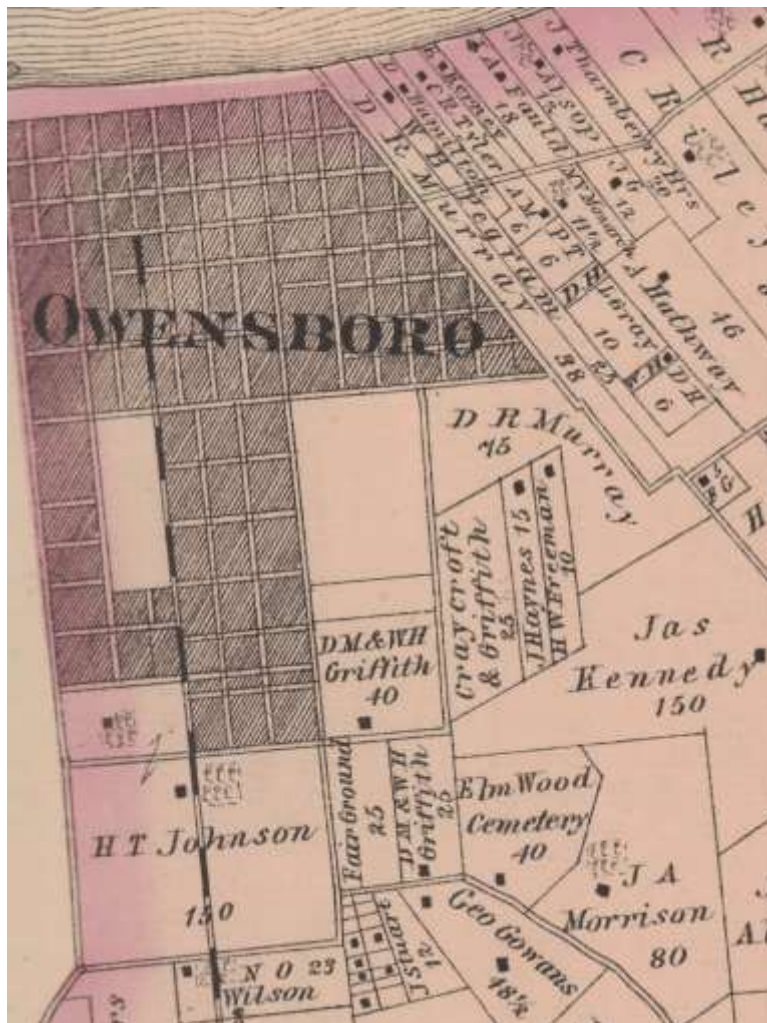


History of Owensboro's Elmwood & Rose Hill Cemeteries

By Jerry Long
c.2024



An Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Daviess County, KY.
Leo McDonough & Co., 1876, p.38 (Uppertown Precinct):



Elmwood Cemetery, 40 acres, lower right



History of Daviess County, Kentucky,
Inter-State Publishing Co., Chicago, IL, 1883, pp.405-406:

CEMETERIES.

The first burying ground for Owensboro was on Fourth street, south of the public square, and in the vicinity of the old "Masonic Lodge" building. It extended west to St. Elizabeth street. Most of the dead who were buried there still remain. In 1840 the place of burial was changed to a point on the Henderson road, just beyond the city limits. Most of the remains buried here have been removed. Paupers, however, are still buried in this ground. In 1852 the cemetery was moved to the southeastern portion of the city, comprising the ground between Triplett and Center streets, and Fourth and Sixth. All the dead buried here have been removed. These grounds were owned by a company of stockholders, and controlled by a directory. The first two spoken of above were owned and controlled by the city.

Elmwood Cemetery. — In the year 1856, seeing the necessity for a cemetery, a company of the citizens of Owensboro was formed, composed of William Bell, James Weir, R. M. Hathaway, George Scarborough, D. M. Griffith, F. M. Pearl, J. B. Anderson, Robert Craig, John H. McHenry, Sr., S. M. Wing and E. A. Hathaway, who purchased of R. M. Hathaway and F. M. Pearl nine acres and a fraction of ground in what is known as Hathaway's addition to Owensboro, and named same "Rural Cemetery."

The use of said grounds was continued until 1868, When, owing to their smallness and the growth of the city around them, it became necessary to seek a more spacious and suitable place for a cemetery. After due consideration, forty acres of ground, situated about one mile southeast of Owensboro, on the Hartford road, were selected and purchased of John G. Barkley, by the following persons: S. M. Wing, James Weir, R. M. Hathaway, D. M. Griffith, J. F. Kimbley, C. Griffith, T. S. Venable, W. B. Tyler, W. N. Sweeney, B. Bransford, T. S. Anderson, David Hamilton, J. H. McHenry, Jr., Charles Werner, John G. Barkley, W. T. Courtney, S. H. Ford and W. H. Perkins. C. R. Milne, in May, 1875, was admitted into the company, on the same footing with the above-named stockholders, and each one received a certificate of the company's indebtedness to him for \$200, to bear twelve per cent interest, annually. The name given to the grounds was "Rural Hill Cemetery"—changed in April, 1869, to Elmwood, its present name.

Nearly all the persons buried in the old cemetery were removed to the new at the expense of the company, and each lot-owner in the old cemetery received a lot in the new one instead.

Biographical – pp. 429-430:

Thomas Sidney Anderson was born July 8, 1842, in Daviess County, Ky. His father, James B. Anderson, was a native of Fayette County, Ky., and died in Owensboro, Oct. 17, 1864. He had been a merchant in Louisville and Brandenburg, Ky., and a farmer in Daviess County up to 1849 when he was appointed Cashier of the Bank of Kentucky, and at the time of his death was Cashier of Planters' Bank. His mother, Mary Ann (Robertson) Anderson, was a native of Franklin County,

Ky., and died in Owensboro, Sept. 18, 1878. Mr. Anderson was educated at a private school and at Ann Arbor University. While at Ann Arbor he was summoned home by the death of his father. He was appointed Cashier in the bank in his father's place, and being also one of the executors of his father's estate was unable to finish his course at Ann Arbor. In February, 1871, he and his brother, W.K. Anderson, organized the Owensboro Savings Bank, he remaining the Cashier at the Planters' and his brother having charge of the new bank. Business increasing so fast at the new bank, T.S. Anderson thought best to help his brother in the new enterprise, and resigned his position at Planters' Bank in the fall of 1871. In January, 1876, Mr. Anderson bought his brother's interest, his brother going to Detroit, Mich. In April, 1882, he completed his new building at a cost of \$15,000. He has been engaged in the insurance business since 1864, having the agency of two companies. In November, 1879, he formed a partnership with J.C. Rudd. He is President of the Owensboro Steam Ferry Company, President of the Owensboro Coal Company, and is one of the Owensboro Warehouse and Feed Company recently organized. He was married May 29, 1867, to Susie Harris, of Petersburg, Va. They have three daughters. Mr. Anderson is a member of the Presbyterian church. Politically he is a Republican.



**Biographical Cyclopedia of the Commonwealth of Kentucky,
John M. Gresham Company, Chicago, IL, 1896, pp.404-405:**

Thomas Sidney Anderson, son of James B. and Mary Ann Martin (Robertson) Anderson, was born in Daviess County, that part known as the "Beech Woods," six miles east of Owensboro, Kentucky, July 8, 1842.

James B. Anderson (father) was born in Lexington, Kentucky, June 1, 1808; first engaged in business with Thomas Anderson & Company, commission merchants of Louisville, as a clerk, and after a few years he acquired an interest in the business. His health failing, he removed to Brandenburg, Kentucky, and was engaged in mercantile business there for several years, but returned to Louisville and engaged in the wholesale dry-goods business as senior member of the firm of Anderson & Evans.

A few years later he removed to Daviess County and bought a farm, upon which he lived until January 1, 1850, when he moved into Owensboro, having been in 1849 elected cashier of the branch of the Southern Bank of Kentucky there. He held that position until 1864, when he organized the Planters' Bank of Kentucky—now the First National Bank of Owensboro—of which he was cashier until his death, which occurred October 17, 1864.

He was a very decided Union man before and during the Civil war, and expressed his convictions openly; was an ardent advocate of the cause of temperance, and was an elder in the Presbyterian Church, he and his wife having been charter members of the first Presbyterian congregation that was organized in the county of Daviess.

John Anderson (grandfather) was a native of County Tyrone, Ireland. He came to America in his youth and settled in Lexington. His father was a sea captain; his wife was Sallie Quicksall, a native of New Jersey.

Mary Ann Anderson (mother) was born near Frankfort, Kentucky, January 2, 1811. Her marriage to James B. Anderson was celebrated in Louisville, December 30, 1828. She survived her husband nearly fourteen years and died in Owensboro, September 18, 1878.

The children of James B. and Mary A. Anderson, two sons and two daughters, were:

Matilda Robertson, who married Charles R. Tyler of Owensboro; Thomas Sidney, the subject of this sketch; Sallie Quicksall, who married Thomas S. Venable of Owensboro; William Kyle, who married Cornelia Cook of Detroit, Michigan.

Thomas Anderson (mentioned in the early part of this sketch) and James B. Anderson were not relatives. They became very warm friends, and the latter named his first son for his friend and his wife, whose name was Sidney.

Isaac Robertson (maternal grandfather) was educated at Princeton College, New Jersey. He was a lawyer in Frankfort, an upright, honorable gentleman; married Matilda Taylor, daughter of Commodore Richard Taylor of Revolutionary fame; and met an untimely death at the hands of a portrait painter named Dearborn, who was arrested and imprisoned, but made his escape.

Donald Robertson (maternal great-grandfather) was an educator, mentioned in "Fisk's American Revolution" as "that most excellent Scotch school master," who numbered among his pupils President James Madison.

T. Sidney Anderson, the principal subject of this sketch, attended the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, but while in his junior year his longer attendance was prevented by the death of his father, who named him executor of his will, and by the fact that he was elected cashier of the Planters' Bank of Kentucky, to succeed his father. This position he held from October, 1864, to September, 1871. He and his brother then organized the Owensboro Savings Bank, of which he was at first vice president and then president until 1887. In 1883 he removed to Detroit, Michigan, where he was the principal mover in organizing the State Savings Bank, of which bank he was vice president and manager till 1887, and then president until December 9, 1889, when he resigned voluntarily. While living in Owensboro, and president and principal owner of the Owensboro Savings Bank, his conscientious business policy was to lend no money to, or aid in any way, the liquor and tobacco trades, or any other business detrimental, in his judgment, to man's good. The same policy was pursued by the State Savings Bank at Detroit from its organization, and during his management. In December, 1889, the board of directors desired to change the policy of the bank, and lend the money to anyone who offered good paper, financially, regardless of a moral consideration; and also wished to hire a special police force to patrol the bank premises on Sundays and Sunday nights, the same as on week day nights. To neither of these changes was he willing to be a party, preferring to sever his connection with the institution which he had founded, had managed successfully, and of which he was by far the largest individual stockholder.

He remained in Detroit until March, 1893, dealt in real estate successfully, and then moved back with his family to his old home, Owensboro, Kentucky, since which time he has been attending to his private business only.

Mr. Anderson is an elder in the First Presbyterian Church of Owensboro, and is superintendent of its Sabbath school. He is an ardent temperance man in principle and in practice, and since about 1885 has voted with the national Prohibition party. Previous to that time he voted the Republican ticket.

Mr. Anderson was married May 29, 1867, to Susan Elizabeth Harris, daughter of Giles Harris of Petersburg, Virginia. They have three children, daughters : Mary Ann, wife of William A. Underbill, a native of Brooklyn, New York ; Pattie Bransford and Susan Harris.

Giles Harris, Mrs. Anderson's father, was born in Prince Edward County, Virginia, September 19, 1805; married Martha Williamson Bransford, December 24, 1828; died Sunday, March 15, 1874, in Owensboro. He was a prominent planter and tobacconist and was one of the leading citizens of his city.

Martha Williamson Bransford (Mrs. Anderson's mother) was born in Cumberland County, Virginia, February 15, 1807.

John Claibourn Harris (Mrs. Anderson's paternal grandfather) was a prominent planter in Prince Edward County, Virginia; married Polly Ganaway. Mrs. Anderson's maternal grandfather was Benjamin Bransford, who was born in Cumberland County, Virginia, December 15, 1769; was a planter; married Lucy Hatcher of the same county. He was a son of John Bransford and Judith Amonette Bransford, who had ten children ; he was a grandson of John Bransford, who was the father of three daughters and two sons.



Thomas Sidney Anderson (1842-1925)

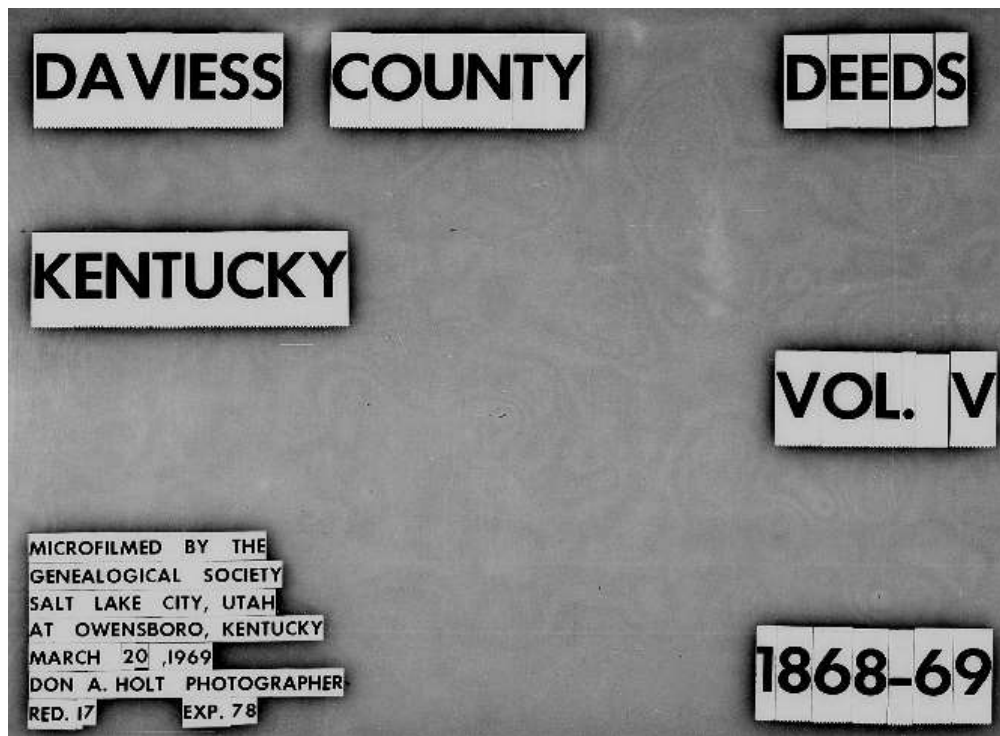
[Additional Notes: Thomas Sidney Anderson in 1900 established the Daviess County Bank & Trust Company. This bank and several others were forced to close in 1908 during a money panic. Anderson owed a large sum of money to the bank and a criminal case was brought against him. He was convicted of malfeasance and sentenced to serve eighteen months in the Eddyville penitentiary. He served one year and was pardoned in May 1911. After being released from prison he located in Tennessee and later in North Carolina. He died on 10 November 1925 in Candler,

NC and was buried in the New Market Cemetery at New Market, TN. His death certificate reported that he was a retired banker.

Above portrait of Thomas Sidney Anderson is from the book, Donald Robertson And His Wife Rachel Rogers Of King And Queen County, Virginia, Their Ancestry And Posterity, by William Kyle Anderson, Winn & Hammond printers, Detroit, MI, 1900, p126. Compliments of Frances Underhill Crispin, Susan Harris Earman (formerly Crispin), Matthew Singleton Crispin. children of Howard Herbert Crispin, Jr. & Caroline Gordon Broun (1931-2005); grandchildren of Matthew Singleton Broun & Fanny Underhill (1897-1983); great-grandchildren of William Augustus Underhill & Mary Ann Anderson (1868-1932); and great-great-grandchildren of Thomas Sidney Anderson (1842-1925) & Susan Elizabeth Harris.]



[Notes within brackets in this file are by the compiler, Jerry Long.]



Daviess County, KY Deed Book V, page 463:

This indenture made and entered into the Jan'y 5, 1869 between John G. Barkley and Eliza Barkley, of the one part and the President and Directors of the Rural Hill Cemetery Company of the other.

Witnesseth: That for and in consideration of Four Thousand Dollars. Twenty four hundred Dollars paid and hereby acknowledged and Sixteen Hundred Dollars to be paid with interest from April 2, 1878 and to secure the payment of which a lien is retained on the land herein after conveyed – the party of the first part has this day bargained & sold and by these presents bargain sell and convey to the party of the second part.

To have and to hold to their own use benefit and behalf forever forty acres of ground lying and being in Daviess County on the Hartford Road being a part of the land conveyed b Robert Fogle to the party of the first part and bounded as follows. Beginning at a stake corner to Mrs. Kennedy. Thence with her line N 82 E 22 poles to a stake in said line. Thence S 37 E 40 poles to a stake. Thence S 10 W 52 poles to a stake. Thence S 39 W 36 poles to a stake in the side of the Hartford Road. Thence with said road N 61 W 68 poles 16 links to a stake. Thence N 29 ½ E 30 poles to a stake. Thence N. 34 E. 58 ½ poles to the beginning.

And the said party of the first part convey the land aforesaid with a Covenant of General Warrantee.

In Testimony we have here onto placed our signatures this the day and date aforesaid.

John G. Barkley

Eliza V. Barkley

State of Kentucky

Daviess County

I, T. C. Jones, Clerk of Daviess County Court do certify that the for going deed was this day before me duly acknowledged by Jno. G. Barkley & Eliza V. Barkley his wife to be their act & deed and being duly stamped admitted to record.

Witness my hand this 8th day of Jany 1869

T. C. Jones Clk

P. T. Watkins D.C.



Owensboro Examiner, Owensboro, KY, Friday, 5 July 1878, p.1:

Notice of Dissolution of the Elmwood Cemetery Company.

Notice is hereby given that whereas at a meeting of the President, Board of Directors and stockholders of the Elmwood Cemetery Company (formerly Rural Hill Cemetery – originally Rural Cemetery Company) held in Owensboro, Ky., on 11th June, 1878, the stockholders of said Elmwood Cemetery Company by a majority of all its stock voted to dissolve said company as a corporation and to assign, transfer and surrender all its corporate rights, privileges and franchises and also all its property, both real and personal, to T. S. Anderson, and directed its President and Board of Directors to make due conveyance to said Anderson of all its said rights, privileges and franchises, and also its said property, in consideration that said Anderson would pay off and discharge all the just debts of the said Company and continue to use the grounds to be so conveyed to him for Cemetery purposes, the said Anderson to have, enjoy and control the grounds, &c., to be conveyed to him subject to certain stipulations and reservations contained in an agreement entered into between said Company and said Anderson and recorded on the records of said Company.

Now, therefore, the undersigned President and Board of Directors of said Company, by the authority vested in them by the stockholders and the charter and by-laws of same, do hereby declare and publish the said dissolution of the corporation heretofore existing under the name of the Elmwood Cemetery Company, to be effected when due publication of this notice is made, as required by law.

J. F. Kimbly, President; Jas. Weir, R. M. Hathaway, J. H. McHenry, John Thixton, Chas. Werner, Directors.



Owensboro Examiner, Owensboro, KY, Friday, 2 August 1878, p.5:

Elmwood Cemetery.

ELM WOOD CEMETERY, near Owensboro, Ky., is by nature one of the most beautiful spots in the State for a Cemetery, and it is intended that neither labor nor money shall be spared to have Art rival Nature in beautifying and adorning the grounds. A competent person will be kept constantly employed on the premises, devoting all his care and attention to keeping everything in the best and trimmest order. Securely enclosed and carefully guarded, Elmwood is all that could be desired as a place for our departed friends. The place is governed by a set of rules and regulations similar to those of the best Cemeteries in the country, a copy of which will be given every lot-holder. A Record is carefully kept of every interment made in Elmwood, showing date of interment, name of deceased, nativity, residence, occupation, date of birth, date of death, disease name of undertaker, name of section and number of lot on which buried and such circumstances connected with the deceased as may be deemed useful and interesting to posterity. How different the resting-place of, those in Elmwood and of those buried in a neglected graveyard or on farms where, in a few years at farthest, their graves are trodden upon and desecrated by man and beast, ploughed up and even their very location obliterated and forgotten.

Lots of sizes to suit all families at prices from \$25 to \$200. A single burial place sold at \$5. For further information apply to T. S. ANDERSON, at Savings Bank.

[Note: A copy of the Elmwood Cemetery rules and regulations referred to in the preceding article can be found in the Kentucky Room, of the Daviess County Public Library, Owensboro, KY.]



Owensboro Examiner, Owensboro, KY, Friday, 18 October 1878, p.5:

Elmwood Cemetery.

It is known to many of our readers that Mr. T. S. Anderson, one of the twenty original stockholders composing the Cemetery Company, became sole owner of the cemetery a short time ago. We have heard some objections urged by individuals in the community against the transfer of this property, which they claim should be held as public property, to the lands of a single individual. On this point, we doubt not that when the city or any individual, or company wish to become the owners, Mr. Anderson will cheerfully make the transfer, provided he can get what the property cost him. At the time of the transfer, as we understand it, Mr. Anderson owned all the stock, with the exception of two or three shares. As the stock was yielding no dividends, but, on the contrary, was becoming less valuable every lot that was sold off, Mr. Anderson desired a change of some kind, so that he might save himself in his investment; and, as he could not sell out,

he bought the balance of the stock. Mr. Anderson has gone to work making improvements in and around the cemetery in the way of new gutters, culverts, etc.



Owensboro Weekly Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Thursday, 30 October 1879, p.4:

"RURAL CEMETERY."

A Deserted City of the Dead.

On yesterday Mr. C. R. Milne, assisted by a corps of workmen, was busy removing the remains of the following persons from the old cemetery, corner Fourth and Triplett streets, to "Elmwood," viz: Phil. B. Thompson, wife and two children; first wife of Robt. Craig; the wife of Dr. F. M. Pearl and infant son. But one grave that can be identified yet remains, that of Matthew Kirkpatrick, who died in 1852 at the age of twenty-four years. This grave is on the old Mosley lot, which was deeded to lie used for a grave-yard only, the property reverting to the heirs whenever used for other purposes. We give a brief historic sketch of the old and new cemeteries.

The necessity for a suitable place to bury the dead, becoming manifest to the citizens of Owensboro, in the year 1856, a company was organized composed of Wm. Bell, James Weir, R. M. Hathaway, Geo. Scarborough, D. M. Griffith, F. M. Pearl, J. B. Anderson, Robt. Craig, John H. McHenry, Sr., S. M. Wing and E. A. Hathaway. The newly organized company purchased of R. M. Hathaway and F. M. Pearl about nine acres of ground, in what was then known as Hathaway's addition, but now bounded by Fourth, Triplett, Sixth and Centre streets. The plot of ground purchased was appropriately arranged and laid out for a city of the dead, and dedicated as the "Rural Cemetery," the remains of Elisha Athy being the first deposited in it. Its use was continued until 1868, when the small area and the growth of the city necessitated a more spacious and suitable place. A new company was then organized composed of the following, persons, viz: S. M. Wing, James Weir, R. M. Hathaway, D. M. Griffith, F. Kimbly, C. Griffith, T. S. Venable, W. B. Tyler, W. N. Sweeney, B. Bransford, T. S. Anderson, David Hamilton, J. H. McHenry, Jr., Charles Werner, John G. Barkley, W. T. Courtney, S. H. Ford and W. H. Perkins. Forty acres of ground were purchased of John G. Barkley, situated about one mile south-east of Owensboro, which was handsomely laid out, beautifully adorned with shade trees and shrubbery and the name "Rural Hill Cemetery" given to it, which in April, 1869, was changed to its present name – "Elmwood." Mr. C. R. Milne was admitted into the company in May, 1875. Nearly all the remains were removed from the old to the new cemetery, as soon as change was made. Vast improvements were made at a large expense, which encumbered the cemetery with a heavy debt. A publication on this subject, says: "The Directors were urged to make arrangements to pay off the debt, if possible, but they seemed unable to do so. T. S. Anderson, being the largest creditor, then proposed to give the company one year's time, without interest on his claim, if they would secure it, but this was declined. He then proposed to pay the entire debt of the cemetery, himself, if the company would transfer its property to him. It was generally conceded at the time that the entire property of the cemetery would not pay its debts at a forced sale, and, before said, the debt was increasing yearly. The Directors said the proposition was liberal, more so than they would be willing to make, and on the 25th of June, 1878, the cemetery and assets were conveyed by deed to T. S. Anderson, on condition that he should pay all debts of the cemetery, and that the grounds should be forever used as a burial-ground and kept in good order." Since the transfer was made to Mr. Anderson the

grounds have been greatly improved, and it is no wonder to us that all who had departed relatives and friends in the old neglected cemetery were anxious to have them removed to Elmwood.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 31 May 1903, p.14:

*The History of
Elmwood Cemetery.*

In view of the movement for a reorganization of Elmwood cemetery on a mutual basis, as was recently explained in full in this paper, the following historical sketch of Elmwood will be of interest, not only to the lot owners, but to the public in general. It is taken from a booklet published in 1878:

In the year 1856. seeing the necessity of a cemetery a company of citizens of Owensboro was formed, composed of Wm. Bell, James Weir. R. M. Hathaway, Geo. Scarborough, D. M. Griffith, F. M. Pearl, J. B. Anderson Robert Craig, John H. McHenry, Sr.. S. M. Wing and E. A. Hathaway, who purchased of R. M. Hathaway and F. M. Pearl nine acres and a fraction of ground in what, is known as Hathaway's addition to Owensboro, and named same "Rural Cemetery."

The use of said grounds continued until 1868. when owing to their smallness and the growth of the city around them, it became necessary to seek a more spacious and suitable place for a cemetery. After due consideration, forty acres of ground, situated about one mile south-east of Owensboro, on the Hartford road, were selected and purchased of John G. Barkley, by the following persons: S. M. Wing, James Weir, R. M. Hathaway, D. M. Griffith, J. F. Kimbley, C. Griffith, T. S. Venable, W. B. Tyler, W. N. Sweeney, B. Bransford, T. S. Anderson, David Hamilton. J. H. McHenry, Jr., Charles Werner, John G. Barkley, W. T. Courtney, S. H. Ford and W. H. Perkins. C. R. Milne, in May. 1875, was admitted into the company, on the, same footing with above named stockholders, and each one received a certificate of the company's indebtedness to him for two hundred dollars, to bear 12 per cent. interest, annually. The name given to the grounds was "Rural Hill Cemetery"— changed in April, 1869, to Elmwood, its present name.

Nearly all the persons buried in the old cemetery were removed to the new at the expense of the company, and each lot-owner in the old cemetery received a lot in the new one' instead. Improvements were immediately begun on the new grounds — a good brick house erected for sexton, grounds fenced in, surveyed, divided into lots, roads and some substantial brick drains made. This was done under the supervision of Mr. R. M. Hathaway, the first president of the Elmwood Cemetery company, and to his close attention, good taste and judgment is due much that is beautiful and substantial on the premises. In order to do all this, much money was expended by the company in anticipation of receipts, which meantime came in slowly, while expenses continued anti interest accrued. In short the indebtedness of the company increased constantly, the stockholders became weary waiting for returns and many of them sold their stock, the majority of which came into the hands of T. S. Anderson.

The debt now (1878) accumulated to such a size that the annual interest on it, to say nothing of the necessary running expenses of the cemetery amounted to more than the yearly receipts from all sources; and. the affairs of the company being in such a condition that each year's business increased the debt and decreased the assets (as the lots were sold), it became evident to the creditors that some change must be made in the finances.

The directors were urged to make arrangement to pay off the debt, if possible, but they seemed unable to do so. T. S. Anderson, being the largest creditor, then proposed to give the company one year's time, without interest on his claim, if they would secure it, but this was declined. He then proposed to pay the entire debt of the cemetery, himself, if the company would transfer its property to him. It was generally conceded at the time that the entire property of the cemetery would not pay its debts at a forced sale, and, as before said the debt was increasing yearly. The directors said the proposition was liberal, more so than they would be willing to make, and on the 25th of June 1878, the cemetery and assets were conveyed by deed to T. S. Anderson, on condition that he should pay all debts of the cemetery, and that the grounds should be forever used as a burial-ground and kept in good order.

Upon taking charge of the cemetery and after consulting the best authorities, Spring Grove cemetery, Cincinnati, Cave Hill, Louisville, and Oak Hill, Evansville, he decided to divide some of the lots, heretofore entirely too large, into sizes to suit the wants of every family; and as the past experience of the company had shown that the old price of lots was not enough to keep the cemetery out of debt, the price of lots per square foot has been increased, but even now the prices of the best ground is only one-fourth of that of same in Cave Hill, and not more than one-third of that in Oak Hill, Evansville.

The entire debt of the old company has been paid off and the cemetery is now on a firm footing. Some improvements have been made already, as can readily be seen, and other's will be made. It is intended that Elmwood shall be a first-class cemetery in every respect; and much more labor and care will be given it than ever before. Having undertaken the management under many difficulties and discouragements, the present proprietor feels that it is a task of no small magnitude to conduct a cemetery properly. He pledges, however, his best efforts in that direction, and feels assured he can, in a few years, make Elmwood a cemetery of which all interested will be proud. He trusts to the lot-holders and all friends to uphold and encourage him in his efforts, as it is an enterprise in which all are interested.



Owensboro Daily Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Saturday, 29 April 1916, p.3:

**ELMWOOD WILL BE
SOLD ON MAY 10**

**Order of Sale and Judgment
In Circuit Court**

**RIGHTS OF LOT OWNERS WILL
BE FULLY PROTECTED.**

TO AUCTION OFF PROPERTY

Elmwood cemetery will be sold on May 10 under order of sale and judgment entered in circuit court Friday. The tract of land containing forty acres, of which the burying place is composed, will be sold as a whole. The rights of lot owners in the cemetery are fully protected by the court's order, as it is directed that the sale be made subject to the right of ownership of all those who have heretofore purchased ground.

The property will be auctioned at the courthouse door by Master (Commissioner LaVega Clements. Twelve, eighteen and twenty-four months' time will be given the purchaser, or purchasers, in which to pay for the property. Attorney Clarence W. Wells drew the judgment, which specifies that it is for the purpose of paying the debts of T. S. Anderson, whose property was assigned to F. A. Van Rensselaer. Chief of these debts are \$5,000 lien debts due to E. B. Anderson as assignee of the Daviess County Bank and Trust company.



Owensboro Daily Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 30 April 1916, p.11:

Commissioner's Sale

State of Kentucky, Daviess circuit court.
F. A. VanRensselaer. assignee, etc., plaintiff, versus
T. S. Anderson, etc., defendant.
In equity. No. 9342.

By virtue of a judgment rendered in the above case, at the April term, 1916, I will on Monday, May 15, 1916, it being first Daviess county court day expose to sale at public auction at the courthouse door in Owensboro on a credit of twelve, eighteen and twenty-four months:

A certain tract of land in Daviess county, Kentucky, known as the. Elmwood cemetery property, lying southeast of the city of Owensboro on the Hartford road, and bounded and described as follows: to-wit:

Beginning at a stake corner to Mrs. Kennedy's; thence with her line N. 82 E. 22 poles to a stake, in said line; thence S. 37 E. 40 poles to a stake; thence S. 10 W. 52 poles to a stake; thence S. 39 W. 36 poles to a stake in the side of the Hartford Road; thence with same N. 61 W. 68 poles and 16 links to a stake; thence N. 29 ½ E. 30 poles to a stake; thence N. 34 E. 58 ½ poles to the beginning, containing forty acres, more or less, and being the same property conveyed to the said T. S. Anderson by the president and director of Elmwood Cemetery company, by deed dated June 25, 1878 and of record in deed book 32, page 478. Daviess county court clerk's office.

Said property, together with the divisions and sub-divisions thereof, is shown by two blue print plats of the old and new parts respectively of said cemetery, of record in the action of F. A. VanRensselaer, as signee vs. T. S. Anderson and others now pending in the Daviess circuit court. Said property will be sold as a whole.

Said property is to be sold subject to the provisions of said deed from said Elmwood cemetery to said T. S. Anderson, and said property is to be continued and used as and for cemetery purposes, and to be kept in good order for said purposes.

Said property is to be sold subject to the sales of lots and burial spaces therein heretofore made, and the rights of the owners of same; the lots and spaces so sold, being shown by said plats and the reports of assignee on file in said action, and the judgment of the court herein. All rights and interests of whatever kind or nature in and to said lots and spaces heretofore sold as aforesaid,

which were held by said T. S. Anderson, or to which he was entitled, at the time of his assignment herein, are now held by his assignee, or to which he is or maybe entitled, are included in the sale of said property, and shall pass to the purchaser at said sale.

Purchaser will be required to give bond for amount bid, with approved security, having the force and effect of a judgment, with a lien upon the property, and bearing interest at the rate of six per cent per an num.

LA VEGA CLEMENTS, M. C.

Sale between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.



Owensboro Daily Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Tuesday, 16 May 1916, p.1:

PROPERTY VALUED AT \$300,000
GOES FOR SUM OF \$80,000

Real Estate Held by Savings Bank Receiver Is Bought For \$48,785

\$30,000 FOR ELMWOOD

W. S. Hazel Buys \$300,000 Worth of Notes and Judgments for \$1,150

Master Commissioner LaVega Clements held yesterday what is said to have been the most important public sale ever held in Kentucky by a master commissioner.

Between the hours of 11 o'clock Monday forenoon and 4 o'clock in the afternoon Commissioner Clements disposed of real and personal property of the approximate value of \$300,000. The consideration received will amount to about \$80,000.

The sale, which was made to satisfy judgments obtained in the circuit court, comprised almost every kind of real and personal property of value including cemeteries, coal mines, pleasure parks, telephone stocks, bonds and other negotiable securities.

Elmwood Brings \$30,000

The purchase of the Elmwood cemetery, which was sold to satisfy a judgment obtained by Fred A. VanRenssalaer, assignee against the T. S. Anderson estate was made by George Mischel & Son, through J. J. Blocher.

The property was purchased by Messrs. Mischel for an investment. A number of improvements will be made, among which will be a modern receiving vault it is said.

[Note: On 15 May 1916 George Mischel and his sons, William G., Joseph G., Paul L. and August C. Mischel, at a sale at the Daviess County Courthouse purchased the Elmwood Cemetery property from T. S. Anderson et al for \$30,000. The sale was confirmed on 16 February 1921. See Daviess County Commissioner's Deed Book K, p.266. The Mischels were the operators of the George H. Mischel & Sons Monument dealers at 412-414 East Main Street, in Owensboro, KY]



ROSE HILL WILL BE
NAME GIVEN TO
NEW CEMETERY

Fifty-two Acres of Craycroft Place on Hartford Road to Be Utilized

IS OPPOSITE ELMWOOD

Thousands of Dollars to Be Spent by Stock Company in Improving Grounds

Another general cemetery for Owensboro is a project that will be put on foot soon, to be located directly across the road from Elmwood. The old Craycroft farm, containing fifty-two acres has been selected as a site for the cemetery, and the citizens behind the movement believe it will make an ideal location. A corporation will be formed and stock offered to the public.

As the city increases in population and the Elmwood becomes more thickly occupied, it is certain that there will be in a not distant future a demand for another burying ground. Already the older portion of the cemetery now is almost entirely taken up, and but recently a large acreage was added to the original grounds. This latter addition joins the old portion on the north.

It is planned to spend thousands of dollars in the proper platting of the new cemetery which will be known as Rose Hill. A landscape gardener will be secured to lay off the fifty-two acres to the best advantage for beauty and arrangement for burial lots. It is intended to build several mausoleums for private use, which will enhance the natural beauty of the place. The location of the new site is not unlike that of Elmwood.

With almost identical rises and level places to Elmwood. the new cemetery would seem as but a continuation to the southward of the original cemetery of Owensboro. It is believed by the promoters of the matter that lots and single burial places could be disposed of to the public at a less cost to the public than that now charged by the Elmwood proprietors. It is said that the work of forming the corporation will be started at an early date, and soon afterwards the arranging of the cemetery will begin.

[Note: On 13 December 1911 Robert E., George C. & John E. Massie purchased from Mary A. Craycroft 46 & 1/10 acres on the south side of the Hartford Road, opposite Elmwood Cemetery and the Daviess County Fair Ground. The deed was recorded in Daviess County, KY Deed Book 90, p.634. In Daviess County, KY Deed Book 95, p.506, a deed of release confirming the sale was recorded on 26 July 1915. The three Massies were brothers and were for several years associated together in the tobacco business under the firm name of R. E. Massie & Brothers at Owensboro. On the property in 1916 the Massies established Rose Hill Cemetery.]



Owensboro Daily Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 4 June 1916, p.12B:

WORK TO BEGIN IN NEXT TWO WEEKS BEAUTIFYING LAND

In Preparation for Rose Hill Cemetery on Hartford Road
\$10,000 TO BE EXPENDED
City Railroad to Extend Track to New Burying Place
Chapel to Be Built

Work in preparation of Rose Hill cemetery will begin within the next ten days, and it is expected to have the new burying place completed by October 1. The character of cemetery to be laid out, together with the equipment that it is planned to build, it was stated Saturday by the proprietor of the land, will give to Owensboro a complete and beautiful cemetery.

R. E. Massie owns the land just west of Elmwood and will be a stockholder in the new project. It is estimated that \$10,000 will be expended in the work on the property and the plans, which have been carefully and worked out studied, finesse, embrace many features that are seen in cities much larger than Owensboro.

Chapel and Receiving Vault.

Besides the plotting of the ground which will be done by an Eastern artist, there will be built in the cemetery grounds a beautiful stone chapel and receiving vault combined. This feature alone is rarely seen outside very large places. By reason of this arrangement bodies persons shipped from a distance whose relatives desire their interment to occur at Owensboro, but ordinarily would have no place other than a church to take them to, may be taken directly to the cemetery and deposited in the vault until such time as funeral services could be arranged and then these held in the chapel.

Where temporary burial would not be desired, corpses may lie in the receiving vault for an unlimited period to be later interred at the wish of those interested. It is believed that this arrangement will be greatly appreciated by Owensboro citizens.

Beautiful Walks and Roads.

Concrete walkways and macadam pikes will be built through the entire cemetery and shrubbery and small evergreens will be placed to make the whole appearance of the place as beautiful human ingenuity and unlimited funds can attain to. There will be no trees placed in the cemetery, as this has been found detrimental in several ways. Besides marring the general view of a position, the beauty of monuments is hidden and often times they are injured by the roots of trees raising their foundations and cracking them.

An extension of the city railway system will be built to the grounds and a waiting station established there. This will be a convenience that has long been desired by Owensboro citizens, and is due to the enterprise of the promoters of the Rose Hill cemetery. It is certain that there will be extensive use of this end of the system, as it will furnish accommodations for both cemeteries.

While Mr. Massie owns the land upon which the cemetery will be laid out and will be interested in the corporation to be formed quite a number of other Owensboro citizens are behind the project and the stock in the corporation to be offered the public will be to secure the cooperation of all who may desire such. The company will be of sufficient capital stock to accomplish all of the intended expensive work without stint.



Owensboro Daily Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Tuesday, 12 June 1917, p.6:

CAPITAL STOCK

OF NEW ROSE HILL CEMETERY IS \$10,000

Articles of Incorporation are Filed in the County Clerk's Office

Articles incorporating Rose Hill Cemetery company were filed in County Clerk Weir's office Monday. The capital stock was placed at \$10,000, fully subscribed.

The incorporators are R. E. Massie, G. Cicero Massie and John E. Massie, each owning thirty-one shares of the par value of \$100. Louis N. Burns owns five shares and Ellis H. Massie owns two shares

The indebtedness of the concern is fixed at \$25,000, and the business is to be controlled by the usual set of officers. The corporation has already begun business in St. Ann street and is to continue for fifty years.

Rose Hill cemetery is located across the road from Elmwood cemetery, and since it has been laid off, with flowers, trees and all kinds of shrubbery planted, the place is said to be one of the most beautiful in the county. A number of well known people have already been buried in Rose Hill.

[Note: The cemetery was incorporated as the "Rose Hill Cemetery" in 1917. The same spelling was published in the Owensboro City Directories until the mid 1980s. In the Owensboro newspapers and other sources the spelling appeared about equally as "Rosehill". After ownership of the cemetery became non-local in 1996 "Rosehill-Elmwood Cemetery" became the standardized spelling.]





George Mischel (1857-1924) family memorial in section I of Elmwood Cemetery. In 1916 Mischel purchased Elmwood Cemetery. His estate sold the cemetery to George William Little, Jr.(1895-1974) in 1980.



Massie family monument in Rose Hill Cemetery. Robert E. Massie (1865-1937) and his estate owned Rose Hill Cemetery during 1916-1953.



[Note: Robert E. Massie, tobacconist, died on 24 June 1937. He was buried in Owensboro's Rose Hill Cemetery. He was one of the largest land owners in Western Kentucky. He resided on the farm where the Kentucky Wesleyan College is now. His son, Ellis H. Massie, donated the residence to the College. Upon the death of Robert E. Massie his estate continued to own Rose Hill Cemetery. The will of his widow, Loretta Haynes Massie (1872-1949), devised the cemetery to her only child, Ellis H. Massie, by her will (Daviness County, KY Will Book K, p.149; the transfer was recorded in Daviness County Deed Books 140, p.618 and 146, p.379). Ellis Haynes Massie (1895-1955) on 20 March 1953 sold Rose Hill Cemetery, 37.17 acres, to George W. Little (Daviness County, KY Deed Book 226, p.161).



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Wednesday, 18 November 1942, p.4A:



..... Rural cemetery was used until in 1868 when, owing to the continued growth of the city which was rapidly encroaching on the cemetery's territory, it became apparent that more spacious grounds would be necessary. In that year 40 acres of ground were purchased on the Hartford road a mile southeast of Owensboro. The company's minutes show that it offered to move all persons buried in the old Rural cemetery, providing written consent could be secured from the families. Many were moved to their new grounds, but some families refused to consent to the removal, and in other instances no families could be found to give the consent, and hence the dead remained undisturbed and still remain with inhabited homes as their monuments. That section is now a residential section, with a house on every lot and little mention is ever made of the cemetery, or the persons still buried there. In April, 1869, the name Rural Hill cemetery was changed to Elmwood which it has retained since that time.

John A. Bidwell, present sexton of Elmwood holds an unique record, having served in that capacity since May 7, 1901. Mr. Bidwell is the father of Police Chief Vernie Bidwell. The pauper cemetery is next to Elmwood, and contains more than two acres purchased by the city of Owensboro in 1868 from the Rural Hill company.

In 1861 the Catholic cemetery was opened on the Henderson road. The description given of it at that time was that it was a "half mile below town." Now the town extends beyond it.

Owensboro's newest cemetery, Rose Hill was opened in 1916. Containing more than 20 acres, the first burial was made on November 21, 1916, when J. Wesley Howard was laid to rest.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 29 May 1983, p.1D:

Elmwood

By Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer

There is life in Elmwood Cemetery.

As the sun sinks toward the horizon beyond the tomb pf circus great Zack Terrell, a jogger winds his way along the two miles of paved trails in the historic cemetery in eastern Owensboro.

A woman strolls by, exercising her dog. Young rabbits scamper through the rhododendron. Chipmunks hurry away. A robin perches on the finger of a statue.

Night is coming on. But there is no fear here. Attitudes are changing, says Brenda Little, who bought the Civil War-era cemetery with her husband, Bill, three years ago. The Littles have owned the newer Rose Hill Cemetery across the road from Elmwood since 1953.

"What we want to be is an oasis in the midst of all the horn-blowing," Mrs. Little said, as she surveyed the peaceful beauty of the thousands of marble and granite monuments that dot the rolling hills near Breckenridge Street.

"I see it as a peaceful place. Most of these people had a good, long life. There's almost a rejoicing, a celebration of them here," she said with a smile.

This Memorial Day at least one family plans a picnic in the cemetery, Mrs. Little said. That's an old tradition being revived. The long rectangular gravestones that lie flat on the ground covering some graves were once the tops of stone tables where families could gather for picnics.

Customs changed and the tables were leveled by another generation, she said.

Birdie Gasser, who chronicled the life of Owensboro for more than half a century in his newspaper columns, used to say that Elmwood Cemetery was the only historic thing that Owensboro hadn't destroyed. Today Gasser lies there among those historic figures.

Mrs. Little agrees with him. "We're on the Kentucky Register of Historic Places. We're very interested in preservation," she said.

But Elmwood is concerned about helping the living appreciate the dead, Mrs. Little said. A former teacher, she is active in promoting the education to be gained in these 60 acres of silence.

Each year six or more school groups follow her over the rolling hills to learn math, zoology, physical education, history, art and literature from the graves. It's an educational field trip, she said.

Several adult groups have taken the tour of the cemetery that ends with champagne, she said. The kids have a lemonade tour.

Some of the best artwork in Owensboro is in Elmwood Cemetery, Mrs. Little said.

There are the angels of death carved by area stonemason Zuckriegel before the turn of the century; the statue of John Thixton, a former secretary of the cemetery; and the three children and one woman who stand watch over the graves in the Junius Bell plot.

There is Victorian poetry aplenty on the graves, most of it tragic, such as the lines on the grave of an infant: " 'Tis a little grave, but oh have care, for worldwide hopes are buried here."

Epitaphs at the cemetery are now being preserved by a computer, and Mrs. Little is constantly researching the lives of those who lie here to add to the stories she can tell on her tours.

There is tragedy here, she said, pointing to a family plot with nine infant graves and that of the mother who died days after the last baby was born.

And there is humor. One couple is buried several rows apart. They never got along." Mrs. Little explained.

Symbols are hidden in many of the stones. Acorns tell of life. A hand points skyward telling where the departed has gone. An empty chair sits beneath a weeping willow tree.

The tour includes visits to the greats of Owensboro's past – Phillip Thompson, first congressman from Owensboro; banker and novelist James Weir; Col. Charles Todd, ambassador to Russia; and Edward Rumsey Wing, minister to Ecuador, among others.

And there's the irony of Col. John McHenry of the Union army, a slaveholder who buried several of his former slaves alongside him. And the legend of the British lion tamer who died in Owensboro and the mysterious lady who once laid flowers on his grave each year on the anniversary of his death.

Personalized monuments began to disappear in the '40s, but they're making a comeback now, Mrs. Little said. A stone from last year carries a photograph of the man, a carving of a shotgun and a poem from the family.

Another shows a man and woman fishing in a boat and the words "Just as we planned, but in a better land."

Elmwood Cemetery will never be full, Mrs. Little said. There are about 20 undeveloped acres and plans for a mausoleum. A mausoleum can accommodate 7,000 people per acre, while ground burial will handle 2,000 or fewer.

There are still copies on file of tickets people used to present at the big iron gates to gain admission to Elmwood, she said.

"But now we think of it as a public place. We want people to come here and enjoy it," added.



**Owensboro: The City on the Yellow Banks, Lee A. Dew & Aloma W. Dew,
Rivendell Publications, Bowling Green, KY, 1988, p.86:**

Elmwood Cemetery – Preserving Owensboro's Heritage Since 1868

By Brenda Little

SHORTLY AFTER the Civil War ended, about a dozen men who were leaders in Owensboro — bankers, distillers and lawyers — worked together to start a cemetery which would be adequate for the needs of Owensboro's citizens for many years. A piece of land with gently rolling hills southeast of the city was laid out according to the rural cemetery concept which was a new idea in America in the early 1800's.

The rural cemetery purpose was to offer people a place to bury their dead which was spacious enough for large trees, expanses of lawn, curving drives and small wildlife. This was in contrast to the crowded and dreary graveyards which preceded. For the first few years the cemetery was named Rural Cemetery before being renamed Elmwood Cemetery.

During the first fifty years the cemetery struggled with financial woes, and an enormous amount of manual labor went into development and upkeep. As financial and management problems happened, the founders turned to the leading cemeteries in Louisville and Cincinnati for advice.

In the early 1900's, despite all the effort and dedication, Elmwood became bankrupt. The cemetery was bought at a tax sale by a family of stonecarvers which operated the cemetery as well as a monument company for about sixty years. Evidently the only reward the founders gained was the most enviable burial lots along a ridge overlooking what is now the outer edge of the city.

In 1980 one of the owners of Rose Hill Cemetery, George William Little, Jr., bought Elmwood. This put the ownership of Owensboro's two largest cemeteries under the same management. The years 1980 to 1986 were devoted to resetting overturned stones, repairing broken monuments, removing overgrown and unattractive plants, and computerizing the records.

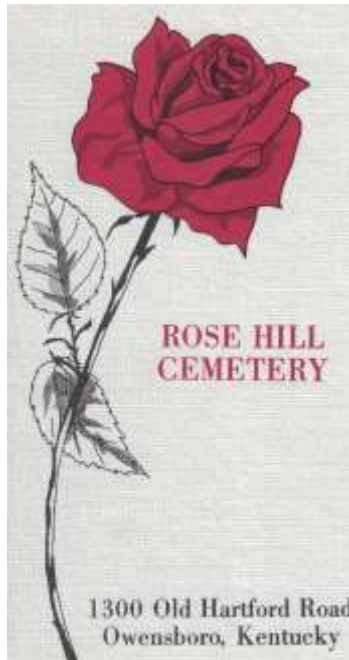
The most important historical element of Elmwood is the presence of representative types of late nineteenth-century memorial architecture. Elaborate gravestones, marble monuments, bronze tablets, even portrait statues, mark the graves of important Owensboro citizens. Humbler stones denote the resting-places of less important individuals, while fading government markers

stand over graves of Civil War soldiers. The many graves of infants and small children remind us of the perils of childhood in the days before pure water and adequate sanitation, while the stones of young mothers illustrate the dangers of childbirth.

Elmwood stands today as a valuable resource for the continuing study of Owensboro's history.



Brochure:



ROSE HILL

THEN...

In 1953 Rose Hill Cemetery was purchased by George William Little, Sr. and his wife, Alma. The operation of the cemetery became a family affair with the Littles' and their children doing the manual labor, the bookkeeping and supervision. Following his father's death in 1974, George William, Jr. joined his mother in the management of the cemetery.

NOW...

Today, Bill serves as corporation president and Mrs. Little is a consultant and member of the board of directors.

The cemetery has undergone tremendous changes since 1953. Mowing, trimming and excavating are mechanized Record keeping is computerized But the Littles' dream of providing the best, affordable burial service to the people of the Owensboro area remains the same.

ITS STAFF...

The cemetery is staffed by experienced people who are dedicated to their work. Our staff responds with courtesy and sensitivity to requests from clients and visitors.

The cemetery management and staff is active in professional organizations at the state, regional and national levels. Both staff and management participate in continuing education by attending night classes and education courses sponsored by the American Cemetery Association. The finest cemeteries in the country are visited and their management is consulted to help make Rose Hill beautiful and cost efficient.

ITS SERVICES...

Rose Hill is expanding its services to include lawn crypt sections, a public mausoleum with cremation niches, and a chapel for committal services.

The greatest service of all is the availability of choices for a family to think about years before there is the actual need to exercise them. Financial arrangements can be made so that the expenses are taken care of at a time when the family is together.

Spaces are available in all sections of the cemetery. A price list will be provided upon request and a counselor will set a private appointment to answer questions. The appointment is free and does not result in any obligation.



[Note: George William Little, Sr. (1895-1974) in 1953 became the owner and manager of Rose Hill Cemetery. He purchased the property from the estate of Robert E. Massie (1865-1937). Upon Little's death ownership of the cemetery descended to his wife, Alma Christine Little (1904-1996). In 1984 Alma Little transferred ownership of Rose Hill Cemetery to her son, George William "Bill" Little, Jr. (1936-2018), and his wife, Brenda. In 1980 George W. Little, Jr. & Brenda purchased Elmwood Cemetery from the heirs of George Mischel (1857-1924). Bill & Brenda Little sold Elmwood and Rose Hill Cemeteries in 1996.]



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Thursday, 22 February 1996, p.1A:

Chain buying local cemetery

By Stewart Jennison; Messenger-Inquirer

One of Owensboro's oldest businesses, Rosehill-Elmwood Cemetery, is close to becoming the newest acquisition of a billion-dollar corporation.

After months of negotiations, G. William Little Jr. and Brenda Little said Thursday they have agreed to sell the 80-acre cemetery to The Loewen Group Inc., a fast-growing group of funeral homes and cemeteries headquartered in Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada.

Eventually, the new owners are expected to attempt to buy an existing funeral home in Owensboro. Or failing that, to build their own.

Rosehill and Elmwood cemeteries, on either side of Old Hartford Road near U.S. 231, contain the graves of more than 30,000 people. Some markers in the historic section of Elmwood date back to the 1850s.

But there's plenty of room for growth, physically. And demographically, there's plenty of business yet to come.

"This is the best time in the history of America to be in the cemetery business," Brenda Little said. "The baby boomers are turning 50."

But it will take a lot of investment to serve that growth. The cemetery has seven miles of access roads that need maintenance. Building mausoleums to maximize the value of the undeveloped 20 acres also takes capital.

Bill Little is 59; his wife, Brenda, is 51. And their son, a college student, wasn't interested in continuing the business after their retirement.



Bill Little, above, and Brenda Little of Owensboro will sell Daviess County's largest cemetery, Rosehill-Elmwood Cemetery, to The Loewen Group, North America's second-largest group of funeral homes and cemeteries.

"We didn't plan to retire this early," Brenda Little said. "We were supposed to plan that for seven years." But when the Littles began spreading word through trade circles that the cemetery might be for sale, it didn't take long for "three solid offers" to come forward.

Bill Little declined to disclose the sale price.

"It's a good company," Brenda Little said of The Loewen Group. "They have a good reputation." She expects the families of those in the cemetery to be happy with the new ownership - unless they're hoping for a reversal of the policy banning artificial flowers.

In late 1992, the Littles banned plastic flowers as gravemarkers, saying they were not environmentally sound and only provided more refuse for landfills.

Loewen also only allows natural flowers.

Matthew Kappers, the Loewen representative who negotiated the sale, promised the community will be happy with the new owner and its investments to maintain and enlarge the cemeteries.

"We're not the big, bad company people think about when a big company comes to town," Kappers said. "We're extremely excited. We will make some terrific improvements." Experienced employees are a valuable asset, he said, and the new owners intend to keep the existing staff, including Brenda Little, who said she plans to stay on as an administrator for at least a year.

Rosehill-Elmwood is one of the largest privately owned cemeteries in Kentucky, Bill Little said. The trend of large corporations acquiring family-owned funeral homes and cemeteries has been gaining momentum over the past 10 years, he said.

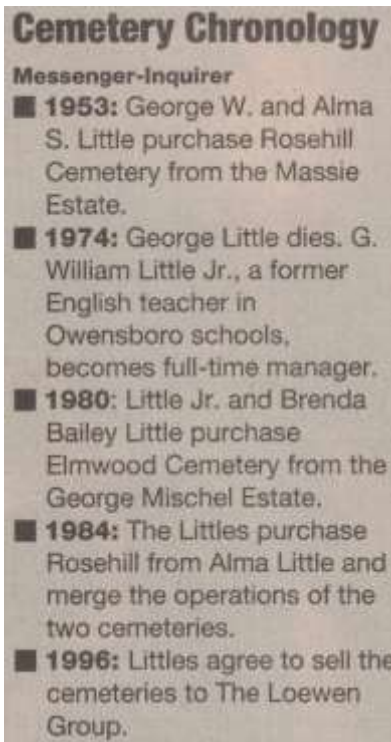
Although The Loewen group is based in Canada, about 90 percent of its revenues come from holdings in the United States, Kappers said.

About 87 percent of the nation's funeral homes and cemeteries are independent, according to a 1995 report by the Philadelphia Inquirer. But in the last few years, three major corporations, including The Loewen Group, have purchased more than 2,400 funeral homes and more than 600 cemeteries and crematories.

Once The Loewen Group is established in Owensboro, Bill Little said he expects the company will be eager to add a funeral home to its holdings.

"It's the coming thing, I guess," said Allen Harl, president of Owensboro Memorial Gardens and secretary-treasurer of Glenn Funeral Home.

"They'll come after one of the funeral homes," Harl said. "And if they can't buy one, they'll build one."



“Daviess County Bicentennial Chronology: 200 Historical Events”, by Jerry Long, Daviess County, Kentucky Celebrating Our Heritage, 1815-2015 (Evansville, IN, M. T. Publishing Company, Inc., 2015) p.18:

2000, Jan. 3 An F3 tornado hits the county; it passed through Owensboro at 4:10 pm. No one was killed but 13 people were injured. Some people were without electricity for a week or more, as temperatures fell below freezing the next day. The tornado caused \$70 million in damage in three local counties. Many monuments in the historic section of Elmwood Cemetery were damaged.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Wednesday, 26 January 2000, p.1A:



By Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer

A fallen angel lies on its side across the grave of four-time Owensboro Mayor J.H. Hickman in historic Elmwood Cemetery, its marble face buried in the snow.

The marble boots of former Mayor John Thixton stand empty beside his grave. The rest of the life-sized statue of the former teacher, farmer, distiller, grocer and tombstone salesman - made in Italy in 1914 - lies in pieces nearby.

And just down the hill, the 20-foot white bronze shaft that stood above the grave of former Sheriff Christopher D. Jackson - a cousin of former President Andrew Jackson - lies broken on the ground.

In the wake of the Jan. 3 tornado that ripped through southern and central Owensboro, most of the attention has focused on the living. But the "City of the Dead," as Elmwood Cemetery was referred to in the 19th century, sustained major damage as well.

"We lost more than 200 trees," says Tom Higdon, a cemetery spokesman. "Some of them date back to the beginnings of the cemetery in 1850. We sustained more than \$1 million in damages in Elmwood and Rosehill cemeteries."

Rosehill, which opened around 1917, is south of Elmwood, across Old Hartford Road.

The shattered cedars and magnolias are being removed from the cemeteries.

And now, work is focusing on the historic preservation section on top of the hill in Elmwood.

"About 50 of the historic monuments were damaged," Higdon said. "And some of them are probably destroyed."

"I just about cried when I saw it," said Shelia Heflin, director of the Kentucky Room at the Daviess County Public Library. "I hope the majority of the monuments can be repaired. That's such a beautiful cemetery. We've given several tours of the monuments."

Heflin said local artists may be able to help repair the damage. And state preservation funds might be available to help with the work, she said.

But Higdon isn't sure if Thixton's statue can be salvaged.

"We're trying to contact all the descendants of the people whose monuments were damaged," he said.

Higdon estimates that it would cost \$100,000 just to restore the white bronze shaft and the bronze flame that topped Jackson's grave. The monument also includes a death mask of Jackson, who was listed as the county's largest landowner and wealthiest man when he died in 1884.

"I doubt if the work could be done locally," Higdon said. "It will probably have to be sent off to a foundry."

Looking at the broken monument, he muses, "I wonder what it cost in 1884?"

The obelisk on the grave of former Congressman William N. Sweeney lies on its side. Nearby, another obelisk was driven into the ground by the storm, point first like a missile. A large cross has toppled from its base. And several fallen angels wait for repairs.

"We're still waiting to see how much of the damage our insurance will cover," Higdon said. "But it may not cover the monuments. They don't belong to us. They belong to the families."

Higdon still gets goose bumps when he thinks about the mausoleum in Rosehill Cemetery.

A door had been left open and the force of the tornado sucked metal folding chairs from the building, he said.

Higdon had left a Bible on an altar in the mausoleum, the pages turned to the 23rd Psalm - "The Lord is my shepherd....."

"The next morning, the chairs were gone, but the Bible was untouched," he said. "And in all that wind, the page hadn't turned. It was still the 23rd Psalm. I had to step back when I saw it."



Preceding page: Monument in Elmwood Cemetery of former Owensboro mayor, John Thixton (1834-1914) before & after the 3 January 2000 tornado.



One of the most prominent monuments damaged in the tornado was that of Christopher D. Jackson (1797-1884). The engraving of his face formerly could be seen on his tall monument as you drove past Elmwood Cemetery on the Old Hartford Road. An 1883 biography of Mr. Jackson stated he “is the largest landholder in the county and the wealthiest man in the county.”



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Tuesday, 30 January 2001, p.1A:

New Hampshire firm buys local cemeteries Elmwood, Rosehill sold as part of bankruptcy

By Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer

When people talk about Rock of Ages at Elmwood and Rosehill cemeteries these days, they're not talking about the song. They're talking about the new owners.

Rock of Ages Corp., a New Hampshire-based company, bought the historic Owensboro cemeteries Jan. 2 as part of a 16-cemetery package during a bankruptcy auction of the assets of the Loewen Group.

That Canadian company had bought the cemeteries in 1996 while it was in a major expansion mode.

By the time Loewen filed for bankruptcy protection in 1999, it had grown to 1,100 funeral homes and 400 cemeteries in the United States.

Roy Keith Jr., president of Keith Rock of Ages Monument in Elizabethtown, said Keith & Keith, his real estate division, actually bought the cemeteries and then sold them to Rock of Ages.

The 16 cemeteries sold for \$6.8 million. The Owensboro cemeteries represented \$490,000 of that amount.

Keith said his family, which owns six cemeteries, has been in the cemetery business for 72 years. His company will manage the Owensboro cemeteries.

Although the two cemeteries, separated by Old Hartford Road, have more than 30,000 graves dating back to the 1850s, there is still plenty of room for the future, Keith said.

"Between Elmwood and Rosehill, there are 75 developed acres and 25 undeveloped," he said.

Typically, Keith said, cemeteries bury 800 people per acre.

"We also have 4,300 unused spaces in the developed part," he said. "That means more than 24,000 spaces are still available."

Recent years have seen an average of 220 to 230 burials in the two cemeteries, Keith said. At that rate, available space would last another century.

But the cemetery expects burials to increase in future years as baby boomers, which represent one-third of the nation's population, begin to die in greater numbers.

The oldest boomers turn 55 this year.

Keith said repairs of damage caused by last year's tornado have been completed.

"We hope people will notice improvements," he said. "We don't expect to make many visible changes. But we don't do telemarketing and we don't offer buy-one-get-one-free specials."

Loewen had an aggressive telemarketing plan in Owensboro.

These are the first cemeteries Rock of Ages has owned, Keith said.

The monument company traces its roots to George Barron Milne, a Scottish granite cutter in 1885.

Today, the company says it is the largest quarrier of granite in North America, as well as the world's largest manufacturer and retailer of granite memorials.

It said in a news release that the purchase of the cemeteries is "an exceptional opportunity for Rock of Ages to dramatically expand our granite memorial market in Kentucky."

"We're not real big advocates of public mausoleums," Keith said, "We lean more toward traditional burials with upright monuments. But we want to fill that niche in Owensboro, too."

Keith Rock of Ages Monument is the company that built the Shelton Memorial in Smothers Park.

[Note: Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 21 January 2001, p4D – The following Daviess County real estate transfers were recorded Jan. 8-12: Two parcels of land in the Elmwood Cemetery property, New Rose Hill Inc. to Rock of Ages Kentucky Cemeteries LLC for \$490,000.]



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Friday, 13 June 2003, p.1A:

Cemetery company acquires Elmwood, Rosehill Indiana group triples its holdings with deal

By Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer

Owensboro's historic Elmwood and Rosehill cemeteries have been sold to a rapidly expanding Kokomo, Ind., company.

David Sullivan's Saber Management LLC signed an agreement Monday to buy the Owensboro cemeteries and 12 others in Kentucky from Rock of Ages Corp. of Concord, N.H., for \$6.75 million.

"This will triple our cemetery holdings," Sullivan said Thursday. "When this is final, we'll own 19 cemeteries in Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Texas and Virginia. We have nine funeral homes in Indiana, and we're building one in Illinois."

Area residents should notice few changes at the cemeteries in the immediate future, Sullivan said.

"We want to maximize customer service and maintenance," he said. "But the products and services that are there now will remain in place. We'll be announcing a short-term and a long-term business plan for the cemeteries probably late in the third quarter."

This week's sale was the second for the cemeteries in less than three years.

Rock of Ages Corp. bought them Jan. 2, 2001, as part of a 16-cemetery package worth \$6.8 million during a bankruptcy auction of the assets of the Loewen Group.

That Canadian company had bought the cemeteries in 1996 from Bill and Brenda Little of Owensboro while it was in a major expansion mode. By the time Loewen filed for bankruptcy protection in 1999, it had grown to 1,100 funeral homes and 400 cemeteries in the United States.

Cemeteries are becoming investment properties as the nation's 75 million baby boomers - born between 1946 and 1964 - grow older. The oldest turned 57 in January.

"I'm one of them," Sullivan said. "There are so many baby boomers out there. They built bigger schools for us once, and now it's coming full circle."

When Rock of Ages bought the cemeteries, Roy Keith Jr., president of Keith Rock of Ages Monument in Elizabethtown, said the two cemeteries, separated by Old Hartford Road, have more than 30,000 graves dating back to the 1850s.

But he said there is still plenty of room for the future.

"Between Elmwood and Rosehill, there are 75 developed acres and 25 undeveloped," he said in 2001.

Typically, Keith said, cemeteries bury 800 people per acre.

"We also have 4,300 unused spaces in the developed part," Keith said in 2001. "That means more than 24,000 spaces are still available."

Recent years have seen an average of 220 to 230 burials in the two cemeteries, Keith said. At that rate, available space would last another century.

Elmwood opened in 1868 as Rural Cemetery - it was well outside the city limits then. Several of the monuments are older, former owner G. William Little Jr., said Thursday, because graves were moved to Elmwood from older cemeteries in the area.

Rosehill was started across the street in 1916, Little said.

Under this week's sale agreement, Rock of Ages will continue "to sell and install upright granite memorials and private mausoleums directly to consumers in designated sections of these cemeteries."

Rock of Ages said it was selling the cemeteries because its core business is the "quarrying, manufacturing and retailing of granite monuments." Saber is primarily a cemetery management company, said Sullivan, the company's president and chief executive officer.

Sullivan, former vice president of sales for Gibraltar Mausoleum Corp., founded Saber Management in 1998. The firm was named the fastest-growing private company in the Indianapolis area by the Indianapolis Business Journal in 2001 and was a finalist for the 2002 Indiana Heartland Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

[Note: Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 14 March 2004, p.4D – The following real estate transfers were recorded March 1-5: Two parcels of land in Rosehill and Elmwood cemeteries in Owensboro, Rock of Ages Kentucky Cemeteries to Saber Management-Ky. LLC for \$467,500.]



See also following Owensboro newspaper articles:

- Owensboro Examiner, 28 June 1878, p.1 – Elmwood Cemetery Company has been dissolved
- Owensboro Messenger, 16 July 1879, p.3 – Improvements at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger & Examiner, 18 May 1880, p.3 – Elmwood Cemetery is attractive
- Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner, 18 October 1882, p.3 – No burials at Elmwood Cemetery in the past five weeks
- Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger, 20 May 1884, p.4 – Elmwood Cemetery is well kept
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 3 June 1887, p.4 – Vandalism at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 15 November 1887 p.4 – William Tanner grounds keeper at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner, 5 January 1888, p.3 – Ninety burials at Elmwood in 1887
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 2 May 1888, p.2 – Special sale of lots at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 14 April 1889, p.4 – Management of Elmwood Cemetery transferred from J. H. Parrish to George & Otis Parrish

- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 11 September 1889, p.1 – Hartford Road to Elmwood Cemetery to be graveled
- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 26 May 1890, p.1 – Names of soldiers known to be buried at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 23 November 1890, p.5 – New Crutcher monument placed at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 19 February 1891, p.1 – Hartford Road to Elmwood Cemetery is in disrepair; see also 24 March 1891 p.1, 30 March 1891, p.1
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 31 March 1891, p.1 – Elmwood Cemetery lots value discussed
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 17 June 1891, p.1 – List of members of local Knights of Pythias who are buried at Elmwood, death dates and locations
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 8 July 1891, p.4 – Unveiling of monument at Elmwood for “Unknown Confederate Soldier”; see also 12 July 1891, p.1
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 20 May 1893, p.1 – Tickets required for admittance to Elmwood Cemetery on Sundays; see also 26 May 1893, p.2
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 16 June 1896, p.4 – Former Knights of Pythias buried at Elmwood honored and their death dates given
- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 25 March 1897, p.1 – Elmwood may not allow Sunday burials
- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 31 May 1897, p.1 – Decoration Day services at Elmwood
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 26 August 1897, p.5 – Two monuments from Italy arrive for Elmwood Cemetery (Stout and Mitchell children)
- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 13 September 1898, p.4 – Notice by T. S. Anderson of his intention to sell Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 15 September 1898, p.2 – County to gravel Hartford Road to Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 30 May 1899, p.1 – Graves of veterans at Elmwood decorated
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 9 February 1900, p.2 – Suit involving Morrison land adjacent to Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 29 May 1901, p.1 – Memorial services at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 13 May 1902, p.3 – Knights of the Globe hold memorial at Elmwood for deceased members
- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 19 May 1903, p.8 – sale of Elmwood Cemetery is proposed; see also 21 May 1903, p.2&3 (reorganization of Elmwood), 25 May 1903, p.1, 18 June 1903 p. 4 (“Cemetery Proposition”), 19 June 1903, p.1, 22 June 1903, p.4, 23 June 1903, p.5, 28 June 1903, p.1, 30 June 1903, p.5, 15 July 1903, p.1
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 21 May 1903, p.5 – Full page ad on “Plan to Reorganize Elmwood Cemetery”; see also 31 May 1903, p.9, 16 June 1903, p.4 (editorial), 18 June 1903, p.5 (“Cemetery Proposition”), 16 July 1903, p.3 (scheme to purchase Elmwood Cemetery fails)
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 19 August 1903, p.1 – Dr. Louis E. Allen, Mohawk Indian medicine man, buried at Elmwood; see also 20 August 1903, p.7
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 22 May 1904, p.12 – List of Civil War veterans of James S. Jackson Post GAR buried at Elmwood

- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 30 May 1904, p.1 – Memorial Day services at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 31 May 1904, p.2 – Decoration Day services at Elmwood, list of Civil War soldiers interred there; see also 3 June 1904, p.2, 4 June 1904, p.3
- Owensboro Daily Inquirer, 3 June 1904, p.4 – List of Confederates buried at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 31 May 1905, p.2 – Decoration Day services at Elmwood
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 26 May 1907, p.9 – List of veterans buried at Elmwood
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 2 May 1908, p.1 – T. S. Anderson transferred three-fourths interest (26 acres) in Elmwood Cemetery to James H., J. Otis & Isaac N. Parrish
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 24 May 1908, p.9 – List of Union soldiers buried at Elmwood
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 31 May 1908, p.9 – List of 35 members including death dates of members of Knights of Pythias buried at Elmwood
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 27 June 1909, p.4, 6, & 7 – Editorial on sale of Elmwood Cemetery; see also 11 July 1909, p.1B, 22 July 1909, p.1, 23 July 1909, p.1 (corporation to be organized to take over Elmwood Cemetery property), 1 August 1909, p.3, 3 September 1909, p.3, 29 September 1909, p.8
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 4 June 1910, p.1 – Memorial service for Confederate dead at Elmwood; memorial to James Coleman of Morgan's Raiders
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 30 July 1911, p.3A – Many unusual inscriptions found on monuments at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 27 July 1913, p.2A – Improvements at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 29 April 1916, p.3 – Elmwood Cemetery to be sold at auction
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 16 May 1916, p.1 – Elmwood Cemetery sold to George Mischel & Son
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 20 July 1916, p.3 – Work being done on Elmwood Cemetery and Rose Hill Cemetery.
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 16 November 1916, p.3 – Work on Rose Hill Cemetery nearing completion; see also 25 March 1917, p.5
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 17 February 1917, p.3 – Life-size monument of John Thixton to be erected at Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Daily Messenger, 25 March 1917, p.5A – Rose Hill Cemetery beautification
- Owensboro Messenger, 31 May 1919, p.4 – Decoration Day services held at Elmwood Cemetery by G.A.R.
- Owensboro Messenger, 23 August 1925, p.1B – Description of George Mischel memorial in Elmwood Cemetery
- Owensboro Messenger, 3 May 1930 p.3 – American Legion post acquires military section in Elmwood Cemetery; leased for 10 years
- Owensboro Messenger, 14 August 1951, p.2 – Unrecorded cemetery discovered behind Owensboro Wagon Company; brick vaulted graves; remains moved to Elmwood Cemetery

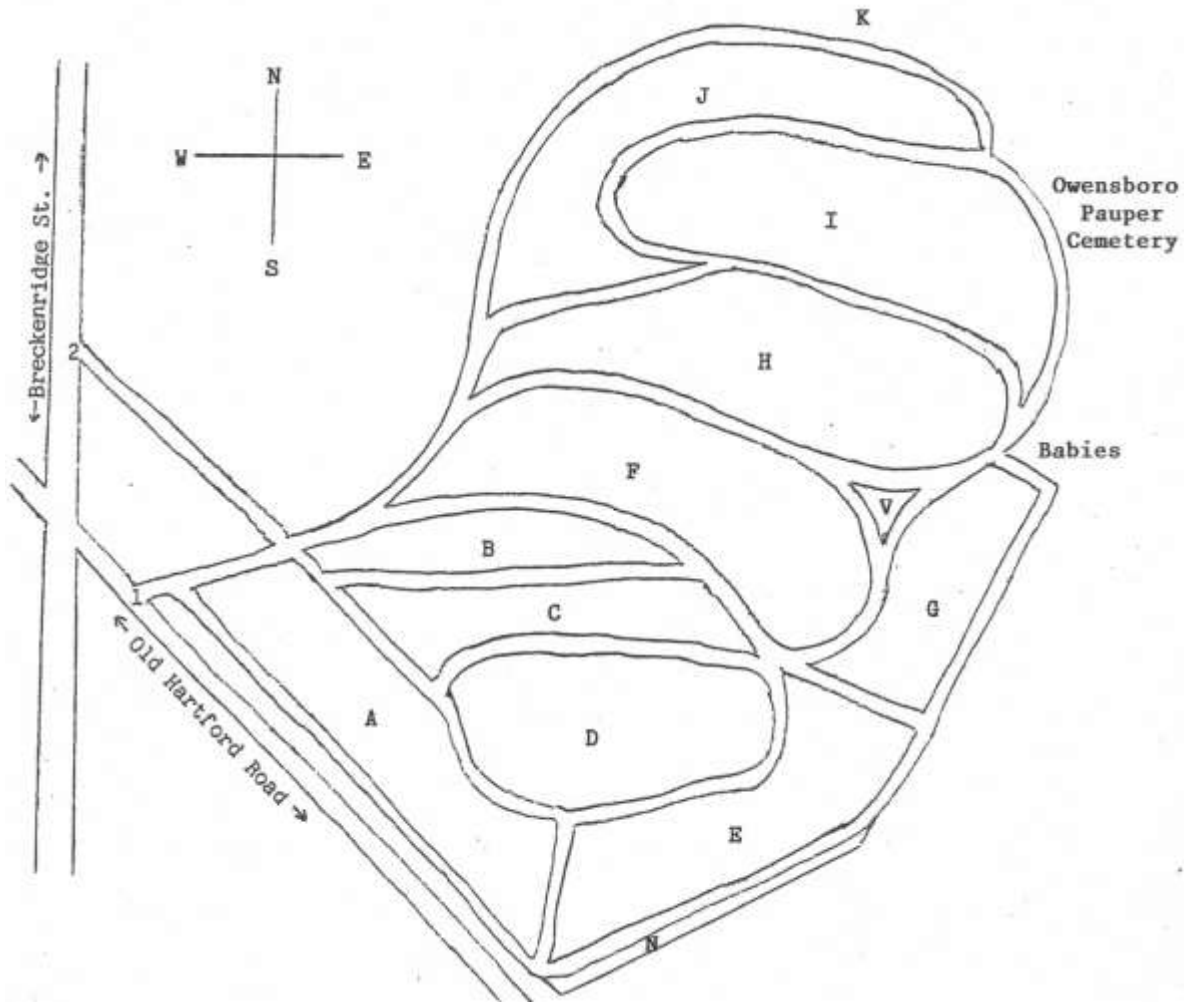




Map of Owensboro – 1951



Map of Owensboro – circa 2000



Elmwood Cemetery layout. Rose Hill Cemetery is on the south side of the Old Hartford Road. Drawing by Jerry Long.





Grave in Elmwood Cemetery of Wendell H. Ford (1924-2015) – Kentucky Governor & U.S. State Senator.



Rosehill – Elmwood Cemetery office, 1300 Old Hartford Road, Owensboro, KY

