

U.S. Military Academy - Cemetery Gates  
At the south and west entrances to the U.S.  
Military Academy cemetery off of Washington Road  
U.S. Military Academy  
West Point  
Orange County  
New York

HABS No. NY-5708-55 - A

HABS  
NY,  
36-WE29  
1/55A -

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HABS  
NY,  
36-WE  
155AHISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY - CEMETERY GATES

LOCATION: At the south and west entrances to the U.S. Military Academy cemetery off of Washington Road, U.S. Military Academy, West Point, Orange County, New York.

U.S.G.S. West Point Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator  
Coordinates: 18.586360.4583110.

PRESENT OWNER  
AND OCCUPANT: U.S. Military Academy, Department of the Army.

PRESENT USE: Cemetery gates.

SIGNIFICANCE: The cemetery gates are an intricately detailed set of cast iron gates and posts which remain as a rare survivor of early exterior decorative ironwork at the Academy.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Unknown.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: U.S. Military Academy, Department of the Army.
4. Builders: Unknown.
5. Original plans and construction: The Annual Report of 1897 mentions that "the stone wall at the cemetery is being rebuilt, and the wrought-iron gates formerly used at the south gate have been repaired and set up at the rear entrance to the cemetery."
6. Alterations and additions: The gates appear to be unaltered with the exception of a missing urn on the west set.

B. Historical Context: For the historical and architectural context of these gates within overall development of West Point see HABS No. NY-5708, Volume 2: "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy."

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

## A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Overall, the gates are classical in form and feeling yet gothic details on the posts make them rather eclectic.
2. Condition of fabric: The gates are in excellent condition.

B. Description:

1. Posts: The cast iron posts are square in plan and are tripartite in elevation, consisting of a base, a shaft and a capital. Cast iron urns sit on top of the four posts at the south entrance while only one urn survives on one of the two posts at the west gate. The shaft of each post is a vertical panel of cast decoration of gothic derivation. A foliated band hangs beneath the square capital. With the exception of the number of posts, the two sets of posts are distinguished only by different styles of urns.
2. Gates: Both sets of gates are made of identical elements: vertical pointed "spear" shafts, three horizontal rails and two diagonal braces which meet the center at a circle. The single valve pedestrian side gates are distinguished by crossed cannon in this circle and the bi-valve center vehicular gates have a shield emblematic of the American flag. The gates are painted black.

C. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The south gate is directly in front of the Old Cadet Chapel off of Washington Road near the junction of Ruger Road. A low stone wall adjoins each end post. The west gate is not an active entrance. It too is connected to a stone perimeter wall. Grass and bushes have now been planted in front of these west gates.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural Drawings: There are no known drawings.
- B. Early Views: Early photographs can be found in the U.S. Military Academy Archives and Special Collections. Some of these are reproduced in the Grashof and Lange volumes of this project.
- C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources: Records, U.S. Military Academy and Special Collections. See bibliographic essay in the Lange volume of this project for a listing of record groups.
2. Secondary and published sources: Annual reports, U.S. Military Academy Archives.

Crashof, Bethanie C. "Building Analysis and Preservation Cuidelines for Category I and Selected Category II Buildings at the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York," Historic American Buildings Survey. 1983. HABS No. NY-5708.

Lange, Robie S. "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy," Historic American Buildings Survey. 1983. HABS No. NY-5708.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation is part of a multi-year project sponsored by the National Park Service and the United States Military Academy, explained in the United States Military Academy, HABS No. NY-5708 Volume 1, "Methodology." This written documentation was prepared by Travis C. McDonald, Jr., architectural historian, in 1982-1985 based on fieldwork conducted in 1982.