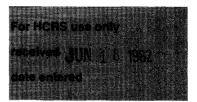
United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms* Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

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historic	N/A			
and/or common	Wyuka Cemetery		Ĺ,	LC13:E9-1)
2. Loca	ation			911 - [
street & number	3600 O Street		Ŋ	A not for publication
city, town	Lincoln	N/A vicinity of	congressional district	First
state	Nebraska code	031 county	Lancaster	code 109
3. Clas	sification			
Category district X building(s) structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisition N/A in process being considered	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible X yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other: Cemetery
4. Own	er of Proper	tv		
name		, a public charita	ble corporation	
street & number	3600 0 Street			·
city, town	Lincoln	N/A vicinity of	state	Nebraska
5. Loca	ation of Lega	l Descripti	on	
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc. Register		oln-Lancaster County	-City Building
		SLIEEL		
city, town	Lincoln			Nebraska
6. Repi	resentation i	n Existing	Surveys	
title Nebraska	<u> Historic Buildings</u>	Survey has this pr	operty been determined el	egible? <u>yes X</u> no
date	On-going		federal _X stat	te county local
depository for su	irvey records Nebraska S	State Historical S	ociety	
city, town	Lincoln		state	Nebraska

7. Description

Condition Check one Check N/A_ excellent deteriorated N/A_ unaltered _X good ruins altered fair unexposed	X_ original site moved dateN/A
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Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Wyuka Cemetery is located in the center of the City of Lincoln, the capital of Nebraska (1980 pop. 171,787). The area nominated, which is the developed portion of the cemetery, is bounded roughly by 0 Street, Vine Street, 36th Street, and 42nd Street. 0 Street is Lincoln's main street, and Vine Street is also a major thoroughfare. The curving avenues and numbers of trees and plantings in Wyuka provide a significant green space in the city, distinct from the grid pattern of the surrounding neighborhoods on the south, west, and north. To the east lies undeveloped land owned by the cemetery for future use.

SITE AND GROUNDS

The site was purchased by the Board of Trustees only a few months after the cemetery was established by the State of Nebraska in 1869. The trustees did not approve a previous location provided by the state and, instead, purchased the present site. The grade changes are greater than many places in the nearly flat Lincoln area. The highest point is in the southeast corner where the old water reservoir is located. The land slopes down towards the northwest. There is a small creek/drainage line along the western boundary. The main entrance is at the southwest corner at 36th and 0 Streets. The approach road curves from 0 Street with the office on the right and the Rudge Memorial Chapel directly ahead. The other old entrance is at 36th and R Streets, and the newest one is in the northwest corner, entering from Vine Street.

The oldest area in Wyuka is the southern forty acres, the first land purchased on July 30, 1869 (see map #2). It is distinctive visually as the only portion of Wyuka where tall gravestones are allowed. The earliest known plan of the cemetery is for the southern portion of an 1871 plat of this forty Sections 1 through 13 are identifiable, although some avenues have acres. been slightly changed. There are no straight avenues in the 1871 plan. Typical of rural cemetery practices, the avenues are curving and relate to the topography. A drainage line is drawn in to follow one avenue. Also typical is the numbering of the irregular sections. The notations "Potter's Field," "Citizens," and "Lawn" describe the original use of these sections. Potter's Field was reserved for state burials. As a state agency, Wyuka was required to provide burials for inmates of state institutions. "Sp" on map #2 refers to Potter's Field areas. "H. of F." is the area for the state orphanage, the Home of the Friendless. The "Citizens" sections on the 1871 plan were lots for the public. The "Lawn" is an interesting designation. This large oval section was set aside as open space, free of burials, for the pleasure of visitors. An 1890 plat labels it "the park." This is the most significant evidence that the designer and the trustees wished to provide a pleasant, park-like space, in the tradition of the rural cemetery. Unfortunately the "park" was divided into lots and sold, beginning in 1902.

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The draftsman of the 1871 plat is listed as James T. Murphy, Deputy County Surveyor. He is possibly the designer of this sophisticated plan; more probably, he is responsible for the drawing of the plat.

In the original forty acres, there is a significant collection of late 19th century and early 20th century cemetery art. Obelisks, gazebos, pergolas, and statuary are prominent, particularly in Section 13. The monuments reflect Lincoln society of the prominent business, political, and educational leaders; seven governors and twenty-one mayors are buried in Wyuka.

Mature trees are an important feature of the landscape. All areas except the extreme northeast corner are rich in mature trees of various species. A row of evergreens on the north border provides a strong sense of separation from Vine Street. On the west, rows of evergreens flank the creek. There are two State Champion Trees on the grounds - a Red Bud (<u>Cercis Canadensis</u>) and a Scotch Pine (<u>Pinus Sylvestris</u>). These trees are recognized as the largest and best examples of their species in the state by the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, the State Department of Forestry, and the State Department of Horticulture.

The northern forty acres were platted in 1909 by Arthur W. Hobert in the rural cemetery manner. Flat gravemarkers, designed for a more park-like appearance, are required in this area.

Many features common in old cemeteries were discouraged in rural cemeteries in favor of a garden atmosphere. At Wyuka there are no fences around lots and there are very few examples of curbed lots. Private mausolea were discouraged. Architectural controls were placed on private mausolea in 1889. The plans and materials were required to be approved by an architect designated by the trustees. There are only four older mausolea in Wyuka. They are similar in design and are adjacent to the Receiving Vault. In recent years, five new mausolea have been erected in the newer, northeast portion of the cemetery.

The first avenue to be paved in brick was the drainage line between Sections 1 and 9 in 1904. This avenue remains slightly concave and is lower than the others. The paving of other boulevards in brick continued for the next decade. Today many avenues retain their brick surface.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

There are special areas within the older parts of Wyuka in addition to the areas allocated for state burials. There are two Soldiers' Circles for American veterans, and Mount Lebanon, the Reformed Jewish cemetery. The G.A.R. Soldiers' Circle is for veterans of wars up to and including the Civil War. The simple white gravestones are arranged in an oval with a statue of a Civil War soldier erected by the G.A.R. in 1902 and a monument to Governor John M. Thayer, Colonel of the First Nebraska Volunteer Infantry (1861-65) in the center. The other, larger circle is for veterans of all wars since the Civil War. Mount Lebanon is retained under special agreement for members of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun.

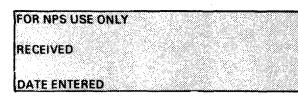
In recent years new special areas have been established in the northeastern portion of the cemetery which are in keeping with the turn of the century ideas on the development of rural or park cemeteries. An area dominated by a monument, statue, or other artwork was surrounded by plantings and flat gravemarkers (<u>Cemetery Handbook</u>, p. 54). This was viewed as a progressive feature which emphasized inspirational artwork and a garden atmosphere, rather than monuments for individual people. The "Garden of Memories" with low stone walls and benches surrounded by trees and shrubs was designed by Davis & Wilson, Lincoln architects, in 1954. The "Masonic Feature" is an area reserved for Masons, highlighted by a stone monument with plantings.

Other features which remain are the iron fence on the south and west borders, which was installed in 1902 and was supplied by the Stewart Iron Works of Cincinnati; the concrete bridge; and the water reservoir. The bridge near the barn is the only remaining feature from the lake. Built in 1910-11, the bridge was also a disguised dam which created a lake along the creek south to 0 Street. When complete with imported swans, ducks, two islands, a swan house on one island, weeping willow trees, and flower beds, the lake area was a picturesque spot for Lincoln residents and an impressive entrance view to the cemetery. The lake was drained about 1967.

BUILDINGS

The most significant feature of Wyuka is the plan of the cemetery and the monuments and plantings which have been designed in the rural cemetery manner. The historic buildings compliment the cemetery; however, there are relatively few extant structures. The Receiving Vault (1886) is the oldest building in Wyuka and an excellent Romanesque Revival style structure. The barn (1908-09) and the bridge (1910-11) were part of the cemetery's largest construction phase. Both are unique adaptations to the different functional requirements of the structure. The barn served as horse barn, pump house,

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

work rooms, and wagon storage areas. These functions were arranged around a wagon entrance and enclosed courtyard. The bridge served as a dam to create a lake. The Rudge Memorial Chapel (1935-38) is a fine reflection of an English Gothic Revival chapel which has been maintained in original condition. The pointed arches and limestone material in the office was chosen to reflect the chapel; otherwise the office is not related to the cemetery's traditions. The employee's house is located on the western border of the cemetery immediately adjacent to the residential neighborhood. Although it is owned by the cemetery, it is visually and stylistically more associated with the neighborhood. The following physical descriptions of the buildings are listed according to the Historic American Buildings Survey formula.

1. <u>Barn</u>; stucco over brick; two-story entrance building with one-story buildings enclosing the courtyard, hipped roof with deep overhang, shed roof on south addition; prominent centered wagon entrance with double-door entrances flanking it, horse barn on north, work room on south, haymow overhead; shed roof addition on south formerly the pump house for the water system; wagon entrance opens onto an enclosed courtyard, wagon stalls on north and south, work room on the west; 1908-09; L. A. Lamoreaux, Minneapolis, architect.

2. <u>Rudge Memorial Chapel</u>; Indiana limestone; 32 x 65 feet, rectangular, one-story with full basement; gabled slate roof; entrance at the gable end, heavy oak doors with ornamental strapwork hinges, cast lead typanum, buttressed piers flanking the entrance, rose window with flowing tracery in the gable end; original interior furnishings--oak pews, carved pulpit, red velour dossal with embroidered damask side panels and valance, pipe organ; central nave with side aisles and clerestory windows, leaded stained glass windows; 1935-38; Gothic Revival; Davis & Wilson, Lincoln architects; J. Ernst Reusch, landscape architect.

3. <u>Receiving Vault</u>; limestone, rectangular, one-story, gabled slate roof; entrance in the gable end with prominent parapet, banked at the rear, round-arched entrance, double metal doors behind double grillwork doors, oculus window in the gable, round finial atop gable; Romanesque Revival; 1886; J. H. W. Hawkins, architect.

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4. <u>Office</u>; limestone, rectangular, one-story with full basement; flat roof; stylized pointed arches in the porch openings and windows, porch extending over sidewalk; 1965; Unthank & Unthank, Lincoln.

5. <u>Employee's House</u>; 3502 P Street; frame, one-and-one-half story, rectangular, frame, gable roof, large dormers on east and west, front porch; ca. 1910; stuccoed garage and chicken house north of the house.

Wyuka Cemetery continues to be operated as an independent state agency by a three-member Board of Trustees appointed by the governor. It is entirely self-supporting. As provided in Section 12:101 of the Nebraska state statutes, Wyuka is a public charitable corporation.

Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 X 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture architecture art commerce communications	community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlement	X landscape architecture law literature military music philosophy politics/government	religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
			····	

N/A

Builder/Architect

1869 Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Specific dates

Wyuka Cemetery is significant to the history of landscape design in Nebraska as one of the few, and the oldest, examples of a "rural" cemetery in the state. It was established in 1869 by the Nebraska Legislature as the state cemetery (reputed to be the only one in the nation) for the infant capital city of Lincoln. One of only four Nebraska examples of rural cemeteries, Wyuka is a fine product of the movement and has maintained the traditions to the present day.

The design of rural cemeteries in the 1830's was a uniquely American phenomenon which inspired the public park movement in the United States. For the first time, Americans were exposed to the English garden school of landscaping with curving paths and picturesque plantings in a public setting. Also for the first time, a landscape was designed for the enjoyment of the public.

Dr. Jacob Bigelow, a Boston physician and health reformer, is credited with establishing the first rural cemetery. He expressed health concerns over the crowded and unkept churchyard cemeteries of Boston, and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society joined him in the sponsorship of the first rural cemetery, Mount Auburn, in Cambridge, Massachusetts (see NRHP nomination 3-21-75). In subsequent years, horticultural societies commonly joined forces with health reformers in advocating rural cemeteries. New privately or municipally owned cemeteries on the outskirts of town (hence the name "rural" cemeteries) were recommended for the health of the community. The design followed that of the English garden school of Humphry Repton, J. C. Louden, and others in England, which included curving streets, informal landscape plantings, rustic gates and outbuildings, irregular pools, quaint bridges, grottos, bowers, and other devices (Reps, p. 325). Other cemeteries followed suit, famous examples of which are Laurel Hill in Philadelphia (see NRHP nomination 3-5-76) and Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati (see NRHP nomination 5-13-76).

The popularity of the cemeteries as pleasure spots astounded the proponents. Summer visitors flocked to the cemeteries by the hundreds for picnics and other summer pursuits. Andrew Jackson Downing and others cited the huge public response to the rural cemeteries in advocating the need for public parks, particularly in the argument for New York's Central Park.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of nominated property	
Quadrangle name <u>Lincoln, NE</u>	Quadrangle scale <u>1:24000</u>
UMT References	
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c 1,4 6 9,6 6,0,0 4,5 2,0 4,7,5	D 114 6 916 51215 415 210 61315
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Verbal boundary description and justification	
See continuation sheet	
List all states and counties for properties overlap	ping state or county boundaries
state N/A code	county code
state code	county code
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title Penelope Chatfield, Preservation	Historian
organization Nebraska State Historical Soci	ety date June, 1981
street & number 1500 R Street	telephone 402/471-3270; 471-3850
city or town Lincoln	state Nebraska
12. State Historic Preser	vation Officer Certification
The evaluated significance of this property within the stat	e is:
national state	_ local
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for t 665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the M according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the H	
State Historic Preservation Officer signature	nu Threatt 6/3/82
title Director, Nebraska State Historical So	date date
For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the f Million A Knownson Keeper of the National Register Attest:	an a
Chief of Registration	

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Rural cemeteries were platted throughout the country following the establishment of Mount Auburn in 1831. Historian John W. Reps states that rural cemeteries were common in cities throughout the country by the 1870's. One of the earliest ones in the Midwest was the Forest Home Cemetery, Milwaukee (see NRHP nomination, 5-2-80). In Nebraska there are four examples, two in Omaha and two in Lincoln.

Besides the graceful curving avenues, the rural cemetery had other distinctive characteristics. The avenues were arranged along topographical lines to aid the drainage of the land. Enclosures, hedges, and fences were discouraged as detracting from the open lawn and rural appearance. Private vaults were restricted for the same reason. The Spring Grove Cemetery of Cincinnati, one of the nationally prominent rural cemeteries, had a standing rule in 1869 allowing only one monument per family burial lot. This monument was placed in the center of the lot and inscriptions placed on all sides. Individual grave-markers, where necessary, were to be simple - nearly level with the ground. A suitable area for a cemetery required easy access, undulating land, and remoteness from the city.

Unique in cemetery ownership, Wyuka Cemetery was established by an act of the Nebraska Legislature in 1869. The infant capital city was less than two years old, and a cemetery was felt to be necessary to provide a resting place for Lincolnites, inmates of state institutions at Lincoln, and any other Nebraskan. A board of three trustees was elected to administer the new cemetery; today, the trustees are appointed by the governor. They are responsible to state government, but are financially independent. The original forty acres roughly bounded by O Street, R Street, 36th Street, and 40th Street (one and one-half miles east of the city) was purchased by the trustees. The cemetery was named Wyuka, an Anglicized corruption of the Dakota or Sioux word "wanka," meaning "He rests or he lies down" (A. E. Sheldon, Nebraska History, Jan.-Mar. 1921, pp. 15-16).

The arrangement of avenues in graceful curves considerate upon the topography is critical to the distinction between a rural cemetery and a traditional grid plan. The earliest known site plan of Wyuka, filed in 1871, shows the southern half of the original forty acres, and provides proof that Wyuka was planned along rural cemetery lines from the beginning. There are no straight avenues in the plan. The straight avenues on the 1967 map (see map #2) do not appear on the original plat and are later additions. The northern forty acres and southern portion of the remaining eastern strip was platted in 1909 by Arthur W. Hobert in the rural cemetery manner.

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Accepted rural cemetery practices are reflected in the earliest list of rules available, July 9, 1883: "no enclosures around lots or graves allowed; no trees can be set about lots or graves; all plantings of flowers or shrubs must be done under the direction of the Sexton." No enclosures are visible today in Wyuka. Curbings and raised lots were outlawed as of 1893; only one example of a curbed lot is currently known.

Controls were placed on private vaults in 1889. Vaults were only allowed in a certain area and the plans and materials were required to be submitted to an architect, named by the board in 1894 "in regard to the building of vaults, etc., and to prepare rules and regulations for same." There are four older private vaults which are built in one area and are of nearly identical design.

The Receiving Vault is the oldest and most prominent vault and the oldest building in the cemetery. Built for the temporary storage of caskets awaiting burial, it was erected in 1886 to the design of architect J. H. W. Hawkins. Its Romanesque styling is similar to his other extant works, R. O. Phillips House (see Lincoln, Nebraska, NRHP nomination, 1979) and St. Matthias' Episcopal Church (see Omaha, Nebraska, NRHP nomination, 1980).

A waterworks system functioned for the first time in 1889, and trees, flowers, and shrubs were planted. A greenhouse was purchased in the 1890's, and a florist, J. H. Hadkinson, was hired to oversee the operation. By 1903, a general plan for the ornamentation and embellishment of the grounds was established.

Although rural cemetery tradition recommended one family monument per family lot, Wyuka did not have such restrictions in the 19th century, except in the case of Potter's Field where no markers were allowed. However, the most common marker arrangement in the original forty acres is that of one tall stone family monument surrounded by low individual markers. In the latter part of the century, flat gravemarkers were advocated to enhance the park-like appearance. In the northern forty acres, platted in 1901, only flat markers are allowed, a typical feature for rural cemeteries in that time.

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The barn and the bridge are a small part of a major construction phase from 1908-15. Lowell A. Lamoreaux, an architect from Minneapolis, designed the gate lodge (office, superintendent's house and entrance), barn, greenhouse, shed, and outbuildings, most of which are not extant. There was also constructed a dam disguised as a bridge, a lake, avenues paved in brick and concrete curbs. The gate lodge and barn were built of the same material and were similar in style. At the end of the construction phase, Wyuka was the most elaborate park in Lincoln. Well-tended flower beds and trees decorated the cemetery. The nursery supplied trees; large greenhouses provided potted and bedding plants. The most significant grouping of trees is the double row of evergreens lining both sides of the ravine which parallels the western boundary, and the row of evergreens on the northern boundary. The mature trees provide a definite sense of division between the cemetery and the adjacent residential neighborhood.

More recent construction has been the Rudge Memorial Chapel and the new office building. Lincoln businessman Charles H. Rudge left a \$25,000 bequest for the construction of a chapel. It was dedicated May 22, 1938. The new modest office building replaced the gate lodge in 1965-66. At the same time, the southwest corner of the property was sold for the new U.S. Post Office.

Wyuka Cemetery has retained the distinctive form of a rural cemetery in spite of the demolition of many of its buildings. The graceful avenues planned with consideration of drainage and topography remain from the earliest plans. Historically, the rural cemeteries preceded and, by their success, encouraged public park improvement. Wyuka developed before Lincoln's city park system was well developed. The current staff of Wyuka recount many stories of visitors' fond memories of past visits. A Minneapolis city park engineer, Alfred C. Godward, who was studying Lincoln's parks in 1915, said, "Lincoln's most scenic and beautiful spot is Wyuka" (Lincoln Daily Star, November 22, 1915).

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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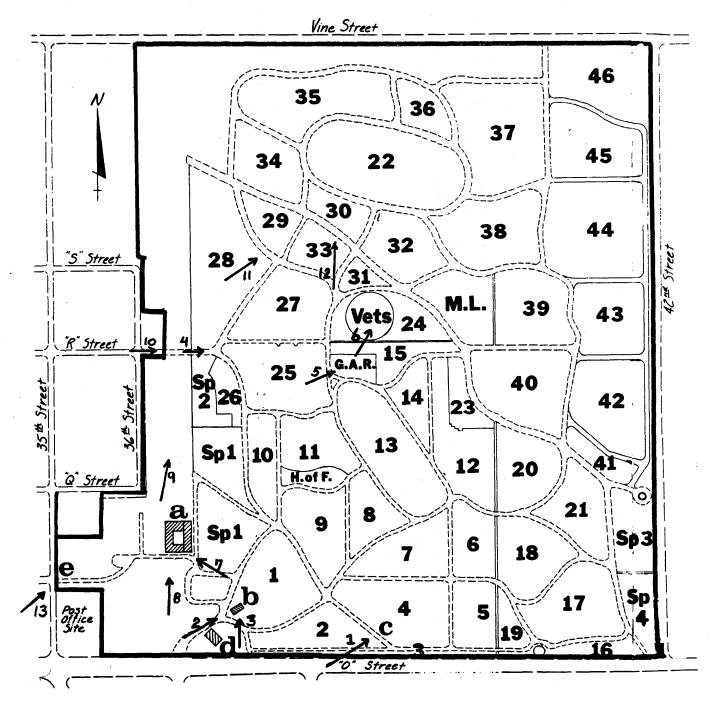
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Beginning at the northeast corner of lot 1, block 1, Charles Hammond Subdivision, City of Lincoln, thence south 2448.10 feet along the eastern lot line to the southwest corner of lot G, block 4, Easton Hill Subdivision, thence west 2348.93 feet to the southeast corner of lot 12, block 19, Ridgeway Grove Subdivision, continuing west 140 feet, thence north 300 feet, thence west 110 feet to the northwest corner of lot 6, block 19, said addition, thence north 112 feet to the northwest corner of lot 7, block 14, said addition, thence east 150 feet along the lot line, thence north 158 feet to the northwest corner of lot 3, said block, thence east 216 feet to a point on the western lot line of lot 3, block 20, said addition, thence north 646.5 feet to the southwest corner of lot 6, block 7, said addition, thence east 82 feet, thence north 150 feet, thence west 82 feet to the northwest corner of said lot, thence north 217.95 feet to a point on the western lot line of lot 4, said block, thence west 33 feet to the center of vacated 36th Street, thence north 892.40 feet to the northeast corner of lot A, Woods Brothers Replat, thence east 2175.93 feet to the point of beginning, including all of the historically associated real estate.

<u>map #1</u>

WYUKA CEMETERY Lincoln, Nebraska



LEGEND

- a Barn
- **b** Rudge Memorial Chapel **C** Receiving Vault
- d Office
- e Employee's House

boundary photo direction

Map adapted from 1967 Harold Hoskins # Associates map. Research and drawing by Penelope Chatfield, 1980-81.

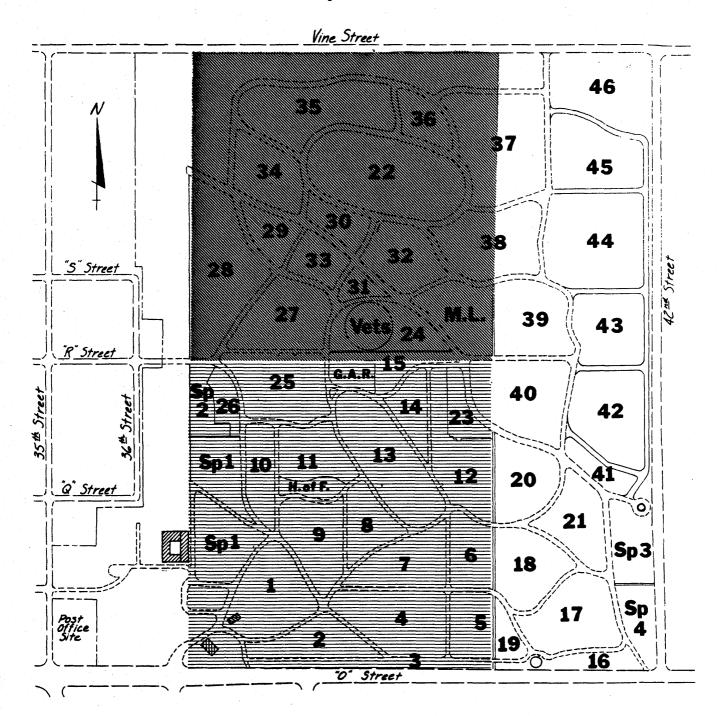
N

map #2

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P

WYUKA CEMETERY Lincoln, Nebraska



LEGEND

N

Original 40 acres. Platted 1871, 1890, \$ 1895.

Northern 40 acres. Platted 1909.

Map adapted from 1967 Harold Hoskins & Assoc. map. Research in deed records and Wyuka Cemetery Board minutes Penetope Chatfield 1980-81.