

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gower Cemetery
other names/site number Gower Memorial Cemetery

2. Location

street & number Covell Road between Douglas and Post Roads
city, town Edmond
state Oklahoma code OK county Oklahoma code 109 zip code 73034

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked)
Category of Property: site (checked)
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0, Total 1

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. N/A See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: [Signature]
Date: Nov. 18, 1991
State or Federal agency and bureau: Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official:
Date:
State or Federal agency and bureau:

5. 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:)
Entered in the National Register: [Signature] 12/27/91
for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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)

N/A

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black

Period of Significance

1896 - 1940

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

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 Approximately one (1) acre

UTM References

A

1	4	6	4	8	3	9	0	3	9	4	9	6	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire property historically associated with the cemetery.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Maryjo Meacham
organization Meacham & Associates date October 5, 1991
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Summary

Gower Memorial Cemetery is a tract of land one-half acre wide and two acres long in a rural area east of downtown Edmond and west of Arcadia. It is sited at a slight angle running from northwest to southeast. It is still in its original location on Covell Road between Douglas and Post Roads, near U. S. Route 66. Scrub oaks cover the hilly terrain which surrounds the cemetery. Pine trees have been planted outside the cemetery fence on the west side, with scrub oaks on the south and east sides. Covell Road runs directly in front of the cemetery on the north side. The cemetery is covered with trimmed Bermuda grass and is marked at regular intervals by headstones and footstones (some of which are deteriorated); metal markers; and five oak trees and one small shrub. Some of the historical stone markers have been removed and new markers have been added since the period of significance. However, the historical integrity of the cemetery has been maintained to some degree.

Physical Description

The Gower Cemetery is approximately 105 feet by 390 feet in size. The entrance is located along Covell Road which runs east and west along the north side of the cemetery. It is divided into 9 x 12 foot strips. Each strip has room for approximately 70 cemetery plots. Many of the graves are grouped together by families with individual gravesites scattered throughout the cemetery. The Gower Family is buried in the southeast corner of the cemetery. An area for the burial of indigents is located in the southwest corner. Four, original, six-inch steel posts mark the cemetery corners.

The cemetery includes ninety-four (94) gravesites identified by stone with the name and date of death, twenty-one (21) gravesites identified by stone or temporary metal markers by name only, and seventy-two (72) unmarked gravesites. From a 1963 list compiled by the Latter Day Saints, eleven of the seventy-two unmarked gravesites were identified by name, but the exact location of these burial sites has not been identified. Using the markers, the Latter Day Saints list, and the survey, a total of 187 gravesites has been determined to be included in the Gower Cemetery. However, this does not include the indigent plot. The southwest corner of the cemetery was reserved for the burial of indigents. Individual markers are absent from this area, although a granite memorial was installed in 1986. The total number of known contributing gravesites is 55.

Of the marked gravesites, the historic headstones and footstones are of odd and various sizes and colors. They are made of cement, sandstone, gypsum, granite and limestone. The headstone markers measure from four feet in height to those that are flush with the burial ground. There are two remaining footstones which are approximately one-third the size of headstones and are not inscribed. The grave markers remain in their original locations except for a few which were removed over the years by maintenance workers and vandals. These are located in a stack on the west side of the cemetery.

Several cement markers are inscribed with epitaphs. Among the most common inscriptions are: "At Rest.", "Asleep in Jesus." and "In God's Care." Some simply provide the place of birth. One marker appears to be inscribed on marble that was possibly salvaged from a piece of furniture.

Many of the earliest markers are large pieces of native sandstone with a name or simple inscription. Small, weather-marred metal markers, provided by mortuary homes, are either blank or illegibly inscribed. There are

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approximately thirty such markers in the cemetery. There are less than ten markers which appear to have been carved by professionals.

The oldest marker belongs to the gravesite of Elizabeth Miller, wife of Henry Miller. The marker is one of the more elaborate monuments and is a column of marble placed upon a square of limestone. Her name and date of death are inscribed on the marker.

The oldest markers and/or gravesites include:

- Marker - Elizabeth Miller - born, date unknown, died 11/20/1896.
- Marker - Jane Samuels born 10/4/1838, died 7/4/1904.
- Marker - Syrena Eavens - born 9/17/1905, died 5/5/1912.
- No marker - Lula J. Gillmore - born 2/6/1878, died 10/8/1909.
- No marker - Caroline Veasey - born 8/27/1868, died 4/13/1913.
- Marker - Johaner Mason - born 7/1895, died 9/25/1916.
- Marker - Georgia Miles - born 1888, died 1919.
- Marker - Cora (Cara) Pierson (Pearson) born date unknown, died 8/23/1914.

Some of the most distinctive markers are described below:

1. A cracked cement marker, inscribed with only one name, "DESSIE" has the letters "S" printed in reverse. Date unknown.
2. A homemade concrete marker bearing the name of ROBERT LEWIS. Handwritten in the concrete is his name and "DIED OCT 21, AT REST 1926."
3. A carved sandstone marker with the name "ANDERSON HARRIS." "BORN OCT 15 1841 DIED AUG 12 1925" is also hand carved on the stone.
4. A tall marble monument, one of the most elaborate markers in the cemetery, marks the grave of Jane Samuels, wife of Isaac Samuels. Jane Samuels was born in 1835 and died in 1904. The family name, "SAMUELS," is also inscribed at the bottom of the marble column. The marble monument rests upon a square of limestone.

Seven markers identifying veterans of the United States military (both the "Colored Cavalry" and the "Colored Infantry") are located in the cemetery. Four of the military markers without dates are simple slabs of limestone with the name of the deceased and the name of the military unit inscribed within a recessed shield. These four are thought to have died before 1940. The military markers include:

1. "W.W. O'KELLEY CO. H. 17 U.S. C. I." (no dates)

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2. "COM. SGT. ALEX PAYNE 18 U.S. C. I." (no dates)
3. "HENRY MILLER CO. C. 17 U.S. C. I." (no dates)
4. "H. B. MILLER CO. E. 17 U.S.C.I. (no dates)
5. "ISAAC SAMUELS CO. 'C'. 5 U.S. C. CAV." (no dates)
6. JOHN L. GUILLORY, Oklahoma, Pfc1, 324 Aven. Squ. AAF, W. W. 2.
2/17/1912 - 2/5/1953. This marker is noncontributing to the site because of its age.
7. DAVID J. HUNTER, Pvt., Co. "H", 65 Pioneer Infl., WWI. 3/31/1891 -
12/8/1954. This marker is noncontributing to the site because of its age.
8. EUGENE LITTLES "Soldier Boy". 8/6/1923 - 6/28/1951. This marker is
noncontributing to the site because of its age.
9. ALFRED MASON, Oklahoma, Pvt. 8 C.D. 162 Depot. Brig., World War I,
11/9/1893 - 4/6/1952. This marker is noncontributing to the site because of age.

Monuments placed in the cemetery after 1940 are also varied in type, style, and material. Some are professionally carved on granite and others are simple concrete slabs with the names and dates of births and deaths inscribed.

The cemetery remains landscaped much as it was during its period of significance. Originally it was cleared of most of the trees except for a few located near the entrance which were used for shade for cemetery visitors. These remain in the cemetery. Originally covered with native grass, Bermuda grass has been added to solve maintenance problems.

Alterations/Additions

In 1986, efforts to preserve Gower Cemetery began. Using a cemetery plan made by the founders' elder son, Willie T. Gower, Sr., who identified family plots by each family's last name, the gravesites were identified and measured horizontally into nine rows, running north and south, and each gravesite was marked with a numbered steel pin. Settled and caved-in gravesites and depressed areas were leveled with new soil, and the cemetery was covered with Bermuda sod. Additionally, two memorial monuments were erected; a granite Regal Rose monument, which lists the names of the founders--John and Ophelia Gower--and three generations of their family, as well as the names of other families buried in the cemetery, stands near the entrance; and a granite Georgia Grey monument, in memory of the homeless and paupers buried in multiple graves, marks the Indigent Plot.

Over the years some of the markers were removed by cemetery maintenance workers and vandals. Many of these

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are still located on the property, although they are not situated on individual graves. Efforts are still in progress to match these markers to gravesites. Only a few of these are engraved, most of the remaining markers are unmarked slabs of sandstone. Approximately 20 stones have yet to be put in place. A 12-inch high concrete wall, which surrounded three soldiers' graves, was removed. This wall was deteriorated and prohibited mechanical lawn maintenance.

A barbed wire and hog wire fence, which could not be determined to be original, was removed and replaced with a chain link fence. At the front entrance, a wrought iron fence and entrance gate, spanned by the name "Gower Memorial Cemetery," was added.

Although these changes have been made, the property continues to convey the same overall feeling and association of the historic period. The setting and the location remain the same. The monuments, the primary physical characteristic, remain and the Gower Cemetery appears much as it did during its period of significance. The historic markers are concentrated in small areas throughout the cemetery, with the monuments added after 1940 mixed in.

It must also be mentioned that a second cemetery began by early Black homesteaders has been located in the general vicinity, six miles northwest from the Gower Cemetery. Although each of the rural communities surrounding the Gower and the Spigner Cemeteries were small, each cemetery did serve the families in the very immediate area. The two cemeteries have been compared. The Spigner Cemetery has retained a higher degree of integrity. However, it has been determined that for the area it served, the Gower Cemetery continues to maintain a degree of integrity which should allow it to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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List of Known Contributing Graves (marked and unmarked)

Total of 55 - Buried in 1940 or before

* - Date of death probably between 1904 and 1929

1.	Allensworth	Simon	Unknown	2/25/1926
2.	Anderson	Cap	1888	1933
3.	Anderson	Porter	12/19/1860	12/16/1926
4.	Andrews	O.	7/4/1843	8/30/1930
5.	Avery	Lillie	Unknown	11/5/1931
6.	Canada	Effie	6/16/1905	2/24/1934
7.	Canada	Elizabeth	12/1/1871	6/8/1929
8.	Canister	Dezzie	1881	3/10/1938
9.	Clipper	Betty E.	Unknown	4/14/1923
10.	Duncan	Mary	11/5/1898	5/18/1935
11.	Eavens	Syrena	9/17/1905	5/5/1912
12.	Eavens	D. E. M.	12/8/1889	5/5/1919
13.	Fox	John Lee	5/31/1894	5/25/1925
14.	Fox	Laura	1885	1937
15.	Fox	Ella	4/18/1892	4/25/1938
16.	Gillmore	Lula J	2/6/1878	10/8/1909
17.	Gillmore	W. L.	Unknown	*
18.	Gower	John	1852	1921
19.	Gower	Lucy M	Unknown	10/15/1921
20.	Gower	Ophelia	12/25/1861	19/2/1922
21.	Harris	Anderson	10/5/1841	9/12/1925
22.	Harris	Ella	10/10/1886	6/30/1934
23.	Harris	Minnie	1901	1929
24.	Harris	Susie	3/9/1871	4/6/1928
25.	Hubbard	Martha	4/16/1891	5/29/1891
26.	Jackson	Edith	12/14/1902	11/20/1937
27.	James	Alma	7/27/1888	12/16/1938

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28.	Jones	Patsy, Canada	8/9/1892	7/30/1929
29.	Lewis	Robert	Unknown	10/26/1926
30.	Littles	Sp___ R	Unknown	3/30/1932 (73 yr)
31.	Luster	Frank	Unknown	9/13/1921
32.	Mason	Johaner	7/1895	9/25/1916
33.	Miles	Georgia	1888	1919
34.	Miller	Elizabeth	Unknown	11/20/1896
35.	Nala	O. Andrew B	7/4/1843	8/30/1930
36.	Owens	Virgie	3/13/1878	3/13/1934
37.	Owens	Rev. Walton	Unknown	*
38.	Parks	Victor Hugh	11/23/1939	2/16/1940
39.	Patton	Leather	Unknown	7/25/1925
40.	Peirson (Pearson)	Cora (Cara)	Unknown	8/23/1914
41.	Reece	Ike	Unknown	1921
42.	Reece	Minnie	Unknown	7/14/1934
43.	Reece	R. D.	185_	10/15/1936
44.	Robinson	Juanita	1921	1928
45.	Samuels	Isaac	Unknown	*
	C. "C", 5 U. S. C. Cav			
46.	Samuels	Jane	10/4/1838	7/4/1904
47.	Shelton	Icie Lawrence	1972	1940
48.	Smith	Patsy L.	8/9/1892	7/30/1929
49.	Stanfield	Laura Milton	1905	1936
50.	Swain	Bessie	Unknown	*
51.	Veasy	Cardine	Unknown	*
52.	Veasey	Caroline	8/27/1868	4/13/1913
53.	Veasey	Clarence	Unknown	8/31/1935
54.	Williams	Mark Everett	Infant	1934
55.	Willis	Jimmy	8/30/1907	2/21/1925

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Summary

The Gower Cemetery is significant for its association with the African American settlers who moved into the rural area northeast of Edmond and west of Arcadia in north Oklahoma County during and shortly after the Run of 1889. The cemetery was one of three properties associated with the black homesteaders which lived in a four- to six-square-mile area around Covell Road and Post Road. A church and a school, no longer extant, were also built and used by the African American homesteaders. The period of significance extends from 1896, when the first recorded burial took place, until 1940, seven years after the close of the church and near the time the school was closed. In addition to its association with the early settlement of African Americans, the cemetery is also significant because of its age and significance to Oklahoma's territorial period and for its distinctive physical features: the handmade and locally constructed monuments and markers.

Historical Background

After the Civil War and prior to the opening of the Unassigned Lands in April of 1889, African Americans in the United States searched for areas to settle. Directly after the war many of the freedmen simply wandered from place to place, exploring their new-found freedom. While Congress recognized the problem of integration or relocation of African Americans, racial discrimination continued. Many African Americans began to go west, and between 1870 and the 1900, black leaders and emigration agents supported this action. Many felt that the West would offer opportunities that were not available in the South or the Northeast, mainly the acquisition of land. Kansas politician W. L. Egleson was one of the many emigration agents who urged African Americans to come to the newly opened Oklahoma District in 1889.

When the Unassigned Lands of central Oklahoma were opened approximately 50,000 people gathered for the land run. Although many figures exist purporting the numbers of African Americans attending, the 1890 census shows that 1,643 black males and 1,365 black females had settled in Oklahoma Territory within a year following the land run of 1889. Seven counties reported the following black population in 1890: Canadian County, 190; Cleveland County, 16; Lincoln County, 2; Kingfisher County, 1,304; Logan County, 736; Oklahoma County, 660; and Payne County, 100.¹ The white and Native American population of these same counties was 62,000 and 13,177 respectively. The 1900 census indicates that a total of 18,831 (4.7 percent) African Americans in the area, 367,524 whites and 11,945 Indians. At that time approximately one-third of the total African American population in Oklahoma Territory was concentrated in Logan County.

Not all African Americans staked claims for homesteading or settled in the newly found cities, but rather they chose to segregate themselves by establishing a number of black towns including Langston, established in 1891; Boley, established in 1903, and approximately 25 other small communities scattered throughout the state. These towns were settled to make it possible for the African Americans to have control of their lives and live within an atmosphere free from prejudice.

Many of the homesteads claimed by the African Americans were located in an area densely covered with black jack and oak, also known as the Cross Timbers. The Cross Timbers ran through northern Oklahoma County and

¹ Table 13, "Population as Native and Foreign Born and White and Colored, by Counties: 1890, 1880, and 1870," Compendium of the Eleventh Census: 1890 (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1892), I, 503.

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south Logan County, where many staked their claims. Those African Americans who did not stake claims headed for the cities, many locating in Muskogee, Guthrie, Ardmore and Oklahoma City. In these cities they opened barbershops, cleaning establishments, cafes, grocery stores, rooming houses, and blacksmith operations.

By the early 1890's Oklahoma Territory created public education for blacks, and in Oklahoma City the first black school opened in 1891. The first black high school was established in Kingfisher, Oklahoma. The statutes prior to statehood provided for local option for segregation, but in 1897 a segregation law was passed. It was that same year that the first school of higher education for blacks, Langston University, was established.

In 1907, Jim Crow laws were passed when Oklahoma and Indian Territories became the State of Oklahoma. The laws were primarily written to provide separate rail coaches and waiting rooms. The first Oklahoma legislature also mandated segregated schools and prohibited interracial marriages. These laws remained intact in Oklahoma until the second half of the twentieth century.

Significance

The Gower Cemetery is significant as the last remaining physical evidence of one of the rural areas in Oklahoma settled primarily by African Americans and one of the few sites in Oklahoma associated with the rural settlement of African Americans prior to statehood. The school, the church, and the farm houses and buildings associated with this small community are no longer extant.

Black homesteaders in Lincoln Township 14 and Deep Fork Township 14, in the vicinity of Edmond and Arcadia, Oklahoma, formed several small communities, an outgrowth of segregation. Between 1889 and 1904, this community, although never incorporated, took tangible shape. In May 1896, Augustus Reece relinquished a portion of his homestead for the establishment of Mt. Olive Baptist Church, which served the community until the parishioners closed the doors in December 1933. In December 1903, Pleasant Grove School was established on land relinquished by Mattie and Willie Kurley. It is thought that the school closed due to insufficient enrollment in the early 1940's, and students were bussed to Dunbar School in nearby Arcadia.

No particular name was found to have been associated with this community except for "Nonsey," the name used for the Gower Cemetery in Oklahoma Cemetery Records of Oklahoma County, Volume Two. These records were collected by the Church of the Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1964. Canvassed on October 22, 1963, the cemetery was listed as Nonsey Cemetery. Interviews with early residents of the area have not determined that this name or any other one name was ever used for the area surrounding the Gower Cemetery, the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, and the Pleasant Grove School. The area these three sites served was approximately fifty-six square miles in size.

The Gower Cemetery

The Gower Cemetery was established by John and Ophelia Gower by November 1889 for the burial of area residents. The earliest recorded burial is Elizabeth Miller, wife of Henry Miller, on November 20, 1896. The Millers homesteaded the SE 1/4 of Section 42 in Lincoln Township. Henry Miller was 68 years old in 1890. Over the next fifty years many of the early homesteaders and family members were buried in the Gower Cemetery,

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including six African American males known to have claimed a homestead in Oklahoma County prior to June 1890. They are John Gower (d. 1921), Anderson Harris (d. 1925), Henry B. Miller, William O'Kelley, and Isaac Samuels (all military graves, dates of death unknown), and Rev. Walton Owens (date of death of unknown).

In the early 1930's, Willie T. Gower, the founders' elder son, developed an Indigent Plot in the cemetery burial ground. The homeless, paupers, and those from the "streets" were buried in multiple graves in this section of the cemetery.

The following is a list of known African American homesteaders in the area who were buried in the Gower Cemetery:

The John Gower Family

The 1900 census shows that John Gower was born in Tennessee and his wife, Ophelia, was born in Louisiana. They migrated to Kansas where their first three children were born. A son, the elder Willie T. Gower, Sr., was born in Kansas in January 1883. John Gower was a stonecutter and donated the land for the the Gower Cemetery. Ophelia was a midwife for families in the area.

John and Ophelia are both buried in the Gower Cemetery. John Gower was one of the original African American homesteaders in Oklahoma County.

The Simon Allensworth Family

Simon, Margaret, and Arlee Allensworth are buried in the Gower Cemetery. Simon Allensworth had staked a claim by June 1890.

The Anderson Harrison Family

A. Harrison was interviewed by J. E. Quein, a census taker on June 18, 1890. Harrison was a black male, 47 years old, born in Tennessee. He had been in the Territory for four months. His wife, Martha, was 29 years old and was born in Kentucky. His daughter was 6 years old, born in Kansas. He was an original African American homesteader and his claim was located at the N.W. 1/4 of section 6 Deep Fork Township. He was buried in the Gower Cemetery.

The Richard Reece Family

Richard and Elsie Bryant Reece came to Oklahoma Territory from Sedan, Kansas, on February 28, 1893. They bought 80 acres in the N. E. 1/4 of Section 18 of the Deep Fork Township. Lizzie Wright, daughter of the Richard and Elsie, taught school at Gant School, a black school located at the intersection of Anderson Road and Sorghum Mill, four miles northeast of the Gower Cemetery. She taught there between 1914 and 1917. Richard and Elsie Reece are buried in the Gower Cemetery.

The Benjamin Walton Owens Family

Owens came to Oklahoma Territory on November 7, 1889, from Illinois and filed a claim for the S. E. 1/4 section 22 of the Deep Fork Township. He was in Kansas City when he heard of the opportunity for land in Oklahoma. Owens was a preacher and the founder of the Mount Olive Baptist Church, a black church. He married Virgie Cotton and they are both buried in the Gower Cemetery. He died on November 19, 1924. Virgie died March 13,

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1934. His grave is identified as "Bowen, Rev Walton." He was an original African American homesteader.

The Frank and Louvenia Guillory Family

Frank, Louvenia, and John (military) are buried in Gower Cemetery. The Guillory family were early African/American residents of Arcadia. Frank Harry Guillory was born at St. Martinville, Louisiana. Frank married Louvenia Harrison (sometimes called Harrolson), daughter of Anderson Harrison. Frank died December 8, 1967 and is buried in Gower Cemetery. Louvenia is also buried there. Frank worked on the railroad when he came to Arcadia.

Isaac Samuels

Isaac Samuels was one of the original homesteaders. He is buried in the Gower Cemetery with his wife, Jane. Samuels was a member of Company "C", 5 U.W. Colored Cavalry. Date of his birth and death unknown. Jane was born on October 4, 1838 and died on July 14, 1904.

The Thomas Fox Family

Many members of the Thomas Fox family were buried in the Gower Cemetery, including John Lee Fox, buried in 1925.

The Henry B. Miller Family

Henry, Elizabeth, Georgia, and H. B. Miller are buried in the Gower Cemetery. Henry Miller was an original African American homesteader.

The O'Kelley Family

Members of the O'Kelley family buried in the Gower Cemetery include William O'Kelley, who served in the United States Colored Infantry, and Catherine and Owens O'Kelley. William O'Kelley was an original African American homesteader.

The Charles McGraw Family

It is possible that members of the McGraw family are buried in the Gower Cemetery; however the only stone with a similar name is deteriorated and the inscription is difficult to decipher.

Gravestones and Markers

The gravestones and markers in the Gower Cemetery are historically significant as excellent examples of the gravestone materials which were used by the African American community following the land run and through the early 1940s. Included in the cemetery are sandstone markers, cut by hand and crudely lettered; simple handmade concrete slabs, also hand lettered; metal markers provided by the funeral home and left to serve as permanent markers; and professionally made granite and limestone gravestones. The majority of the gravestones were the sandstone markers; large pieces of local red sandstone which were found in the area. These stones were soft enough to carve by hand the name of the deceased and dates of birth and death. Many of these have been moved from their original site; broken in pieces and stacked in a pile at the side of the cemetery. However, the stones which remain standing in the Gower Cemetery continue to maintain a high degree of integrity and are an important part of one of the few identified sites associated with the settlement of African Americans in rural Oklahoma.

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Verbal Boundary Description

One acre of land about 48 Rods east more or less from Northwest corner on the North side, one-half acre wide and two acres long. Running north and south in the Northeast Quarter of Section 24, Township 14 North, Range 2 West, Indian Meridian, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma, containing one acre, more or less.

COMMENCING at the NW Corner of the NE 1/4 of said Section 24, THENCE: N 89° 41' 57" E along the north section line a distance of 535.18' TO THE POINT OR PLACE OF BEGINNING, THENCE: S 09° 00' 26" E a distance of 389.26', THENCE: N 83° 02' 31" E a distance of 105.93', THENCE: N 08° 49' 05" W a distance of 376.61' to a point on the north section line, THENCE: S 89° 41' 57" W along the north section line a distance of 108.36' TO THE POINT OR PLACE OF BEGINNING. The above described tract contains 40,820 square feet or 0.937 acres more or less.

A			B	C	D				E		
6			5	4		3		2		1	
	F	Spigner Cemetery		G		H	I	J	K	L	
				M	N	O			P		
7			8	9		10		11			12
				Q	R				S		
T	U										V
	18		17		16		15		14		13
						W				X	
									Y	Z	
	19		20		21		22		23		24
		Arcadia				AA	BB				
							CC				
	30				28		27		26		25
			29								
	31		DD		33		34		35		36
							EE		FF		

North

**Deep Fork Township
Township 14 North Range 1 West
North edge of Oklahoma County**



Shaded area = Black Homesteaders prior to June, 1890

- | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Names of Homesteaders | J | Elijah Powell | T | Milton Harvey | EE | Peter Mobley | |
| A | Anderson Harrison | K | Henry Burton | U | A. D. Reece | FF | Jefferson Green |
| B | Abraham Baker | L | Robert Jordan | V | William Barnett | | |
| C | Albert Tandy | M | Originally Black Homesteader | W | Aaron McKay | | |
| D | James Walker | N | Richard Ricketts | X | Armstead Tutt | | |
| E | William Anderson | O | H.J. Spigner | Y | Sophia Dulan | | |
| F | James Reeves | P | Henry Wilson | Z | Benjamin Dulan | | |
| G | Originally Black Homesteader | Q | Albert Kelly | AA | Solomon Lee | | |
| H | Henry Spigner | R | Bert L. Hamilton | BB | Benjamin Owens | | |
| I | Charles Morris | S | Chas McGraw | CC | Margaret Blizzrd | | |
| | | | | DD | Isaac Samuels | | |

GOWER MEMORIAL CEMETERY

Gower Memorial Cemetery

No Gravesites . . . 518
 No Burials 186
 No Vacant Gravesites . . . 333

U = Unknown
 - = Vacant Gravesites
 1888 Gravesites
 David & Myrtle Gower Thomas

Gower & Thomas
 108 36
 108 93
 108 26

** - Before 1940
 Note: locations of all gravesites listed
 prior to 1940 are NORTH - 108 36'

FENCE	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	John L. Fox **								
2	Laura Fox **	Milton Homestead							
3	Ella Fox **								
4	U								
5	Arne Jensen **								
6	Ella J. Carter								
7	U								
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13	U								
14	Eugene Little								
15									
16									
17									
18									
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20									
21									
22	Marvin Lee								
23									
24									
25									
26									
27									
28	Andrew **								
29									
30	U								
31	Carrie Moody								
32									
33	U								
34	U								
35	U								
36									
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DRIVE - 11'									
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DRIVE - 55'									
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WEST - 389 26'

EAST - 376 61'

SOUTH - 105 93'

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page

Gower Cemetery
name of property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
county and State

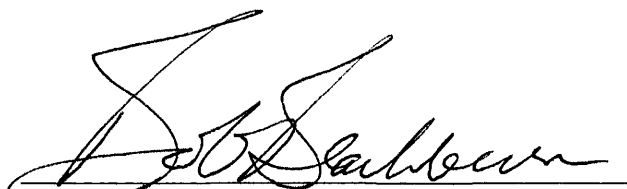
Gower Cemetery (91001895)

The verbal boundary description for the Gower Cemetery as originally submitted was incorrect. The UTM location is correct, though. The following constitutes the correct legal description of the Gower Cemetery.

Verbal Boundary Description

Part of the Northeast Quarter of Section Twenty-Four (24), in Township Fourteen (14) North, of Range Two (2) West of the Indian Meridian, in Oklahoma County, Oklahoma, and being more particularly described as:

Commencing at the Northwest Corner of said West half of the Northeast Quarter (NE/4); Thence North 89°41'57" East along the North line of said West Half of the Northeast Quarter (NE/4) for a distance of 535.11 feet to the POINT or PLACE OF BEGINNING; Thence South 9°01'10" East for a distance of 389.77 feet; Thence North 8°03'25" East for a distance of 105.39 feet; Thence North 8°49'19" West for a distance of 377.24 feet to a point on the North line of said West half of the Northeast Quarter (NE/4); Thence South 89°41'57" West along said North line for a distance of 107.87 feet to the POINT of PLACE OF BEGINNING.


Director, Oklahoma Historical Society (SHPO)

12-21-04
Date