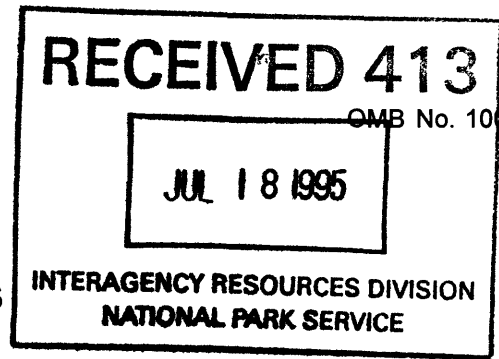


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 Hill Section, Golden Hill Cemetery

other names/site number The Hill; 5JF975

### 2. Location

street & number 12000 W. Colfax Ave. [n/a] not for publication

city or town Lakewood [X] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Jefferson code 059 zip code 80215

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

James Edward Spitzman State Historic Preservation Officer  
Signature of certifying official/Title

July 12, 1995  
Date

Colorado State Historic Preservation Office  
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:

- 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  
See continuation sheet [ ].

Signature of the Keeper

Date

Beth Poland

7/31/95

Hill Section, Golden Hill Cemetery

Jefferson County, CO

Name of Property

County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [X] private
[ ] public-local
[ ] public-State
[ ] public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- [ ] building(s)
[ ] district
[X] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

buildings
1 sites
structures
objects
1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY/cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY/cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

No style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

walls

roof

other STONE

Narrative Description

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

Hill Section, Golden Hill Cemetery

Jefferson County, CO

Name of Property

County/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.)

### 9. Major Bibliographic 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)

Social History

Health/Medicine

#### Periods of Significance

1908 - 1944

#### Significant Dates

N/A

#### Significant Person(s)

(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:

Penrose Library, Denver University

Hebrew Educational Alliance, Denver

Hill Section, Golden Hill Cemetery  
Name of Property

Jefferson County, CO  
County/State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.6

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A. Zone Easting Northing  
13 488290 4398630

B. Zone Easting Northing

C. Zone Easting Northing

D. Zone Easting Northing

[ ] See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ron Sladek/President Mary Dearhamer/Research Assistant

organization Tatanka Research, Inc. date 3/25/94

street & number PO Box 925 telephone 303-669-2234

city or town Loveland state CO zip code 80539

#### 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

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name West Side Benevolent Society

street & number 1555 Stuart Street date 3/25/94

city or town Denver state CO zip code 80204

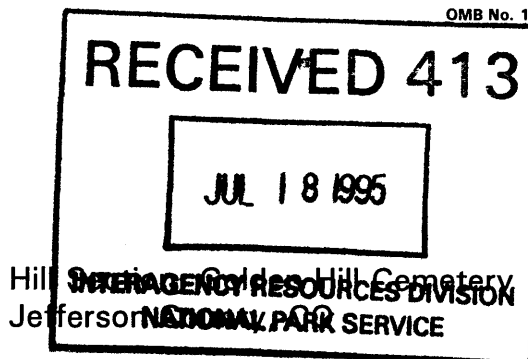
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to 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.

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**DESCRIPTION**

Located near the junction of Union Ave. and W. Colfax Ave. in unincorporated Jefferson County, Colorado, the Hill Section of Golden Hill Cemetery is situated on a relatively steep hillside that slopes downward from W. Colfax Ave. toward Wide Acres Rd. to the south. The Hill Section, commonly known as The Hill, initially encompassed 5.7 acres and was triangular in shape. A lynch gate located at the eastern-most point of the property marked the main entrance to The Hill. The site submitted for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places includes the lynch gate and the foot print of land on which it stands, and the 1.6 acre, rectangular-shaped western portion of the original Hill Section. The western parcel contains all of the grave sites, while the eastern area is a vacant lot that is currently for sale.

According to the cemetery's records, The Hill contains approximately 700 graves, a third of which are unmarked. One third of the graves are identified by small metal markers into which a card with the name of the deceased was inserted. These inserts have long since disintegrated and many of the markers are no longer standing upright. The final third of the graves are marked with headstones typical of the time period - predominantly plain granite tablets with inscriptions in Hebrew and English. A handful of the stones were made from concrete. Additionally, most of the headstones exhibit engraving elements common to historic Jewish cemeteries throughout Europe and North America. Coping stones of red sandstone and concrete are in evidence around some of the marked graves, and a few others are covered with concrete ledgers.

In accordance with Jewish law, the men were segregated in burial from the women. There are approximately 150 women buried on The Hill, accounting for only one fifth of the total number of graves. Very few children are interred in The Hill Section.

A dirt driveway runs south from the current gate along W. Colfax Ave. for approximately 100 feet, then turns eastward, continuing to the eastern edge of the site where it turns to the north and south. To the north, the driveway loops around the east and north edges of the graves, meeting itself again near the entrance. Toward the south, the driveway slopes downhill and exits onto Wide Acres Road at a break in the fence.

The Hill Section is arranged in long rectangular burial blocks oriented on a north-south axis. The blocks located in the southern portion of the site contain two to three rows of 50 graves each. Blocks in the northern portion contain one to four rows of 25 graves each. The original layout called for walkways between the blocks, however visual inspection reveals that most of these walkways do not in fact exist. In all, the cemetery contains over 800 plots, approximately 700 of which are occupied.

A wire fence with iron pipe posts surrounds the original 5.7 acre Hill Section of the cemetery. The west and south portions of the fence are six feet high. The north section along Colfax Ave. is

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Hill Section, Golden Hill Cemetery  
Jefferson County, CO

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five feet high. A barbed wire fence with metal posts separates the eastern, unused section from the 1.6 acre portion that is being nominated.

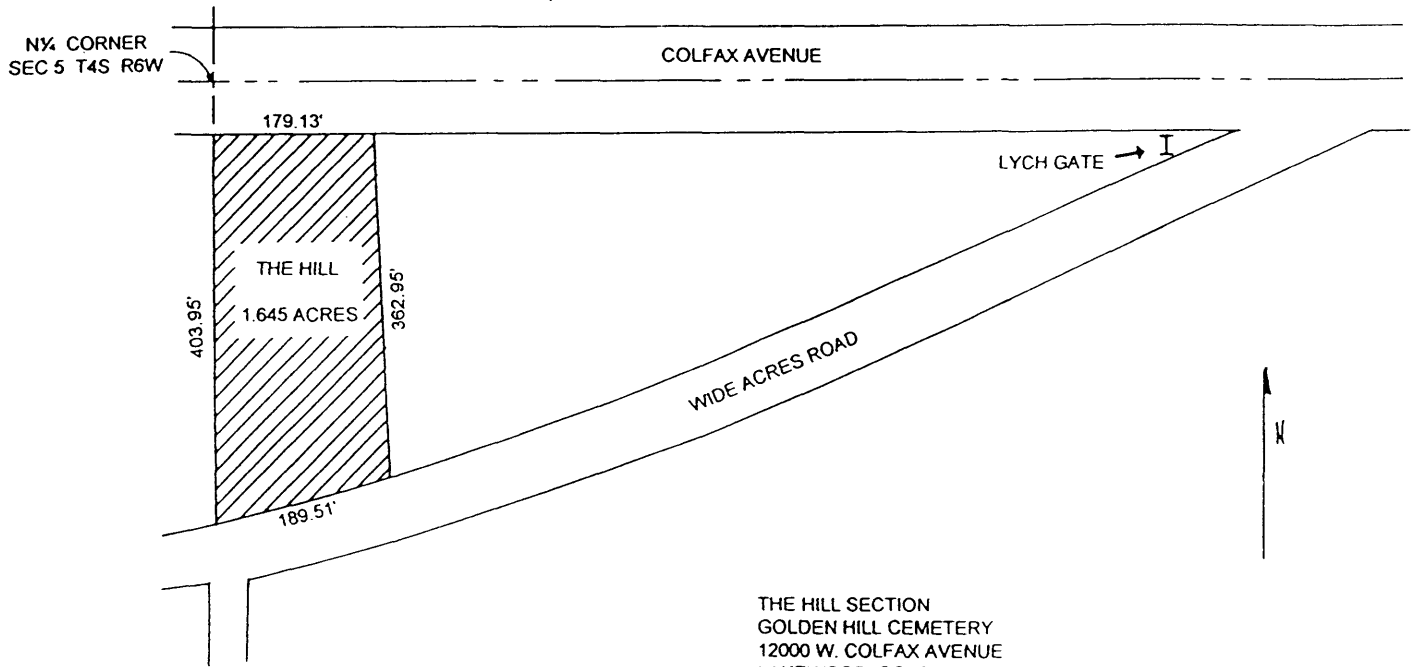
Although a diagram drawn in 1972 shows several partial rows of trees on The Hill, because of their size it is doubtful that they are original plantings. Due to a lack of water and its hillside location, The Hill has never been extensively landscaped or well-maintained. A few of the graves are adorned with living plants, no doubt placed there by relatives of the deceased. Most of the graves, however, are unadorned and overgrown with native grasses. Due to volunteer cleanup efforts over the past several years, the cemetery has been cleared of brush and the many fallen headstones have been uprighted. The driveway and walkways are not clearly delineated, although it is still possible to drive through the site. Because of the large number of graves in such a small area there is little open space, and most of the open spaces between the headstones contain unmarked graves. The Hill commands an excellent view of Denver to the southeast. In 1908 when the cemetery was established, the area was rural and the view pastoral.

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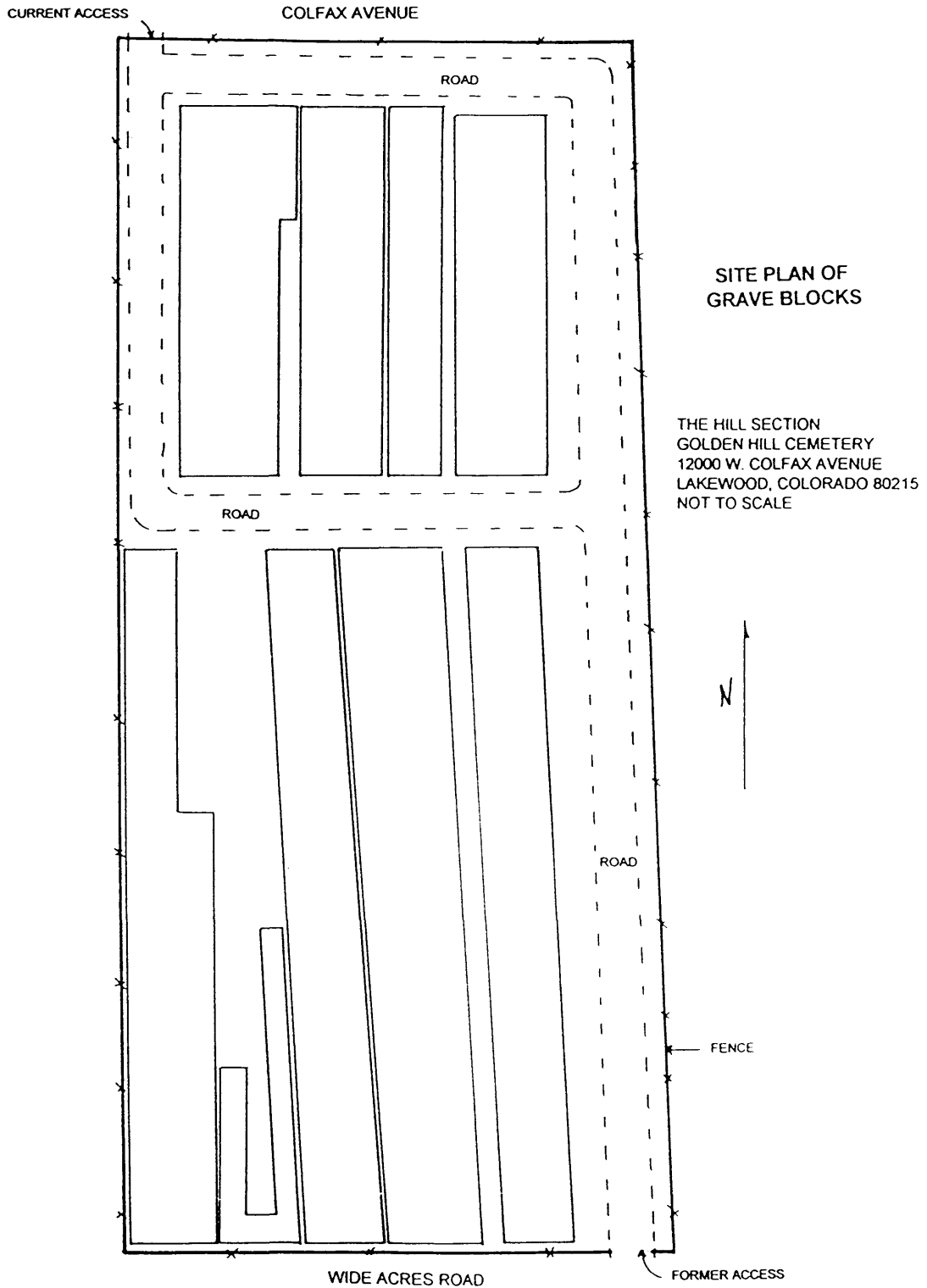
THE HILL SECTION  
GOLDEN HILL CEMETERY  
12000 W. COLFAX AVENUE  
LAKEWOOD, COLORADO 80215  
NOT TO SCALE

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Hill Section of Golden Hill Cemetery is being nominated under Criteria A for its association with the tuberculosis epidemic of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. It serves as the final resting place for numerous individuals of the Jewish faith who came to Colorado seeking a cure. While other sites represent those whose health returned, the Hill Section reminds us that many who came in search of the cure found only death, far away from family and friends.

The westward migration of the afflicted, many of them immigrants who had settled in the east's large urban centers, was spurred by a national movement in search of treatment and cures for this dread disease. Patients came to Colorado for the clean air and altitude, both of which were thought to be beneficial. National Jewish Hospital and later the Jewish Consumptive Relief Society (JCRS), were founded to care for those victims of the disease who were unable to pay for their treatment. Both hospitals were nationally recognized for their research and the development of new treatments for tuberculosis. The West Side Benevolent Society was founded, and Golden Hill Cemetery was established, in order to provide proper burials for indigent Jews in the West Colfax area, including those impoverished patients at JCRS. Most of the graves in the Hill Section are consequently those of tuberculosis victims.

The White Plague, as tuberculosis was known, was responsible for one out of every five deaths nationwide, making it the leading cause of death in America during the nineteenth century. Until Robert Koch discovered the Tubercle Bacillus in 1882, the disease was thought to be hereditary. As with other respiratory ailments, fresh air and proper diet were the prescribed course of medical treatment. A concerted effort by journalists, doctors and the Denver Chamber of Commerce brought thousands of patients to the region in order to avail themselves of Colorado's curative air. After the discovery of the bacillus, and the communicability of the disease was recognized, it became clear to the medical establishment that places were needed where consumptives could receive adequate diet and medical supervision, and be separated from the general public. The sanitarium movement arose in response to this need.

Although Colorado had one of the highest number of tuberculosis patients of any state in the country, no public facilities were available for the thousands of indigent patients who arrived here. Often these victims sold what little they owned in order to pay for train fare. In some cases, eastern communities would finance a patient's trip west in order to be relieved of the responsibility of his care. Members of several religious and ethnic groups in Denver responded to the need for facilities for impoverished victims of tuberculosis by establishing four sanatoria, the Jewish Consumptive Relief Society (JCRS) being one of them. Founded in 1904, JCRS was nonsectarian although it attracted mostly Jewish patients. Unlike National Jewish Hospital, JCRS accepted patients in advance stages of the disease. As a result of this policy, many of the patients at JCRS died and the West Colfax Jewish community took it upon itself to see that these unfortunate victims received a proper burial, according to Jewish law and custom.

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In the mid-nineteenth century, independent Jewish mutual aid societies began to found cemeteries and provide funeral arrangements for their members, a task previously undertaken by synagogues. The West Side Benevolent Society was formed in 1906 to meet this need. In 1908, the Society purchased a parcel of land on W. Colfax Ave. west of Denver and named it the Golden Hill Cemetery. Bisected by the former road to Golden, the two sections of the cemetery were very different from one another in character and use.

The lower (southern) section of the cemetery, the larger of the two, is landscaped, well-maintained and still in use. The upper (northern) section is hilly, rocky, covered with weeds and neglected. Essentially, The Hill was reserved for the indigent buried at community expense, suicides (restricted from the main portion of the cemetery according to Jewish custom), and those diseased patients from JCRS. Victims of tuberculosis were also restricted to burial on The Hill due to a common belief at the time that persons visiting the cemetery could contract the disease from the deceased. Because no money was received for most of these burials, little was spent on the maintenance of the Hill Section. Unless family or friends of the deceased had money for a marker, graves were often marked by only a small metal marker.

Generally, the modest headstones reflect the use of The Hill section as a burial ground for the indigent, the victims of disease, and those ostracized according to religious law due to suicide. The Hill was maintained by an immigrant community with little money, but a desire to provide dignified burials to those in need.

By the 1940s, tuberculosis cases became increasingly rare and JCRS began to assume other medical roles. In 1954, it became the American Medical Center Cancer Research Center. As JCRS changed, the need for a burial place for tubercular deaths also decreased. The Hill was the site of increasingly fewer internments. In light of its declining use in the mid-1940s and with the National Register's fifty year criteria consideration, 1944 was selected as the end of the period of significance.

#### Conclusion

The Hill is predominantly the final resting place for those impoverished Jews who came to Colorado in search of a cure for tuberculosis and died here without family or friends. They were buried according to Jewish law, thanks to a community of fellow believers who felt that they deserved the dignity of a proper burial. In this age of modern medicine, it is easy to forget that barely fifty years ago the cure for many diseases was still out of reach. Today, The Hill stands as a reminder of the tuberculosis epidemic that was national in scope, and the response of the local community to the needs of the unfortunate victims of the White Plague. No other such monument to tuberculosis victims is known to exist in the area.

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Rothman, Sheila M. Living in the Shadow of Death. New York: HarperCollins, 1994.

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An Inventory of the Papers of The West Side Benevolent Society, Collection No. 1392, Colorado Historical Society, Denver.

"National Register Bulletin 41: Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places". Washington D.C., USDI, NPS, Interagency Resources Division, 1992.

Records of JCRS, Rocky Mountain Jewish Historical Society, Center for Judaic Studies, University of Denver.

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Hill Section of Golden Hill Cemetery is a rectangular parcel of land, bounded by Colfax Ave. on the north and Wide Acres Road on the south. Beginning at a point where the south curb of W. Colfax Ave. meets the line forming the western edge of the NE¼ of Section 5, T4S, R6W, 6PM, proceed 179.13' east along Colfax Ave., then south 362.95' to the north shoulder of Wide Acres Road, then southwest along the road to the line forming the western edge of the NE¼ of Section 5, T4S, R6W, 6PM, then north 403.95' to the starting point.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes only the western 1.6 acre portion of the Hill Section because it contains all of the grave sites and was the only part of the Hill Section utilized historically.

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Jefferson County, CO

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**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

The following information is common to all photographs-

Name of property: Hill Section, Golden Hill Cemetery

Location: Jefferson County, Colorado

Negatives: Tatanka Research, Inc., PO Box 925, Loveland, CO 80539

Photographer: Ron Sladek

Date: 3/24/1994

<u>Photograph No.</u>	<u>Description of View</u>
1	View to the east showing the southern portion of the Hill Section, Wide Acres Road, and the modern section of the cemetery.
2	View to the southeast showing the southern portion of the Hill Section, Wide Acres Road, and the modern section of the cemetery.
3	View to the north from the southern part of the Hill Section.
4	View to the southeast from the western edge of the Hill Section showing the modern section of the Golden Hill Cemetery below and across Wide Acres Road.
5	View to the south from the upper (northern) half of the Hill Section.
6	View to the southeast from the western edge of the Hill Section. A small part of the modern section of the Golden Hill Cemetery is visible in the far background.
7	View to the southeast from the western part of the cross road.
8	View to the south showing the southern portion of the east row of graves in the Hill Section. Wide Acres Road, and the modern section of the cemetery.
9	View to the southeast from the northwest corner of Hill Section.
10	View to the southwest from the eastern portion of the cross road.
11	View to the northeast from the western edge of the cross road.
12	View to the northeast from the midpoint of the Hill Section.

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<u>Photograph No.</u>	<u>Description of View</u>
13	View to east from middle of the Hill Section.
14	View to the east, Silverman grave.
15	View to the west at western edge of section, Sayon grave.
16	View to the east, Lebow grave.
17	View to the southeast, various graves.
18	View to the east, Dane grave.
19	View to the east, Spigel grave.
20	View to the southeast, Rosen grave.

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PHOTOGRAPH MAP

