

**DATA SHEET**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED **MAY 1 1979**

DATE ENTERED

**JUN 15 1979**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Rapides Cemetery

AND/OR COMMON

same

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Hardtner and Main Streets

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Pineville

\_\_ VICINITY OF

8th - Gillis Long

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Louisiana

CODE

022

COUNTY

Rapides Parish

CODE

079

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Burial ground

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Rapides Cemetery Association

STREET & NUMBER

126 David Street

CITY, TOWN

Pineville

\_\_ VICINITY OF

Louisiana

STATE

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Rapides Parish Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

710 Murray Street

CITY, TOWN

Alexandria

STATE

Louisiana

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historical Survey, Alexandria and Pineville, Louisiana

DATE

September 1973

\_\_FEDERAL \_\_STATE  COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Rapides Area Planning Commission

CITY, TOWN

818 Main Street, Pineville

STATE

Louisiana

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The full 7.05 acres of the cemetery were included in the nominated area for two reasons:

1. It recognizes the full extent of the area in which the Post of Rapides could be located. (A more precise determination of the location is impossible owing to the fact that archaeological excavation within the cemetery would be illegal.)
2. It recognizes the fact that the full acreage contributes a sympathetic and proper historical setting for the three artistically significant family plots which are found within the cemetery.

The cemetery ground itself is surrounded by a chain-link fence. The slightly undulating ground is sparsely planted with trees which have over the years grown to some size. The grave sites and monuments are placed without regard to regularity. Approximately 25% of the marked graves are above ground tombs, approximately 60% are upright monuments, and approximately 15% are flat on the ground. Many of the graves and tombs are fashioned of granite. The cemetery is traversed by dirt roads. Many of the smaller plots are separated off by concrete ledges. Although most of these ledges are more recent than the graves they encompass, many are over 50 years old. In addition, they do not significantly intrude upon the landscape setting which the bulk of the cemetery provides for the aforementioned three outstanding plots.

These three plots (the Mead plot, the Ashley plot, and the Thomas-Flint-Casson plot) are widely spaced within the cemetery (see sketch map). Each is primarily noteworthy for its surrounding cast-iron fence. All fences date from the later 19th century.

### The Ashley Plot

Most important is the James B. Ashley plot. Here the striking cast-iron fence was made by F. Guerdan, of 7th Street, St. Louis, Missouri. Its gate consists of a central caryatid ensconced in rinceau motifs and flanked by upside down candelabrum-shaped torches. The gate is surmounted by a winged putti head. The fence is supported by elaborate candelabrum-shaped posts. Between the posts are areas containing panels. Each panel is ensconced in foliage and contains a lamb beneath a weeping willow with a pair of scroll volutes beneath.

The Ashley plot contains two granite tombs and a handsome granite obelisk which appears to be derived from Ruskinian Gothic and the Renaissance Revival.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Local History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although cemeteries are normally excluded from the National Register, Rapides Cemetery merits inclusion because of the high artistic value of the design work it contains. In addition, it is also significant in the areas of exploration/settlement and local history because it is the site of the first colonial military establishment in Rapides Parish and also the burial place for several people notable in the history of the area.

Since stone is not native to Louisiana, the granite used in the cemetery's two monumental obelisks had to be imported. The use of this material speaks of a good deal of architectural pretention on the part of the families involved.

The iron fences which encompass the cemetery's three significant plots represent one of the most pretentious and elaborate instances of the use of ornamental Victorian cast-iron in Louisiana outside of New Orleans. Indeed the Ashley plot fence is superior to any funerary cast-iron fence found in New Orleans, because although the tree motif is seen in New Orleans, it is used only for gates, never for the entire fence. Finally, the Louisiana statewide Historic Sites Survey reveals that Rapides Cemetery contains the only examples of ornamental cast-iron to be found in Rapides Parish.

The Rapides Cemetery is also significant because it was the site of the Post of Rapides--the first colonial military establishment in what is now Rapides Parish and also the beginning of permanent white settlement of the Pineville region.

The Post of Rapides was founded by the French in 1722 or 1723, apparently as a result of two main factors. The first was the need to protect whites from the Indians. In May, 1722, the Inspector General of Troops for the Province of Louisiana, Diron d'Artaguet, made an inspection trip up Red River. In his report, he advocated that a post be established at "the place called the Great Rapid which is a point almost halfway between the beginning of Red River and Naichotoches (sic) and where the river ceases to be navigable four or five months of the year." He cited barbarous acts perpetrated by the Indians in the area, alleging, for example, that the Chickasaws would station themselves at the river bank near the rapids and lie in wait for small parties of whites passing by below.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brister, Elaine H. Once Upon a River: A History of Pineville, Louisiana.  
 Baton Rouge: Claitor's Publishing Division, 1968.

Charter of the Rapides Cemetery Association, 18 March 1872.

Conveyance Records, Rapides Parish Courthouse. (continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 7.05

QUADRANGLE NAME _____			QUADRANGLE SCALE _____		
UTM REFERENCES					
A	1 5	3 5 3 1 2 0	3 4 6 4 6 5 0	B	
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C				D	
E				F	
G				H	

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See attached plat map. The boundaries were chosen to encompass only the Rapides Cemetery, because the documentation describes the Post of Rapides as having been located within the cemetery confines.

### LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE  
 Ethel G. Holloman, Chairman of the UDC's historical committee

ORGANIZATION  
 Thomas Overton Moore Chapter, United Daughters of Confederacy

STREET & NUMBER  
 1021 City Park Blvd.

CITY OR TOWN  
 Alexandria

DATE  
 8/25/78

TELEPHONE  
 home: 318-442-7061 office: 487-7194

STATE  
 Louisiana

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Donald Cameron*

TITLE

DATE 4/23/79

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Mark Atkinson*  
 ATTEST: *Bill Bobich*  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 6-15-79

DATE June 14, 1979

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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The Thomas-Flint-Casson Plot.

Although this plot contains no notable funerary architecture, it has a Gothic cast-iron fence with two exceptionally fine gates, which were made in Philadelphia. Each gate is set between a pair of pinnacles flanked, in turn, by square posts which are ornamented with regularized rinceau motifs. The posts are surmounted by foliated urns. The gates themselves each consist of a pair of doors which come together to form a large finial lancet which is composed of a lower colonnette screen which rises to an elaborate interlacing of rinceau motifs with cusps, crockets, and foils.

The Mead Plot

The mead plot contains a monumental twenty-five foot granite obelisk with paneled base. The cast-iron fence, which is composed of ovals, round arches, and ball drops, was made by T. M. Lincoln and Company of Hartford, Connecticut.

Archaeological Potential

Since the cemetery is the site where the Post of Rapides once stood, it is probable that the site has considerable potential for archaeological research, but to date none has been done since it is a cemetery. According to Thomas C. David, City Engineer for Pineville, and historian Elaine H. Brister, there has been no archaeological research on the site.

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The second factor was the administrative situation. In 1723 the administration of Louisiana was revised when the colony was divided into nine districts, each with a principal trading post. The site near the "Great Rapid" was included in the Natchitoches district under the command of St. Denis. It was his responsibility to establish small trading posts in strategic places. Indeed, it was also in his personal interest to do so since he received a percentage of the profits from such trade.<sup>1</sup>

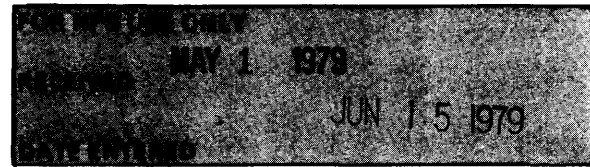
Some type of post and rest stop was thus established at the rapids in 1722 or 1723. Apparently a few crude buildings were built on the bluff overlooking the rapids, a site which is now part of Rapides Cemetery. That the cemetery was the site of the post was established by a deposition of 1819 signed by two of the post's former commandants, Valentine Layssard (who was also the son of another commandant) and Enemund Muellion. It was one of a series of depositions taken on the boundaries of Rapides and Avoyelles Parishes. Layssard stated that in about 1769 "a Priest was established on the River opposite to the Town of Alexandria. . . near to the burying Ground and that the place has been continued ever since as a burying Ground." He went on to state that "that place (the burying ground) was always called and considered the situation of the Post of Rapides."<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the French colonial period, there was never more than a small detachment of soldiers at the Post of Rapides. According to historian Elaine Brister, "With so few of the amenities of life at the little frontier post as compared with the attractions of the older settlement at Natchitoches, no doubt it was considered an onerous duty to be stationed at the Rapides." The main activity at the post during the French period was trade with the Indians in the area.

In 1762 France ceded Louisiana to Spain, and during the Spanish regime the settlement at Rapides grew. During his brief stay in Louisiana, Governor O'Reilly sent out commissioners to report on conditions in the colony. At the Post of Rapides he found 33 whites and 18 slaves. They also stated that there was a "small village of Apalache Indians--twenty-six men and about eighteen women of all ages." In livestock there were 98 horses, 258 cattle, and 97 pigs. The commissioners also reported that "In this district only tobacco and corn are cultivated, and cattle. . . of the same quality, size, and good meat as those of Natchitoches, with which they maintain themselves."

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Under Spanish rule, the main activity changed from the Indian trade to agriculture. By 1785 the population in and around the post had grown to 212 whites and 138 "free persons of color." In 1799, according to the commandant, it had increased to 760 persons, including 127 men, 101 women, 199 male children, 157 female children, 99 male slaves, and 77 female slaves. These persons lived in 112 separate habitations and owned 678 horses and 3,131 horned cattle.<sup>3</sup> Little additional information is available on the appearance of the post and conditions there. Research in the commandants' records at USL yielded no important data.

In the last years of the Spanish regime, a wave of English-speaking people from other states came into the area, and most of them settled on the opposite side of the river from the original post. Although there never ceased to be residents on the north side of the river in the area of the Post of Rapides, in the final years of Spanish control the old post was all but abandoned. Nearby was the public cemetery which was the beginning of the present-day Rapides Cemetery. In about 1805 the settlement which had grown up around the original post was named Pineville.<sup>4</sup>

Since the records in the Rapides Parish Courthouse were destroyed by fire in 1864, there is little available information on the cemetery from the years prior to the Civil War.<sup>5</sup> The Rapides Cemetery Association was founded March 18, 1872 by a group of 14 men for the purpose of fencing the cemetery and beautifying it by "cleaning away the undergrowth and planting shrubbery, making walks, and in short, to permanently improve, repair and maintain the same in such a manner as it shall be a lasting credit rather than a standing disgrace to the people of Rapides." From that statement it is logical to conclude that the cemetery had suffered years of neglect during and following the Civil War.

Two years later the association received a donation of 10 acres of land from Thomas H. Maddox; in 1875, another deed was filed returning part of the property to Maddox. Robert P. Hunter was president of the association in both transactions as well as the notary before whom the original articles of incorporation were drawn up.<sup>6</sup>

The Rapides Cemetery is still used for burials today. Buried there are soldiers and sailors who fell in all the wars in which colonial French and Spanish forces from Louisiana participated as well as America's wars, including those of the 20th century. This information is noted on a bronze marker, placed in the cemetery in 1964 by Loyalty Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Alexandria.

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Some of the outstanding people known to be buried there are the following:

Pierre Baillio II

Pierre Baillio II, the builder of Kent House, died in 1824. He was one of the trustees of the College of Rapides. The legislature of 1819 incorporated the group, whose members were interested in giving the youth the best that could be had in the way of education.<sup>7</sup>

Enemund Meullion

Enemund Meullion, a later commandant of the Post of Rapides is buried in the Rapides Cemetery with his wife Jennette. Next to their grave is the grave of Meullion's body guard. Meullion was serving as commandant when the Louisiana Purchase was completed in 1803 and was the last commandant under the flag of the United States. He was a native of Normandy, France; was educated as a physician; and came to Louisiana during the French Revolution to escape political conditions there. Governor W. C. C. Claiborne, Governor of the Territory of Orleans, 1803-1812, retained Meullion as the official in charge of the Rapides area until a county judge could be named. Then Gov. Claiborne appointed him as the first treasurer of the County of Rapides.<sup>8</sup>

Gen. George Mason Graham

Gen. George Mason Graham, also buried in the Rapides Cemetery, lived at Tyrone Plantation on Bayou Rapides, nine miles from Alexandria. It was at Tyrone that Gen. Graham conferred with Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, who was named the first president of the Louisiana Seminary of Learning in 1859, and with members of the official board of trustees of that institution of higher learning.<sup>9</sup> The seminary was the forerunner of Louisiana State University.

Dr. and Mrs. John Casson

The grave of the eminent physician, Dr. John Casson and his wife are located in Rapides Cemetery. Mrs. Casson was the former Adelia Thomas, daughter of Gen. Isaac Thomas. Gen. Thomas built the first sugar mill in the area, but the mill was later demolished when the bricks and the lumber were needed to build Bailey's Dam in the rapids of Red River during the Union retreat following the Confederate victory at the Battle of Mansfield (April 8, 1864).



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Adelia was first married to Ebezener Hubbard Flint, the second son of Timothy Flint and Abigail Hubbard. Timothy Flint was a well-known explorer and writer.

Only the grave of Dr. Casson and his wife, who are buried together, is marked. However, another memorial is erected to her and her five Flint daughters, who are buried there also.<sup>10</sup>

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ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 6

1. Elaine H. Brister, Once Upon a River: A History of Pineville, Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Claitor's Publishing Division, 1968), 26-28, hereinafter cited as Brister, Pineville.
2. Typescript copy of deposition of April 1, 1819, by Enemond Muellion and Valentine Layssard before Judge Thomas C. Scott, Parish Judge of Rapides Parish, in Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge; Brister, Pineville, 28.
3. Brister, Pineville, 28-34.
4. Brister, Pineville, 39.
5. Brister, Pineville, 36.
6. Charter of the Rapides Cemetery Association, 18 March 1872; T. H. Maddox to Rapides Cemetery Association, 22 June 1874, Conveyance Records, Rapides Parish Courthouse.
7. Catherine B. Futch, The Ballio Family, Baton Rouge: The Author, 1961.
8. G. P. Whittington, Rapides Parish, Louisiana: A History (Reprinted from Louisiana Historical Quarterly, 1932-1935) 36, hereinafter cited as Whittington, Rapides Parish.
9. Whittington, Rapides Parish, 130.
10. Inscriptions on tombstones in Rapides Cemetery; Records in the possession of Mrs. Herbert Kraushaar of Alexandria, and an interview with Mrs. Kraushaar by Ethel G. Holloman.

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Deposition of April 1, 1819 by Enemund Muellion and Valentine Layssard before Judge Thomas C. Scott. Typescript copy in Department of Archives and Manuscripts, LSU, Baton Rouge.

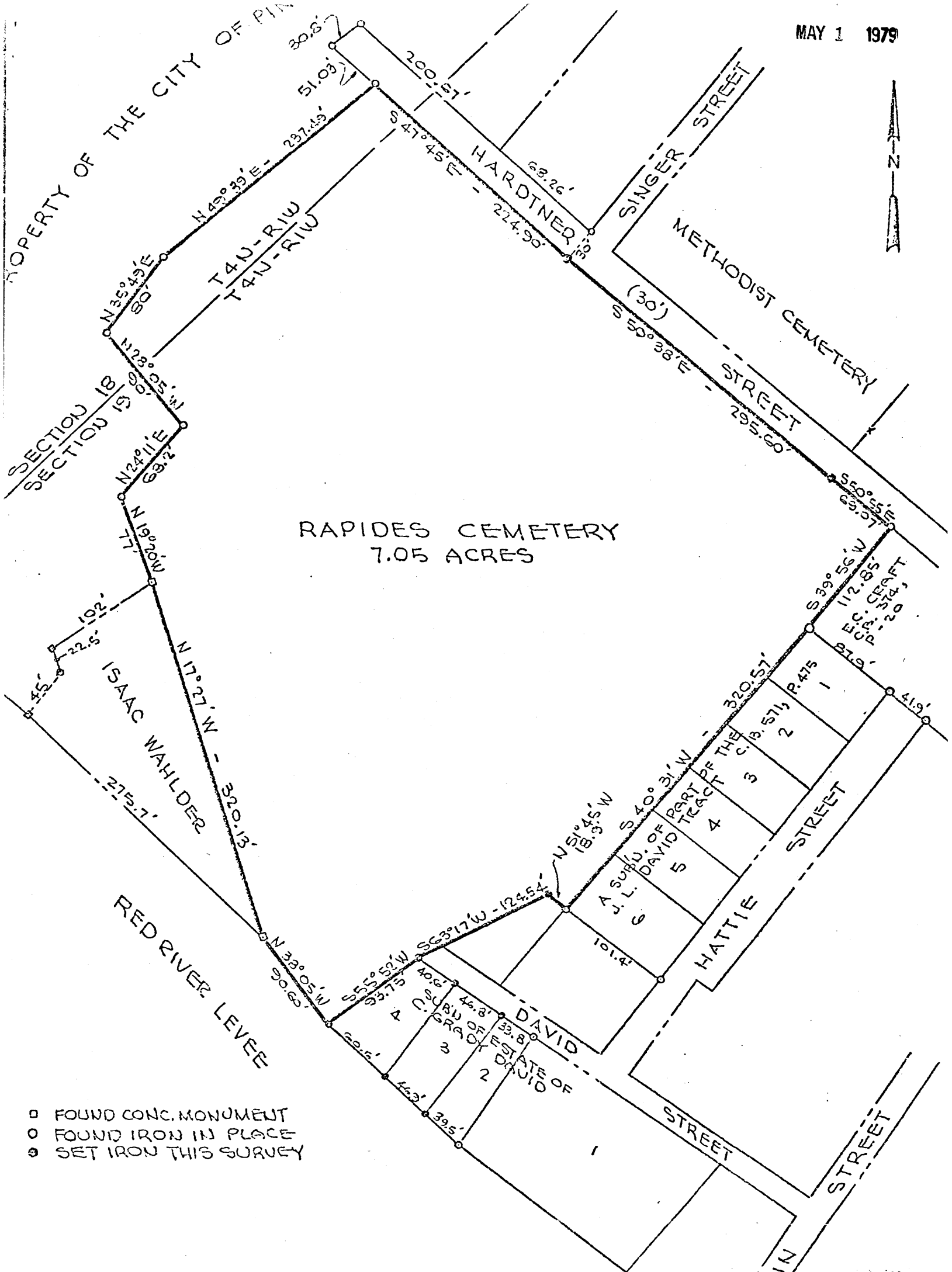
Futch, Catherine B. The Ballio Family. Baton Rouge: The Author, 1961.

Inscriptions on tombstones in Rapides Cemetery.

Interview with Mrs. Herbert Kraushaar of Alexandria by Ethel G. Holloman.

Records in the possession of Mrs. Herbert Kraushaar of Alexandria, La.

Whittington, G. P. Rapides Parish, Louisiana: A History. Reprinted from Louisiana Historical Quarterly, 1932-1935.



PROPERTY SURVEY OF RAPIDES CEMETERY  
 LOCATED NORTH OF RED RIVER IN SECTIONS 18 & 19,  
 T4N-R1W, CITY OF PINEVILLE, RAPIDES PARISH, LA.



PAN AMERICAN ENGINEERS

Alexandria, La.

Baton Rouge, La.

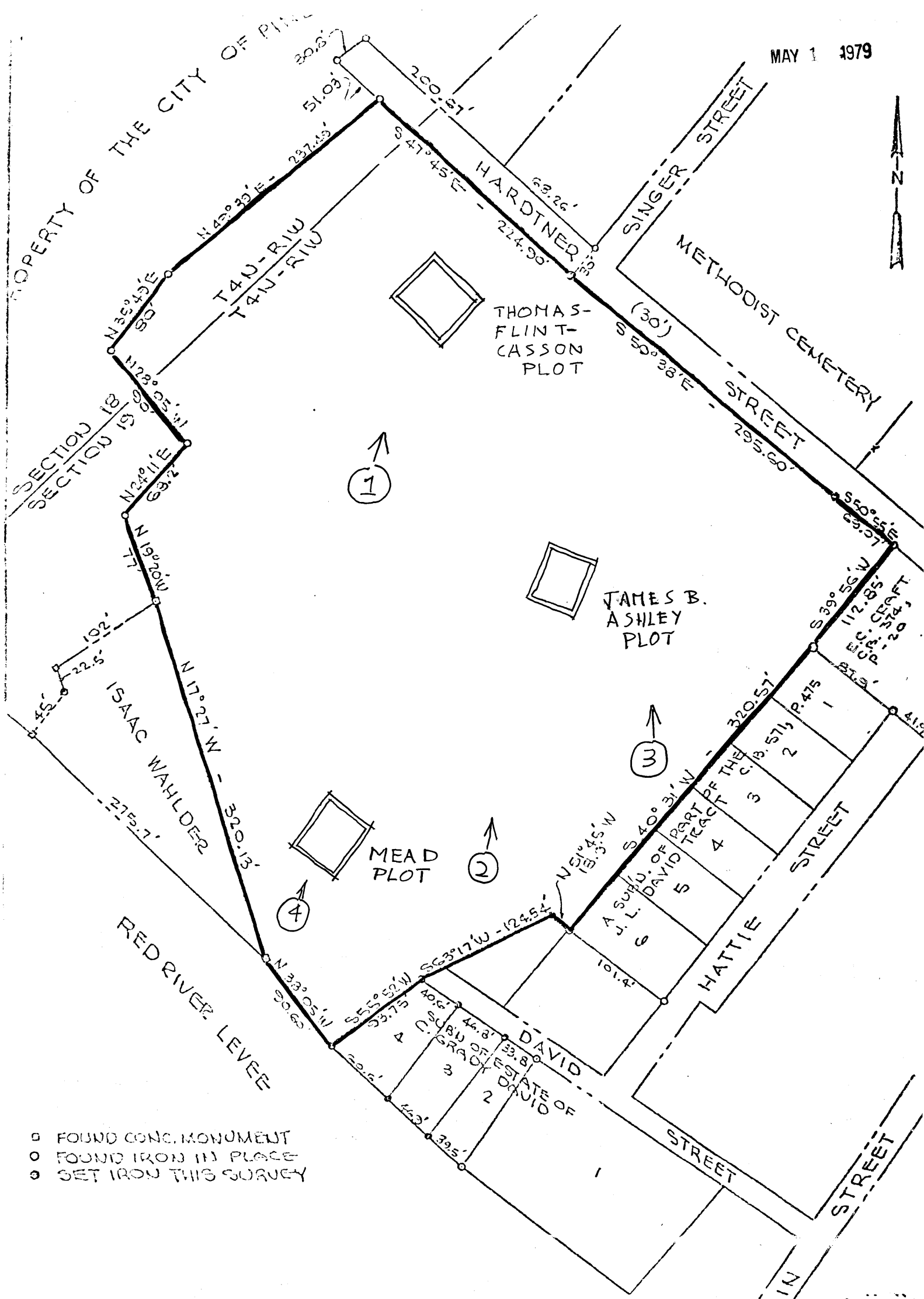
scale 1" = 100' date

book # 368

approved

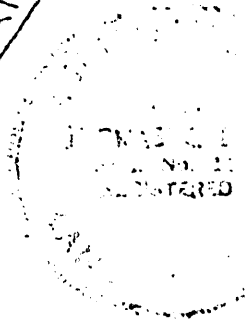
T.C. Daniel

MAY 1 1979



- FOUND CONC. MONUMENT
- FOUND IRON IN PLACE
- SET IRON THIS SURVEY

PROPERTY SURVEY OF RAPIDES CEMETERY  
 LOCATED NORTH OF RED RIVER IN SECTIONS 18 & 19,  
 T4N-R1W, CITY OF PINEVILLE, RAPIDES PARISH, LA.



PAN AMERICAN ENGINEERS

Alexandria, La.

Baton Rouge, La.

scale 1" = 100' date

book # 368

approved T.C. [Signature]