Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

DH 0679879

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

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JUL 28 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

S			O COMPLETE NATI			3
1 NAME HISTORIC	onfederate Mon	ument				
AND/OR COMM		to Unknown	Confederate Dead	ī.		
LOCATI						
STREET & NUMB						
		tersection	with Edwards St	ceetNOTF	OR PUBLICATION	
CITY, TOWN					RESSIONAL DISTRI	СТ
Union City	7		VICINITY OF		Seventh	
STATE Tennessee			CODE 47	COUN		CODE 131
CLASSIF	ICATION					
CATEGOI	RY OWNERS	HIP	STATUS		PRESI	ENT USE
DISTRICT	_ ≱ ∪выс Se	e continu-	OCCUPIED		AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
BUILDING(S)	PRIVATE a	tion sheet	UNOCCUPIED		COMMERCIAL	X_PARK
_XSTRUCTURE	вотн		WORK IN PROGRESS	_	EDUCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDENCE
SITE	PUBLIC A	CQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE		ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	IN PROCESS		YES: RESTRICTED		GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSI	DERED	X_YES: UNRESTRICTED	_	INDUSTRIAL	_TRANSPORTATION
			NO	_	MILITARY	OTHER:
OWNER	OF PROPER	TY				
NAME	_					
	See Continuat	ion Sheet				
STREET & NUMB	ER					
CITY, TOWN			VICINITY OF		STATE	
LOCATI	ON OF LEGA	I DESCP				
LUCATI	ON OF LEGA	IL DESCR	IF IION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DE	EDS,ETC. Obio	n County Co	ourthouse			
STREET & NUMB		thouse Squa	ıre			
CITY, TOWN					STATE	
	Unio	n City			Tennessee	
6 REPRES	ENTATION	IN EXIST	ING SURVEYS	3		
TITLE						
	nessee Histori	cal Commiss	sion			
DATE Aug	ust 1976		FEDERAL	XSTATE _C	OUNTYLOCAL	
DEPOSITORY FO	ne .	istorical C	Commission			
CITY.TOWN Nashville			v v antitististististististististististististi	(STATE Tennessee	



CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

__EXCELLENT

x.GOOD

__FAIR

__DETERIORATED
__RUINS
__UNEXPOSED

_XUNALTERED

X_ORIGINAL SITE

__MOVED DATE_____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The monument, approximately forty feet in height, was constructed of locally made brick in 1869 and covered with a smooth, stucco-like finish and painted white. monument consists of four square tiers, decreasing in size from bottom to top from eight to four feet, which support a slender obelisk approximately twelve feet in height. Each of the four sides of each tier has recesses approximately six inches deep which are cut in various geometrical patterns. In the north recess of the second tier from the ground, there is a half-round marble marker with a broken sword and the inscription "UNKNOWN CONFEDERATE DEAD." Surrounding this monument is a large circle of plain, marble headstones and footstones marking the graves of twenty-nine unknown Confederate soldiers, who were reinterred here in 1869. There were possibly forty reinterments, but some of the stones have disappeared. North and south of the monument, respectively, are the graves of a young doctor from Kentucky who served in the Confederate Army and a Negro body servant of General George Maney. Both of these graves are marked by small headstones with inscriptions. There are several large oaks and smaller ornamental trees in the cemetery which is enclosed by a fence of concrete posts joined with a single chain, painted black.

The original appearance of the monument is believed to be very much like that of the present, however several items placed inside the monument when it was built, including a Bible, Confederate rifle and a history of the inception of the monument, were removed years ago by vandals. Original access to the monument and cemetery, before the streets were built, was up wooden steps from the railroad on the north. The cemetery was surrounded by a paling fence with double, arched gates, inscribed, "UNKNOWN CONFEDERATE DEAD." There were walks, probably of crushed stone, throughout the cemetery which divided it into quadrants.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

SPECIFIC DAT	ES 1869	BUILDER/ARCI	HITECT	
CX1				
	to the first of the second of the second	INVENTION	s recognition to the second	Commemorative
1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	XOTHER (SPECIFY)
<u>X</u> 1800-1899	COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	TRANSPORTATION
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
1600-1699	ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
PERIOD	AF	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	FECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	,

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Dedicated on October 21, 1869, this monument was the first ever erected to honor unknown Confederate dead. This combination of age and symbolic value has thus invested the memorial with its own historical significance.

Constructed in 1868-9, within the shadow of the Civil War, the monument and its associated burials have been thoroughly documented by research. During the Civil War Centennial, an effort was made to locate the oldest such memorial. Contacts with centennial organizations in the various states and with Civil War Roundtables failed to produce a memorial of prior date. It should be noted that interest in Civil War history was at a peak during these years, lending additional weight to the results of the search. Since that time, no prior claim has been brought forth.

Additionally, the design and construction of the memorial are considered of interest in the context of the times. Made of almost entirely local materials and from funds raised in a small town during the difficult days of Reconstruction, the monument seems all the more elaborate and ambitious in size, detail of construction, and design of both it and the surrounding burials.

Marshall, E. Forrester, R.	H., History of	Obion Count	Tennessee Certy, Daily Mess Lanzer Co, 1	senger, 1940.	'•	
Congressional	Record, Gover	nment Print:	ing Office, Oc	ctober 11, 196	53, pp. A-5706-7.	
Scrapbook of I	Dr. John H. Mo	rton, origin	nal in posse	ession of his	granddaughter	
Rosalyn El	berle of El Do	orado, Ark.				
10 GEOGRAPH		.5 acres				
ACREAGE OF NOMINA	ATED PROPERTY	.5 acres				
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VERBAL BOUNDA	RY DESCRIPTION					
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STATE		CODE	COUNTY	e ger	CODE	
STATE		CODE	COUNTY		CODE	
11 FORM PREP NAME / TITLE R. C. FO	orrester, Pres	sident	:			
ORGANIZATION		_		DATE	0.77	
Obion C	ounty Historic	cal Society		August 19		
Route 1				(901) 885-1		
CITY OR TOWN	-		STATE			
Union C	ity			Tennesse	e	
12 STATE HIST	ORIC PRES	EDVATIO:				
	CILLO I MED	EKVAIIU	N OFFICER	CERTIFICA	TION	
	THE EVALUATED S					
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NATION As the designated State	THE EVALUATED S AL Historic Preservation operty for inclusion	IGNIFICANCE OF STAT on Officer for the N	THIS PROPERTY W TE X National Historic Pre Register and certify	LOCAL LOCAL servation Act of 196	IS:	
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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

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The ownership of the Unknown Confederate Cemetery, in which the monument herein nominated is located, has been unresolved for many years, but there have apparently been no disputes or controversies regarding the matter. F. W. Mathews owned a large tract of land, including that occupied by the cemetery, when the cemetery was established in 1869. When his property was sold in the early 1870s to Dr. T. J. Edwards, the cemetery was excluded from the description as being "sold by Edwards during his lifetime." However, Dr. Edwards never had title to it. An extensive search of the records in the Obion County Register's Office in Union City, Tennessee, has not revealed a recorded deed from either Mathews or Edwards. The city of Union City cuts the grass and otherwise maintains the cemetery as a part of the city cemetery program. However, neither the city, the county nor any organization or group apparently claims ownership of it. An article in a local newspaper shortly after the dedication on October 21, 1869, written by one of the three members on the committee which established the cemetery and built the monument asked that permanent trustees be selected to "secure the deeds to the property and provide for perpetual care." It is not known if any trustees were selected and if so, who they were; however, the names of the members of the committee are known. Ownership would seem to be quasi-public, with no person or organization, governmental or otherwise, being able to clearly show legal title.