Mrs. Midgeon donated the land for the cemetery and paid for the front gate. Achille Migeon, son of French immigrant Henri Migeon, was one of the founders of Excelsior Needle Company (later the Torrington Company) and served as president of a number of Torrington industries, including Union Hardware and the Eagle Bicycle Company. Both father and son had homes on the long street that bears their name, Migeon Avenue. A

This plot is dominated by a granite monument designed and sited by Olmsted Brothers. It features a large vertical stele with a central image of an angel with spread wings. Names, birth and death dates of prominent members of the family are inscribed on each side of the angel. Flat stones commemorating other members of the family are laid in rows in front of and behind this monument (Figure 13, Photograph 24).

Roraback: Willard A. Roraback, a Massachusetts native, opened a law office in Torrington in 1884 and within a few years, he became a political fixture in town, holding several appointed and elected offices locally and representing the town in the State Legislature in 1895. His was a legacy that was honored by his family and the Roraback name continues to be associated with the practice of law in Torrington, a commitment to the interests of area organizations, and the political arena in Connecticut.

Swayze: Robert Swayze was born in Washington, D.C. and came to Torrington in 1895 in the employ of the Torrington Manufacturing Company. He rose to presidency of the company, served as chairman of its board after his retirement there, and, in 1932, became president of the Litchfield Bank. He was an officer or director in a number of Torrington companies, including Hendey Manufacturing, Turner & Seymour, Union Hardware, and the Torrington Company, a business established by his father-in-law, Achille Migeon. Swayze also served as president of the Hillside Cemetery Association for 25 years.

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Travis: Frank Travis, a native of Torrington, was considered to have been the moving force behind the development of both the Torrington Water Company in 1878 and the Torrington Electric Light Company in 1887 where he served as president. Travis was also on the Board of Directors for the Brooker Memorial in Torrington and was a champion of Torrington's volunteer firefighters.

Workman: The Workman family enjoyed a long association with the Warrenton Woolen Company, Torrington's oldest manufacturing concern, beginning with Samuel Workman who was an early leader in the company. By the late 1800s, his sons George and John served as president and treasurer of the company respectively. The family name is connected with a number of Torrington-area organizations including the Boy Scouts' Camp Workcoeman, Workman Apartments elderly housing, and the Workman A.M.E. Zion Church.³

The Workman family plot is marked by a granite Egyptian Revival obelisk that is draped at its top and sits on a square base. It was moved from Torrington's Center Cemetery in 1909. The family names are affixed to the base in bronze letters. Inscriptions listing the birth and death dates of significant family members are incised into plaques on all sides above the family names. Small upright stones surrounding the obelisk commemorate other family members (Figure 16, Photograph 26)

Davis-Matthews – The Davis-Matthews tomb is the only mausoleum in the cemetery. It faces southeast on a rise at the corner of one of the cemetery roads and it is to the southwest of a large stone outcropping. It is a simple Art Deco, end gable design executed in granite. It has bronze doors centered on the façade and the entrance is surrounded by an evening primrose motif (Photograph 22).

Morrison – The Morrison plot is dominated by a granite exedra with a tall granite stele rising from a pediment with the name "Morrison" in raised granite letters in its center. The plaque has the bas-relief images of an angel embracing a cross and holding a morning glory with four morning glories at the angel's feet. Flat stones commemorating members of the family are laid in a row in front of this monument (Photograph 25).

Fence and Gate (Contributing Structure, 1909)

An iron and stone gate extends along the Walnut Street frontage of the cemetery at the main entrance. The structure is comprised of stone piers with iron fence picket panels set atop a low cobble stone wall base. The piers and wall base are made of fieldstone at the corners and cobblestone infill with thick, flat granite caps. The gate, which serves as the main vehicular entrance to the property, consists of end piers that are taller than the fence piers and flank double, ten-foot wide, iron swing gates. West of the vehicle entry, a picketed gate provides pedestrian access when the grounds are closed to vehicles. A flagstone bench is located in a solid

³ Family profiles provided by Mark McEachern, President, Torrington Historical Society in an email to the author on May 9, 2017.

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cobblestone wall to the west. Photographs dated to 1909 show beginning construction on the wall and iron work with completion by or before 1915 (Figures 3 and 4, Photographs 1 and 2).

Office and Maintenance Building (Contributing Building, date)

The office and maintenance building is located 120 feet southeast of the main gate and faces west toward x. The building is sited near the edge of the cemetery, a short distance from single-family residences outside the property on Walnut and McKinley streets. It is a low, horizontally emphasized, one-story masonry building designed by the Olmsted Firm. The building consists of a compact, two-bay by three-bay rectangular block with a hipped, asphalt-shingled roof and two one-story, flat-roofed additions to the north and south. Overall, it measures 87 feet wide and 71 feet deep. The walls of the original block and additions are constructed of red brick with cast stone lintels and sills. A brick chimney rises from the southeast corner of the main roof. The main entrance is located at the north side of the façade and there is a pair of one-over-one, double-hung aluminum replacement windows with decorative (fixed) shutters to the south of the entry. Three rectangular single window openings filled with aluminum replacement windows are located on the north elevation. The south addition is windowless. The north addition has two pairs of one-over-one aluminum replacement windows on the west elevation of this addition (Photograph 3). The interior is divided into two sections western section contains offices and bathrooms with sheetrock walls, drop ceilings, and tiled or carpeted floors (Photograph 26). The western section is a garage/workshop with open bays, walls and concrete floors.

Alvord Memorial Chapel (Contributing Building)

The Alvord Memorial Chapel is a granite, one-story Gothic Revival-style building with a standing seam copper roof. It faces northwest and measures 44 feet wide by 63 feet long. The chapel is located approximately 350 feet southeast of the office and maintenance building. The façade is dominated by a square tower, 57 feet high and 24 feet wide, with buttresses and a crenelated top. The portal is centered in the tower and it is reached by a flight of five stone stairs. Double wooden doors are recessed within a double-height lancet-arched opening and they are surmounted by a tripartite stained glass windows and bar tracery. A pair of lancet openings with louvered insets is centered near the top of the tower (Photographs 4-6).

The interior of the building is rusticated stone and it follows a typical Gothic plan with a central nave and aisles on each side. The aisles are separated from the nave by colonnade of stone columns and pointed arches. There is an altar in the apse and a stained-glass window above it in the south wall of the apse (Photograph 27). The west transept opens onto a concrete path used for moving caskets into and out of the chapel (Photograph 28). The narthex is enframed by a tall stone pointed arch and there is a stained-glass window above the main entrance. Wooden structural elements of the roof are exposed (Photograph 29). There are rows of stained-glass windows on the east and west walls of the chapel. Representative windows depict scenes from the Christian religion (Photographs 30 and 31).

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Integrity Statement

The cemetery remains on its original hilltop location, in proximity to but visually separated from the City's downtown. The natural setting is intact and the cemetery is buffered from the neighborhoods to the north and east by dense forest. In terms of design and workmanship, the spatial organization of the cemetery; internal views; topography/grading; circulation of drives including the extant promontory/overlook; and landscape structures, entrance gate and stone retaining walls designed by the Olmsted firm remain. These features are shown in the 1909 master plan and a contemporary photograph. A small addition has been built onto the administration building, but it is otherwise unchanged (Figures 5 and 15, Photograph 3).

The Hillside Cemetery Association of Torrington owns the cemetery and is responsible for having maintained it in this condition since its founding. The landscape is managed with care not to alter the Olmsted character design with concern for preservation of its landscape character as instilled in management goals that include the philosophy and approach to grave makers, as presented by the Olmsted Brothers to maintain a picturesque quality and avoid large focal elements in the landscape. In a pamphlet titled, *A Suggestion as to Gravestones*, they stated, "Our observations of cemeteries in general, have led us to the conclusion that too often they become so over-ornamented with purely gardenesque features as to destroy the dignity of their purpose." To encourage proper care, the firm wrote guidance for maintaining moderate markers to preserve the natural and scenic qualities of place overlooking the Naugatuck River Valley.⁴ Several early twentieth century photographs are testament to the fact that the cemetery has changed little since it was constructed (Figures 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 12 - 17).

⁴ Olmsted Brothers, *A Suggestion as to Gravestones*.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1909 - 1969

Significant Dates

1909: cemetery opened

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects

Westhoff, Max H. (chapel architect)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Hillside Cemetery is significant statewide under Criterion C in the category of Landscape Design for its expression of the naturalistic style in cemetery design as completed by Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects and Olmsted Associates, Landscape Architects in the early twentieth century. The Olmsted firms designed only four complete cemeteries and Hillside is the only one in Connecticut. The firms are a continuation of Frederick Law Olmsted, Landscape Architects and the earlier Olmsted, Vaux & Co., founded by Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., who is considered to be the father of American landscape architecture. The cemetery retains exceptional integrity with respect to its spatial organization, views, circulation, and topography as illustrated in the 1909 General Plan. Its construction layout, grading and planting plans, plant lists, circulation and finish grading remain substantially intact. These elements are consistent with the Olmsted firms' design for public properties, parks, cemeteries and private estates nationally. Hillside Cemetery also satisfies the requirements of Criteria Consideration D, because it derives its primary historic significance from landscape design. The Olmsted Brothers' design for Hillside Cemetery is consistent with their father's funerary design goal – to create a place of respect for the deceased, while offering an environment for contemplation and respite for visitors, achieved through a park-like setting. The design also incorporates a chapel by Max H. Westhoff, an architect known for his work in several revival styles. The period of significance extends from 1909, when the cemetery opened, to 1969

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion C: Landscape Design

American Cemetery Design

By the middle of the nineteenth century Rural Cemetery movement had transformed American cemeteries from simple burying grounds to showcases of elaborate landscapes and ostentatious, fenced family plots. Families often tried to outdo each other in both and these displays of wealth began to attract visitors. The new cemeteries soon became popular places of recreation and tourist destinations. Newspaper articles chronicled the latest monument and guidebooks were published to provide visitors with routes through the grounds, information on families and readings appropriate for a melancholy atmosphere. These excesses led Fredrick law Olmsted to write in 1861 that, ...” the rural cemetery, which should above all things, be a place of rest, silence seclusion and peace, is too often now made a place not only of the grossest ostentation

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of the living, but a constant resort of mere pleasure seekers, travelers, promenaders, and loungers.”⁵

Reaction to the frivolous use of cemeteries was not limited to Olmsted. The board of directors of the Cemetery of Spring Grove in Cincinnati had also become concerned with this lack of respect for the dead. In 1855, they asked Adolph Strauch, a German-born, English-trained horticulturalist to review the design of the cemetery. Strauch had been working for the industrialist Robert Bowker and others as the landscape gardener on their estates in the wealthy Cincinnati suburb of Clifton and they wanted him to apply his vision to the cemetery. He reported that there were too many pathways and that the many plantings and monuments so cluttered the landscape that the picturesque effect had been lost. He began by redesigning the marshy front section of the cemetery into a rolling landscape of linked lakes. This so impressed the directors that he was given nearly total authority over the design and operation of Spring Grove. During the next three years, he transformed the cemetery by opening up vistas, removing excessive plantings and managing to get lot holders to be more conservative in the design of their monuments. His plan turned away from the picturesque toward simplicity and accessibility. His landscape, “...exhibited a preponderance of gently flowing lines, roundness and regularity, balance and symmetry, perfection and repose.”⁶ He also had approval of the design and placement of any new monument proposed for the cemetery, since he believed that they had to complement, rather than overwhelm the landscape. Strauch had, with his landscape designs and managerial methods, created what would come to be known as the Lawn-Park Cemetery.⁷

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Lawn-Park Cemetery had almost completely replaced the picturesque Rural Cemetery in the United States. Olmsted Brothers design for Hillside Cemetery follows in the tradition of Strauch’s pioneering work.

Establishment of Hillside Cemetery

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Torrington’s increased industrialization led to a population explosion from only 3,327 people in 1880 to 12,455 people in 1900.⁸ The town-owned Center Cemetery had sold all its lots by the beginning of the twentieth century and in May of 1906, some of the town’s prominent citizens began to look for a place to establish a new facility outside of town, away from commerce and industry. Businessmen E. H. Hotchkiss, James Doughty, F. M. Travis, W. A. Roraback, Charles Alvord and H. E. Higgins met at the

⁵ Ibid., 90.

⁶ Ibid., 103.

⁷ Ibid., 121.

⁸ Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Population of Connecticut Towns 1830-1890; Population of Connecticut Towns 1900-1960.

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office of Attorney Higgins to discuss a new cemetery. All were members of the Wolcottville School Society which administered Center Cemetery and they had been looking for a new cemetery site for some time. The Society had no authority outside the school district, so they took on the project as private individuals. They decided to form a corporation with stock to purchase the Hine Tract of about sixty acres south of town. It had already been offered for sale to be used as a cemetery and they saw it as an ideal location.⁹

F. M. Travis and Isaac Brooks were appointed to find an expert to assess the suitability of the site for a cemetery. A committee of E. H. Hotchkiss, James Doughty, F. M. Travis, W. A. Roraback, Charles Alvord, H. E. Higgins and Robert Swayze was appointed to draft a paper and to solicit subscriptions for a new association. About \$5000 was pledged at the meeting and they foresaw little difficulty in raising an additional \$15000 needed before purchase.

In August of 1906, this group met again to consider more aspects of the proposed new cemetery. They discussed various methods of corporate organization and determined that small subscriptions may be taken but responsibility mostly rested with twenty men who can contribute \$500 or more. Lots would cost about the same as the old cemetery. They took into account the fact that St. Francis and East Branch Catholic cemeteries were also almost full and considered adding a Catholic section.

The local newspaper commented on the Hine tract by stating, "This tract is large enough for Torrington cemetery purposes for 100 years to come..." the tract included 67 acres of rolling land, "...believed to be as near perfection as could be obtained within accessible distance of Torrington." It could be reached by road and was on the route of proposed Torrington-Thomaston trolley line.¹⁰

In September of 1906, the same group of men were meeting at the Torrington Club when Robert Swayze, announced that Mrs. Elizabeth Migeon would buy the Hine tract and donate it for the Hillside Cemetery. She also offered to build a fence and a gate of their design. Mr. Hine had owned the land for several years and wanted to sell it for a cemetery or park. He had refused several offers to buy parts of it in order to preserve a lot large enough for that purpose. The group had found it more difficult than they thought to raise money for the cemetery, and they had been discussing new approaches to fundraising when the offer was made. They accepted the gift and vowed to make greater pledges to the project.¹¹

⁹ "May purchase Hine Place for Cemetery- committee recommends a site and association may be formed," *The Evening Register*, Torrington, Connecticut, June 25, 1906.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "Mrs. Migeon Presents Site for a Cemetery – Offers to purchase Hine tract for future Hillside Cemetery./".

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The cemetery committee met twice in January of 1907. Those attending the meeting included James A. Doughty, E. J. Steele, Edward H. Hotchkiss, Robert C. Swayze, Luther G. Turner, John F. Alvord, Charles H. Alvord, George H. Braman, Isaac W. Brooks, and Bernard E. Higgins, Frederick F. Fuessenich, E. J. Steele, Charles L. McNellin and W. A. Roraback. They formed a corporation and elected Robert C. Swayze, John F. Alvord, Isaac W. Brooks, Frederick F. Fuessenich, E. J. Steele, James A. Doughty, Luther G. Turner, Charles H. Alvord, Charles L. McNellin and George H. Braman as directors of the new venture. A committee was established to "...draw up suitable resolutions thanking Mrs. Elizabeth Migeon for her proffered gift."¹² Later that January, officers of the corporation were elected: President- Robert G. Swayze, Vice President, Secretary, Luther G. Turner, and Treasurer, Isaac W. Brooks. The Executive Committee was then authorized to, "...consult with landscape gardeners in regard to securing plans for the development of the tract of land which will be devoted to the cemetery."¹³

Minutes of the meetings during which the firms that had been contacted were discussed and the meeting when the Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects firm was selected, have been lost. By January 14, 1907, the cemetery association was in correspondence with Olmsted Brothers about the advisability of hiring a superintendent to oversee construction. Olmsted Brothers strongly suggested that they do so and recommended Walter B. Hatch (1884-1963), then assistant Superintendent of Parks in Hartford, Connecticut, for the job.¹⁴ Someone at the Olmsted firm may have known Hatch from his time as an Assistant Horticulturalist at the Hatch Experimental Station of the Massachusetts Agricultural College. Hatch was hired later that year and he oversaw the construction of the cemetery.

Subsequent correspondence reveals that the cemetery committee's contact at Olmsted Brothers was Percival Gallagher (1874-1934).¹⁵ Gallagher studied horticulture at Harvard's Bussey Institute, supplemented by classes in the Fine Arts program where he met Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. He joined Olmsted, Olmsted, & Eliot in 1894 where his projects included restoration of the plants on the U.S. Capitol Grounds in Washington, D.C. In 1904, he attempted to open a firm with landscape architect James Sturgis Pray, but he was not adept at the business side of running a firm and he returned to the Olmsted office after two years. In 1927, he became a full partner with Olmsted Brothers. He was known for his artistic talent, horticultural

¹² "Cemetery Incorporated," *The Evening Register*, Torrington, Connecticut, January 7, 1907.

¹³ "Hillside Cemetery Plans," *The Evening Register*, Torrington, Connecticut, January 14, 1907.

¹⁴ Letter to Robert Swayze from Olmsted Brothers, unsigned, but dictated by Percival Gallagher, January 4, 1907.

¹⁵ Letters from Olmsted Brothers dated April 27, 1907 and April 30, 1907 bear the initials PG. Letters to Olmsted Brothers dated September 12, 1913 and October 31, 1913 have the handwritten note "Gallagher" above the address, as does a letter from the firm dated March 2, 1925, which includes notes on a revised plan, Olmsted Archive, National Park Service.

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knowledge, and generally modest temperament. He worked well with colleagues and clients alike. Gallagher's projects included design work for Bryn Mawr, Haverford, Swarthmore, Vassar, and Duke University campuses. He also worked on the design of the park system for Union County, New Jersey, including Rahway River Park. His most extensive estate work took place on Long Island and it included Ormston, the George Baker estate and the H.H. Rogers estate.¹⁶

Percival Gallagher made the visit to the proposed cemetery site that is summarized in a 14-page letter from the Olmsted firm to Mr. Swayze of the Cemetery Committee dated May 1, 1907. This was the first time that anyone from Olmsted Brothers had seen the site and he was impressed. He mentions a, "...particularly beautiful view south..." and recommends that the growth of trees and shrubs in that area be managed to maintain the view.¹⁷ In the same letter, he discusses the Committee's desire that the cemetery also serve as a park. His advice to them follows the principles that had been established by Adolph Strauch and supported by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. He suggests that they not create a separate park area, since it would be many years before all the grave sites were filled. Instead, he recommended that the entire site should be open for, "...quiet recreation, but not in the way that parks are usually used, that is, for picnicking, games and the like. Otherwise, the use of the property by holiday-makers will defeat its highest purposes which should appeal to the mind in a serious way and lead to contemplation and peacefulness on the part of the visitor." He also comments on the need to control the design, size and placement of monuments.¹⁸ The letter goes on to discuss the road layout, a main entrance on Walnut Street, a superintendent's office near the entrance, the placement of the chapel and the need that, "...every endeavor [be] made to preserve the natural beauties of the ground."¹⁹ This letter is the foundation of Olmsted Brothers' approach to the design and management of Hillside Cemetery. It includes the ideas on cemetery design that had been evolving over the previous fifty years and places it in the mainstream of American cemeteries of the early twentieth century.

Hillside Cemetery announced its opening on July 2, 1909.²⁰ Several of the prominent families who had been instrumental in creating the new cemetery, moved their Center Cemetery interments to Hillside Cemetery. Among the first to do so were the Coe and Workman families, who not only moved the bodies of family members, but also disassembled their twenty-five foot tall, nine ton obelisk for re-erection at the new site. They were soon followed by the Alvord

¹⁶ "Pervival Gallagher," *The Cultural Landscape Foundation*, <https://tclf.org/pioneer/percival-gallagher>, accessed December 1, 2015.

¹⁷ Letter from "OB" to Robert Swayze, May 1, 1907, Olmsted Archive, National Park Service.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ "The Hillside Cemetery," *The Evening Register*, Torrington, Connecticut, July 2, 1909

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family who also moved bodies and had a new monument designed by Olmsted Brothers.²¹ By 1910 a newspaper article states that over three hundred burials had been moved to the new cemetery. However, cemetery records show only 43 reinterments by the end of 1910.²² The reason for that large discrepancy is unknown.

The site was developed over time and it is still evolving in 2021. Several letters from Olmsted Brothers and their successors to the Hillside Cemetery Association from 1907 through 1980, show that the Association continued to depend on an Olmsted firm for site planning and other aspects of cemetery design and management for seventy-three years. Olmsted Brothers also designed eight family plots and several new sections of the cemetery. They designed the main entrance gate to the cemetery, which was donated to the Association by Mrs. Elizabeth Migeon in 1909. In 2020, the area between the main gate and the Chapel was replanted to better follow the original planting plan and design.

Frederick Law Olmsted Sr.

Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) was America's most influential landscape architect. He grew up in Hartford, Connecticut and was deeply influenced by its surroundings and the rural Connecticut landscape. His father had a great love of nature and he took the boy on short excursions to the nearby countryside. As an adult, he accompanied his father on annual trips "...in search of the picturesque" through northern New England and upstate New York.²³ He traveled widely to many foreign countries and throughout the American south. Olmsted held a number of jobs as diverse as magazine publisher and farmer while reading about landscape ideas and forming his theories of landscape design. By the fall of 1857 he was able to use his business and social connections to secure the position of Superintendent of Central Park in New York City. The following year, the Greensward design submitted by Olmsted and English architect Calvert Vaux (1824-1895) won the competition for the design of the park. For the next seven years he acted as administrator for the construction of the park, but left in 1861 to become the director of the US Sanitary Commission, which was responsible for the wellbeing of volunteer soldiers of the Union Army, as well as for the creation of a national system of medical supply. He left federal service in 1863 to become the manager of a huge gold-mining estate in California. He returned to New York in 1865 to work with Vaux on the completion of Central Park. Olmsted continued to work as a landscape architect until his retirement in 1895. During his career he established the first full-scale professional firm of landscape architects in the United States - Olmsted, Vaux & Company with Calvert Vaux - to design Prospect Park in Brooklyn (1866). Later successor firms designed The World's Columbian Exposition (Chicago, 1893 Olmsted, Olmsted & Elliot), the grounds of the U.S. Capitol (1874), the grounds of Connecticut

²¹ "To Move Monuments to New Cemetery," *The Evening Register*, Torrington, Connecticut, September 21, 1909.

²² Weston, "Moves from Center Cemetery to Hillside Cemetery 1909 – 1960.."

²³ Beveridge, "Olmsted - His Essential Theory,"

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State House (1878, Frederick Law Olmsted Landscape Architect) and the Biltmore Estate (1889) *F.L. & J.C. Olmsted* for George Vanderbilt. He also played a seminal role in the establishment of the National Park system. Olmsted and his companies completed over 500 commissions, including scenic reservations, urban parks, parkways, park systems, residential community plans, landscapes of government buildings and country estates between 1857 and 1895.²⁴

Olmsted's Principles of Landscape Architecture

Frederick Law Olmsted was guided by design ideas that he formed during his childhood in Connecticut and his travels, particularly in England and the Americas. A guiding principle of his work is the subordination of individual or showy elements to an overall composition, creating landscapes that increase ones' interest and connection with the environment away from the bustling and congested urban centers. The experience within the landscape is meant to act on the subconscious and emotions of the viewer. His work avoided placement of structures or distracting elements in locations that overpower the landscape or focus attention on a single point that would diminish the overall experience. This principal is the basis for the avoidance of ostentatious cemetery monuments that is evident in Hillside Cemetery as designed by the Olmsted Brothers. Creating vistas with purposeful grading, drive and walk alignment, as well as plantings, is an element employed to draw attention across the landscape, making it feel larger and incorporating views of distant places as part of the adventure and intrigue of an Olmsted landscape. Design of each landscape had to be unique to the place and considered the ecology of each individual site. Topography, hydrology and natural vegetative species were incorporated as a design evolved, resulting in landscapes that have endured and have become more valued over time. Olmsted wanted his designs to enhance the special character of a site and to respect "The Genius of the Place."²⁵ Working with the inherent nature of the site to the achieve the purpose and desired use of the landscape included a preferred selection of native and regionally appropriate plant species to be used in developing the planting plans. Compositions included existing vegetation, providing an immediate connection with the place. Plant materials were used to enhance the existing and constructed portions of the landscapes. Areas of profuse planting were designed to create an effect of layering with contrasting textures and colors of planting materials, reliant on the green and modest flowering displays, always careful to refrain from showy or loud flowering species. The desired effect in time was to create a landscape that appears natural in character. These principles are foundational for the Olmsted firms' work into the mid twentieth century and are evident at Hillside Cemetery.

Olmsted Brothers

Following the retirement of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. in 1895, his son Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (1871-1959) and his adopted son John Charles Olmsted (1852-1920) continued the firm's work. This was a natural transition for them, since John Charles Olmsted had been assisting his

²⁴ Beveridge, "Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.," *Olmsted Legacy*."

²⁵ *Ibid*.

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father since at least 1874. In 1884, John Charles became a partner in the firm of F. L. and J.C. Olmsted. One of Olmsted, Sr.'s protégés, Henry Sargent Codman (1863-1893), became a partner in the firm in 1889, but he died tragically in 1893 at the age of 29. After his death Olmsted Sr.'s former student, Charles Elliot (1859-1897) joined the firm and it was renamed Olmsted, Olmsted & Elliot. However, Elliot died of meningitis in 1897 at the age of 37. After the Elliot's death, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. joined his brother in using the old firm name of F. L. and J.C. Olmsted, but the son had replaced the father in the name. Just one year later, in 1898, they changed the name to Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, the name the firm would continue to use until 1961. The depth of the Olmsted legacy is illustrated by the fact that a man named Frederick Law Olmsted practiced landscape architecture in the firm for a full century.²⁶ They were among the founding members of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA).²⁷

Olmsted Brothers continued Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. and the Firm's design legacy on projects throughout the United States that include; the National Parks; park systems and boulevards in Buffalo, Louisville and Boston; universities, exposition grounds, libraries, hospitals, residential neighborhoods, state capitol campuses and private residences. Their work over this period created many of the United States' most prominent landscapes, including the redesign of Washington, D. C. under the McMillan Commission, the U. S. Capitol Grounds, White House grounds, the Federal Triangle, the Jefferson Memorial, Roosevelt Island and Rock Creek Parkway. Other commissions included memorials, monuments, and commemorative landscapes including three entire cemeteries and sections of twenty-three more, including many individual patron's private family burial plots.²⁸

The Olmsted Brothers firm carried out several projects in Torrington, most of which were commissioned by the same families who were involved in Hillside Cemetery. They include:

- Elizabeth Blake Fuessenick Park (1919-1921, radically changed)²⁹
- Elizabeth Migeon – Migeon Place (1909-1919, Migeon Avenue Historic District)³⁰
- Mrs. T. W. Bryant residence (1935-36, Migeon Avenue Historic District, house demolished but landscape mostly intact)³¹
- Trinity Church Rectory (1917-1920)³²

Olmsted Cemeteries

²⁶ Beveridge, "The Olmsted Firm – An Introduction."

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Lawliss *Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm 1857-1979*, 45.

³⁰ Ibid., 159.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

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The Olmsted firm designed only four complete cemeteries.³³ The vast majority of the over 200 projects concerning cemeteries listed in the Olmsted Archive involved the expansion or modification of existing cemeteries or the design of gravesites and monuments for prominent clients.³⁴ The Migeon, Coe, Bryant and Alvord plots at Hillside Cemetery are good examples of this because they were custom designed and sited for wealthy families within an existing cemetery..

Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. designed only one cemetery, Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland, California (1864), and his work there was to inform all later cemeteries designed by the firm. In his *Preface to the Plan for Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland, California*, Olmsted states the case for thoughtful cemetery design by writing, "Plainly, something more is contemplated in this than providing a place where spaces of ground are to be held ready for sale for those who have bodies of the dead in their houses, which they wish to put away..."³⁵ He goes on to define a proper cemetery as, "...a place in which those feelings, sentiments and aspirations which religion and civilization make common to all in the presence of the dead..." and "...a place wherein we may see and feel our sympathy one with another." To these ends, he applied his principles of design to a difficult site to produce a landscape of curving paths and gentle hills. Its most ostentatious monuments and mausoleums are clustered near the center of the cemetery as they are at Hillside, while smaller monuments in the remainder of the cemetery fit into the landscape.³⁶

At Hillside Cemetery (1907-1969), the first designed by Olmsted Brothers, they followed their father's design principles in grading and planting. They went further than he had at Mountain View in their opinion of the intrusion of monuments into the landscape. In their chapter, "A Suggestion as to Gravestones," in the Hillside Cemetery handbook they state, "In the design of Hillside Cemetery it has been our aim, with due regard to the economical use of the land to preserve and develop the natural loveliness of the place. This quality in the landscape setting of a burial ground is most to be desired, and yet most easily destroyed. Our observations of cemeteries in general, have led us to the conclusion that too often they become so over-ornamented with purely gardenesque features as to destroy the dignity of their purpose."³⁷ In the "Rules and Regulations" section the Association gives regulatory force to this idea in Rule 6, which states that all headstones and monuments, "...shall be of such size and character as to be neither offensive nor injurious to the appearance of the surrounding lots of ground or of harmony

³³ Job Number 09790 was assigned to the American Military Cemetery in 1947, but the firm only designed the landscape plan. Site design was done by Perry Dean Rogers Architects;

"Cambridge American Cemetery, *American Battle Monuments*,

³⁴ Lawliss, *Master List*, 159.

³⁵ Beveridge, *Frederick Law Olmsted: Writings on Landscape, Culture, and Society (LOA #270)*, unpaginated.

³⁶ "Mountain View Cemetery: The Bay area's best landscape,"

³⁷ Olmsted Brothers, "A Suggestion as to Gravestones," in *The Hillside Cemetery Association of Torrington Incorporated*; This pamphlet is still printed and distributed by Hillside Cemetery.

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with the general plan of the cemetery.³⁸ As a result of these regulations, monuments and headstones at Hillside are much smaller and more restrained than those at Mountain View and the general experience of the cemetery is much more unified and peaceful.

The North Purchase Cemetery, Attleboro, Massachusetts (1920 -1980) is a relatively small, 14-acre cemetery approximately 30 miles southwest of Boston. It is uncharacteristically flat but has the signature Olmsted circulation pattern of winding roads and few large monuments.³⁹

The last cemetery wholly designed by Olmsted Brothers is Puritan Lawn Memorial Park, West Peabody, Massachusetts (1934-1968) fifteen miles north of Boston.⁴⁰ In this project, they came closest to Frederick Law Olmsted's vision of an ideal cemetery. It is not a cemetery in the conventional sense, but, as its name states, a memorial park. The 140-acre site has the typical Olmsted circulation pattern of winding roads. The park includes two lakes and there are no gravestones or large monuments to mar the effect of the landscape. Instead, each grave is marked by a bronze memorial set flush with the ground. It is home to many species of wildlife, and it is used by the public for walking, jogging and passive recreation.⁴¹

The Chapel

The prominent Torrington family of industrialist John F. Alvord donated the Alvord Memorial Mortuary Chapel in memory of his parents, Charles and Almira Burtis Alvord, to the Hillside Cemetery Association in 1913.⁴² It is based on an English parish church in the Gothic Revival style and was designed by architect Max H. Westhoff of Saranac Lake, New York.⁴³

Chapel Architect

Max H. Westhoff (1874- 1951) was a member of the initial class at Pratt Institute, and was first employed by (Cyrus) Eidlitz and (Andrew) McKenzie in New York. Cyrus was the son of Leopold who was one of the architects of the New York State Capitol. Westhoff moved to Saranac Lake as a result of contracting tuberculosis at age 32. In 1902, he was hired by architect William L. Coulter, who had worked in James Renwick's New York office before setting up his office in the Adirondacks after also contracting Tuberculosis. Westhoff became a partner in the firm in 1905. Coulter passed away in 1907, but due to his great respect for his senior partner, Westhoff continued the firm under the name "Coulter and Westhoff" for the next five years. The firm designed several homes in Saranac Lake and lake camps in the Adirondacks along with two

³⁸ Lawliss, *Master List of Design Projects*, 15-16.

³⁹ "Woodlawn North Purchase Cemetery, Attleboro, Massachusetts," *Google Earth Pro*.

⁴⁰ Lawliss, *Master List*, 249-250.

⁴¹ "About Us," *Puritan Lawn Memorial Park*,

⁴² "Splendid Chapel Now Being Built in Hillside Cemetery," *The Evening Register*, Torrington, Connecticut, August 8, 1913.

⁴³ *Ibid*.

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in New Hampshire. They also designed additions to Paul Smith's Hotel and the Lake Placid Club. Working alone, he produced designs for the St. Regis Hotel, the Adirondack National Bank, and the Northwood School, in Lake Placid. In 1910, he hired William G. Distin as a draftsman, who became a partner by 1918. Their firm designed the Gothic Revival St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake.⁴⁴

In 1917, he moved his practice to Springfield, Massachusetts, where he designed a number of notable buildings, including the Colonial Revival style Frank M. Travis House (1918) in Torrington, which is a contributing building to the Migeon Avenue Historic District.⁴⁵ He also completed two major projects in Ticonderoga, the Hancock House (1925-26) and the Community Building (1927), while living in Springfield. He retired in 1935 and died near St. Petersburg, Florida, in 1951.⁴⁶

Criterion Consideration D

Hillside Cemetery is significant under Criterion Consideration D because it was designed by the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, and it has retained a very high degree of integrity. The company was a successor to the United States' first professional landscape firm, founded by their father, Fredrick Law Olmsted. The cemetery gate, administration building, grading and circulation plan designed by the firm and shown in the 1909 master plan (Figure 5), are intact and unchanged. Eight monuments designed and sited by the firm remain unchanged in their original locations. The Hillside Cemetery Association, which owns the cemetery, continues to reprint and distribute the 1909 Olmsted Brothers pamphlet, *A Suggestion as to Gravestones*. The guidelines for design included in this publication have always been the guiding principles for management of the cemetery. The cemetery is also an excellent example of early twentieth century Lawn-Park Cemetery design and Frederick Law Olmsted's design approach. It focuses on the experience of the landscape, rather than that of ostentatious monuments and elaborate family plots.

⁴⁴ This building burned in 1967 and it was replaced by a Modern church.

⁴⁵ Ohno, "Migeon Avenue Historic District."

⁴⁶ Hotaling, "Max Westhoff, Revival-Style Architect," 4, 11.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ____ previously listed in the National Register
- ____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ____ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ____ State Historic Preservation Office
- ____ Other State agency

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- Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 64.2

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 41.787079 | Longitude: -73.126126 |
| 2. Latitude: 41.788014 | Longitude: -73.121403 |
| 3. Latitude: 41.783943 | Longitude: -73.120408 |
| 4. Latitude: 41.783502 | Longitude: -73.128257 |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the property are the boundaries of Hillside Cemetery as listed in the Tax Assessor's records of the City of Torrington, Connecticut as Map 114, Lot 001, Block 001 and shown on Figure 2.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the property are consistent with the historic boundaries of Hillside Cemetery, when the land was purchased for the creation of the cemetery in 1906 The cemetery parcel has not been subdivided or expanded.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Tod Bryant/ Peter Viteretto
organization: Heritage Resources/Heritage Landscapes
street & number: 23 Morgan Avenue/34 Wall Street
city or town: Norwalk state: CT zip code: 06851/06850
e-mail: tbryant23@optonline.net/viteretto@heritagelandscapes.cc
telephone: 203-852-9788/203-852-9966
date: November, 2021

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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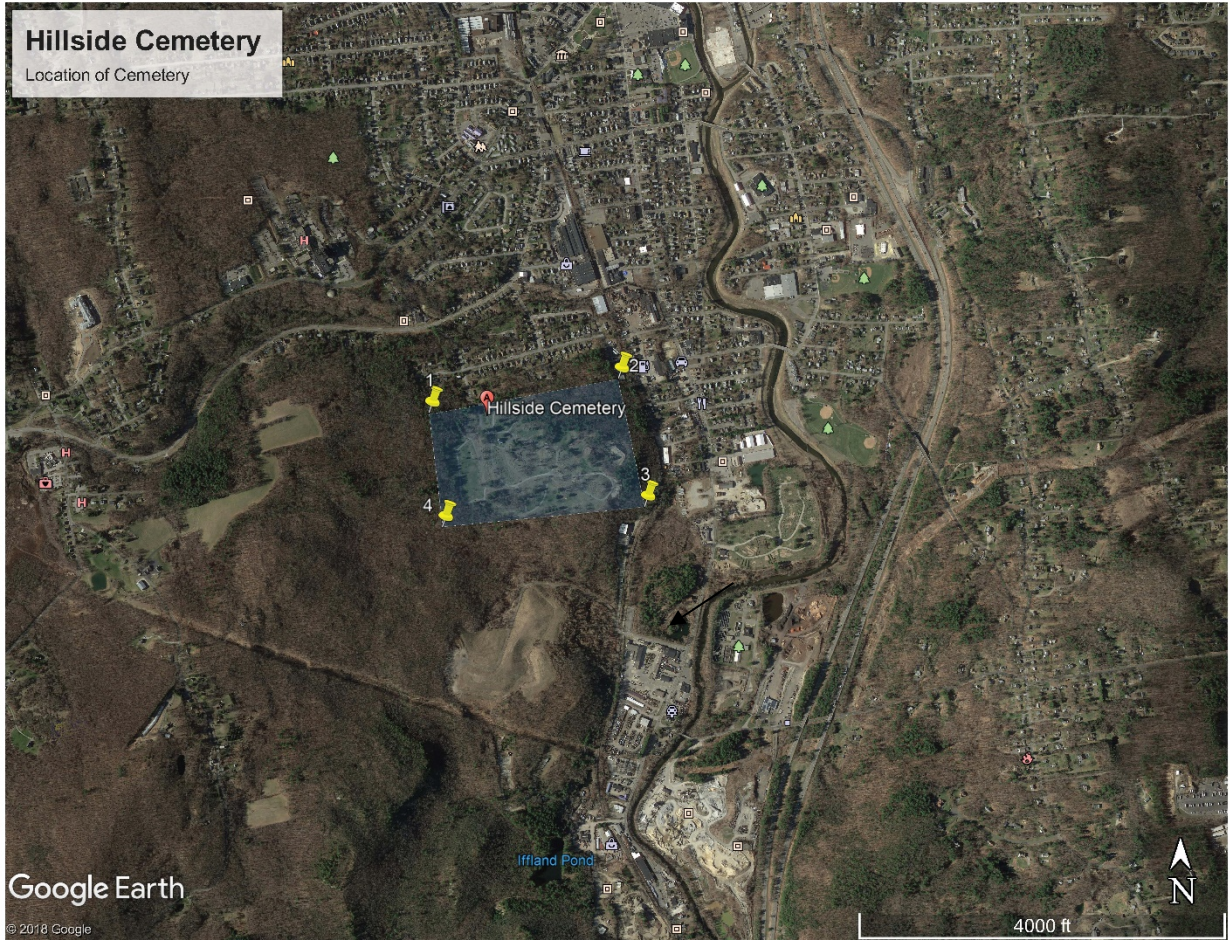


Figure 1. Map showing location of Hillside Cemetery (base map: Google Earth, 2018)

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Figure 2. Site plan of Hillside Cemetery.

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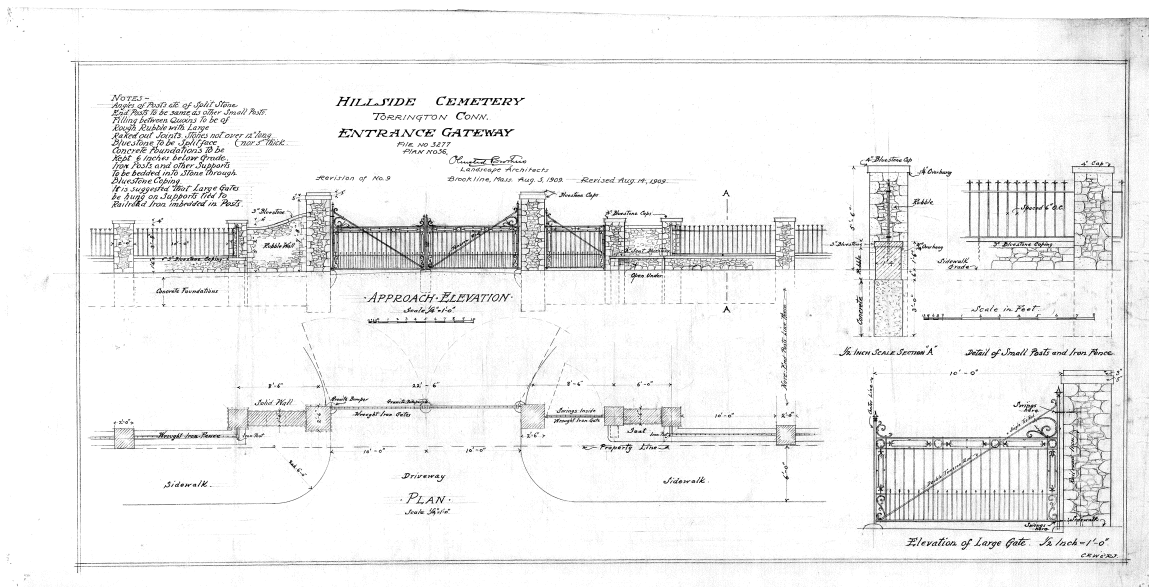


Figure 3. Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects 1909 drawing of main gate.



Figure 4. View east of main gate in 1921. Plantings inside of the main entry gate are a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees grown atop the graded bank inside the cemetery with mixed shrubs planted on the face of the slope for the visible length behind the gated entrance along Chapel Drive. (Courtesy of Torrington Historical Society, David Hosford Collection)

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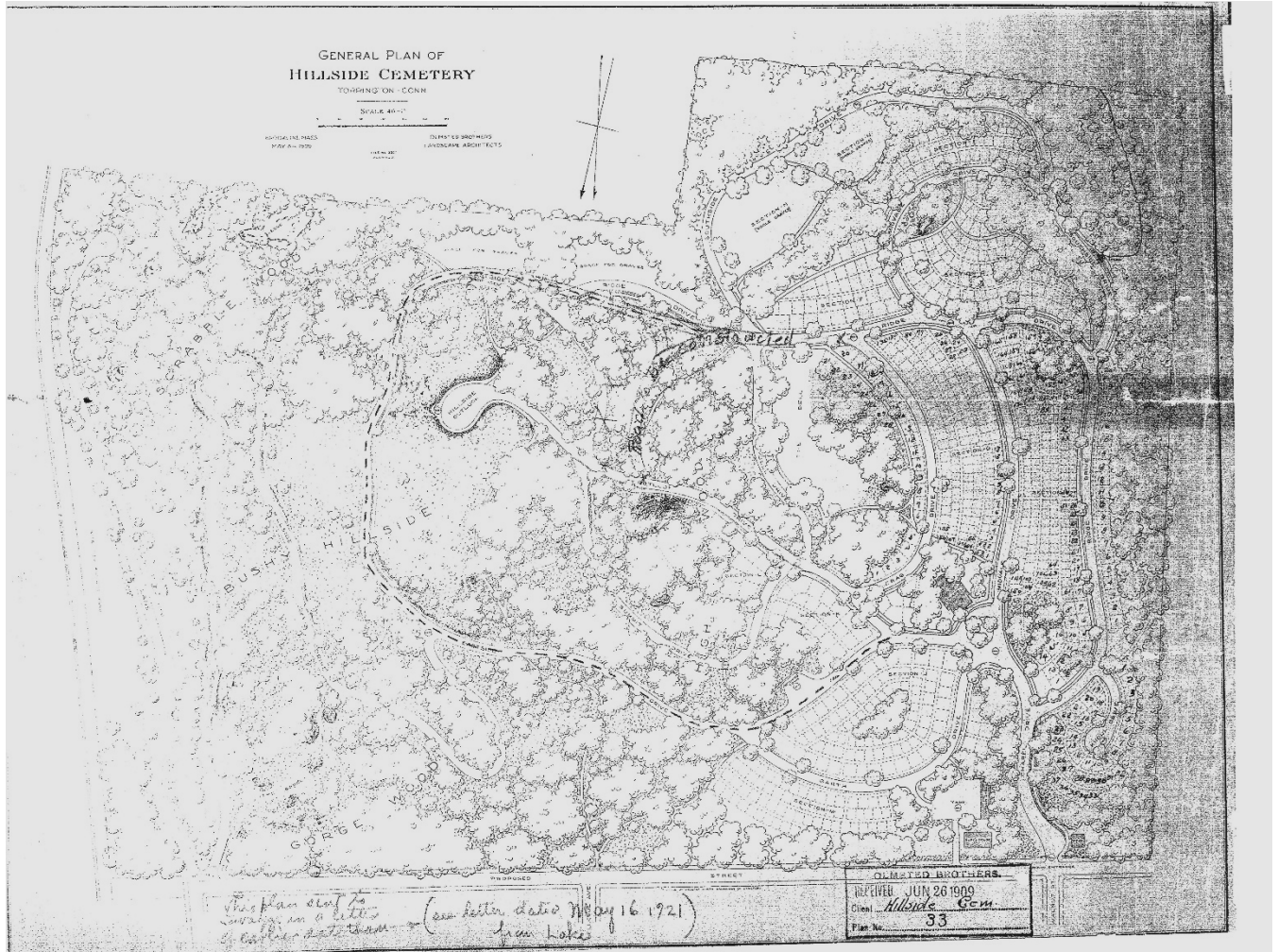


Figure 5. Olmsted Brothers General Plan of Hillside Cemetery, 1909. (Olmsted Archive)

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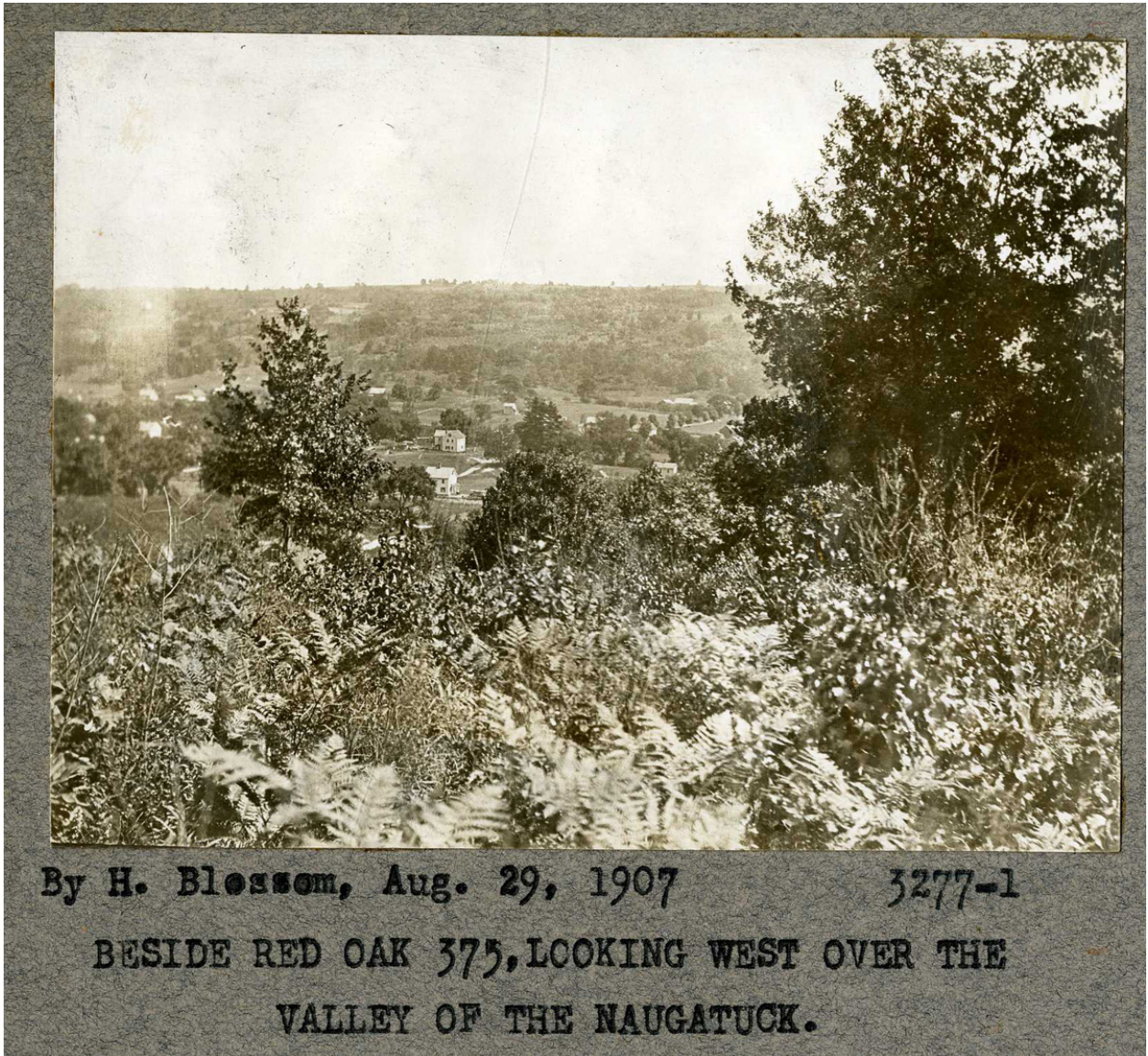


Figure 6. View northeast across the Naugatuck Valley before cemetery development in 1907. The open landscape is covered with low herbaceous materials and individual trees. (Torrington Historical Society, David Hosford Collection)

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Figure 7. Woodland vegetation and turf covered lawns frames the natural landscape of the Naugatuck Valley visible in the background. Curvilinear drives create a sequence of views that unfold as visitors move throughout the landscape. (Torrington Historical Society, David Hosford Collection)

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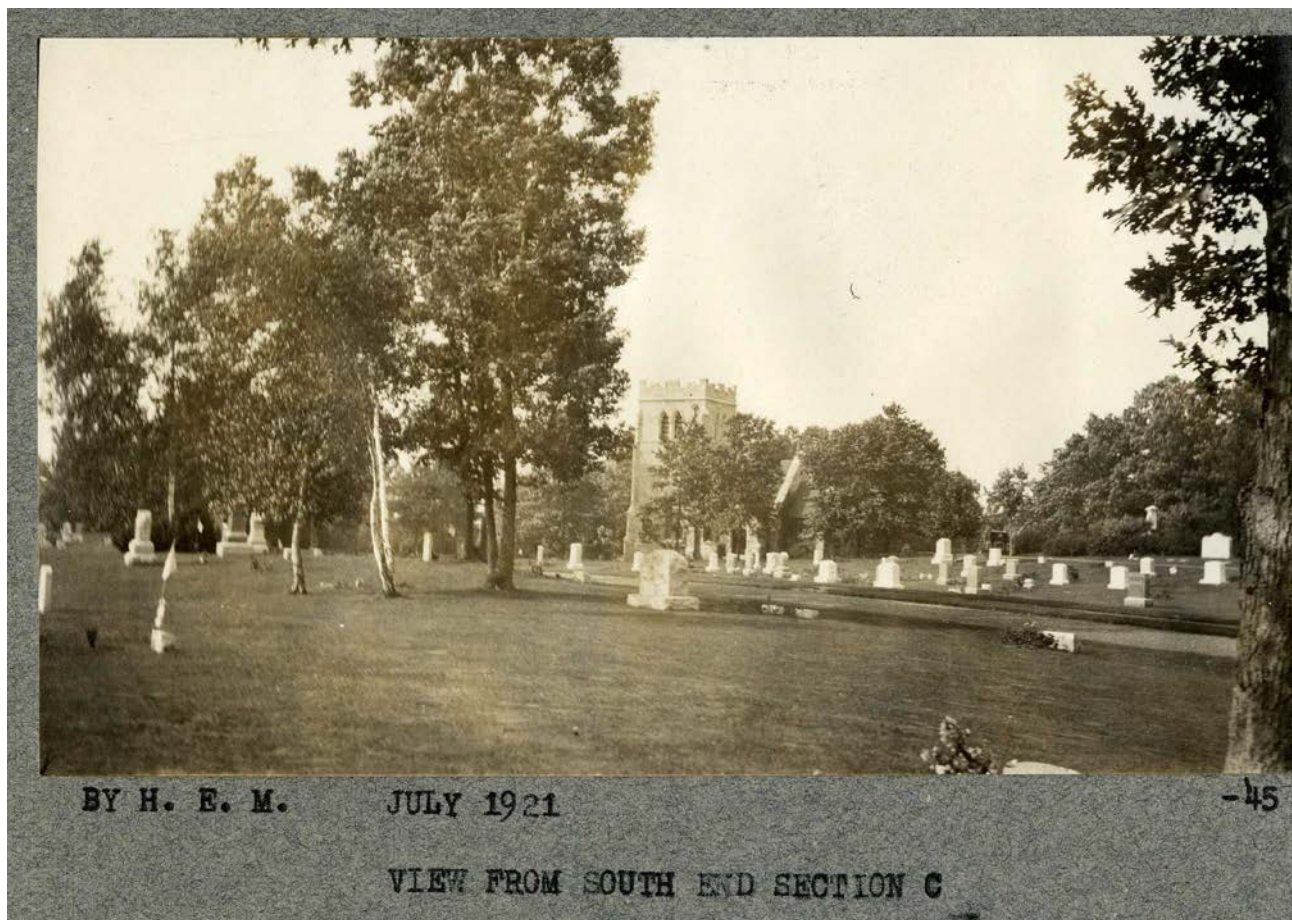


Figure 8. View north from Section C toward the Alvord Memorial Chapel. A turf covered lawn expands across the landscape in this section, as groups of trees create smaller landscape spaces and visual separation. In the background, the chapel stands against a backdrop of deciduous and evergreen trees on the gently sloping turf. (Torrington Historical Society, David Hosford Collection)

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Figure 9. Shown during preliminary grading work, large stones lie along the edge of the drive to provide a naturalistic border and address the grade change of Crag Drive. The Naugatuck Valley is seen in the distance. (Torrington Historical Society, David Hosford Collection)

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Figure 10. View north Curvilinear crushed stone drives with cobble gutters accommodated vehicle movement throughout the landscape. A separate system of crushed stone paths offers pedestrian access to grave sites and wooded areas within the cemetery landscape. (Torrington Historical Society, David Hosford Collection)

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Figure 11. View east of the “Outlook” located at the terminus of Overlook Drive along the eastern ridge of the developed cemetery grounds, Hillside Overlook offers panoramic views of Torrington center and Naugatuck Valley. The overlook is constructed of compacted earth and gravel with a large stone laid back retaining wall but is now overgrown. (Torrington Historical Society, David Hosford Collection)

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Figure 12. Large masses of shrub materials, including rhododendron, exist throughout the cemetery. Rock outcroppings, visible in the background and utilized in the design, create a naturalistic setting for the cemetery park. (Torrington Historical Society, David Hosford Collection)

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Figure 13. Model of Migeon monument and stairs in place, 1914. (Olmsted Archive)

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Figure 14. Coe monument c.1910. (Torrington Historical Society)



Figure 15. Office building c.1910. (Torrington Historical Society)

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Figure 16. Coe-Workman monument c.1910. (Torrington Historical Society)



Figure 17. Graded and planted site with curving roadway c.1910.
(Torrington Historical Society)

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Figure 18. Section map of Hillside Cemetery.

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Hillside Cemetery

City or Vicinity: Torrington

County: Litchfield

State: CT

Photographer: Tod Bryant

Date Photographed: June 2014, March 2016, June 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photograph 1 of 31. View south of main gate, June 27, 2019.

Photograph 2 of 31. View southeast of main gate, June 6, 2014.

Photograph 3 of 31. View east of office building showing facade, June 27, 2019.

Photograph 4 of 31. View southeast of chapel showing facade and west elevation. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 5 of 31. View northeast of chapel showing west elevation. June 26, 2014.

Photograph 6 of 31. View northwest of chapel showing north and east elevations. June 26, 2014.

Photograph 7 of 31. View south from Chapel Drive toward Midvale, showing plantings and curving roads. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 8 of 31. View southeast across Section E toward mausoleum, showing graded landscape, monuments and rock outcropping. June 6, 2014.

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Photograph 9 of 31. View southeast from Section C toward chapel. This image is nearly identical to that in Figure 8 from July 1921. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 10 of 31. View southeast from Section D showing vista with graded landscape, plantings and monuments. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 11 of 31. View west from Section E showing curved roadways, plantings and monuments. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 12 of 31. View west from Section B toward Section G showing curved roadways, plantings and monuments. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 13 of 31. View southeast toward Section L showing curved footpath, plantings, rock outcropping and monuments. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 14 of 31. View east of Section E showing stone stairs, plantings, rock outcroppings and monuments. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 15 of 31. View northwest of Section D toward Section C showing curved roadway, grading, plantings, and monuments. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 16 of 31. View south of Sections C and D showing curved roadway, grading, rhododendron plantings, and monuments. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 17 of 31. View northeast of Section D showing stone wall of overlook, plantings, stone outcroppings and monuments. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 18 of 31. View southwest of Section E, The Dell, showing stone wall, plantings (the tree in the center was not part of the Olmsted planting plan) and monuments. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 19 of 31. View west of Alvord Monument. March 29, 2016.

Photograph 20 of 31. View west of Bryant monument. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 21 of 31. View west of Coe Monument, showing rhododendron plantings. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 22 of 31. View north from Section D showing stone wall, curved roadway, Davis-Matthews Mausoleum, rock outcropping and plantings. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 23 of 31. View southeast of Hotchkiss-Fyler monument. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 24. of 31. View northeast of Migeon monument and stairs. June 27, 2019.

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Photograph 25 of 31. View southeast of Workman monument. June 27, 2019.

Photograph 26 of 31. Interior view southeast of office in office and maintenance building. September 16 2021.

Photograph 27 of 31. Interior view south showing altar in the apse and stained-glass window. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 28 of 31. Interior view northwest of west transept in chapel. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 29 of 31. Interior view north showing narthex and stained-glass window. June 6, 2014.

Photograph 30 of 31. Interior view east showing stained-glass windows. June 6, 2014.

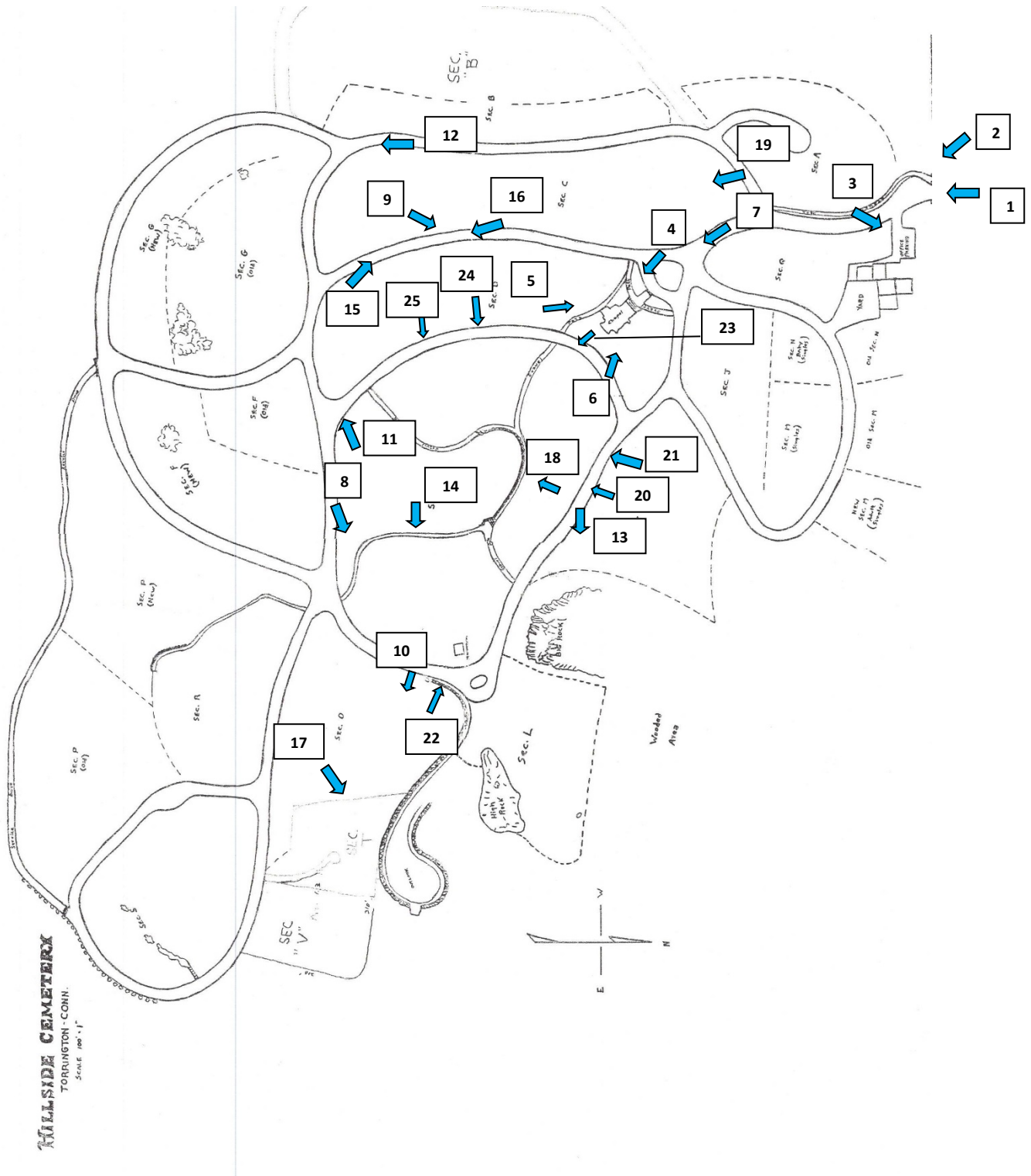
Photograph 31 of 31. Interior view west showing stained-glass windows. June 6, 2014.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Photograph 1. View south of main gate, June 27, 2019.



Photograph 2. View southeast of main gate, June 6, 2014.



Photograph 3. View east of office building showing facade, June 27, 2019



Photograph 4. View southeast of chapel showing facade and west elevation. June 27, 2019



Photograph 5. View northeast of chapel showing west elevation. June 26, 2014



Photograph 6. View northwest of chapel showing north and east elevations. June 26, 2014



Photograph 7. View south from Chapel Drive toward Midvale, showing plantings and curving roads. June 6, 2014.



Photograph 8. View southeast across Section E toward mausoleum, showing graded landscape, monuments and rock outcropping. June 6, 2014.



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Photograph 13. View southeast toward Section L showing curved footpath, plantings, rock outcropping and monuments. June 27, 2019.



Photograph 14. View east toward Section E showing stone stairs, plantings, rock outcroppings and monuments. June 27, 2019.



Photograph 15. View northwest of Section D toward Section C showing curved roadway, grading, plantings, and monuments. June 6, 2014.



Photograph 16.. View south of Sections C and D showing curved roadway, grading, rhododendron plantings, and monuments. June 6, 2014..



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Photograph 29. Interior view north showing narthex and stained-glass window. June 6, 2014..



Photograph 30. Interior view east showing stained-glass windows. June 6, 2014.



Photograph 31. Interior view west showing stained-glass windows. June 6, 2014..