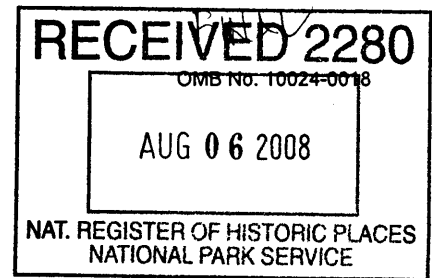


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



915

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 Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church

other names/site number /035-676-05007

#### 2. Location

street & number 1701 West Eaton-Wheeling Pike

N/A  not for publication

city or town Eaton

vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Delaware

code 035

zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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

*James E. Hea*  
Signature of certifying official/Title

8/6/2008  
Date

Indiana 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:

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:)

*for*  
Signature of the Keeper

*Edson H. Beall*

Date of Action

9.17.08

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Name of Property

Delaware, IN  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	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 Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious Facility

FUNERARY: Cemetery

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Museum

FUNERARY: Cemetery

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER:

Gable Front

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Limestone

walls BRICK

\_\_\_\_\_

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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, 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 significant within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**  
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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 if 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)

ARCHITECTURE; EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1836-1958  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:  
Ball State University, CAP Archives



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delaware County, Indiana

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Description

The Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church is a late Victorian era, modestly adorned, one-room church. The red brick building is topped by a reconstructed bell tower. The church is located on the south side of the junction of West Eaton-Wheeling Pike and 100 West, and is surrounded by agricultural fields. The first Mount Zion Church was a log structure from 1840 but the current Mount Zion Church dates from 1867.

The Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church is a modest gable front building, measuring approximately 46 feet by 36 feet, with heavy timber framing supporting its ceiling and roof. The brick is laid in a common bond; it is trimmed with wooden fascia, rake boards, and soffit, with lintels and sills of limestone.

The foundation of the church is uncut Indiana limestone, rising one foot above grade. The east and west elevations each have three weep holes, which are just above the foundation, and span three courses of brick. The building has a single entrance on its gable ended, north elevation. The entrance has five panel double-doors with a clear glass, six light transom. The interior of these doors features the original graining detail; however, a new door knob and lock has been installed.

The east and west elevations feature three four-over-four clear glass windows, while the gable ended south elevation had a four light clear glass window into the attic, but is now covered with wood. Since several window lights have been vandalized over the years, hinged shutters were added in the 1950s. The sills and lintels to the door and windows are made of cut Indiana limestone. One of the few masonry details on the church's exterior is a string-course, 15 feet above the foundation, nine inches below the fascia. It runs the length of the building on the east and west elevations, and wraps three feet around to the north and south elevations. The north elevation features a simple cut Indiana limestone rectangle block above the double doors with "Mt. Zion M. E. Church 1867" inscribed in it. The soffit, fascia, and rake board have all been wrapped in aluminum, but maintain their original profile. The church's roof is modern asphalt shingles, replacing asbestos shingles put on in the 1950s which replaced an original wood shake roof.

Originally, the roof featured two chimneys coming from the east and west walls, but today, only one exists on the west wall. The east chimney was damaged before the 1950s asbestos shingle installation, and was removed during that project. The most elaborate feature on the exterior is the reconstructed bell tower, which straddles the ridge close to the north elevation, and rises 41 feet above the foundation. The tower, reconstructed in 1997, is wood-framed, with clapboard

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delaware County, Indiana

---

Description-continued

siding, arched openings, and Italianate brackets supporting its hipped roof. The current bell tower is an exact duplicate of the 1867 original and utilizes the original brackets and bell. Measurements were taken from the 1867 bell tower before it was removed due to wood deterioration.

The interior of the church is approximately 44 feet by 34 feet. The original, heavily worn pine floor is exposed in the main aisle, where a red and white ivy patterned carpet once was. The tongue and groove boards are slightly cupped. The carpet was not salvageable. The walls of the church are bare plaster since the original green and white ivy patterned wallpaper was removed in 1952. The roof is heavy-timber framed in a queen-post truss system and the 14-foot ceiling is covered with gypsum board. Inside the church's entrance hangs a rope with which to ring the bell. Adjacent to the rope is an access panel to the attic.

A cross aisle intersects the main aisle at about the middle of the church. Two cast iron stoves were originally located in those open spaces. The one on the east has been stolen but the one on the west has been restored and it rests upon a three foot by four foot original brick pad. New electric lamps have replaced the gas lamps.

There are fifteen remaining pews in the church. Made of poplar, they feature graining and walnut crests on the ends and along the tops of the seat backs. The pews are reinforced in the middle with a one inch wide poplar partition and with a two inch walnut trim on the top. There were originally two smaller pews on each side of the center aisle next to the stoves but these pews, along with six choir pews and one sanctuary pew, have been stolen.

Walnut is found throughout the church in the base, door, and window trim, as well as the spindled altar rail and the organ. Unfortunately the original pulpit was stolen in the 1980s. A c.1930 pulpit desk sits upon a slightly raised platform at the end of the main aisle. It is surrounded by the original walnut altar rail and the original organ is in the southeast corner.

The church is still in its original setting, surrounded by farmland, set back from the road approximately 250 feet. Hardwood and pine shade trees still flourish on the grassy lot. A contributing feature on the church property is a cemetery with monuments dating back to 1836, to the time of the original Mount Zion log church. The level terrain has a variety of marker forms including tablet, tablet-on-base, obelisk, and barrel vault. There are also two cast white bronze markers. The original arched metal cemetery sign, "1840 Mt. Zion Cemetery" marks the entrance to the cemetery. The early twentieth century woven wire fence has been restored.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delaware County, Indiana

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Description-continued

There are over 100 gravesites, the most recent of which is dated 2001. Seven Civil War Veterans are buried in the cemetery.

In 1996, a group of former neighbors, residents, and interested people formed the Mount Zion Foundation, Inc. Their mission is to save and restore the Mount Zion building to its original condition. The property had fallen into extreme disrepair and a new roof was immediately needed to save the property. A group of six gathered together and engaged an architect to help plan, repair, and restore the building and property to its original integrity as nearly as possible. The restoration is an on-going process and every effort has been made to retain the exact physical integrity of the building, fences, sign and interior. Alteration thus far include the installation of electric power; extensive masonry repair on its south east corner using concrete masonry units, and original brick; a new ceiling and roof have been added; and repairs to the original windows. These efforts will ensure that the building will remain viable, as a symbol of the current generations' respect for their ancestors. The proposed function of the church will be to educate visitors on the history of the church and the Eaton area.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 4

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delaware County, Indiana

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Statement of Significance

The Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for Exploration/Settlement and under Criterion C for Architecture. The period of significance for Criterion A is 1836-1926 and represents the early development of the congregation through its consolidation with Eaton Methodist Episcopal Church in 1926. The period of significance for Criterion C is 1867, the date of construction for the church. The church and cemetery were given an "outstanding" rating in the Delaware County Interim Report (1985) and are the only combined church-cemetery property in Union Township.

Historical Background

The Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery are located in Delaware County, Indiana, approximately 60 miles northeast of Indianapolis. The area started out as an early settlement of the Delaware Indians, a tribe from Ohio that moved east in the 1770s. In 1818 a treaty was signed and the Delaware ceded their holdings. Delaware County opened for settlement in 1820 with the first permanent white settler, Goldsmith Gilbert, arriving in 1823. The county was officially organized in 1827 but due to poor transportation routes, Delaware County grew slowly. In the 1830s and 1840s roads began to develop and an increased population was a direct result.<sup>1</sup> The Eaton-Wheeling Pike, a main thoroughfare between Ohio and the Upper Wabash Canal, was established in the late 1830s. Mount Zion's location on the south side of the pike and being far from other Methodist churches, made it viable after other churches began to close in order to consolidate congregations.<sup>2</sup>

Exploration/Settlement

Settlement of Union Township in Delaware County, Indiana, began in 1828 when Tristram Starbuck erected a cabin on a tract of land. In 1833 a small group of people met at the house of John Ginn, and under the pastoral labors of Rev. Robert Burns, were united as a class of the Methodist Episcopal Church. About the same time, another class of the same denomination was organized at the house of Tristram Starbuck, and the two classes met regularly at their respective places for several years. In 1840 Starbuck and Ginn opted to join their classes into what became the Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church. With the combination of the two congregations and influx of new settlers to the area, there arose a need to build a church.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Delaware County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory* (Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1985), XV.

<sup>2</sup> F. C. Holliday. *Indiana Methodism*. (Hitchcock and Walden Publishers, Cincinnati, 1873) 155.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*; John Ellis. *Our County*. (Whipporwill Publications, 1887) 87.



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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delaware County, Indiana

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Statement of Significance-continued

In 1840, the congregation built a log church and formally established a cemetery on land donated by the Richard Craw and William Adist families, church members and neighbors along Eaton-Wheeling Pike. Among the early and prominent members of the first church were Martin Brandt and wife, James Rutherford, and wife, John Gothrup and wife, Leonard Cline, and wife, Philip Keller and wife, Richard Craw and wife, William Craw and wife, John Craw and wife, Tristram Starbuck and wife, and Mrs. Isaac Cox.

The log church lasted less than 30 years, and whether it burned or was outgrown by the congregation is not known. In 1867 it was replaced by the current Mount Zion Church, which stands on the site of its log predecessor.<sup>4</sup> It was constructed at a cost of about \$2000. The land, wood, and brick used in the construction also came from the pioneer congregation.

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church congregation served this rural community from the mid-1830s until 1926. This property was used for the early settler's spiritual needs, as well as their social ones. The large front yard was an excellent place for children to play, for picnics, and general gatherings of not just church members but of the larger community in general. The church and cemetery also filled an obvious role when a member died by offering not only a location for burial but a sense of community and support for the grieving family. Many early church members and their families are buried here, including seven Civil War veterans.

There are seven additional cemeteries in Union Township. One of the oldest cemeteries in the township is the Mississinewa Church of the Brethren Cemetery. This cemetery was transferred to the Union Cemetery Association in 1903. Union Cemetery, which now has approximately 46 acres, was founded in 1897. This cemetery includes the Mississinewa Church of the Brethren Cemetery, the Studebaker section and the Dunkard section and is an open, flat terrain. Union Cemetery is still in use today. Galbraith Cemetery has nine markers and is the smallest cemetery in the township. Ginn Cemetery has 34 markers that date between c.1835-1918. The heavily forested cemetery is less than 1/8 acre and most likely was a family plot. Leaird Cemetery is slightly larger than Ginn with approximately 80 markers. Burials date from c.1836-1979 in this open, level cemetery. Roderick Cemetery has 17 markers dating from c.1847-1891, it is heavily overgrown although still identifiable as a cemetery. The last rural cemetery in Union Township is Ashenfelder Cemetery. Burials date from c.1838 to c.1902.

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<sup>4</sup> J. B. Helm. History of Delaware County, Indiana 1881 (Kingman Brothers Chicago) 291.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delaware County, Indiana

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Statement of Significance-continued

The only cemetery within an urban area in the township is Eaton Cemetery. It has 3.45 acres with approximately 400 markers dating from 1849 to the present. It is on slightly hilly terrain on the south edge of Eaton, overlooking the Mississinewa River. While several of the cemeteries date from around the time of the Mount Zion Cemetery, Mount Zion, Mississinewa Church of the Brethren Cemetery, and the Eaton Cemetery have a direct association with a church.

In the early 1900s several church members left Mount Zion to help establish the Eaton Methodist Episcopal Church in nearby Eaton. By 1926, when the congregation officially consolidated with the Eaton Methodist Episcopal Church, the Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church closed its doors. After the close of the church, the Mount Zion Cemetery Association was formed to care for the cemetery and an endowment fund was raised from donations to maintain the church and cemetery grounds. The Trustees of the Shideler Circuit Methodist Episcopal Church, North Indiana Conference, Muncie District sold the church and awarded the cemetery to the Mount Zion Cemetery Association in March 1930.

In the 1950s, family members of the early congregation saw to it that the church did not fall into decline by replacing the failing wood shake roof with asbestos shingles, installing shutters to protect the windows from vandals and placing the organ and stove in storage. Despite this effort, the church has been broken into resulting in the loss of several pews, pulpit, and one stove.

Architecture

While the Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church is a very modest building, it represents the simplicity of a typical rural church. The congregation did not have extra money to afford elaborate architectural details. The main intention was to build a structure to house their religious services and serve as a community building for the area. The church does not have a discernible architectural style although its details do relate to a couple of styles common at the time. The squared off lintels and sills could be said to loosely reference the Greek Revival style while the small, simple brackets that set off the roof of the bell tower are Italianate in nature. Of additional interest is the fact that the church has a single common entrance instead of male and female entrances is significant too. This common entrance signifies that the church did not segregate its congregation by sex. Further evidence of this is seen in its pew seating, which allowed families and couples to sit together.<sup>5</sup>

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Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church

<sup>5</sup> F. C. Holliday. Indiana Methodism 1873 (Hitchcock and Walden Publishers, Cincinnati) 157.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 7

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delaware County, Indiana

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Statement of Significance-continued

The Mount Zion Church, Mississinewa Church of the Brethren, Union Grove Church of the Brethren, and Maple Grove Church of the Brethren could have served as public gathering places for the rural residents of this community. Union Grove Church of the Brethren, dedicated November 5, 1885, is still an active church today. Maple Grove Church of the Brethren still exists. Built in 1887, the building has been converted into a home after extensive renovation and new construction.

The other public buildings identified in the *Delaware County Interim Report* were two c.1890 Italianate schoolhouses, but neither remains. One was at the southwest corner of 1100N and 270 W; the other was near the northeast corner of 900 N and SR 3 in Union Township and both received a contributing rating in the *Delaware County Interim Report*. The schools were virtually identical: small, one-room, gable-front, brick buildings with a centered door and flanking windows on the main façade. The windows were capped with brick segmental arches.

The other churches in Union Township are located in Eaton, a town approximately two miles east of the Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church. It is the only sizeable community in the township. There are two historic churches in Eaton and neither is as old as Mount Zion and the pair are visually representative of a more "high style" approach to architecture in contrast to the more functional nature of Mount Zion. The 1899 Late Gothic Revival Church of Christ, which was assigned a notable rating in the survey and the 1924 Jacobethan Revival Methodist Episcopal Church, which received an outstanding rating. There are two other churches in Eaton but they are not historic.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delaware County, Indiana

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 & Photos Page 9

Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church  
Delaware County, Indiana

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Verbal Boundary Description

Commencing at the northwest corner of Section twenty-one (21) thence south 26 ½ rods; thence east 3 rods thence north 26 ½; thence west to the place of beginning, also commencing at the northeast corner of Section twenty (20) running 26 ½ rods south; thence six rods west; thence 26 ½ rods north; thence east to the place of beginning, in township twenty two (22) range ten (10) east, supposed to contain one and a half (1 ½) acres, more or less. The property of Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church extends 409 feet and 10 ¾ inches, south from Eaton-Wheeling Pike. It is 168 feet and 5 inches wide, and is flanked by farm fields.

Verbal Boundary Justification

These boundaries are based on Historic American Building Survey documentation

Photo Descriptions

The following information is the same for all photos:

Property: Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery  
Location: Delaware County, Indiana  
Photographer: Dollie C. Rees  
Date of Photography: March 14, 2007

- Photo 1: North elevation, camera facing south
- Photo 2: West elevation, camera facing east
- Photo 3: South elevation, camera facing north
- Photo 4: East elevation, camera facing west
- Photo 5: Weep hole on west elevation, camera facing east
- Photo 6: Brick detail on west elevation, camera facing east
- Photo 7: Interior southwest window, camera facing west
- Photo 8: Graining detail on pews, camera facing east
- Photo 9: Graining detail on pews, camera facing east
- Photo 10: Interior view from altar to entry doors, camera facing north
- Photo 11: Interior view from entry doors to altar, camera facing south
- Photo 12: Altar rail, camera facing south
- Photo 13: Stove, camera facing west
- Photo 14: Organ, camera facing south
- Photo 15: Cemetery sign and gate, camera facing south
- Photo 16: Restored fence and cemetery markers, camera facing east
- Photo 17: Cemetery, camera facing east
- Photo 18: Cemetery, camera facing west