

A STRIKING, HISTORIC PLACE

By **ROBERT B. STEPHENSON**

Jaffrey Center Village Improvement Society
and Jaffrey Historical Society

JAFFREY — Of the historic cemeteries of Jaffrey, the most striking and interesting is perhaps Cutter Cemetery. It lies at the edge of the Jaffrey Center village on Harkness Road close to Route 124. What is striking about the cemetery is the allee of sugar maples.

The now-ancient trees run up the center drive and along the boundary walls, giving both an ordered and a serene appearance. Time has seen some gaps develop here and there, but the grand layout survives nicely.

The cemetery was laid out in 1836 in accordance with the wishes of John Cutter (1765-1835) who lived beside the site chosen. His house, the largest in the village, still stands. At the start and for nearly a century the cemetery was for the Cutter family alone. What is interesting and unusual is the cemetery is over an acre in size, whereas private family burying grounds tend to be much smaller. And it is grand, not only for its stately maples but also its cast-iron fencing and entrance gate and the large cut granite holding tomb.

Although it is unclear exactly why, the cemetery was entrusted to the care and ownership of the town in 1927. From that date there has been a small but steady influx of non-Cutters. Presently no lots are available to purchase though burials are still occurring. Longtime Jaffrey schoolteacher Mildred Cutter joined her ancestors in 2007.

Even though Cutter Cemetery is full, its story continues. If you wander up the center drive to the end and turn left, you will see an opening in the wall. This leads to the Cutter Extension, a grassy 1.5-acre meadow with views to Mount Monadnock. In May 2004, the town of Jaffrey purchased the land so there would continue to be an active burying place with available lots in the center of town. A single reddish granite



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To fill the present and future gaps of the cemetery, the Monadnock Garden Club and the Garden Club of Dublin have joined together in a Garden Club of America Centennial Project to restore the sugar maples of Cutter Cemetery.

Cuttings from the existing trees are being propagated along with new trees that will be planted over the next couple of years.



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Articles are contributed by individual historical organizations that are part of the Monadnock Historical Societies Forum. For further information, please contact Tom Haynes at the Historical Society of Cheshire County at 352-1895 or visit the Forum's webpage at www.hscnh.org/roundtable/default.cfm.