

CONFEDERATE BURIALS IN THE NATIONAL CEMETERY

The Confederate Cemetery

After the Civil War, women's groups in the South, known collectively as Ladies' Memorial Associations (LMA), undertook efforts to consolidate the remains of Confederate soldiers. In 1866, a group of women in Springfield, Missouri, formed the Confederate Cemetery Association. In 1869, the organization appealed for aid and within months raised \$3,000. They purchased 3 acres near Springfield National Cemetery and enclosed it with a picket fence.



LMA ribbon, c. 1892.
Helena Museum,
Helena, Ark.

By 1872, the Confederate Cemetery Association had moved the remains of 504 soldiers, most unknown, from Wilson's Creek, Hartsville, and Springfield to this cemetery. They marked each grave with a cedar headboard.

The Confederate Veterans Association of Missouri, the statewide United Confederate Veterans organization (UCV), assumed ownership of the Confederate cemetery in 1882. The following year, the UCV built the stone wall and connected it to the one surrounding the adjacent national cemetery.



By 1901, small square headstones had replaced the cedar headboards. The standard government headstones were erected between 1914 and 1948. Missouri UCV Reunion Souvenir Program, 1901.

The Confederate Monument

The Confederate Veterans Association of Missouri and the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) began raising funds to erect a monument in the mid-1880s. Sculptor Gaetano Trentanove completed the monument, envisioned as the cemetery's centerpiece, in 1901.

An estimated crowd of 1,000 people attended the unveiling on August 10, 1901—the fortieth anniversary of the Battle of



A ceremony in the Confederate cemetery, 1905.
History Museum on the Square, Springfield, Mo.

Wilson's Creek. Special excursion trains brought many to Springfield. After a bugle call, 135 young women marched into the cemetery. Each carried a flag representing one of the eleven Missouri chapters of the UDC. A minister led a prayer and Miss Laura Virginia Edwards unveiled the monument. Speeches and an artillery salute concluded the ceremony.

The Last Confederate Veteran

Thomas Henry Hadden, 90, the last Confederate veteran interred in Springfield National Cemetery, was buried June 12, 1939. He requested burial in a Confederate uniform, with the Confederate flag. The local UDC chapter supplied the uniform. Hadden was laid to rest near the Confederate monument. His wife, Martha, was buried next to him in 1964.

A National Cemetery

Springfield National Cemetery was created in 1867. The federal government accepted the deed to the Confederate cemetery in 1911, ensuring that it would be maintained in perpetuity.

The small square markers the UDC erected in the 1880s were replaced with the distinctive pointed-top marble headstones in the 1920s-1930s. Some headstones are engraved with the Southern Cross of Honor, the addition of which was authorized by the War Department in 1930. The UDC created the cross medal in 1898 and bestowed it upon Confederate veterans or their families. In 1939, part of the wall between the Confederate and national cemeteries was removed and a Neoclassical temple-like rostrum was built by the federal government in its place. It was used for Memorial Day ceremonies at both sites.

In 1984, the UDC lifted a deed restriction reserving the cemetery for Confederate dead, enabling all eligible veterans to be buried here. New graves in the Confederate section are marked with stones set flush with the ground to maintain the historic appearance of the landscape.



The separate cemeteries had their own rostrums. View of Confederate rostrum, 1930.
National Archives and Records Administration.