

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHO 689009

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 1 1978

DATE ENTERED DEC 28 1978

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

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Renville Valley Pioneer Cemetery

AND/OR COMMON

McKinney Cemetery (Preferred)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Tolley

 VICINITY OF

—NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1

STATE

North Dakota

CODE

38

COUNTY

Renville

CODE

075

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**

DISTRICT
 BUILDING(S)
 STRUCTURE
 SITE
 OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC
 PRIVATE
 BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
 IN PROCESS
 BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED
 UNOCCUPIED
 WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
 YES: RESTRICTED
 YES: UNRESTRICTED
 NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE
 COMMERCIAL
 EDUCATIONAL
 ENTERTAINMENT
 GOVERNMENT
 INDUSTRIAL
 MILITARY
 MUSEUM
 PARK
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 RELIGIOUS
 SCIENTIFIC
 TRANSPORTATION
 OTHER: Cemetery

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

McKinney Cemetery Association

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Tolley

 VICINITY OF

STATE

North Dakota

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Renville County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Mohall

STATE

North Dakota

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Burlington Dam Historical Survey

DATE

Summer, 1978

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

University of North Dakota
Department of Anthropology and Archeology

CITY, TOWN

Grand Forks

STATE

North Dakota

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

McKinney Cemetery, located four miles northeast of Tolley, lies along the banks of the Mouse River, a historic waterway. The three-acre, non-denominational burial site is situated among the hills of the Mouse River Valley. A narrow gravel road on the west and the Mouse River on the east form the major boundaries of the cemetery.

The entire site is bordered by a woven wire fence with a crimped ornamental top. A wrought and cast iron arched gate containing the words "McKinney Cemetery" stands at the entrance. Decorative wrought iron scroll work surmounts a wrought iron arch which connects two supporting vertical elements of cast iron. Within the arch, a woven wire fence with crimped ornamental top has been interlaced with the cemetery's name. Beneath the arched entry are metal pipe gates of woven wire with wrought iron trim covered by a diamond pattern. Plain woven wire fences immediately adjoin the gates on both sides.

A log building, dating from 1886, occupies the northwest corner of the cemetery, outside the woven wire fence. Designed in the American tradition style, the structure is constructed of hewn logs with saddle notched corners on the exterior. Wooden shingles cover the gable roof and log purlins are discernable under the eaves. The cabin was built by Frank Swenson in the 1880s and later was secured by Ed Swenson, a son of McKinney pioneer Nels P. Swenson, in a land transaction. In 1937, the log building was moved to its present site at McKinney Cemetery and restored by the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service. Because the historic cabin stands at the entrance gate to the cemetery, the structure serves as a memorial to the pioneer Swenson family of which several members are buried at McKinney.

Within the cemetery, gravestones have been sparsely spread throughout the grassy grounds and mark the burials of approximately 250 area residents--of varying degrees of local significance--from 1886 to the present. The majority of the gravestones are small in scale and are made of either marble or granite. While most of the gravestones have a simple design, that of Ira Pellett shows the influence of a Neoclassical sculptural style with its Doric columns supporting a modified ogee arch.

Interspersed between the graves are clipped lilac bushes which beautify the McKinney Cemetery grounds.

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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

c. 1886

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

McKinney Cemetery, originally called the Renville Valley Pioneer Cemetery, was founded in c. 1886 and is the oldest cemetery in Renville County. The cemetery is also the only remaining physical manifestation of the former town of McKinney. McKinney Cemetery is significant for its associations with the history of McKinney and pioneer settlement in North Dakota.

Ordinarily, cemeteries are not considered eligible for the National Register. However, exceptions listed in the National Register criteria state that a "cemetery which derives its primary significance . . . from association with historic events" and a "property primarily commemorative in intent if . . . age . . . or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance" may qualify for listing in the National Register. McKinney Cemetery's affiliation with the history of the town of McKinney and the cemetery's significance as a symbol of the former town falls within the above categories.

Nels P. Swenson, a Swedish immigrant, settled in McKinney in 1886. Regretful that there was no burial ground for immigrants who had passed away during the earlier settlement days, Swenson donated a parcel of his homestead land for this purpose and named the new burial site "McKinney Cemetery," after the nearby town. Two years previous, the town had been established in the Mouse River Valley and named for Otis McKinney, a member of the Mouse River Horse and Cattle Company. In 1886, the first unrecorded burial--that of a cowboy, Rip Stanton--took place at McKinney Cemetery. Eventually, in 1911, the cemetery was incorporated.

Swenson was an influential pioneer and was instrumental in the growth and development of the town of McKinney. The town's first post office was established in his home in 1886 and Swenson served as the town's first postmaster until 1901. The mail was brought north to McKinney from Minot on a tri-weekly basis and then distributed to area residents by Swenson. Like her husband, Mrs. Swenson was also active in McKinney's community life. She served as midwife and undertaker for many of the town's settlers. For several years, the Swenson home served multiple functions: church, post office, store, and school. When Mr. and Mrs. Swenson died in 1929 and 1902 respectively, they were buried at McKinney Cemetery--the land that they had donated to the community. Three generations of the Swenson family are buried at the cemetery.

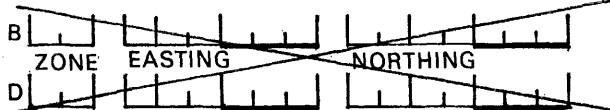
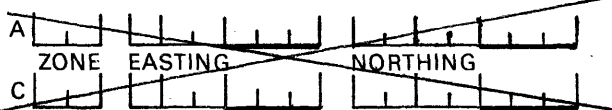
9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Cory, Robert. "Tumbling Around These Prairies." Minot Daily News. October 25, 1958.
 Fukuda, Constance. Interviews with Mrs. Luella Armstrong, Sherwood, North Dakota;
 Mr. Paul Krenz (President of McKinney Cemetery Association), Tolley, North Dakota;
 and other members of the McKinney Cemetery Association on August 2, 1978.
 Fukuda, Constance. Personal inspection, August 2, 1978.
 Hembree, Blanche. Fate, Destiny, Necessity on Renville's Prairies. Tolley: Blanche
 Hembree, 1977.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres
 UTM REFERENCES

Latitude - 48° 45' 34"
 Longitude - 101° 46' 57"



VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Starting at a point 675 feet east of the SW corner of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 23, Township 161 N, Range 86 W, Renville County, North Dakota, north 44 feet, thence east 330 feet, thence south 82 feet, thence south 26° 54' east 154.72 feet, thence south 44° 25' west 210.02 feet, thence west 210 feet, thence north 16° west 156.04 feet, thence north 176 feet to the point of beginning.

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

Constance Fukuda, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of North Dakota

DATE

September 27, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Liberty Memorial Building

TELEPHONE

(701)224-2672

CITY OR TOWN

Bismarck

STATE

North Dakota 58505

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

James E. Sherry

TITLE

N.D. State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

10/23/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ATTEST

Charles A. [Signature]

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/2/78

DATE

12 2 78

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 1 1978
DATE ENTERED	DEC 23 1978

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

The significance of McKinney Cemetery must be examined in light of the town's history. McKinney was located on the Mouse River, 55 miles northwest of Minot and 4 miles north-east of Tolley. Although the town's population never exceeded 200 people, McKinney was critical to Renville County's developing business and commerce. McKinney had the only bridge and point of crossing on the Mouse River for 20 miles either up or down stream (north or south). Consequently, when the town site was platted in 1901, businesses were rapidly established. There were three mercantile establishments in McKinney to serve the settlers of the region. Within the year, the three general stores were joined by two hardware stores, three implement dealers, a drug store, restaurant, barber shop, butcher shop, doctor's office, confectionery, flour mill, newspaper office, pool hall, lumber yard, bank, land office, and two livery stables. All the merchandise for these businesses was freighted from Kenmare--a neighboring town, located on the railroad, 20 miles northeast of McKinney--by a team of eight mules which pulled four to seven wagons. The transportation of goods from Kenmare to McKinney took a total of two days. Like other North Dakota towns of this period, McKinney was primarily an agricultural supply center and the area's settlers depended on the town's businesses to supply them with necessary goods such as food and clothing.

Among the most important of these enterprises was the town's first flour mill, McKinney Mill, built in 1903 by William J. Paff, owner and operator. Because the mill was intended to be powered by steam and water, Paff, in 1904, completed a dam beside the mill that backed up water on the Mouse River for 15 miles. Since Paff's mill was the only one northwest of Minot, farmers from McKinney would arrive with loads of wheat for milling into flour. Paff's reputation as a skillful miller, coupled with his successful business venture, often resulted in the mill operating day and night when the farmers laid in their winter supply of flour. It was a common sight to see teams lined up all day while their owners awaited their turn to have wheat ground into flour. In 1906, McKinney Mill burned down but Paff rebuilt it that same year. Due to declining business, he sold the mill in 1913.

As an early homesteader and miller in McKinney, Paff constantly promoted improved strains of grain and better farming methods. He was also active in community affairs, including the McKinney school system and operation of McKinney Cemetery. Paff, who served as the first secretary of the McKinney Cemetery Association, donated some of his land for an expansion to the cemetery. Moreover, Paff also planted the ornamental trees on the south side of McKinney Cemetery. When he died in 1946, Paff was buried--along with other early McKinney settlers--at McKinney Cemetery.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 2 1978
DATE ENTERED	11/2/78

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 2

Two factors which contributed to McKinney's demise were a disastrous flood and being bypassed by the railroad. In 1904, an unprecedented flood of the Mouse River occurred in McKinney. The flood--which resulted in four feet of water on McKinney's main street--had a devastating effect on the town's future growth. McKinney had been founded with the expectation that it would be served by the Soo Line Railroad's proposed Wheat Line. However, the severity of the 1904 flood caused Soo Line engineers to change the Wheat Line route and bypass McKinney. Instead, stations were established at Greene and Tolley in 1905. By late 1904, though, businesses had already started to relocate from McKinney to the new town of Tolley. Furthermore, the area's homesteader population had begun to decline due to difficult agricultural and economic conditions caused by a recent drought in the region. In 1916, the McKinney Post Office was discontinued and in 1935, the Mouse River Valley was purchased by the Bureau of Biological Survey for a wildlife refuge. All the remaining buildings of McKinney were demolished by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1935.

Today, only McKinney Cemetery remains as a physical manifestation of the former town. In this regard, the historic cemetery chronicles the growth and demise of McKinney. By virtue of the fact that prominent pioneers of McKinney--such as Nels P. Swenson and William J. Paff--are buried here and the site continues to be used today, McKinney Cemetery is a significant landmark in Renville County. McKinney's importance within the county as a once-prosperous business, commercial, and milling community in the Mouse River Valley is now marked solely by the existence of McKinney Cemetery.

In a larger sense, McKinney exemplifies the typical settlement pattern in North Dakota during the period 1886-1904: a town's dependence for a thriving existence on the presence of the railroad. As evidenced by McKinney, the bypassing of the railroad precipitated the demise of a town. The history of McKinney in Renville County and, by extension, North Dakota, can better be understood by appreciating the importance of McKinney Cemetery.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 1 1976
DATE ENTERED	NOV 1 1976

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 3

Mouse River Journal. McKinney, Ward County. I, No. 1. August 1, 1902.

Renville County Old Settler's Association. Renville County History, 1901-1976. 1976.

State Historical Society of North Dakota. File on McKinney Cemetery.

Williams, Mary Ann Barnes. Origins of North Dakota Place Names. Washburn:
Mary Ann Barnes Williams, 1966.