

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

INTRODUCTION

Riverside Cemetery lies on the west side of Algoma Boulevard overlooking the Fox River, northwest of Oshkosh's central business district. The cemetery totals 98.39 acres and includes sections historically reserved for Catholics, Masons and veterans. The city of Oshkosh purchased the original (non-denominational) section in 1855, adding to it in 1882 and 1914. The Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) veteran's plot is located in the original (non-denominational) section of the cemetery, but was not established until 1886. The Catholic sections date from 1855, 1875 and 1882/1887. The Masonic burial ground was established in 1868.¹

Riverside Cemetery is composed of the following contributing resources: two buildings (the 1920-21 Riverside Chapel and the 1936-37 garage); 32 structures (all mausoleums); five objects (the two gate posts that make up the Riverside Cemetery Gateway, the Soldier and Sailor Monument, the Burr/End of the Trail Monument; and the G.A.R. Memorial; and one site (the cemetery itself). Two metal garages (c. 1960 and c. 1980) are the lone non-contributing elements. Riverside Cemetery also contains numerous markers that are too small to count, but which contribute to the setting and note the passing of the more than 20,000 persons interred here. In addition, within the cemetery there are a number of mature trees that likely date from the historic period and that form a part of the setting.

DESCRIPTION

The south end of Riverside Cemetery encompasses the earliest sections; the additions expanded the cemetery north- and westward (see Figure I attached). The Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) veterans plot is in the southwest corner of the 1855 original (non-denominational) section. The potter's field lies just east of the G.A.R. plot in the original (non-denominational) section. The Masonic section, added in 1868, is east of the potter's field. The remainder of the original (non-denominational) 1855

¹ Clinton F. Karstaedt, editor, *Oshkosh, One Hundred Years a City: 1853-1953*. Oshkosh: Oshkosh Centennial, Incorporated, 1953), p. 109; "Community's Cemeteries Have Many Stories to Tell," *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, 27 October 1990; and Mary Tollard, Secretary, Riverside Cemetery, "Riverside Cemetery," Oshkosh, 1986, p. 3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

section is set just north of the G.A.R., potter's field and Masonic sections and includes the lots on which the Riverside Cemetery Chapel sits. The Catholic section is next north; it is divided into five areas, each named for a saint. The areas that make up the Catholic section date from 1855 (southwest corner of the Catholic section), 1875 (St. Joseph's section, southeast corner of the Catholic section), and 1882/1887 (three areas, north of the earlier two, and named for St. Peter, St. Vincent and St. Mary). The 1882 non-denominational addition is located just north of the Catholic sections; the 1914 addition lies north of the 1882 addition. The northeast corner of the 1914 addition was developed as a "memorial park," with markers set flush to the ground, in 1951.

The main entrance into the Riverside Cemetery is on Laurel Avenue, which leads west from Algoma Boulevard through the Riverside Cemetery Gateway, south of the Riverside Cemetery Chapel, and into the 1855 section. North of the Chapel, a driveway provides access from Algoma Boulevard to Ash Avenue, which runs north along the eastern edge of the cemetery, past the Catholic sections and the 1882 and 1914 additions, more or less parallel to Algoma Boulevard. A grass terrace, planted with trees in 1985,² separates Ash Avenue from Algoma Boulevard.

Cemetery Site

The Riverside Cemetery itself is counted as a contributing site for the purposes of National Register eligibility. A grid plan is found in each of the 1855 non-denominational, the G. A. R., the potter's field, the Masonic and the Catholic sections. The narrow streets in the non-denominational section are named for trees. The north-south streets are (west-to-east): Oak, Pine, Cedar, Maple, Linden and Ash avenues. The east-west streets are (north-south) Myrtle and Laurel avenues. The streets are not all paved.

The Masonic section is quite small and exhibits a grid plan with a circular center, laid out 29 November 1889.³ The streets are unnamed and unpaved. Stone curbing separates the grassy streets from the plots (see photo 1).

² Tollard, p. 8.

³ Ibid., p. 2.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 3

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Myrtle Avenue marks the dividing line between the 1855 non-denominational section and the Catholic burying grounds. Oak, Cedar and Ash avenues run north through the Catholic sections, but the streets in between do not line up with the other ones in the non-denominational section. Those in the Catholic sections are named (west-to-east): St. Peter's, St. Vincent's, and St. Joseph's avenues. Woodbine Avenue separates the Catholic area from the 1882 addition to the Riverside Cemetery.

A curvilinear plan emerges in the 1882 and 1914 sections of the Riverside Cemetery. The plans do not match up, however, suggesting that the 1882 section was laid out before the 1914 addition was acquired, although the former had not been platted by 1909.⁴ Ash Avenue continues to run north along the east edge of the cemetery from the Catholic section and past both additions. The northeast corner of the 1914 addition was developed as a "memorial park" in 1951, with a broad lawn and markers set flush with the ground.

Cemetery Buildings, Structures and Objects

Two buildings; 32 structures (all mausoleums); and five objects are substantial enough in size to count as contributing to the significance of the Riverside Cemetery. The locations of these resources appear in Figure II (attached).

The **Riverside Cemetery Chapel** was designed by Oshkosh architect Julius Dreger and erected in 1920-21.⁵ It is a one-story, front-gabled, Romanesque Revival building finished with locally-quarried, rock-faced, limestone laid in random ashlar (see photo 2). The chapel is set on a concrete foundation. The building is T-shaped in plan, with the base pointing east, and the top oriented north-south. The chapel's maximum dimensions measure approximately 91 feet (east-west) by 84 feet (north-south).

The chapel section features shouldered, parapeted gables; a tiled, front-gable roof; stone buttresses, belt-courses and moldings; and round-arched openings with stone voussoirs. The front faces east, overlooking Algoma Boulevard. On the front, a cut-away porte-cochere appears. Its east-facing, round-arched

⁴ Gorman and Soudea, *Map and Plat Book of Winnebago County, Wisconsin*. Chicago: Gorman and Soudea, 1909.

⁵ "Beautiful Riverside Cemetery Will Have Chapel, Receiving Vault and Waiting Station," *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, 23 October 1920, p. 1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 4

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

openings are enclosed with wrought-iron gates. In the gable end above, the chapel is embellished with a stone tablet reading: CHAPEL, and decorative stonework that forms a cross in a circle.

The main entrance into the chapel is found beneath the portecochere and is composed of a pair of wood doors surmounted by a semi-circular transom with leaded glass. The transom displays an urn and swags. A round-arched, leaded-glass window with simple tracery appears on either side of the doors. Each of the north- and south-facing façades of the chapel section exhibit two more of these windows.

At the rear of the chapel section, forming the top of the T, is the office and receiving vault. It is a one-story, flat-roofed structure with a narrow parapet, enlivened with stone belt-courses. The east-facing facades of this section flank the chapel section and each displays a centered, round-arched doorway, flanked by round-arched windows. The office occupies the south section; a third round-arched window and a second door appears in this section (see photo 3).

The north- and south-facing façades of the office and receiving vault each feature a projecting bay with a group of three, leaded-glass windows (see photo 4, to the right). Above, the parapet displays a semi-circular cap.

A round-arched portal flanked by buttresses is found on the west-facing (rear) façade of the office and receiving vault section (see photo 4, to the left). The entrance, recessed within the portal, matches the one on the front-facing façade.

The interior plan consists of the chapel section, flanked by the office and the ladies' restroom (south), and the robing room and men's restroom (north). The receiving vault occupies the rear (west) end of the building. Inside, the chapel section measures 25 feet (north-south) by 37 feet (east-west) and seats 132 persons. The center aisle is flanked by wooden pews. The wooden pulpit is carved, as are the exposed wooden ceiling beams. The ceiling is finished with narrow boards, the walls are plastered, and the floor is covered with octagonal tiles. Decorative iron wall sconces and a pair of iron chandeliers provide lighting.

The chapel also showcases two paintings by Gustav Behncke, noted local artist. Behncke presented "The Resurrection" to the cemetery in 1930. The other, depicting the crucifixion of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 5 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Christ, was donated by Behncke's widow, Ida, in 1942.⁶

The office has been altered with wood paneling and carpeting, but the restrooms, robing room, and receiving vault retain their original plaster ceilings and walls, and exposed concrete floors. The receiving vault is 35 feet (east-west) by 77 feet (north-south) with a 9-foot cross-shaped corridor,⁷ and is lined with crypts that will accommodate up to 200 bodies.

The **garage** is a long, one-story, astylistic utilitarian building finished with glazed brick in Flemish bond (see photo 5). It was erected in 1936-37.⁸ The garage sits on a concrete slab foundation and exhibits a flat roof, hidden behind a narrow parapet. Five garage doors line the east-facing (front) façade.

The 32 mausoleums in the Riverside Cemetery are all temple-front structures with an embellished entrance. Most exhibit wrought iron doors or gates, and a small window with leaded glass (usually on the rear façade). Twenty-three show the influence of the Neo-Classical Revival style, eight are Egyptian Revival, and one represents the Gothic Revival mode.

The Neo-Classical Revival mausoleums display a range of interpretations of the style. The **Paine Mausoleum**, erected in 1904, exemplifies Neo-Classical Revival design by presenting a replica of the Parthenon, in miniature and only slightly less ornate (see photo 6). The Paine Mausoleum exhibits a smooth-faced ashlar finish and a temple front with fluted Doric columns supporting a broad entablature enriched with triglyphs. A closed pediment appears above. Wrought iron gates protect the door.

The **Hartley Mausoleum** also conforms closely to the Neo-Classical Revival mode (see photo 7). Built of red brick c. 1900, it displays temple-front form and quoining. The base, door surround, cornices, and closed pediment are of white stone. The surround of the central entrance is enriched with a bracketed cornice. A wrought iron gate stands in front of the door and a brass plaque reading: HARTLEY flanks either side.

Fourteen of the Neo-Classical Revival mausoleums show the influence of the Richardsonian Romanesque style through the use of rock-faced stone finish and a pediment that is implied with a stone parapet. The **Wickwire-Steele Mausoleum** presents a good

⁶ Tollard, p. 3.

⁷ "Beautiful Riverside Cemetery Will Have Chapel, Receiving Vault and Waiting Station."

⁸ Karstaedt, p. 110.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 6

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

example of this variant (see photo 8). Dating from c. 1900, it displays a temple front and a rock-faced finish. The entrance is flanked by paired, polished, Doric columns.

The **Fisk Mausoleum**, constructed in 1892, is the most eclectic of the Neo-Classical Revival/Richardsonian Romanesque mausoleums (see photo 9). It is temple-front in form and has a rock-faced ashlar finish, but the doorway's polished stone surround is carved in a manner that defies classification.

Other Neo-Classical Revival mausoleums that show the influence of Richardsonian Romanesque are: the **Percey Mausoleum** (c. 1920); the **Gilkey Mausoleum** (c. 1900); the **Hay Mausoleum (east)** (c. 1900); the **Hay Mausoleum (west)** (c. 1900); the **Hardy Mausoleum** (c. 1900); the **Bauman Mausoleum** (c. 1900); the **Morris-Amos Mausoleum** (c. 1900); the **Rasmussen Mausoleum** (c. 1920); the **Schlummer Mausoleum** (c. 1900); the **Roenitz Mausoleum** (1909); the **Jones-Steiner Mausoleum** (c. 1900); and the **Waite Mausoleum** (1910).

Seven of the Neo-Classical Revival mausoleums present a streamlined appearance that suggests a c. 1925-1935 construction date, reflecting the trend toward simplification in architectural styles that took place during that period. The **Gibson Mausoleum** (c. 1930) is a good example of this era (see photo 10). It is a temple-front, Neo-Classical Revival structure of polished granite. The central, recessed entrance is framed by Doric columns in antis. A wrought iron gate is placed in front of the door. Other examples of this era are: the **Flugelberg-Flister Mausoleum** (c. 1925); the **Nevitt Mausoleum** (c. 1925); the **Reinke Mausoleum** (c. 1925); the **Moerke Mausoleum** (c. 1925); the **Pulliam Mausoleum** (c. 1925); and the **Thoma Mausoleum** (c. 1925).

Eight of the mausoleums show the influence of the Egyptian Revival, employed in funerary monuments between 1830 and 1880, and again during the 1920s and 1930s. All are finished with stone panels and recall the Egyptian mastaba in form. The **Conro Mausoleum** (c. 1925, see photo 11) even has battered walls. The **Pollock Mausoleum** (c. 1925) displays a simple entrance surround framed with delicate fluting. The roofline is stepped, like a ziggurat, giving this monument an Art Deco flair. The **Koelbel Mausoleum** (1874); the **Campbell Mausoleum** (c. 1925); the **Daly Mausoleum** (c. 1925); the **Schreiber Mausoleum** (c. 1925); the **Behlendorf Mausoleum** (c. 1925); and the **Harwood-Stein Mausoleum** (c. 1925) are the other examples of Egyptian Revival in the Riverside Cemetery.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 7

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

The **Sawyer Mausoleum** is a small version of a Gothic Revival chapel, constructed of rock-faced ashlar, and appears to date from c. 1890 (see photo 12). The steep pitch of front-gabled roof is echoed in the gable-roofed portico. The portico features a pair of polished granite columns. Wrought iron gates protect the door.

The five objects that are substantial enough to contribute to the significance of the Riverside Cemetery are described below.

The **Riverside Cemetery Gateway** is composed of two, square posts of rock-faced stone in a random ashlar pattern (see photo 13). The base and cap are white stone. A bronze plaque reading: RIVERSIDE CEMETERY is set on the front (east face) of each post. An historical photograph shows that, at one time, iron gates hung here. A metal bracket embedded into the inside face of each post is all that remains of the gates. The rustic appearance of the Gateway suggests a construction date of c. 1930. The Gateway frames Laurel Avenue, the principal road into the original section of the cemetery. The Riverside Cemetery Gateway is a good example of a Rustic style gateway, typical of those used for cemeteries and parks during the 1930s.

The **Soldier and Sailor Monument** was erected in 1924.⁹ It is a 40-foot obelisk of smooth, white granite quarried at Barre, Vermont (see photo 14). The \$10,000 cost was funded by popular subscription. On the east face of the obelisk (overlooking Algoma Boulevard), an inscription reads: TO THE SOLDIER AND SAILOR DEAD OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN AND WORLD WARS FROM THE CITIZENS OF OSHKOSH 1924. The Soldier and Sailor Monument marks a plot set aside for veterans of those two wars.

The **Burr/End of the Trail Monument** was erected in 1929 and carved by John Burr, a local stone cutter, in memory of his wife, Minerva.¹⁰ It is a fine reproduction of the John Fraser sculpture, "The End of the Trail." It depicts an American Indian astride a pony, both bowing their heads with weariness, and is executed in smooth, white stone (see photo 15).

The G.A.R. Memorial consists of a stone statue of a soldier standing on a polished stone pedestal, set on a rock-faced stone

⁹ "Beautiful Memorial Erected By Popular Subscription Was Center of Attraction Today at Formal Dedication," *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, 30 May 1925.

¹⁰ Madison, Wisconsin, Architecture/History Inventory, Wisconsin Historical Society, Office of Historic Buildings.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 8

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

base. The memorial is inscribed: TO OUR DEAD COMRADES, and was erected in 1894.¹¹

The many markers that are too small to be individually counted for National Register evaluation purposes nonetheless add to the atmosphere of the Riverside Cemetery. Although most are simple, astylistic tombstones, others represent one of the three major historical trends in funerary art: Classical, Gothic, and Egyptian. The Jewell marker is canopy in form, but Classical in style, exhibiting fluted Doric columns, a broad entablature and a low-pitched hip roof (see photo 16). The white stone Nichol sarcophagus is inset with Gothic tracery (see photo 17). Numerous Egyptian Revival-influenced obelisks of white stone can be found in the cemetery, especially in the earliest section (see photo 18). Few rise taller than six feet. Several markers show something about the life of the person commemorated. A tree stump with branches lopped off, representing someone who died young, is a typical of this type of monument (see photo 19).

Non-Contributing Resources

There two non-contributing resources on the site of the Riverside Cemetery. Both are side-gabled, metal-finished **garages** standing alongside one another behind the 1936-37 garage in the southwest corner of the cemetery (see photo 20). One dates from c. 1960, the other from c. 1980. The location of these buildings in the rear corner of the cemetery and hidden behind the 1936-37 garage minimizes their impact.

ALTERATIONS

The Riverside Cemetery has lost four structures and one building. In 1887, a grandstand with seating for 50 people was erected in the G.A.R. plot in the southwest section of the cemetery. It was razed in 1986. A nineteenth century bandstand was destroyed by fire in 1980. A new one was constructed in 1981, but removed in 1986 due to repeated vandalism. The loss of these two structures has very little negative impact on the design of the Riverside Cemetery. However, they did help to illustrate how the community used the cemetery during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many communities had a grandstand and/or bandstand in their municipal cemetery during this era, but few of those structures have survived.

¹¹ Tollard, p. 2.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 9

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

A second gateway stood just north of the Riverside Chapel. It matched the existing gateway, with square posts of rock-faced random ashlar and wrought iron gates, and appeared to date from c. 1930. The loss of this gateway has a minimal negative impact, given the many intact elements that the Riverside Cemetery displays.

The Riverside Cemetery Chapel was constructed on the site of the sexton's house in 1920-21. Nothing has been discovered about the appearance or date of construction of the sexton's house.¹² The chapel replaced it 80 years ago, during the historic period, and has gained its own significance. When the chapel was completed, a "waiting station," where cemetery visitors could wait for the trolley and later, the bus, was part of the plan. It was a free-standing structure, placed in front of the chapel, composed of a tiled, side-gabled roof placed on heavy, rock-faced limestone piers.¹³ The waiting station was razed in 1970.¹⁴ The waiting station was an interesting element, unusual for either a cemetery or a chapel. It is not an element that is characteristic of either a cemetery or a chapel. In the context of the whole cemetery, it was a small resource and only one of a great many elements that might contribute to the significance of the property, so its loss does not impair the integrity of the cemetery.

The cemetery had a wrought iron fence in the extreme south end of the site, but it did not extend beyond the existing Riverside Cemetery Gateway.¹⁵ The wrought iron fence was removed c. 1957, but its loss has a minimal impact on the integrity of the cemetery.

The original plan of the 1855 non-denominational section has been changed slightly. In 1950, the subsidiary east-west roads and the grassy depressions that delineated each numbered block were filled in. Broken curbing and some fencing were also removed at this time.¹⁶ However, the grid plan, a distinguishing feature of early-to-mid nineteenth century cemeteries, has been retained. Further, the plans of the other sections have not been changed.

¹² Ibid., pp. 1-3, 6 and 8.

¹³ Historical photograph, Karstaedt, p. 109.

¹⁴ Photograph of razing appears in *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, 20 March 1970, p. 5.

¹⁵ Historical photograph, Karstaedt, p. 109.

¹⁶ Karstaedt, p. 110.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 10

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

These alterations do change the appearance of the cemetery. However, the overall integrity of the Riverside Cemetery is excellent, with its grid and curvilinear sections, two contributing buildings, 32 contributing structures, five contributing objects and numerous markers too small to count.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date built</u>
1	Bauman Mausoleum	c. 1900
30	Behlendorf Mausoleum	c. 1925
31	Campbell Mausoleum	c. 1925
2	Conro Mausoleum	c. 1925
32	Daly Mausoleum	c. 1925
3	End of the Trail/Burr Monument	1929
4	Fisk Mausoleum	1892
5	Flugleberg-Flister Mausoleum	c. 1925
33	G.A.R. Memorial	1894
6	Gibson Mausoleum	c. 1930
7	Gilkey Mausoleum	c. 1900
8	Hardy Mausoleum	c. 1900
9	Hartley Mausoleum	c. 1900
34	Harwood-Stein Mausoleum	c. 1925
10	Hay Mausoleum (east)	c. 1900
11	Hay Mausoleum (west)	c. 1900
12	Koelbl Mausoleum	1874
35	Jones-Steiner Mausoleum	c. 1900
13	Moerke Mausoleum	c. 1925
14	Morris-Amos Mausoleum	c. 1900
15	Nevitt Mausoleum	c. 1925
16	Paine Mausoleum	1904
17	Percey Mausoleum	c. 1920
18	Pollock Mausoleum	c. 1925
19	Pulliam Mausoleum	c. 1925
20	Rasmussen Mausoleum	c. 1920
21	Reinke Mausoleum	c. 1925
22	Riverside Cemetery Chapel	1920-21
23	Riverside Cemetery Garage	1936-37
24	Riverside Cemetery Gateposts	c. 1930
36	Roenitz Mausoleum	1909
25	Sawyer Mausoleum	c. 1890
26	Schlummer Mausoleum	c. 1900

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 11

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

37	Schreiber Mausoleum	c. 1925
27	Soldier and Sailor Monument	1924
38	Thoma Mausoleum	c. 1925
39	Waite Mausoleum	1910
28	Wickwire-Steele Mausoleum	c. 1900

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date built</u>
29a	Garage	c. 1980
29b	Garage	c. 1960

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 1 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: SUMMARY

Riverside Cemetery embodies the distinctive characteristics of a cemetery landscape of the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. As such, it is potentially eligible for the National Register under *Criterion C*. The cemetery's scenic site, on a bluff overlooking the Fox River, and on what was originally the edge of the city, are characteristic of nineteenth century cemeteries. The layout illustrates the evolution of cemetery design from the nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, from grid plan to the curvilinear layout characteristic of the rural cemetery type. A section of the cemetery has been developed as a memorial park, with broad lawns and flush markers, reflecting the trend that succeeded the rural cemetery in the early-to-mid twentieth centuries. The presence of the gateway, separating the dead from the living, and a prominently sited chapel with a receiving vault are additional resources that distinguish a cemetery landscape. In addition, Riverside Cemetery showcases an impressive collection of monuments, mausoleums and markers that reflect the changing tastes in funerary art from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries. The period of significance extends from 1855 to 1951, to encompass the dates of development of the entire cemetery plan, from the original section to the 1951 memorial park section.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CITY OF OSHKOSH

Although the fur trade brought a handful of pioneers of European descent to Winnebago County as early as 1818, it was not until the Treaty of the Cedars was signed in 1836 that the area that is present-day Oshkosh truly opened for settlement. Within 15 years, pioneer farmers had erased all but a few traces of the fur-trading era.¹⁷

A ferry began crossing the Fox River at the present site of the Main Street Bridge in Oshkosh in the early 1840s. In 1844, a small general store opened near the ferry on what is now North Main Street. By the summer of 1846, settlers were arriving daily and Oshkosh had become a small village. In 1847, two lumber mills were established in the area, and the industry that would

¹⁷ James I. Metz, editor, *Prairie, Pines and People: Winnebago County, A New Perspective*, (Oshkosh: Oshkosh Northwestern Company, 1976), pp. 131-35.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

spur Oshkosh to phenomenal growth was born. The community's first burying ground, the Locust Grove Cemetery, opened in 1848. In 1849, the population of the village reached 500. By 1850, Oshkosh had become the county seat of Winnebago County, and its population had nearly tripled, standing at 1,392. In 1853, Oshkosh incorporated as a city.¹⁸

The city grew rapidly during the 1850s. By 1855, the Locust Grove Cemetery had been outgrown, prompting the city to purchase the original section of the Riverside Cemetery. The remains of those buried in Locust Grove Cemetery were transferred to Riverside Cemetery over the next fifteen years.

The railroad arrived in Oshkosh in 1859. The city boomed in the 1860s as a result of the improved transportation connections and an increased demand for lumber products during the Civil War. The city's population rose from 6,086 in 1860 to 12,663 in 1870, making Oshkosh Wisconsin's third largest city. Despite a nationwide recession, Oshkosh continued to grow in the 1870s, counting 17,000 residents in 1875.¹⁹

By the end of the 1870s, the growth of the lumber industry in Oshkosh began to slow. As the importance of the lumbering declined, wood products industries such as furniture- and box-making, and pulp and paper production, began to appear. As Oshkosh's industrial base changed, the demographics of the population changed as well. The early settlers were primarily Yankees. Following the Civil War, German and Irish immigrants arrived to work in the city's factories. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, many Poles, Scandinavians and ethnic Germans from the Volga River region of Russia settled in Oshkosh. The wood products industries thrived through the 1920s, helping Oshkosh maintain its position as one of the five largest cities in the state throughout the period. In 1930, the population of Oshkosh stood at 40,108.²⁰

During the Depression and World War II, the city struggled as most of the wood products manufacturers went out of business. Oshkosh recovered after World War II, growing to 53,104 residents

¹⁸ Howard, Needles, Tammen and Bergendoff, "Final Report of the Intensive Historic Resource Survey for the City of Oshkosh, Wisconsin," September 1981, pp. 4-6, and 16.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ "Oshkosh, A Progressive City," *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, undated, c. 1891; and Robert C. Nesbit, *Wisconsin: A History*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973), pp. 341-43 and 459-60.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 3 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

by 1970.²¹ Today, Oshkosh remains the seat of Winnebago County, is home to the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and the Experimental Aircraft Association Museum, and has a lively business sector that includes two long-time wood products manufacturers, Morgan Manufacturing (building supplies) and the Buckstaff Company (furniture manufacturing), as well as Oshkosh B'gosh, an internationally-known maker of children's clothing. In 2000, the population was 62,916.

HISTORY OF RIVERSIDE CEMETERY

On 6 March 1855, the city of Oshkosh purchased a parcel of land from Maria Grignon, widow of Charles Grignon, for cemetery purposes. The property was located on the east bank of the Fox River at the northwestern edge of the city and was named Riverside Cemetery. Oshkosh was expanding so quickly that the first burying ground, the Locust Grove Cemetery, had already been outgrown, even though it had only opened in 1848. A Catholic cemetery was laid out on land just north of the city's new cemetery, purchased from John Hennie in 1855.²²

The Masons bought a small parcel on the east edge of Riverside Cemetery from D. D. Whitney in 1868. An addition was made to the Catholic cemetery in 1875. On 23 September 1882, the city purchased 38 acres along the north edge of the Catholic plots from R. P. Edgerton. In 1887, the city sold the southernmost 10 acres of this parcel to the Catholic church. Riverside Cemetery was brought to its current size of 98.39 acres with the purchase of 61 acres from H. C. Rogers on 18 December 1914.²³

Riverside Cemetery, including the Masonic, Catholic, and veteran's plots, was governed by the Riverside Cemetery Board until 1972, when management was transferred to the Director of the Oshkosh Parks Department.²⁴

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: CEMETERIES AS DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

European-American cemeteries during the Colonial period were generally churchyard plots, except in New England, where Puritan

²¹ Nesbit, 459.

²² Tollard, pp. 1-2.

²³ Ibid., p. 2.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 4

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

beliefs led to the establishment of common community burial grounds. Neither type had paths or streets, but rather were devoid of design elements, although they were often walled or fenced. In America, as had happened in Europe, these cemeteries were soon overcrowded due to their small size and, as a result, often became malodorous as the interred bodies decomposed.²⁵

America's first designed cemetery was New Haven's New Burying Ground (later Grove Street Cemetery), founded by James Hillhouse in 1796 and laid out by Josiah Meigs. It was a small (6.0-acre), flat site with a grid plan, its streets lined with trees. The formal, rational layout may have been inspired by the popularity of the Classical-influenced Georgian and Federal architectural styles of the day.²⁶ Research did not identify the name given to this type of cemetery, if any.

Although the plan of the New Burying Ground was imitated, simple churchyard and communal burying plots dominated until 1831, when Mount Auburn Cemetery opened in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mount Auburn was the first "rural" cemetery in America. It was established through the efforts of Dr. Jacob Bigelow, a Boston physician and botanist, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Bigelow was convinced that the traditional churchyard plot was a menace to public health. Mount Auburn was designed by General Henry A. S. Dearborn and based on the Pere Lachaise in Paris, a garden-like municipal cemetery founded in 1804. Mount Auburn's extensive grounds, its hills and valleys, ponds and woods, roads and paths that meandered in imitation of nature, park-like setting and picturesque views romanticized the cemetery. Mount Auburn became very popular as a quiet place away from the noise of the city, ideal for walking and even for family picnics. Following its success,²⁷ similar cemeteries were developed around the United States.

²⁵ Elisabeth Walton Potter and Beth M. Boland, "Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places," National Register Bulletin 41, U. S. Department of The Interior, National Park Service, 1993, p. 5; and Peggy McDowell and Richard E. Meyer, *The Revival Styles in American Memorial Art*, (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994), p. 13.

²⁶ William Tishler, editor, *American Landscape Architecture*, (Washington, D. C.: The Preservation Press, 1989), p. 121.

²⁷ Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 268; and McDowell and Meyer, p.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 5

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

The rural cemetery of the pre-Civil War era was generally sited on a relatively large, hilly and wooded parcel, on the outskirts of town. Where possible, the site commanded a dramatic or symbolic view, such as of a river, which evoked the journey the dead make from this world into the next. The naturalistic appearance of the pre-Civil War rural cemetery was shaped by thinning existing trees and placing plants to direct the view. After the Civil War, the landscape of the rural cemetery became less dramatic and more like a garden. This was done by removing the woods and smoothing out the rough and hilly features of the site. Dr. Bigelow was influential in this transformation, as he had guided the redesign of the Mount Auburn Cemetery grounds along these lines between 1845 and 1871, while president of the cemetery association. Noted landscape architects such as Adolph Strauch, Jacob Weidenmann, and O. C. Simonds made significant contributions to this development, providing much-emulated examples of gardens of the dead during the late nineteenth century.²⁸

In the early twentieth century, the American rural cemetery evolved into the perpetual lawn care cemetery or "memorial park." The City Beautiful movement, with its emphasis on formal plans and manicured lawns, was a prime factor in sparking this transition. A level site with a broad lawn, unbroken by large monuments or fences around individual plots, characterizes this type. Mechanized equipment for maintaining the manicured lawn came into widespread use just after World War II, making markers that were flush with the ground preferred in memorial parks.²⁹

The advent and evolution of the rural cemetery in America coincided with a period of radical change in funerary monumentation. This first became evident in Europe, where imposing artistic and architectural funerary monuments had been erected solely for the nobility until the end of the eighteenth century. The social and political reform that attended the founding of democracies in France and in the United States gave rise to a popular belief in the worth of the individual. The industrial revolution of the early nineteenth century helped create a middle class, with the funds to perpetuate the memories of their loved ones and of heroes. These factors together

13.

²⁸ Tishler, p. 121-22.

²⁹ Potter and Boland, p. 5.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 6 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

ushered in an era of extensive private and public monumentation, beginning around 1840 and lasting until about 1930. Most of these monuments were executed in one of three architecturally inspired styles: Classical Revival, Egyptian Revival, and Gothic Revival.³⁰

Archaeological excavations in locations such as Herculaneum and Pompei, and the availability of builder's guides, such as Asher Benjamin's *American Builder's Companion* (1827), made Classical Revival especially fashionable in the mid-nineteenth century. The Chicago World Columbian Exposition of 1893 later sparked a resurgence in the popularity of classical-derived monumentation. Columns supporting a canopy or statuary, and urns enriched with swags and placed on classical pedestals were common. The temple-front form lent itself to mausoleum design and was widely built between about 1895 and 1910, an era which saw the erection of sumptuous tombs for the self-made millionaires of industry.³¹

Egyptian Revival monumentation peaked with archaeological discoveries along the Nile River (1850s-1880s) and again following the excavation of King Tut's tomb (1920s-1930s). The obelisk was the most prevalent Egyptian Revival form in the United States, employed for individual markers during 1850s-1880s, and for military commemorative markers erected after the Civil War and after World War I. Dr. Bigelow had designed an Egyptian Revival gateway for the Mount Auburn Cemetery, inspiring Egyptian-influenced entrances in many other cemeteries, especially during the mid-nineteenth century. The form of the Egyptian mastaba, with its battered walls of rock-faced masonry and a flat or stepped roof, was well suited to mausoleums, although it was not employed as often as the classical temple-front form, even at the height of its popularity during 1920s and 1930s.³²

While Gothic Revival was less often employed in funerary monuments, it was favored for cemetery gates during the late nineteenth century and preferred in chapel design throughout the period. The fact that Dr. Bigelow had designed the Mount Auburn Cemetery Chapel in the Gothic Revival mode no doubt accounts for

³⁰ McDowell and Meyer, pp. 1-5.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 18-23.

³² Ibid., pp. 18, and 133-44.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 7 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

some of the style's popularity in chapel construction.³³

SIGNIFICANCE: DESIGNED LANDSCAPE

Riverside Cemetery is eligible for the National Register under *Criterion C*, as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a cemetery landscape of the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. The original non-denominational, Masonic, and Catholic sections exhibit grid plans, in place by 1889 and reflecting the formal, rational layout found in some early nineteenth century cemeteries.³⁴ Curvilinear plans mark the 1882 and 1914 additions, representing the rural cemetery of the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The northeast section of the 1914 addition was developed as a memorial park in 1951, with broad lawns and flush markers imposed upon the curvilinear plan, reflecting the trend that succeeded the rural cemetery in the early-to-mid twentieth centuries. Riverside Cemetery's location on what was the edge of town, with a dramatic and possibly symbolic view of the Fox River, its park-like setting, its Rustic style gateway, and its prominent chapel and receiving vault are all elements that make the Riverside Cemetery an excellent example of a cemetery landscape.

The markers and monuments in Riverside Cemetery exemplify the changing tastes in funerary monumentation from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century, adding to the historic character of the cemetery. Particularly fine examples include the Soldier and Sailor Monument (1924), an imposing Egyptian Revival obelisk typical of military markers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; and numerous mausoleums, most notable among them the Parthenon-in-miniature that is the tomb of the Paines (1904), and the tiny Gothic Revival chapel that is the Sawyer Mausoleum (c. 1890). Both the Paine and Sawyer mausoleums were erected for wealthy lumbering families.

Oshkosh's first burial ground, the Locust Grove Cemetery, was established in 1848 at Wisconsin Avenue and Algoma Boulevard. No new interments took place there after the Riverside Cemetery opened in 1855. The last remains were removed from the Locust Grove Cemetery in 1869. The old Lincoln Elementary School was

³³ Ibid., pp. 122-128.

³⁴ Brant and Fuller, *Illustrated Atlas of Winnebago County, Wisconsin*, (Oshkosh: Brant and Fuller, 1889).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 8

Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

then erected on the site.³⁵

There are two, smaller cemeteries in Oshkosh. Calvary Cemetery lies on the east side of Algoma Boulevard, across from Riverside Cemetery. It was laid out in a grid pattern in 1917. Lake View Memorial Park, on the east side of Algoma Boulevard south of Riverside Cemetery, was created in 1931. Both were developed in the twentieth century, as memorial parks with flush markers, and so do not compare well with Riverside Cemetery, although Lake View Memorial Park possesses a lovely Tudor Revival chapel.³⁶

CRITERION CONSIDERATION D

It should be noted that a cemetery is not eligible for the National Register unless it meets *Criteria Consideration D*. Under this consideration, a cemetery is eligible if it derives its primary significance from the graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from an association with historic events. The Riverside Cemetery derives its primary significance from distinctive design features, as outlined above.

³⁵ Karstaedt, p. 109.

³⁶ Clarence Inky Jungwirth, *A History of the City of Oshkosh*, (Oshkosh: Clarence Inky Jungwirth, 1994), 1:26-27.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 1 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

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(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 2 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 1 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A parcel being located in the Southwest 1/4 of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 11, the South 1/2 of the Northeast 1/4 and the East 1/2 of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 10, T18N, R16E, City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin:

Beginning an aluminum monument at the South quarter corner of said Section 10;

Thence S 89°22'55" W, 292.06 feet to the easterly line of the Chicago Northwestern Railroad;

Thence N 28°56'24" W, 4482.46 feet along said line to the northerly property line;

Thence N 89°15'36" E, 1127.92 feet;

Thence N 00°14'31" W, 15.43 feet to the westerly right of way line of STH 110;

Thence S 48°25'20" E, 673.42 feet along said right of way line;

Thence southeasterly 82.32 feet along the arc of a curve concave to the southwest, having a radius of 778.00 feet (the long chord of which bears S 37°19'39" E, 82.28 feet);

Thence N 56°27'03" E, 2.50 feet;

Thence S 33°13'38" E, 29.07 feet;

Thence S 58°21'39" W, 2.50 feet;

Thence southeasterly 179.20 feet along the arc of a curve concave to the southwest, having a radius of 778.00 feet (the long chord of which bears S 25°33'47" E, 178.81 feet);

Thence S 18°57'51" E, 1217.15 feet;

Thence S 19°08'55" E 22.41 feet;

Thence N 70°12'35" E, 9.50 feet;

Thence S 19°08'55" E, 50.00 feet;

Thence S 70°12'35" W, 4.00 feet;

Thence S 19°08'55" E, 92.12 feet;

Thence S 71°51'14" W, 5.50 feet;

Thence S 19°08'55" E, 201.60 feet;

Thence S 70°51'05" W, 2.00 feet;

Thence S 19°08'55" E, 1252.18 feet;

Thence N 89°22'55" E, 1.05 feet;

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(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 2 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Thence S 19°08'55" E, 74.15 feet;
Thence S 69°37'23" W, 5.50 feet;
Thence S 19°08'55" E, 114.22 feet;
Thence N71°12'51" E, 3.00 feet;
Thence S 19°08'55" E, 15.00 feet;
Thence S 71°12'51" W, 3.00 feet;
Thence S 19°08'55" E, 167.70 feet to the owner's southerly
property line;
Thence S 89°22'55" W, 370.72 feet along said line to the west
line of said Southeast 1/4;
Thence S 00°18'09" E, 220.02 feet along said westerly line to the
point of beginning.

Said parcel contains **98.39 acres** of land.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

These boundaries coincide with the legal boundaries of the
property and enclose the all the resources historically
associated with Riverside Cemetery.

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(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section photos Page 1 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Photo 1 of 20

Riverside Cemetery

City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County

All photos were taken by Elizabeth L. Miller in November 2001 and June 2002.

Negatives on file at the Wisconsin Historical Society.

View of the Masonic section, showing curbing around a block, looking north.

The information for the following photos is the same as the above, except as noted:

Photo 2 of 20

View of the east-facing (front) façade, Riverside Cemetery Chapel, looking west.

Photo 3 of 20

View of the south-facing façade, Riverside Cemetery Chapel, looking northwest.

Photo 4 of 20

View of the west- (rear) and south-facing facades, Riverside Cemetery Chapel, looking northeast.

Photo 5 of 20

View of the south- and east-facing (front) facades, 1936-37 garage, looking northwest.

Photo 6 of 20

View of the east-facing (front) façade, Paine Mausoleum, looking west.

Photo 7 of 20

View of the south- and east-facing (front) façades, Hartley Mausoleum, looking northwest.

Photo 8 of 20

View of the west-facing (front) façade, Wickwire-Steele Mausoleum, looking northeast.

Photo 9 of 20

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section photos Page 2 Riverside Cemetery
City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

View of the south-facing (front) façade, Fisk Mausoleum, looking northwest.

Photo 10 of 20

View of the east-facing (front) façade, Gibson Mausoleum, looking northwest.

Photo 11 of 20

View of the west-facing (front) façade, Conro Mausoleum, looking northeast.

Photo 12 of 20

View of the east-facing (front) façade, Sawyer Mausoleum, looking northwest.

Photo 13 of 20

View of the cemetery gateway, looking northwest.

Photo 14 of 20

View of the Soldier and Sailor Monument, looking northwest.

Photo 15 of 20

View of the Burr/End of the Trail Monument, looking west.

Photo 16 of 20

View of the Jewell canopy, and curbing around plot, looking north.

Photo 17 of 20

View of the Nichol sarcophagus, looking northwest.

Photo 18 of 20

View of obelisk markers, looking northeast.

Photo 19 of 20

View of Miller marker, looking east.

Photo 20 of 20

View of non-contributing c. 1960 and 1980 garages, looking southeast.