

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received MAR 29 1982  
date entered

**1. Name**

historic Adath Israel Cemetery

and/or common Temple Cemetery

**2. Location**

street & number 2716 Preston Street

NA not for publication

city, town Louisville

NA vicinity of

congressional district

3 & 4

state Kentucky

code 021

county Jefferson

code 111

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) <sup>3</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>NA</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<u>NA</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: cemetery

**4. Owner of Property**

name Adath Israel Brith Sholom

street & number 5105 Brownsboro Rd.

city, town Louisville

NA vicinity of

state Kentucky 40222

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number

.517 W. Jefferson St.

city, town

Louisville

state Kentucky

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Division

city, town Frankfort

state Kentucky

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Adath Israel Cemetery is located in the southeast section of Louisville on Preston Street just south of Eastern Parkway (pending National Register). Preston Street is largely commercial in this section, with various sixth class cities and Louisville neighborhoods which developed during the period of 1920 to 1950 adjacent to the commercial strip.

There are five Jewish cemeteries adjacent to Adath Israel Cemetery, Adath Israel being the oldest and the northernmost. Keneseth Israel Cemetery and Adath Jeshurun Cemetery are located to the south respectively, and Anshei Sfarad Cemetery and Bnai Jacob Cemetery are situated to the west of Adath Jeshurun Cemetery respectively on Locust Lane. Agudath Achim has a cemetery on the east side of Preston Street, but since its merger with Anshei Sfarad there have been no more interments there.

Adath Israel Cemetery is approximately 23 acres in area. In the mid 1970s, Adath Israel and Brith Sholom, whose cemetery was located directly north of Adath Israel Cemetery, merged and the cemetery was renamed Temple Cemetery. The two cemeteries have always had common roads and a clear separation between the two is not evident.

Adath Israel is the oldest and the most beautiful of the five adjacent cemeteries on Preston Street. A limestone wall topped by a decorative iron fence stretches the full length of the cemetery on Preston Street. The entrance to the cemetery is central, with a gatehouse on the south and the chapel on the north. The gate was originally roofed. Although the roof is gone, the stone piers and decorative iron gates are intact. (Photo 9)

The Gatehouse is a two-story gable-end residence built in two sections. The older section, ca. 1876, nearest the road, contains the main entrance and two windows on the first floor, and two smaller windows on the second floor. The windows and door are slightly arched with two rows of header bricks and a third row of corbeled headers over each. A one-story porch contains three posts and two pilasters and has an abundance of gingerbread. The addition to the southwest end of the building, ca. 1890, has slightly smaller window and door openings, but they are also slightly arched and have three rows of headers but no corbeling. Besides the porch gingerbread, bargeboards and matching cornice gingerbread continue around the structure. Upon close inspection, it is possible to detect the division of the cornice gingerbread between new and old sections. It is therefore assumed that the bargeboards and cornice trim are original to the older section of the house. (Photos 2 & 3)

The Cemetery Chapel, ca. 1890, is a square stone structure with attached two-story tower. The slate pyramidal roof has flared eaves with exposed rafters. The main entrance, from inside the cemetery, is a Gothic double entry. A large simple door hood is supported by huge brackets and has a hipped roof. There are three windows on the other three sides of the building with stained glass in Gothic mullions. The tower is two-stories in height with a crenelated parapet wall. The southwest and northeast sides of the tower contain two vented openings on the second level and two rectangular windows on the first floor. An entrance is located on the southeast side, facing the gate. The tower also contains a pyramidal slate spire. (Photos 1 & 8)

# 8. Significance

<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

cemetery chapel: c. 1876

**Specific dates** Frankel chapel: 1905 **Builder/Architect** cemetery: Benjamin Grove (cemetery engineer)  
 cemetery: 1876 cemetery chapel: Maury & Dodd, architects

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Adath Israel Cemetery is Kentucky's oldest extant Jewish cemetery. It was laid out in 1876 by Benjamin Grove in a picturesque style of landscape gardening. Three major structures of architectural significance are located in the cemetery, including one of Louisville's finest examples of the Richardsonian style on a small scale, the Cemetery Chapel. This cemetery is significant due to its association with Adath Israel, the oldest Jewish congregation in Kentucky, and due to its importance to the statewide Jewish community as the oldest surviving Jewish cemetery.

In the early part of the eighteenth century, Jewish immigrants settled in the largest established communities, since most Jews gained their livelihood as merchants. Cincinnati and New Orleans had the largest Jewish populations west of the Appalachians, with Louisville gaining in Jewish population by the 1830s.

Adath Israel is Louisville's oldest congregation, as well as the oldest in Kentucky. It was established ca. 1840 and built its first synagogue in 1847. The first cemetery of Adath Israel was located at Preston and Woodbine streets about one mile north of the present cemetery. This was the first Jewish cemetery in the state. In 1955, the graves were moved to the present cemetery due to the completion of Interstate 65 which consumed the older cemetery.

Louisville is the only city in Kentucky with Jewish cemeteries. In the past and present, deceased members of the Jewish communities in cities such as Frankfort and Lexington are frequently buried in Louisville's various Jewish cemeteries. In the northern part of the state, particularly in the Covington area, the Jewish cemeteries of Cincinnati, Ohio, play a role similar to that of Louisville's Jewish cemeteries.

A portion of the present cemetery grounds was purchased by Adath Israel in 1873. In 1876, Benjamin Grove, a cemetery engineer, designed a landscape scheme for the cemetery which was eventually scaled down to the present configuration. The original plan presently hangs in the caretaker's office. Although little is known about the career of Grove, it is known that he designed a plan for Linden Grove Cemetery in Covington, Kentucky in 1858. He was also responsible for an 1857 plan for a portion of Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville (National Register). The design of the Adath Israel Cemetery was probably influenced by the spectacular design of Cave Hill. Grove was able to take the limited resources of the location and develop a picturesque and restful setting. In more recent years, topiary has been introduced to the setting. Dozens of holly trees are shaped like gum drops.

Sometime prior to 1900, the Brith Sholom congregation purchased a small parcel of land adjacent to Adath Israel. The narrow roads were designed in the same meandering style as found in the Adath Israel Cemetery and the two cemeteries were treated as one. This section of the cemetery also contains the gum drop holly trees. Finally, in the mid-1970s, the two congregations merged and the cemeteries were renamed as one, Temple Cemetery.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data **ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED** **UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 23 acres

Quadrangle name Louisville East

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

**UMT References**

A 

1	6	6	1	0	3	6	0	4	2	2	9	6	4	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

1	6	6	1	0	2	4	0	4	2	2	9	8	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

1	6	6	0	9	9	8	5	4	2	2	9	7	5	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

1	6	6	1	0	5	0	0	4	2	2	9	0	2	5
Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

City Block 83C Lots 50 & 51 (see continuation sheet). See Map 2.

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries**

state NA code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title M. A. Allgeier, Researcher

organization Louisville Landmarks Commission

date 1/18/81

street & number 727 W. Main St.

telephone (502) 587-3501

city or town Louisville

state Kentucky

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Mary Joeman Appel*

title SHPO

date 3/11/82

For NCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*William H. Brannan*

date 6-22-82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

Adath Israel Cemetery  
2716 Preston Street  
Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky

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The cemetery grounds were designed in 1876 by Benjamin Grove. The narrow roads meander through the original 15-acre site in an irregular plan. Many trees have been planted through the years which add to the park-like setting of the cemetery. The most impressive landscaping device is the topiary. There countless large holly trees which have, over the years, been trained and shaped. They are identical to one another and are shaped like gum drops.

The third major structure is Frankel Memorial Chapel, 1905. It is a one-story stone building with a stone facade which projects above the gabled roof and extends beyond the sides of the building. This facade is stepped and crowned with a large arch pierced by three rectangular openings. A pedimented porch with hipped tile roof is supported by Tuscan columns. The chapel roof is also tile and three windows are located on each side. The gabled chancel projects from the rear wall, and contains half timbering. (Photo 4)

Located in the rear of section of the cemetery is a receiving vault which is built into the side of a hill. Before the advent of refrigeration, the vault held caskets until final interments were arranged. The vault entrance is through a small stone gothic arch supported by engaged columns. (Photo 10)

There are many fine monuments and markers throughout the cemetery. Among them are the family monuments of Berhneim (Photo 15), Davis (Photo 13), Bloom (Photo 14) and Hess (Photo 12).

Adath Israel Cemetery provides a picturesque, park-like setting to this largely commercial area. The structures, monuments, stone fence and landscaping combine to create one of Louisville's finest cemeteries.

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Benjamin Grove may also have designed the gatehouse, built ca. 1876. It is a fine example of the vernacular architecture of the period, with an abundance of gingerbread. The gatehouse is in excellent condition and remains in use as the residence of a watchman.

The Cemetery Chapel was constructed ca. 1890, designed by Maury and Dodd, one of Louisville's premier architectural firms of the period. The Richardsonian style incorporated in the design of this chapel is one of the most pure small scale Richardsonian designs in Louisville. It is probable that the limestone wall was erected at about the same time that the chapel was constructed, since the limestone construction of the chapel so closely resembles that of the wall. The chapel is no longer used for services, but rather for storage.

The Frankel Memorial Chapel is designed in an unusual eclectic style. It is on the same scale as the Cemetery Chapel and the facade is stone. It is an impressive memorial, built in 1905. It too is no longer used as a chapel and serves as a storage unit.

Located in the rear of the cemetery is a receiving vault, built ca. 1880. Built into the side of a small hill, the vault was used before the advent of refrigeration. Grove may also have been responsible for the vault. A rendering of a receiving vault is found in the margin of the 1876 landscape scheme, but as with the design of the grounds, the receiving vault design was also scaled down. The vault is no longer used and stands open.

Of the numerous prominent local figures buried in the Adath Israel Cemetery, Abraham Flexner is the most renowned. Born in Louisville in 1866, Flexner "was a product of the intellectual interests that abounded in the city's Jewish community."<sup>2</sup> Flexner began teaching at Louisville's Male High School in 1886 after acquiring a degree from John Hopkins University. He later opened a school of his own. Flexner is frequently referred to as the father of the University of Louisville Medical School because of a report he published in 1910. As a member of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, he was given an assignment to study the deficiencies of medical education in the United States. The publication of the Flexner Report is considered the turning point in the education of American physicians. Its local impact resulted in annual appropriations from the city of Louisville and the election of a new president of the University who began the development of the Medical School as a viable institution.

Adolph and Fredericka Brandeis are also buried at Adath Israel Cemetery. They are the parents of Louis Dembitz Brandeis, the first Jewish Supreme Court Justice. Adolph Brandeis was a wealthy local merchant who immigrated to Louisville from Prague, Bohemia, as a child. Louis Brandeis and his wife are not buried in this cemetery. Their ashes have been placed under the steps of the University of Louisville Law School, an institution to which Louis endowed large sums of money and his personal papers. (Photo 11)

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There are many family names found throughout the cemetery which have become closely associated with the commercial development of Louisville. Among them are Bernheim, Straus, Levy, Wolf, Klein, Dinkelspeil, Meyer, Appel, Oppenheimer and many more. Throughout the city, many buildings and businesses have retained these names, most still in the hands of the respective families.

The cemetery is approximately 23 acres in size. The rear section, approximately one fourth of the entire cemetery is open land. Interments are still made throughout the cemetery.

Adath Israel Cemetery is important to Louisville as it is the oldest remaining Jewish cemetery in the state and one of the most beautiful cemeteries in Louisville. The cemetery represents the history of the Jewish faith in Louisville. The buildings, landscaping and stone wall combine to create a restful, park-like setting in an otherwise commercial area. This cemetery compares well with Cave Hill Cemetery, but on a smaller scale.

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PAGE 2

Adath Israel. Cemetery Records. 1873-1920.

Caron Annual Directories of the City of Louisville. 1850-1920.

Landau, Herman. Adath Louisville. Louisville: Grieb Printing Co., 1981.

Maury & Dodd Architects, Louisville. Catalogue, ND.

Personal Interview, George Kinder, caretaker Temple Cemetery, 3-3-81.

Personal Interview, Jack Benjamin, administrator Adath Israel Brith Sholom, 10-8-81.

Personal Interview, Sonny Meyer, Meyer Funeral Home, 10-22-81.



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FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Herman Landau, Adath Louisville (Louisville: Herman Landau & Associates, 1981), p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>George H. Yater, Two Hundred Years at the Falls of the Ohio (Louisville: The Heritage Corporation, 1979), p. 160.

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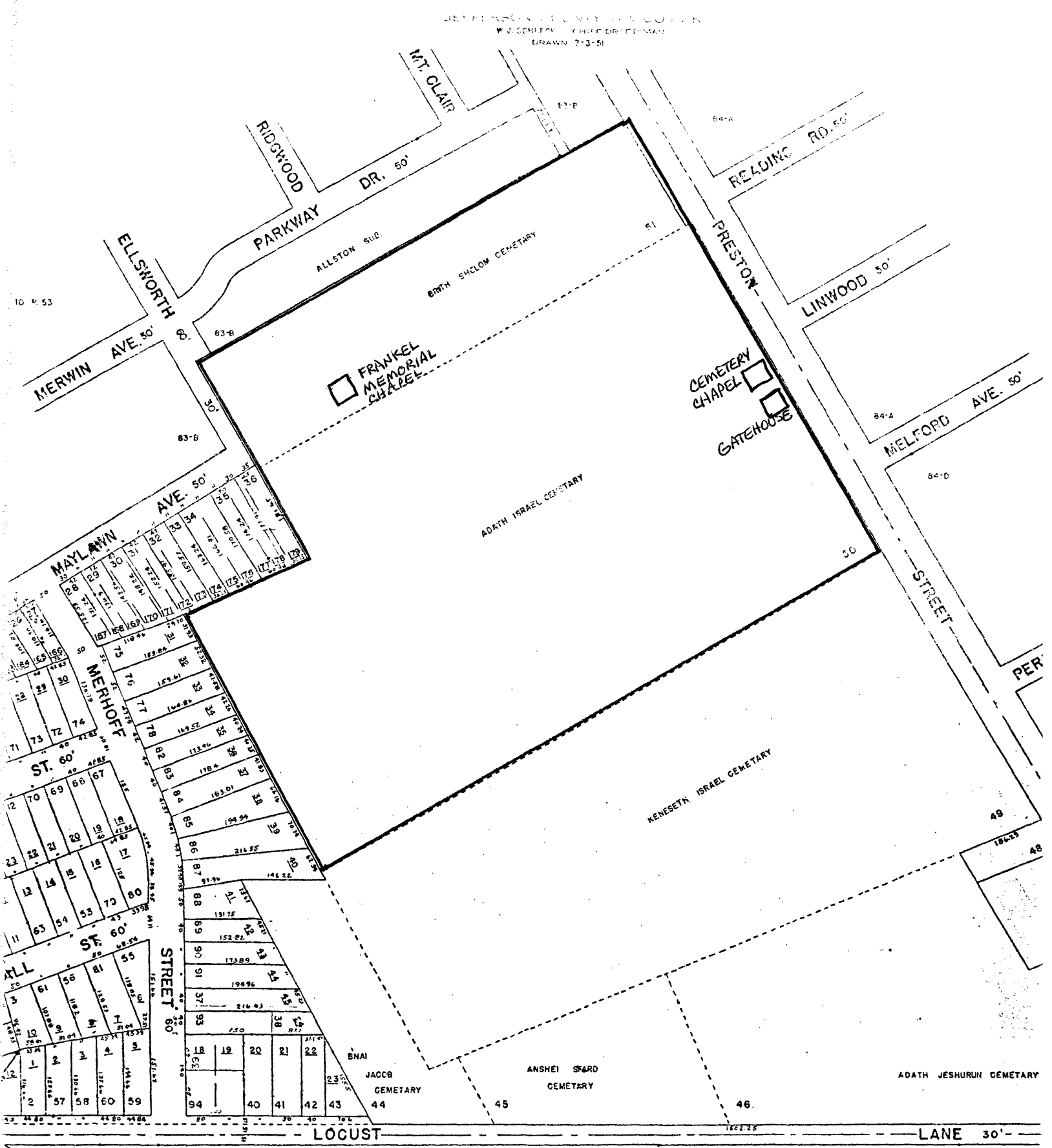
Beginning at a point on the west right-of-way line of Preston Street 1290 feet north of the northwest corner of Locust Lane and Preston Street, thence northwardly along said right-of-way line 975 feet to a point, thence westwardly 967 feet to a point, thence southwardly 435 feet to a point, thence westwardly 270 feet to a point, thence southwardly 570 feet to a point, thence eastwardly 1260 feet to the point of beginning.

The boundaries have been drawn to include the original Adath Israel Cemetery and the old Brith Sholom cemetery which was just north of the Adath Israel Cemetery, since the congregations are now one. The cemetery is within the limestone walls and appears as one cemetery. Adath Israel Cemetery is, however, distinct from the cemeteries to the south, particularly due to landscaping and the positioning of graves on the sites.



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Adath Israel Cemetery  
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Photo 16 - Ariel View of  
cemetery  
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Louisville & Jefferson Co.  
Planning and Zoning Comm.



BUILDINGS MARK GENERAL LOCATION - NOT TO SCALE

Adath Israel Cemetery  
2716 Preston St.  
Louisville, Jefferson Co., KY  
Sanborn Map  
Sanborn Map Co., Pelham, NY  
1974

MAP 2