

Sunday, April 10, 2011: Springfield Cemetery, Springfield, Massachusetts

Posted April 11, 2011

Today I left Springfield. A little driving tour of the Springfield Cemetery is in order before I totally leave Springfield, Massachusetts.

This cemetery is very large and is right in the heart of Springfield. It also houses the burials from the **Elm Street** Cemetery or more properly the "Old Burying Yard" that were moved there in mid 1848. You might find more information at the Longmeadow Historical Society. I was told by the cemetery office to enter in the Pine Street entrance and turn left to find the old section and the mass graves. Well, guess what? It was locked up tight. So that means I had to go around to the main entrance off Central which changes to Cemetery Road. This took a bit of doing because I could not find it. About the 3rd time down Central St. I finally spotted the entrance and figured out how to enter.

The entrance to the Springfield Cemetery looks like an alley way except for the two brick pillars with urns at the top and the two wrought iron gates that have oxidized with green mold.



Entrance to the Springfield Cemetery



The roadway into the Springfield Cemetery

Once through the gates you drive down this long-paved road till you come to the cemetery office and crematorium which is on your left. It is a rather boxy brick building.



Based on the information I had received from the office, I decided to take the road to the right rather than go straight ahead. It led me past the Chapel and up a steep one lane road with a cliff

on the left. No errors here or you are down in the gully. The Springfield Cemetery is hilly, has valleys, dips, different levels and is huge.

My goal was the area along Pine Street where the Elm Street interments were placed. It is right beside the Pine Street Entrance so that helps. Fortunately, I had taken the correct road. It took me up to these older stones. I used the Pine Street entrance to park my car. Elm Street was the old burial ground at the Court Park area of Springfield that I was talking about in my post on April 5th. It is the cemetery that was destroyed, and the burials were removed and interred in the Springfield Cemetery because of the railroad. These are the older pioneers of the area.



Memorial Stone to the Old Burying Ground 1848

The old stones are about 4 rows deep. I feel sad and wondered how many graves were lost, not just from time turning them into dust but who might have been buried there. Tombstones that had broken or had been buried as well. The above photograph shows the marker that I found. A marker that is a deep brownish red, small and hard to read right at the corner next to the Pine Street entrance. I hope there are more references to this bygone cemetery, but I did not have time to dig deeper.





Tombstones from the Old Burying Ground on Elm Street 1848

Here is the link to the Springfield Cemetery website.

<http://springfieldcemetery.com/design/?int=1>





Some stones are doing well but this one has broken off. If you want to know who is buried in the Springfield Cemetery go to Find A Grave and search for the Springfield Cemetery. The cemetery office website states they have 25,000+ burials but Find A Grave only has about 19,501. You can search for a cemetery or search by a name. If you bring up a specific cemetery you can search just that cemetery with a name.

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&CRid=91750>

I choose the name Daniel Cooley and it gave me two names:

- Daniel Cooley born May 2, 1651 died Feb 9, 1727. This individual was placed in the marker that represents the mass grave.
- The 2nd was Daniel Cooley born May 2, 1651 d. Feb 9, 1726. Another search came up with Elizabeth Wolcott born Aug. 19, 1662 in Windsor, died Jan. 30, 1706.

Daniel Cooley (1651-1727) and Elizabeth Wolcott Cooley (1662-1706) were the parents of Benjamin Cooley who married Margaret Bliss and went to Brimfield.

Here are some additional photos of this cemetery. I also have a video which is at YouTube regarding this cemetery.



More cemetery through the trees



Through the Trees more of the cemetery

One could spend hours in this cemetery studying the stones and examining all the nooks and crannies. I was there maybe 1/2 hour or 45 minutes and I felt a sense of age, tiredness and time. I could see that there was destruction, stones had fallen over and were getting covered with debris and disappearing. This made me wonder how many are buried underneath. Unfortunately the ancestors that I want to study or visit are gone with the ages and one can only guess where they might be resting peacefully.