766

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

RECEIVED 2280
AUG - 1 1996
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 any 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 Knoxville National Cemetery

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 939 Tyson Street, N.W. ☐ not for publication N/A

city or town Knoxville ☒ vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Knox code 093 zip code 37917

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 forth 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.)

Karen Rome Tupek 3/26/96
Signature of certifying official/Title Federal Preservation Officer Date
Department of Veterans Affairs
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.)

Herbert L. Harper, DSHPO 5/22/96
Signature of commenting or other official/Title Date
Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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 Signature of Keeper Date of Action
9/12/96

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 the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
2	0	structures
2	0	objects
4	0	Total

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

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

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 Concrete
walls Brick
roof Asbestos
other Metal: Iron; Stone: Marble, Stone

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** a birthplace or grave.
- ☒ **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)

Military

Period of Significance

1867-1905, 1936

Significant Dates

1867
1936

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☒ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☒ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository
Department of Veterans Affairs

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 9.8

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	236020	3985000	3			
2				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 Therese T. Sammartino, Staff Assistant, National Cemetery System

organization Department of Veterans Affairs date July 8, 1996

street & number 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. telephone (202) 565-4895

city or town Washington, D.C. state _____ zip code 20420

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Department of Veterans Affairs

street & number 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. telephone _____

city or town Washington, D.C. state _____ zip code 20420

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 listings. 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 the 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.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Knoxville National Cemetery is located at 939 Tyson Street, N.W., within the city limits of Knoxville, Tennessee, in Knox County. The site is nearly square in shape, and the burial sections are arranged in the shape of a large circle, separated by conveniently arranged walks. Each section forms a quarter of the large circle, while the headstones at the graves form circles, all converging toward the intersection of two walks, where the flagpole is located. The grounds are enclosed by a stone wall, constructed in 1875, on the north side of which is an iron fence. The main entrance is situated at the center of the south side and is protected by a double iron gate. There are two additional entries to the cemetery that are no longer used. The Cooper Street entry in the rear of the cemetery is now closed by a stone wall, and a pedestrian entry near the northern corner of the cemetery is now closed by wrought-iron fencing. A service building containing an administrative office and public restroom, is located to the northwest of the main entrance.

The cemetery was established in September 1863. Graves were originally marked with painted and lettered headboards and by numbered stakes. These were later replaced with upright marble markers.. The cemetery was closed on May 1, 1973, but reopened on July 29, 1985, when part of the road system was removed to create additional grave space. The road that was removed extended from the cemetery entry to the former entry gate at Cooper Street. The cemetery remained open for five additional years and was officially closed in 1990. Interments of casketed remains in occupied graves and reserved graves, as well as interments of cremated remains, continue. As of May 31, 1996, there were 8, 012 graves used for the interment of 8,503 casketed remains and 154 sites used for the interment of 209 cremated remains. As of May 31, 1996, there were 125 gravesites available (121 reserved) for the interment of casketed remains and 108 sites available for the interment of cremated remains.

The original superintendent's lodge was constructed some time prior to 1868. According to the Report of Inspector of the National Cemeteries of the United States for 1869, "The lodge is very badly built. The plank was not seasoned, and the shingles were most inferior. The shrinkage has been very great, and every rain storm beats through the doors and casements of the windows, covering the floors with water. The roof leaks badly. The plastering was done in mid-winter. The mortar contains very little lime, and is constantly falling off." The same report for the years 1870 and 1871 states that the lodge is a small wooden cottage in poor condition. National Cemetery System records show that a two-story brick, stone, and concrete lodge with office building was constructed in 1907. The roof was slate. Cemetery superintendents or directors resided in the lodge until 1984. That same year, a decision was made to demolish the lodge. Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act was begun. Subsequently, in 1990, a fire caused extensive damage to the structure. It was later demolished on September 28, 1993.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

The brick service building was constructed in 1936. It originally contained two storage bays and two toilets. A brick addition and garage were constructed in 1949. The roof of the building is covered with asbestos shingles, and the garage area has a built-up flat roof. The interior and exterior of the original service building were renovated in 1987 to accommodate the administration office, since the lodge was going to be demolished, and to provide handicapped accessible restroom facilities. One of the public toilets was converted to an employee restroom. The total area of the building and garage is 1,578 square feet. There is also an enclosed fuel storage area adjacent to the service building.

A brick and concrete rectangular rostrum, 22 feet by 37 feet, with an asphalt shingle roof, was constructed in 1885. It was located near the northeast corner of the cemetery and was removed on September 30, 1960.

A monument, sixty feet in height, prominently displayed in the northeast corner of the national cemetery, was erected by members of the Department of Tennessee, Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.). Department Commander H. C. Whittaker first publicly outlined the plan on March 23, 1893, during the tenth annual G.A.R. encampment at Harriman. A memorial committee was chaired by William Rule, influential editor of the Knoxville *Daily Journal*, who later wrote that plans for the memorial were first presented at the Athens encampment in 1892. There was little hope that the state would sanction funding for a Union monument; this sadly was a burden each veteran and his friends would have to bear. After a promising beginning in 1893, the funding campaign became dismally inactive. Three years later, only $1,300 had been collected. In the spring of 1896, the group forwarded, for the approval of the United States Quartermaster General, the chief supervising agency for all G.A.R. construction, a design for the monument. The structure was to be a fifty-foot Tennessee marble shaft, embellished with unidentified bronze figures on the corners, and a single statue at the summit. A design was agreed upon and, on May 8, 1896, approved by the United States Quartermaster's Office. Approval was conditioned by the proviso "that no part of the expense attending the work be made a charge against the United States." In the summer, the memorial committee signed a contract with William B. McMullen, president of the Tennessee Producers Marble Company and the Southern Monument Company, for material and construction, and with Colonel William A. Gage for engineering consultation. The design showed that flanking entrances were to lead, as if from drawbridges, into a small sanctuary dressed entirely with marble. In its west wall was to be an "art glass" window. The east wall would be hung with tablets detailing regimental histories. Close by the entrances would appear the national emblem and state hatchment, as well as an epitaph and dedication. The monument was a miniature medieval fortress complete with its unique inner room, stained glass window and mosaic star. David H. Geddes, chief carver and foreman at the Southern Monument Company, and his assistants apparently had admirably sculpted the crenelated

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

bastions, turrets, corbelled table, decorative frieze, round-arch openings, and rusticated wall surfaces. But, looking high over Holston Street to the central turret, one found not only a sentry peering steadfastly toward the southern horizon, but a ferocious bronze eagle with wings widely spread. The monument cost $11,300 and was nearly paid for by soldier residents of the state. Of the estimated 7,000 donations, most came as one dollar offerings from dutiful pensioners. The monument was formally turned over to the Government and accepted by the Secretary of War on October 24, 1901.

On August 22, 1904, a powerful bolt of lightning struck the monument. Only the steps and part of the foundation remained, and these were scarred. The stones and eagle, its wings "closely cropped at its body as evenly as if the work had been done by an instrument," were flung to the ground and into the street. Lightning had apparently been attracted to a steel rod that anchored the eagle to the shaft; consequently, the sculpture had sustained a direct hit. Through the state department, the committee sponsored G.A.R. General Orders No 2, calling for immediate reconstruction. United States Representative Henry R. Gibson introduced before the House a bill calling for $10,000 to secure the repairs. The bill passed on April 25, 1905, but the appropriation was for a maximum of $5,000 or "so much thereof might be necessary to repair the monument." In November 1905, the committee retained Baumann Brothers, Incorporated, of Knoxville as the consulting architect. Reconstruction began the next May, following acceptance of a $4,300 bid submitted by the Fenton Construction Company. The Baumann design must have closely duplicated the original plan. The bronze eagle was replaced with an eight-foot-tall soldier, taking his post on top of the castle's main turret. The coat of arms was left off, for fear it would draw more lightning. The project was completed on October 15, 1906. A fanciful local legend identified the soldier figure with General John T. Wilder, who was the only ranking general on the memorial committee. Union General Wilder first came to Tennessee in 1863, when he marched his Indiana brigade through what is now Rockwood to join the Union Army at Chattanooga. He took part in the Battle of Chickamauga and, on that battlefield, there is an imposing monument to him and his brigade. While camping in what is now Rockwood, General Wilder, a mineralogist and engineer, noticed signs of both coal and iron ore in close proximity. After the war, he came back to Knoxville, established the Roane Iron Company, and operated it for several years. During the McKinley Administration, he was appointed Federal pension agent and maintained an office in the old post office. Every three months, he issued pension checks to hundreds of Union veterans.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

The monument is inscribed as follows:

Northeast Opening

1861 1865

IN MEMORIAM
UNION SOLDIERS
OF
TENNESSEE
OCTOBER 15, 1896
REST ON, EMBALMED AND SAINTED DEAD,
DEAR AS THE BLOOD YE GAVE;
NO IMPIOUS FOOTSTEP HERE SHALL TREAD
THE HERBAGE OF YOUR GRAVE;
NOR SHALL YOUR GLORY BE FORGOT
WHILE FAME HER RECORD KEEPS, OR HONOR POINTS THE HALLOWED SPOT
WHERE VALOR PROUDLY SLEEPS.
TENNESSEE FURNISHED FOR THE UNION ARMY 31092 MEN.
CASUALTIES 6776.

Northwest Wall

1896 1901

TO THE TENNESSEE MEN
WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES A VOLUNTARY
SACRIFICE ON
FREEDOM'S ALTAR;
WHO ENDURED WITH FORTITUDE A TEMPORARY BANISH-
MENT FROM THEIR MOUNTAIN HOMES WHO FOLLOWED
THE FLAG THEY LOVED;
ON SCORGES OF BATTLE-FIELDS AND WHO FELL
VALIANTLY FOR
NATIONAL UNITY
THIS MONUMENT
IS LOVINGLY ERECTED BY THEIR SURVIVING
COMRADES AND FRIENDS.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

When looking through the wrought-iron gate on the northeast side of the monument, you can see the following inscribed on a slab forming a part of the interior wall:

Monument Committee

WILLIAM RULE	CHAIRMAN
W.R. CARTER	SECRETARY
W.J. RAMAGE	TREASURE
R.R. SAMUEL	
H.C. WHITAKER	DIED SEPT. 29. 1898.
W.E.F. MILBURN	
A.J. GAHAGAN	
E.H. MATHEWS	
FRANK WEISE	
J.W. CARTER	
G.W. PETERS	
J. T. WILDER	
D.M. COLDWELL	

Farther inside the monument, inscribed on another wall, is the following:

ORGANIZATION OF TENNESSEE UNION TROOPS
CAVALRY.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

1ST. CAMP GARBER, KY., MAR., 1862.
2D. CUMBERLAND GAP, TENN., AUG. AND SEPT., 1862.
3D. CUMBERLAND GAP, TENN., AUG. AND SEPT. 1862.
4TH. CUMBERLAND GAP, TENN., AUG. AND SEPT., 1862.
5TH. NASHVILLE, TENN., JULY, 1862.
7TH. HUNTINGDON, TENN., NOV. 1862.
8TH. CAMP NELSON, KY., JUNE, 1863.
9TH. CAMP NELSON, KY., JUNE 1863.
10TH. NASHVILLE, TENN., OCT. 1863.
11TH. CAMP NELSON, KY., OCT., 1863
12TH. NASHVILLE, TENN., OCT., 1863.
13TH. STRAWBERRY PLAINS, TENN., SEPT., 1863.
14TH UNION CITY, TENN., DEC., 1863.

On the southeast elevation of the monument is a stained-glass window. Inside the monument to the left of this window, the following is inscribed:

INFANTRY

1ST. CAMP DICK ROBINSON, KY., AUG. 1861
2D. CAMP PICKETT ROBINSON, KY., SEPT. 1861
3D. FLAT LICK, KY., FEB. 1862
4TH LOUISVILLE, KY., MAR. 1863
5TH BARBOURVILLE, KY., MAR. 1862
6TH BARBOURVILLE, KY., MAR. 1862
7TH NEVER ORGANIZED MEN TRANSFERRED TO OTHER REGIMENTS
8TH LEXINGTON, KY., SEPT. 1862
9TH NEVER ORGANIZED MEN TRANSFERRED TO OTHER REGIMENTS
10TH NASHVILLE, TENN., MAY 1862

As you enter the cemetery, there is a dedicatory plaque that was placed there when the cemetery was reopened on July 29, 1985. It is inscribed as follows:

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
ESTABLISHED IN 1863
IS THIS DAY REDEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF ALL THE
PATRIOTIC MEN AND WOMEN
WHO ANSWERED THEIR
COUNTRY'S CALL TO SERVICE
THEIR INSPIRING CONTRIBUTION
WILL HELP PRESERVE IN THE
HEARTS AND LIVES OF ALL
AMERICANS THE SPIRIT OF
PATRIOTISM THE LOVE OF
COUNTRY AND THE WILLINGNESS
TO SERVE AND SACRIFICE
FOR THE COMMON GOOD

RONALD REAGAN
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
HARRY N. WALTERS
ADMINISTRATOR OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
PAUL T. BANNAI
CHIEF MEMORIAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR
JULY 29, 1985

There are two known Medal of Honor recipients buried in the Knoxville National Cemetery:

Troy A. McGill, Sergeant, U.S. Army, Troop G, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division - World War II - For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy at Los Negros Islands, Admiralty Group, on March 4, 1944. In the early morning hours Sergeant McGill, with a squad of eight men, occupied a revetment that bore the brunt of a furious attack by approximately 200 drink-crazed enemy troops. Although covered by crossfire from machine guns on the right and left flanks he could receive no support from the remainder of our troops stationed at his rear. All members of the squad were killed or wounded except Sergeant McGill and another man, whom he ordered to return to the next revetment. Courageously resolved to hold his position at all costs, he fired his weapon until it ceased to function. Then, with the enemy only five yards away, he charged from his foxhole in the face of certain death and clubbed the enemy with his

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

rifle in hand-to-hand combat until he was killed. At dawn, 105 enemy dead were found around his position. Sergeant McGill's intrepid stand was an inspiration to his comrades and a decisive factor in the defeat of a fanatical enemy. He is buried in Section B, Grave 6294.

Timothy Spillane, Private, Company C, 16th Pennsylvania Cavalry, Civil War - At Hatcher's Run, Virginia, on February 7, 1865, his gallantry and good conduct in action as well as his bravery in a charge and reluctance to leave the field after being twice wounded, earned him the Medal of Honor. He is buried in Section A, Grave 3319.

The numbers shown for contributing resources within the property reflect the following:

Buildings: Service building

Sites: Cemetery

Structures: Gate, perimeter wall

Objects: Flagpole, monument

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Knoxville National Cemetery is significant under Criterion A, and is an important component of the multiple property submission of Civil War Era National Cemeteries. It is significant under Criterion A because of its association with the Civil War.

To Abraham Lincoln, there was no question that East Tennessee and its people were his main source of strength in the South and, immediately after the disaster that befell his army at Bull Run, he ordered an all-out advance into East Tennessee from the Cincinnati base. There were both military and political reasons for his strategy. Union occupation of the territory would sever the vital railroad line connecting Virginia with the Mississippi Valley, and the area was ablaze with Unionists eager to join his legions. East Tennessee was even more important to the Confederate States. Even before Tennessee had broken from the Union, companies of rebel troops were recruited in Knoxville and nearby counties, mustered into service with state militia, and stationed at strategic points.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

By the summer of 1861, the Confederate States of America had assumed all the characteristics of an independent nation. In early June, the city of Knoxville was still controlled by the Military League troops. Their primary function was to protect the manufacturing facilities and the railroads that were daily transporting soldiers from the Southwestern states through East Tennessee into Virginia. The continuous transit of troops was witnessed by people loyal to the Union with feelings of dissatisfaction, which sometimes grew into animated wrath. At Strawberry Plains, Tennessee, a regiment of southern troops being transported by train, fired on a mass meeting of Unionists as they passed, and the fire was returned. No lives were lost, but feelings of hatred were naturally intensified. To prevent further occurrences, President Jefferson Davis established the District of East Tennessee of the Confederate Armies, and Brigadier General Felix K. Zollicoffer was named first commander. He established his headquarters in Knoxville and chose General William R. Caswell as his aide and Major B.F. Fogg as his adjutant. Zollicoffer found himself surrounded by multiple pockets of resistance as the mountaineers gathered all available weapons and met in secret rendezvous to plan their own private revolution. They brazenly exercised their freedom at the ballot box in August by electing Union candidates overwhelmingly in the congressional districts around Knoxville.

The Confederate government was well aware that any Federal move into East Tennessee would have to come through southeastern Kentucky, following the route of the forbidding, ancient Wilderness Trail that passed through Cumberland Gap, a narrow and easily defended pass located sixty miles north of Knoxville. Charged with the defense of the Gap and the entire Western Territory was General Albert Sidney Johnston, a man President Davis considered the ablest soldier in the entire Confederacy. On his journey from Richmond to East Tennessee, he stopped in Knoxville to confer with General Zollicoffer. The two quickly agreed that the natural defense of East Tennessee began at Cumberland Gap, and Johnston ordered that it be occupied immediately. Opposing the Confederates forty miles north of the Gap at Camp Andrew Johnson, near Barbourville, Kentucky, was an unlikely group of refugees from East Tennessee, calling themselves the First and Second Tennessee volunteers, organized and commanded by Samuel P. Carter. President Davis ordered Zollicoffer to shift his troops from Knoxville to Cumberland Gap and seize Camp Johnson as well as Camp Robinson that was commanded by Lieutenant William Nelson. Zollicoffer took three regiments and established Camp Buckner at Cumberland Ford. He captured the salt works at Manchester, took the salt and wagons and sent them on to Knoxville. He left General William Churchwell in command at Cumberland Gap and went back to East Tennessee. Operating out of Knoxville, the Confederates then began a more potent campaign to wipe out resistance. Vigilance committees were dispersed all around East Tennessee with the authority to arrest persons on suspicion of hostility. Jefferson Davis and his War Department, for some time, had doubts about the military abilities of Zollicoffer. Consequently, they assigned Major General George B. Crittenden to take over the District

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

of East Tennessee. Zollicoffer was later killed at the Battle of Mill Springs in Kentucky. At Knoxville, the news of his death caused great consternation. He was the most popular Confederate leader in Tennessee and was the first Tennessee general killed in the Civil War.

The spring of 1862 witnessed a falling-off of acts of violence in East Tennessee. At Knoxville on March 8, 1862, Major General Edmund Kirby Smith succeeded General George B. Crittenden as Confederate commander of the District of East Tennessee, which was soon reorganized as the Department of East Tennessee, with headquarters at Knoxville. His first task was to muster sufficient forces for adequate defense of East Tennessee. By June 1862, his forces had swelled to 18,000. Confederates in East Tennessee were threatened by encirclement of Federal forces occupying Kentucky, western and central Tennessee, and northern Mississippi and Alabama. General Braxton Bragg assumed command in the West. A Confederate invasion of Kentucky took place and failed to turn the tide of the war in favor of the South. Bragg's and Smith's combined operations had produced some positive results for the South. East Tennessee and the valuable rail lines that ran through Knoxville were secured for the South for months to come.

In January 1863, General Ambrose Burnside was the new Federal Commander of the Army of the Ohio. In June, to pave the way for the invasion of East Tennessee, Burnside sent Colonel William P. Sanders to lead a cavalry raid on Confederate lines south of Cumberland Gap to tear up bridges and communications. The night of June 19, Colonel Sanders ran into the Confederate pickets outside Knoxville. On the 20th, he was moving toward the center of Knoxville on the Tazewell Road. War had come to Knoxville. The Confederates in Knoxville knew that a Union raid on the city was a certainty. The call went out for Knoxville citizens to help defend their city and brace the garrison. By nightfall, two hundred citizens and convalescent soldiers reported for duty, and the batteries were manned. Colonel Sanders and his raiders arrived in Knoxville after dark. The skirmish, mainly an artillery duel, lasted little more than an hour. Two Confederate officers and an enlisted man lost their lives. Their primary mission was to destroy communication lines. Sanders was later promoted to Brigadier General. On November 18, General Sanders and his aide, Major R.E. Lawder, were watching as the gray line swarmed up the hill against the Federal position on Kingston Pike in front of Fort Loudon. They saw Captain Winthrop, a lone Confederate horseman, charging directly into a murderous fire of rifles. They turned and began to retreat for cover behind the hill. Sanders was hit and Lawder caught the general in his arms and quickly collected a few men, who carried their bleeding commander to the Anderson House where they found an old ladder and used it as a stretcher to move Sanders to a room at the Lamar House, where he was examined by Dr. J.C. Hatchitt. A Minie ball had entered his left side and tore the spleen. Sanders, 28 years old, died the next morning, November 19. It was decided that, for the sake of the morale among the soldiers, General Sanders's

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

death would be concealed for the time being. The funeral with graveside service would be held at night, as silently as possible. He was buried in the graveyard next to the Second Presbyterian Church, and his remains were later moved to the Chattanooga National Cemetery, Chattanooga, Tennessee. He is buried in Section C, Grave 1601. Sanders was the only Southern-born Union general officer killed in the Civil War and was a cousin of Jefferson Davis. By command of General Burnside, Fort Loudon was renamed Fort Sanders in his honor.

Union commander General Burnside established his Knoxville headquarters in the home of John H. Crozier, which stood on the northeast corner of Gay Street and Clinch Avenue (site of the present-day Farragut Building). By early September, he had occupied Knoxville and closed the short interior lines of communication from Virginia to Tennessee.

General James Longstreet was Lee's most trusted corps commander. He urged President Davis and General Robert E. Lee to send him and his First Corps by rail from Virginia through Knoxville to join Bragg.

General Longstreet's mission was to destroy Burnside quickly at Knoxville and return to the assistance of Bragg who, for the moment, had Grant trapped in Chattanooga. Burnside, on the other hand, had to delay Longstreet in order to increase Grant's chances of defeating Bragg and breaking out of the trap.

From Campbell's Station on November 16, 1863, General Burnside had sent instructions to Captain Orlando Poe, chief engineer of the Army of the Ohio, at Knoxville, to prepare lines of defense for the town, employing the engineering battalion of the 23rd Corps and such civilians as he could impress into service.

The siege of Knoxville effectively began on November 17, 1863, when the Confederates surrounded Knoxville except where it was bounded on the south by the Tennessee River. The Union troops, ordered by Burnside to retreat no farther, to stand or die in Knoxville, now began to number the days of the siege. The third day, November 19, was memorable, for in the early morning hours the 79th New York Highlanders inside the earthwork fort erected their flag staff, and for the first time the Stars and Stripes flew over the red clay ramparts. For these three days, the Confederate force had ringed the town but had not made a serious demonstration at any point. On November 20, offensive lines began to appear as Longstreet ordered the construction of entrenchments. To strengthen their "diggings," the Union troops reinforced their lines with every material on hand.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

Fort Sanders was the most heavily fortified emplacement. The west front of this fort was in the vicinity of 17th Street between Clinch and Laurel Avenues, with the northwest bastion near the present site of Fort Sanders Manor, an apartment building at the intersection of 17th and Laurel. Both sides knew that, although this fort was constructed according to classical engineering principles, with a profile of moat, embankment, and parapet, its northwest bastion, a prominent salient in the main Union line of defense, had been built upon a hill that fell off sharply to the northwest. Beneath the brow of this hill a large attacking force could approach within 100 yards without being exposed to view or to fire either from the fort or from the adjacent rifle pit.

By the night of November 20, the physical divisions of offensive and defensive lines were clearly drawn. On Saturday, November 21, the fifth day of the siege of Knoxville, there was no significant change in the positions of the lines. Longstreet's philosophy of attack was to move into enemy territory, select a defensive position, and entice the enemy into attacking from a disadvantageous angle. But Burnside, whose mission was defensive, had no intention of leaving his fortifications and attacking in open ground.

Sunday, the 22nd, there was less firing than usual, but several Union men were hit by Rebel snipers as the guard was changed in daylight hours at Fort Sanders. On the 23rd, Longstreet received word from Bragg that a large force was advancing from Kingston against the Confederates at Knoxville. Longstreet immediately withdrew most of Wheeler's cavalry from the line and sent them toward Kingston to block the progress of the unknown force pressing from the rear. Bragg, sensing an attack upon his own position at Missionary Ridge, decided to recall Longstreet from Knoxville. He dispatched Brigadier General Danville Leadbetter, his chief engineering officer, to Longstreet to personally urge either an immediate Confederate assault or a hasty withdrawal. The night of the 23rd, the Union picket lines between First and Second creeks were driven in, and it appeared that a general engagement would result. Burnside ordered his troops to set fire to the long line of buildings north of the railroad between the two armies. Flames lighted up the wintry sky and the whole town was illuminated by the blazing buildings.

Tuesday, November 24, there was very little picket firing. Most of the day, the Confederates were occupied in establishing their rifle guns on Cherokee Heights south of the river, from which they could enfilade the western side of Fort Sanders. The attack was ordered to commence at sunrise of the 25th. Before orders could be issued to the subordinate officers, Longstreet learned that the brigades of Generals Bushrod Johnson and Archibald Gracie, about 2,600 men, were on their way to reinforce him and would arrive the night of the 25th from Loudon. The attack was postponed once again. General Leadbetter arrived at Longstreet's headquarters after dark on the 25th with orders from Bragg to attack

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

and crush Burnside quickly. Longstreet suggested that with more reinforcements expected that evening and in the next few days, Union troops could be starved into surrender without the needless expense of Confederate lives in an assault that may not be successful. He added that if an assault must be made, it should be directed against the northwest bastion of Fort Sanders. Leadbetter agreed but requested that the final decision be delayed until he could make a thorough reconnaissance of the Federal lines and concluded that an attack upon Mabry's Hill was impossible. On Saturday, November 28, the siege of Knoxville went into its twelfth day and General Leadbetter delivered General Bragg's order to attack immediately. Longstreet ordered General McLaws to strike at Fort Sanders as soon as it became visible in the morning sun of the 28th, but it was extremely cold and foggy. Once more, Longstreet canceled the attack order. The attack was then to begin in the darkness of the 28th just before sunrise, preceded by only a few rounds of artillery fire to encourage the infantry, and the assault would be made by the infantry alone. As the Rebel sharpshooters advanced into position about eleven o'clock that evening, Burnside's entire command was alerted to the point of attack. During the cold night of November 28, the Union soldiers ate and slept fully armed. Just before dawn on November 29, the Confederate troops moved forward. The bloody fight lasted only twenty minutes. The confederates felt that without ladders they were not given a fair chance, and they wanted another crack at the fort. General Jenkins pleaded with Longstreet and finally obtained permission to renew the assault. While plans were being made, a courier suddenly arrived with a telegram which President Jefferson Davis sent to Major General Robert Ransom to relay to Longstreet. General Grant had driven Bragg's army from Missionary Ridge and Longstreet was ordered to join Bragg near Ringgold or Dalton, Georgia. As soon as it became evident to General Burnside that the assault was over, he ordered General Potter to arrange a thirty-minute truce with Colonel Sorrel of Longstreet's staff in order to care for the wounded and bury the dead. The attacking Confederate troops sustained 813 casualties--129 killed, 458 wounded, and 226 missing. Union losses in the fort were reported as 5 killed and 8 wounded. At 7 p.m. on November 29, a single cannon's roar marked the end of the truce. The victorious Union Army was once again besieged in Knoxville. The "defeated" Confederate army was still in a position to starve the Union army into surrender or to capture it by another assault. At midnight on December 4, 1863, as the men in Fort Sanders were standing to arms, something of an unusual nature was observed going on in the Confederate camps.

They made wild speculations. Some thought the Confederates were preparing for one final assault, others that they were retreating. At daylight, Captain Ames, Company B of the 36th Massachusetts, discovered that the Confederates were indeed gone. The siege of Knoxville was over.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

The Knoxville National Cemetery was established in September 1863. Bodies were removed in Tennessee from Tazewell, Claiborne County, 15 miles north; from Concord, Knox County, 20 miles west; from Christianburg, Montgomery County, in Virginia, 200 miles east; from Asheville, Buncombe County, in North Carolina, 80 miles south, and from various places within those limits; and from the cemetery at Cumberland Gap, in Claiborne County, Tennessee.

The Knoxville National Cemetery consists of 9.8 acres. The property was formerly owned by John Damron, who on June 10, 1867, in accordance with an appraisement made by a decree of the Court, conveyed the same to the United States, in fee simple, for the sum of $5,000.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

National Cemetery System Microfilm Records

Department of Veterans Affairs Historic Preservation Office

Report of Inspector of the National Cemeteries of the United States for 1869

Report of the Inspector of the National Cemeteries for the years 1870 and 1871

Seymour, Digby Gordon. Divided Loyalties. University of Tennessee Press, 1963. East Tennessee Historical Society, 1982.

Moffatt, Frederick C. A Tale of Two Monuments: Civil War Sculpture in Knoxville. East Tennessee Historical Society.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA - VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries are indicated on the accompanying base map.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The National Cemetery System has used the existing boundaries of the cemetery.

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
City of Knoxville, Tennessee
Armando A. Sammartino, photographer
Dates of Photographs: November 12 and 13, 1995

All negatives are stored with Technical Support Service (401B), National Cemetery System, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20420

VIEW OF: Entrance gate, view looking southwest
NEG. NO. 49949-1
PHOTO 1 of 17

VIEW OF: Flagpole, view looking west
NEG. NO. 49949-11
PHOTO 2 of 17

VIEW OF: Service building (office portion), southeast elevation
NEG. NO. 49949-15
PHOTO 3 of 17

VIEW OF: Service building, southeast elevation
NEG. NO. 49949-14
PHOTO 4 of 17

VIEW OF: Service building, southwest elevation
NEG. NO. 49949-16
PHOTO 5 of 17

VIEW OF: Service building, northwest elevation
NEG. NO. 49949-21
PHOTO 6 of 17

VIEW OF: Monument, northeast elevation
NEG. NO. 49949-6
PHOTO 7 of 17

VIEW OF: Monument, northwest elevation
NEG. NO. 49949-4
PHOTO 8 of 17

VIEW OF: Monument, southeast elevation
NEG. NO. 49949-8
PHOTO 9 of 17

VIEW OF: Monument, southwest elevation
NEG. NO. 49949-9
PHOTO 10 of 17

VIEW OF: Stained-glass window on southeast elevation of monument
NEG. NO. 49949-10
PHOTO 11 of 17

VIEW OF: Rededication plaque at cemetery entrance
NEG. NO. 49949-3
PHOTO 12 of 17

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking northwest

NEG. NO. 49949-23
PHOTO 13 of 17

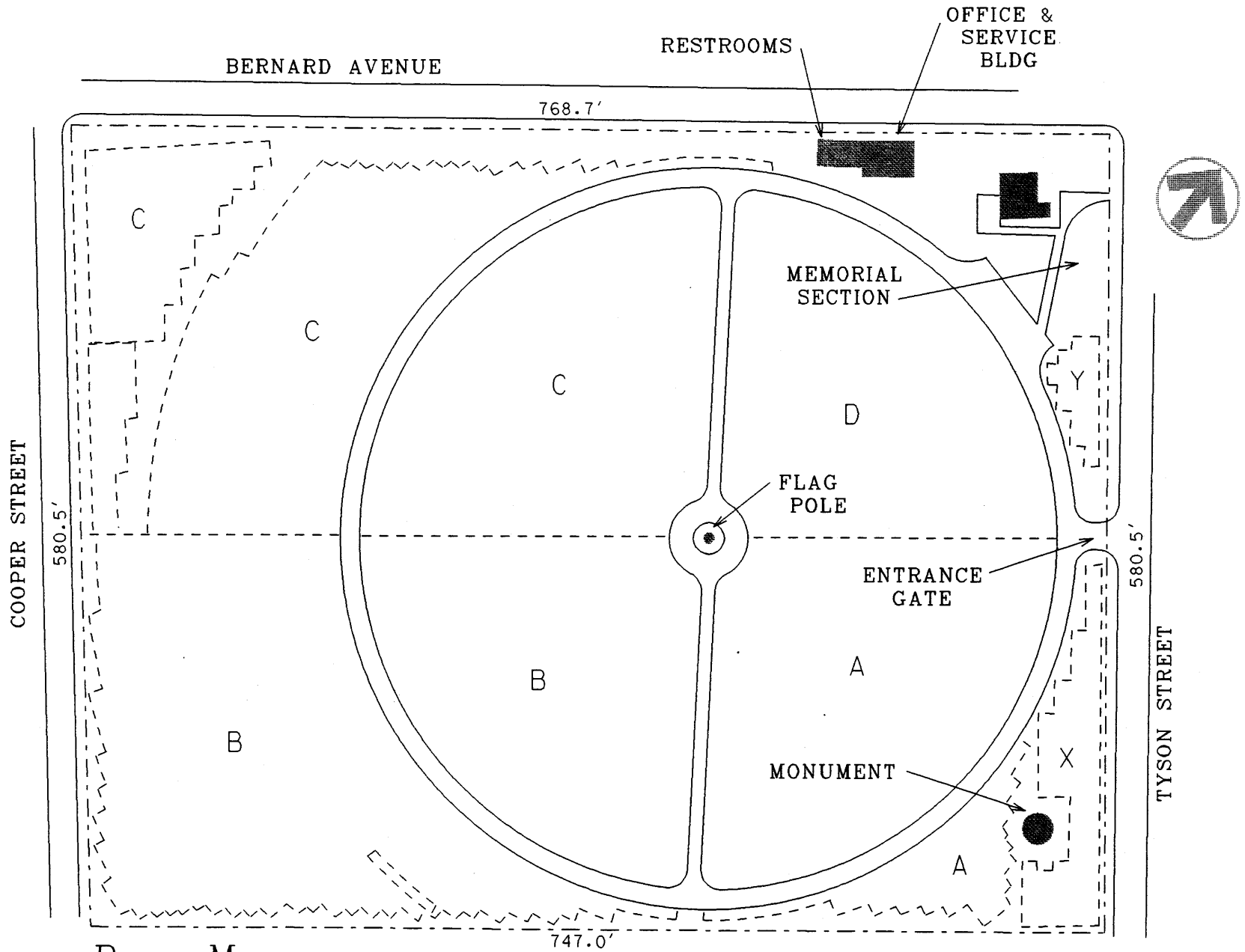
VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking west

NEG. NO. 49949-22
PHOTO 14 of 17

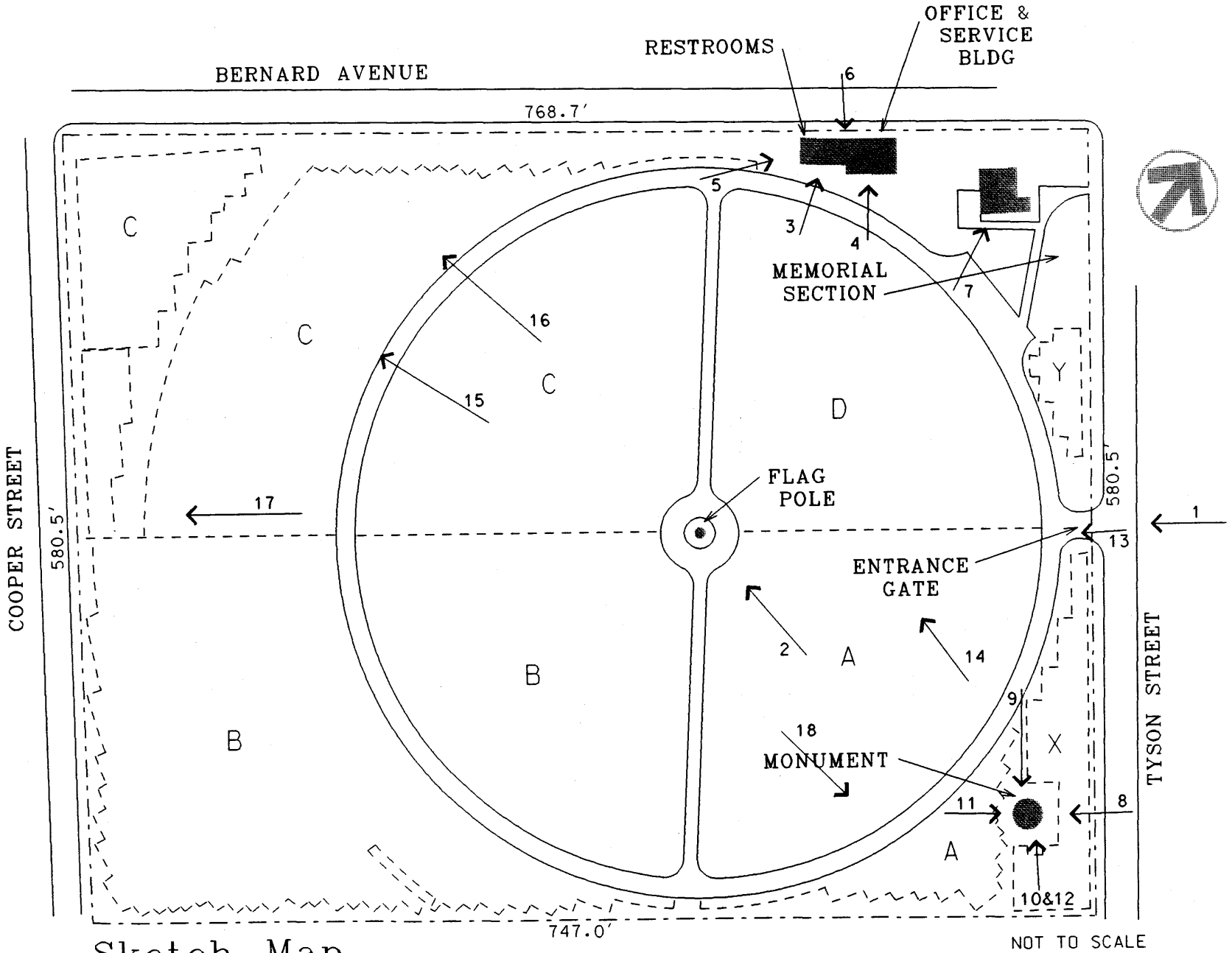
VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking west
showing portion of perimeter wall
NEG. NO. 49949-17
PHOTO 15 of 17

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking southwest
showing portion of perimeter wall
NEG. NO. 49949-18
PHOTO 16 of 17

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking east,
showing several private monuments
NEG. NO. 49949-12
PHOTO 17 of 17



Base Map
Knoxville National Cemetery
Knox County, Tennessee



Sketch Map
Knoxville National Cemetery
Knox County, Tennessee

NOTE: Numbered arrows correspond to the views in the accompanying photographs.

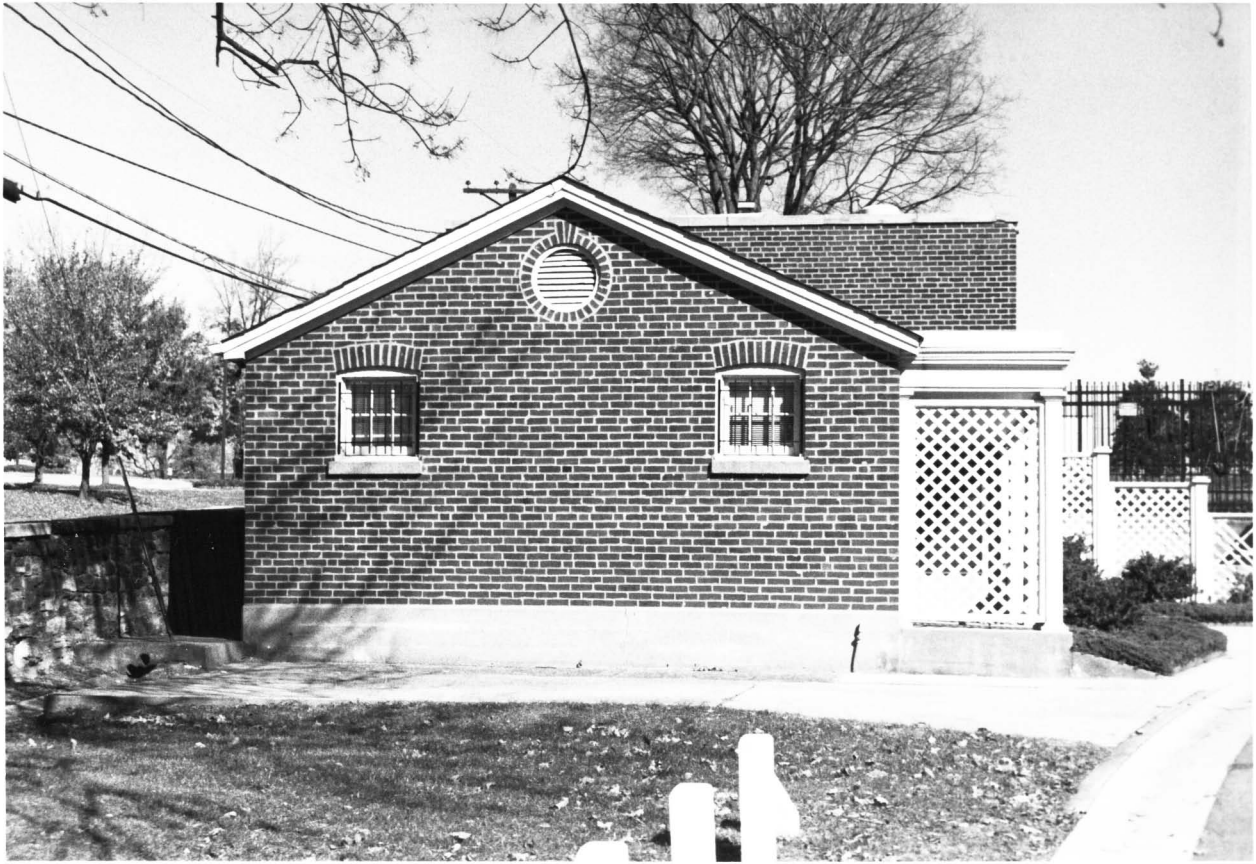
OPEN EVERY DAY

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 1 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 2 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 3 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 4 OF 17

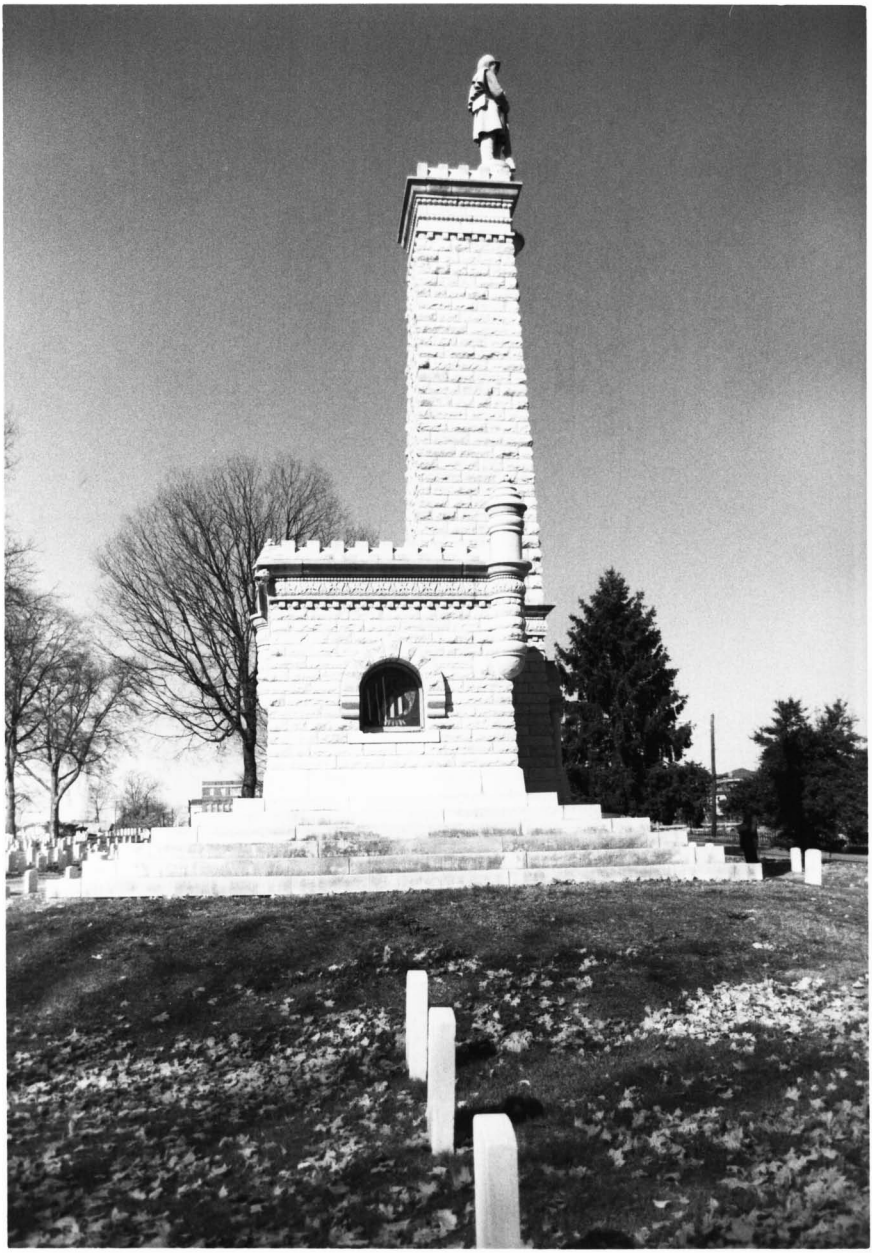


KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 5 OF 17

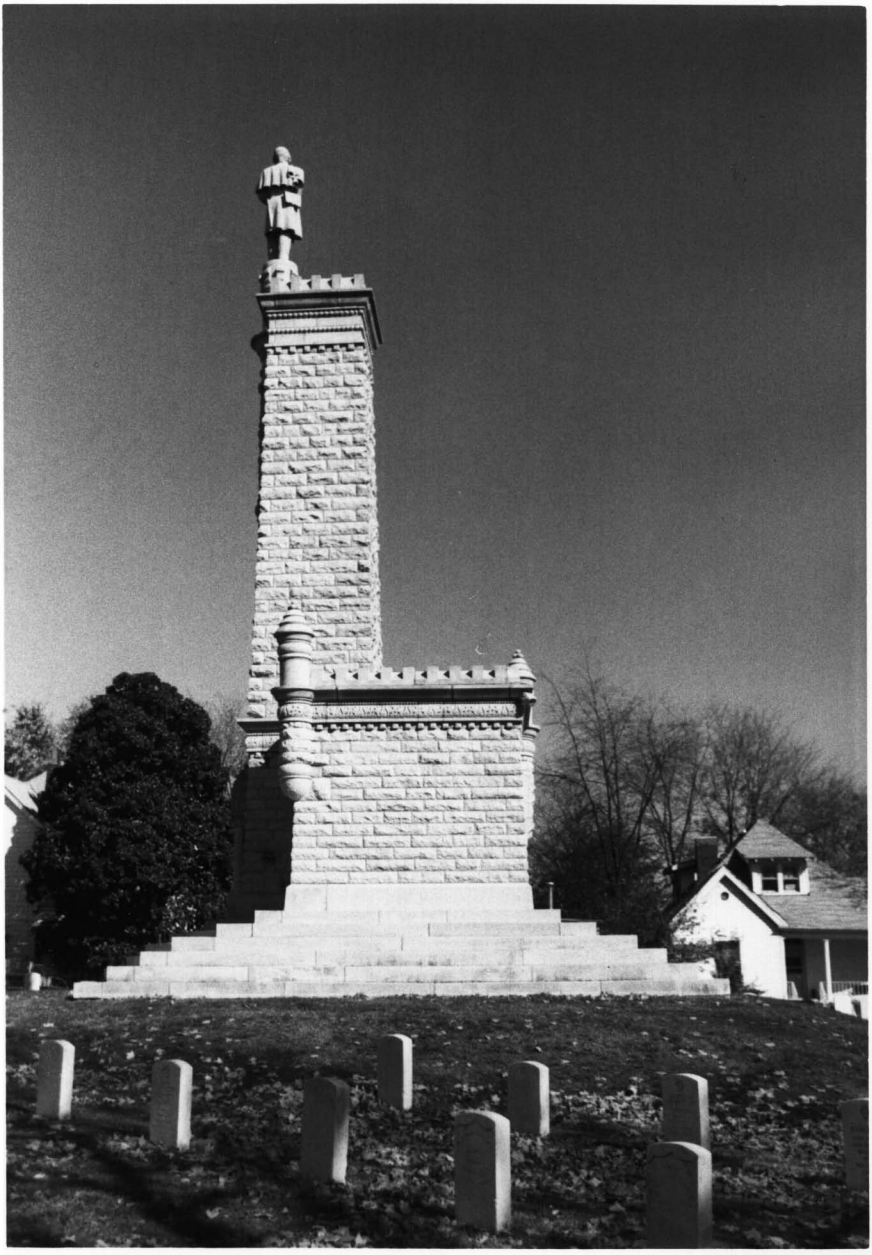
KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 6 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 7 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 8 OF 17



KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 9 OF 17



KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 10 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 11 OF 17

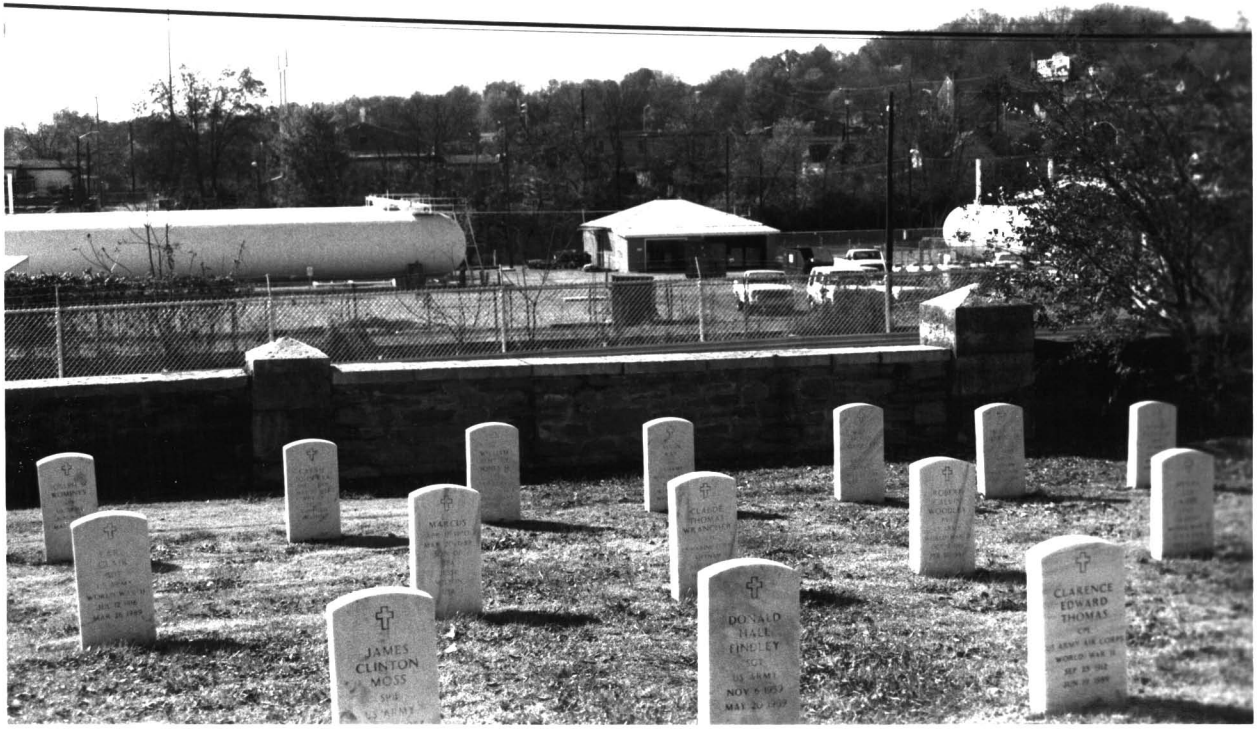
KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
ESTABLISHED IN 1863
IS THIS DAY REDEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF ALL THE
PATRIOTIC MEN AND WOMEN
WHO ANSWERED THEIR
COUNTRY'S CALL TO SERVICE
THEIR INSPIRING CONTRIBUTION
WILL HELP PRESERVE IN THE
HEARTS AND LIVES OF ALL
AMERICANS THE SPIRIT OF
PATRIOTISM THE LOVE OF
COUNTRY AND THE WILLINGNESS
TO SERVE AND SACRIFICE
FOR THE COMMON GOOD
RONALD REAGAN
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
HARRY N. WALTERS
ADMINISTRATOR OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
PAUL T. BANNAI
CHIEF MEMORIAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR
JULY 29. 1985

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 12 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 13 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 14 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 15 OF 17


JAMES
CLINTON
MOSS
MARCUS
CLAUDE
THOMAS
DONALD
HALL
FINDLEY
CLARENCE
EDWARD
THOMAS

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 16 OF 17

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PHOTO 17 OF 17