

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Multiple Property Listing \_\_\_\_\_

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

street & number 2043 Sunnyside Ave

not for publication

city or town Burlington

vicinity

state Iowa

county Des Moines

zip code 52601

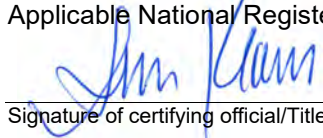
## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: \_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D



March 10, 2022

Signature of certifying official/Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

State Historical Society of Iowa

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

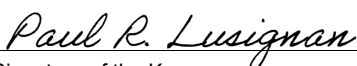
X entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:)



04/22/2022

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

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.)

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
6	2	buildings
1		site
12	1	structure
3	1	object
22	4	<b>Total</b>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY/Cemetery

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY/Cemetery

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

LATE VICTORIAN

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> AND 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE/Limestone

walls: STONE/Granite

BRICK

roof: ASPHALT

other: CONCRETE, STONE

STONE/Marble

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

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### Narrative Description

**Summary Paragraph** (Briefly describe the current, general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

The Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District is in the northern part of the City of Burlington in Des Moines County, Iowa. It is situated on a scenic hilltop overlooking the historic core of Burlington, which was established along the Mississippi River on a level plain formed by Hawkeye Creek where it drained into the river. Surrounding this level plain are steep-sided slopes and high ridgetops overlooking the city. The square-shaped plat of the original cemetery is located in the southeastern part of the current cemetery boundaries and was laid out on the nearly-level summit of an upland interfluve. While the grid pattern of the original cemetery does not conform to the natural contours of this area, the later additions to the cemetery after 1870 were developed in naturalistic, landscape-designed plans that showed consideration and planning with regard to the area's varied topography and natural setting. This resulted in a complex curvilinear plan to those additions. The roads and gravesites plotted along these plans spread out over the increasingly steep slopes that descend southward toward what was historically known as Hawkeye Creek. This creek was later channeled underground as part of the storm water drainage system developed for Burlington, with both underground and open channels of this drainage system built within the cemetery boundaries. The historic district encompasses 133 acres and contains 6 contributing buildings, 12 contributing structures, 3 contributing objects, and 1 contributing site. In addition are 2 non-contributing buildings, 1 non-contributing structure, and 1 non-contributing object. Among the buildings and structures are a chapel and 7 mausoleums designed in Mid-Nineteenth Century, Late Victorian, and Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Revival styles. Most of these buildings and structures were designed by architects, with the various landscape plans also designed by professional landscape architects and engineers. The historic integrity of the district is good in all aspects of integrity.

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**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

(**Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions:** After the main **Narrative Description**, discuss any physical alterations since the period of significance under the subheading **Alterations**, and the seven aspects of integrity as it applies to the resource in a **Statement of Integrity** with each aspect discussed in its own paragraph.)

The Aspen Grove Cemetery is quite large. It currently encompasses 133 acres in the northern part of the City of Burlington (Figure 1). When it was first established, the cemetery was on the northwestern outskirts of the city.<sup>1</sup> The original portion of the cemetery was platted on a grid plan that had driveways conforming to the cardinal directions and subdividing the cemetery into four quadrants with three driveways that entered from the north, east, and west meeting at the center in a circle driveway (Figure 2). Because of the limitations of the topography in this area, the south driveway could not be built because of the steeper terrain in the south half of the original plat. As the cemetery developed in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the new additions to the cemetery began to follow the national trends of naturalistic, designed landscapes that took into account the natural topography of the location (Figure 3). The resulting additions had curvilinear driveways following the natural contours of the property, with plotted blocks and lots also taking on curvilinear patterns, thus abandoning the formal grid pattern of the early cemetery. In general in Iowa and the nation, cemeteries became more park-like in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, and those who developed this cemetery followed that pattern. While most of the historic design elements of Aspen Grove Cemetery remain in place, there were several features that are no longer extant. These include a circular reflecting pond that was located in the northwest part of the cemetery and a formal sunken garden that was maintained within one of the ravines in the south-central portion of the cemetery. Located near the sunken

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<sup>1</sup> The cemetery was reported in a 1957 account as having upwards of 225 acres (*Burlington Hawk-Eye Gazette*, January 2, 1957), however, there have been no major land acquisitions for the cemetery in the last 70 years meaning the 1957 total is incorrect (Paul French, personal communication with Leah Rogers, November 8, 2019). The total of 133 acres is confirmed by the GIS mapping of the current cemetery.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

garden was a Memorial Amphitheatre where Memorial Day and other celebrations were held. The basin of this amphitheater is still recognizable as such, but only the concrete platform once used for ceremonies is still in place. The reflecting pool was later backfilled and built over by a driveway and new burial plots. The cemetery today contains well-maintained, grassy lawns, areas of scattered trees and shrubbery, flower beds, and natural wooded ravines that enhance the scenic aspect of the cemetery. Large numbers of deer and other fauna freely roam the cemetery, adding to its park-like feel. Contained within the cemetery are approximately 40,000 documented burials, and it is believed that there are thousands of undocumented burials (<https://findagrave.com>, accessed December 2019).

The location may have once been a Native American burial ground as well. In 1957, it was noted that “a few years ago excavations disclosed several skeletons whose resting places were not charged on the burial lists...their remains indicated they had been interred in upright positions” (*Burlington Hawk-Eye Gazette*, January 2, 1957). Burials of this type are a known practice for some Native American traditions. The location on a hilltop overlooking a major river valley would certainly be an expected location for prehistoric and/or early historic Native American burial sites and certainly suggests archaeological potential within the cemetery.

Steven Brower, Landscape Architect and Historic Preservation Planner conducted a survey of the cemetery in 1988. In this study, he identified the following components (Brower 1988):

- 6.3 miles of hard surface road
- 152 catch basins
- 11,550 feet of brick gutters
- 2,200 trees identified
- 71 species of trees
- 204 pre-settlement trees
- 172 monuments over 8 feet tall including obelisks and vaults
- 106 retaining and coping walls around family plots (70 stone, 353, concrete, 1 iron fence)
- The drainage system as a whole includes the stone drains, brick gutters, concrete gutters, large sewer tile (impermeable) buried underground, drainage tile and spillways, and riprapped areas. There is also a natural creek in the undeveloped section.
- 2 potter’s fields
- 2 babyland sections, one from the nineteenth century (Block 283) and one established in the 1950s (Block 500)

Figure 3 is a map that was originally drawn by Raymond Duerr, who was superintendent of the cemetery from 1921 to 1947. This map shows the platting of the cemetery during his tenure but also shows the earlier platting and how the design evolved over time. Figure 4 is a map of the plat acquisitions from 1844 to 1930 overlaid on the modern aerial of the cemetery. This map shows that the south half expanded to the northwest and west from the original 1844 11-acre plat in 1852, 1853, 1889, 1894, and 1907. Other additions were made to the west in 1889 and 1894, with smaller additions made to the south circa 1930, including a small lot on the south side of the railroad tracks that is no longer part of the cemetery boundary. The north half of the cemetery received a large addition in 1866-68, with later additions to the north made in 1909, 1911, 1913, and 1920. The rest of the expansion to the cemetery’s current boundaries dates from after 1930.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

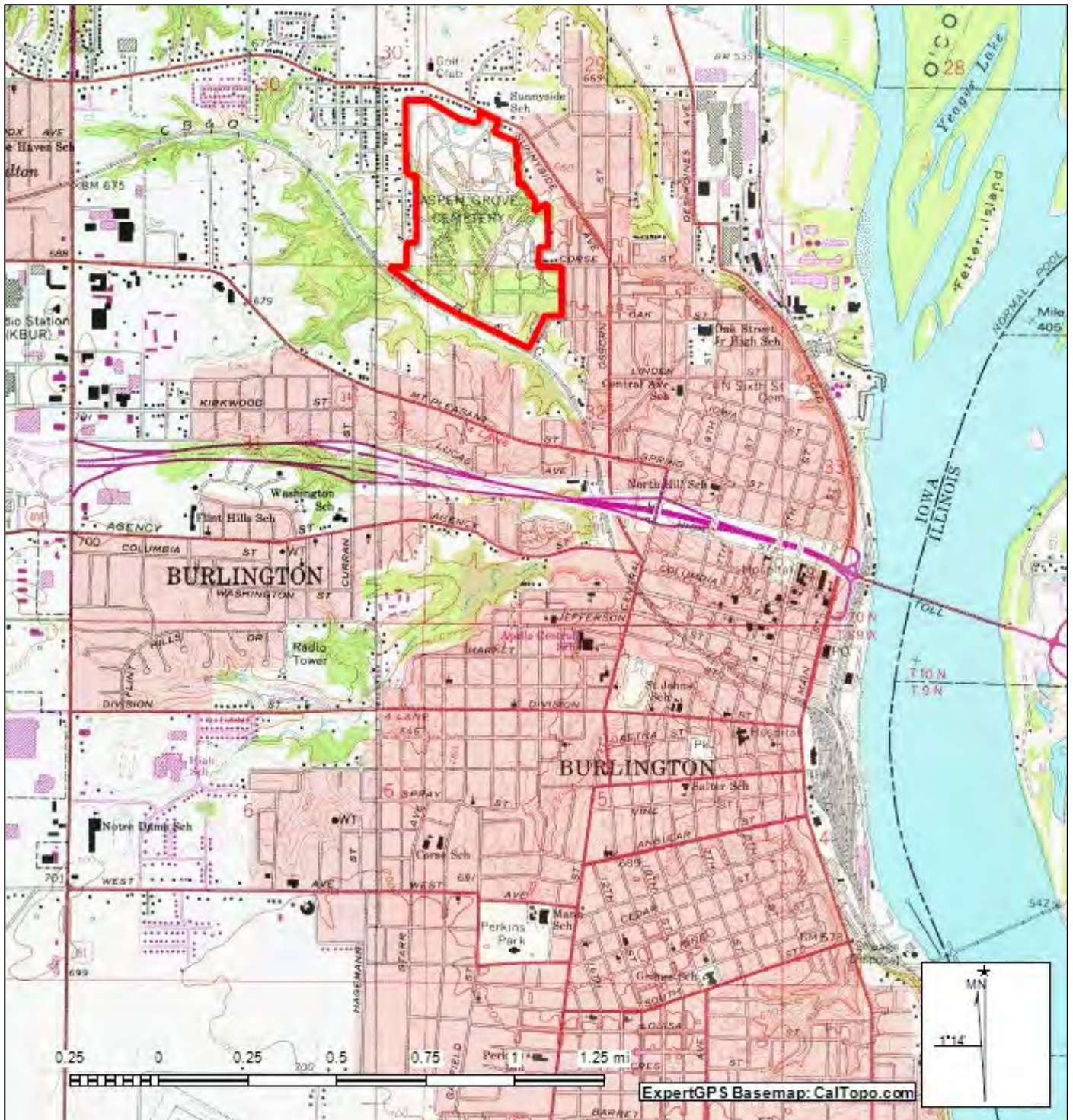


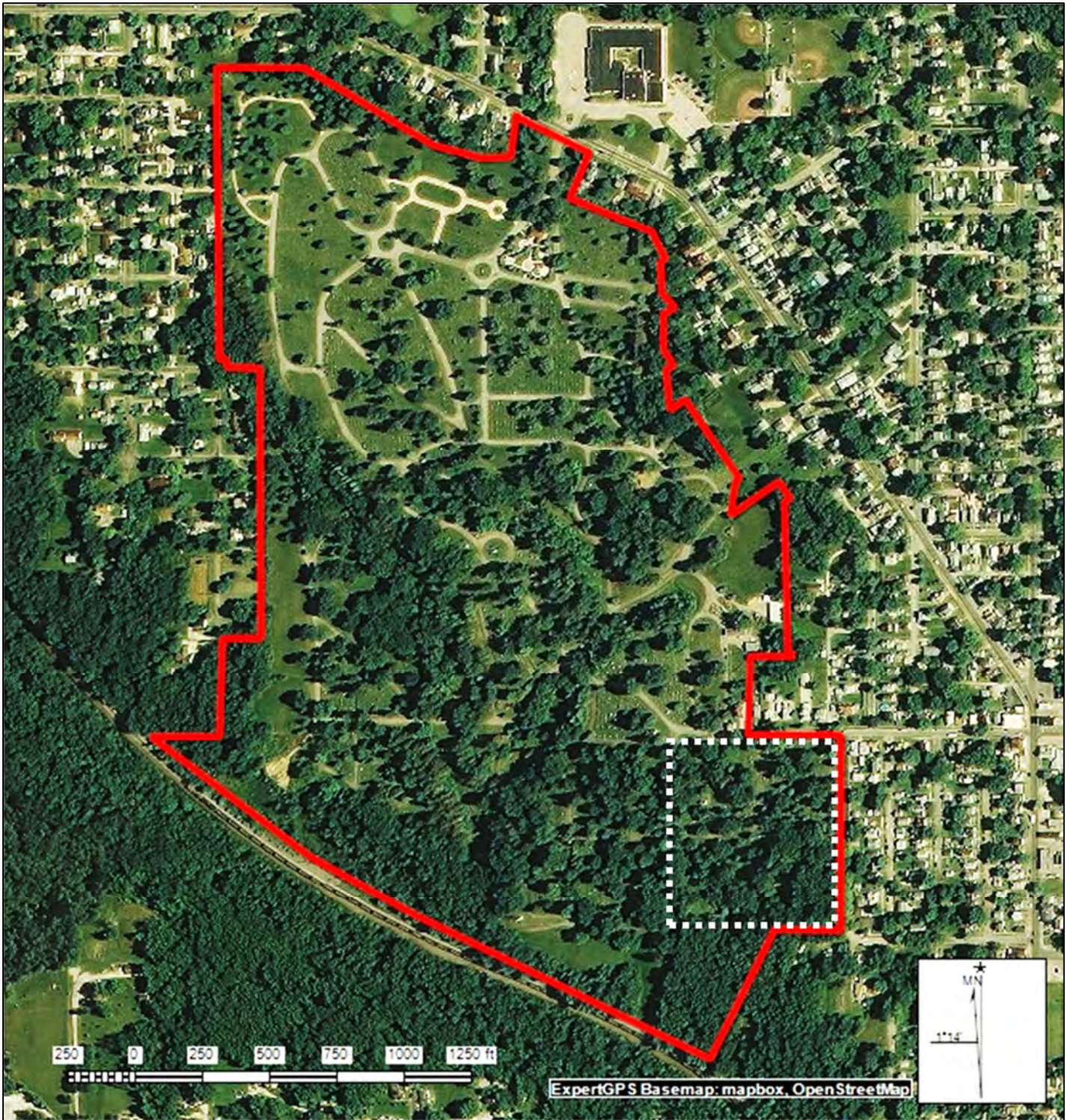
Figure 1. Topographical map showing location of Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District (red outline).  
Source: USGS Burlington, IA Quad map obtained from ExpertGPS Pro mapping software, 2020.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Figure 2. Aerial map showing boundary of Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District (red outline).**

White dotted line shows boundary of original portion of cemetery.

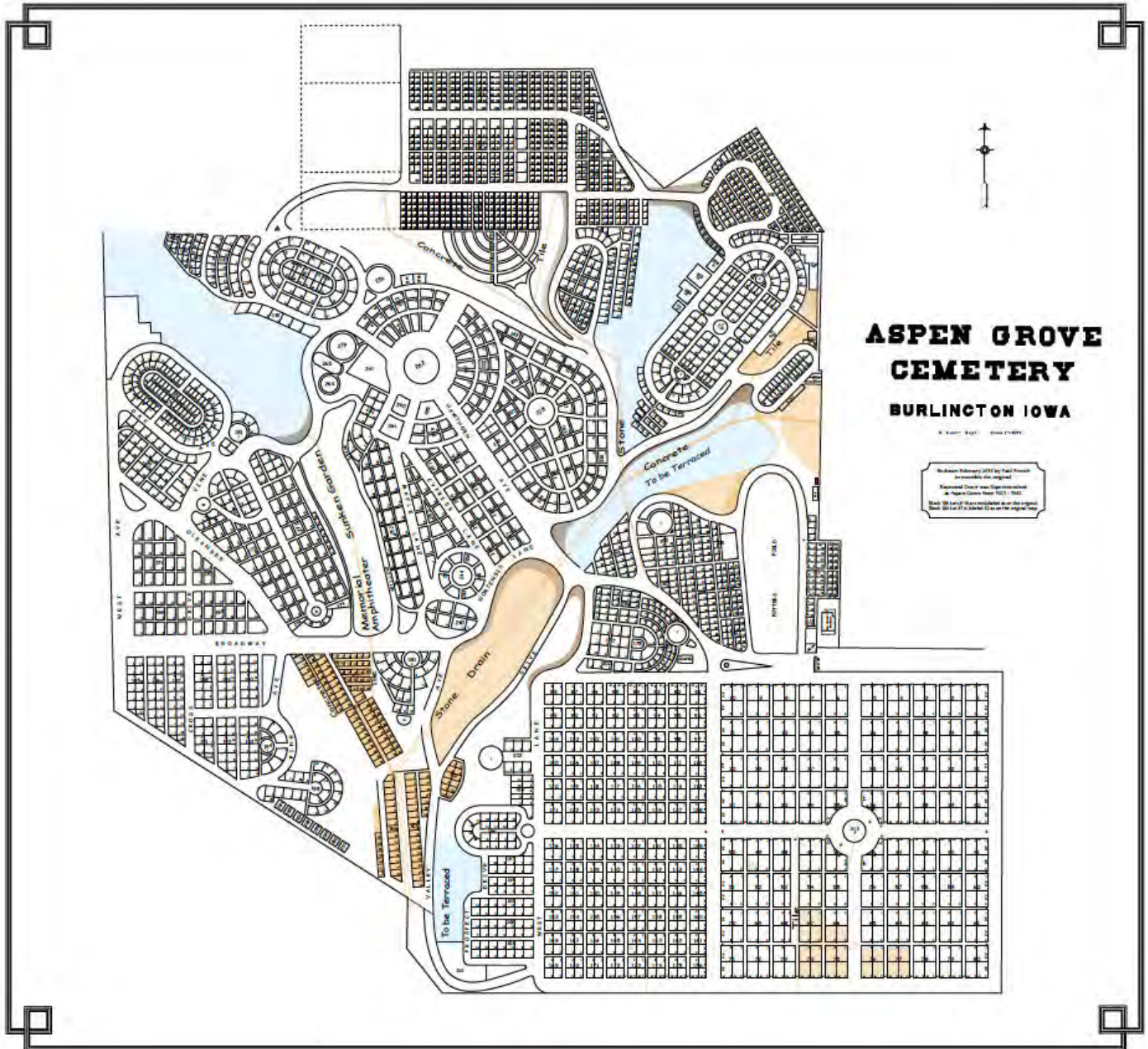
Source: Aerial obtained from ExpertGPS Pro mapping software, 2020.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Figure 3. Aspen Grove Cemetery Map from 1844 to circa 1930.**

Source: Map redrawn in Feb. 2016 by Paul French after the original by Raymond Duerr, Superintendent of Aspen Grove Cemetery from 1921-1947.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

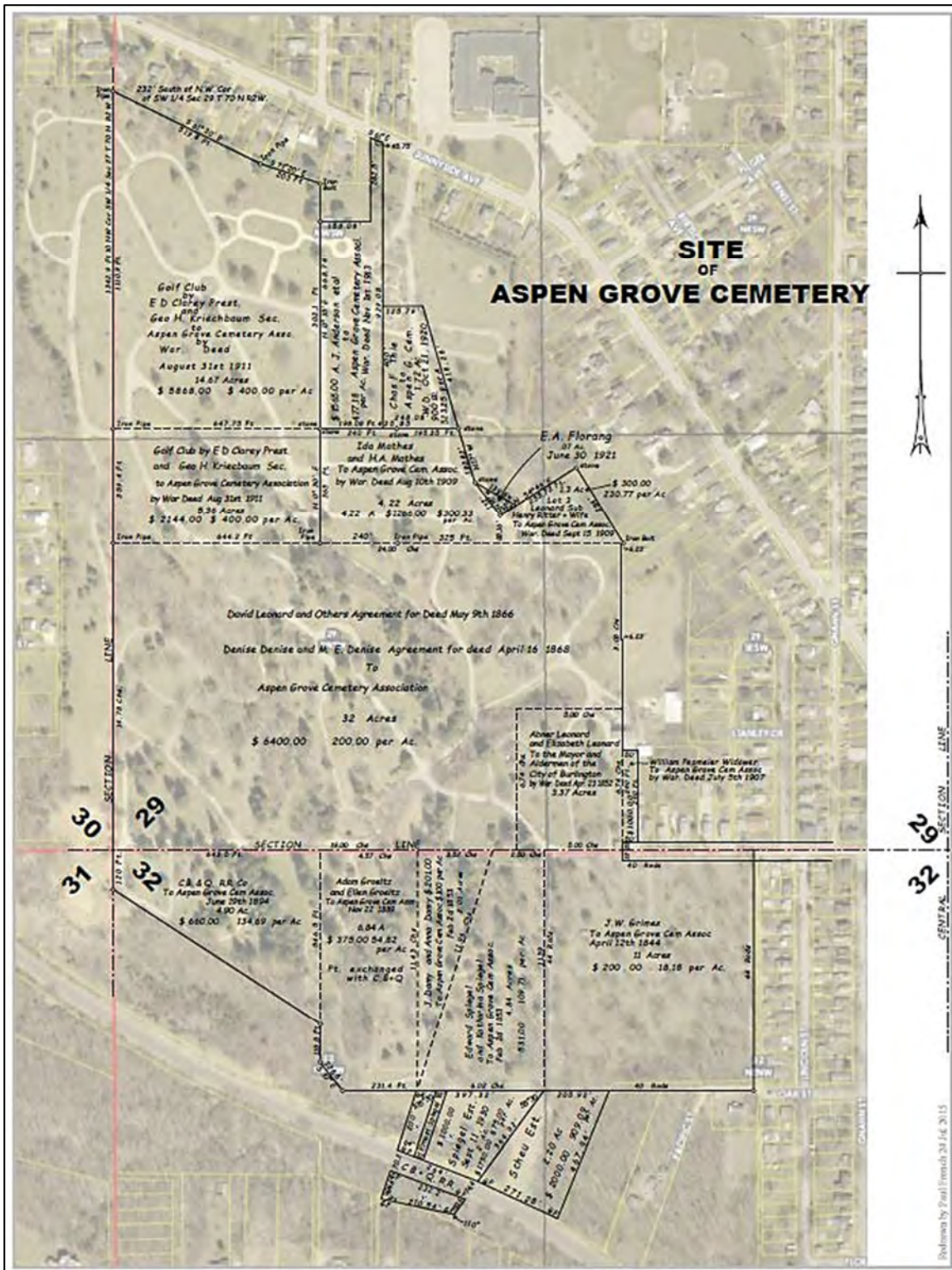


Figure 4. Site of Aspen Grove Cemetery showing plat acquisitions from 1844 to circa 1930 overlaid using GIS on modern aerial image. Redrawn by Paul French July 24, 2015 from Plat Book A, Des Moines County Courthouse.



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

The two current entrances to the park can be found off of Sunnyside Avenue and off of Corse Street (Figure 5). The entrance at Corse Street is marked by the large stone-arched entryway built in 1906-07 and donated by Mrs. Thomas J. Potter in memory of her husband and children, who had died before her. The memorial arch includes a stone building that was originally designed to be a “memorial cottage for use of the public” and included waiting and restrooms for men and women and grate fireplaces (*Burlington Evening Gazette*, December 12, 1907). O.M. Burrus & Bro., a “well-known granite firm” built the Potter Memorial Arch, with the “Architect Goddard” doing the design (*Burlington Evening Gazette*, December 12, 1907). The entrance off of Sunnyside enters the newer part of the cemetery and leads directly to the cemetery administration building, which was built in 1956 in the Ranch style. Historically, there was a third entrance located at the southeast corner of the cemetery but it is now closed and the pillars once marking that entrance are now removed (Figure 6).

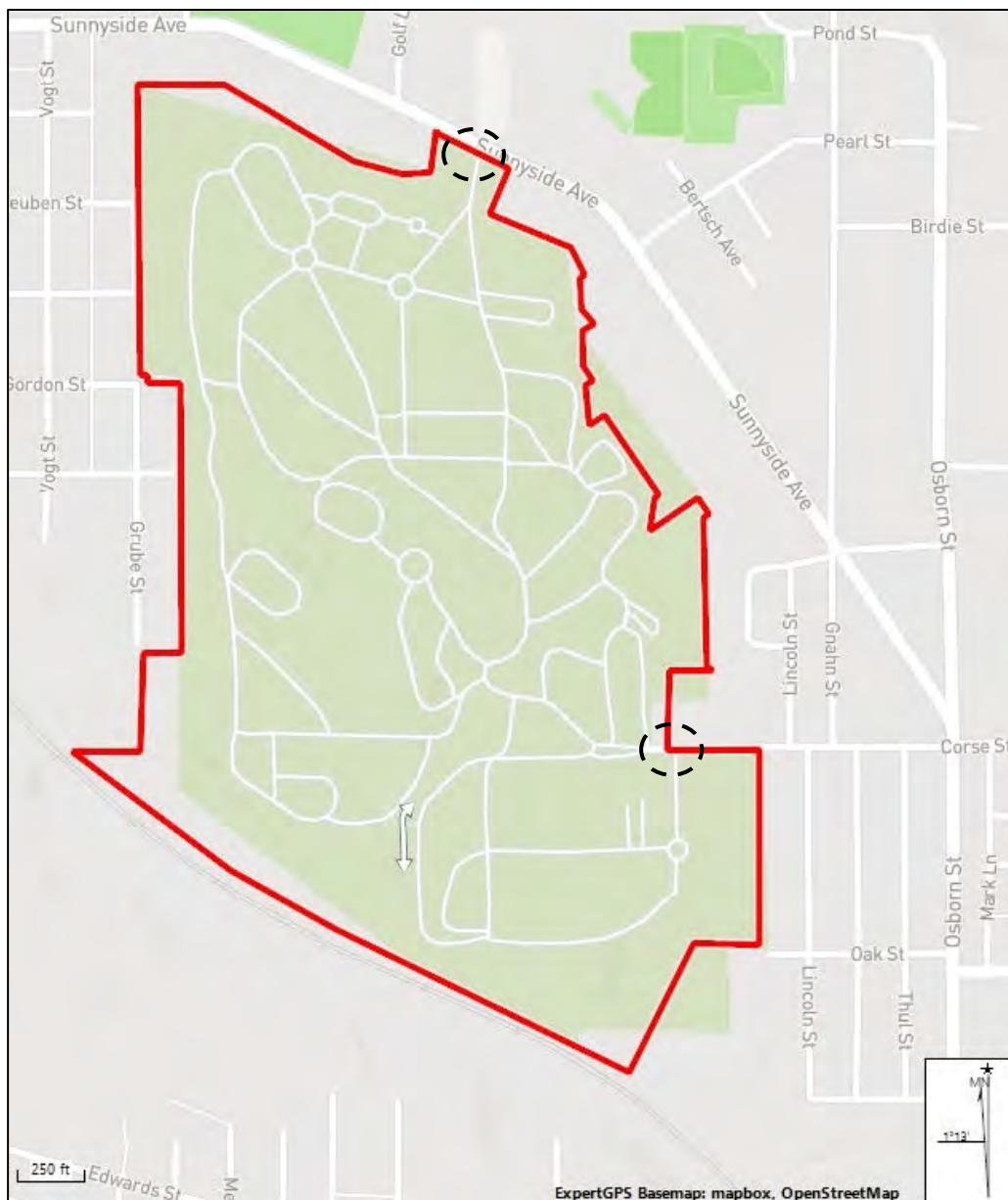


Figure 5. Street map of the Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District (red outline) with current entrances circled (black dashed). Source: ExpertGPS Pro mapping software, 2021.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Figure 6. Former Oak Street entrance at the SE corner of Aspen Grove Cemetery, brick pillars no longer extant.**  
Source: Des Moines County Historical Society Aspen Grove Cemetery Association (DMCHS AGCA) Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.

The contributing resources within the Aspen Grove Historic District include: seven mausoleums built between the 1870s and 1926; Corse Chapel built in 1881 and designed by architect William Le Baron Jenney of Chicago; the Potter Memorial Building and Gateway built in 1906-07 and designed by architect Harvey Irving Goddard of Burlington; the former caretaker's house at 1636 Corse Street built in 1908 and still owned by the cemetery;<sup>2</sup> a service garage built in the 1930s; the convenience building built in the 1930s; the cemetery administration building completed in 1956; the stone drain (aka, Stone Creek built in the 1890s); a stone and concrete-arched culvert (first built in the 1890s and widened in the 1930s); a concrete platform in the former Memorial Amphitheatre built in the early twentieth century; a concrete overpass built in the 1930s; a receiving vault built in 1933; the circa 1907 Charles Elliott Perkins memorial obelisk; a GAR monument and cannon placed in 1912; and a large monumental stone cross added in 1960 to one of the newer sections near the Sunnyside entrance. In addition are the landscape and other elements of the cemetery as a contributing site including the system of gridded and curvilinear driveways, driveways or paths (some abandoned), brick drains, concrete and stone block retaining walls and steps, concrete curbs, iron fencing, and the natural landscape of the cemetery including several wooded ravines.

Among the notable gravestones and monuments in the cemetery are:

- two Iowa governors, one being the architect-designed 1874 monument of James Wilson Grimes, Iowa's third governor
- freedom seekers and Underground Railroad participants
- a number of obelisks of various sizes
- an actual ship's anchor marking the grave of Capt. Thomas Peel who died in 1914
- above-ground crypts
- statues including that of a dog
- bas reliefs
- and other unusual markers such as one made to look like a salesman's sample case and three grave markers created from four thin stone slabs held together with hand-forged staples to simulate a large stone block. Originally, there were four such markers in the cemetery but one collapsed and now has only the base and cap stones remaining. The slab markers were the creation of a local stone mason

<sup>2</sup> The caretaker's house at 1636 Corse Street was previously inventoried as 29-00866 and was recommended either eligible or contributing to a potential district (I-Sites Pro 2020).

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

named Scott, who advertised these markers in the 1840s and even signed one of these unique monuments.

The extant mausoleums include those of the Rand (1881), Ransom (date uncertain but probably 1870s), Ewing (1877), Andre (1881), Darwin (1925-26), Burnham (1876), and Starker (1902) families. These buildings are all likely architect designed and reflect the popular styles of their times including Gothic Revival, Classical Revival, and Greek Revival. Two other known mausoleums, those of the Bodemann and Wigren families were removed circa 1908 and 1942, respectively. These mausoleums had deteriorated to the point that their removal was necessary for public safety. The former Sunken Garden was not maintained and has become overgrown, with the former Reflecting Pool drained and the location now partially built over by an oval drive and new burial plots. In addition, some of the roadways were widened, the amphitheater area has been mostly deconstructed except for a concrete platform, some roads were abandoned, and the southeast entrance from Oak Street was closed and is no longer extant. Despite these modifications, the cemetery as a whole has not been dramatically overhauled in the modern era. Most modifications have come in the form of maintenance and repairs and newer additions in areas that had historically been part of the cemetery but had not been developed until the modern era.

### CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS (6)

#### Potter Memorial Building & Gateway

*Built:* foundation set in 1906; building and gateway completed in 1907

*Architect:* Harvey Irving Goddard of Burlington

*Built by:* O.M. Burrus & Bro. of Burlington

*Physical Description:* This building is situated at the east, Corse Street entrance to the cemetery. It consists of a 25x19 feet building with grey granite walls that connects to a three-part granite gateway. The building, or "entrance cottage" has a flat roof built from steel girders and concrete, and a granite frieze runs along the top of all four sides. The window openings have been covered with modern materials. A 1907 article in the *Burlington Evening Gazette* noted that the grey granite was from Vermont and the polished pink granite of the interior floors and wainscoting was from Tennessee.<sup>3</sup> It also noted that the interior included men's and women's waiting rooms and lavatories (*Burlington Evening Gazette*, December 12, 1907:71). The west-facing facade includes a portico with square granite pillars. The portico's east side constitutes the north gate of the gateway. The south gate is designed to match. The center gate is larger and designed to accommodate vehicle traffic. The center gate is arched, while the two side gates are square. The complete gateway portion of the building is approximately 60 feet long. The gateways have swinging iron gates, and each has a granite frieze along its top. Above the center gate, on its east-facing side, is the text "Potter Memorial. Aspen Grove. 1907." Affixed to the granite between the north and center pillar, on the east-facing side, is a 2016 plaque, entitled "Symbol of Hope" and containing several paragraphs about Rachel Bundy, a freedom seeker who arrived in Burlington in 1839 and died in 1875. Bundy was granted freedom in Iowa territory by a local judge and continued to live and work in Burlington. She is buried in Aspen Grove Cemetery. The plaque was sponsored by the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom organization.

*Modifications:* The building has seen very few modifications. Exceptions include the covering of windows with modern materials and the attachment of modern signs.

*Integrity:* This building retains good historic integrity of design, craftsmanship, and materials. Its setting is much unchanged, though it no longer serves as the primary entrance into the cemetery. Its integrity of feeling and association are good.

<sup>3</sup> An undated O.M. Burrus & Bro. catalogue noted that the memorial arch was built of "E.R. Fletcher Woodbury Granite" that was cut and designed by O.M. Burrus & Bro.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Potter Memorial Building and Gateway at Corse Street, looking WSW.**  
Photograph taken by Tallgrass Archaeology LLC, November 25, 2020.



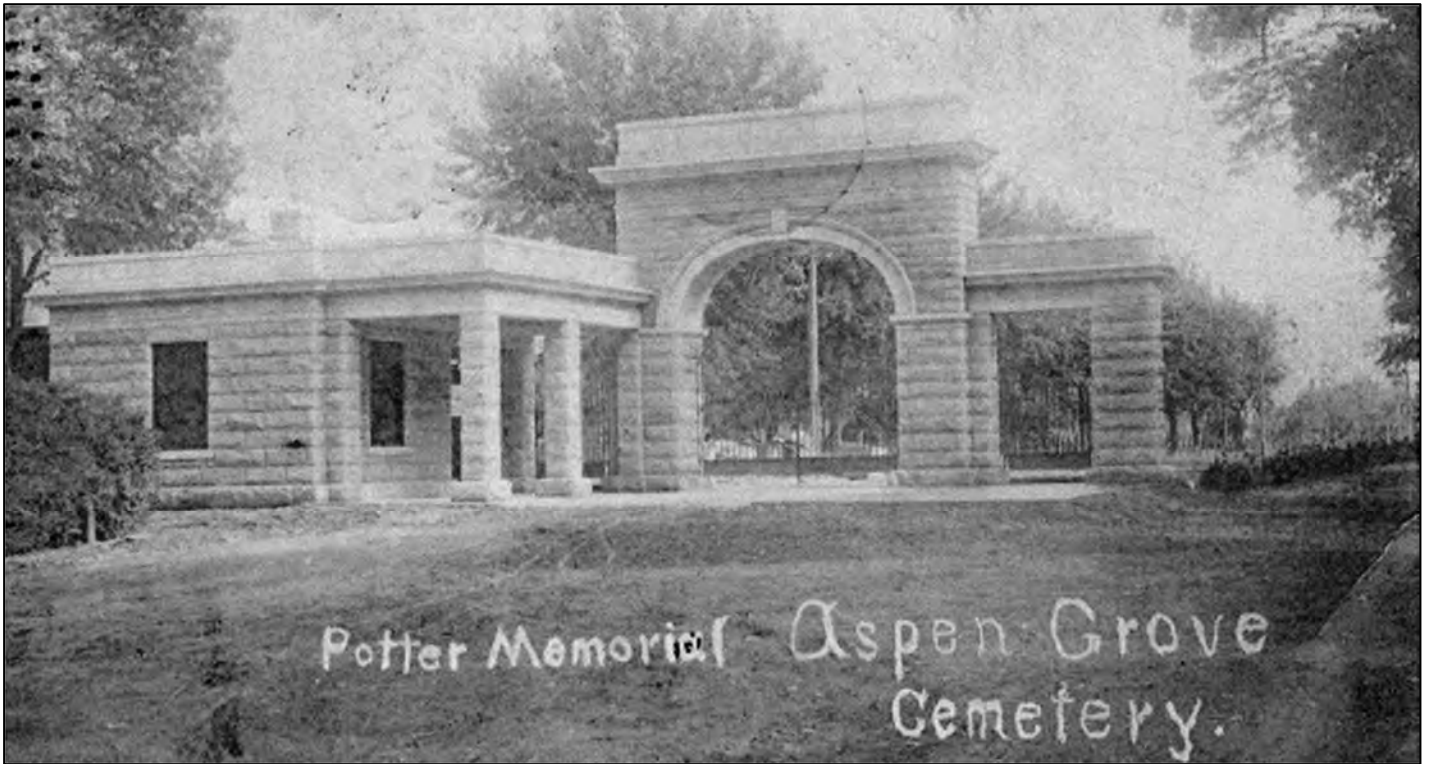
**Potter Memorial Building and Gateway at Corse Street, looking NNE.**  
Photograph taken by Tallgrass Archaeology LLC, November 8, 2019.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Cira 1910 photograph of Potter Memorial, looking NE.**  
Source: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.



**Undated but early photograph of Potter Memorial, looking WNW.**  
Source: Catalogue of O.M. Burrus & Bro. Burlington, Iowa, copy provided by Paul French, Burlington.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Corse Chapel

*Built:* 1881

*Architect:* William Le Baron Jenney of Chicago

*Built by:* C.A. Dunham of Burlington

*Physical Description:* This small memorial chapel and crypt sits at the end of the east, divided entry lane off Corse Street. It faces east toward the Potter Memorial Building & Gateway. This gabled building sits on a stone foundation and has walls of pressed red brick and limestone. The building originally had a slate roof, which has since been replaced with asphalt shingles. The façade of the building has three stone medallions, one above and one to each side, of a Gothic-arched recess framed by stone details and stylized columns flanking the wood-paneled double doors. The name "CORSE" and the date of "1881" are inscribed on the Gothic-arched panel above the door. Stone plaques flank the entry doors: the left one inscribed with "In memoriam, Ellen Edwards, Wife of John M. Corse. 1881", while the other reads "John Murray Corse, Brevet Major General, U.S.V."<sup>4</sup> The gable peaks of both the front and rear sides are raised and capped with stone crosses. The north and south sides of the roof have shallow shed-roofed wall dormers each having three stained glass windows. The interior has exposed timber beams and a King post truss on the ceiling, with an interior Gothic-arched doorway into the crypt vaults that has iron gates. There are modern benches in the interior of the chapel but do not appear to be fixed in place. There are four interments in the crypt portion of the building including those of Ellen Edwards Corse (1834-1881), Saida A. Corse (1859-1890), Sarah Corse (Feb-March 1858), and Frances McNeil Corse (1850-1940).

*Modifications:* The only exterior changes have been the removal or overgrowth of a paved pathway that once led from the driveway to the entrance of the chapel and the replacement of the slate roof with asphalt shingles.

*Integrity:* This building retains good historic integrity.



**Current view of Corse Chapel, looking SW.** Photograph taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> USV stands for United States Volunteers in the American Civil War.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Early twentieth century photograph of Corse Chapel taken from near the Potter Memorial, facing west.** Note the now non-extant cast iron fountain and flowerbeds in the center of the driveway and the pathway leading to the front door of the chapel. Source: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.



**Interior of Corse Chapel.** Crypts behind the iron gates. Photograph taken by Paul French, July 25, 2019.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

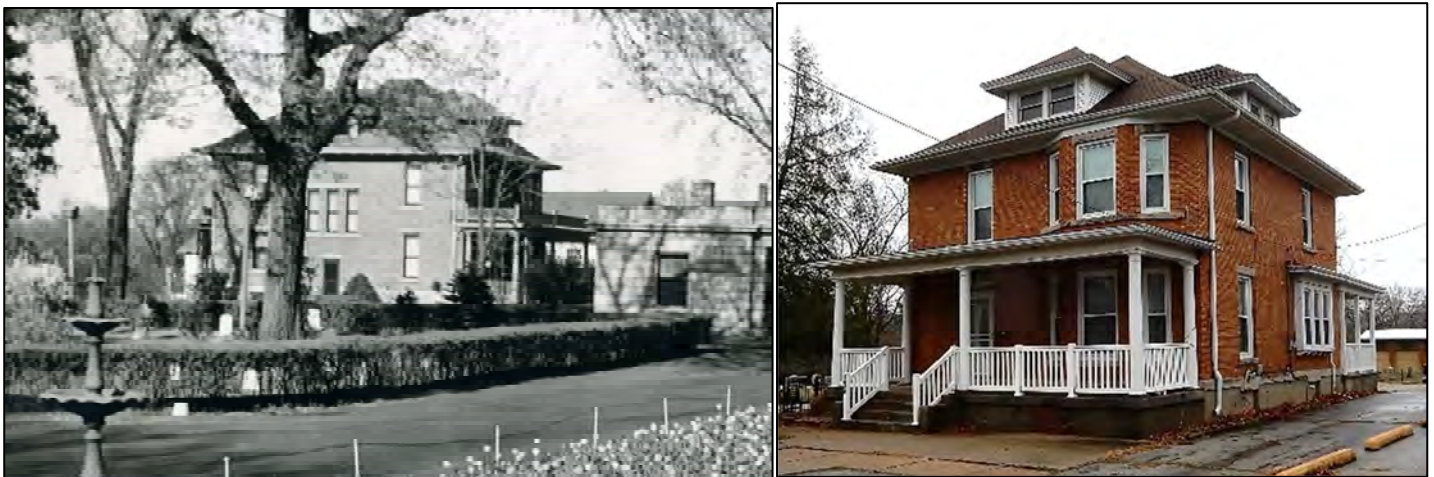
Former Caretaker's House

*Built:* 1908

*Physical Description:* This dwelling is an American Foursquare variant with exterior brick walls and an asphalt-shingled, hipped roof. Windows are now vinyl replacements, except for the windows on the dormers which are the original wood-sash, double-hung windows. All of the first and second story windows have quarry-faced stone lintels and sills. The house is situated to the northeast of the Potter Memorial Building & Gateway and west of a private residence on the north side of Corse Street. The south-facing façade features a two-story canted bay window with 1/1 windows on each of its three sides on both stories. The second story of the house has a 1/1 window to the west of the bay window. The first story has a door on the main wall that is covered by a full-width, open porch supported with wood handrails and Tuscan columns. The porch is accessed by concrete steps with handrails. The façade also has a hip-roofed dormer with two 1/1 windows. A historical photograph of the house shows that the porch originally had a railing around the roof. The east side of the house has another hipped dormer with two 1/1 windows. The second story has two 1/1 windows and the first story has another 1/1 window and a shallow cantilevered bay window with three 1/1 windows. The north (rear) side of the house has a number of windows on its first and second stories. The first story has a rear entry door that is accessed by a wood porch with concrete steps and square posts. The west side of the house has a hip-roofed dormer with two 1/1 windows. It has two 1/1 windows on its second story and two on its first story. There are three narrow 1/1 windows near the center of the wall that may be for the stairway landing. Below them is a ground-level entry door.

*Modifications:* Modifications to the exterior of this house are limited to window replacements, the removal of the upper railing on the porch, and the replacement of the front porch lower railing with a vinyl railing.

*Integrity:* The house retains good historic integrity.



**Left: early twentieth century photograph looking ENE from inside the cemetery. Right: current view looking NW from Corse Street outside the Potter Gateway.**

Sources: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa, and Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

Service Garage

*Built:* circa 1930s during the tenure of Raymond Duerr as superintendent (1921-1947)

*Physical Description:* This garage is banked into the hillside so that on its south side it is one-story in height and on the north side, the full two stories are exposed. The building originally had six garage bays along its south-facing façade. Today, the eastern two bays have been covered with wood siding with a modern walk-in door built into the easternmost bay. The remaining four bays retain historic, wood-paneled, overhead garage doors. Above each door is an original, twelve-light rectangular window. The exterior walls of the building are polychrome brick. The original flat roof has been modified with an added side gable that is covered with metal roofing. The west end of the garage has two 15-light windows. The north side of the building retains the



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

original 18-light rectangular windows above each of the garage bay doors on the lower level. These windows have a centered upper section that is an awning window that can be opened for ventilation; however, some of the windows have panes that are now broken out. The garage doors originally had two rows of six-light windows but the doors have since been replaced.

*Modifications:* Modifications include likely replacement of the overhead garage doors, some window panes broken out, and the addition of the gabled roof.

*Integrity:* Overall the integrity of the Service Garage is fair. The garage is still used as the primary maintenance building for the cemetery as originally intended.



**Left: Current view of Service Garage. Right: circa 1950s view of Service Garage.**

Current photo taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020; 1950s photograph from the Aspen Grove Cemetery collection.



**1950s photograph of the south side of Service Garage with all the doors open.**

Source: Aspen Grove Cemetery collection.



**North (rear) of Service Building looking SE and taken July 17, 2021 by Tallgrass.**

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**North side view of Service Building circa 1930s looking SSE.**  
Source: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.



**Interior view of the service garage in the 1930s-40s.**  
Source: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.

### Administration Building

*Built:* 1956

*Built by:* Ed Phillips, contractor

*Physical Description:* This hip-roofed, buff-colored brick-veneered, Ranch-style building was built for, and is still used as, the primary office for the cemetery administration. It has a recessed entry near the center of the façade with three 1/1 windows to the left and two smaller 1/1 windows to the right. The porch recess has wrought-iron posts under the roof overhang. Originally, there was a large nine-light window on the slight hip-roofed bump-out on the east side of the façade. That window has now been replaced with tripled 1/1 vinyl windows. It is likely that the other windows are modern replacements as well. The dedication of the completed building was held on November 1, 1956 (Aspen Grove Cemetery Association Board Meeting Minutes, 1956).

*Modifications:* The windows are modern replacements.

*Integrity:* Apart from the window replacements, the overall integrity of this Ranch-style building is good.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Top Left: current view of administration building. Top Right: circa 1957 photo of office building.  
Bottom: building under construction in 1956.**

Sources: Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020 and Aspen Grove Cemetery photograph collection.

Convenience Building

*Built:* ca. 1930s

*Description:* This small, single-story building is faced with rusticated concrete blocks. It has a flat roof with a stepped parapet on all sides formed by the extended tops of the concrete block pilasters at the corner and the center of each side. There is a door on each end of the building, with the door on the north end inscribed with "Women" on the concrete lintel and the door on the south end inscribed with "Men." It was built to house public restrooms but was likely closed when the new administration building was built in 1956 offering modern restrooms for public use (Paul French, e-mail correspondence, January 22, 2021). There are metal pipe railings leading to each entrance.

*Modifications:* The closure of this building means it is no longer being maintained, The doors and windows have been covered over with wood panels.

*Integrity:* Generally has fair to good integrity.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



View of former convenience building. Photograph taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

## CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES (12)

### Rand Mausoleum

*Built:* 1881

*Physical Description:* This front-gabled mausoleum has a stone arch on its façade that is inscribed with the name “Rand” and within the arch is the year “1881.” The walls, foundation, and roof are all covered with stone, with the walls having smooth stone panels in the gable end and for the frieze and quarry-face stone blocks for the walls. The door is now covered with a wood panel and is accessed by several stone steps. It has a cross on the top of the gable peak. The interior has marble-paneled walls. There is a stained glass window in the rear gable end, with two marble busts set on marble pillars in front of the rear crypts.

*Modifications:* The front door is now covered by a modern plywood panel.

*Integrity:* Except for the door and some minor erosion, the mausoleum retains good integrity.



Left: Exterior view of Rand Mausoleum taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

Right: Interior photograph, from Find-A-Grave.com user Ronda Larson, 2018.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Ransom Mausoleum

*Built:* circa 1870s

*Physical Description:* This mausoleum is built into the hillside so that only the façade and a lower front-gabled, stone slab roof behind the façade are above ground. The façade has angled stone walls to either side of the entrance, which features two columns supporting a frieze with a stepped pediment. The original metal door has a cross-shaped cut-out above an X-shaped cut-out. Above the door is inscribed the name “RANSOM,” with an emblem above.

*Modifications:* The structure has some deterioration from erosion and spalling but otherwise is unchanged.

*Integrity:* While the structure has suffered some erosion, the historic integrity of this structure is good.



**View of Ransom Mausoleum.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

Andre Mausoleum

*Built:* 1881

*Built by:* Anderson of Chicago

*Physical Description:* This is an elaborate, front-gabled mausoleum that is perhaps notable for a lack of Christian imagery or text. At the top of the façade gable is a polygonal finial with a floral medallion. The pedimented gable has sunburst motif around the text “Memorial to,” and in the frieze are two more floral medallions flanking the text “Mother.” Below the pediment is a series of recessed arches and columns, each with decorative patterns. In the arched space above the ornate bronze door is the text “Andre, 1881,” The bronze door itself is highly stylized. The sides have round-arched windows and buttresses. The walls, roofing, and foundation are made of stone, with the structure sitting on a solid concrete pad that extends out from all four walls as a step. The gable end pieces and the arch above the doorway may be marble, while the columns may be granite. The structure was described in 1905 as having a “solid cement foundation, granite base, and superstructure of Joliet limestone” and requiring a year to complete (Hobart Publishing 1905:271). It was noted that the structure was erected by “Anderson of Chicago, who constructed the Grant monument at Riverside and the Douglas monument in Chicago” (Hobart Publishing 1905:271).

*Modifications:* None identifiable other than some minor erosion.

*Integrity:* This mausoleum retains good historic integrity.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**View of Andre Mausoleum.**  
Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

**Starker Mausoleum**

*Built:* 1902

*Physical Description:* This square mausoleum has a pedimented roof, stone frieze, and two Corinthian columns flanking the bronze door. There are also Corinthian columns on the rear of the structure. Above the door, across the frieze is the name "STARKER." Compared to other mausoleums in this cemetery, this example is small and understated in its Classical temple design. The walls, roof, and foundation are stone, with the columns appearing to be granite.

*Modifications:* None discernible.

*Integrity:* This mausoleum retains good integrity.



**View of Starker Mausoleum.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Darwin Mausoleum

*Built:* 1925-26

*Physical Description:* This rectangular mausoleum has freestanding fluted Doric columns on all sides. These columns support a broad frieze and a hipped roof. The name "DARWIN" is inscribed on the top step. The recessed double doors are bronze and have the crest of the Darwin family as designed by William Platt Darwin, who commissioned this mausoleum for his mother, who died in 1886. Her remains were reinterred in this mausoleum, with six urns also installed to receive the cremains of other Darwin family members (*Burlington Gazette*, May 22, 1926). The design of this mausoleum was patterned after a Classical temple, with the walls of "light-colored marble" sitting on a "massive concrete foundation" and the interior lined with "polished Italian marble" (*Burlington Gazette*, May 22, 1926). A news item from 1925 noted that the foundation had been laid by November of that year, with the structure completed the following year (November 12, 1925 newspaper clipping from collection of Burlington Public Library).

*Modifications:* The window on one of the bronze doors is now covered by a modern panel.

*Integrity:* This mausoleum retains good integrity.



**View of Darwin Mausoleum.**

Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

Ewing Mausoleum

*Built:* 1877

*Physical Description:* The Ewing Mausoleum is banked into the hillside, with only the façade and the top of the front-gabled, roof are exposed above ground. This structure has an inset arched doorway and a gabled façade. There is a concrete retaining wall to one side that was a later addition or replaced an older stone wall. Flanking the recessed doorway are gabled pilasters that rise above the roofline. The roof is made of stone panels, with the façade being rough-faced stone blocks. The stone cap piece of the gable peak is now sitting on the ground in front of the doorway. This cap piece is inscribed with "1877." The paneled door is metal, but both windows are covered with wood panels. The name "EWING" is inscribed on the panel above the door within the recessed entry. Historically, this mausoleum was the center structure of three hillside mausoleums and was flanked by the Bodemann and Wigren mausoleums, which were removed circa 1908 and 1942 due to their extreme deterioration.

*Modifications:* This structure has suffered from physical deterioration and erosion.

*Integrity:* The erosion of the stone, the detached stone cap, the crack in the arch, and the covering of the door windows indicates poor integrity because the deterioration may have compromised the material integrity and life span of significant features of this mausoleum.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**View of Ewing Mausoleum.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.



**Hillside mausoleums in Aspen Grove Cemetery in 1889, including the non-extant Bodemann mausoleum in the foreground, the extant Ewing mausoleum to left, and the non-extant Wigren mausoleum to the far left in this view.** Source: Page, H.R. & Co. 1889.



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Burnham Mausoleum

*Built: 1876*

*Physical Description:* This mausoleum is another that is banked into the hillside with the only above-ground components being the façade and the lower front-gabled roof behind the facade. This stone façade has three steeply-pitched gables, two smaller to either side of the larger and higher center gable. The doorway is recessed within a Gothic-arched opening, with the name “Burnham” and “1876” inscribed on the panel above the door. The stone blocks are rough-faced like those on the Ewing Mausoleum. There are two short buttresses flanking the doorway, with the door itself being a single panel metal door that is probably a later replacement. This façade has sunk into the ground to the point that the door does not open. One side of the façade is also crumbling as a result of this sinking.

*Modifications:* The door is a later replacement, but the façade overall has suffered from erosion, sinking, and deterioration.

*Integrity:* This mausoleum retains poor integrity because of the damage from the sinking of the stone structure into the ground to the point that the structure may be compromised.



**View of Burnham Mausoleum.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.

Stone Drain (aka “Stone Creek”)

*Built:* conceived and supervised by Charles Starker in 1890

*Physical Description:* This drainage system now consists of both underground vitrified stoneware pipe and an open and curving channel lined with rough-cut stone blocks. The stone portion of this drain was an early improvement to alleviate the issues of stormwater run-off from the cemetery’s steep ravines down to Hawkeye Creek and the City of Burlington below. It is tied into the late nineteenth century Hawkeye Creek Sewer in the historic core of the city and drains into the Mississippi River along the historic riverfront. Therefore, this drain has significance not only as part of the early infrastructure of the cemetery but for its association with the city’s early stormwater sewerage. The brick gutters along most of the older roadways in the cemetery were part of this drainage system as well and were probably installed in the 1890s. These gutters are similar to those installed in Burlington’s Crapo Park, which was built in the mid-1890s. Both Charles Starker and William Steyh were involved in the development of that park as well as involved in the development of the cemetery.

*Modifications:* Part of the original stone drain was buried when the stoneware pipeline was installed, with other sections partially rebuilt in the early twentieth century based on historical photographs.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

*Integrity:* This structure retains good integrity because even the later addition of the vitrified pipeline sections underground was executed as an improvement to the drain within the district's period of significance.



**Left: view of open stone creek channel and Right: view of inlet of the underground pipe portion of the system where it drains into the open channel. Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.**



**Photographs of workers in the early twentieth century installing underground vitrified pipeline in the ravine. Source: Aspen Grove Cemetery photograph collection.**

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Photographs of workers in the early twentieth century installing underground vitrified pipeline in the ravine and connecting to the culvert under one of the driveways.**

Source: Aspen Grove Cemetery photograph collection.



**Historical photograph of open section of the stone-lined storm drain.**

Source: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.

#### Stone and Concrete-Arched Culvert

*Built:* 1890s and widened in the 1930s

*Physical Description:* This culvert was built over the open channel section of the stone drain to allow the cemetery driveway to pass over the drain in this area. This is a simple, short-span, stone-arched culvert that was later extended with a concrete culvert when the cemetery driveways were widened in the 1930s. There are metal pipe railings on top where the road crosses over that would have been added in the 1930s.

*Modifications:* Extension of culvert in the 1930s with concrete but stone-arch appears to remain in place.

*Integrity:* The structure retains good integrity, with the 1930s extension having been made within the district's period of significance.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Views of both sides of the arched culvert. Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

#### Memorial Amphitheatre Concrete Platform

*Built:* Early twentieth century

*Physical Description:* This structure is a poured concrete platform with a low, metal railing added on top and across the front. It once served as a stage, with an area of temporary seating set up in front of it. It was near the Sunken Garden, which is non-extant.

*Modifications:* The pergola that once stood on top of this concrete platform has been removed. The metal railing is a later addition.

*Integrity:* This structure retains only fair integrity having lost the pergola that one stood on this platform. However, the site is being maintained and offers the opportunity for reconstruction of the pergola in the future. The area of the temporary seating is also maintained as a grassy lawn as it was historically.



Current view of platform, all that remains of the amphitheater.

Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Historical photographs of the platform (top two views showing the pergola then in place) and the seating in the amphitheater that faced the stage platform (bottom).**

Source: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.

Concrete Bridge Overpass

*Built:* 1930s

*Builder:* M.W. Daly of Burlington

*Physical Description:* This concrete bridge has poured concrete sidewalls and angled concrete wingwalls. The bridge is comparatively small in span size and width and has concrete railings with inset panels. Cemetery drives pass over and under this bridge. There is a concrete-lined gutter and drain that lines one side of the lower road and extends underneath this bridge structure tying into the cemetery's drainage system. There is an impressed mark on one of the panels of the bridge that appears to read "M.W. Daly Burl-owa," likely indicating the contractor for this bridge. This overpass was built in the 1930s when it is known that Raymond Duerr was planning for the widening of many of the driveways in the cemetery.

*Modifications:* Other than deterioration and a number of different painting episodes for this bridge, no modifications are discernible. The current color is a gray.

*Integrity:* This bridge retains fair to good integrity.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Current view of overpass taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020



Undated historical photograph of the overpass. Source: Aspen Grove Cemetery photograph collection.

### Receiving Vault

*Built:* 1933

*Physical Description:* This concrete vault is built into a low hillside, with only the low, arched roof and the façade exposed above-ground. It has a stepped- and shaped-gable façade. Above its double metal doors is the year "1933" and inset on the panel below the date is inscribed "ASPEN GROVE." Originally there was a concrete-paved driveway and pad in front of the doors. This pad and driveway may be covered over by sod. This structure is no longer in use. The entire façade has been painted. This vault was used to house remains before burial.

*Modifications:* A poured concrete pad that once sat in front of the vault has been removed.

*Integrity:* Other than the silting over or removal of the concrete pad and the painting of the facade, this structure appears to retain good historic integrity.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Left: current view of vault. Right: circa 1930s colorized postcard.** Sources: current view taken by Tallgrass on July 17, 2021; postcard photo obtained from DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.

**CONTRIBUTING OBJECTS (3)**

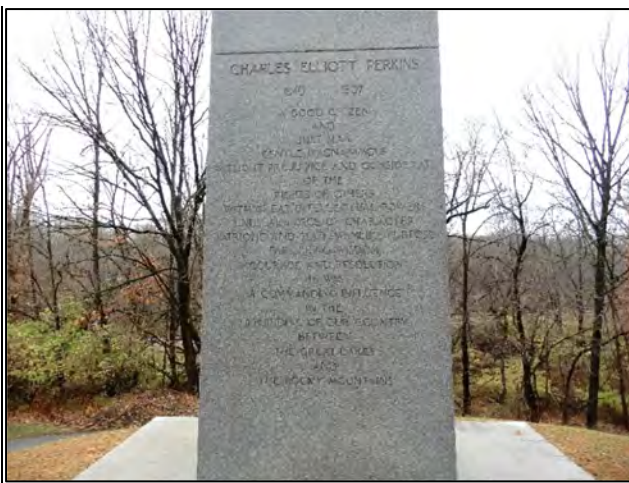
Charles Elliott Perkins Obelisk

*Built:* circa 1907

*Physical Description:* This large stone obelisk was placed on this hilltop as a memorial and does not mark a gravesite. It overlooks the railroad tracks that curve around the south end of the cemetery. It was placed here in honor of Charles Elliott Perkins by the railroad workers. This is the largest obelisk in the cemetery and is notable as a memorial marker rather than a grave marker. It is four-sided and tapers to a pyramidal cap. It sits on a stepped square base. There is an inscription near the base of the obelisk that reads: "Charles Elliott Perkins/1840 1907/A Good Citizen/and/Just Man/Gentle Magnanimous/Without Prejudice and Considerate/of the/Rights of Others/With Great Intellectual Powers/Unusual Force of Character/Patriotic and Statesmanlike purpose/Far Seeing Wisdom/He Was/a Commanding Influence /in the/Upbuilding of our Country/Between/the Great Lakes/and/the Rocky Mountains."

*Modifications:* None discernible.

*Integrity:* This object retains good integrity.



**Current view of obelisk and detail of inscription.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Undated historical photograph of the obelisk taken from below.**

Source: Aspen Grove Cemetery photograph collection.

Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)/Civil War Monument and Cannon

*Built:* 1912

*Physical Description:* The GAR section of the cemetery was donated to the Matthies Post #5 of Burlington by the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association in 1894. Upon the death of the last post soldier, the section reverted back to the care of the cemetery association. The monument was placed in the GAR section in 1912 to honor the Civil War soldiers who are buried here. The monument is a square stone pillar with square stepped base, and a stepped cap with the statue of a soldier on top. There are bronze plaques on three sides of the pillar that are original. The front of the monument has an inscription that reads "In Memory of the Defenders of the Union 1861-1865," with crossed swords above and crossed rifles below. A static display of a Civil War-era cannon sits on the ground next to the monument, with a flagpole nearby.

*Modifications:* The GAR section of the cemetery was refurbished by current cemetery administrator Mike Bloomer and his son, Jace in 2012. They raised approximately \$30,000 in private funding for the project, which was completed in 2015. The bronze plaques were restored on the monument, with the cannon restored by Steen Cannon of Ashland, Kentucky. It used to sit on a concrete base, with Steen Cannon building a replica circa 1864 caisson to hold the restored piece. The metal fence around this section is not original.

*Integrity:* This monument retains good integrity.



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Current view of GAR Monument and cannon to left.** Taken by Tallgrass, July 17, 2021.

Stone Cross

*Built:* 1960

*Physical Description:* This large freestanding stone cross is placed in one of the newer sections of the cemetery known as the Garden of the Cross. It is made of rounded, tapered columns and sits on a small square base. In 1959, a total of \$5,000 was allocated by the Aspen Grove Association board to pay Bernard Zuckermann for the purchase and installation of the cross, with the cross installation completed by October 1960 (Minutes of Special Meeting of the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association, March 25, 1959; Minutes of the 3rd Quarterly Meeting of the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association, October 20, 1960).

*Modifications:* None discernible.

*Integrity:* This distinctive stylized cross retains good integrity.



**Left: Current view of cross; Right: 1960 dedication photograph of the cross.**

Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020 and from the Aspen Grove Cemetery photograph collection.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

### Contributing Site (1)

The contributing site consists of the designed landscape, the natural wooded ravines, and the system of gridded and curvilinear driveways, earthen driveways, brick drains, concrete and stone block retaining walls, brick sidewalks, concrete curbs and stairways, and areas of iron fencing. Within this site are the many thousands of headstones of the citizens who have been buried here including two Iowa governors, the influential and notable citizens (men and women) who built and developed Burlington, and the many citizens of all races, religions, and walks of life who lie buried here. Among the graves are noted freedom seekers and persons who assisted with the Underground Railroad before the Civil War. In general, the gravestones consist of a wide variety of simple upright stone slabs to elaborate above-ground crypts, stone obelisks in many sizes, crosses, urns, statuary, stone tables, stones with bas reliefs, and the aforementioned salesman's sample case and a ship's anchor.



**Ship's anchor as a grave marker.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.



**The gravestones of Freedom Seekers buried in Aspen Grove.** Left: husband and wife, Ben and Kitty Sandridge held in bondage for 49 years, purchased to give them their freedom; Right: Sarah Harris born in slavery was purchased and brought to Iowa to be freed. Source: <http://www.burlingtonmemories.com/graveyard/slaves.html>, 2021.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Gravestone of Rachel Bundy, who was a freedom seeker in 1839 when she arrived in Burlington with her slave holder Thomas Easton, and from whom she was able to escape while in Burlington. Photograph taken by Tallgrass, July 17, 2021.



Left: Pillar marker with urn of Augustus Dodge, a US congressman and senator and US diplomat; Right: upright marker with capstone for John Morgan, American Revolutionary soldier.

Photo Source: Findagrave.com user Thomas Fisher (accessed online, March 2021);

Aspen Grove Cemetery Photograph Collection.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Historical photo of the Governor John Gear Monument.**  
Source: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.



**Above-ground crypt monument for Barhydt family.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.



**Table grave maker (left) and one of the older stone markers (right) in the original cemetery.**  
Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Historical photograph of Dodge obelisk in original portion of cemetery.**  
Source: Aspen Grove Cemetery Photograph Collection.



**Variety of stone markers, statues, retaining walls, and stairs in Aspen Grove Cemetery.**  
Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

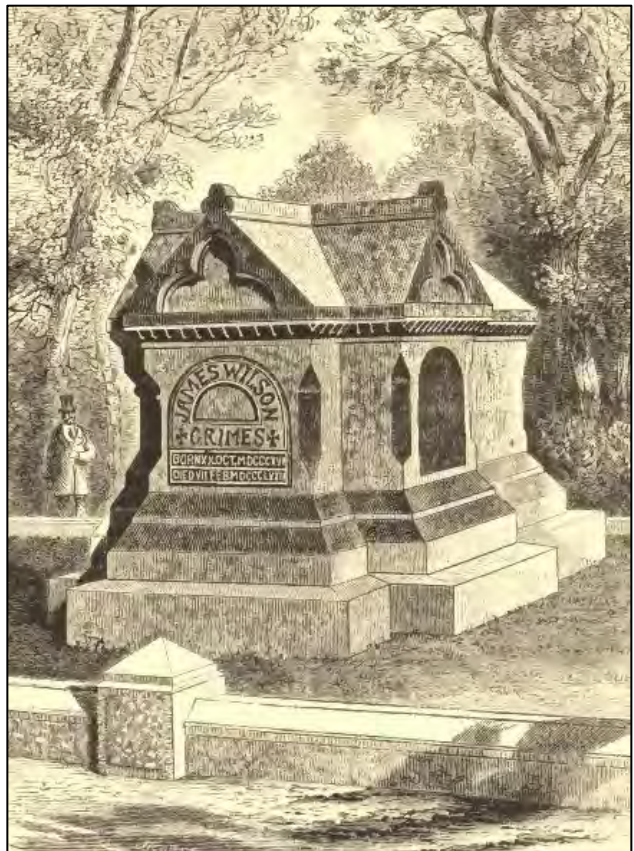
Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Two views of one of the three hollow stone monuments, this one for the McGuire family.



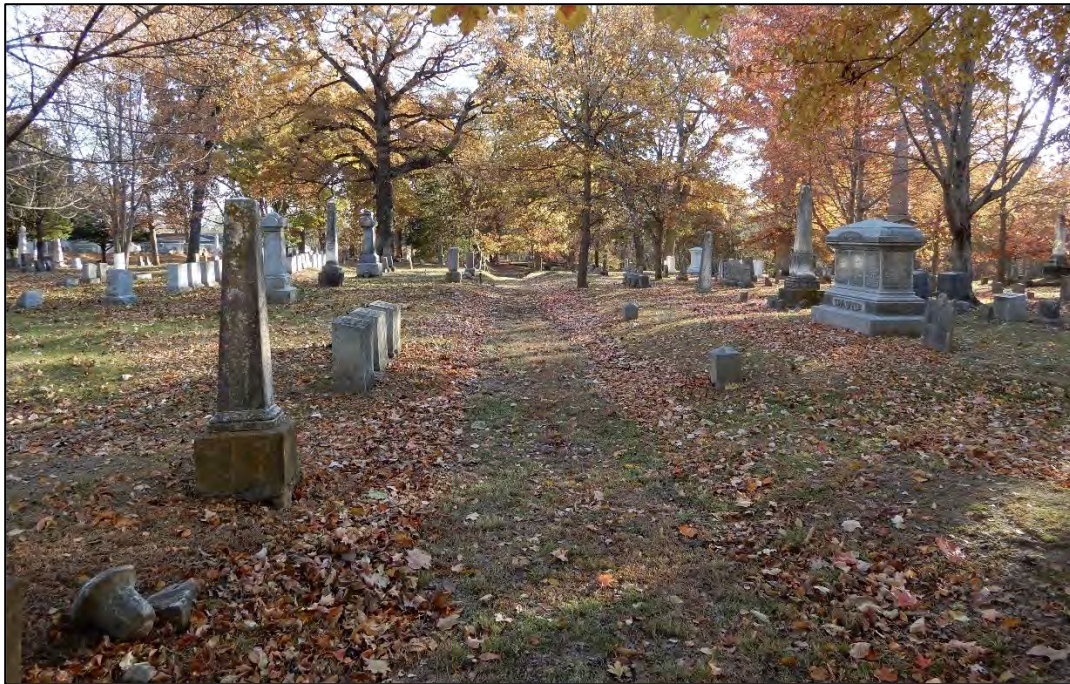
Left: current photograph of Senator James Wilson Grimes monument.  
Right: historical sketch of same. Source: current view taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020;  
historical sketch from Salter 1876:388.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



View in original section of Aspen Grove Cemetery. Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.



Historical photograph showing a wide variety of markers in the original section of the cemetery, with the back of the Rand Mausoleum in the background to right. Source: Aspen Grove Cemetery Photograph Collection.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

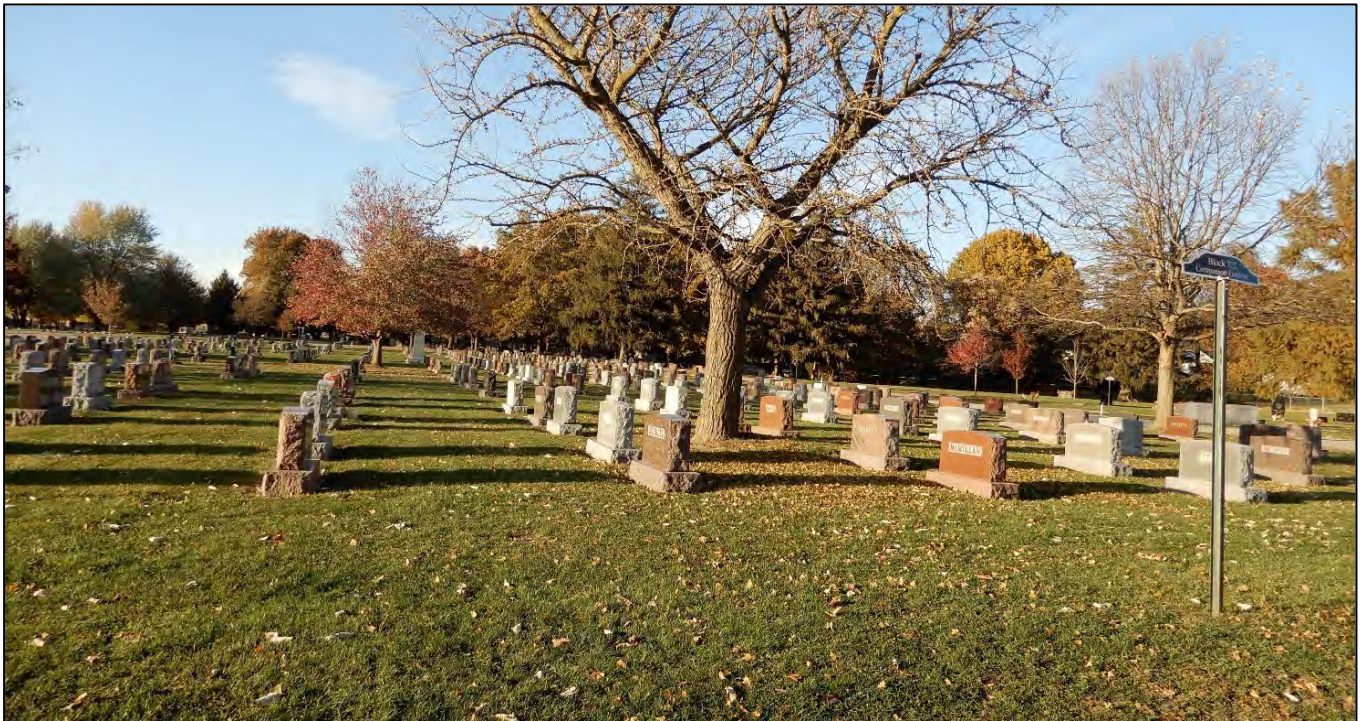
Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Brick drain in Aspen Grove Cemetery.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.



**Companion Gardens in northwest part of Aspen Grove Cemetery.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Old Babyland.** Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.

### Non-Contributing Buildings (2)

The only non-contributing buildings are the two modern maintenance sheds added by the early 1980s to the northeast and southeast of the 1930s garage along the east edge of the cemetery. These are pole buildings with metal siding and metal roofing that do not obstruct or obscure any public views of the cemetery or historic buildings or structures.



**Larger maintenance shed, view from the 1933 receiving vault (left) and the smaller maintenance shed to the right of the 1930s service garage (right).** Taken by Tallgrass, November 8, 2019.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

### Non-Contributing Structure (1)

#### Gerdner Mausoleum

*Built:* circa 2018

*Physical Description:* The Gerdner Mausoleum is a modern mausoleum, one of the few added to the cemetery since the historic era of building mausoleums ended in the 1920s in this cemetery. This modern above-ground structure has a low-pitched, front-gabled roof with a wide frieze with the gilded name "Gerdner" on the façade. The bronze entry door is recessed on the façade and flanked by fluted stone columns. The door has a gilded cross and floral design. The walls are smooth granite panels as is the walkway leading to the granite steps up to the door. This is an interesting example of a modern mausoleum patterned after the historic examples but is a modern interpretation of a classical temple design. For the current nomination, this modern structure was built after the period of significance and is considered a non-contributing structure as a result.



View of Gerdner Mausoleum in 2020.

### Non-Contributing Object (1)

#### All-Veterans Memorial

*Built:* post-1991

*Physical Description:* This modern memorial wall commemorates all veterans of Des Moines County and southeast Iowa who served in the Civil War, World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Storm. This upright granite wall has a rectangular center piece flanked by two stone pillars and flanked by angled granite walls. It is located in the northwest part of the cemetery. For the current nomination, this modern object was added after the period of significance and is considered a non-contributing object as a result.



Modern Veterans Memorial wall. Taken by Tallgrass, November 25, 2020.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

### Modifications

Among the known historic features that were removed in later years were the Reflecting Pool, which was an artificial circular pond with center island that featured water fountains and floral displays. The late 1930s aerial showed this feature not yet built; however, by the early 1950s, the pool was clearly in place (Iowa Geographic Map Server 2021). It remained in place until the 1990s when it had been backfilled. The location is now built over by a driveway and new grave plots.



**Postcard of the Reflecting Pool at Aspen Grove Cemetery.**  
Source: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.

Two mausoleums were removed including the Bodemann and Wigren vaults, which were removed circa 1908 and 1942, respectively. Some older driveways were abandoned; the Sunken Gardens was not maintained and has become overgrown; and the southeast Oak Street entrance was closed and the pillars removed (see Figure 6).



**Postcard of the non-extant Sunken Garden in Aspen Grove Cemetery.**  
Source: DMCHS AGCA Postcard Collection, Burlington, Iowa.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

As with any cemetery still in use, there have been, and will be, continued additions of gravestones, and memorials. The modern mausoleum and the post-1991 All-Veterans memorial wall are considered non-contributing simply because they post-date the period of significance for the district. The two added maintenance buildings are the late twentieth century prefabricated machine sheds placed in the vicinity of the historic service garage on the east edge of the district and do not obstruct public views of any of the historic components of the cemetery.

## Integrity

The overall historic integrity of the Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District is good. The cemetery retains good integrity of location (this is where the cemetery was founded, expanded, and developed during the period of significance); design (the park retains evidence throughout of its design by landscape architects and cemetery superintendents and reflecting the evolution of cemetery design in the late nineteenth to late twentieth centuries); setting (the cemetery has maintained park-like and timbered sections that have matured through the years and still reflect the original design of the cemetery but also its evolution through the years as national trends in cemetery design changed); materials (the buildings, structures, and objects are made of a variety of stone, brick, and concrete as appropriate for the time periods and styles that were then popular); workmanship (the original craftsmanship of the built structures and buildings is still largely intact and evidenced throughout the cemetery); feeling (the cemetery still evokes a strong sense of time and place of a nineteenth century rural cemetery but also of the evolution of the cemetery into a modern memorial park cemetery); and association (all components of this cemetery reflect the direct association with the establishment, design, and use of this cemetery during the period of significance). Some individual structures such as the extant hillside mausoleums have diminished integrity because of deterioration and loss of important structural components.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for 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, or 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

#### Period of Significance

1844-1960

#### Significant Dates

1844

1881

1906-07

#### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

#### Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

#### Architect/Builder

Starker, Charles

Hagemann, Edward

Steyh, William

Duerr, Raymond

Jenney, William Le Baron

Goddard, Harvey Irving

Earnshaw, Joseph

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

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### Statement of Significance

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Aspen Grove Cemetery is significant at the local level under Criterion C for its architectural significance. This cemetery was established early in Burlington's history when it was serving as the territorial capital prior to the establishment of the State of Iowa in 1846. The first burials date from 1844, with older burials moved here in 1852 from an older burying ground that had been abandoned. Since 1844, Aspen Grove has served as the City of Burlington's main cemetery for all citizens and all religions. The earliest part of the cemetery was in the southeast quadrant of the current cemetery. This part of the cemetery was an English Garden grid plan, with driveways around all four sides, one down the center to a circle drive where two driveways branch to the east and west. The first addition was added to the west side of the original and was also in the grid plan. However, by the late nineteenth century, the new additions began to be designed in the Landscape Lawn plan, which dominated the cemetery's design into the twentieth century. These designs had curvilinear paths, with blocks and lots that followed the natural terrain and contours paying homage to the natural setting but enhancing the setting with floral and tree plantings and manicured lawns. In the mid to late twentieth century, newer additions to the cemetery continued the curvilinear driveway plans but incorporated new ideas of cemetery and burial design in the Memorial Park plan. In the newer sections, the grave markers are generally closer to the ground, some lying flat, although some larger monuments continued to be added to the new sections as well. Noted designers and engineers, who influenced the development of Aspen Grove Cemetery included: Charles Starker, who served on the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association beginning in 1867 and appears to have been influenced by the Landscape Lawn designs of nationally known designer Adolph Strauch through Strauch's protégé, Joseph Earnshaw; William Steyh, an engineer who designed much of the middle zone of Aspen Grove as well as his own family plot in the early twentieth century and surveyed and platted the northern additions to Aspen Grove; Edward Hagemann, who followed Starker as president of the cemetery association and devoted a great deal of his time to the beautification of the cemetery; and Raymond Duerr, a civil engineer who became superintendent of the cemetery in 1922 and improved the drainage and road system within the cemetery. Architects who designed some of the notable buildings in Aspen Grove included William L.B. Jenney of Chicago, who designed the Corse Chapel, and a local architect Harvey Irving Goddard, who designed the Potter Memorial Building and Gateway. The Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion Consideration D, as a cemetery that derives its primary significance from distinctive design features and the graves of persons of transcendent importance in Burlington, Des Moines County, and southeastern Iowa. The period of significance is from 1844 when the cemetery was established to 1960 by which time the bulk of cemetery expansion and design was complete, with the last major additions having been the administration building (1956) and the monumental cross (1960) in the Garden of the Cross section of the cemetery. Significant dates include 1844 when the cemetery was established, 1881 when Corse Chapel was built, and 1906-07 when the Potter Memorial Building and Gateway was established as the main entrance into the cemetery.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

 (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

(Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions: For properties not nominated under Criterion D, include a statement about whether any archaeological remains within or beyond the footprint of the property were assessed as part of this nomination under the subheading **Archaeological Assessment**.)

Since 1844, Aspen Grove Cemetery has served as the City of Burlington's main cemetery for all citizens and all religions. There are separate, smaller Catholic and Jewish cemeteries in Burlington, but Aspen Grove includes burials from both religions. The original portion of this cemetery is in the southeastern part of the current cemetery. This part of the cemetery was designed on a grid plan, with driveways around all four sides, and one down the center to a circle drive in the middle where two driveways branch to the east and west. The steep terrain prohibited a permanent driveway extending down to the south edge of the grid plan. The first additions were made to the northwest corner (1852) and to the west side of the original plot (1853).

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

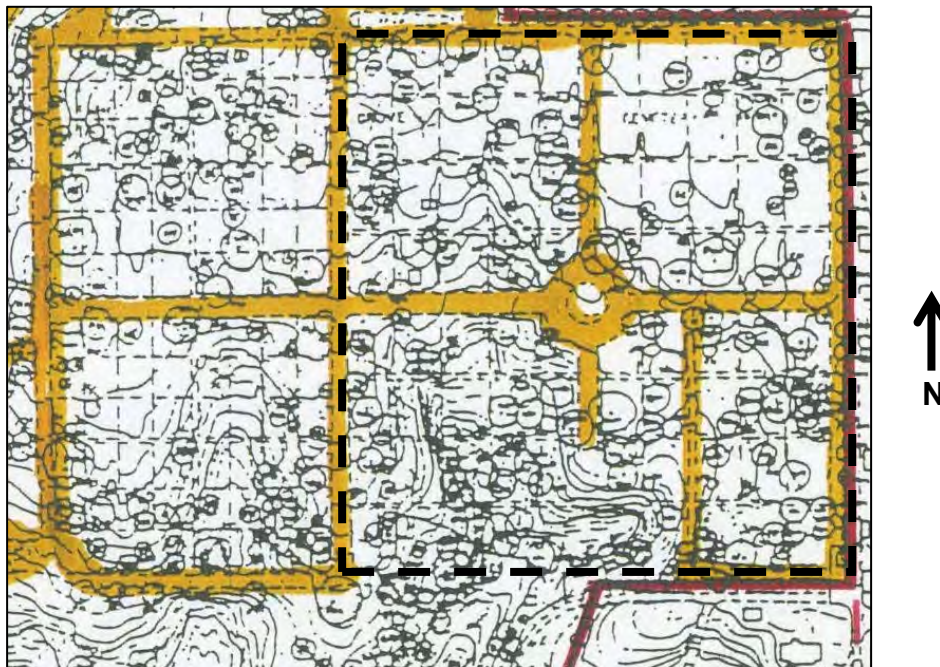
County and State

The west addition was developed on the grid plan (see Figure 3). The 1852 addition became the cemetery's first designated "potter's field." By the late nineteenth century, new additions were being designed in the naturalistic and picturesque Landscape Lawn Plan. This design trend dominated the cemetery's design into the twentieth century and was part of a national trend. In the mid to late twentieth century, newer additions to the cemetery continued the curvilinear driveway plans but incorporated new ideas of cemetery and burial design in the Memorial Park plan. In the newer sections, the grave markers are generally closer to the ground, some lying flat, although some larger monuments continued to be added to the new sections.

Architectural & Landscape Design Significance (Criterion C) of Aspen Grove Cemetery

Original Cemetery: 1844-circa 1870

The oldest part of the cemetery was developed on a gridded plan, which was a common type of burial ground design then popular in this country. This particular plan, which had a circle drive at its center reflected the formal English garden model that imposed formality and order on the landscape with little regard for the natural terrain or vegetation (Figure 7). This is seen in the Aspen Grove example with the original plat laid out on a fairly level hilltop; however, the plat extended onto a slope to the southwest precluding the completion of the grid pattern of driveways because of the steep terrain in that area (see Figure 7).



**Figure 7. Original section of Aspen Grove Cemetery superimposed on topographical map and showing the English Plan with the circular center section in the 1844 plat (black dashed outline).**

The two-part section on the west side of the original square plat is the 1853 addition to the cemetery.

Source: Brower 1988:20.

In 1843 in Burlington, "there was a demand for a regularly established cemetery where burials could be made with more assurance of security" in Burlington ([https://www.aspengrovecemetery.com/ history--visitors information](https://www.aspengrovecemetery.com/history--visitors-information), accessed December 2019). At that time, Burlington was the capital of the Territory of Iowa. A group of citizens asked permission of the territorial legislature to establish a cemetery association. An act was passed on December 18, 1843 that established a non-profit cemetery organization, and Aspen Grove Cemetery was incorporated on January 3, 1844, "by B. White, A. Bridgman, G. Temple, John Johnson, Levi Hager and their associates" (Western Historical 1879:565). Abiathar White was the first president; Oliver

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Cock was secretary, and Levi Hager was treasurer. A Board of Control was also appointed that was first composed of George Temple, G. Partridge, and Arthur Bridgman (Western Historical 1879:565). The first burials were made here in 1844. However, some older burials were later relocated here and consisting of “several dozen burials of individuals who died before establishment of this cemetery. Many of those were transferred from the old Burlington Burial Ground/Smith Cemetery when it was condemned and closed in 1852” (<https://www.findagrave.com>, December 2019).

Among those who facilitated the formation of the cemetery association and the founding of Aspen Grove Cemetery was territorial legislator James Wilson Grimes, who advanced the charter but also acted as an agent for the association in the purchase of the original 11 acres for the cemetery. The charter passed, with Grimes then selling the association the 11-acre parcel for a dollar (1844 Deed from Grimes to the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association, AGCA Archives, Burlington). Grimes is among the prominent lowans buried in this cemetery.

By 1879, there were two other cemeteries noted in Burlington: a Catholic cemetery located on Sixth Street and a Jewish cemetery located on the “Germantown road” (Western Historical 1879:565), though some people of those faiths were also buried in Aspen Grove. Within Aspen Grove Cemetery, there were no specifically segregated areas by religion or by race, but there were some sections where purchases of lots were made together for Jewish burials and other church affiliations. One section contains predominantly African American burials, but there is no record that they were ever actually segregated within the cemetery. Among the notable African American burials in Aspen Grove is that of Rachel Bundy, who was a freedom seeker in 1839 when she arrived in Burlington with her slave holder Thomas Easton, and from whom she was able to escape while in Burlington. She sought refuge and was able to file a writ of Habeas Corpus, which resulted in the case of *Rachel, a negro woman, v. James Cameron, Sheriff*. A trial was held in May 1839 that resulted in Rachel Bundy being set free. She continued to live in Burlington where she died in 1875 and was buried in Aspen Grove Cemetery in Block 10, Lot S.B. Grave 18. Her life and her burial here was recognized by the National Park Service in 2016 along with three other individuals who were recognized for their Underground Railroad activities in Burlington and Iowa. These included: Catherine “Aunt Kitty” Sandridge (died 1863), Rev. William Salter (died 1910), and David Rorer (died 1884), all of whom are also buried in Aspen Grove Cemetery (Information obtained from the 2016 National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom sign at Aspen Grove Cemetery, Burlington, Iowa).

In 1879, it was noted that Aspen Grove Cemetery was in “the northwestern” part of the city, contained 51 acres, and had “several large vaults and many fine monuments” (Western Historical 1879:565). This included the original 1844 section and the 1853 addition that continued the original grid-plan of the original section and was surveyed by William Lefler (see Figure 7). However, by 1879, the cemetery also included the section that had been added in 1852 to the northwest corner of the original cemetery. This addition became the first designated “potters field” in Aspen Grove (Figure 8). But the cemetery had also expanded to the northwest with two additions made in 1866 and 1868.



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

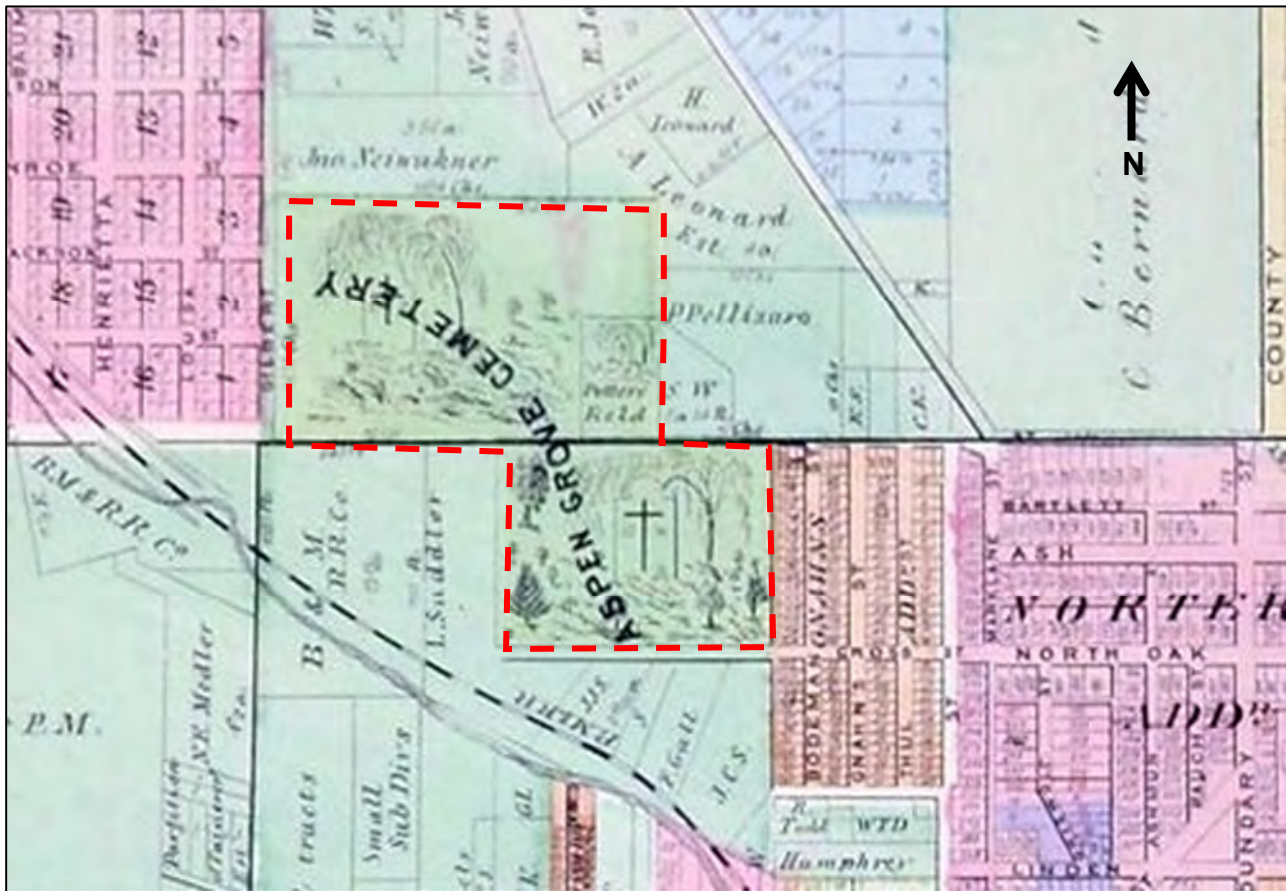


Figure 8. 1873 map showing the extent of Aspen Grove Cemetery (red dashed outline).

Source: Andreas 1873

### The Rural Cemetery Movement and Aspen Grove Cemetery

Aspen Grove Cemetery’s distinctive design features, including its curving driveways and general park-like atmosphere, are rooted in the American rural cemetery movement that began in the northeastern states in the 1830s. Three early rural cemeteries became models for countless others throughout the country: Mount Auburn in Cambridge (1831); Laurel Hill in Philadelphia (1836); and Greenwood in Brooklyn (1837). One observer described their proliferation in 1849:

Already, not only the larger towns, . . .but smaller ones, . . .and we know not how many others, have large areas in their neighborhood laid out for the mansions of the dead, where beauty of scenery, taste in landscape gardening, elegance and costliness of monuments awaken wide curiosity... (Thomas Woolsey quoted in Sears 1989:99-100).

The popularity of these cemeteries stemmed from a growing anti-urban sentiment and an attraction to “the picturesque.” This was a Romantic aesthetic which evoked a “natural” landscape appearance of rougher terrain and dramatic asymmetric composition in contrast to the axial geometry of earlier Renaissance and Baroque landscapes, such as Versailles” (Cultural Landscape Foundation 2012). Unlike their British counterparts who “distinguished the ‘Beautiful’ aesthetic (as seen in the rolling pastoral landscape designs of Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown) from the wildly dramatic ‘Picturesque’ (replete with ravines, dead trees and artificial ruins),” American landscape architects combined the two approaches into the “natural” landscape aesthetic (Cultural Landscape Foundation 2012). They often employed both approaches on a single site.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Prior to this, in the early nineteenth century, people were still being interred in burial grounds and churchyards where there was a “confused medley of graves” often in poorly kept locations and symbolizing sorrowful places of death where one would rarely want to linger (Sloane 1991:13). Other established burial grounds, such as the original section of Aspen Grove, followed the formal English garden model that imposed formality and order on the landscape with little regard for the natural terrain or vegetation. The isolation of pioneer life on the frontier also led to family burial grounds away from church and closer to home. Churchyard burials were an alternative and followed a European tradition. This often resulted in a social hierarchy, with the wealthiest buried closest to the church or in vaults within the church itself, those locations being the safest locations from vandalism and grave robbing. It also put the higher social order closer to God. Space in urban churchyards quickly became a premium (Sloane 1991:13-19). So-called “Potter’s Fields” also became part of the American burial tradition at an early date, being a location where those who could not afford a vault or grave in an established burial ground could be buried at the community or church’s expense (Sloane 1991:24-25). There were two such “potter’s fields” in the Aspen Grove Cemetery.

In the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries, the customs surrounding burials and burying grounds evolved into one having a stronger family orientation, a formalized funeral ceremony, and the establishment of “cemeteries” rather than “burial grounds.” There was also a change in emphasis from “in-city” burial grounds to “rural cemeteries,” in part in response to growing fears of contagious disease but also to overcrowding in the city and new attitudes and aesthetics concerning burial places in general (Sloane 1991).

Americans were searching for a burial place that did not evoke the city’s fast pace or commercial life. “Only when cemeteries...abandoned traditional urban forms and took on aspects of the country, did they become...‘rural.’” Only when Americans embraced mid-nineteenth-century rural values did they discover a new burial place (Sloane 1991:43 quoting in part Schuyler 1986:41).

When Aspen Grove was first established it was on the rural outskirts of Burlington far from the urban core.

### *The Landscape Lawn Plan and Aspen Grove Cemetery*

It was in the 1870s, that Aspen Grove Cemetery’s development diverged from its original grid plan, with designers embracing new cemetery designs that were then becoming popular in the United States. A November 19, 1874 article in the *Burlington Hawk-Eye* provided a lengthy discussion about cemetery design and touted the new “Landscape Lawn Plan” for Aspen Grove and its “newly acquired land additions.” The article specifically noted the Landscape Lawn Plan of Adolph Strauch, which was described as “a practical application of a system of landscape gardening” (*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, November 19, 1874). Adolph Strauch was influential in the later evolution of the rural cemetery movement beginning with his transformation of Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati into a garden-park cemetery. This was “three years before the success of Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux’s Greensward plan for Central Park would start a generation of ‘rural’ parks” (Sloane 1991:99). “Using what he termed the ‘landscape lawn plan,’ [but also referred to as the “Lawn Cemetery”], Strauch, the cemetery’s new landscape gardener, proclaimed in his design for Spring Grove an age of new professionalism and renewed accessibility, both physical and psychological” (Sloane 1991:99).

Strauch’s ideas and innovations were central to the development of the lawn-park cemetery and the modern cemetery in general. Jacob Weidenmann, a landscape architect who wrote the first manual of cemetery management and designed several cemeteries, considered Strauch the founder of the modern cemetery. Ossian Cole Simonds, America’s most influential cemetery designer at the turn of the twentieth century, called Spring Grove, a ‘Mecca for those interested in cemeteries’ (Sloane 1991:107).

Both Olmsted and Strauch “accepted the role of art in the landscape and the cemetery” and “both recognized that the cemetery was not a park, a playground, or a garden” (Sloane 1991:109). They “encouraged lot-holders to honor their dead through simple, stylish, and artistic monuments,” with Strauch placing the

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

cemetery management on a professional basis. He encouraged rules and regulations and “set the stage for the emergence of the superintendent as the overseer of the cemetery landscape” (Sloane 1991:109). Near the end of the nineteenth century, “lawn-park” cemeteries had become commonplace and worked well with the rise of the City Beautiful Movement of the 1890s to early 1900s (Sloane 1991:121).

The sections that Strauch laid out in cemeteries, as well as those he redesigned, were simpler, more spacious, and more pastoral landscapes, in which management’s control was increasingly extended over monuments and plantings. Lot-holder’s responsibility for molding the landscape was restricted. The foal of melding of nature and art into a comfortable balance was something that could be maintained as the cemetery matured. This was embedded through the entire design and maintenance plan (Sloane 1991:99).

Strauch influenced “generations of cemetery designers and managers, through both his published reports for Spring Grove and his designs for several cemeteries, including Mount Hope in Chicago and Forest Lawn in Buffalo” (Sloane 1991:99). Among those he influenced appears to have been Charles Starker, who served on the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association beginning in 1867 and had a hand developing portions of Aspen Grove Cemetery in the late nineteenth century. Starker became President of the Board of Control in 1875 and remained in that position for 25 years. It is known that Strauch had traveled to Dubuque, Iowa, before his death in 1883, and Jerome Bock, who was a friend of Charles Starker’s worked at Kew Gardens at the same time as Strauch. In addition, a Strauch protégé named Earnshaw came to work in Burlington on Aspen Grove Cemetery and Crapo Park where he would have worked with Starker.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, Starker had either direct or indirect contact with Strauch and his design principles through these contacts. Strauch died before the accelerated “park” design of Aspen Grove in the 1890s, but it is likely that his ideas and designs had an influence on Starker and Earnshaw and thus on Aspen Grove (Comments from Steven Brower to Paul French re: 1874 newspaper article about Strauch and the Landscape Lawn Plan, e-mail dated 11/03/2018). During the late nineteenth century, “many cemetery designers, managers, and lot-holders would turn towards Strauch’s ideas” (Sloane 1991:107).

In their cemeteries, the pastoral would replace the picturesque. The lawn would expand, and the grouped trees were thinned. Cemeteries would become more parklike. Monuments were more formalized and standardized. The artfulness of the landscape would become more obvious and more celebrated (Sloane 1991:107).

In 1879, Charles Starker also served on the city drainage committee with the city engineer and hired the well-known sewer and drainage engineer, E.S. Chesbrough of Chicago to design the city’s early drainage system.<sup>6</sup> Starker conceived of, and supervised, the construction of the so-called “Stone Creek” in Aspen Grove Cemetery, which consisted of an open, stone drainage channel. Stone Creek initially relied on slow surface drainage from a porous brick gutter system but later added an underground section of vitrified pipe that directed greater runoff directly into the remaining open section of the stone-lined channel.

<sup>5</sup> There were two Earnshaws, who were involved in Spring Grove Cemetery, both civil engineers and brothers. Henry Earnshaw was a surveyor and engineer at Spring Grove Cemetery in the 1850s but seemed more at odds with Strauch than his protégé; However, his brother, Joseph Earnshaw, also a civil engineer, worked with Strauch at Spring Grove Cemetery in the 1870s surveying and producing detailed plans for that cemetery and was considered one of Strauch’s “key collaborators at Spring Grove” (Spring Grove Cemetery, electronic pdf accessed at SAH Archipedia at <https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/OH-01-061-8076>, February 2022). Joseph Earnshaw collaborated with Strauch in grading and filling deeper ravines as well as creating a “greensward” and pond in Spring Grove Cemetery (Adolph Strauch’s Landscape Lawn Plan, electronic pdf of article accessed at <http://library.cincymuseum.org/journals/files/qch/v53/n1-2/qch-v53-n1-2-ado-030.pdf>, February 2022). As such, it seems likely that it was Joseph Earnshaw who became acquainted with Charles Starker and collaborated with Starker in the late 19th century at Aspen Grove Cemetery and Crapo Park in Burlington.

<sup>6</sup> Whether Chesbrough had a direct hand in the design of the “stone creek” at Aspen Grove appears uncertain, but his involvement in designing the city’s early drainage and sewer system would likely have influenced Starker’s design of the stone drain and its tie-in to the city’s drainage system.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

William Steyh also had a notable influence on the design and structures of Aspen Grove Cemetery. Steyh was an engineer who designed much of the middle zone of Aspen Grove as well as his own family plot in 1914. He surveyed and platted the cemetery in 1909 including the new north addition to the cemetery (Figure 9). He also worked with Starker on other Burlington projects and is known to have laid out the streetcar lines in town. However, it should be noted that the sections that Steyh appears to have been responsible for in Aspen Grove cemetery tended to embrace gridded lots imposed on the landscape rather than the naturalistic designs seen in Starker's work in the cemetery (Figure 10). However, even in the areas where the grid plan dominated, there were still curvilinear and circular roads and features included in the plan (see Figure 10).

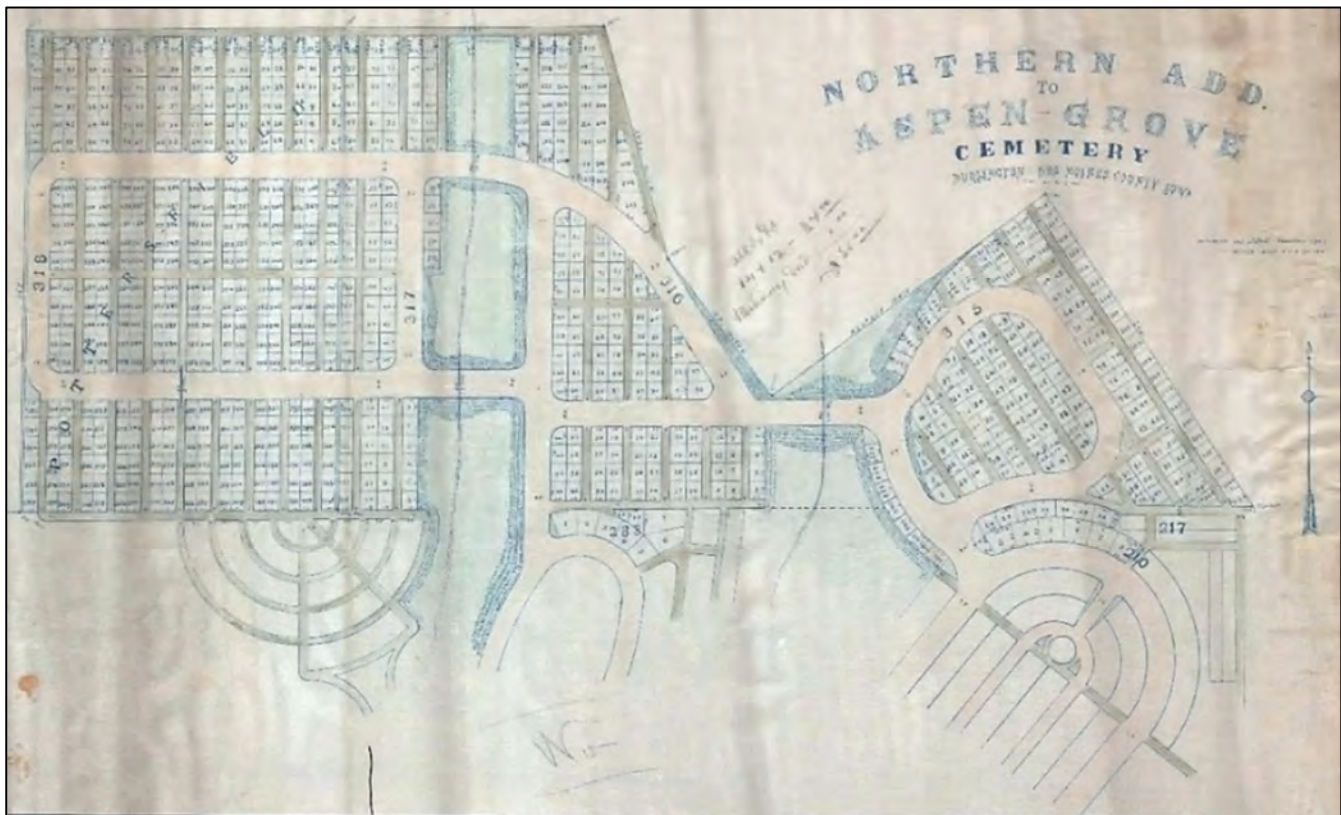


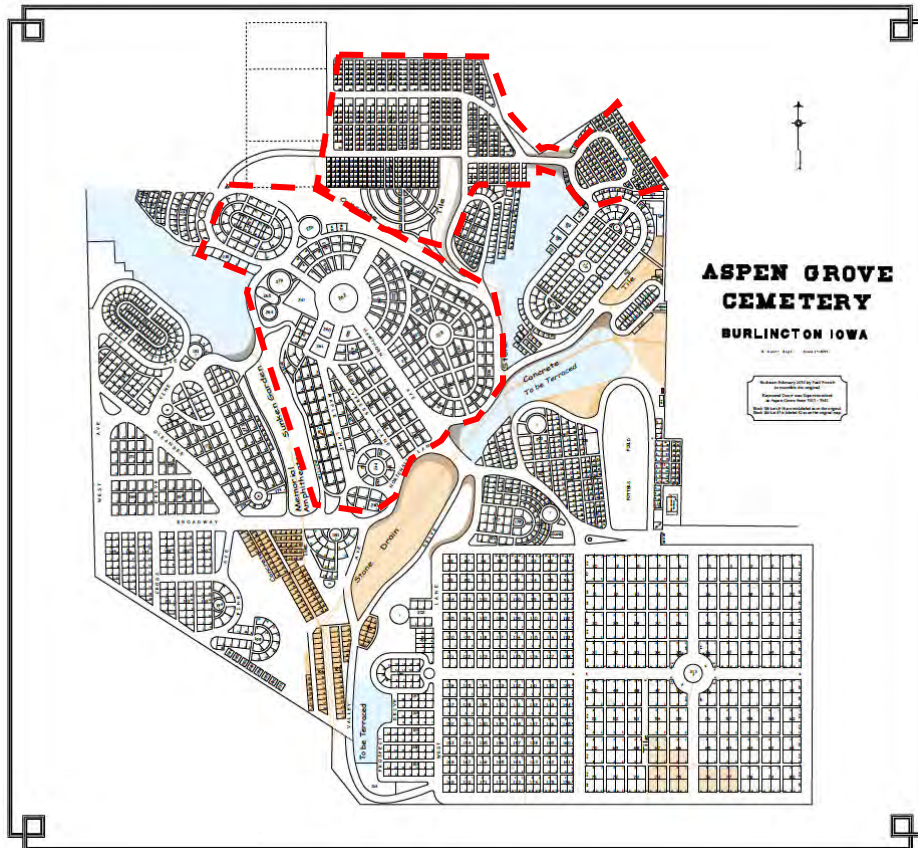
Figure 9. 1909 map by William Steyh of "Northern Add. to Aspen Grove Cemetery" including a large "Potters Field" in the northwest section of this plan. On file, Aspen Grove Cemetery Association, Burlington, Iowa.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



**Figure 10. Aspen Grove Cemetery Map from 1844 to circa 1930 and showing those portions of the cemetery that appear to have been platted by William Steyh (red dashed outlines).**

Source: Map redrawn in Feb. 2016 by Paul French after the original by Raymond Duerr, Superintendent of Aspen Grove Cemetery from 1921-1947.

The new cemeteries reversed the priorities predominant in urban life. The visitor was immersed in nature and cut off from urban civilization. The cemetery's landscape integrated various aspects of the ideal picturesque landscape: wild scenery, rolling or sharper terrains, and water. Roads and paths were serpentine, to ensure that the 'garden of graves' would not remind the mourner and visitor of life in the geometrically ordered city (Sloane 1991:94).

The new burial place became a "cemetery" located in a rural setting. The rural cemetery also became the garden cemetery due to its growing horticultural orientation. However, the cultural significance of the "rural cemetery" was in its reflection of "city dwellers' growing isolation from rural life and their attempts—through first the *rural cemetery*, then the *rural park*—to reestablish some of the virtues of country life in the cities" (Sloane 1991:94). When established in 1844, Aspen Grove Cemetery was on the northwest outskirts of Burlington in the hills and wooded ravines that formed the north edge of the urban core. The urban core developed on the more level creek valley below that opened out onto the Mississippi River bank where boat landings and docks were sited. This cemetery in the nineteenth century would have been well removed from the hectic urban life in the valley below.

Within these picturesque grounds, lot-holders wished to celebrate their heritage and success. Family lots became a means through which middle- and upper-class Americans could commemorate their families, their ancestors, their community, and themselves. Large, artistically styled monuments dotted the sections, and smaller, more standardized monuments filled the spaces between. Even as critics complained about the loss of naturalism, the growing ostentation of the monuments, and the crowding of sections, Americans proud of their success continued to erect monuments to their past.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

The rural-cemetery movement had begun to evolve as soon as the first cemetery was organized. By the 1850s, a new generation of landscape designers was experimenting with a simpler and cleaner landscape, and Americans began to retreat from their close relationship with death (Sloane 1991:94-95).

This “retreat from sentimentality” and the evolution of the rural cemetery from picturesque natural gardens to pastoral, park-like, landscape-lawn plans designed by a new profession of trained landscape architects and landscape gardeners certainly influenced the design progression of the Aspen Grove Cemetery in the late nineteenth century.

American picturesque landscapes featured “open meadows of irregular outline, uneven stands of trees, naturalistic lakes, accents of specimen plants and, here and there, incidental objects such as an antique statue or urn on a pedestal to lend interest and variety to the scene” (Potter and Boland 1992:6). Such scenery imparted to viewers, moral inspiration, spiritual awakening, and an appreciation of nature. Frederick Law Olmsted, Andrew Jackson Downing, and Horace W.S. Cleveland all created American picturesque landscapes, which included many rural cemeteries and public parks. The style remained popular from the 1840s well into the early twentieth century (Cultural Landscape Foundation 2012). Plantings of trees, shrubs, and flowerbeds and urns were used throughout the cemetery from an early day.

Rural cemeteries were designed to be picturesque landscapes, with “serene and spacious grounds, where the combination of nature and monuments would be spiritually uplifting” (Potter and Boland 1992:6). Located on the outskirts of towns and cities, rural cemeteries stood apart from the communities they served, while providing retreats within easy reach of residents. An elaborate cemetery gateway physically established for visitors this separation from the everyday world. The cemetery grounds consisted of a hilly, wooded site further “enhanced by grading, selective thinning of trees, and massing of plant materials which directed views opening onto broad vistas” (Potter and Boland 1992:6). Winding paths and circuitous avenues adapted to the contours of the land encouraged leisurely promenades and carriage rides among ornamental monuments, headstones, and statuary, and provided visitors with attractive scenic views (Sears 1989:100, 102, 104). In this way, rural cemeteries served as early recreational parks, civic amenities intended for the enjoyment of the living. This is an apt description of what Aspen Grove Cemetery became in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the construction of stylish mausoleums, a variety of gravestones and monuments, scenic vistas, planted flower gardens, winding paths and circuitous driveways, with the monumental east gateway added in the early 1900s establishing Corse Street as the formal entrance from the city into the cemetery.

Family mausoleums designed in classical and other popular revival styles of the day became more common during this same period. However, mausoleums placed a new level of concern for cemetery maintenance and who would pay for their upkeep and perpetual care because mausoleums were essentially buildings constructed within the cemeteries. This has been a problem for many cemeteries, including Aspen Grove Cemetery where most of the mausoleums were not maintained through the years and are now exhibiting major structural issues. Often there are no surviving family members able or willing to take financial responsibility. As noted above, at least two of the known mausoleums in Aspen Grove Cemetery were later removed because they were in such poor condition.

There are two kinds of mausoleums in Aspen Grove, the typical above-ground structure that has interior crypts and a less common structure that is banked into the hillside, with the only above-ground structure being the façade and roofline, with the crypts within the underground chamber. It is the latter type that has suffered the most from deterioration through the years likely because of the greater potential for impact from erosion and water infiltration. The banked mausoleums are also the oldest type in the cemetery. The above-ground structures became more common in the 1880s to 1920s. After that time, their popularity waned, although there is one modern example of a mausoleum in Aspen Grove, the Gerdner Mausoleum built c.2018.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

### *The Memorial Park Movement/The Cemetery as Business*

As the twentieth century progressed, American attitudes towards death and burial places evolved yet again. Cemeteries became professionalized and commercialized and increasingly less family oriented. As a result, "the business of death was becoming complex" (Sloane 1991:126).

The new cemetery with its less dramatic appearance, was in keeping with the withdrawal of most Americans from a close relationship with death, which had characterized the antebellum period. Sanitarians and medical scientists had jointly lowered the risk of living in the cities. Professionals managed the process of death and burial. Consolation poetry and prose became less prevalent. Death continued to be a powerful social issue but did not engage the attention of Americans as it had in the Victorian era.

Because of these factors, not only the appearance but also the character of the cemetery changed. Entrepreneurs, who assumed responsibility for so much of the American economy and culture during this period, commercialized the burial ground. Whereas rural cemeteries and ethnic and religious lawn-park cemeteries retained loyal lot-holders, for-profit cemeteries attracted other Americans. However, people also began to recognize the commercialization of the cemetery, and such commercialism evoked a storm of anger and ignited a movement of reform, which eventually led to the redesign of the cemetery into the memorial park (Sloane 1991:127).

Cremation rose in popularity in the twentieth century, in part because many cemeteries began to run out of space, particularly urban cemeteries that had become boxed in by other development and no longer had the room to expand. While Aspen Grove began as a cemetery on the rural outskirts and purchased land whenever possible with the idea of future expansion, there will come a time where here too space will become scarce. Cremation also began to appeal to those with changing ideas about death, the earthly body, and the soul as well as to those simply not interested in being buried underground. However, with such ideas, a whole new set of issues arose concerning interment versus scattering of cremains, with some areas in the United States prohibiting the scattering of cremains in public places. Some cemeteries continue to bury cremains underground in regular grave lots, while others have adopted the columbarium above-ground structure for the reposing of multiple cremains, while others have built buildings for the reposing of cremains (Rogers 2018).

Some cemeteries adapted to the new trends by incorporating the memorial park idea into new additions to the older cemeteries, as was the case in Aspen Grove Cemetery. In this cemetery, the newer memorial park type of plan along with specific locations and structures for the interment of cremains were established in the northern part of the cemetery. In some cities, however, entirely new cemeteries were established based on the memorial park plan. These cemeteries feature grave markers flush with the ground instead of large above-ground monuments. The low-profile grave markers facilitated the use of modern mowing machinery, which could ride over the markers rather than having to mow around them.

The movement towards the memorial park plan by Aspen Grove was likely spurred, in part, by the establishment in 1934 of a new commercial cemetery called Burlington Memorial Park Cemetery. Competition with this new cemetery certainly exerted financial pressure on Aspen Grove, with a 1936 advertisement touting that the Burlington Memorial Park Cemetery had sold "\$166,402.68 worth of lots" (October 9, 1936 newspaper advertisement provided by Paul French). In addition to designing new sections of the cemetery on the memorial park plan, the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association also tried to control the perceived threat from the new cemetery by purchasing land bordering the new cemetery that might otherwise have been available for expansion of that cemetery (Information provided by Paul French, February 2020).

Others who influenced the twentieth century evolution of Aspen Grove Cemetery included Raymond Duerr, who was superintendent from 1921 to 1947. Another was a firm out of Chicago which was hired in the 1930s

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

to lay out new sections in the northwestern part of the cemetery including the Memorial Lawn and Companion Gardens section where plots were intended to be purchased in pairs for “a man and wife” with no more than two spaces sold to any individual (*Burlington Hawk Eye Gazette*, January 2, 1957). However, the implementation of these plans was not accomplished by the Chicago firm and not all of their plans were ever implemented (Paul French, personal communication with Leah Rogers, November 8, 2019). Therefore, it is assumed that the greatest influence in the development of these newer areas during this period was that of Raymond Duerr.

### *Aspen Grove Cemetery as a Significant Place*

Aspen Grove Cemetery meets the integrity considerations and significance criteria of the NRHP to be eligible as a historic district under Criterion C (architectural significance). This cemetery retains good historic integrity. It represents the evolution of cemetery design and development from an early burial ground in the early settlement days of Burlington, to the picturesque rural cemetery of the mid to late nineteenth century, to the professionally designed Landscape Lawn Plan of the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, and to the commercial cemetery of the Memorial Park plan of the mid to late twentieth century. It also contains notable architect-designed mausoleums, monuments, and memorial buildings, structures and objects.

Some of the well-known persons buried in this cemetery, and not already noted above, include: John Morgan, American Revolutionary War soldier; James S. Clark, founder of the first newspaper in Iowa, a member of the First Constitutional Convention, Iowa Territorial Governor, and Mayor of Burlington; John H. Gear, the tenth Governor of Iowa and a U.S. Senator from Iowa; Nicholas Bouquet, a Civil War Congressional Medal of Honor recipient; John Murray Corse, Civil War Brigadier General; Augustus C. Dodge, U.S. Congressman, U.S. Senator, U.S. Diplomat, and served in the Black Hawk War; Aldo Leopold, noted environmentalist and conservationist, Charles Wachsmuth, a noted collector and scholar of crinoid fossils, and Henry Dodge, who along with his son Augustus C. Dodge, were the only father/son combo to serve in the U.S. Senate at the same time. Noted women’s names need further research but should include Mary Abigail Darwin, an 1845 graduate of Oberlin College, who became principal of the women’s department of Burlington University in 1851. Also notable among the burials at Aspen Grove are at least 650 Civil War veterans, including five generals.

The period of significance is identified as 1844 to 1960, which encompasses the significant stages of the cemetery’s design, development, and construction. Important dates are many but include the significant dates for the construction of Corse Chapel (1881) and the Potter Memorial Building and Gateway (1906-07). Other notable dates include the construction of the extant mausoleums (1876, 1877, 1881, 1902, and 1922); the caretaker’s house (1908); the Civil War Monument (1912); the Perkins Obelisk (circa 1907); the service garage and receiving vault (1930s); the administration building (1956); and the monumental cross (1960).

### Influential Persons in the Design of Aspen Grove Cemetery

The persons who appear to have been most influence in the design evolution of the Aspen Grove Cemetery are the various cemetery association presidents and superintendents in the late nineteenth to mid twentieth centuries, notably Charles Starker, Edward Hagemann, William Steyh, and Raymond Duerr.

#### *Charles Starker*

Charles Starker became part of the cemetery association in 1867 and served as president of the Board of Control starting in 1875. He has been credited with enhancing the “picturesque and perfect landscape with which nature had endowed this sweet and quiet resting place” (*Burlington Evening Gazette*, December 12, 1907). He was further noted to have “knowledge and experience in landscape gardening” (*Burlington Evening Gazette*, December 12, 1907). Starker also had a hand in the design of Burlington’s early storm sewer system including the drainage of Aspen Grove Cemetery.



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Carl Heinrich Wilhelm "Charles" Starker was born in 1826 in Stuttgart, Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany (Family Tree accessed at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), July 2021). He studied architecture "and after coming to Burlington, he drafted many of the beautiful buildings in that city" (Hobart Publishing 1905; transcription of biography accessed at [http://www.iagenweb.org/desmoines/Bios/Bios\\_STUV.htm](http://www.iagenweb.org/desmoines/Bios/Bios_STUV.htm), July 2021). He emigrated from Germany in 1848 and lived for a short time in Buffalo, New York, before locating in Chicago where "he embarked in the mercantile business; but subsequently, in 1850 he settled permanently in Burlington, engaging in the retail and wholesale grocery business, which he continued twenty-five years with success, accumulating a large property" (Hobart Publishing 1905; transcription of biography accessed at [http://www.iagenweb.org/desmoines/Bios/Bios\\_STUV.htm](http://www.iagenweb.org/desmoines/Bios/Bios_STUV.htm), July 2021). He married Marie L. Runge in Burlington, Iowa, in 1852 and they had two children: Arthur and Clara. Starker died in Burlington on February 9, 1900 and is buried in the Starker Mausoleum in Aspen Grove Cemetery. In addition to his grocery business, Starker was also involved in the banking interests in Burlington. In 1905, his many accomplishments were noted in a county biographical review.

Since 1860 he has been identified with its banking interests and has also held many prominent places in city affairs. He is President of the Iowa Savings Bank; Director of the National State Bank, with which he has been connected since its organization; President of Aspen Grove Cemetery and has been one of its directors for twenty five years; Treasurer and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Opera House, and to him is due the credit for so elegant a structure; Treasurer of the I.O.O.F Building, Treasurer of the Independent School District, and Director of the Agricultural Society. He laid off the public square, and also planned and laid off the beautiful cemetery of Aspen Grove (Hobart Publishing 1905; transcription of biography accessed at [http://www.iagenweb.org/desmoines/Bios/Bios\\_STUV.htm](http://www.iagenweb.org/desmoines/Bios/Bios_STUV.htm), July 2021).

The 1879 county history noted that he had been a director or an officer of the Iowa State Savings Bank since its organization in 1874 (Western Historical 1879:518, 650). The 1892 city directory also listed him as the president of this bank (1892 Burlington Directory).

*Edward Hagemann*

The careers of Starker and Edward Hagemann were entwined from an early date. Hagemann had been born in Germany circa 1831 and was listed in the 1905 Iowa State Census as a 74-year-old widower. While often referred to simply as "E." Hagemann in many of the historical accounts and news items, his first name was Edward. His first wife was Katherine Bachmann Hagemann, with both buried in Aspen Grove, Edward having died in 1917. Hagemann settled in Burlington in 1855, and as noted, his career in Burlington mirrored that of Charles Starker, with his first profession listed as retail grocery (1870 U.S. Census) during which time he was in a partnership with Starker in the wholesale grocery business from 1867 to 1875 (*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, February 24, 1917). Both were also involved in the founding and operation of the Iowa State Savings Bank, with Hagemann listed as the bank president in the 1900 and 1910 U.S. Censuses. A resolution printed in the newspaper upon his death noted that "the two spots in our city most admired for their great beauty are Crapo park and Aspen Grove cemetery, and without the aid of Edward Hageman[sic], neither of these would be what they are to-day" (*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, March 13, 1917). In fact, Charles Starker and Edward Hagemann both served as park commissioners, with both jointly resigning from that commission in 1898 for reasons unstated (*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, February 22, 1898). Another article noted that Starker and Hagemann both devoted a great deal of their time to the beautification of Aspen Grove, with Edward chosen president of the association upon Starker's death and "during many years he looked after the beautiful silent city of the dead with the most painstaking care and attention" (*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, December 25, 1917). In 1904, Hagemann was listed as the president of the Board of Control for Aspen Grove Cemetery (1904 Burlington City Directory).

*William Steyh*

William Steyh was born in Germany in 1845. He immigrated to the United States in 1866 and married Christine Pfeiff in 1873. He was listed as a civil engineer in the 1880-1910 U.S. Censuses while living in Burlington. His son, William H. was also listed as a civil engineer in the 1900 census. He served as City

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Engineer and was noted to having spent years of railroad building in western Iowa and neighboring states prior to settling in Burlington (*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, September 23, 1918). He was still working for the Burlington Railroad when on a trip in Colorado on railroad business, Steyh took sick and died on October 6, 1918. He was buried in Aspen Grove. It was noted upon his death that he had been city engineer for many years in Burlington, "during which time he was active in helping establish many permanent public improvements" and in the "laying out of Crapo park and Aspen Grove," his work testifying to "his skill and his love of the beautiful" (*Burlington Gazette*, October 7, 1918).

*Raymond Duerr*

Raymond Duerr was also a civil engineer, who served as assistant city engineer in Burlington from 1910 to 1914, then as Des Moines County engineer for two years, and then as county engineer of Van Buren County from 1916 to 1919 when he left for Syria and Armenia to engage in reconstruction work in those war-torn regions of the world (*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, January 14, 1919). He returned to Burlington where he became superintendent of the Aspen Grove Cemetery in 1922 having succeeded P.H. Christensen in that post. At the time, his ability as an engineer was praised, with plans to install a drainage system and "make maps of the cemetery" (*Burlington Gazette*, January 11, 1922). In 1930, one project of Duerr's was a plan for the roads in the new north addition to the cemetery, "which extends up to within 300 feet of Sunnyside avenue."

In harmony with the plan of the cemetery, the roads laid out are winding and one of the main approaches will be by way of the ravines branching from the main entrance road at the cemetery vault. This road when extended will proceed north under the concrete bridge near the Darwin memorial. The road will then proceed north and wind thru two ravines and join in a circle at the north end. With this plan of roads, it will be possible for the cemetery association to begin planting trees to beautify the section ahead of burials (*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, January 16, 1930).

In 1944, it was noted that Duerr had been the superintendent for the "past 20 years," had graduated from the engineering department at Iowa State University, and that his engineering experience had been very useful to the cemetery board in the expansion program for Aspen Grove during this period. Noted among his improvements was the widening of many of the drives using a 22-foot minimum and 30-foot width for the main drives (*Burlington Hawk-Eye Gazette*, May 24, 1944). Duerr passed away in Burlington at the age of 62 on September 9, 1947, while still superintendent of the cemetery. He is buried in Aspen Grove. His obituary noted that he had been born in McGregor, Iowa, in 1885 and attended Grinnell College and the University of Iowa (graduating in 1910), and then received his civil engineering degree from Iowa State in 1915. He married Bertha "Birdie" Elizabeth Dear in 1922 (*Burlington Hawk-Eye Gazette*, September 9, 1947).

In addition to those who served in official capacities with the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association, were the notable contributions to the cemetery's built environment by architects William Le Baron Jenney and Harvey Irving Goddard. It also appears that Joseph Earnshaw, a protégé of the noted Adolph Strauch, worked with Charles Starker in some of the design of Aspen Grove Cemetery's landscape plan and drainage.

*William Le Baron Jenney*

William L.B. Jenny helped launch the Chicago School of Architecture and was a pioneer of skyscraper design (Craven 2019). He trained as an architect and engineer at Harvard and in Paris. He arrived in Chicago in 1867 and "began a practice that would not only impact building design but also influence a whole generation of Chicago architects" and specialized in commercial buildings and public parks. But after Chicago's Great Fire of 1871, Jenney turned to iron and steel construction with masonry cladding, with the 10-story tall Home Insurance Building completed in 1885 using steel for its support skeleton considered one of his seminal skyscrapers (Architecture & Design Dictionary: William Le Baron Jenney, accessed at <https://www.architecture.org/learn/resources/architecture-dictionary/entry/william-le-baron-jenney/>, July 2021).

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

During the 1870s, Jenney's firm of Jenney, Schermerhorn and Bogart supervised much of the implementation of Olmsted and Vaux's plan for Riverside, Illinois, contributing significantly to the physical landscape character of this early Picturesque suburb. Much of Jenney's landscape work has been superseded by that of later practitioners. Due to lack of public funding, Jenney only was able to implement portions of his 1871 plan for Chicago's Douglas, Humboldt, and Garfield Parks and boulevards. Jens Jensen later redesigned much of Jenney's extant park work. In the 1870s, Jenney and H.W.S. Cleveland were hired to work on the design of Graceland, Chicago's new rural cemetery conceived in the Picturesque tradition. Jenney brought O.C. Simonds into the project, who, working in the tradition of Olmsted and knowledgeable of Strauch's work at Spring Grove Cemetery, ultimately became Graceland's superintendent, applying his knowledge of Prairie Style planting to reinforce the site's strong regional character. Today, Simonds (not Jenney) is most closely associated with Graceland. Fortunately for Jenney, his design reputation rests primarily and firmly on his architectural opus (Cultural Landscape Foundation 2001).

Despite Jenney's experience with cemetery design, there is no indication that his contribution to Aspen Grove Cemetery went beyond the design of the Corse Chapel in 1881.

*Harvey Irving Goddard*

Goddard appears to have been commonly known as Harry Goddard. He was born in Illinois in 1865. He married Pauline Lillian Moore in 1888, and by 1905 the couple had moved to Burlington, Iowa. The 1907-08 Burlington City Directories, listed Harry I. Goddard as an architect working out of the Tama Building. The 1943 city directory listed Harry I. Goddard as a draftsman in Burlington, but his 1948 death certificate noted that he was by then retired but had been an architect during his career. He was buried in Greenwood Cemetery in West Burlington having died February 17, 1948 at the age of 82. Goddard was responsible for the design of the Potter Memorial Gateway, which was completed in 1907 and may have been among his early commissions in the city. This gateway served as the main entrance into the cemetery until the Sunnyside entrance was added at the north edge of the cemetery.

*Joseph Earnshaw*

Joseph Earnshaw was one of Adolph Strauch's key collaborators at Spring Grove Cemetery and was an "accomplished civil engineer" (Spring Grove Cemetery accessed at SAH Archipedia at <https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/OH-01-061-8076>, February 2022).

Strauch and Earnshaw supervised a group of 25-30 landscapers who sculpted mounds and built other minimal land forms within Spring Grove. Strauch and Earnshaw's approach to Spring Grove came to be known as the lawn cemetery concept, an influential scheme that stressed the integration of individual monuments and the landscape to create a clean, open, and unified composition. While this lawn plan cemetery design was considered radical at its inception, it eventually achieved widespread appreciation and acceptance. Cemeteries across the country were built or reconfigured to embrace the concept of a peaceful and natural setting in which to reflect and mourn the dead (Spring Grove Cemetery accessed at SAH Archipedia at <https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/OH-01-061-8076>, February 2022).

Earnshaw had been born in England in 1831. He immigrated to Cincinnati, Ohio, with his family around 1840. In Cincinnati, he practiced civil engineering along with his brother Henry. Joseph Earnshaw worked with Strauch at Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati and on Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo, New York. "In 1884, Earnshaw planned the 137-acre Highland Lawn Cemetery in Terre Haute, Indiana, and in 1889 he designed Prospect Cemetery in Toronto" (Joseph Earnshaw. The Cultural Landscape Foundation, electronic pdf accessed at <https://www.tclf.org/pioneer/joseph-earnshaw>, February 2022). He was noted for his "separately delineated drainage, divisions of burial plots, plantings, and curving pathways. In keeping with Strauch's tutelage, the intended result was a Picturesque 'lawn cemetery,' in which internal fencing and barriers were largely eliminated in favor of a united, bucolic landscape" (Joseph Earnshaw. The Cultural Landscape Foundation, electronic pdf accessed at <https://www.tclf.org/pioneer/joseph-earnshaw>, February

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

2022). Earnshaw partnered with Thomas Brown Punshon in 1890 and had commissions across the United States. It would appear that among those collaborations was working with Charles Starker at Aspen Grove Cemetery and Crapo Park. Earnshaw died in 1906 and is buried in Spring Grove Cemetery (Joseph Earnshaw. The Cultural Landscape Foundation, electronic pdf accessed at <https://www.tclf.org/pioneer/joseph-earnshaw>, February 2022).

### Comparable Properties

Historic cemeteries comparable to Aspen Grove Cemetery include the Oak Hill Cemetery in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and the Elmwood-St. Joseph Municipal Cemetery in Mason City, Iowa, both of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Rogers 2013, 2018).

Oak Hill Cemetery in Cedar Rapids has a similar history and topography to Aspen Grove. Oak Hill began in 1853 with a grid-pattern cemetery plan and evolved in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries into a naturalistic and picturesque, professionally-designed landscape, which in this case was the work of two important landscape architects: Horace W.S. Cleveland in the late nineteenth century and Ossian C. Simonds in the early twentieth century. This cemetery was also originally established on the rural outskirts of Cedar Rapids but came to be surrounded by suburban development that was both industrial and residential. While the terrain at Oak Hill is rolling, it does not have the same high upland location with steep wooded ravines that Aspen Grove possesses. As with Aspen Grove, Oak Hill features a system of curvilinear driveways and blocks and lots that conform to the natural terrain, with architect-designed mausoleums and a monumental gateway important structures in the cemetery. Like Aspen Grove, Oak Hill is a municipal cemetery open to all races and religions, with one notable aspect of its pattern of cemetery groupings being neighbors in the surrounding residential neighborhoods often “recreating” their neighborhoods in life in their interments in the cemetery. Oak Hill Cemetery was listed for its architectural significance as well as its historical significance for its representation of the social history of the city including race relations, the role of women, and the role of immigrant groups in Cedar Rapids’ history (Rogers 2013).

The Elmwood-St. Joseph Municipal Cemetery in Mason City differs from Aspen Grove in that it is now a municipal cemetery but incorporated the St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery in its subsequent development. However, the evolution of the Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery mirrors that of Aspen Grove and Oak Hill having begun with the early grid plan as the original section but then adding areas that were designed by landscape architects influenced by the national movements in lawn-park and then memorial park designs. Here landscape architects who influenced the cemetery design included H.W.S. Cleveland, Ray Wyrick, and Donald W. Drewes, with features including curvilinear driveways and blocks and lots on a naturalistic plan. As with Aspen Grove, the later additions and development in Elmwood-St. Joseph embraced the more commercial memorial park that became popular in the twentieth century. Elmwood-St. Joseph also features a number of architect-designed mausoleums dating from the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries as well as notable monuments and bas reliefs. A lake was a late addition to the cemetery design. The landscape of Elmwood-St. Joseph, while having some rolling topography, does not have the steep ravines and sloping, wooded terrain that Aspen Grove features. It is smaller in size but was also built on the outskirts of Mason City and came to be surrounded by that city. Elmwood-St. Joseph was listed in the NRHP for its architectural significance for many of the same reasons as Aspen Grove but also for its historical significance because Elmwood-St. Joseph was associated with significant aspects of Mason City’s industrial development, social history, and ethnic heritage, which were represented by certain areas and grave stone construction in that cemetery (Rogers 2018).

### **Archaeological Potential**

As noted previously, there is some potential for archaeological components at Aspen Grove such as the reported Native American burials within the cemetery boundary as well as for evidence of nonextant

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

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Name of Property

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County and State

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buildings and features, such as the pond and sunken gardens. However, as a cemetery, archaeological investigation is not advised nor usually permitted unless unexpected finds, such as unmarked graves or Native American burial sites, are suspected or encountered. Therefore, for the current nomination, significance is not claimed under Criterion D.

### **Acknowledgements**

The nomination of the Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District was made possible by the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association through a grant from the Historic Resources Development Program from the State Historical Society of Iowa. The project director is Mike Bloomer, Administrator of Aspen Grove Cemetery. Bloomer. Paul French, a volunteer for the Aspen Grove Cemetery Association assisted with the historical research, provided historical maps and photographs, and answered questions concerning the cemetery's development.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

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Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of 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

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

\_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other State Agency  
\_\_\_\_\_ Federal Agency  
\_\_\_\_\_ Local Government  
\_\_\_\_\_ University  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other  
\_\_\_\_\_ Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 133

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	_____	_____	3	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

**Or  
UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,211.47	Northing: 4,521,859.16
2. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,309.18	Northing: 4,521,861.25
3. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,457.60	Northing: 4,521,777.55
4. Zone: 15	Easting: 659,512.64	Northing: 4,521,764.25
5. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,545.61	Northing: 4,521,767.22
6. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,550.09	Northing: 4,521,811.66
7. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,633.29	Northing: 4,521,772.72
8. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,614.02	Northing: 4,521,721.62
9. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,706.23	Northing: 4,521,684.68
10. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,722.71	Northing: 4,521,654.72
11. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,717.83	Northing: 4,521,650.08
12. Zone: 15	Easting: 658,719.94	Northing: 4,521,615.28



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

13.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,734.77	Northing: 4,521,598.86
14.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,721.36	Northing: 4,521,591.33
15.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,723.12	Northing: 4,521,551.54
16.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,734.80	Northing: 4,521,534.59
17.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,726.32	Northing: 4,521,528.98
18.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,731.81	Northing: 4,521,484.30
19.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,748.76	Northing: 4,521,495.52
20.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,812.23	Northing: 4,521,406.37
21.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,807.33	Northing: 4,521,402.65
22.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,802.68	Northing: 4,521,366.34
23.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,856.18	Northing: 4,521,403.70
24.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,868.78	Northing: 4,521,386.32
25.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,863.01	Northing: 4,521,380.76
26.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,870.77	Northing: 4,521,209.40
27.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,826.02	Northing: 4,521,207.08
28.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,827.48	Northing: 4,521,117.96
29.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,932.01	Northing: 4,521,118.85
30.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,937.18	Northing: 4,520,899.45
31.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,862.07	Northing: 4,520,898.29
32.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,792.81	Northing: 4,520,751.51
33.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,338.29	Northing: 4,520,967.61
34.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,153.46	Northing: 4,521,102.14
35.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,230.37	Northing: 4,521,103.79
36.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,231.66	Northing: 4,521,212.43
37.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,275.05	Northing: 4,521,215.17
38.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,266.69	Northing: 4,521,520.93
39.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,229.54	Northing: 4,521,522.85
40.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,229.39	Northing: 4,521,529.64
41.Zone: 15	Easting: 658,220.76	Northing: 4,521,531.26

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District is shown as the solid black outline on the accompanying map entitled "Topographic map showing nomination boundary and UTM coordinates of the Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District."

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the entirety of Aspen Grove Cemetery, the extent of which was achieved during the period of significance. It includes the original cemetery section, the first addition, and the late nineteenth century to mid-twentieth century expansions and developments as the cemetery evolved from the Landscape Lawn Plan to the Memorial Park plan.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Ray Werner Project Historian & Leah D. Rogers Principal Investigator date March 6, 2022  
organization Tallgrass Archaeology LLC telephone 319-354-6722  
street & number 2460 S. Riverside Drive email lrogerstallgrass@gmail.com  
city or town Iowa City state Iowa zip code 52246

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

**Additional Documentation**

**Topographic map showing nomination boundary (black outline) and UTM coordinates (numbered green dots) of the Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District. Source: USGS Burlington Quadrangle map obtained from ExpertGPS Pro mapping software, 2021.**



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

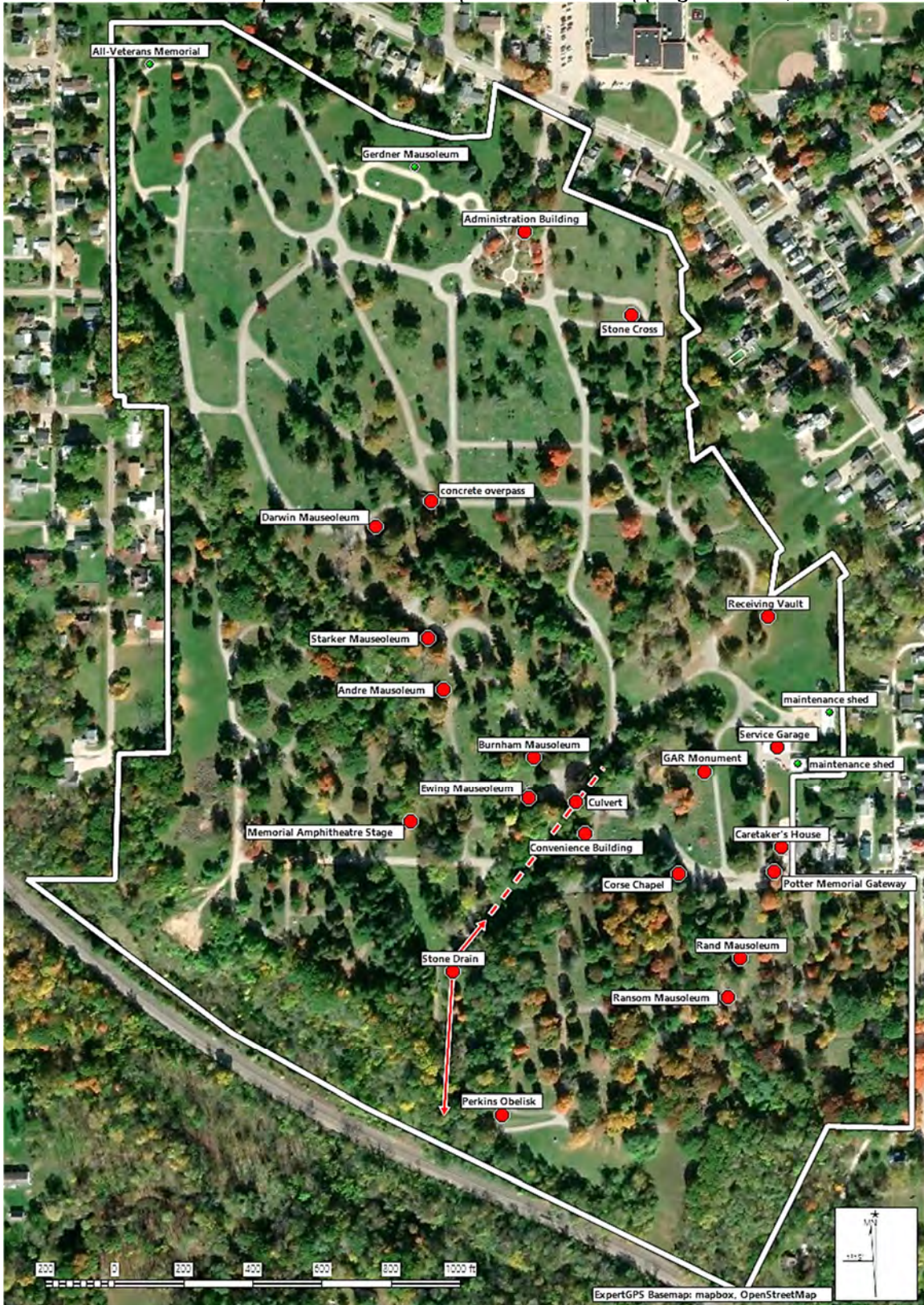
Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

**Aerial map showing nomination boundary of Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District (white outline) and the contributing (red dots/red lines) and non-contributing (green dots) resources.**

Source: Aerial map obtained from ExpertGPS Pro mapping software, 2021.



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

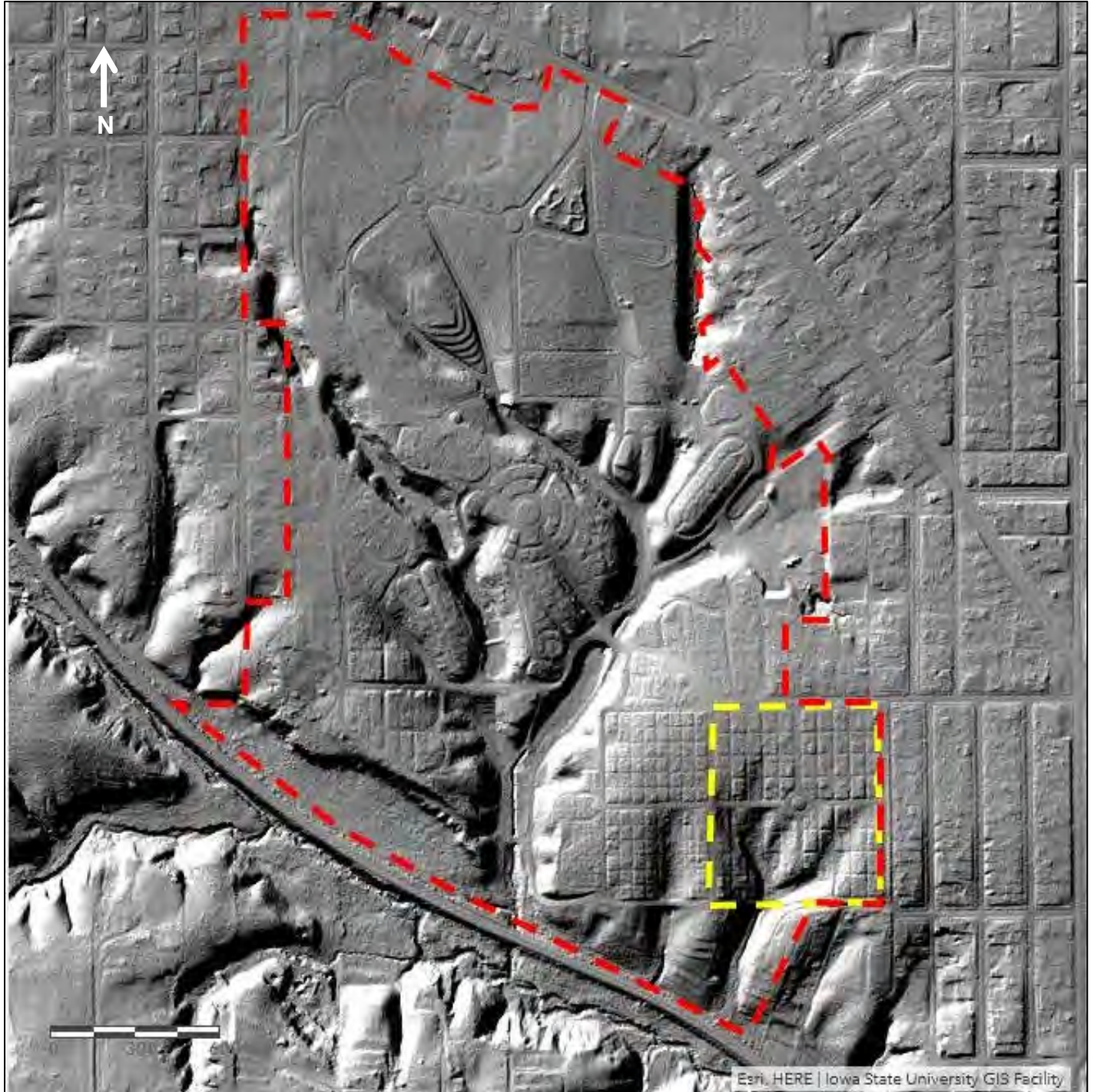
Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

**LiDAR Hillshade image of Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District (red dashed outline) showing the terrain in relation to the overall cemetery and the original section (yellow dashed outline).**

Map obtained from Iowa Geographic Map Server 2021.



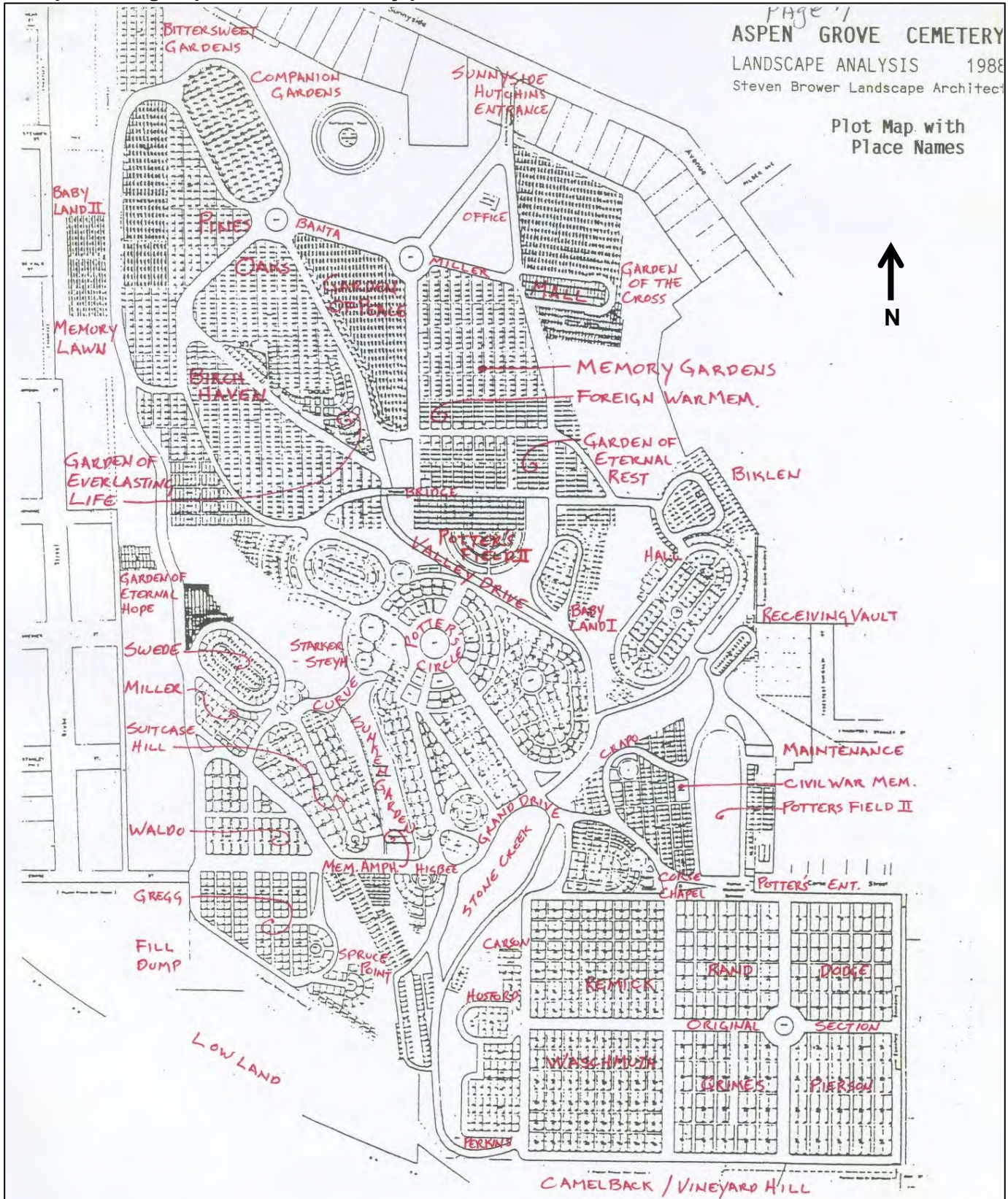
Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

Map showing Aspen Grove Cemetery plats and notable features in 1988. Source: Brower 1988:7



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

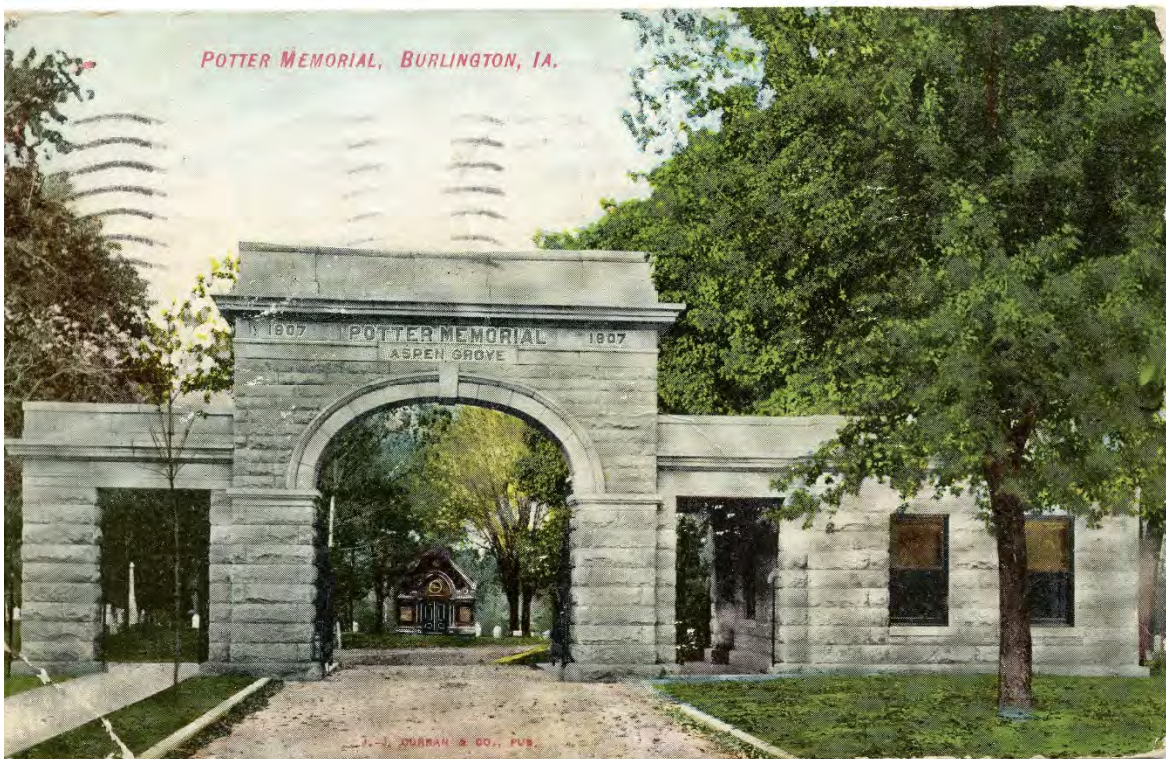
County and State

**Additional Historical Photographs.**

Source: DMCHS AGCA collection, Burlington, Iowa.



Corse Chapel and flower beds west of the Potter Memorial Arch, looking WNW.



Hand-colored photograph of the 1907 Potter Memorial Arch from just outside of the cemetery and looking west towards the chapel (framed within the archway)

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

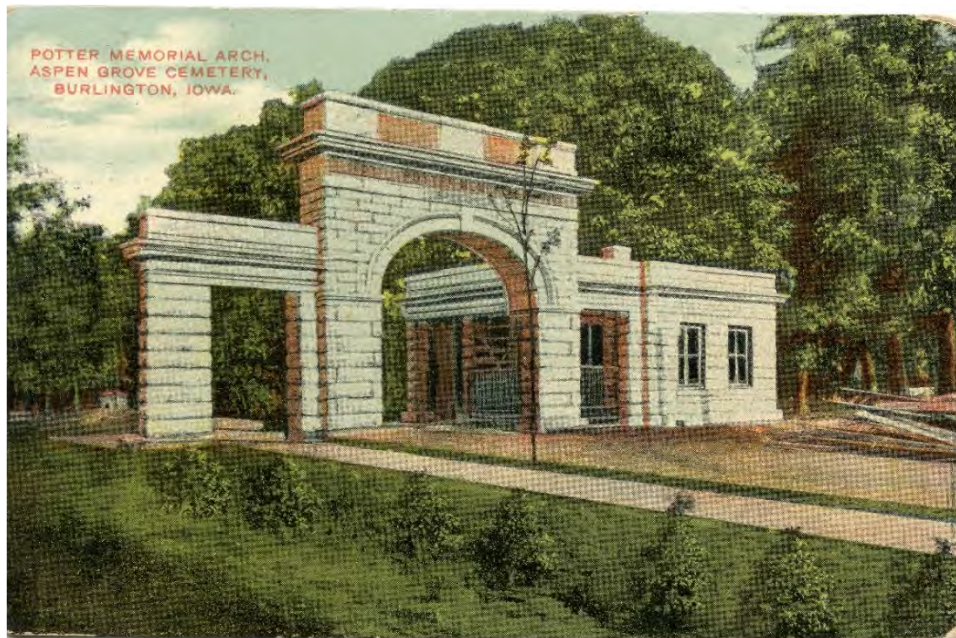
Name of Property

County and State



Potter Memorial, Entrance to Aspen Grove, Burlington, Iowa. 86.01104/1410 PUBLISHED BY JOHN BOESCH CO.

Postcard of the 1907 Potter Memorial Arch looking west on Corse Street, with the cemetery caretaker's house at far right.



Hand-colored postcard photo of the 1907 Potter Memorial Arch from just outside of the cemetery looking NW.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



1889 photograph of drive in Aspen Grove Cemetery. Source: H.R. Page and Company 1889:107.



The Sunnyside Ave entrance under construction (current main entrance) in the early 1950s.



Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



Photo of a barn being torn down to make way for the extant service building.  
Aspen Grove Cemetery photograph collection.



South side view of the service building.  
Aspen Grove Cemetery photograph collection.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State



1950s photograph of rear of service garage. Source: Aspen Grove Cemetery Collection.

*Scenes of Aspen Grove Cemetery, Burlington, Iowa*



Historical scenes from Aspen Grove Cemetery.  
Postcard from Wholesale Distributors, Inc., Burlington, Iowa.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

Des Moines County, Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs under separate cover. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and does not need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

**Name of Property:** Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District

**City or Vicinity:** Burlington

**County:** Des Moines **State:** Iowa

**Photographer:** Ashlynn Brown, Tallgrass Archaeology LLC

**Date Photographed:** 11-08-2019 (#13), 11-25-2020 (#17), 07-14-2021 (#2, 4), & 07-17-2021 (#1, 3, 5-12, 14-16, 19-21)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1 of 21: Potter Memorial Building and Gateway looking West
- Photo 2 of 21: Caretaker's House looking NW
- Photo 3 of 21: Corse Chapel looking WNW
- Photo 4 of 21: Service Garage looking SE
- Photo 5 of 21: Ransom Mausoleum looking NE
- Photo 6 of 21: Ewing Mausoleum looking NNE
- Photo 7 of 21: Burnham Mausoleum looking SW
- Photo 8 of 21: Rand Mausoleum looking SW
- Photo 9 of 21: Andre Mausoleum looking NNW
- Photo 10 of 21: Darwin Mausoleum looking NE
- Photo 11 of 21: Starker Mausoleum looking NW
- Photo 12 of 21: Convenience Building looking WSW
- Photo 13 of 21: Receiving Vault, with Maintenance Shed in background looking SE
- Photo 14 of 21: Concrete Overpass looking SSE
- Photo 15 of 21: Memorial Amphitheatre Stage looking NW
- Photo 16 of 21: Stone Drain looking SSW
- Photo 17 of 21: Stone and Concrete Arched Culvert looking NE
- Photo 18 of 21: Civil War Monument and Cannon looking NW
- Photo 19 of 21: Perkins Obelisk looking WNW
- Photo 20 of 21: Stone Cross looking NE
- Photo 21 of 21: Administration Building looking SE

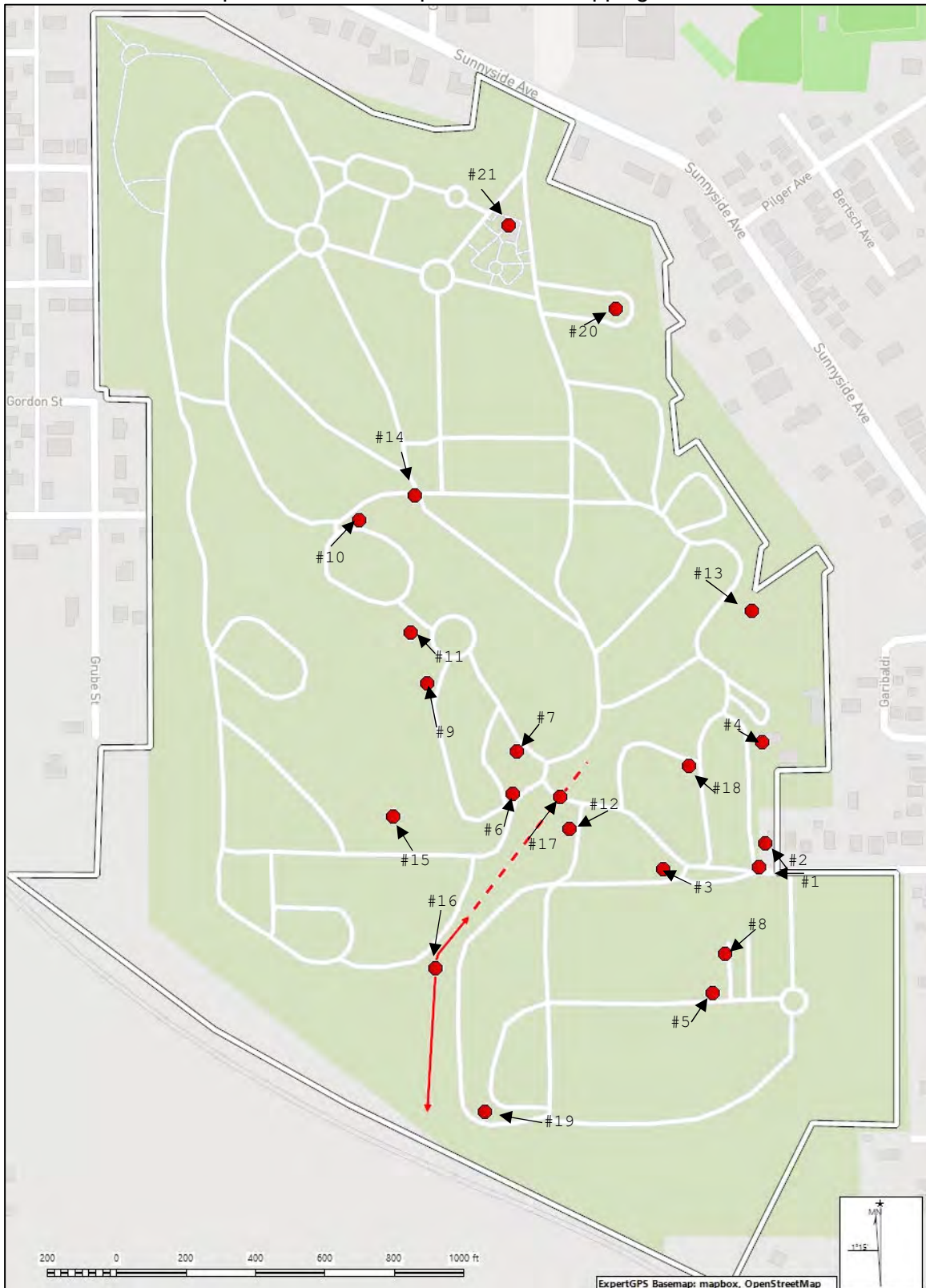
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District  
Name of Property

Des Moines County, Iowa  
County and State

**Map Showing Direction of Photographs #1-21**  
Street map obtained from ExpertGPS Pro mapping software, 2021.





1907

POTTER MEMORIAL

1907

ASPEN GROVE

THIS GATE WILL BE CLOSED FRI. 4:30 PM TO MON. 7:30 AM. PLEASE USE SOUTHWEST ENTRANCE. THANK YOU

STOP

NO MOTORCYCLES, MOPEDS, OR DOGS ALLOWED

SPEED LIMIT 15

NO MOTORCYCLES, MOPEDS, OR DOGS ALLOWED





18 CORSE 81

IN MEMORIAM  
ELLEN EDWARDS  
WIFE OF  
JOHN M. CORSE  
1881

JOHN MURRAY  
CORSE  
MAY 18 1881  
U.S.A.

BARR







RANSOM





E. W. I.

1877



1876  
BURNHAM

BURNHAM  
Died May 7  
1885



RAND

1881

MAUSOLEUM  
FEB 1881  
MAY 1881



MEMORIAL

CAVE



DARWIN



STARKER







1933

ASPEN GROVE

DAVISON











IN MEMORY  
OF THE DEFENDERS  
OF THE UNION  
1861-1865

DES MOINES COUNTY.  
IN THE MEMORY OF  
TWO THOUSAND Loyal SOLDIERS  
OF THIS COUNTY WHO ANSWERED  
PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S CALL  
THIS MEMORIAL IS DEDICATED.  
THEIR NAMES MAY BE FORGOTTEN  
BUT THEIR DEEDS ARE  
RECORDED IN THE ANNALS  
OF A GREAT COUNTRY.  
ERECTED BY THE  
DES MOINES COUNTY SOLDIERS  
RELIEF COMMISSION  
AS AUTHORIZED BY  
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.  
DEDICATED MEMORIAL DAY  
1912

THE  
CANNON  
WAS  
PRESENTED  
TO  
THE  
CITY  
OF  
DES  
MOINES  
BY  
THE  
DES  
MOINES  
COUNTY  
SOLDIERS  
RELIEF  
COMMISSION  
AS  
AUTHORIZED  
BY  
THE  
BOARD  
OF  
SUPERVISORS  
DEDICATED  
MEMORIAL  
DAY  
1912



CHARLES ELIOTT PERROW  
BORN 1871  
DIED 1954  
MEMORIAL TO THE  
SACRIFICE OF THE  
SOLDIERS OF THE  
UNITED STATES ARMY  
AND NAVY WHO  
DIED IN THE  
WORLD WAR  
1914-1918  
AND  
1941-1945  
AND  
THE  
NAVY RESERVE  
1916-1918  
AND  
THE  
NAVY RESERVE  
1941-1945







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 3/10/2022      Date of Pending List: 3/28/2022      Date of 16th Day: 4/12/2022      Date of 45th Day: 4/25/2022      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      4/22/2022 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Paul Lusignan      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229      Date 04/22/2022

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

IOWA ARTS  
COUNCIL

PRODUCE  
IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL  
MUSEUM OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

STATE HISTORIC SITES

STATE HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
OFFICE OF IOWA

IOWA HISTORICAL  
FOUNDATION

March 10, 2022

Joy Beasley, Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places  
ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Dear Ms Beasley:

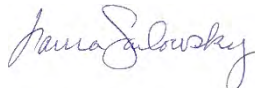
The following National Register nomination from Iowa is enclosed for your review and listing if acceptable. Photos chosen for inclusion from the Photo Log are labeled on each.

### **Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District**

The Aspen Grove Cemetery is significant at the local level under Criterion C for its architectural significance. This cemetery was established early in Burlington's history when it was serving as the territorial capital prior to the establishment of the State of Iowa in 1846. The first burials date from 1844, with older burials moved here in 1852 from an older burying ground that had been abandoned. The earliest part of the cemetery was in the southeast quadrant of the current cemetery. This part of the cemetery was an English Garden grid plan, with driveways around all four sides, one down the center to a circle drive where two driveways branch to the east and west. The first addition was added to the west side of the original and was also in the grid plan. However, by the late nineteenth century, the new additions began to be designed in the Landscape Lawn plan, which dominated the cemetery's design into the twentieth century. In the mid to late twentieth century, newer additions to the cemetery continued the curvilinear driveway plans but incorporated new ideas of cemetery and burial design in the Memorial Park plan. In the newer sections, the grave markers are generally closer to the ground, some lying flat, although some larger monuments continued to be added to the new sections as well. The Aspen Grove Cemetery Historic District qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion Consideration D, as a cemetery that derives its primary significance from distinctive design features. The period of significance is from 1844 when the cemetery was established to 1960 by which time the bulk of cemetery expansion and design was complete, with the last major additions having been the administration building (1956) and the monumental cross (1960) in the Garden of the Cross section of the cemetery. Significant dates include 1844 when the cemetery was established, 1881 when Corse Chapel was built, and 1906-07 when the Potter Memorial Building and Gateway was established as the main entrance into the cemetery.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Laura Sadowsky  
State Historian  
Historic Preservation Specialist  
[laura.sadowsky@iowa.gov](mailto:laura.sadowsky@iowa.gov) | 515.281.3989 | [iowaculture.gov](http://iowaculture.gov)