

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 97000323

Date Listed: 4/14/97

<u>Union Cemetery-Pioneer Calvary Cemetery</u>	<u>Thurston</u>	<u>WA</u>
Property Name	County	State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

4/14/97
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Significance:

The nomination is amended to remove Criterion B and retain Criterion A in the area of Exploration/Settlement. [The current documentation fails to establish the individual significance of the persons cited under Criterion B. While these individuals were early residents, their specific contributions to local and regional history remain undocumented except in the most general terms. In order to establish significance under Criterion B, the contributions of individuals must be extraordinary in comparison to others, must be explicitly justified, and must be based on a comparative analysis. When persons associated with a property have collectively had a significant demonstrable impact on a community, the resource is more likely to be significant under Criterion A for a broad pattern of events. [NR Bulletin 32, pp.7-9; NR Bulletin 41, pp.11 & 16].

Period of Significance:

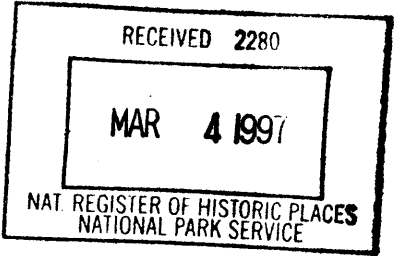
The period of significance is revised to read: 1866-1900. [This period best reflects the site's historic significance under exploration/settlement.]

This information was confirmed with L. McCroskey of the WA SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

NPS Form 10-900
OMB No. 1024-0018
(Rev. 10/90)



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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Union Cemetery/Pioneer Calvary Cemetery
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 5700 Littlerock Road not for publication
city or town Tumwater vicinity _____
state Washington code WA county Thurston code 067 zip code 98501

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David Hansen 2.18.97
Signature of certifying official Date

David Hansen, State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Cal B. Fung 4/14/97

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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Property Name Union/Pioneer Calvary Cemetery

County and State Thurston, Washington

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<input type="checkbox"/> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total

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

No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

N/A

0

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Funerary/Cemetery

Funerary/Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

foundation N/A
walls _____
roof _____
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See attached.

Property Name Union/Pioneer Calvary Cemetery

County and State Thurston, Washington

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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Exploration/Settlement

Period of Significance

1866-1947

Significant Dates

1866-founding date

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Jesse Ferguson/George and Isabella Bush/Charles Mason

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
See attached.

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Section number 7 Page 1
Name of Property Union/Pioneer Calvary
County and State Thurston, Washington

Narrative Description

The Union Pioneer Cemetery and Pioneer Calvary Cemetery are an approximately 3.95 acre rectangular plot (two acres "more or less" acres were originally deeded for the Union Cemetery [now 1.65 acres] and two and three tenths of an acre for the Pioneer Calvary Cemetery) located in the south part of Tumwater along Littlerock Road in central Thurston County. Historically, this area was the site of the first American settlement near Puget Sound. Early plat maps show extensive settlement and cultivation of the area and indicate it was an area of natural prairie. The prairie attracted settlement because much of the rest of the area was heavily wooded. It would also have been fertile ground for farming near the Deschutes River.

The cemetery is located on south sloping prairie ground along Littlerock Road in south Tumwater. It is bisected by a center roadway which divides the north and south sections of the plot. No visible demarcation divides the Union Cemetery from the Pioneer Calvary plot. Historically, according to a longtime resident, Dale Rutledge, the Pioneer Calvary section had a separate entrance. The north roadway was the access to the Calvary section which was entered through a gateway with a tall cross. The row of fir trees just west of the Rutledge plots grew in the fenceline. The "jog" in the property line on the south side marks the easternmost line of this section. The Calvary Section was enclosed with a woven wire fence and it could not be accessed from the Union Cemetery.

The entire plot is now accessed through an opening closed by a chain on the northeast side of the plot and by the central roadway which has posts connected by chains. Historically, persons visiting the cemetery parked outside the plot and did not drive in the center roadway. A more modern cemetery is located to the north of the historic property, Olympic Memorial Gardens.

The cemetery is enclosed on the south and west by a vertical board fence and on the north by a remnant of the 1930s era wire fence. The west end of the plot is a tangle of scotch broom. It is unknown if any gravesites are in that area. The east side main entry is obscured by irregularly placed and sized bushes. The whole cemetery has extensive vegetation including a row of bushes on the east side along the main road and what amounts to a grove of large firs in the northwest corner. There are a wide variety of other types of vegetation including oregon grape. The cemetery itself has mown grassland punctuated by the vegetation. Large scotch broom plants are at the west end of the Pioneer Calvary Section. Many of the grave markers are obscured by the overgrown bushes.

Property Name Union/Pioneer Calvary Cemetery

County and State Thurston, Washington

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

See attached.

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
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 3.95 acres

UTM References

1	<u>1/0</u>	<u>5/0/6/0/0/0</u>	<u>5/2/0/4/4/6/0</u>	3	<u>/ /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>/ /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	4	<u>/ /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) _____

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

These are the historic boundaries of the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shanna Stevenson

organization Tumwater Historic Preservation Commission Staff date July, 1994

street & number 2404 Heritage Court SW telephone 786-5480

city or town Olympia state WA zip code 98502

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Tumwater

street & number 555 Israel Road telephone 491-3000

city or town Tumwater state WA zip code 98503

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Section number 7 Page 2
Name of Property Union/Pioneer Calvary Cemetery
County and State Thurston, Washington

Although the cemetery is set up in regular rows which run perpendicular to the center roadway, the placement of the stones gives an overall random appearance. The Union portion of the cemetery is laid out in four quarters with 48 gravesites in each quarter in twelve rows. (Although plat maps give this arrangement, the actual arrangement in the cemetery seems to differ from that plat.) The range of stones includes very early signed marble headstones dating from the 1860's, obelisks, many bevel markers, small flush metal markers and a few family plot stele markers. Most are handcarved and are mostly made from sandstone. The earliest stone dates from 1855. There are 207 markers in both cemeteries. There are 11 bases without markers. It is unknown how many interments have been made in the plot. None of the markers in the Pioneer Calvary Section date from after 1900 and the majority in the Union section are from the 1880s and 1890s. The dates on the stones are random so it does not appear that one part of the cemeteries was developed before another. It appears that many of the graves have fallen in since the overall appearance of the site is very irregular. It is known that several of the graves were exhumed to be reburied in the Masonic Cemetery and in the newer Calvary Cemetery, both of which are in Tumwater. Some of the sandstone markers are badly weathered and are nearly unreadable.

Because of the known long period of time when the cemetery was overgrown and ill cared for, it is probable that a number of the stones have been lost. Still, many of the historic markers are in place although some are displaced and fallen. The cemetery was not a highly landscaped property since it evolved over time. It is known from cemetery records that in October 1921, seventeen maple trees were planted, although they evidently do not survive. In addition, some historic concrete curbing is intact as well as a wrought iron and wire fence grave enclosures. A letter from the Archdiocese of Seattle Archives from April 24, 1956 noted that there were 111 remains still in the Pioneer Calvary cemetery, with three burials taking place in the 1950s, although there had been few burials there since 1922 at the date of the letter in 1956. It was noted that about 50 burials were transferred to the new Calvary Cemetery at that date. In 1956, the cemetery was described: "The old cemetery is overgrown with fern and scotch broom, but there are trails through it, and evidence that someone goes there now and then to clean around a grave."

In the 1960's the Catholic Church according to letters from the Archdiocesan Archives, tried to purchase additional land for the Old Calvary Cemetery under the transmission lines adjacent to the existing cemetery. This was vetoed by the Bonneville Power Administration.

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County and State Thurston, Washington

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Union/Pioneer Calvary Cemetery is significant because of its associations with the earliest period of Tumwater history and because of the burials there of some of the party of the first permanent American settlers on Puget Sound at Tumwater. It is also significant as the only extant property associated with persons important in local, state and national history. George and Isabella Bush, members of the 1845 Simmon/Bush settlement party who located at Tumwater are interred here. Bush, a mulatto, was widely recognized and honored for his generosity. It is believed that because Bush and his family were mulattoes affected by the Black Exclusion Law of 1844 passed by the Oregon Provisional Government, the Simmons/Bush party decided to settle north of the Columbia River where the Exclusion Law did not apply, prompting the settlement at Tumwater. The Cemetery also has the only extant sites authentically associated with these earliest settlers. The cemetery is also significant for the interments there with gravemarkers noting they were Indian War Volunteers, unusual in Washington. There is also a marker for War of 1812 veteran William Rutledge, the only one in Washington. (George Bush also probably served in that War.) There are also Civil War Veterans here. The Pioneer Calvary Cemetery is significant as the first Catholic Cemetery in the area. Both cemeteries represent two of the earliest burial plots in the county.

This area of Tumwater by 1855 was heavily settled. The 1854 survey map shows the extent of the settlement and cultivation of the area, especially the David Kindred Farm. It is notable that the area around the cemetery is cited as "Bush's Prairie" on the map, making it likely that the early burials listed as being "at Bush Prairie" were at this site. The area around the cemetery was also the site of an early school said by early sources to be on the Thomas Harper Donation Land Claim near what is now Airdustrial Way and Capitol Way or at the later site of the Brighton Park School where the Fire Station on Israel Road is located. Early meetings about the cemetery were held in the school or in Jesse Ferguson's House which stood where Tumwater Middle School is now located, adjacent to the cemetery. It was not unusual to locate a cemetery near a school. In Thurston County, both the Ruddell Pioneer Cemetery in Lacey and the McLane Cemetery on Delphi Road were located near early schools, since they were community centers.

The oldest Thurston County Cemetery is probably the Ruddell Pioneer Cemetery where the first interment occurred in 1852. The Ruddell Pioneer Cemetery was incorporated by the Legislature at the same time

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County and State Thurston, Washington

as the Union Cemetery. The Masonic Cemetery had its first burial in 1852 also although it was not chartered officially until 1859.

Although it was not formally dedicated until 1866, extant markers indicate that as early as 1855 interments were being made at the site. Hazard Stevens records in his Life of General Isaac Stevens, that George Watson Stevens, Isaac Stevens' nephew died while crossing the Skookumchuck River in February 1855, and "He was buried on the beautiful green Bush Prairie, amid the scenes of mountain, prairie and forest he loved so well. His intimate friends, Mason and Doty, were soon to be laid to rest by his side." (Vol. 2, pg 11.)

Louise Bomer's stone has an interment date of 1855 on her stone. Hazard Stevens recounts that James Doty, a secretary to Isaac Stevens and member of the parties who negotiated the Indian Treaties died in 1857 and "He was buried on Bush prairie beside his friend, George W. Stevens." (page 268.) Charles Mason, who had served as Territorial Secretary of State and Acting Governor during the Indian War died in 1859 and according to a newspaper account of his funeral was "buried on Bush's prairie." Hazard Stevens notes that "He was laid at rest on Bush prairie, beside his friend, George W. Stevens." (page 289) There is no marker for Stevens or Doty. One plat map gives a location for the Mason grave and a replacement marker has recently been installed.

Jesse Ferguson's young wife died in childbirth in 1861 as did their infant daughter. Their graves are marked. George Bush died in 1863 and is buried in the Union Cemetery. From available records it appears that by 1865 when the first meeting was held to establish the cemetery, probably 10 to 12 burials had already taken place and the site was well established.

Extant records document a meeting December 1, 1865 at the dwelling of Jesse Ferguson [sic] of several interested persons for "the purpose of taking measures to procure a suitable piece of ground for a burying place or cemetery, and also layout establish and organize the same." At that meeting James Dunlap was named chair and C. P. Judson as secretary. Judson was also charged to contact the legislature and proceed with incorporating a cemetery association. The group later met in March 1866 and solicited Nathan S. Porter, a local attorney and surveyor, Henry Jenks and Tolbert Bush, son of George Bush to survey the grounds. The result was the description of two acres of ground more or less on Jesse Ferguson's original donation land claim. (The size of this part of the cemetery is now 1.65 acres. It is not known when the size changed from the original.) Ferguson deeded the property to the Acting Trustees of the Union Cemetery of Thurston County for \$10.00 in December 1867. It was recorded by the Auditor on

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March 19, 1868. Ferguson signed with his mark in the presence of Reuben Crowder and Andrew Moses. It is evident from these records that it was the settlers on Bush Prairie who initiated the cemetery.

By an act of the Territorial Legislature in 1866, the Union Cemetery of Thurston County was declared a "body corporate and politic". It was incorporated by William Jenks, James Dunlap and Morris Littlejohn.

The account books for 1868 and 1869 note that the cemetery was fenced with a wooden fence and the record notes expenditures for hinges and fastening for the gate.

The price of the lots was set at \$6.00. C. P. Judson, the secretary for the group kept minutes with rather novel spellings. By 1870 the Trustees were Albert Wellman, David Drury and Jesse Ferguson. The group continued to meet in the Bush Prairie School or at Ferguson's nearby home. Sanford Bush is recorded as being in attendance.

In 1873, another cemetery was established adjacent to and west of the Union Cemetery. In January, 1873 Father A. M. A. Blanchet, Catholic Bishop of Nisqually purchased 2.3 acres of land from Jesse Ferguson for a cemetery, known as the Calvary Cemetery. (Subsequently the plot has been known as Pioneer Calvary to distinguish it from the nearby Calvary Cemetery also in Tumwater.) The purchase price was "57 U.S. Gold coin dollars," according to the deed. Some information from the Archdiocese of Seattle Archives relate that as early as 1853, burials had occurred in the plot which was designated at that date.

By 1886, the fence needed repair and the Union Cemetery was well subscribed since by 1900, 56 lots were sold. That year the next generation of the Bush family took over the cemetery trusteeships with George Gaston (son in law of W. O. Bush), J. L. Kimsey (W. O. Bush's stepson) and John Bush (W. O. Bush's son) as trustees. J. K. Littlejohn was also a trustee.

In 1909 the New Calvary Cemetery adjacent to the Tumwater Masonic Cemetery was established and according to what is known, many of the interments from the Pioneer Calvary Cemetery were moved to the new location.

It is also known that by that date the Union Cemetery and probably the Pioneer Calvary Cemetery had become overgrown and derelict. Dale Rutledge stated that when his grandfather died in 1909, the family did

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not want to bury him there and in fact at the same time moved 10 other Rutledge family members to the Oddfellow's Cemetery next to the Masonic Cemetery because of the condition of the Union plot.

A gap in the records until 1919 confirms that the cemetery had fallen into disrepair and was overgrown. John Bush, Ada Sprague Mowell, who grew up in the Tumwater area, Mr. Gordon and D. R. Burdick called meetings to reorganize the cemetery and to clear out the scotch broom.

A newly reorganized group convened in 1920 with Ada Sprague Mowell, John Bush, J. W. Walker, W. J. Abbott and L. R. Burdick as trustees. A motion was made to replat and restake the cemetery. They also determined to re-issue the deeds. Frank Rutledge surveyed the cemetery and set the new stakes.

The Cemetery was cleaned up in 1921 and according to records, seventeen maple trees were planted. The minutes from that meeting also note that there was an old shack at the entrance to the Catholic cemetery. In 1921-1922 the cemetery was "plowed and staked" and in 1922 a well was dug for the cemetery. Minutes from 1922-23 describe that the cattle from an adjacent property broke down the fence and tipped over stones also damaging the gate.

In 1930 Mrs. Mowell employed someone to do work on the cemetery and that appears to be when the wire fencing was installed since individual contributions were solicited for the fence in 1930 and 1932. Iron posts were set in cement and a woven wire fence installed.

A plan was conceived no doubt because of the difficulty of keeping the site to transfer the cemetery to the state in 1937. Evidently nothing came of the plan. A letter was addressed to Ernest N. Hutchinson of State Parks asking for the action. An article in the Daily Olympian in 1937 gives the details.

"The cemetery, located on the Littlerock road a few miles from Tumwater, was started in Territorial days and in 1866 a deed for the land was presented the association by the state. [incorrect information] Since few friends and relatives of pioneers buried there are in the immediate Puget Sound area, the care of the grounds became too costly for the few remaining here and consequently is in need of repairs. George Talcott, who is taking an active interest in the program, said there should be no doubt of the state's willingness to care for the cemetery since many of the territorial and early state officials, including Charles Mason, first secretary of state for the state of Washington, [incorrect] are interred there. Many other pioneer burial places, Talcott said, may exist throughout the state

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but this particular one is of special interest because it is located near "The end of the Oregon trail."

Few burials took place in the 1940s or 1950s. In the 1960s according to another longtime resident, Jim Brown interest was revived in some of the interments. A group interested in those who fought in the War of 1812 repaired the stone of William Rutledge. The Black Women's Caucus of Thurston County repaired the Bush Marker and had it encased in cement. During this time A. G. West tried to document the cemetery and groups from both Tumwater Junior and Senior High School worked at the site.

In 1972, local museum director Ken Hopkins and members of the Union Cemetery Board explored the possibility of turning the cemetery over to the State Historical Society. Then State Senator Harry Lewis met with Tumwater Mayor Wes Barclift. Mayor Barclift appointed Jim Brown to work with groups interested in preservation of the cemetery. In 1973, interested parties tried to effect a plan for preservation of the cemetery involving the State Capitol Museum and the City of Tumwater.

Jim Brown, acting for the City of Tumwater and David Nicandri, of the State Capitol Museum, approached Dale Rutledge and his father who were the trustees at that time about giving the cemetery to the city. In order to accomplish this the corporation authorized by the Territorial Legislature in 1866 for the Union Cemetery had to be voluntarily disincorporated. The Union Cemetery was disincorporated in 1977. The property was deeded to the City in December of 1977. It was not until 1991 that the cemetery was decommissioned. Also in 1991, the Catholic Archdiocese quit claimed the Pioneer Calvary Cemetery to the City of Tumwater.

The City started cleanup efforts after acquiring the cemetery. At that time a split rail fence was along the front of the property and a rotted wooden fence was on another part of the property. Jim Brown recalls that a few other historic elements were still present when the city acquired the site. Since the acquisition, the city has maintained the site. The last burial indicated by a stone was in 1984.

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Name of Property Union/Pioneer Calvary Cemetery
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Bibliography

Union Cemetery Records, State Library.
Information compiled by Lanny Weaver and Jill Kangas.
Interview with Jim Brown, July 1995.
Interview with Dale Rutledge, August 1995.
Material from the Archdiocese of Seattle Archives
Stevens, Hazard, Life of Isaac Stevens, Houghton, Mifflin & Co, Boston
and New York, 1900.

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Name of Property Union/Pioneer Calvary Cemetery
County and State Thurston, Washington

Verbal Boundary Description:

Union Cemetery

In Section 3, Township 17 North, Range 2 West in the Willamette Meridian: Commencing 22 chains and 2 links E and 3 chains and 34 links south of the northwest corner of Section 3; east 4 chains, 75 links; south 22°; west 5 chains, 88 links; west 3 chains 25 links; north 5 chains to beginning; Less road. Less 210 square feet to Puget Sound Power and Light.

Pioneer Calvary

In Section 3, Township 17 North, Range 2 West in the Willamette Meridian: Commencing 22 chains and 2 links east and 3 chains and 34 links south of the northwest corner of section 3 being the northwest corner of Union Cemetery; thence south 4 chains and 97 links along the west boundary of Union cemetery; west 4 chains, 3 links; north 5 chains 52 links; east 4 chains 3 links; south 55 links to beginning.

Also commencing at the northwest corner of Union Cemetery east along the north line of Union Cemetery 5 chains 21 links to road N 62° E along northwest side of road 60 feet; west 5 chains 96 links; south 55 links to beginning.

tumwater\unionnr