

## **Ewing Reunion Tour at City Cemetery on Saturday, August 18, 2018**

City Cemetery was opened as a public cemetery in 1822. "Public Cemetery" meant that burials were for all people ~ White ~ rich or poor, civic leader or stranger in town as well as African Americans ~ Slaves and Free of Color. There have been 20,000 burials at City Cemetery. Of that number, 6,000 were African Americans. The cemetery was restored in 2010 with funds provided through the efforts of Mayor Bill Purcell and the Metro Council.

The only place we can and talk about the lives of these people is at City Cemetery. In the main, their homes, churches, banks and businesses have disappeared. City Cemetery serves as an Outdoor Living History Museum.

In 1843, the City began to sell lots for family burials. On May 16, 1844, three of Nathan Ewing's sons, Andrew, Edwin H. and Orville bought a large lot, measuring 40 x 40 feet – in the very spot where you are standing. The lot would encompass the graves of several family members already buried in Section 8.

Date of Burials on the Ewing Lot ~ In Chronological Order

1<sup>st</sup> Margaret Hynes Ewing (died January 7, 1841), aged 22, first wife of Andrew Ewing. They were married in 1836 by Dr. Philip Lindsley, Presbyterian preacher and president of the University of Nashville. She was "a member and ornament of the Presbyterian Church." They had one son Andrew Hynes Ewing. Her tombstone reads "Our Margaret Sleeps." Later her name was added on the obelisk erected for her husband Andrew Ewing.

2<sup>nd</sup> Rebecca Williams Ewing (died July 27, 1844), aged 27, daughter of Col. Andrew Hynes & wife of Edwin H. Ewing. She died at "Mile End," the home of her brother in law Orville Ewing. They were married December 20, 1832, by Rev. William Hume, Presbyterian preacher who had been sent in 1801 to the frontier by Presbytery of Kirkaldy, Scotland. Less than six months after the Ewing marriage, Rev. Hume died & was buried at City Cemetery. Rebecca's table top monument is a remarkable ornament in the cemetery. Edwin lived in Murfreesboro where he was a lawyer & served in U.S. House of Representatives. He lived to the grand old age of 92. In his will he stated firmly: "I wish to be quietly buried in Evergreen Cemetery, Murfreesboro, without religious or other services with no monument except a plain head stone with my name and dates of birth & death."

Three Williams sisters married three Ewing brothers

Rebecca Williams to Edwin H. Ewing

Milbrey Williams to Orville Ewing

Rowena Williams to Andrew Ewing

Josiah Williams (father) and Nathan Ewing (father)

3<sup>rd</sup> Andrew Ewing (died June 17, 1864), just two days shy of his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. A lawyer & member of U.S. House of Representatives, he had opposed secession but after Tennessee left the Union, he put his fortune into building a gun factory in Nashville for the Confederates. When the Federal Army occupied the city in February 1862, he went south and joined the CSA Army. He served as Judge in General Bragg's Military Court. He died in Atlanta, Georgia. His remains were brought back and reburied in City Cemetery on March 3, 1866.

4<sup>th</sup> Milbrey Williams Ewing (died September 27, 1864). 49 years. Married on January 26, 1832 to Orville Ewing, by Rev. William Hume. Her home "Mile End" in South Nashville was

well known for her beautiful gardens. She and her husband elected to stay in Nashville during the unpleasant days of the Occupation of the City by the Federal Army. Her death occurred just three months before the Battle of Nashville. Funeral was preached at "Mile End" by Dr. Fall, Christian Church.

5<sup>th</sup> Andrew Hynes Ewing (died Jan. 10, 1870), 33 years, son of Andrew Ewing and Margaret Hynes Ewing. He owned a farm in Guthrie, Kentucky. A road ran through the farm which A. H. Ewing closed. This irritated a neighbor Thomas Yancey who liked to use the road. An altercation followed in the street. Later Yancey met A.H. at the railroad depot, fired a pistol & killed him. His body was returned to City Cemetery for burial.

6<sup>th</sup> Rebecca Eakin, (died Jan. 31, 1870), 13 months old. Daughter of Spencer Eakin and Milbrey Ewing Eakin Granddaughter of Rowena & Andrew Ewing.

7<sup>th</sup> Orville Ewing (died October 10, 1876), aged 70 years, son of Nathan and Sarah Ewing. He had a successful career as a merchant. He amassed a large property in South Nashville, around "Mile End" in the area where he lived. After the Civil War, in 1866, he sold this property with the proviso to buyers that on every lot "a neat brick cottage should be erected." The neighborhood became one of the most attractive in the city. He died in Gainesville, Florida. His remains were brought back to Nashville. Pastor Fall preached his funeral at City Cemetery: "You all know Orville Ewing. You know his life. You know his character. These shall be his eulogy."

8<sup>th</sup> Rowena Williams Ewing (died November 10, 1903), aged 83 years, the widow of Andrew Ewing who had died in 1864. In her later years, she had made her home with her daughter Rebecca Ewing Watterson whose husband Henry Watterson was editor of the *Louisville Courier Journal*. She died in Louisville. Her remains were brought to Nashville and her funeral took place at the home of her son Judge Robert Ewing.

Note: Out these eight burials of Ewings, four died outside of Nashville and were returned to the city for interment at City Cemetery.

There are eight other family members buried on the Ewing Lot at City Cemetery who are in unmarked graves. Perhaps the Ewing Descendants will consider a donation to Nashville City Cemetery Association for a Replacement Tombstone listing their names and kinship.

### **Ewings buried in the family cemetery and removed to City Cemetery in 1935**

On May 1, 1935, a ceremony took place for the unveiling of a plaque, sponsored by the Campbell Chapter DAR, on the box tomb of Andrew Ewing. Mrs. Albert G. Ewing, III., was in charge of the event. This date was chosen because May 1<sup>st</sup> was the anniversary for three historical events:

Signing of the Cumberland Compact at the Bluffs (later Nashville) May 1, 1780

Death of Andrew Ewing, who had signed the Compact, May 1, 1813

Death of Nathan Ewing, Andrew's son, May 1, 1830

Ewing Family Cemetery near Granny White Pike. The property, on present day Woodmont Blvd., is identified by Metro Planning Commission Mapping as a "Cemetery." The cemetery was on the farm originally owned by Andrew and then Nathan Ewing. In Nathan Ewing's will, recorded May 13, 1830, he identified the family graveyard on his farm, "half an acre to

remain as a burying ground free to my posterity to remotest generation with a way to get to the said bury grounds." In 1833, Nathan's son Albert G. Ewing, sold 100 acres of the farm, reserving the "family burying ground" in the deed. Over the years the grave yard fell into disrepair and the descendants decided to move the graves to City Cemetery.

Today at City Cemetery, there are three box tombs for Andrew Ewing, his wife Susannah, Nathan Ewing, Andrew's son, and two small tombstones for Nathan Ewing's two children. In 1911, Albert Ewing, Jr. recorded the inscriptions for eleven people at the family graveyard. A marker for Nathan's wife Sarah (Sallie), whose will was recorded December 12, 1855, must have been lost. By that date, other markers were probably also lost.

Sarah Ewing made certain that Nathan would be remembered and had inscribed:

This monument is dedicated by his surviving wife and sons as a testimony of their love for his person and their respect for his virtues. By his virtues he raised to himself a monument more precious than gold, more durable than marble.

Not all the graves were removed to City Cemetery in 1935. There is a definite need for surface archaeological investigation to determine how many graves remain on the property which is located adjacent to Woodmont Blvd., a busy two-way city street that might be need to be widened in the future.

#### Legacy of Andrew Ewing

Andrew Ewing served as Davidson County Court Clerk from his appointment in 1783 until his death 30 years later. He set the precedence for transcribing all land deeds, marriages and wills. Many have remarked on "his beautifully flowing handwriting which had strokes and lines so delicate that a magnifying glass was used to copy them."

He set a high standard for competence as County Clerk which was carried forth by his son Nathan from 1813 until his death in 1830 and then by his grandson Henry who continued the work from 1830 until he 1835 when he moved away from Nashville. The Ewings served as County Clerks for 152 years (1783-1835). Descendants of Andrew Ewing have continued to make significant contributions to the City of Nashville.

On July 20, 1901, *Nashville American* carried this story:

Attorney Albert Ewing Makes Unique Discovery at the Court House  
Attorney Albert Ewing in looking over some old papers in the office of the County Court Clerk yesterday discovered some executions that were over 100 years old. The oldest was dated 1800 and was signed by Andrew Ewing, a great great grandfather of the lawyer" ...  
"The signatures of Andrew, Nathan and Henry Ewing along with that of Attorney Albert were placed side by side and the similarity of all four was so striking as to give the appearance that all had been signed by the same person."

For Additional Reading ~ On-line Websites and *Retrospect* newspaper

[thenashvillecitycemetery.org](http://thenashvillecitycemetery.org) ~ Ewing, Andrew & other Ewings > continues next page

[davidsoncocemeterysurvey.org](http://davidsoncocemeterysurvey.org) ~ Nathan Ewing; Alexander Ewing; Philips cemeteries

[tennesseeporraitproject](http://tennesseeporraitproject) (tnportraits.org) ~ Margaret Philips Williams

[nashville clerk history](http://nashvilleclerkhistory) ~ Court Clerks 1783 – Present

*Tennessean Archives* on-line ~ Sunday, April 28, 1935  
Unveiling of Andrew Ewing Plaque at City Cemetery Announced

*The Nashville Retrospect*, August 2018 ~ "Andrew Ewing" by Paul Clements

Ewing History prepared by Fletch Coke 8-17-2018