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Gilmanton cemeteries damaged in rash of disturbances

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GILMANTON — A rash of disturbances, damage, and theft have occurred in two Gilmanton cemeteries.

Gilmanton Cemetery Trustees report that one of two matching antique, hand-forged gates in the Friends Cemetery in Gilmanton Corners was stolen mid-July. In the nearby Beech Grove Cemetery, several granite sections were pulled from a vault wall, a gravestone was toppled, and two granite corner markers were disturbed. Granite posts and one corner marker were stolen.

The trustees have installed surveillance equipment to prevent further vandalism. Damage and thefts in cemeteries are specifically cited in state law and may be prosecuted as Class B felonies.



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The first recorded burial in Friends Cemetery, previously owned by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), occurred in 1810. Beech Grove Cemetery has been used as a burial ground since 1813.

Gilmanton residents have always shown interest and care in the protection of their cemeteries and burial grounds. The recent violations have resulted in extra costs, and the trustees are asking that anyone knowing of these events, or of other such thefts, contact the Gilmanton Police Department at 603-267-7401.

Property owners and landscaping companies are encouraged to require proof of ownership before purchasing granite, gates, and other decorative items from individuals.