

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mt. Memorial Cemetery

other name/site number The Old Graveyard

2. Location

street & town 500 Block of East Mississippi Street N/A not for publication

city or town Liberty N/A vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Clay code 047 zip code 64068

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark A Miles MARCH 5, 2012
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY: Cemetery

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY: Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: cemetery

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____
walls concrete

roof _____
other limestone, marble, granite

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Name of Property

Clay County, MO
County and State

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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

EXPLORATION / SETTLEMENT

ART: Funerary

Period of Significance

1820-1916

Significant Dates

1836

1910

1916

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: _____

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Name of Property

Clay County, MO
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.4 acres

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/5 3/7/8/1/5/0 4/3/4/5/1/4/0
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jonna Wensel / Community Development Manager

organization City of Liberty date 10/31/2011

street & number 101 E. Kansas St. telephone 816-439-4537

city or town Liberty state MO zip code 64068

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name/title City of Liberty

street & number 101 E. Kansas St. telephone 816-439-4400

city or town Liberty state MO zip code 64068

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. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

**Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Clay County, MO**

Narrative Description

Summary

Mt. Memorial Cemetery occupies 1.4 acres on a high hilltop, one-half mile to the east of Liberty's courthouse square in Clay County, Missouri. The cemetery is located at the easternmost end of Mississippi Street, in the middle of the campus of William Jewell College. It is rectangular in plan and measures approximately 140 feet east to west by 435 feet north to south. One driveway, with access from Miller Avenue on the north, makes a single loop through the cemetery. The cemetery is a self-contained island within the college campus, and enclosed by a concrete wall built in 1910. There are 554 documented burials, dating from 1828 to the present. The number of unmarked graves is unknown, although many internments have been two or three deep. There are several family plots, some containing as many as 16 known burials. The monuments and grave markers are constructed of traditional materials; the older ones are made of marble and limestone, and the newer ones are primarily of granite. The markers are modest, with the traditional iconography typically found in nineteenth century cemeteries. The site is in good condition, and is maintained by the City of Liberty. Although there are no longer any plots available to purchase, the cemetery is still used for burials. The location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association have been maintained in this cemetery, which is now 175 years old. Mt. Memorial Cemetery is an excellent example of the burial customs of Liberty's early settlers. It is locally significant and eligible for listing under Criterion A: Exploration/Settlement and Criterion C: Funerary Art; and Criterion Consideration D: Planned Burial Site.

Setting

The cemetery is located on one of the highest spots in the county, from which there are views of the countryside to the north and east. Immediately to the west are park-like green space and the home of the president of William Jewell College. To the north and east are dormitories and administration buildings, and to the south are Gano Chapel, the campus quad, and Jewell Hall. The campus is adjacent to the Jewell-Lightburne National Register District to the west.

Site

Due to its elevated location and the four-foot high wall surrounding it, one could easily remain unaware of the cemetery's existence. The fence is constructed of concrete posts every twelve feet with concrete panels between them. The cemetery is accessible by vehicle via an access road which enters the site at the northwest corner. There is a stairway at the southwest corner, which is nearly hidden from sight, but provides pedestrian access.

Within the walls of the cemetery there are a few trees, but many were felled by a tornado in 2003. Some cedars and oaks stand at the south end. Outside the walls, on the north and west sides, are numerous cedar, oak, and pine trees. There is no landscaping to speak of and graveside plantings are rare, although there are a few yucca plants growing throughout.

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**Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Clay County, MO**

Most grave markers and monuments within the cemetery appear to be scattered haphazardly, although some are arranged in rows. This is typical of older cemeteries, where the spaces were often reused, with remains stacked upon each other. In an account by the city's sexton of 30 years, he reported uncovering bones in unmarked spots and finding remains buried two and three deep.¹

As was also common in old cemeteries, the north side of the cemetery was considered less desirable and was often set aside for slaves, servants, suicides, "unknowns," etc.² Likewise, at Mt. Memorial, the northern end was designated for blacks,³ although there is no longer any evidence that it was once segregated.

Grave Markers and Monuments

The stylistic character of the grave markers in Mt. Memorial Cemetery is eclectic. While there are a great variety of types, styles, and ages of the markers, they are all relatively modest. There are no tombs or mausoleums found in this small cemetery, which likely reflects both the social and financial modesty of the local population. The markers reflect the traditional burial customs and monuments of the mid-nineteenth century through the early twentieth century. A few of the markers are newer than the burials with which they are associated. Some have been replaced or were purchased later by family descendants.

The grave markers range in age from more than 150 years to less than five. One of the oldest markers is dated 1828 (Charlie Desmon). Many of the inscriptions on the stones have been weathered so that they are illegible. Most of the oldest stones are constructed of limestone or sandstone, with a few of marble. More modern monuments are constructed of granite. The graves are oriented so that the bodies lie with their heads to the west and their feet to the east. In some areas, it appears that there has been an attempt to align the burials and markers in north to south rows, with the markers facing east. There are several graves, however, which have been placed without regard for alignment.

One common type of monument found here is the tablet. Some are on bases, but most are inserted directly in the ground. Some lie flat on the ground. They vary in size; from the smallest markers measuring about eight by twelve inches for infants and children, up to four or five feet tall. There is a wide variety of motifs decorating the tablets: winged cherubs, urns and willow, fraternal symbols, crosses, florals (some with baskets), anchors, and military emblems.

¹ Sharon Beltz, "A slice of time" Liberty Tribune 19 March 1980, p.5.

² The Association for Gravestone Studies website FAQ page, 2005, 28 Sept. 2011, <<http://www.gravestonestudies.org/faq.htm>>.

³ D.C. Allen, "The Old Graveyard" Liberty Tribune 28 Jan. 1910.

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**Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Clay County, MO**

In addition to the more common markers such as tablets and obelisks, the cemetery contains several distinctive markers of the Victorian era. Some of the more elaborate markers and family plots include:

Thusnelda Louise Leopold Marker, 1849 (Photo 9): A large, iron cross with decorative fan-like brackets at the intersections. Cross is inscribed with Bible verse Matthew 19:14 in German, and stars on the left and right ends and at the top. Cross stands in a concrete base.

Ruth Woodhead Dawson Marker, 1870 (Photo 10): Monument is in the form of a bench that is integrated into the concrete wall that encircles the cemetery. Bench is approximately four feet wide, and is supported by bracket-like legs on a concrete base. Two large square columns (approximately five feet tall) with arched caps flank a tablet that frames the word "MOTHER". The name and dates are inscribed below the seat of the bench.

Anderson Family Grave Markers:

Ann Miller Anderson, 1872 (Photos 7 & 11): Statue of kneeling girl (thought to be a likeness of Ann) on a limestone plinth. The grave is outlined by a scalloped limestone cradle and large footstone.

Madison Miller Anderson, 1886 (Photo 11): Statue of a seated young man in a suit holding flowers, thought to be a likeness of the 13-year-old Madison (head missing). The statue sits on a large square limestone plinth and is outlined by a carved limestone cradle and arched footstone.

William and Mary Anderson, 1888 (Photo 11): Limestone marker on multi-tiered stone base stands 10 feet tall. The squared base is carved with Gothic points and decorative pendants at the corners. This is topped by a Gothic arched temple supported by four columns. Capping the marker is a draped urn.

Dorsey Family Grave Markers:

Arabella Dorsey, 1866 (Photo 6): Limestone tablet depicts a basket of flowers atop a cartouche, which is supported at the base by lily flower brackets. Grave is outlined by a scalloped limestone cradle and low footstone.

William Dorsey, 1854 (Photo 6): Limestone ogee arch tablet with a decorative scroll and sprouting poppy flower at the top. Grave is outlined by a scalloped limestone cradle and low footstone.

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**Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Clay County, MO**

Neal – Gittings Family Plot & Markers (Photo 8): A collection of four obelisks of various sizes, outlined by a limestone curb, six to eight inches high.

Charles & Sidney Neal, 1844: Approximately 10-12 feet tall draped obelisk of limestone, sits on a massive square stone plinth.

Darius & Phebe A. Gittings, 1908: A granite obelisk, 10-12 feet tall on a massive stone plinth.

Mary Hughes Gittings, 1867: A smaller limestone obelisk, about 5 feet tall on a large square stone plinth.

Illegible, but likely Charles Neale Gittings, 1856: Limestone obelisk, almost identical to the one next to it for Mary Hughes Gittings, on a large square stone plinth.

As the cemetery is still being used for burials, there are a number of more modern, granite monument-style markers, dating from the 1930s to the present. Many modern stones also include plaque-type markers that lie flat on the ground. In 1916, the Trustees of Mt. Memorial cemetery passed a regulation that new fences or markers may not be greater than 12 inches high, to keep the look uniform and to more easily maintain the grounds.⁴ However, more recent monuments have not adhered to this rule.

Condition / Conclusion

The cemetery has gone through several periods of neglect and incidences of vandalism during its 175 year history. A tornado swept through this area in 2003, felling most of the large trees within the walls. These events have served to draw attention to this historic site and renew the community's interest and pride in it. Currently, the cemetery is maintained by the city's Parks Department. In 2009, a Cemetery Advisory Committee was appointed by the mayor to do planning and fundraising for the cemetery's upkeep. A group of volunteers helps with annual clean-up, pruning, and stone restoration. The monuments within Mt. Memorial Cemetery provide a good example of the burial customs and funerary art of Liberty's early settlers. The cemetery retains a high degree of integrity in its setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

⁴ "Driveway for Cemetery", Liberty Tribune, 17 Nov. 1916.

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**Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Clay County, MO**

Statement of Significance

Summary

Mt. Memorial Cemetery is located in Liberty, Missouri, one-half mile east of the courthouse square, on the campus of William Jewell College. The cemetery is locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A: Exploration/Settlement, and C: Funerary Art. The cemetery also meets Criteria Consideration D as a planned burial site that derives its historical significance as the final resting place of many of the original settlers and founding fathers of Liberty and Clay County. It was the first cemetery to be established in Clay County, other than family burial grounds, and has been in continuous use from the early 1820s to the present.⁵ Of the 338 documented cemeteries and burial grounds in Clay County, Mt. Memorial is the only planned cemetery that has been in continuous use since it was established in 1836.⁶ It contains the remains of settlers, community leaders, war veterans, Civil War soldiers, itinerants, and children. This cemetery is associated with historic events such as westward expansion, the settlement of the City of Liberty, and the Civil War, and retains a collection of artistic grave markers and monuments from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century. The period of significance corresponds to the date range of the distinctive extant markers, and extends from the date of the earliest known burial (c. 1820) to the date of the last significant improvement: the construction of the driveway (1916).

Settlers and Pioneers

The first European settlers in Missouri were mostly French Canadian fur trappers and traders who had migrated west from the Illinois Country and settled at Ste. Genevieve and St. Louis. The Missouri River provided access to ever greater fur-bearing regions and facilitated the shipment of furs back to the markets in St. Louis and New Orleans. These fur traders were the first Europeans to explore the west and to establish alliances with Native Americans. The expedition of Lewis and Clark, from 1804 to 1806, spurred further business in the fur trade, and many trading posts were established along the Missouri River soon thereafter. One trapper, Delaney Bowlin, built a cabin near what is now the campus of William Jewell College in 1808. He later sold the property to Cyrus Curtis, who operated successful trading companies along the Missouri River in the settlements that later became Kansas City and Liberty in the 1820s.⁷

With word spreading of the plentiful natural resources and commercial opportunities available in the Missouri territory, its population tripled from 21,000 to 67,000 in the decade between 1810 and 1820⁸ and then doubled every decade up until the 1860s. Farmers with a pioneering spirit were encouraged to move to the area by land grants from the government. In 1811, victims of the New Madrid earthquake in southeast Missouri were issued warrants to land in unsettled areas,

⁵ Ethel Massie Withers, ed., Clay County Missouri Centennial Souvenir, 1922; p. 152.

⁶ Clay County Archives Mosaic Newsletter, January 2012.

⁷ Myra Cozad Unger, ed., Liberty For All, p. 4.

⁸ Unger, p. 4.

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**Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Clay County, MO**

such as Clay County. In 1812, the U.S. Congress passed an act that set aside bounty lands as payment to volunteer soldiers for the War against the British. For those with a desire to buy land, they found that property in the territory was far cheaper than in their native states of Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and the Carolinas. The first steamboat passed up the Missouri River in 1819 and by 1820, the arrival of settlers had begun in earnest. A bend in the river four miles south of Liberty provided an excellent spot for riverboat landings. Colonel Shubael Allen's landing welcomed "a great mass of humanity,"⁹ including missionaries, Creoles, trappers, traders, merchants, farmers, French voyageurs, slaves, mountain men, brides, and Indians. In 1821, Missouri was granted statehood and the population of northwest Missouri had grown to 1,200, a sufficient number to establish Clay County in 1822.¹⁰

History of Liberty

In 1822, commissioners of the newly-formed Clay County searched for an appropriate spot for the county seat of justice. After three days of examining sites for a town, they recommended the 50 acres donated by John Owens and Charles McGee, which offered sufficient elevation, access to safe drinking water, and proximity to the river without influence of stagnant waters. The town was called "Liberty," inspired by the patriotic fervor of the time.

Settlers went about creating a civilization in the wilderness. David Bevins, who came to Liberty in 1821, described the town as "a briar and paw-paw-patch."¹¹ The public square was cleared of timber in 1822. On the west side, a well was dug, and the first log residences were built in the first block north of the square on Water Street. Until 1826, there were about a dozen log cabins in Liberty and about 75 citizens. The establishment of Fort Leavenworth in 1827 provided a great market for Liberty merchants, traders, and farmers. Liberty became a civilized retreat for those posted at the fort, as it was the closest town to Leavenworth for shopping, entertaining, and education.

Travel beyond Liberty was generally by steamboat, but roads were built in various directions from Liberty, including the Garrison Road, which connected Liberty to Fort Leavenworth, and Kansas Street, which led west to Kansas. Liberty businessmen created a road southwest to François Gesseau Chouteau's trading posts at the Randolph Bluffs along the Missouri River and at Westport. Crossing the river required a ferryboat, some of which were large enough to carry loaded wagons. Pioneers heading west and desiring to connect with the Oregon, California, or Santa Fe trails could do so at Independence or Westport, on the south side of the river.

From its founding, many emigrants came to Liberty from sophisticated Southern societies that emphasized education, religion, and culture. Perhaps more than many other frontier outposts, Liberty was a community where settlers brought with them their desire to establish schools and

⁹ Unger, p. 7.

¹⁰ Don Jackson, *The Heritage of Liberty*, p. 2.

¹¹ Unger, p. 10.

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Mt. Memorial Cemetery Clay County, MO

civic organizations for the betterment of its people. Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics, and Disciples of Christ numbered among Liberty's earliest settlers. The first school was a log cabin built in 1822 by Judge Sebron G. Snead, a block north of the town square.¹² From the late 1820s to 1918 there were at least five schools for young ladies in Liberty. William Jewell College was established in Liberty in 1849 and named for Dr. William Jewell, who offered \$10,000 to start one of the first private four-year men's colleges west of the Mississippi. The *Liberty Tribune* newspaper has contributed to the social, political, and intellectual life of Liberty since its founding in 1846 to the present, and is thought to have influenced the decision to locate the college in Liberty.¹³

In 1829, the citizens of Liberty petitioned Clay County for the ability to incorporate as a self-governing town. Articles of incorporation were granted and five trustees were appointed to govern the town: Samuel Tillery, George Wallis, Cyrus Brashear, Greenup Bird, and Henry Coleman. By 1851 Liberty citizens wanted the rights and privileges granted to cities by the state legislature, rather than to continue as a corporation as it had been originally established. The Missouri General Assembly granted Liberty a special charter in 1851 for an area of one square mile, the center of which was the public square. Liberty is one of only a dozen special charter cities in Missouri, as they are no longer granted by the legislature.

History of Mt. Memorial Cemetery

On July 5, 1836, the one and a half acre plot of land was bought by the trustees of the Town of Liberty for the purpose of a graveyard from Andrew Hixson and his wife Ann for the sum of thirty dollars.¹⁴ The term of the sale maintained that the land was to be used "for the purpose of a public burying ground." Three of the trustees named in the deed (Tillery, Wallis, and Brashear) are buried in the cemetery.

Although the graveyard was not officially deeded to Liberty until 1836, it had been in use as a burial ground well before that date. Cyrus Curtis owned a cabin at the location that is now the northeast corner of Wilson Street and College Place West, located about 300 yards from the site of the present day cemetery. The infant daughter of Curtis and his Native American wife is believed to be the first buried at this site in 1819.¹⁵

In 1836, when the cemetery was officially established, Liberty's population numbered just 700. The original town comprised 50 acres, about six square blocks, which was centered on the present day town square.¹⁶ The cemetery was located on the next hilltop to the east, a distance of about one-half mile and well outside the city limits.

¹² Unger, p. 86.

¹³ Jackson, p. 5.

¹⁴ Deed of Sale from Andrew Hixson to Trustees of Town of Liberty, 5 July 1836, Recorder of Deeds of Clay County, Missouri, 1836, Book E, page 132.

¹⁵ Untitled news clipping from *Liberty Tribune*, 19 Aug. 1882, p.2.

¹⁶ Myra Cozad Unger, ed., *Liberty For All*, p.27.

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Mt. Memorial Cemetery Clay County, MO

Its location, apart from the town, seems to follow the early nineteenth century trend to establish the common burial ground away from populated areas. Prior to this time, the deceased were interred in church yards or in family plots on the homestead. However, due to space constraints and a growing awareness of public health hazards, burial customs began to change in the early 1800s.

New “rural” cemeteries were park-like areas; pleasant places for the living to visit their lost loved ones. Locations were selected for their natural beauty and proximity to heaven, such as the location of Mt. Memorial. The first rural cemetery in the U.S., Mt. Auburn, was established in Boston in 1832. Several others followed near larger cities, but even here, on the edge of the western frontier, it is likely that the selection of this location was inspired by the rural cemetery movement. While on a significantly smaller scale, and in a “rough and wild town” rather than a proper civilized city, Mt. Memorial meets the criteria for a rural cemetery, chosen for its peaceful beauty, uninterrupted vistas in all directions, and a secluded hilltop spot where the dead could be closer to God. The location was likely thought to be ideal for a final resting place.

Some of Liberty's most prominent early settlers and their families are buried here. While their graves alone may not represent the historic significance of this site, their stories vividly illustrate the themes of exploration and settlement that make this site unique. Among them is Madison Miller (d.1871), the first mayor of Liberty. Miller was born in Berkley County, Virginia, on August 30, 1811. He moved to Liberty in March 1839 with “considerable means,” when it was still a frontier town. Miller was a dry goods merchant, banker, and later operated a drugstore. He made many important contributions to Liberty; one of the most lasting was his influence on education in Liberty. He proved invaluable to William Jewell College, serving as a member of the Board of Trustees from 1858 until his death in 1871. Madison’s wife, Ann (d. 1910) is buried here, along with son William Dorsey, daughter Mary Ann, and three other relatives.

Michael Arthur (d.1884) was a banker who came to Clay County from Kentucky in 1825. He considered himself the “architect” of his own fortune, having borrowed \$200 in 1827, only to leverage that into several successful real estate and business holdings. He was president of the Pro-Slavery Aid Association, which sent men and means into Kansas to further the pro-slavery cause. He was said to be a great benefactor to his slaves, paying them for their labor. When the slaves were liberated after the Civil War, his were given considerable sums of money and acres of land. Along with General Alexander Doniphan and Edward .M. Samuel, he organized and led the Liberty Insurance company. He built the first railroad between Hannibal and St. Joseph, Missouri, and was the most generous investor in the construction of Liberty’s first hotel in 1855, which was named for him: the Arthur House Hotel.¹⁷ Michael Arthur’s wife, Amanda (d. 1889), was the daughter of a Revolutionary War soldier and is buried next to her husband at Mt. Memorial in a family plot that contains their daughters and sons-in-law.

¹⁷ Edna McKinley, “The Changing Years...Or Liberty That Was,” Liberty Chronicle 4 Feb. 1943.

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Mt. Memorial Cemetery Clay County, MO

Greenup Bird (d. 1882) came to Liberty from Glasgow Kentucky. He built the Clay County Savings Association in 1859 on the northeast corner of the square and was the bank's president. He and his son, William Bird, a clerk, were working there on February 13, 1866, when the first successful daylight bank robbery was committed, allegedly by the infamous James-Younger Gang. Bird held several significant roles during his lifetime, including as a trustee of the Town of Liberty. He was one of the five trustees named in the deed when the plot of present day Mt. Memorial was sold to the Town of Liberty in 1836. Bird served as the County Clerk from 1848-1853.¹⁸ Bird is buried with his first wife, Ellenor (d. 1840) and second wife, Catherine (d. 1896), and no less than ten other family members.

Cullen Melone (d.1853) is noteworthy for his encounter with Germany's Prince Maximilian of Wied-Neuwied, who was a German explorer, naturalist, and ethnologist. Prince Maximilian came to the United States in 1833 to explore the west. Like many western explorers traveling up the Missouri River, Maximilian paused at the Liberty Landing to re-supply his provisions before continuing on. Cullen Melone signed on as a rower and set off with the Prince's expedition. On the return trip from North Dakota during the winter of 1833-34, Melone, in a drunken state, convinced many of the other Americans in the party to abandon the Europeans and leave them to fend for themselves in the foreign land. His friends agreed, but changed their minds once sober. The Prince, unmoved by Melone's apology, left him behind at Fort Pierre, South Dakota. Melone eventually made it back to Liberty and became Liberty's postmaster in 1849.¹⁹ Cullen is buried with his first wife Louisiana, and second wife, Julia, and two young children Stephen (age 14) and Mildred (age 4).

Edward M. Samuel is one of the most distinguished people buried in Mt. Memorial for his connection to William Jewell College. Samuel was a charter member of the Board of Trustees of William Jewell College. He also served as the first elected treasurer of the college, serving from 1851-1864. Samuel was president of the Liberty branch of Farmer's Bank of Missouri from 1857 until 1865, when he moved to St. Louis, Missouri. After his death in 1869, his remains were brought back to Liberty and buried at Mt. Memorial, along with his two wives and several children by his first wife. His second wife, Sarah Prosser, was a cousin to Stonewall Jackson.²⁰

Frank Hughes (d. 1937) was a local businessman and philanthropist. Upon his death, Hughes's largest bequest was for the establishment of a \$57,000 trust fund for a public library, and the lot on which to build it. The Frank Hughes Memorial Library was the first public library in Liberty and a key example of civic philanthropy. It is listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places.²¹

¹⁸ Mrs. Charles A. McConn, comp., Interesting Facts About Clay County, Juliette Bird, "Memories," 24 Jan. 1935.

¹⁹ D.C. Allen, "The Old Graveyard," Liberty Tribune, 28 June 1910.

²⁰ Liberty Sun article, Vol. 13, Number 35, May 12, 1982.

²¹ National Register Nomination, Frank Hughes Memorial Library.

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Mt. Memorial Cemetery Clay County, MO

In addition to its association with historic events such as the settlement of the City of Liberty and Clay County, Mt. Memorial Cemetery is associated with events associated with the Civil War. On September 17, 1861, the Battle of Blue Mills Landing took place just south of Liberty, near the Missouri River. Union forces unsuccessfully attempted to prevent pro-Confederate Missouri State Guards from northern Missouri from crossing the river near the confluence with the Blue River to reinforce Sterling Price at Lexington. The fighting at Blue Mills Landing lasted for an hour and resulted in a total of 126 casualties. The Union forces suffered 56 casualties and the Missouri State Guard lost 70. Union troops set up a hospital in Jewell Hall on the campus of William Jewell College and buried their dead in the adjacent Mt. Memorial cemetery. Accounts vary, but a survey compiled in 1933 lists six Civil War veterans and 25 soldiers killed in the battle of Blue Mills Landing who were buried in the southwest corner of the cemetery.²²

In the summer of 1862, Union troops again occupied the hilltop around the cemetery. The Fifth Cavalry of the Missouri State Militia established its headquarters and barracks at Jewell Hall. A series of shallow rifle pits was dug around the brow of the hill, within 20 yards of the cemetery. The soldiers used the soft white rock tombstones for target practice during the time the trenches were in use, April to September 1862.²³ Evidence of target practice is visible on several of the stones in the southwest corner.

In 1912, the remains of 27 Civil War soldiers were moved to Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery at the request of family members. The remains of at least six soldiers are known to still be in Mt. Memorial, and two or three are marked with gravestones. There is mention in a cemetery census compiled in 1962 that there are a number of unmarked Civil War graves in the northeast corner of the cemetery, but these have not been confirmed.²⁴

By 1910, the condition of the cemetery was described as “utterly neglected and unkempt” by D.C. Allen, a prominent Liberty attorney and historian, who wrote an article for the *Liberty Tribune* to draw attention to the deteriorating condition of the site. His appeal was to the City of Liberty for the “repair and ornamentation” of the old graveyard.²⁵ Due to its location on the college campus, there was confusion over the ownership and responsibility of the cemetery for many years. The college believed it to be the property of the city, and the city assumed it belonged to the college until Mr. Allen discovered the original deed, which settled the dispute.

²² Mrs. Charles A. McConn, comp., Interesting Facts About Clay County, “List of Veterans Buried in Liberty Cemetery,” 11 May 1933.

²³ Sonny Wells, “The Cemetery at William Jewell,” undated newspaper clipping.

²⁴ Mt. Memorial Cemetery Census, Frank Littleford, 1962.

²⁵ D.C. Allen, “The Old Graveyard,” Liberty Tribune, 28 June 1910.

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**Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Clay County, MO**

Soon thereafter, a committee of city trustees and friends of the cemetery raised \$1,500 for the construction of a four-foot high concrete wall to surround the cemetery. The concrete panels were placed five inches off the ground to avoid the expense of a foundation along the length of the wall.²⁶ In 1916, the cemetery committee once again took subscriptions to construct a driveway through the cemetery to connect the entrance of the graveyard with a campus road to make it more easily accessible to visitors. The new driveway made a single loop and was constructed for \$300.²⁷

The cemetery was not first officially named until 1916. Until then, it was known as the “Old Graveyard” or the “Old Burying Ground”. The cemetery committee first decided to name the cemetery “Hillcrest” in 1915, but this name did not stick. Later the names of “Gethsemane” and “Forest Hill” were proposed. Finally, in October 1916, an election was held by the lot owners and the current name of “Mt. Memorial” was selected.

Funerary Art in Mt. Memorial Cemetery

Mt. Memorial Cemetery retains a high degree of integrity and displays the religious and cultural influences on burial markers through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most of the markers are constructed of limestone or marble, and are relatively modest in size and decoration. The more recent markers are made of granite. The most common type of grave marker in Mt. Memorial is the tablet, with each stone personalized with an inscription or engraved decoration. Other than the typical information engraved on a headstone (i.e. name, birth date, death date), many of these also include the birthplace, such as Kentucky, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Decorative engravings include images of angels, willow trees, flowers (sometimes in baskets), drapery, a hand pointing upward, anchors, crosses, and compass. These images represent grief, mourning, loss, or rebirth, and are common on late nineteenth century grave markers.

Perhaps the most common style of monument at Mt. Memorial cemetery, other than the tablet, is the obelisk. They vary greatly in size, from three feet tall up to 12 or 15 feet tall. Many are decorated with urns or drapery, which represent sorrow and mourning. Obelisks are the simplest form of memorial, first used by the ancient Egyptians who believed they represented eternal life. According to the Association for Gravestone Studies, “Obelisks were considered to be tasteful, with pure uplifting lines, associated with ancient greatness, patriotic, able to be used in relatively small spaces, and, perhaps most importantly, obelisks were less costly than large and elaborate sculpted monuments.”²⁸ Obelisks were very popular in the early to mid-nineteenth century, thanks to the fascination with Egypt following the Napoleonic and British campaigns there at the turn of that century.

²⁶ “To Build Concrete Fence,” Liberty Tribune, 16 Sept. 1910, p.5.

²⁷ “Driveway for Cemetery,” Liberty Tribune, 17 Nov. 1916.

²⁸ The Association for Gravestone Studies website FAQ page, 2005, 28 Sept. 2011, <<http://www.gravestonestudies.org/faq.htm>>.

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Grave markers became more elaborate in the Victorian era, even in an outpost such as Liberty. It was expected that a middle-class family would spend as much as it could afford on a monument appropriate to the deceased's (and the family's) social status. One fine example, constructed in 1888, is the William and Mary Anderson monument (Photo 11), which stands next to those of their children, Madison and Ann. It is an elaborate Victorian design of a Gothic arched temple supported by four columns, topped with a cloth covered urn. The marker was supplied by the Eastern Marble and Granite Works of Kansas City, Missouri, at a cost of \$400. The contract for its construction reads "This monument is to be first-class in every particular...to stand 10 feet high. All complete in the best Italian marble."²⁹ The square base includes three links of chain, surrounding the letters FLT, ("Friendship, Love, Truth"), which indicates Mr. Anderson was a member of the International Order of the Odd Fellows.

The monument for Ann Miller Anderson (1872), 4-year-old daughter of William and Mary Anderson, is carved in her likeness. The limestone statue shows a young girl on her knees in prayer. Similarly, the monument for Ann's 13-year-old brother, Madison Miller Anderson, is a carved statue of a seated boy holding a bouquet of roses (Photo 11). In Victorian funerary art, the rose symbolizes love. The flower adorns many children's graves, often as a rose bud that has not opened. Both graves are enclosed by a scalloped stone cradle with a marble footstone. While used on children's graves here, the stone cradles are not exclusive to children, but in the Victorian era were commonly used to create a flower bed.

The monument for Arabella Dorsey (1866, Photo 6) was supplied by John Estes, a local merchant, for \$300.³⁰ The limestone tablet depicts a basket of flowers atop a cartouche, which is supported at the base by lily flower brackets. The lilies represent love and marriage. Next to Arabella is her husband William Dorsey. His monument is a limestone tablet with a decorative scroll and sprouting poppy flower at the top (Photo 6). The poppy represents eternal sleep. Mr. Dorsey died in 1854 in New York City and was returned to Liberty for burial. The graves of Arabella and William are both outlined by a scalloped limestone cradle and low marble footstone.

Conclusion

Despite the periods of deferred maintenance, incidents of vandalism, and development pressure from the college and the city over time, the cemetery retains a high degree of integrity. It has changed very little in the past 175 years. The original plot of land deeded to the city in 1836 has not been expanded or reduced in size. While the city grew and William Jewell College arose around it, very little has changed within the walls of the cemetery. It has been in continuous use since the first burial there in the early 1820s, and is the only location in Liberty that represents the full spectrum of its history, from its earliest settlement to the present day. The cemetery

²⁹ Original contract for Anderson monument, 29 June 1888.

³⁰ Original receipt for Dorsey monument, 31 Aug. 1866.

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**Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Clay County, MO**

contains a nice collection of artistic grave markers, many dating to the mid to late nineteenth century. These stones include symbols of mourning, loss, and love, such as flowers, angels, willow trees, drapery, and urns. A few are lovely sculptures of the departed. Many are elegant obelisks or simple tablets in limestone or marble.

Mt. Memorial Cemetery has retained its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, which makes the site eligible for National Register listing. Its location and design have not been altered, and the manmade features have not been removed or altered, other than occasional necessary repairs to the concrete wall or to reset fallen grave markers. The setting has evolved over time, with the development of the college campus around it. There has been no encroachment upon the property and the picturesque setting of the campus grounds and buildings only complement the organic beauty of the cemetery. The materials and workmanship have been retained and remain intact overall. The feeling and association of the cemetery, especially, have been retained, as it provides a physical record of the settlement and early settlers of Liberty. This cemetery meets the requirements of Criterion A for its significance in the settlement of Liberty; Criterion C for its funerary art; and Criterion Consideration D, because of its age, design, and association with historic events.

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**Mt. Memorial Cemetery
Clay County, MO**

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Untitled news clipping reports visit of Mrs. Dunlap to her brother Mr. J.A. Beauchamp, Liberty Tribune 19 Aug. 1882, p. 2.

Wells, Sonny. "The Cemetery at William Jewell." undated clipping from an unidentified newspaper, in scrapbook of Juarenne Hester of Liberty, Missouri.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the 1.4 acre cemetery is marked on all sides by a concrete wall, measuring 432 feet north and south and 140 feet east and west. The boundary is also as shown on the attached scaled site map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is determined by the parcel boundaries and the concrete wall surrounding the cemetery. This boundary wall makes the boundary of the original 1.4 acre plot deeded to the City of Liberty for use as a cemetery in 1836.

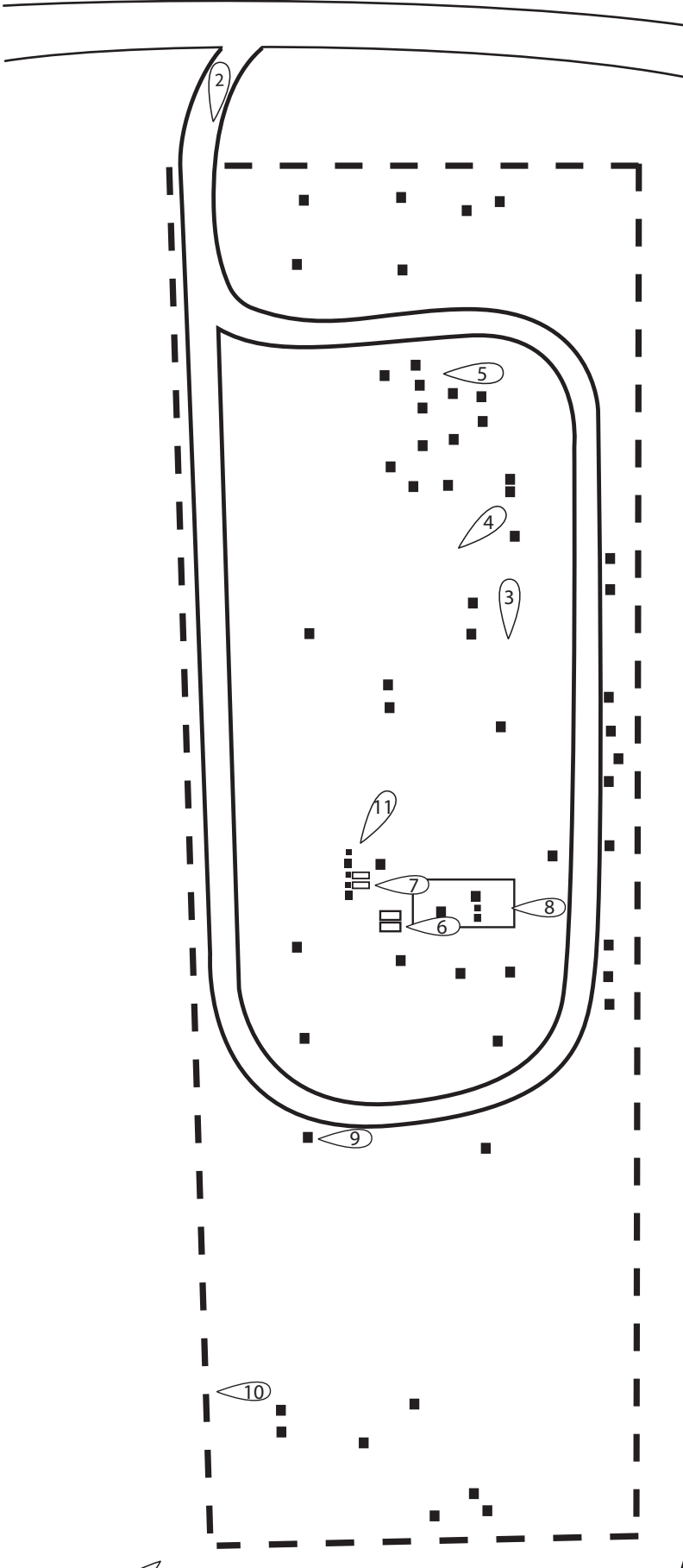
List of Photographs

Photographer: Jonna Wensel

Dates taken: 12/20/2010; 6/21/2011; 9/28/2011

Numbers correspond to site map:

1. Overview of cemetery, looking northeast
2. Entry gate on north end, looking south
3. General view, looking south
4. General view, looking southwest
5. North end, looking west
6. Dorsey monuments, looking west
7. Anderson monument, looking west
8. Gittings family plot, looking west
9. Leopold monument, looking west
10. Dawson monument, looking west
11. Anderson family plot, looking south



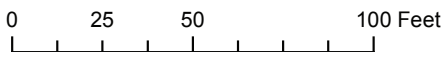
Site Map
 Mt. Memorial Cemetery
 Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

- - - - Site Boundary / Cemetery Wall
- ⑤ Photo number and view
- ▭ Grave / plot marker
- Larger gravestone / monument

Greene Dr.

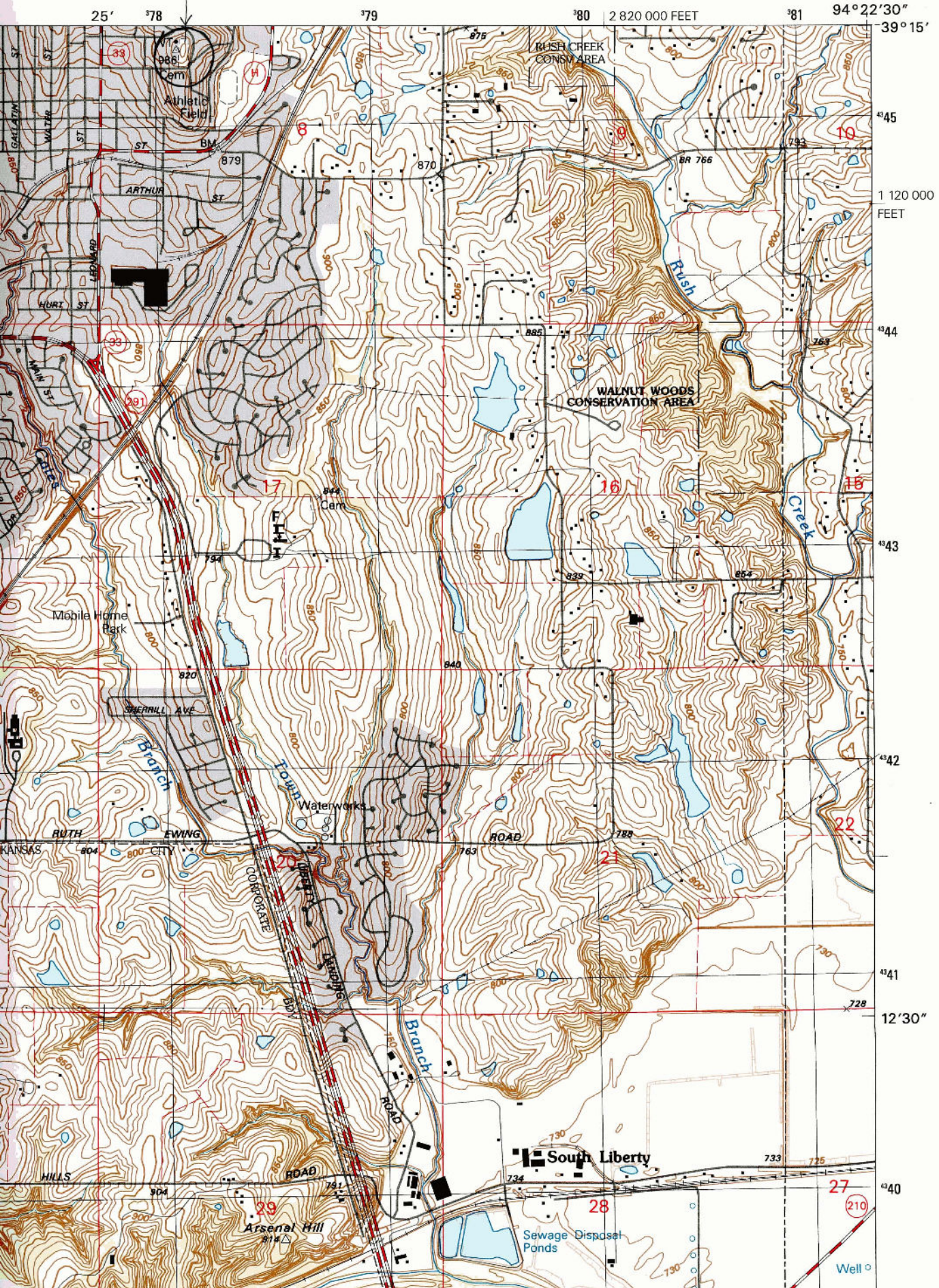
College Hill

Mississippi St.



Mt. Memorial Cemetery
E. Mississippi St., Liberty, MO
UTM Reference:
1. 15/378150/4345140

LIBERTY QUADRANGLE
MISSOURI
7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)





03/23/2011

**"THE OLD GRAVEYARD"
"MT. MEMORIAL CEMETERY"**

On July 26th, 1836, Andrew Hixson and wife, Ann, conveyed by Warranty Deed to the "Town of Liberty" Trustees for \$20, one acre, "for the purpose of a public burying ground". Used as such before the 1828 settlement of Liberty, "The Old Graveyard", is one of the highest crests in Clay County, became Mt. Memorial, its first cemetery, with its first burial in 1827. As reported by Hon. D.C. Allen in the Jan. 28, 1910 Liberty Tribune, the "Hixson" conveyance created in perpetuity, "a charitable trust" based on a Missouri Territorial Legislature's Act, in 1821, Hixson's Legislature "chartered" Liberty as a city, passing to it "The Old Graveyard". Nestled within the William Jewell College campus, it contains the "hallowed" remains of all of six hundred persons... white and black alike, some born before the American Revolution. Among early prominent family members who lie here are Liberty's first Mayor, Madison Miller, William Jewell College's first elected Treasurer in 1849, Edward H. Samuel, and John Baxter, former "Liberty Landing" proprietor and County Sheriff.







FRITZLEN

MCGONN

COLLINS

JESSE W. 1878 - 1961
BELLIE M. 1878 - 1961

JOE E. FRITZLEN
1888 - 1962



FRITZLEN

NORTH

Whiston R. Collins

JAMES H. NORTH
MARTHA J. NORTH

STUART

BARBARA
WIFE OF
WEN. DORSEY
BORN
Oct. 11, 1828
DIED
Feb. 12, 1899

WILLIAM
MILLER
DIED
OCT. 25, 1849

WIFE OF
WEN. DORSEY
BORN
OCT. 21, 1810
DIED IN N. YORK CITY
AUGUST 1, 1854

MADISON MILLER
BORN
In New York City
DIED
July 21, 1851





MOTHER





STUART

GITTINGS

SIDNEY L. NEAL
WIFE OF CHARLES NEAL
BORN JULY 21ST 1854
DIED JUNE 17, 1914

ARTHUR

ELLIS MARY JANE
GITTINGS
1863-1922 1874-1927

IR



Lasst die Kinder, und wehret ihnen nicht,
zu mir zu kommen, denn für solche ist
das himmlische Reich. Mat. C. 19. 14.

MOTHER

RUTH WOODHEAD
1832 DAWSON 1870

