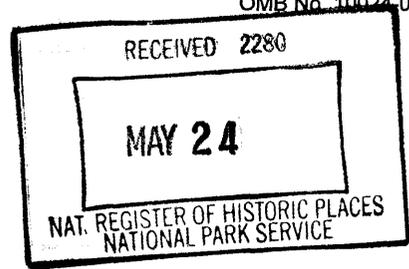


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 Bethel Cemetery
other names/site number Presbyterian Hill Cemetery, Kingston Cemetery, Old Burial Ground, Old Bethel Cemetery, New Bethel Cemetery

2. Location

street & number Euclid Avenue and Third Street N/A not for publication
city or town Kingston N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Roane code 145 zip code 37763

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. Bayne 5/18/06
Signature of certifying official/Title 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:)

for Daniel J. Vivan Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
6/26/06

Bethel Cemetery

Name of Property

Roane County, Tennessee

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing Noncontributing

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing and 4 rows: buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

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 stone, metal

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)

Social History

Period of Significance

1811- 1956

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

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): N/A

- 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:
Roane County Heritage Commission

Bethel Cemetery
Name of Property

Roane County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.9 acres Bacon Gap, Tenn 123 SE

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 724146 3972290
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____

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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary C. (Mrs. Beecher) Bell
organization Southwest Point Chapter, NSDAR date 02/2006
street & number 120 Hilltop Lane telephone 865-376-5181
city or town Kingston state TN zip code 37763

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name City of Kingston, Mayor Troy Beets
street & number 100 West Cumberland Street telephone 865-376-6584
city or town Kingston state TN zip code 37763

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Bethel Cemetery
Roane County, Tennessee

Narrative Description

Near the Southwest Point Garrison (NR 7/31/72), the historic Bethel Cemetery is located on a hilltop overlooking the town of Kingston (pop. 5,264) and the Clinch River. The south and east sides of the cemetery slope downhill from the apex. The cemetery comprises two sections: the old section dates to 1811, at the time of the incorporation of Kingston; the new section opened in 1920. The site has formerly been known by various names, including the unceremonious "Old Burying Ground," the more formal "Presbyterian Hill," (due to proximity of the Bethel Presbyterian Church for a period during the nineteenth century), and later, Bethel Cemetery. Essentially a city cemetery, however, the site does not have strict associations with any church or denomination, currently or historically. Burial is currently restricted and the cemetery retains a high level of integrity.

Bethel Cemetery is located on a 2.9-acre hill site bounded on the north by an access road above Third Street, on the west by Euclid Avenue, on the south by a shrub-lined gully, and on the east by a fence and pine row. The perimeter of the cemetery is marked on the north by a fence consisting of iron chain threaded through wooden posts along the Third Street access road and on the west by a four-foot tall stone/block wall parallel to Euclid Avenue. A drive-in entrance curves up from Euclid, and concrete steps, flanked by a pair of large cedar trees, provide pedestrian access up the hill from Euclid. There is a historic formal pedestrian entrance on the north border, consisting of concrete steps with metal handrails flanked by a non-historic commemorative marker and a non-historic roofed information kiosk. The marker credits the city of Kingston and the Southwest Point Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution with restoring the once neglected cemetery. The kiosk posts names of pioneer families buried within the cemetery, a copy of the deed, and a self-guided tour.

The north entrance stairs begin at an access road that rises approximately forty feet above Kingston's Third Street. The summit of the hill is approximately fifteen feet higher. From the summit, the terrain of the cemetery slopes gently about 100 feet to the west wall and more sharply 150 feet to the east and 300 feet to the south. In the 1920s the cemetery was expanded to the south. The new section is located in the lower third of the cemetery's southern half. The only visible distinction between the new 1920s section and the original cemetery is the increased presence of mid to late twentieth century granite tombstones along its southern edge.

Several large trees are located along the cemetery's perimeter, such as cedars, oaks, Norway spruce, magnolia, and dogwoods. Unfortunately many old trees were lost in recent years due to dry weather and old age.¹ The remaining trees help to visually separate the cemetery from the surrounding residential neighborhood. Bethel Cemetery's hilltop location gives the site a park-like setting with an expansive vista of the river, which serves also to separate a visitor from the bustle of town life below.

¹ Paul Page, "Bethel Cemetery Trees Dying," *The Roane County News*, 25 May 1990, 3-A.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Bethel Cemetery
Roane County, Tennessee

The "Southwest Point DAR Bethel Millennium Project" identifies names of more than 800 individual burials in the cemetery, locations of which are identified on a master grid [see attachment]. The markers vary in design from thin slab stone of the earliest period to ornamental headstones, sculpted pillars, and obelisks during the second half of the nineteenth century, to thick relatively unadorned blocks of the twentieth century. The vast majority of the stones are limestone, with some granite stones located mostly in the southern half of the cemetery. Additionally, a couple fieldstones are in the cemetery. Most of the stones date to the period of significance and are fairly modest in design and have traditional symbolism. Symbolism commonly found on tombstones in Bethel includes: lambs, floral designs, an open book, a hand pointing up, willow trees, and a dove. Several of the larger stones are obelisks. A good example is the Samuel J. (1816-1897) and Margaret A. (1830-1897) D'Armond stone, which is an obelisk topped with a draped urn.

Order of placement is somewhat random, unlike orderly rows of modern cemeteries. The cemetery is arranged in a series of family plots with the greatest density of stones being on the hilltop. More open spaces are located on the sloping sides, especially the east side. Cemetery records state that large rocks used in lieu of markers have been moved around over the years, suggesting that approximately one hundred unmarked graves could exist.

Several family plots are delineated by low concrete borders or ornamental wrought iron fences. Additionally, according to tradition, the McEwen family plot is enclosed with foundation stones from the old Bethel Presbyterian Church that once stood within the boundaries of the cemetery. These stones are limestone and stand approximately one foot off the ground.

Although seen in cemeteries throughout the state, one of the more unusual marker types found in Bethel Cemetery is the box tomb. Box tombs were popular during the mid nineteenth century. Box tombs feature a flat ledger supported by a stone box. The ledgers have the name and dates of the deceased carved on their surface. These markers are tombs in name only, in that the bodies of the deceased are buried in the ground, and not in the tomb itself. Bethel Cemetery has four box tombs.

Also included in the cemetery are tombstones of twenty-one steamboat men. The markers for these men are located throughout the cemetery and are decorated with either a carved emblem of an anchor or a pilot's wheel. The majority of these stones date to the latter half of the nineteenth century. This is a large collection of markers associated with steamboat men in this region.

Burials are currently restricted to those who already have a place in a family plot. While there have been small modern improvements such as the information kiosk, markers to points of interest in the cemetery, and modern benches, the cemetery retains its historic integrity of design, workmanship, feeling, and materials.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Bethel Cemetery
Roane County, Tennessee

Statement of Significance

The historic Bethel Cemetery is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its local significance in social history. Beginning with the first burial in 1811 and continuing through the mid-twentieth century, the cemetery has been the resting place of most of Kingston's prominent individuals and families. These include Thomas Norris Clark, Thomas Brown, and Captain John Doss. Furthermore the cemetery has the distinction of containing at least one veteran of every American war from the Revolution to Vietnam. Most of the monuments are small and have traditional symbolism. There are very few elaborate monuments or mausoleums. The original boundaries of the cemetery were expanded in 1920. Today burial in Bethel Cemetery is restricted. The cemetery continues to retain a high level of integrity.

John Riley, a Cherokee man, donated the land for a school and cemetery so that his children could attend the school. The school was named Rittenhouse Academy and was held in a log structure in the cemetery. Bethel Presbyterian Church, officially organized in 1806, held its first meeting on June 6, 1818 in the Rittenhouse Academy, thus the site came to be known as the Presbyterian Hill Cemetery. In 1820, the Bethel Presbyterian congregation built a brick church building for its services. The previous log building was torn down and Bethel Presbyterian Church and Rittenhouse Academy both used the new brick building until 1832 when Rittenhouse Academy moved to a new building. The building continued to be used by the church until 1858 when the building was torn down and replaced with a wood frame building. Church members worshipped there until the 1880s, when the structure was systematically dismantled, moved in numbered pieces down the hill, and reconstructed at its current location at the corner of Kentucky and Church Streets by Karl Frederick Rothe, a master carpenter and graduate from the University of Leipzig. From that point, the cemetery was devoid of buildings and became known as Bethel, or Kingston, Cemetery.²

The area around Kingston known as Southwest Point was a key militia fortification and pioneer outpost beginning in the early 1790s, and the establishment of Kingston occurred in 1799.³ The original plat of Kingston included space reserved for the cemetery.⁴ However, the first known burial and oldest marked grave dates from 1811, that of Elizabeth McEwen, whose family owned and operated a store and inn near the cemetery. Elizabeth's husband, John M. McEwen, was buried alongside her in 1821. Altogether, five members of this pioneer family were interred in the cemetery, and their family plot later was delineated by limestone blocks.

² "Bethel Historical Cemetery," pamphlet; "Bethel Organized in 1818 by Six Men and 20 Women," *Today's News, Harriman*, 25 October 1974, 3; Emma Middleton Wells, *History of Roane County 1801-1870*, Chattanooga, Lookout Pub. Co., 1927.

³ Herbert L. Harper, "National Register of Historic Places - Nomination Form: Southwest Point," Nashville, Tennessee, 1972, 3; "The history of Roane County: Kingston and the County," accessed at <http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/tn/roane/history/1927/roanecou/kingston8ms.txt>, January 17, 2006;

⁴ J. C. Parker, "Kingston - 175th Anniversary," *Today's News, Harriman*, 25 October 1974, 3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Bethel Cemetery
Roane County, Tennessee

According to local historians Bethel Cemetery has the distinction of being the only known cemetery in the state with at least one grave of a veteran from each war of American involvement (through the Vietnam War).⁵ Pioneer Gideon Morgan served in the Massachusetts Militia in the Revolutionary War (1775-1783). Morgan established a trading post on the Clinch River and a tavern at his home when Kingston was an important ferrying point. His one-and-one-half story, brick Federal style home indicates his wealth as a local businessman. Located at 149 North Kentucky Street, the Morgan home (N.R. 01/27/1983) is prominently located across from the Roane County Court House (N.R. 07/17/1971).⁶ Morgan died in 1830, and his box tomb, is marked with a DAR plaque recognizing his military service.

Representing the War of 1812 (1812-1815), Uriah Allison was buried in Bethel Cemetery in 1820. His box tomb bears a plaque noting his military service, reading "Captain, 2 Rgt. Rifle, War of 1812". Other veterans of the War of 1812 buried in Bethel cemetery are Colonel Joseph Byrd and Thomas Brown. Two Mexican War (1846-1848) veterans' graves can be found in the cemetery: Joseph B. Martin and L. M. Wester. From the Civil War (1861-1865), forty veterans of the Union Army are known to have been buried in Bethel, while only five marked graves of Confederate Army veterans can be found. However, it is believed that an additional unknown number of Civil War veterans were buried in Bethel Cemetery. There are no records documenting the number of soldiers buried and later moved to Civil War cemeteries in Nashville.⁷

The cemetery also contains the graves of eight veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898), fourteen from World War I (1914-1918), nineteen from World War II (1941-1945), three from the Korean War (1950-1953), and one from the Vietnam War (1963-1972). The density of burials by date reflects the peak and decline of use of the cemetery.

Another noteworthy group of burials in Bethel consists of the 'steamboat men,' sailors who navigated the river from Kingston to Chattanooga. Even a cursory look at a list of their names suggests that the trade ran in families, such as Chapman, Allison, Washam, and Wilkey, each having two or more members buried in Bethel. The headstones of the steamboat men are distinguished by an engraved anchor. In addition to representing St. Nicholas the patron saint of seamen, the anchor also represents hope and steadfastness. The most notable of the steamboat men was Captain John Doss (1818-1870). Captain Doss was one of the most famous steamboat men of his time. After his death in 1870, his body was brought to Kingston from Chattanooga on a steamboat. It is said that he had the largest funeral ever held in Kingston as every steamboat between the two towns formed a caravan to escort Captain Doss to his final resting place in Bethel Cemetery.⁸

⁵ ibid
⁶ Lloyd Ostby, "National Register of Historic Places – Nomination Form: Colonel Gideon Morgan House," Nashville, Tennessee, 1982, 2; C. Parker, 3.
⁷ "Bethel Historical Cemetery," pamphlet.
⁸ Parker, 3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Bethel Cemetery
Roane County, Tennessee

Steamboats traveling along the Tennessee River were an important method of transporting goods during the nineteenth century. Through most of the nineteenth century the beginning of the Tennessee River was considered to be at the confluence of the Clinch River near Kingston. Kingston was a natural place for loading and unloading goods for shipment. Steamboats ran regionally between Knoxville and Chattanooga. From Chattanooga boats ran regularly to Decatur, Alabama.⁹ Hazardous conditions on the river, particularly at the Muscle Shoals in Alabama made it difficult to navigate the full length of the river. Regular service between Knoxville and the Ohio River did not occur until 1890. The importance of steamboat travel began to decline with the advent of railroads. Following the Civil War railroad transportation began to replace river transport for all goods except coal.¹⁰ Later improvements in roads further decreased the need for steamboats.

Other notable burials in Bethel include those of Thomas N. Clark and wife Susan, Edward A. Wyatt, and Karl F. Rothe. Clark owned most of the land that became the town of Kingston, including the Southwest Point, and the only ferry that crossed Clinch River. He also served as one of the first town commissioners of Kingston. Edward A. Wyatt, as a teenager, assisted master carpenter Karl Rothe, who designed and later moved the Bethel Presbyterian church from the top of the cemetery hill to Kentucky Street below.

Several of Kingston's prominent pioneers, politicians and merchants are buried in Bethel Cemetery. Thomas Brown (1779-1848) was one of Kingston's early settlers. He served as the quartermaster for Fort Southwest Point, which preceded Kingston. When Roane County was organized in 1801 Brown was named the county tax collector. He went on to serve as a lieutenant during the War of 1812. Brown was also elected to the state House of Representatives in 1817-19 and 1821-23. Thomas' twin brother, John Brown (1779-1845), owned a large tract of land in the county and served as the first sheriff in Roane County, a position he held for 23 years.

Roane County showed its Unionist feelings by electing James Lea (1807-1867), a Unionist, to serve in the state House of Representatives in 1861-1863. During his life in Roane County, Lea practiced medicine. Lea's daughter, Mary Lucretia, married another prominent citizen of Roane County, Robert King Byrd (1823-1885). Byrd was a well-known farmer and trader who had a plantation near Kingston. He was a strong Unionist who served on the State Executive Committee of the National Union Party during the Civil War. He also organized the 1st Tennessee Volunteer Infantry and was a brigade commander for the Union Army. He was elected to the State Senate and served 1879-81.

Thomas Franklin Ingram (1860-1939) had a farm and also operated the Exchange Hotel in Kingston. He served in several public offices including constable, 1896; sheriff, 1900-1906; circuit court clerk, 1909-1917; State Senate 1915-1919; and county judge, 1918-1934. James M. Hartley (1850-1920) was a merchant for ten years, and then went on to practice law in Kingston. He was also a justice of the peace and mayor of Kingston. He was elected to the state House of Representatives and served 1907-09. His marker in Bethel Cemetery is a small unassuming stone that simply states his name and date of death.

⁹ Ann Toplovich. "Tennessee River System", *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*. Web site accessed 3/29/2006.

¹⁰ Michael Allen. "Steamboating", *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*. Web site accessed 3/29/2006.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Bethel Cemetery
Roane County, Tennessee

Bethel Cemetery has several examples of markers bearing traditional symbolism. A common symbol found in the cemetery is the figure of a hand with a finger pointing. Most often the hand is pointing up to represent the idea that the deceased has gone up to heaven. Open gates or doors also represent this idea of the deceased reaching heaven or enlightenment. There is also an example of a hand with the finger pointing down, which simply represents that the person is buried in the ground. Another common symbol is that of a handshake. This can have several meanings including greeting, goodbye, and friendship. Animal symbols are also common, especially lambs and doves. The lamb represents innocence and purity, and is often used on tombstones of children. The dove represents the soul, spirituality, and peace, or more specifically the idea of the soul finding peace after death.

Bethel Cemetery stands as the last remaining representation of many early settlers and prominent citizens of Kingston. In 2000-02 the cemetery underwent a restoration that included the removal of dead trees and brush, as well as the repair of broken tombstones. Today no burials are allowed except for those who already have places in family plots. Plots are no longer available in the cemetery. The most recent burial appears to have taken place in December of 2005. Elizabeth "Lib" Muecke, born in 1912, was laid to rest on December 27, 2005 in a family plot whose oldest grave dates to 1879. Despite some recent burials the majority of the tombstones date to the period of significance giving the cemetery a high level of integrity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 7

Bethel Cemetery
Roane County, Tennessee

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number PHOTOS Page 9

Bethel Cemetery
Roane County, Tennessee

Photographs

Photographs by: East Tennessee Development District

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission; Nashville, TN

- 1 of 19: Commemorative marker at north entrance of cemetery. Photographer facing south.
- 2 of 19: Eastern slope of cemetery. Photographer facing south.
- 3 of 19: Byrd family plot with decorative metal fencing. Photographer facing west.
- 4 of 19: Lowery family plot. Photographer facing northeast.
- 5 of 19: Obelisk. Photographer facing west.
- 6 of 19: McEwen family plot with limestone block border. Photographer facing west.
- 7 of 19: Tombstones of John and Elizabeth McEwen, the earliest stones in the cemetery. Photographer facing west.
- 8 of 19: Tombstone of Mrs. Susan T. Phillips. Photographer facing east.
- 9 of 19: Tombstone of George Yost. Photographer facing west.
- 10 of 19: Tombstone of Thomas and Jane Brown. Photographer facing west.
- 11 of 19: Tombstone of Myrtilia A. Denning. Photographer facing southeast.
- 12 of 19: Box tomb of Gideon Morgan. Photographer facing west.
- 13 of 19: Box tomb of Uriah Alison. Photographer facing south.
- 14 of 19: Tombs of Thomas and Susan Clark. Photographer facing northwest.
- 15 of 19: Tombstone of James C. and Allen H. Yost. Photographer facing west.
- 16 of 19: Tombstone of Karl Rothe. Photographer facing west.
- 17 of 19: Tombstone of Edward Wyatt. Photographer facing south.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number PHOTOS Page 10

Bethel Cemetery
Roane County, Tennessee

18 of 19: Tombstone of Jas. Miller. Photographer facing west.

19 of 19: Tombstone of Isaac Stout. Photographer facing south.