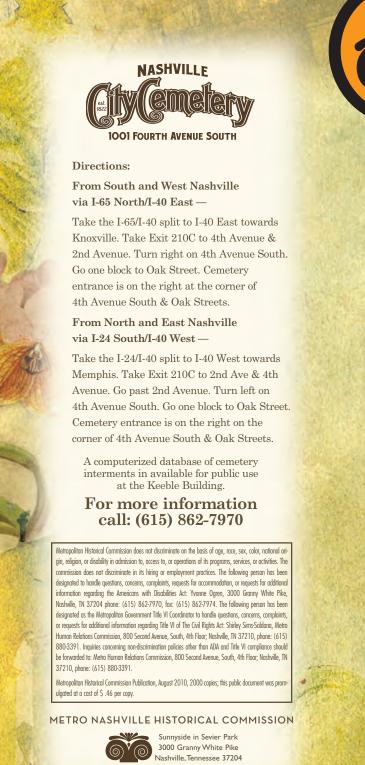
In 1820, the city of Nashville purchased four acres of land just below St. Cloud Hill for use as a public burial ground. The city's former cemetery, just north of today's State Capitol, was plagued by a combination of flooding from the Cumberland River and shallow soil. In response, Mayor Thomas Crutcher and the town aldermen acquired more elevated terrain two miles to the south. A number of graves were exhumed from various burying grounds around the county and moved to the new location. In 1822, with the initial burials complete, the City Cemetery was officially opened.

By 1836 the cemetery had outgrown the original four acres. Over the next twenty years the city made eight additional land purchases. Roads were added and the property was divided into sections consisting of both individual and family plots. By 1856, the cemetery had expanded to twenty-seven acres and contained over 20,000 graves. Black and white Nashvillians, alike, rest in the cemetery. During the Civil War (1861-1865) both Confederate and Federal soldiers were buried here. Except for several high-ranking officers and numerous enlisted soldiers, almost all were removed after the war and reinterred at the National Cemetery (Union) and Mt. Olivet (Confederate).

The City Cemetery was closed to further burials — except for those in pre-purchased plots — after 1878 because an outbreak of disease in the city was believed to have originated in the cemetery. The rumors were unfounded.

Several preservation and restoration efforts took place beginning in the late 19th century; the most extensive of these in the 1950s. The cemetery, however, was largely neglected. In 2006, the city renewed efforts to restore the cemetery. Today, those efforts are complete. The site is on the National Register of Historic Places and remains the final resting place of the city's founders, along with veterans, politicians, ministers, doctors, businessmen, wives, sons, and daughters from Nashville's historic past. Please observe all rules governing the cemetery. Because of age and weathering, headstones are fragile and can be easily damaged. We hope you enjoy your visit to the Nashville City Cemetery.



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