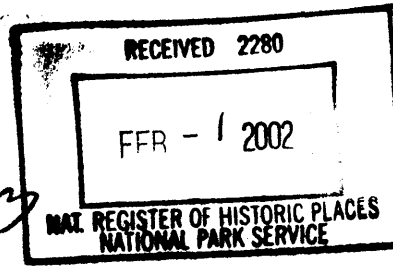


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



OK

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 an 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 Elmwood Cemetery

other names/site number NA

2. Location

street & number 824 Dudley Street

NA  not for publication

city or town Memphis

NA  vicinity

state Tennessee

code TN

county Shelby

code 157

zip code 38104

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 for 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.)

Herbert L. Sawyer  
Signature of certifying official/Title

2/6/02  
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
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 certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:)

Wilson A. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

3/28/02  
Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(explain:)

Elmwood Cemetery  
Name of Property

Shelby County, Tennessee  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing

Noncontributing

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
1	1	Total

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

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

2

**6. Function 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)

NA  
Gothic Revival

foundation BRICK  
walls Weatherboard,  
roof ASPHALT,  
other Granite, marble

**Narrative Description**

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

**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 boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- 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)

ART  
 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
 SOCIAL HISTORY

**Period of Significance**

Circa 1852-1951

**Significant Dates**

NA

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

NA

**Cultural Affiliation**

NA

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown, multiple

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

**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

Name of repository:

Elmwood Cemetery

Elmwood Cemetery  
Name of Property

Shelby County, Tennessee  
County and State

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### 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 80 acres Southwest Memphis 404 SE

#### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>770468</u>	<u>3890665</u>	3	<u>15</u>	<u>771103</u>	<u>3890107</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>15</u>	<u>771063</u>	<u>3890640</u>	4	<u>15</u>	<u>771103</u>	<u>3890122</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.)

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### 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title Sara M. Holmes (historian) and Kimberly Caldwell (director's assistant)  
organization Elmwood Cemetery date November 2001  
street & number 824 South Dudley Street telephone 901/774-3212  
city or town Memphis state TN zip code 38104

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#### Additional Documentation

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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

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#### Property Owner

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

name Elmwood Cemetery, c/o Francis Crawford Catmur, Executive Director  
street & number 824 South Dudley Street telephone 901/774-3212  
city or town Memphis state TN zip code 38104

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**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 listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Elmwood Cemetery is an eighty-acre site bounded by the Illinois Central Railroad tracks on the north, I-240 on the east, Walker Avenue on the south and Neptune Street on the west. Founded in 1852, Elmwood is the oldest continuously operating cemetery in Memphis. From its earliest days it has operated as a non-denominational cemetery open to all races.

On August 28, 1852, fifty gentlemen each subscribed for one share of \$500 in the capital stock of Elmwood Cemetery Association. Forty acres three miles from the center of Memphis were purchased at that time. After the Civil War, an additional forty contiguous acres were bought. The Tennessee Legislature incorporated the cemetery on February 13, 1854. The stock company was dissolved on February 21, 1873, and a new charter was registered July 11, 1873, which established a corporation governed by a Board of Trustees selected by the lot owners. In that same year it was granted tax-exempt status by the state of Tennessee. Elmwood continues to operate as a non-profit corporation with a Board of Trustees.

Influenced by the rural cemetery movement which had begun earlier in the century in the northeast with the development of Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Boston, the goal of the founders of Elmwood was to establish a final resting place in a wooded area outside the city where there would be rolling hills with majestic native trees. Joseph Lenow, a founding member who served as Elmwood president for thirty-one years until his death in 1889, envisioned a cemetery design that would follow the natural topography of the land. The roads leading through the cemetery were planned to follow the slopes and rises of the terrain. The cemetery is encircled by Grand Tour Drive (Photo 26) with other streets intersecting. The grounds are landscaped to provide a park for the living where the dead can be suitably mourned. In 1866, a Victorian era Carpenter Gothic Cottage was erected to serve as a one-room superintendent's office, with a parlor, vault and porch added in 1902. In 1903, an arched span bridge was constructed to cross the railroad tracks on the north side of the grounds. Both were listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978, and both continue to serve their original purposes.

The Carpenter Gothic Cottage (Photo 2) is located on the north edge of the cemetery grounds and is seen immediately upon coming over the bridge. Constructed of weatherboards with milled wood trim on the porch and the gables, it is the only known remaining example of such a Victorian era cottage in the city of Memphis. The bell was added to the structure in the 1870s, and was brought from the State Female College that was located on McLemore Street. It tolls for funeral processions as they enter the grounds over the bridge. In 1998, an office addition to the Cottage was built with care to preserve its architectural integrity. The arched span bridge (Photo 1) was designed by J. A. Omberg, Memphis City Engineer, who is buried in Elmwood Cemetery. The span design was used to clear the railroad tracks. Trains continue to pass by the grounds

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# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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regularly. At the north end of the bridge, an overhead wrought iron sign announces "Elmwood, Founded 1852", while large wrought iron lanterns and a gate adorn the south end.

When Elmwood was founded, the grounds were forested with native oak trees. After the name "Elmwood" was drawn from a hat and selected, the stockholders ordered a number of elm trees to be planted. Samuel Phillips, superintendent from 1866 to 1878, is credited with choosing and planting many trees that were protected by the 1873 Charter and some still adorn the property. Ornamentals such as dogwood, magnolia, redbud and crepe myrtle, and hardwoods including maples, gum and tulip poplar, as well as varieties of oaks are found on the grounds. In 1998, the Board of Trustees designated the more than 800 trees at Elmwood as an arboretum named in honor of the late Carlisle S. Page, a trustee for thirty-eight years, who personally planted and maintained the trees during his tenure.

The spacious grounds of the rural cemetery changed cemetery art and allowed the use of sculpture in a way that a crowded churchyard had never permitted. This space, along with the Victorians' sentimental view of death, led to the large variety of statuary found in Elmwood. According to George Crone, who has been in the monument business in West Tennessee for over forty years, Elmwood is regarded as having one of the finest collections of cemetery art in the southeast. Elmwood includes a variety of monument styles and symbolism. The cemetery includes many monuments and markers with carved, incised or sculpted angels that symbolize the heavenly host. Often the angels, in a variety of draperies and forms, are seen leading a soul toward heaven. When holding a torch, this is a representation of eternal life. (Photo 5) There are allegorical (Photo 6) figures and also human figures that are literal representations of the deceased. (Photos 8 and 33) Many ethnic monuments and markers, especially Greek, have photographs of the deceased set in glass and embedded in the tombstone. (Photo 9) Symbolism abounds on the majority of the historic markers. Doves that symbolize devotion, peace or the Holy Spirit and crosses and crowns representing the triumph over death and the glory of heaven are examples of markers that depict aspects of the Christian faith. Victorian era monuments are adorned with flowers, fruit, wheat (fleeting quality of life), willow (the loss of earthly life), and other vegetation. Elmwood Cemetery also contains monuments with traditional or classical forms such as obelisks that represent the hope for rebirth, regeneration, and everlasting life or trees used as symbols of the tree of life. When the trees is cut, the monument is showing a life cut short. There are also impressive substantial monuments erected in the early twentieth century. Aboveground mausoleums are found on the cemetery grounds; (Photos 15 and 29) however, Joseph Lenow, longtime president of the cemetery until his death in 1898, who favored burial in the ground, discouraged these. The many children's graves often are marked with lambs depicting the "Lamb of God" or innocence (Photo 10) or small statues of cupids or children (Photo 11). The beautiful Waggoner monument (Photo 4), which memorializes two small daughters, has an urn of flowers inside a seashell, all symbolizing resurrection, with ivy and flowers adorning the base. Although some Victorian era iron work fencing remains enclosing family plots, (Photo 17) the predominate

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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type of enclosure is a very low marble or cast stone surround either embedded or acting as a fence around a plot or individual grave (Photo 16). These are frequently seen in the older sections of the cemetery.

Most of the monuments and markers in Elmwood were created by local stonecutters and marble companies. Muldoon, Bullett & Co. designed and executed many early monuments. Notable of these is the Mattie Stephenson monument, erected in memory of the young yellow fever heroine, and the Charles Wesley Goyer monument, erected in the 1870s. These monuments are large and impressive with life-size angels and skilled stonework. Mattie Stephenson's is adorned with lilies, symbolizing her youth and innocence, including a lily over the head of the beautiful young female angel. The Goyer monument includes, in addition to the angel on the top, a bas relief bust of Laura Goyer and weeping cherubs on each side. They also created the monuments for Edie Greenwood and Wade Bolton (Photo 7), among others. Morriss Brothers, in business from 1880 until 1933, made most of the large granite monuments of the early twentieth century. Among these are the Noland Fontaine monument (Photo 39). Others are Neal Brien who constructed the columned monument of Dr. Willis C. Campbell (Photo 13), who died in 1943, and J. C. Sutton who created the large obelisk for E. H. Crump (Photo 41), who died in 1954. In the last 50 years most of the large monuments in Elmwood have been erected by the Crone Monument Company under the leadership of George E. Crone. Some of those that he created are the Allen B. Morgan monument (Photo 38), the Murff monument (Photo 37) and the A. Maceo Walker monument (Photo 36). The Crone Company has a long history beginning with the Quigley Company in the 1830s. The Quigley Company became the Anderson-Fisher Company, then the Anderson Company, then Anderson-Venn, then Venn, and finally Crone. All of these companies placed many markers in Elmwood. The majority of the modern markers and monuments have the same scale as the historic monuments and they tend to be scattered throughout the cemetery.

The first burial at Elmwood took place on July 15, 1853, when Mrs. R. B. Berry was interred in the Chapel Hill section (Photo 25). Since that time more than 70,000 persons have joined her in this final resting place. More than eighty-five percent of the burials are fifty years old or older; however, lots continue to be sold and there are burials every week. There are markers with death dates earlier than 1853. Most of these were moved from Morris and Winchester Cemeteries, early graveyards in downtown Memphis that were moved to make way for the city's progress. Others were brought by families who had migrated here and wanted their loved ones interred with the rest of the family. Prominent among these is Col. John Smith, Elmwood's only Revolutionary War veteran, who died in 1851 and was buried here in 1894 (Photo 34).

Through the years a number of areas have been set aside for the use of fraternal orders such as the Masons (Photo 21), Woodmen of the World and Odd Fellows (Photo 22). During the Civil War a large area was designated for Confederate soldiers to be buried free of charge. In 1878, an impressive monument was erected on this lot, purchased with funds raised by the Ladies Memorial

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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Association and the Confederate Relief and Historical Association (Photo 24). In the 1870s Memphis was devastated by several yellow fever epidemics that killed thousands of citizens. Some 1400 yellow fever victims were buried in 1878 in an area of public lots that became known as No Man's Land (Photo 23). Close by is a monument to the Howard Association, a volunteer group of men who worked heroically to bring assistance to disease victims. Other areas have been designated for the Mary Galloway Home for Women, the Porter-Leath Orphanage (Photo 35), police and firemen who have died in the line of duty, and in modern times, those persons who have donated their bodies to the University of Tennessee Medical School for research.

In the last fifty years, Elmwood has continued to be maintained as a garden cemetery. During his tenure as president of the Board of Trustees, Carlisle S. Page devoted himself to the care and maintenance of the trees. He planted hundreds of crepe myrtles and other ornamental trees that beautify the grounds in the spring and summer months. Funds contributed in the Capital Campaign of 1995-98 have made possible the development of Victorian era gardens at the bridge entrance and surrounding the Cottage headquarters. Plants of the type that were known to the Victorians have been used, with some modern plants to provide year-round bloom. A picnic area with tables under an arbor has been created in the garden on the north side of the cottage.

There is a modern fence around the cemetery. (Noncontributing due to age.)



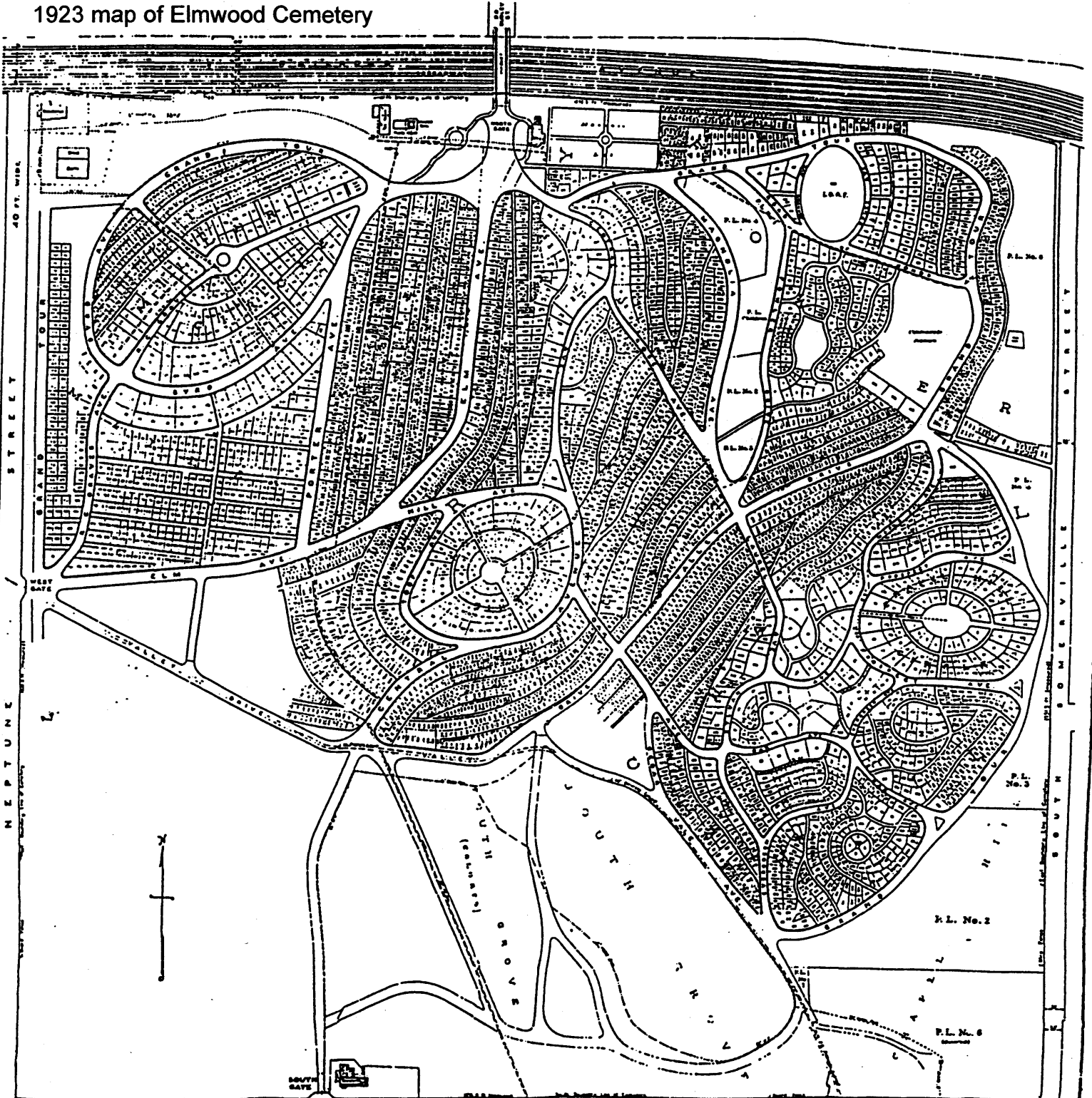
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

1923 map of Elmwood Cemetery



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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Elmwood Cemetery is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C for its illustration of the development of a garden movement cemetery in Memphis and for the artistry of its collection of monuments and markers. Beginning with its establishment in 1852, monuments and markers in the cemetery illustrate the popular motifs for monuments through out the cemetery's history. Traditional symbolism of trees and floral motifs, large impressive monuments to community leaders, smaller gravestones for yellow fever victims, and markers denoting ethnic ties are all found in Elmwood Cemetery. The cemetery is also being nominated under criterion A for its significance in the social history of Memphis. From its inception, Elmwood has been the burial place of the most notable citizens, such as Mayor Edward Crump and the first African-American millionaire Robert Church. In addition, the burial sections in the cemetery represent a microcosm of settlement patterns in Memphis. Numerous ethnic groups, fraternal groups, war veterans and prominent families are buried in separate divisions of Elmwood. Elmwood Cemetery, with its park-like setting, was where families would go to pay their respects to the dead, but also where they would go to stroll and enjoy the scenery. Approximately eighty-five percent of the monuments in the cemetery are pre-1951. Landscaping has changed over the years, but it still reflects the rural cemetery movement of nineteenth and early twentieth century. Overall, Elmwood Cemetery retains a high degree of integrity.

Elmwood is one of the oldest organized cemeteries in Memphis and the oldest in continuous operation. It was the first in Memphis to be planned within the rural cemetery movement tradition. Its rolling terrain, curving streets, numerous fine trees, landscaping and monuments all contribute to the design characteristics of the garden cemetery. In the early days, families visited the cemetery frequently and personally tended the graves. There was a bandstand to provide entertainment on occasion, and family picnics were a common occurrence. Today, in 2001, Elmwood Cemetery still provides beautifully landscaped grounds for burials. The grounds also are used for recreation, with walkers, bikers, birdwatchers and picnickers seen. Those interested in history and genealogy follow self-guided and docent-led tours to learn about Memphis's early residents.

Although it was called a rural cemetery movement, burial grounds like Elmwood Cemetery were usually situated outside of cities and on an elevated site, to allow for a more scenic vista. The antecedents of this movement were in France and England. The American rural cemetery movement began with Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1831. Philadelphia, Baltimore and Brooklyn all had rural cemeteries in the 1830s. Memphis' Elmwood Cemetery was established a generation later, still early for this area. Rolling landscapes, waterways, curved paths, an irregular or naturalistic plan and numerous types of monuments to break up the landscape are common features of the rural cemetery. Cemeteries were planned to be contemplative spots that could be used for respite and quiet recreation, such as strolling or

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

picnicking. The entry to the cemetery separated this artificial environment from the everyday world. Elmwood Cemetery's gate and bridge demonstrate this nicely.

The use of cemeteries for non-funerary events would help lead to the establishment of picturesque urban parks of the type Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux wrote about. This movement was especially popular in the late nineteenth century. A more classic symmetry and formality in cemetery planning become pronounced in the early twentieth century. The differences in design concepts can be seen in Elmwood Cemetery, where mid to late twentieth century monuments and markers are located. The later cemetery (and park) movement was also a shift from the elaborate Victorian era monuments with strong symbolism and Gothic Revival buildings to simpler, classical monuments and Greek Revival buildings in cemeteries. The majority of Elmwood Cemetery is representative of the earlier rustic cemetery movement.

Since 1852, Elmwood has been involved in the events that have affected the city of Memphis. Those who were buried here in the earliest years were part of the western migration of people who settled the United States. Coming primarily from Virginia and North Carolina, these settlers were attracted by the rich land that was available here and the transportation that the Mississippi River would make possible. One of the founders of Memphis, John C. McLemore, is buried here, as well as second-generation descendants of the other founders, Marcus Winchester, John Overton and Andrew Jackson.

In 1861, the Civil War changed Memphis, as it did the rest of the south. In addition to some 1,000 soldiers who lie in Confederate Rest, twenty Confederate generals and two Union generals are buried here, as well as others who were involved in the war. Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest was interred in Elmwood in 1877 in the largest funeral ever to take place in the south. Although his remains were removed in 1904 to be buried along with his wife in Forrest Park, many of his family members remain in the family plot, including his brother, Colonel Jeffrey Forrest. Victims of the April 1865 sinking of the steamboat Sultana are interred near Confederate Rest. A memorial monument for the Sultana, the worst maritime disaster in U. S. history, was erected in 1989. Hundreds of Union soldiers were buried in Elmwood during the Civil War; however, these bodies were exhumed and removed to the new National Cemetery (NR 10/30/96) on Jackson Avenue when it opened in 1866.

The 1870s in Memphis were a time of yellow fever epidemics that ruined the city, causing it to lose its charter and become a taxing district of Tennessee. The epidemics of 1873, 1874, 1878 and 1879 killed more than 5,000 Memphians and caused thousands more to flee the city, many never to return. Some 2,500 yellow fever victims are buried in Elmwood, including several who were considered martyrs because of their selfless devotion to serve the sick. Mattie Stevenson, Annie Cook, the reverends Charles Carroll Parsons, Louis Schuyler (Photo 18) and Edward Slater, and the four Episcopal nuns, Constance and her companions, now saints in the Episcopal Church, are

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# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 8

Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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martyrs buried in Elmwood Cemetery. Many yellow fever victims were buried in No Man's Land (see map and Photo 23) and nearby graves; however, a number of others were buried in family plots and other areas of the cemetery.

A positive result of the yellow fever epidemics was the recognition of the need to clean up Memphis and install a sewer system and sanitary waterworks. Leaders in this effort were Dr. D. T. Porter, mayor of the Taxing District after the Tennessee Legislature abolished the city charter in 1879, and doctors William Rogers, G. B. Thornton, and R. B. Maury. Lena Angevine Warner, whose parents died of yellow fever, became a nurse and was instrumental in establishing the nurses training program at the new Memphis City Hospital in 1898. After the Spanish-American War, she worked with Dr. Walter Reed in Cuba in his studies that identified the mosquito as the yellow fever carrier.

In the 1850s an influx of German immigrants had moved to Memphis, bringing with them a variety of skills and talents, including a capacity for hard work. During the 1870s many German families fled the city to escape the yellow fever. Many went to St. Louis and did not return. The slow development of an industrial base in Memphis has been blamed on this exodus. There are numerous German graves in Elmwood, the earliest having German inscriptions on their tombstones (Photo 10). An area of the cemetery is known as Dutch Town (Deutsch Town) for the number of Germans buried there.

Other ethnic groups are represented. The Chinese came to the mid-south in the nineteenth century as laborers building the railroad. After the completion of the railroad, they stayed on, opening family grocery stores in small towns, and later in Memphis. A newer section of Elmwood Cemetery is filled with Chinese graves whose tombstones are inscribed with Chinese characters (Photo 28). These burials began in the early twentieth century and continue to this time. These monuments show a shift from the ornate designs of the mid-nineteenth century to the simpler classic styles considered popular at the time. Many Greek immigrants are buried in Elmwood. Their markers reflect their religious and cultural heritage. The Romani people (Gypsies) have been buried in Elmwood since the early days of the cemetery (Photo 27). Its proximity to the Mississippi River made Elmwood a convenient place to meet annually to bury their dead in the days when they traveled as horse traders. The Romani continue to gather for funerals at Elmwood on several occasions through the year.

From the beginning, African Americans have been buried at Elmwood. Both free men and women and slaves were interred before the Civil War. Most were placed in an area set aside for them; however, some were buried with the families that they served. As time has gone by, Elmwood Cemetery has become the choice place for African-American burials. Beginning with Robert Church, the south's first African-American millionaire, who erected an impressive mausoleum for himself and his family in 1912 (Photo 29), the adjoining section has filled with outstanding African-

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# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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Americans in the fields of business, medicine, politics, education and religion. In recent years, African-Americans have chosen burial lots all over the cemetery; however, the majority continues to want to be in the prestigious area near Church Drive (Photo 30).

Many noteworthy people are buried in Elmwood. They include: Tennessee governors James C. Jones and Isham G. Harris, who also served as U. S. Senator. Other U. S. Senators are Kenneth D. McKellar, Thomas Battle Turley (Photo 33), Stephan Adams, and Spencer Jarnagan. Eighteen Memphis mayors are here, including Edward Hull Crump (Photo 41), Memphis political boss for fifty years. Suffragists Lide Smith Meriwether and Elizabeth Lyle Saxon are here, as well as Marion Scudder Griffin, the first woman to be admitted to the Tennessee Bar and the first female state legislator. Historian and preservationist Eleanor Day Hughes, who founded the Memphis Landmarks Commission and is credited with saving Victorian Village (NR 12/11/72), is buried in Elmwood Cemetery. Veterans of every U. S. war from the Revolutionary War through the Vietnam War are buried in Elmwood. In addition to Colonel John Smith, another person with famous Revolutionary roots is Dorothea Henry Spottswood Winston, a daughter of Patrick Henry (Photo 31).

Elmwood Cemetery was opened during the times when visitors came in carriages or on foot. After the Civil War, the owners of Elmwood paid to have the streetcar line extended to the cemetery gates. The entrance at Dudley Street was always the principal entrance, but there was also an entry at Walker Avenue where the streetcar let riders off. The grounds were laid out with carriage paths going through the sections to take mourners close to the graves. In 1909, automobiles were permitted on Elmwood Cemetery's drives and the first motorized funeral took place in 1911 with the burial of Chester Anderson. Automobile travel became a fixture in Memphis after World War I, with most visitors arriving by that means. In recent years the carriage paths have been converted to gravesites to accommodate those who continue to use Elmwood as their final resting place.

Since 1951, new areas have been opened to accommodate the need for burial lots. Most recently in the 1990s, the Howard Carothers Section has been opened, with a new Chinese section at the corner of Central and Valley Drive, and a section to the west along Valley Drive for Police and Firemen who have been killed in the line of duty. This is land historically associated with Elmwood Cemetery, in some cases the former location of support buildings for the cemetery. Approximately fifteen percent of total burials have occurred since 1951, with interments in every section. Sections along the perimeter of the grounds now are full.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 10

Elmwood Cemetery  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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### **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION**

The Elmwood Cemetery is bounded on the north by the Illinois Central Railroad, on the east by I-240, on the south by Walker Avenue, and on the west by Neptune Street. The property included in the nomination includes land historically associated with the cemetery. The boundaries exclude land not associated with Elmwood Cemetery.

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## PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo by: Kimberly Caldwell  
Date: October 2001  
Neg: Tennessee Historical Commission

NR-listed Morgan Bridge  
# 1 of 41

NR-listed gatehouse/cemetery headquarters  
# 2 of 41

Note: The location of markers and monuments is given in parenthesis by section and plot number.

John J. Worsham Marker (Turley 16)  
#3 of 41

Waggoner Monument (Turley 245)  
#4 of 41

Bethell Plot (Fowler 149-150)  
#5 of 41

Rembert Plot (Chapel Hill 51)  
#6 of 41

Wade Bolton Monument (Chapel Hill 61 ½)  
#7 of 41

Henry Montgomery Monument (Lenow Circle 111)  
#8 of 41

Joseph Maine Marker (Fowler 6 1138)  
#9 of 41

Greishaber Marker (Fowler 197)  
#10 of 41

Ferguson Marker (Chapel Hill 20)  
#11 of 41



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Grosvenor Monument (Lenow Circle 10)  
#12 of 41

Willis C. Campbell Monument (Miller 97)  
#13 of 41

Finlay Monument (Lenow Circle 11)  
#14 of 41

Louden Mausoleum (Chapel Hill 468)  
#15 of 41

Bender Plot (Chapel Hill 176)  
#16 of 41

Eichberg Plot (Turley 162)  
#17 of 41

Martyr Priests Monument (Fowler 266)  
#18 of 41

Greenlaw Monument (Turley 250)  
#19 of 41

Graham Marker (South Grove 26)  
#20 of 41

Masonic Section (Fowler 2)  
#21 of 41

Odd Fellows Rest (Fowler 120)  
#22 of 41

No Man's Land Monument (Fowler P. L. 4)  
#23 of 41

Confederate Rest (Fowler Section)  
#24 of 41

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Berry Monument (Chapel Hill 93)  
#25 of 41

Grand Tour Drive (Chapel Hill Section)  
#26 of 41

Briggs Marker (Bethel T. Hunt 125)  
#27 of 41

Chinese Markers (South Grove 10)  
#28 of 41

Church Mausoleum (South Grove 10 122)  
#29 of 41

George W. Lee Plot (W1C 119)  
#30 of 41

Dorthea Henry Winston Monument (Fowler 10)  
#31 of 41

Lee Plot (Turley 565)  
#32 of 41

Turley Plot (Turley 7)  
#33 of 41

John Smith Monument (Turley 1290)  
#34 of 41

Porter Leath Home Monument (Turley 420-425)  
#35 of 41

A. Maceo Walker Monument (South Grove 10)  
#36 of 41

Murff Monument (miller 116)  
#37 of 41

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Morgan Plot (Miller Circle 138)  
#38 of 41

Noland Fontaine Monument (Miller Circle 266)  
#39 of 41

Goodlett Plot (Miller Circle 38)  
#40 of 41

E.H. Crump Monument (Miller 42)  
#41 of 41

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Photo key map

