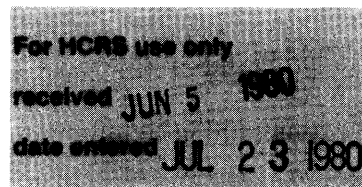


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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**

historic Friendship Cemetery

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 1300 4th Street South \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Columbus \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district Second

state Mississippi code 28 county Lowndes code 87

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Cemetery

**4. Owner of Property**

name City of Columbus

street & number 525 Main Street

city, town Columbus \_\_\_ vicinity of state Mississippi

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Chancery Clerk  
Lowndes County Courthouse

street & number 501 2nd Avenue North

city, town Columbus state Mississippi

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Statewide Survey of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date May 2, 1978  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Mississippi Department of Archives and History

city, town Jackson state Mississippi

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

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### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located in the southwest corner of the city of Columbus, Mississippi, Friendship Cemetery is bounded on the north by a residential area, on the south by Lake Catherine, on the east by 4th Street South, and on the west by a heavily foliated area overlooking the Tombigbee River. The original plot, which forms the nucleus of the present cemetery, was laid out in 1849 in the form of three interlocking circles (the emblem of its founders, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows) and covered only five acres. Over the years land continued to be purchased by the Odd Fellows and added to the cemetery until a total of thirty-five acres had been assembled. After receiving Friendship Cemetery from the Odd Fellows in 1957, the City of Columbus added approximately another twenty acres to the northwest corner of the cemetery. However, only the thirty-five acres of the old burial ground have been included in the nomination.

The three original ellipses still dominate the front of the cemetery, but the remainder of the grounds have been developed along a grid plan. Around most of the perimeter is a cast iron fence which was erected in 1900 by Champion Iron Company of Kenton, Ohio. (Friendship Cemetery papers, Columbus-Lowndes County Public Library, Columbus, Mississippi.) The cemetery is divided into "squares" measuring twenty-four feet by twenty-six feet which are in turn subdivided into twelve individual burial plots. Many of the squares were purchased by one family and often contain the graves of several generations of that family. Several of these family plots are surrounded by ornamental cast iron fences or outlined by a coping of stone. Friendship Cemetery is a virtual "forest" of stone monuments of varying sizes and shapes. Most are of marble or granite and possess a moderate to high degree of artistic quality. Typical monuments include obelisks, broken columns, urns, angels, cherubs, lambs, and crosses of various styles, as well as traditional upright slabs embellished by ornamental carvings. Rev. Thomas C. Teasdale's "Weeping Angel," the bronze bust of General S. D. Lee, the obelisk-type Confederate monument erected in 1873 by the Ladies' Monumental Association, and the "Unknown Confederate Soldier" monument erected in 1894 are among the most notable. There is also a small Gothic Revival mausoleum located within the graveyard.

Probably the most solemnly impressive feature of the cemetery is the Confederate burial ground containing the graves of over 2,000 Southern soldiers, mostly unknown. Due to the high mortality rate, the tract at the southern end of the cemetery, set aside for the Confederates was found to be insufficient so another tract to the north was acquired. Their graves were dug in long, even rows and were originally marked by wooden headboards (which, unfortunately, soon deteriorated) inscribed with the name, regiment, and company of the soldier (William L. Lipscomb, A History of Columbus, Mississippi [Birmingham, Alabama: Dispatch Printing Co., 1909], p. 127). Simple marble headstones from the Veterans Administration now mark most of the Confederate graves. The identity of the approximately 350 are known; the remainder of the markers bear the inscription "Unknown Confederate Soldier." In the 1870's the Ladies' Monumental Association planted rows of the magnolia trees in the Confederate plots and along the drive which connects the two areas (Lipscomb, p. 131). Today most of these trees survive and have grown to giant dimensions.

# 8. Significance

<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** July 16, 1849

**Builder/Architect**

**Origin of National Celebration**

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Friendship Cemetery is one of the oldest perpetually maintained cemeteries in Mississippi and is an historic site of national importance. Established May 30, 1849, on a five acre parcel of land owned and operated by Union Lodge No. 35 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the cemetery had its first recorded burial in July, 1849. Soon after opening, however, Friendship was recipient of several graves moved from other cemeteries, which accounts for the 1823 date found on its oldest tombstones (James W. Parker, Friendship Cemetery Tombstone Inscriptions and Burial Records [Columbus, Miss.: Lowndes County Department of Archives and History, 1979], pp. iii-iv).

The cemetery was originally laid out in the form of three interlocking circles representing "Friendship, Love, and Faith," the insignia and motto of the Odd Fellows. From time to time, as the need arose, the local Odd Fellows lodge purchased additional land (most prior to 1900) until the cemetery contained thirty-five acres which includes the old "Covenant Plot" Jewish cemetery that adjoined Friendship. In 1957 the Odd Fellows transferred ownership of Friendship Cemetery to the City of Columbus along with approximately \$70,000 in bonds for continued care of the burial ground. The cemetery presently contains some 9,000 graves, and the city still allows burials in the remaining unused plots (Friendship Cemetery papers, Columbus-Lowndes County Public Library, Columbus, Mississippi).

During the War Between the States, Columbus became a hospital community tending both Confederate soldiers and Union prisoners-of-war wounded at the Battle of Shiloh and other fighting in north Mississippi. Of those mortally wounded, burial records indicate that 2,194 Confederate and 49 Union dead were interred at Friendship Cemetery. Throughout the war a small group of Columbus ladies came on a regular basis to clean the graves of weeds and periodically decorate them with flowers. In the spring of 1866 Miss Matt Morton, Mrs. J. T. Fontaine, and Mrs. Green T. Hill met at the Morton home, "Twelve Gables," to plan what became the first observance of Memorial Day (William L. Lipscomb, A History of Columbus, Mississippi [Birmingham, Alabama: Dispatch Printing Co., 1909], pp. 127-129).

Designed to be an annual event, "Decoration Day" (as it was called) was scheduled for April 25, 1866. On that day a large number of ladies assembled at Friendship Cemetery to officially decorate the Confederate graves and honor the Federal dead as well. The (Columbus) Mississippi Index of April 26, 1866, reported the proceedings as follows:

The procession of yesterday in honor of the Confederate dead was large and imposing... Arriving at the cemetery, the ladies assembled around the graves of the soliders in the form of a square; from the center of the ground, an elaborate and eloquent address was delivered by Rev. G. T. Stainback, and following it, a fervent prayer by Rev. A. S. Andrews. The ladies then performed the beautiful and touching duty of decorating the graves with flowers... We were glad to see that no distinction was made between our own dead and about

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Columbus, Mississippi. Columbus-Lowndes County Public Library. Friendship Cemetery papers.

Kilmer, Kenton, "The Origin and History of Memorial Day." Research Paper, Legislative Reference Service, Library of Congress, 1958.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 35 acres **UTM NOT VERIFIED**  
Quadrangle name Columbus, Miss.-Ala. Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>3</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>3</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u>	D	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>8</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>
E	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	F	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
G	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	H	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

## Verbal boundary description and justification

The thirty-five acre section of Friendship Cemetery being nominated is an irregularly shaped area enclosed by the red line in the 1978 cemetery map. See attached map.

## List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. P'Pool, Architectural Historian

organization Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History date April 28, 1980

street & number P. O. Box W-239 telephone (601) 328-0104

city or town Columbus state Mississippi

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national     state     local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Arthur B. Hilliard

title State Historic Preservation Officer date May 27, 1980

**For HCERS use only**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

W. Ray Luce date 7/23/80  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Carol Dubie date 7/21/80

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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## 8 - STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

forty Federal soldiers who slept their last sleep by them. It proved the exalted, unselfish tone of the female character. Confederate and Federal--once enemies, now friends--receiving this tribute of respect (Lispcomb, pp. 129-130).

It was from this observance, as reported in Northern newspapers, that New York jurist Francis Miles Finch drew the inspiration for his popular poem, "The Blue and the Gray." Prefacing the poem, published in The Atlantic Monthly, in September, 1867, was this note of praise for the deed performed at Friendship Cemetery:

The women of Columbus, Mississippi, animated by noble sentiments, have shown themselves impartial in their offerings to the memory of the dead. They strewed flowers on the graves of the Confederate and of the National soldiers (Kenton Kilmer, History and Government Division, Library of Congress, "The Origin and History of Memorial Day," research paper for Legislative Reference Service, Library of Congress, 1958).

In October, 1867, all the Union soldiers buried at Friendship Cemetery were reinterred at the Corinth National Cemetery, and in subsequent years, the Federal government placed the official observance of Memorial Day on May 30th (Friendship Cemetery papers). The people of Columbus, however, have continued to honor their dead every April 25 in a ceremony which has become known as "Confederate Decoration Day." Other communities which held similar ceremonies in April of 1866 have also laid claim to the origin of Memorial Day. Most conspicuous of these are Columbus, Georgia, which honored its Confederate dead on April 26th and Carbondale, Illinois, which honored its Union dead on April 29th. However, Columbus, Mississippi, can claim not only to have been ahead of the other observances of Memorial Day, but more national-minded in its distribution of the tributes of honor and mourning (Kilmer).

In addition to being the site of this historic event, Friendship Cemetery is the burial place of many persons significant to local, state, and national history. Among them are two Mississippi governors, James Whitfield (1791-1873), and Henry L. Whitfield (1868-1927); four Confederate generals, William E. Baldwin (1827-1864), Jephtha V. Harris (1816-1899), Jacob H. Sharp (1833-1907), and Stephen D. Lee (1833-1908); Revolutionary War officer, U. S. Senator, and Indian agent, William Cocks (1747-1828); and U. S. Congressman and President of the Mississippi Secession Convention, William T. S. Barry (1821-1868). According to Ray Collins (Chief of Procurement, Monument Service, National Cemetery System, Veterans Administration), the grave of Mrs. Canant, who was mortally wounded tending soldiers at Shiloh, is marked by the only headstone ever issued by the Veterans Administration in honor of a volunteer Confederate nurse (Pat Locke, "308 Unknown Soldiers to Be Identified by Markers," Columbus (Mississippi) Commercial Dispatch, November 25, 1976).

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
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9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lipscomb, William L. A History of Columbus, Mississippi. Birmingham, Ala.: Dispatch Printing Co., 1909.

Locke, Pat. "308 Unknown Soldiers to be Identified by Markers." Columbus (Miss.) Commercial Dispatch, Nov. 25, 1976.

Parker, James W. Friendship Cemetery Tombstone Inscriptions and Burial Records. Columbus, Miss.: Lowndes County Department of Archives and History, 1979.