

NR: 5-11-12

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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 an 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 Old Corinth Cemetery

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number AR Highway 26 not for publication

city or town Center Point Vicinity vicinity

state AR code AR county Howard code 061 zip code 72064

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 for 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.)

Chapelle Matthews
Signature of certifying official/Title

4/13/11
Date

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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property - (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing Noncontributing

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY/cemetery

FUNERARY/cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other Concrete, marble, granite, fieldstone.

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A, B, C, D, E, F, G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

Period of Significance

1851-1940

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Undefined

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):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file (NPS).

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Name of repository:

Old Corinth Cemetery
Name of Property

Howard County, AR
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 0.17 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>422456</u>	<u>3767390</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the south side of AR Highway 26 proceed east 324.06 feet; thence proceed north 211.31 feet; thence proceed west 174.27 feet; thence proceed south 365.59 feet back to point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Holly Hope/ Special Projects Historian
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 04/05/2012
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone 501 324-9880
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Corinth Cemetery Association
street & number 143 Cassady Lane telephone
city or town Nashville state AR zip code 71852

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 listing. 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 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. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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SUMMARY

The Old Corinth Cemetery is located 5 miles north of Nashville, Arkansas on Arkansas Highway 26. Earliest graves date from the 1850s and the last burial took place in 2000. The Old Corinth Cemetery is the only extant resource of the community of Corinth in Howard County. The cemetery is one of three in the community. The first, known as Pioneer Cemetery since at least 1977 is located at the site of the Corinth Church of Christ. By the 1930s it was recorded that there was no sign of the burial ground but by 2009 it was noted in *Corinth Revisited by Its Kinfolks* (1977) that unmarked fieldstones remained to mark interments. The New Corinth Cemetery was established circa 1953 to the south of Old Corinth Cemetery on Corinth Road.¹

The Old Corinth Cemetery has 257 marked burials, 89 unmarked burials including approximately 35 fieldstones and markers with no inscriptions or illegible and missing information. The community of Corinth was located in the area of the cemetery but by the 1950s the Highland Peach Orchard had encompassed the site and all commercial and residential structures were destroyed for the crop. The Old Corinth Cemetery is the only remainder of Corinth and contains the burials of the earliest families who settled there in the early 19th century.

ELABORATION

The Old Corinth Cemetery is located in the former community of Corinth on Arkansas State Highway 26. The highway follows the route of the military road built by the federal government to facilitate Indian removal to Oklahoma. The cemetery is surrounded by extensive tracts of farmland and few residences. It is open to the highway on the south and is enclosed on the east, west and north by a barbed wire fence. There is no sign marking the name of the cemetery. The largest collection of burials

¹ Lucille Westbrook, *Corinth Revisited by Its Kinfolks*, (1977), (Self-published, 1977), 78.

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date from the post-Victorian eras with interments tapering off by 1940. While there are modern burials, the last interment was in 2000 and only 22 occurred in the previous 40 years.

Burials by Decade

1850-1859	4
1860-1869	6
1870-1879	9
1880-1889	27
1890-1899	39
1900-1919	60
1920-1929	30
1930-1939	30
1940-1949	17
1950-1959	12
1960-1969	9
1970-1979	7
1980-1989	3
1990-1999	3
2000	1
Total	257

Unmarked Burials

There are approximately 89 unmarked burials, which include commercial markers with illegible or missing death dates and approximately 35 fieldstones

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Landscape

The environment of the Old Corinth Cemetery is flat with no large trees among the burials. There are azaleas, and one large cedar tree. Irises are found in various plots and around individual tombstones.

Grave Markers and Plots

Many commercially produced tablet-style monuments of marble or limestone are found in the cemetery as well as several homemade examples constructed of concrete. The burials are arranged in north-south rows and there are several family plots. The coping on these plots primarily consist of concrete. The Roberson plot is surrounded by an Art Moderne-inspired coping of concrete posts, rounded metal rails and a concrete stile gate. There are three family plots of stacked rock and one unmarked stacked rock cairn.

Tombstone forms are short obelisk, cross-obelisk, tablet-style with graduated, round, square and gothic shoulders, scroll, pulpit, block and ground-level. Burials after the 1900s include granite and concrete composition. There are also three angle-iron examples with names but no dates welded onto the surface. The grave of J.D. Ellis (b. October 20, 1920, d. February 21, 1935), is composed of a short bulky concrete post with a piece of paper documenting the interred's information inset under glass.

Several burials exhibit the symbol of the gates of Heaven opening and are topped with open Bibles. Many markers are inscribed with hands pointing to Heaven or clasping. Animal symbols include doves as a symbol of peace and lambs to denote the innocence of children. Foliage symbols found are ferns for humility, frankness and sincerity, evening primrose for eternal love or sadness, and lilies representing innocence, purity and virginity. The most elaborate burial in the cemetery is that of Richard T. Copeland (b. February 22, 1814, d. November 13, 1890). Copeland's tombstone is a gothic tablet-style

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topped with a tripartite finial. An abundant spray of foliage including lilies of the valley, evening primrose and roses adorns the apex of the marker.

Vernacular examples of concrete take the form of tablet-style with rounded, square or slanted shoulders and ground-level. The inscriptions are executed with stamps or a stylus and iconography is confined to a primitive dove. One unmarked vernacular monument consists of a small ground level concrete slab inset with colored marbles. A large square rubble concrete base can be found in the cemetery with evidence of a missing slab on the top. No maker's marks are evident.

INTEGRITY

Among the graves in the Old Corinth Cemetery can be found those of the earliest settlers of the community of Corinth and their descendants. The cemetery has been maintained well with appropriate repairs being performed when needed.

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SUMMARY

The Old Corinth Cemetery contains the burials of early families who settled the community of Corinth, originally known as Wilton, in the mid-19th century. Physical traces of the homes and businesses of those families are no longer extant and the cemetery is the only resource that provides information on their place in the establishment of the community and the county.

The cemetery exhibits many examples of popular mourning iconography and funerary architecture of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. It also contains many heartfelt handmade vernacular markers of the type that rural farm families of limited means would erect.

The Old Corinth Cemetery is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion A, Criteria Consideration D, with local significance as the only remnant of the community of Corinth. There are eight historic burials dating from the 19th century that have been marked with 20th century monuments. An inventory of the cemetery from 1977 makes note of the fact that three burials with monuments were formerly designated by unmarked fieldstones. Despite this, the moderately high-style forms and individualized vernacular forms as well as the mourning symbolism are important cultural indicators of the community of Corinth. The architecture in the cemetery relates the story of the community members and the settlement of Corinth.²

Corinth was primarily a farming area populated by offshoots of early settlers who branched out to larger nearby towns of Center Point and Nashville to run small businesses or take up farming. There were stores in the area, a school, a Church of Christ was established there as well as a small religious instruction school for a brief period.

² Westbrook, 77.

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ELABORATION

Howard County, containing the unincorporated community of Corinth, was formed from Hempstead, Sevier, Polk and Pike counties in 1873. The county seat was established in that year at Center Point, west of Corinth. By 1905 the seat was moved to Nashville. A spring had been discovered in the area of Corinth, then known as Wilton, which made it conducive to settlement.

There had been previous settlement in the eastern portion of modern Howard County when the Jones and Reese families from Tennessee moved there in 1845. David Dickens Jones took up residence in an existing log house with adjacent cleared land and constructed the first blacksmith shop in the community. Jones and Reese found the area to be good for establishing pastures, and raising fruits with reliable sources of water so they persuaded family members and friends to join them. By 1850 there were 40 families who hailed from 11 states in the east and south regions of the county.

A post office was established by 1849 under the name of Wilton. The community retained that name until 1885 when the post office was moved from its original location on the farm of the Stewart family and renamed Corinth. The source of that name came from the local Church of Christ. The first meeting of the congregation was held in 1850 under a tree on the land of Campbell Hedrick and the name of Corinth Church of Christ was chosen. Tyler Bacon loaned his home for meetings until the group moved to an arbor on the site of the Pioneer Cemetery. The arbor was replaced in 1885 with a frame church.

The children in the community received their education in a log building in the area of the Pioneer Cemetery through a Mr. Tolleson in 1862. The school was moved later to Wood Reese's property. The last site of the public school in Corinth, which closed in 1939, was on the grounds of the New Corinth Cemetery.³

³ Westbrook, 182, Introduction, p. 2.

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Corinth was also home to a Christian college called Nazareth University. It was established in the community by Colin McKinney Wilmeth and his nephew Alexander Campbell Wilmeth who moved there from Dallas, Texas. The Wilmeths had come to Corinth in 1888 to oversee a summer meeting in conjunction with the church. They returned the next year and the Church of Christ members asked him to institute a "church school" for religious instruction along the lines of his school in Dallas. Four departments were offered at the school – Biblical, Classical, Industrial and Musical. The Nazareth Publication Society also published a weekly newspaper called *The Watchman*. The school brought an influx of residents and students resulting in a recorded enrollment of 200. This was beneficial to Corinth until the depression of 1893 destroyed the strides the school had taken. The Wilmeths were not able to recover and the university was abandoned in 1897 for a missionary society in Tampico, Mexico.⁴

Farmers in Corinth took their goods to market in Camden and Little Rock via the Military Road, now Arkansas Highway 26 through Corinth. The business area of Corinth included a flour mill, gin, sawmill and a drug store, two blacksmiths and a feed store. Dr. A.J. Ball looked after patients in the area. The situation of Corinth on a major transportation route within close proximity to the county seat at Nashville and other extensive towns like Camden, DeQueen and Murfreesboro contributed to its character as a rural residential stop on the Military Road. It was relatively easy to get to these areas with political and economic establishments, so other than local small businesses and services Corinth did not

⁴ *Ibid*, Introduction, p. 2; "Brief Sketch of the Life of D.S. Ligon," online article found at <http://www.therestorationmovement.com/ligon.htm>, accessed October 30, 2011; Westbrook, 123, 206; Howard County Heritage Club, *The History of Howard County, Arkansas*, (Nashville News: Nashville, AR 1973), 21; James Jackson, "Peach Industry," *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, online article at <http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=2099>, accessed October 30, 2011; Virginia Buxton, "Genealogy of Michael Womack: The Pioneer Arkansan Who Named Nashville, Arkansas," online article found at www.womack.net.com/features/michaelwomack.html, accessed November 29, 2011.

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experience a significant amount of growth and remained a farming community. The post office at Corinth had closed in 1912, which usually signals a decline in population.

The land around Corinth had been planted in extensive peach orchards by the early 20th century. Nashville was a major shipper of peaches because of railroad spurs that allowed shipment to market and the construction of icehouses and storage facilities. The Depression brought an end to the prominence of the peach industry in Howard County. The orchard was divided into small tracts and the crop continued to be raised in the area through the 1940s and early 1950s. A late freeze for two years in a row beginning in 1952 destroyed two-thirds of the crop, lowering production. Brokers moved their business to California, Florida and southern Texas so Howard County farmers pulled up the trees and converted their land to other uses.

The loss of such a major industry was a factor in the relocation of Corinth families looking for work. Shifts in the population can be discerned from the numbers of burials in the cemetery during the years of the Depression and World War II. In the 1950s cotton production declined in Southwest and West Arkansas, which would have detrimentally affected a farming community like Corinth. These events were major reasons for changes in the makeup of many areas across the nation. Even though the distribution of the population in Corinth and Howard County changed, families who descended from the original settlers remain in the area.⁵

⁵ Russell Baker, *From Memdag to Norsk: A Historical Directory of Arkansas Post Offices, 1832-1971*, (Arkansas Genealogical Society: Hot Springs, AR, 1988), 51; Information from Russell Baker, Mabelvale, AR, November 1, 2011.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The core settlers of Corinth stem from the Jones and Reese families, who moved to Pike County, Arkansas in 1845. Davie D. Jones and Jordan Reese left Tennessee and settled near a spring in the area. By 1847 other family members joined them; including Rebecca Norman Jones (b. Feb. 2, 1781, d. Dec. 19, 1859), and her children. Other Tennesseans who were related or acquainted with Jones and Reese traveled to Corinth including the Bacons, Copelands, Hales, Murrays, McClures, Dixons, McFarlands, Campbells, Snoddys, Shofners, Womacks, Chesshirs and Lokeys – all of whom are represented by interments in Old Corinth Cemetery.

Soon after arriving in Arkansas, William Tyler Bacon (b. September 23, 1815, d. June 25, 1871), began hosting church meetings on his property. Prior to moving to Arkansas, Bacon, Davie Jones and Anthony Floyd (b. Aug. 10, 1816, d. Oct. 13, 1871), had joined the Campbell reformation. Hoping to share the teachings of the movement in their new home, the men enlisted Elijah Kelley of Delight to preach, organized the Corinth Church of Christ in 1850, and served as the first elders. The Church of Christ was the center of life in Corinth. Farming was the financial sustenance while the church provided social and spiritual sustenance for the community.

The Church of Christ was formed at Lexington, Kentucky, in 1832 when members of Christian Churches and the Disciples of Christ acknowledged both movements and agreed to come together to preach the restoration of New Testament Christianity. The tenet of the Church of Christ held that congregations of the church are self-governing. The elders oversaw the functioning of the church and confession of faith and immersion in baptism was required for membership. This controversial movement depleted many Baptist churches of members and caused several schisms. Corinth did not

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experience these problems and the Church of Christ became integral to the community.⁶

The congregation used Tyler Bacon's home for approximately two years until they built a frame building south of the Old Corinth Cemetery. The Civil War interrupted growth until 1875 when members built a tabernacle behind the original church for large summer meetings. At the end of the 19th century there was a substantial membership, estimated at several hundred. The conservative character of the Church of Christ seemed to work well for the farming community of Corinth. J.A. Copeland, a Church of Christ preacher from Corinth, stressed the need for "country preachers" in a 1932 article. Copeland noted that there were ten congregations in Howard County but there was no steady preacher at the time. He advocated that preachers for small rural churches should take up residence on farms and produce extra income in between addressing local congregations and taking their message to widespread areas. This would be more efficient and meaningful to the preachers and the congregation rather than holding out for full-time work at more pay in larger urban churches.

The location of Nazareth University in Corinth was a result of the support of the Church of Christ. The relationship between the founder and the local congregation was boosted by the belief in independent comprehension of the Bible, which enabled the school to be a success, albeit short-lived. Nazareth University was one of the earliest institutions in Arkansas with a Christian education curriculum.⁷

⁶ Paul D. Haynie, "Churches of Christ," *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*, online article found at <http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entry>, Accessed 03/21/2012; Lawrence H. Roberts, "Trials and Triumphs in the Life of J.A. Copeland," online article at <http://www.therestorationmovement.com/trialsandtriumphs.htm>, Accessed 03/21/2012; Fred Savage, Jr., "A History of the Campbellite Influence of Arkansas Baptists," Self-published, 1977.

⁷ Roberts.

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Today, no physical remnants of the church, university, or any other early buildings of Corinth remain and the land around the Old Corinth Cemetery is utilized for farming and harvesting of timber. The historic period of settlement is represented by burials dating from the 1850s. The concentration of burials through the decades up to 2000 document the fluctuations in population and their correspondence with national and local events like the establishment of the Church of Christ and its educational offshoot, Nazareth University. Local agricultural trends contributed to movement of settlers as well as the impact of the depressions of 1893 and 1929.

Old Corinth Cemetery is the only remnant of the community of Corinth, but the names within relate the story of its settlement and the agricultural character of the area. The physical integrity of the cemetery is excellent and it has a good local collection of vernacular and moderately high-style funerary architecture. Although the Old Corinth Cemetery was used for modern burials up to 2000, the bulk of the burials predate 1961. The cemetery is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion A, Criteria Consideration D, with local significance.

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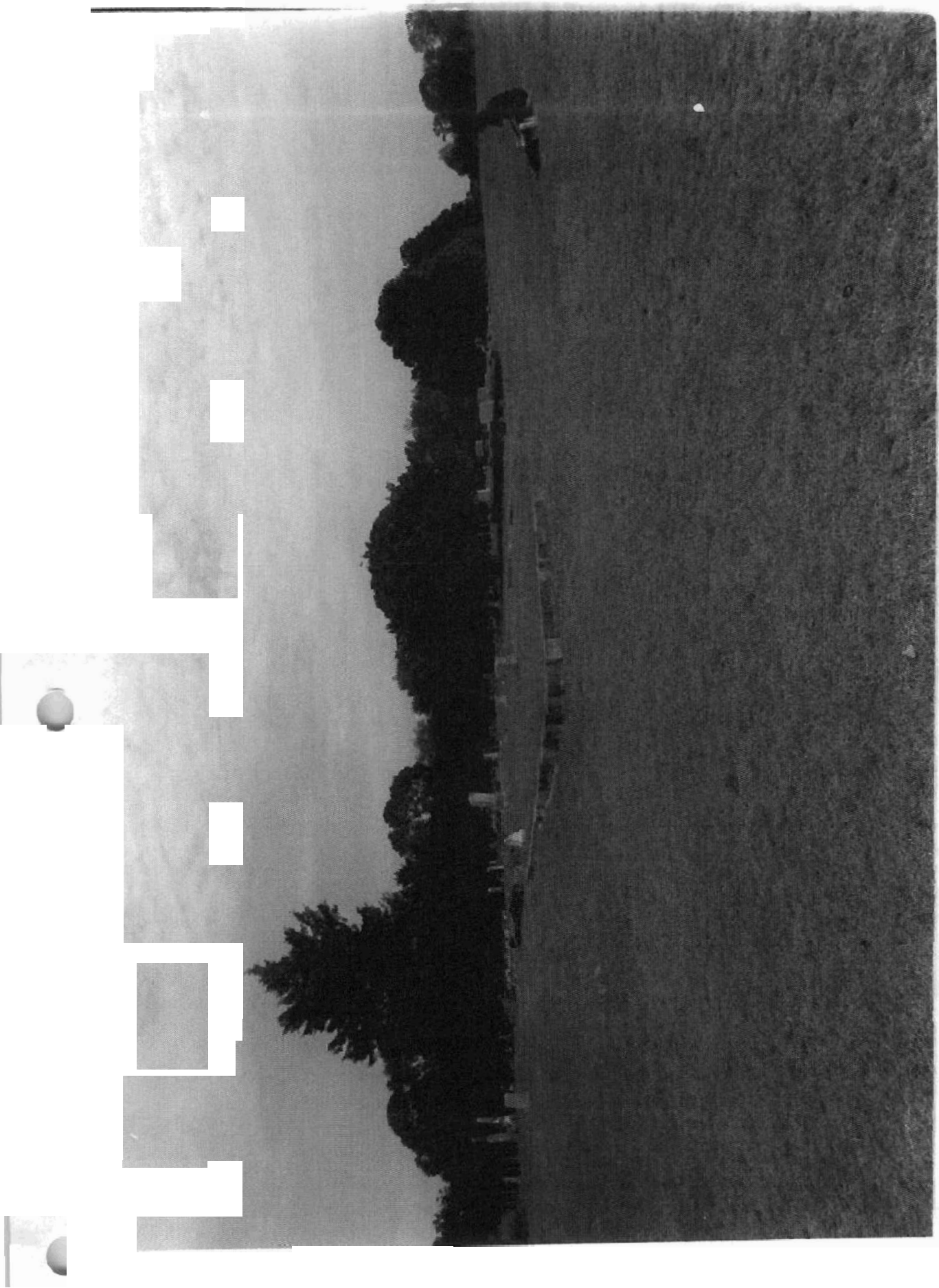
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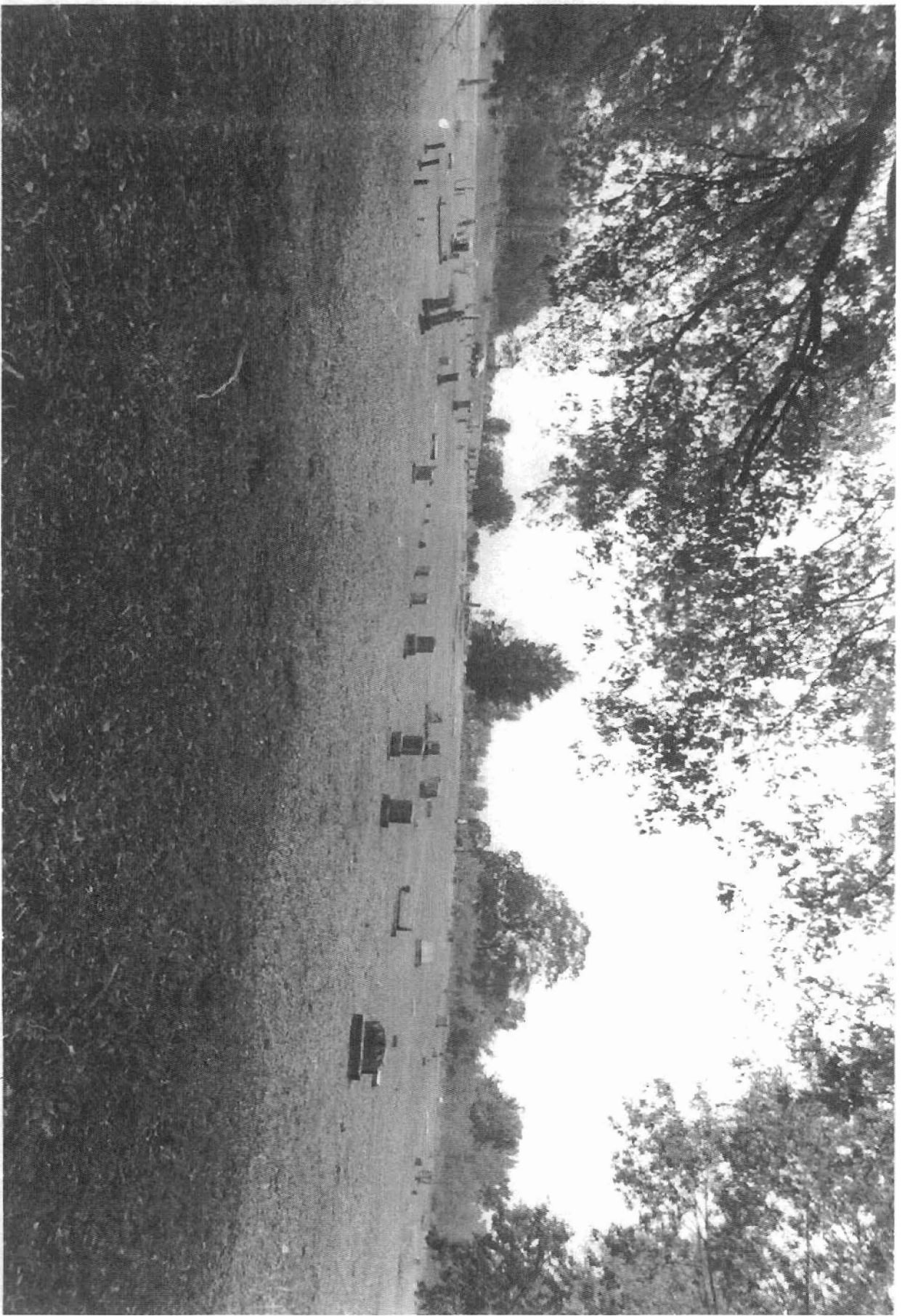
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<http://www.therestorationmovement.com./trialsandtriumphs.htm>, Accessed 03/21/2012.

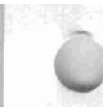
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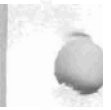
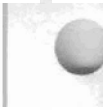
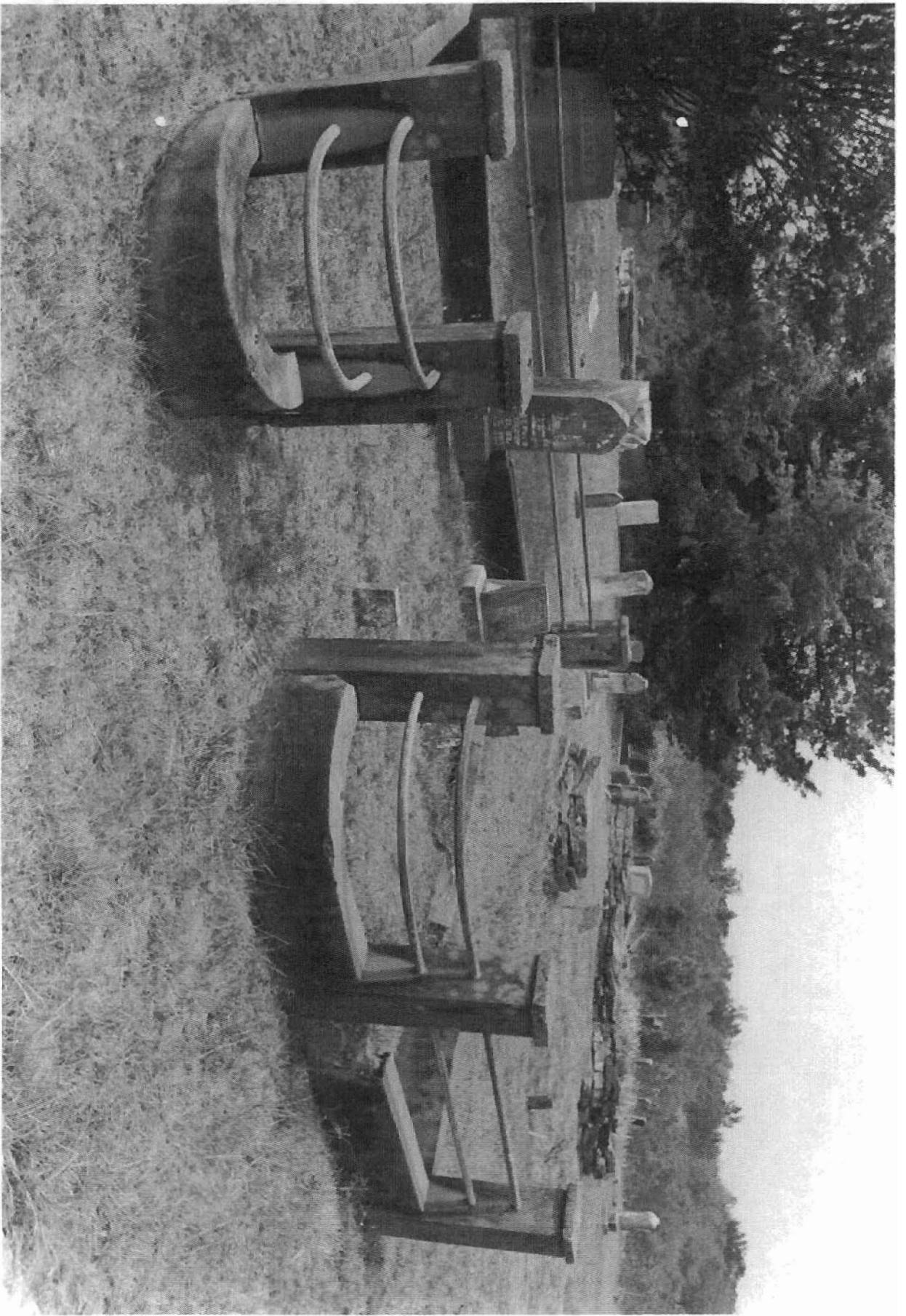


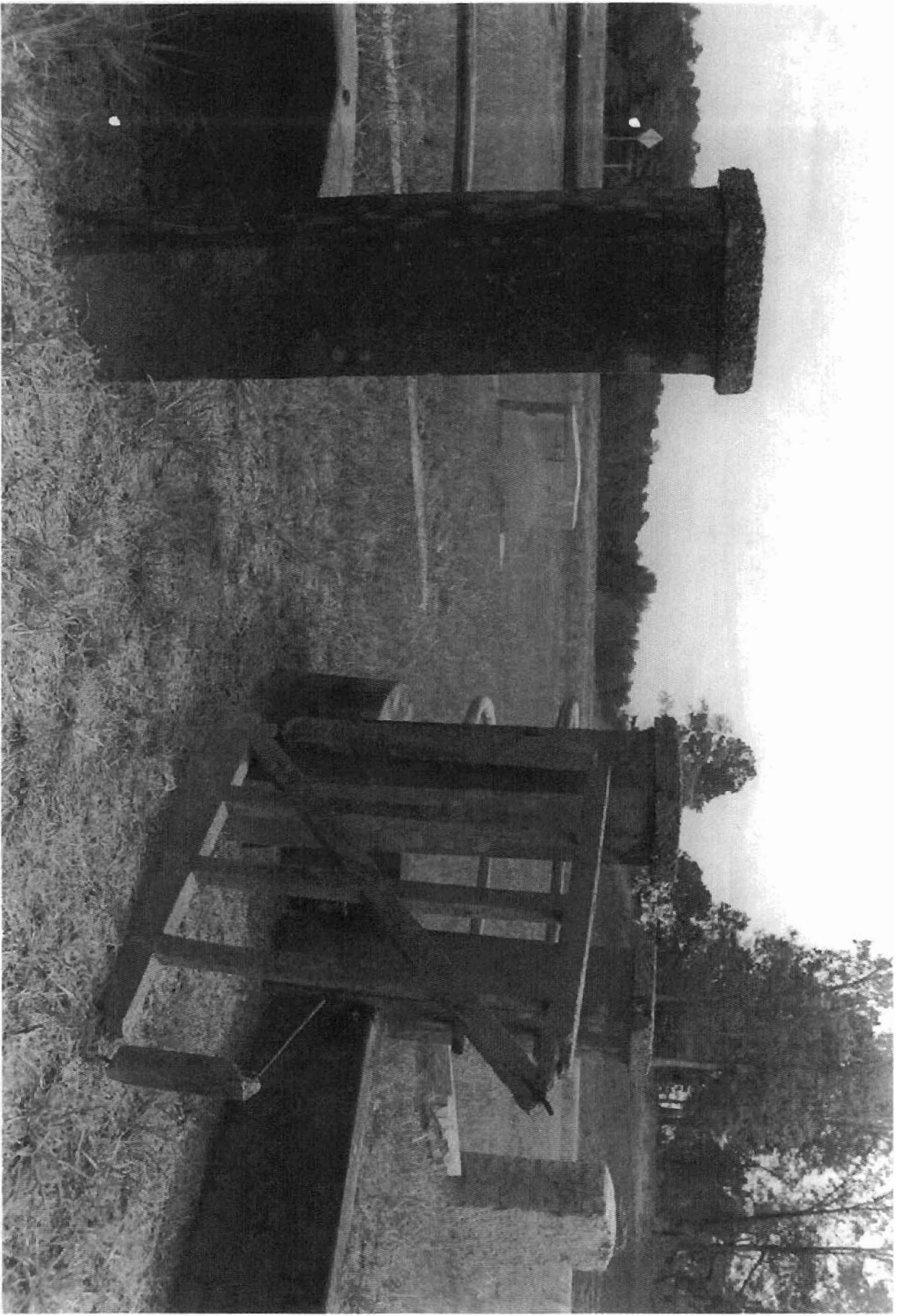


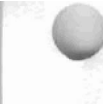
RICHARD T.
COPELAND
FEB. 22, 1814
NOV. 13, 1890

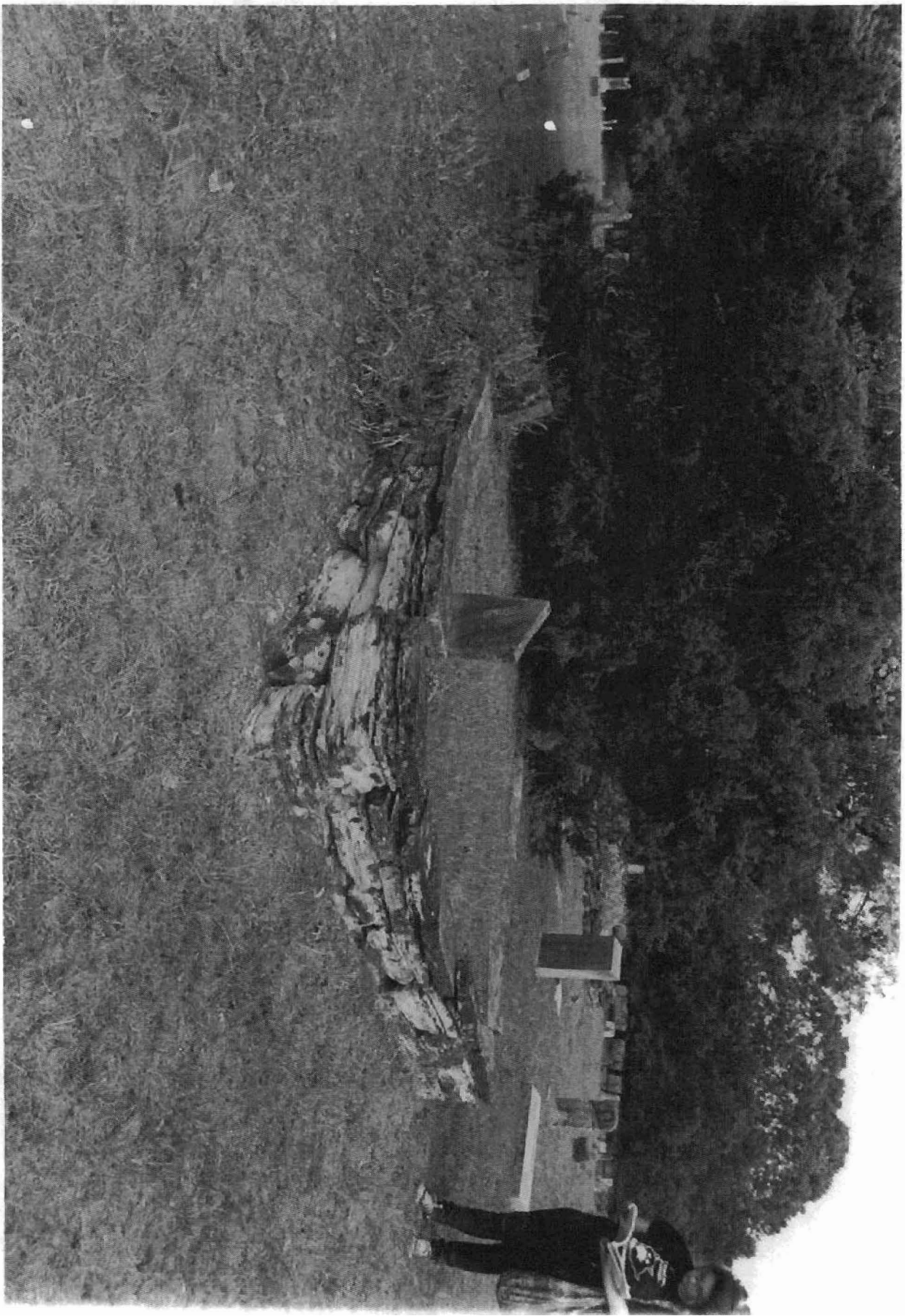
Too good for earth, God
called him home

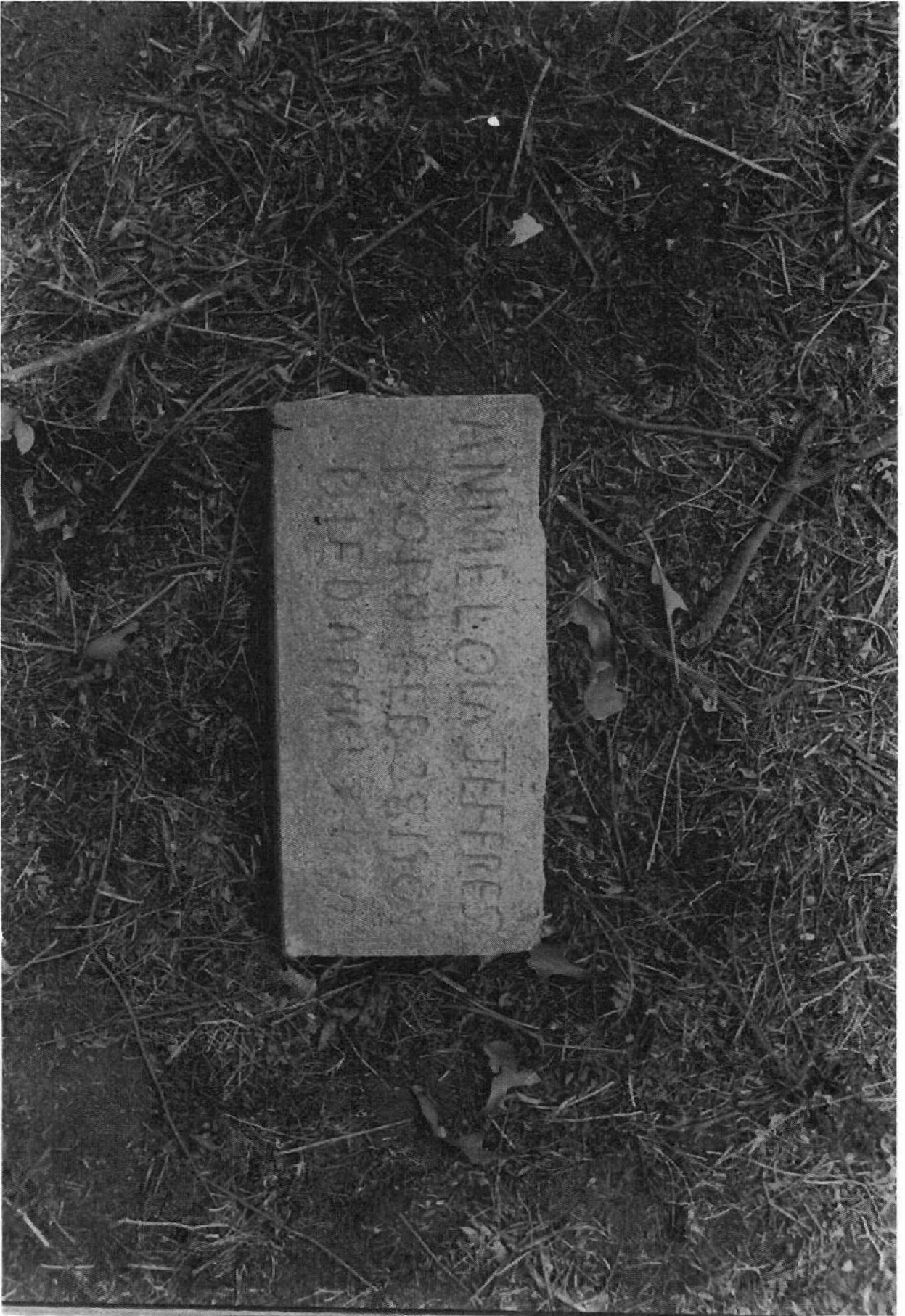




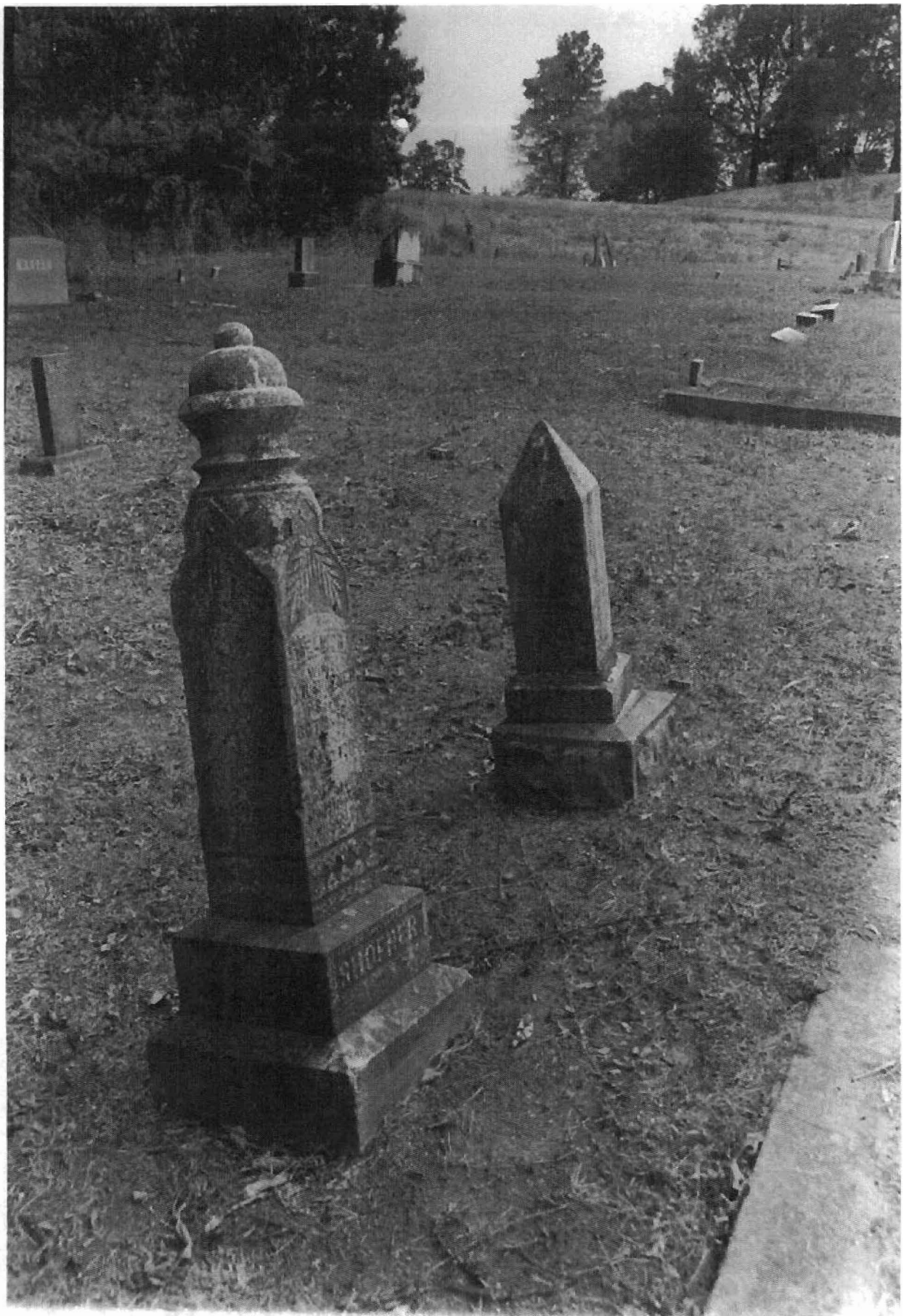


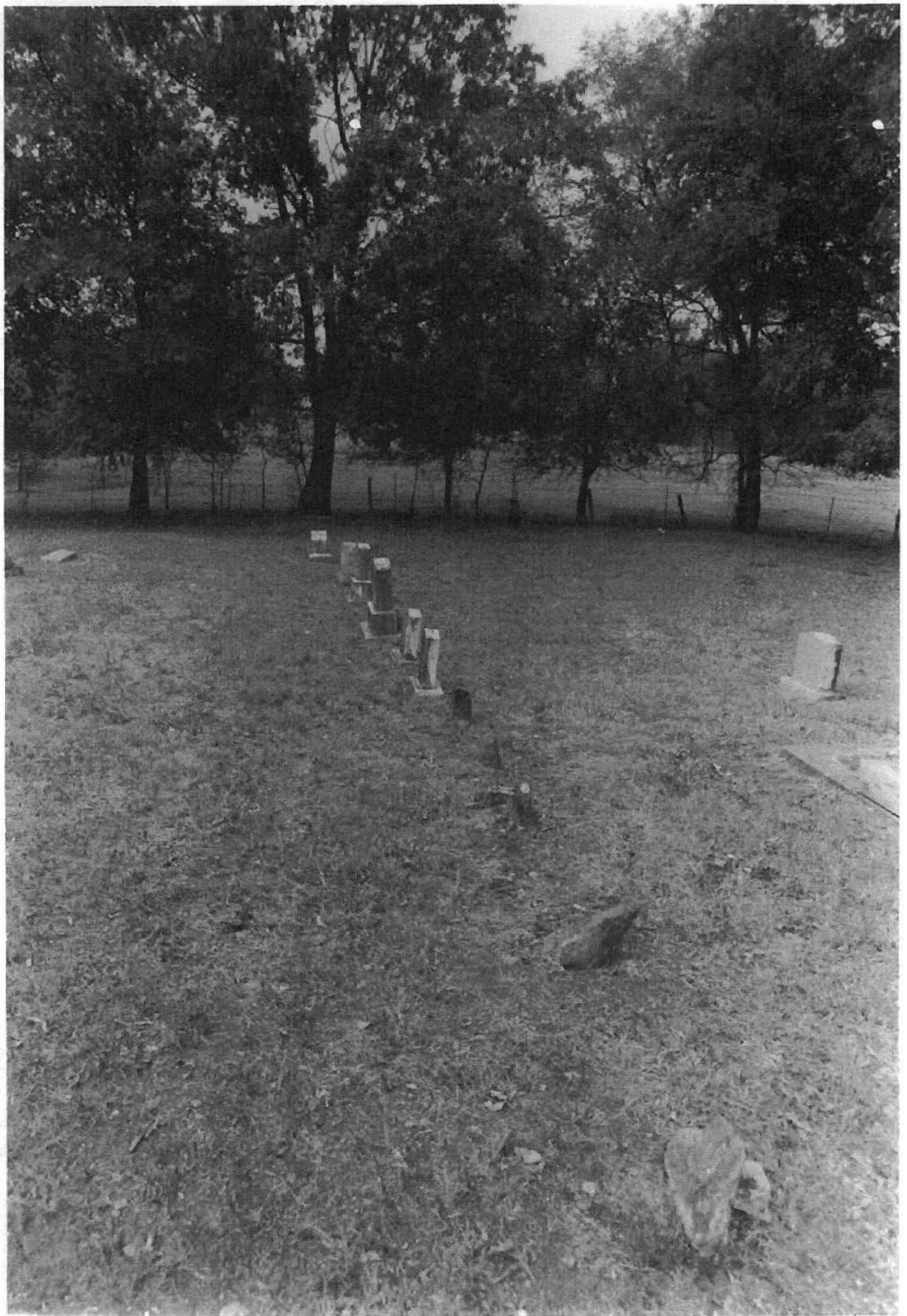




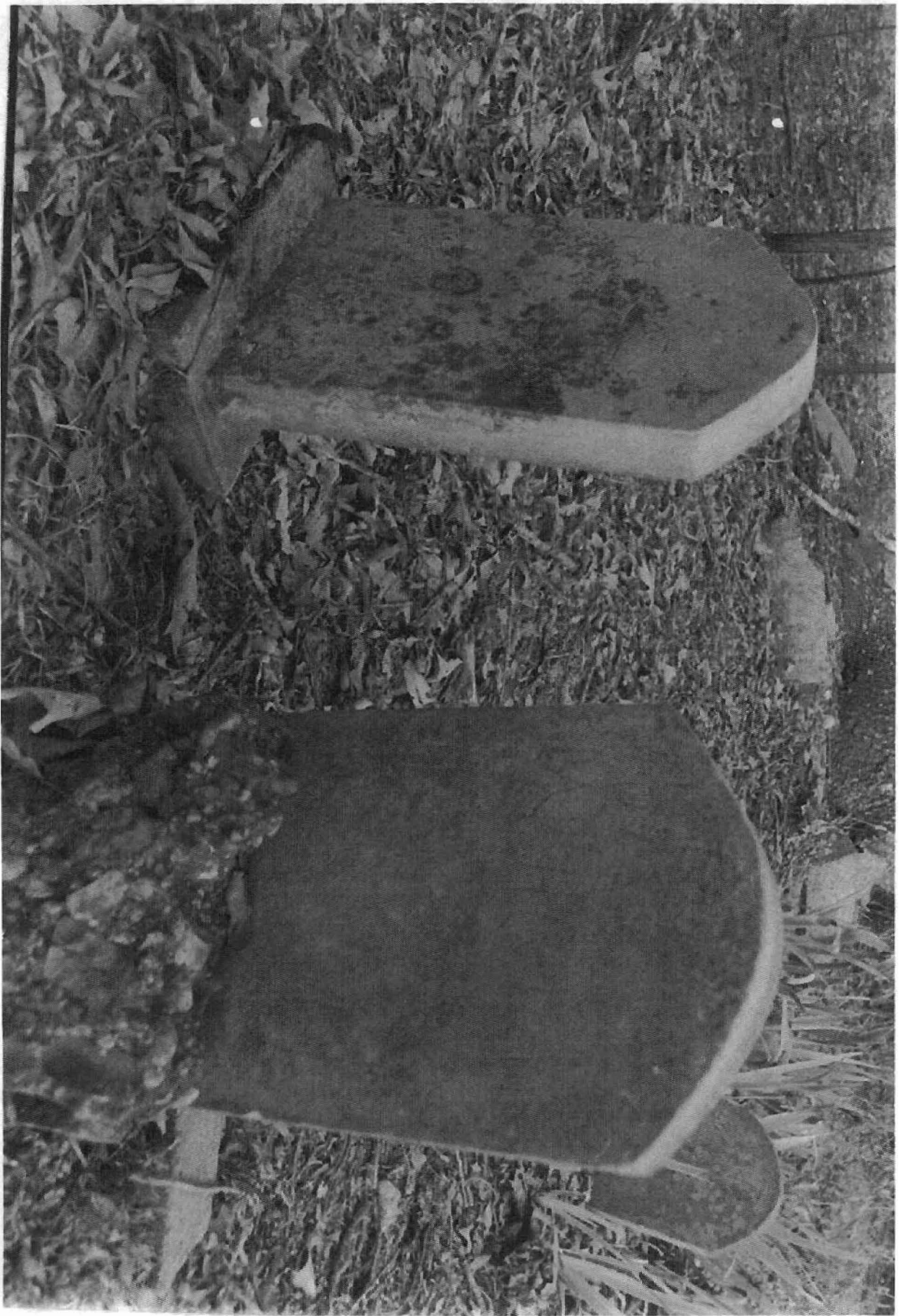
















GOMEYER BLESSED

D. M. FLOYD
Born Jan 11 - 1872
Died Feb 25 - 1918

FLOYD





3765
500 000
FEET

3766
12 MI. TO APRK. 26
CENTER POINT 4.5 MI.

3767
2' 30"

3770
7252 III SW
(CENTER POINT)

3771

3767370
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AR
CORNH, HOWARD
CENTRAL
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