



# HISTORIC PROSPECT HILL CEMETERY

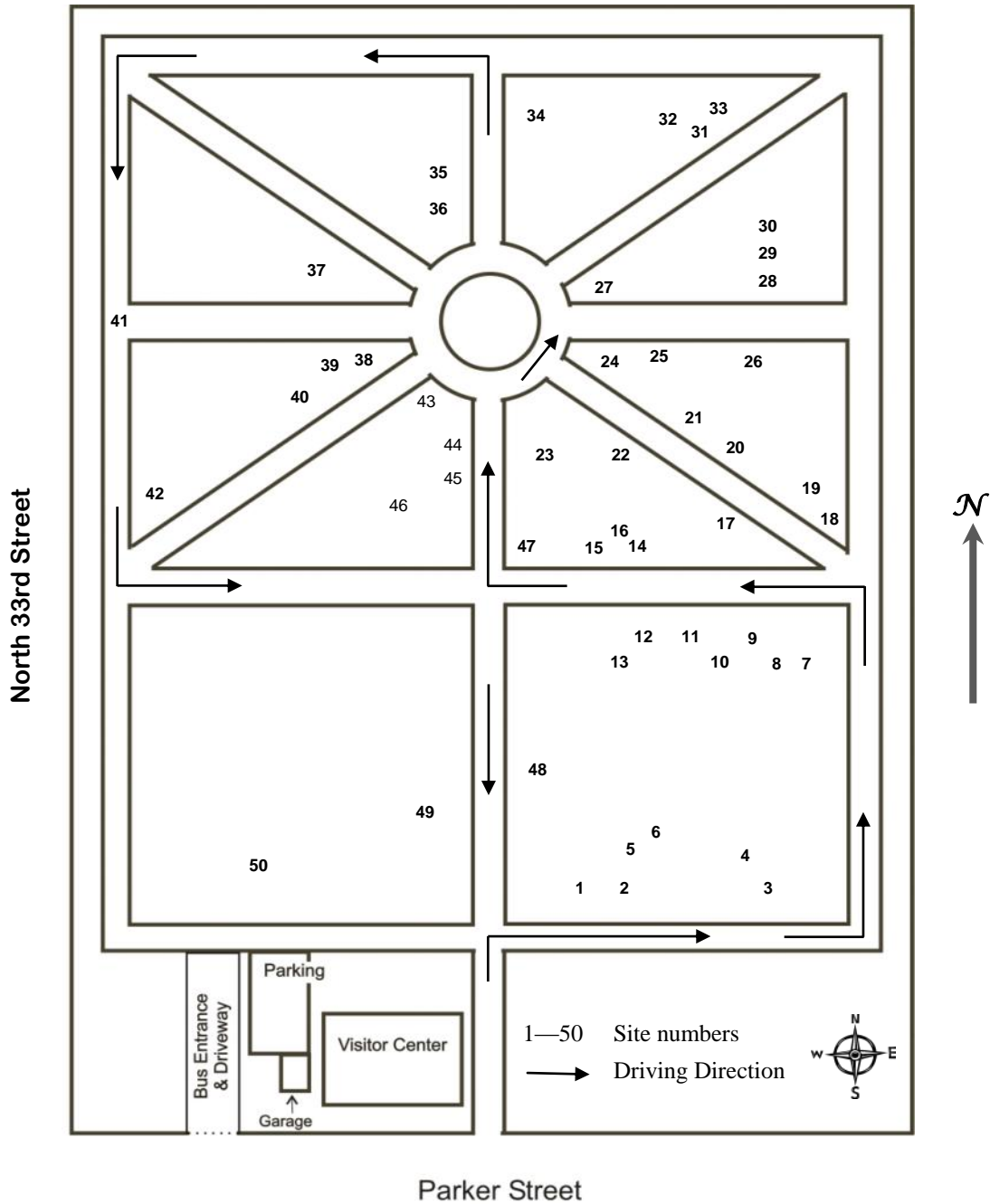
OMAHA'S PIONEER CEMETERY

and

LEGACY ARBORETUM

## WALKING OR DRIVING TOUR GUIDE

*Revised 2007*



## WALKING TOUR SITES

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2. Lowe
3. Millard, J.
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by Kristin L. Sutherlin, Louise Bloom Baumann, and Wm. L. McNichols,  
with assistance from other members of the Board of Trustees,  
Prospect Hill Cemetery Historical Site Development Foundation

Based on an earlier Walking Tour by Charles W. Martin

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memory of Paul and Ruth Musil Giger, by the  
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## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Following authorization of cemeteries by the Territorial Legislature in 1858, Prospect Hill Cemetery officially began with Burial Permit #1 for Alonzo F. Salisbury, Omaha pioneer and member of the Legislative Council in the Third Session. Since then there have been approximately 15,000 burials recorded here, including those of many Omaha pioneers—Deuel, Gaylord, Hall, Hanscom, Hitchcock, Kennard, Kountze, Krug, Lake, Lowe, McCague, Metz, Millard, Poppleton, Redick, Reed, Shinn, Anna Wilson and her good friend Dan Allen, and many others—Omaha's developers, religious leaders, mayors, judges, those for whom Omaha streets, parks and schools have been named. There are military burials from early-day Omaha Barracks (later Fort Omaha, now the Fort Omaha Campus of Metro Community College) as well as many from armed conflicts dating back to the War of 1812.

We are now in a new era! In 1979, Prospect Hill was designated an Historic Site by the Landmarks Commission of Omaha and the Omaha City Council. The Prospect Hill Cemetery Historical Site Development Foundation was formed to aid in developing the historical and educational aspects of the Cemetery. Information on many of those interred here, gathered from relatives, was collected into a book (*Omaha's Historic Prospect Hill Cemetery*). Improvements to the house and grounds have been made with the help of many interested parties. A Nebraska State Historical Site marker was erected, veterans' graves were located, and Memorial Day services again were held with special music provided by the Prospect Hill Preservation Brass Ensemble. We implemented an educational outreach plan to enhance the teaching of the region's history in local schools, and produced materials to make the Cemetery's resources available to a wider audience. Most recently, we established a Legacy Arboretum, emphasizing trees native to the area. The Legacy arboretum project will bring a new dimension to the learning opportunities here.

Located in the Visitor Center near the gate, the Cemetery office can assist you in locating specific burial plots. General information as to burials and the history of Prospect Hill Cemetery may be found at the W. Dale Clark Library (Omaha Public Library), at the Douglas County Historical Society Library at Fort Omaha, and at the Nebraska State Historical Society in Lincoln. Copies of *Omaha's Historic Prospect Hill Cemetery* are available in the Cemetery office. Proceeds benefit the preservation efforts of the Prospect Hill Cemetery Historical Site Development Foundation.

## PROSPECT HILL CEMETERY — WALKING TOUR

*Heading east on the first crossroad you will see ...*

1. **MILLARD** — The tall spire to your left is the gravesite of the Ezra Millard family. He and his brother, Joseph, started a banking business in 1856—Barrows, Millard & Company. In 1866, Ezra left that bank to found the Omaha National Bank, now part of the US Bank system. The town of Millard was named for the family.
2. **LOWE** — The next tall spire is that of Enos Lowe. He is said to have chosen the name “Omaha,” meaning “Above all others on the stream.” He was a member of the Ferry and Land Company that laid out Omaha City, and a member of the Claim Club. He built the first banking house, the Western Exchange. (His brother, Jesse, the first mayor of Omaha, was interred here, but now lies at Forest Lawn.) Cedar Hill and Omaha Cemeteries were located on his farm before their incorporation into Prospect Hill Cemetery in 1860. Lowe Avenue (North 40<sup>th</sup> Street) was named for his family.



*Enos Lowe*

*Look toward the east for...*

3. **MILLARD** — Ezra’s brother, Joseph, lies here (see p. 4). He ran a bank in Virginia City, Montana, between his Omaha banking operations.

*A little to the north is ...*

4. **WOOLWORTH** — James Woolworth came to Omaha in 1856, and became a prominent attorney. His daughter, Meliora, was the first Queen of Ak-Sar-Ben in 1894. Woolworth Avenue is named for him.
5. **FORBY** — Look for the large stone with an eagle on top (see p. 5). Captain Lee Forby died near Manila, Philippine Islands, in March, 1899, during the Spanish-American War.



*James Woolworth*

**(5) LEE FORBY, 1871-1899**

Born in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1871, Lee Forby came to Omaha in 1885 with his parents, Charles and Sarah Forby. While attending school, Lee worked part-time at the trunk manufacturing company started by his father. He was among the first to join the Thurston Flambeau Club, which later merged with the Thurston Rifles, a volunteer militia organization named after Senator John Thurston.



Following school, he was a member of the Mars Lodge, Knights of Pythias of Omaha, and captained the crack rifle team of the Knights in Council Bluffs. He was also an active member of Camp #120, Modern Woodmen of America, and the Omaha Business Men's League.

At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, members of the Thurston Rifles (the Nebraska National Guard) eagerly sought active service. Lee was mustered in as adjutant of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Nebraska Volunteers. When called to active duty, the former Company L was redesignated as Company G of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Nebraska Volunteers. That December, at the age of 27, he was promoted to captain, commanding Company G. Sent into combat in the Philippines, Lee earned a reputation as a fearless fighter and popular officer, a man of high character and ability. Leading Company G in the battle of San Francisco del Monte against the Moros outside of Manila, he was wounded in hand-to-hand combat on March 25, 1899. He died the following day, and his body was returned to Omaha for burial in the family plot at Prospect Hill Cemetery.

In 1900, the veterans of the Thurston Rifles arranged with the Cemetery to provide a special section for members of Company G, pledging to erect a granite monument costing not less than \$600.00 by May 1<sup>st</sup> of that year. While the Lee Forby Encampment #1 of the Spanish-American War Veterans officially presented the imposing statue on the west side of the Circle, State Senator John T. Paulsen actually paid for it.

Several of Forby's comrades lie at the base of this statue.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 28, 1984*

*Now look a little to the north ...*

6. **CALDWELL** — This large stone is for Smith S. Caldwell, early-day banker, mayor, and partner in building the Grand Central Hotel, which burned in 1879. Caldwell Street is named for him.

*To the northwest, near the side road, is ...*

7. **GAYLORD** — The Rev. Reuben Gaylord (see p. 7) was the first Congregational minister in Omaha, arriving in 1855. He had spent twenty years organizing churches in Iowa before coming to Omaha.

*To the west of Rev. Gaylord is....*

8. **PADDOCK** — The large, flat, ledger stone is for Algernon S. Paddock, an early U. S. Senator from Nebraska and a prominent educator in early Omaha. Paddock Road is named for him.

*Look just north from here for...*

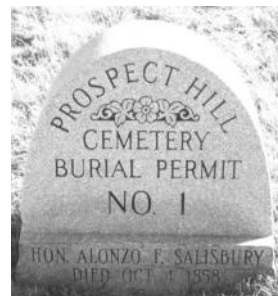
9. **SALISBURY** — This was Burial Permit #1, but was not the first burial here! There were both Indian and white burials on this hill before Byron Reed took over what had been Cedar Hill Cemetery and Omaha City Cemetery on this site and named it Prospect Hill in 1860. Alonzo Salisbury was a wagon train driver, a mill owner, and a territorial legislator (see below and p. 9).

*Look to the southwest for...*

10. **LAKE** — Buried nearby is Judge George B. Lake, a prominent lawyer who helped to draft the constitution under which Nebraska was admitted to statehood, and served as judge in the Chief Standing Bear trial. Lake Street is named for him.

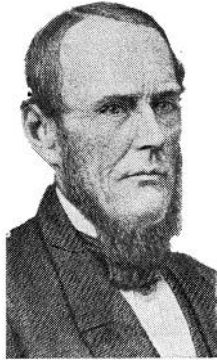


*Joseph Millard (3)*



*Alonzo Salisbury (9)*

## **(7) REVEREND REUBEN GAYLORD, 1812-1880**



*Rev. Reuben Gaylord*

The Reverend Reuben Gaylord was born in Litchfield County, Connecticut, on April 28, 1812. He died in Omaha on January 10, 1880. Between those dates, he lived a rich life, contributing much to the communities he served, especially Omaha, where he founded the Congregational Church in 1856.

He received his formal education at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, where he graduated in 1834 with honors as first in his class of 70. After a year of teaching in Illinois, he returned to the Yale Theological Seminary, graduating in 1838.

Beginning his ministry in eastern Iowa, he helped to found Iowa College, serving as a trustee for many years. Later, the college was moved to Grinnell, Iowa, and

renamed.

He arrived in Omaha in September, 1855, holding services and preaching at the Territorial State House in the rough frontier town. On May 4, 1856, he organized the first Congregational Church in Omaha with nine members. The organizational meeting was held in the Council Chamber of the Nebraska Territorial State House at 9<sup>th</sup> and Douglas Streets.

Fortunately, the Ferry Company that had platted Omaha City had set aside a lot for a church on the west side of 16<sup>th</sup> Street between Douglas and Farnam Streets, due largely to the intervention of Rev. G.G. Rice of Council Bluffs. While his new brick church was being built, Rev. Gaylord preached to his small flock in the dining room of the Douglas Hotel. On October 26, 1856, Rev. Gaylord and his congregation initiated services in the new church's basement. The rest of the structure followed.

In 1867, the growing congregation sold its building and moved to a larger church at 19<sup>th</sup> and Chicago Streets on Capitol Hill. While Rev. Gaylord retired from active service at his church that year, he continued to serve the Congregational Church in and out of Omaha.

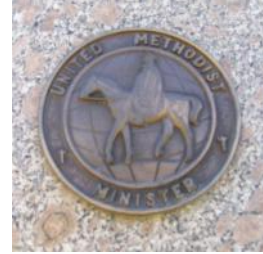
Alfred Sorenson's history of Omaha had this to say about Rev. Gaylord: "No minister of the gospel ever was held in higher esteem by the people of Omaha than Rev. Reuben Gaylord."

We are fortunate that his wife, Mary, wrote a nearly 450-page history of her late husband, *The Life and Labors of Rev. Reuben Gaylord*, which was published in 1889. It gives us insight into his life and into the lives of many now interred at Prospect Hill.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 27, 2002*

*Note shaft to the northwest for...*

11. **SHINN** — The Rev. Moses Shinn was noted as a fiery Methodist minister and a good businessman. He laid out Shinn's Addition just northwest of the city, and owned and operated a rope ferry across the Platte River about five miles west of Schuyler. Elder Shinn, it is said, never failed to advertise his ferry at religious meetings, emphatically asserting his ferry to be far superior to the rival ferry near Columbus.



*Close-up of the United Methodist Minister medallion shown on Rev. Shinn's marker.*

*Just to the west is...*

12. **MEGEATH** — James G. Megeath and his family are buried in this mausoleum. He opened a store in 1856, doing business with the Union Pacific as it was being constructed. He developed portable warehouses that could be moved from point to point along the track, keeping up with the progress of construction (see p. 9).

*Immediately to the southwest is ...*



*Sen. John T. Paulsen*

13. **PAULSEN** — The impressive monument with the figure on top is that of Nebraska State Senator John T. Paulsen. According to his family, he is looking southwest toward his farm. Sen. Paulsen paid for the Spanish-American War Monument at the Circle.

*To the north, across the road from Megeath, is ...*

14. **SHEELEY** — Here is the grave of Joseph Sheeley, who ran a packing plant located near the railroad tracks southeast of Hanscom Park. The area became known as "Sheeleytown," and in the early days was populated by immigrants from Italy and Sicily.



**(9) ALONZO F. SALISBURY, 1808-1858**

Born in Vermont in 1808, Alonzo Salisbury came to Omaha in 1855 as a stagecoach driver, but soon started a mill. He became a member of the Lower House of the Third Territorial Legislature, which convened on January 5, 1857, representing Douglas County. He served as a vestryman of the Trinity Episcopal parish, as well. He was buried October 4, 1858, in Cedar Hill Cemetery, which was incorporated into Prospect Hill in 1860. While his burial permit was #1, it is known that there were earlier burials here, both American Indian and white, all unrecorded. It is suspected that the Cemetery's proximity to the wagon trails heading west generated some of these unrecorded burials.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 26, 1980*

**(12) JAMES G. MEGEATH, 1824-1906**

Born in Virginia in 1824, James Megeath was the eldest of 10 children. By age 20, he had become a cattle and sheep trader. Struck by gold fever, he went to Calaveras County, California, in 1851, operating a general merchandise store for three years. Enroute back to Virginia in 1854, he visited Omaha and saw its potential for the future. By 1857, he was operating a general merchandise store in Omaha with his brother, Samuel, and his brother-in-law, W. S. Richards, becoming sole owner by 1867. The right man in the right place at the right time, he capitalized on the nascent Union Pacific Railroad as it was built westward from Omaha. He developed portable warehouses and used them in the general forwarding and commission business, moving them westward as track was laid. His sales to the railroad and to its workers were valued in the millions of dollars.



*James G. Megeath*

He also purchased considerable real estate in Omaha. In 1872, he and Andrew Hanscom donated land that became Hanscom Park in what was then southwest Omaha. (As Mr. Hanscom had given 60 percent of the land, the park was named for him instead of Mr. Megeath.) At various times an Omaha city councilman and Douglas County commissioner, Mr. Megeath also served as speaker of the Nebraska Territorial Legislature in 1866.

While in Virginia, he had married Virginia Carter, with whom he had five children. James Megeath was buried on November 12, 1906, in the family mausoleum, where his wife, children and some of his grandchildren also are buried. Tragically, one granddaughter, Mary Virginia, queen of Ak-Sar-Ben in 1916, died virtually on the eve of her wedding to Herbert Connell. She was buried in the family mausoleum in her coronation robes on May 8, 1919.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 27, 1991*

*Just west is ...*

15. **MOORE** — The unusual stone to the left of the tree is for Mr. and Mrs. George H. Moore. There are pictures of his faithful companion, “Ak-Sar-Ben Little Man,” and of her champion Pekinese, “Ak-Sar-Ben Sun-Yat-Sen.” Neither birth nor death dates are given. Are the Moores buried here, or the dogs, or perhaps all of them?



*Mr. And Mrs. George Moore*

*To the north, two cylindrical stones lie on the ground to mark the graves of ....*

16. **AHMANSON** — Born in Sweden, Johan Ahmanson became a Mormon and came to America with his Norwegian-born wife Sophia in 1856, leading one of the Scandinavian “Hundreds”—part of a Mormon wagon train—to Salt Lake City, a trip filled with hardship. Johan became disenchanted with the Mormons. In 1859, he returned to Omaha, where he was first a hardware merchant, then entered the grocery business. He represented Douglas County in the Eighth Nebraska State Legislature and was highly regarded as a leader of the Republican Party. At the age of 40, he went to Chicago to study Homeopathic Medicine, returning to practice in Omaha until his death in August 1891 (see p. 11).

*Look due east to find the tallest stone nearby, with stone steps leading to it...*

17. **KRUG** — Frederick Krug came from Germany in 1859. His brewery at 25<sup>th</sup> and Vinton Streets (later sold to Falstaff) was South Omaha’s first in the 1890s. Taking over the Tietz Beer Garden at 52<sup>nd</sup> and Maple Streets in the town of Benson, he renamed it “Krug Park” (now Gallagher Park). He was aptly named, for the German word “Krug” means “beer stein.” Krug Avenue is named for him.



*Frederick Krug*

### **(16) JOHAN (1827-1891) and SOPHIA (18?-1894) AHMANSON**

Johan Ahmanson was born on April 7, 1827, in Smaland, Sweden. At age six he was taken to live with a farmer, for whom he worked until age eighteen. He became a master bookbinder and emigrated to Denmark in 1849. There he was recruited by the Mormons, who sent him to Norway as a missionary. While in jail there for his religious activities, the jailer's daughter, Greta Sophia Fjelstad, fell in love with him. Upon his release from jail, she followed him to Copenhagen, where they married in 1853.

In 1856, Johan and Sophia came to America with their infant son and a party of immigrants, landing in New York City and traveling by train to Iowa City. Johan was in charge of one of the Scandinavian "Hundreds" – part of a Mormon handcart company from Iowa City to Salt Lake City via the Mormon grounds at Florence, north of Omaha. They endured terrible hardships during this trek, arriving in Salt Lake City in November, 1856. During the winter of 1856-57, Johan became disenchanted with the Mormons. That spring he and his family joined a wagon train headed east to Missouri.

The Ahmanson family returned to Omaha in 1859, where Johan engaged in several occupations. He was a hardware merchant until 1867, then entered the grocery business. He also published a Scandinavian newspaper. In his 40's, he studied homeopathic medicine in Chicago, returning to practice in Omaha until his death in August 1891. Dr. Ahmanson represented Douglas County in the Eighth Nebraska State Legislature and was highly regarded as a leader of the Republican Party.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 29, 1989*



*Johan and Sophie Ahmanson*

*Look down the hill, near the side road, to see ...*

18. **MONELL-HITCHCOCK** — This tall stone reads MONELL on one side, HITCHCOCK on the other. Dr. Gilbert Monell came to Omaha in 1857 and was later instrumental in founding the Deaf and Dumb Asylum. His daughter married Phineas W. Hitchcock, an early-day lawyer, real estate and insurance man, U.S. Senator, and father of Gilbert Hitchcock, founder of the World-Herald.

*To the north, see the Emerson side of a stone facing you, next to the cedar marker ...*

19. **SNOWDEN / EMERSON** — Rachel (“Aunt Rachel”) and William (“Uncle Billy”) Snowden were the first white settlers in Omaha in 1854 and ran the first hotel, the St. Nicholas, and claim house (see p. 13).

*Up the hill from the Snowden lot, to the west, is ...*

20. **ROOT** — Adelaide Goodwill Root was the first schoolteacher in Omaha. In 1855, she taught forty pupils in a room at the old Territorial Capital at 9<sup>th</sup> and Douglas Streets.

*Just to the northwest is...*

21. **HANSCOM** — Andrew Jackson Hanscom (see p. 14) opened a law office in Omaha in 1854. He was Speaker of the House of the First Territorial Legislature, and with James Megeath (see #12) donated the land for Hanscom Park to Omaha in 1872. Hanscom Boulevard is named for him as well.

*Across the road to the west is ....*

22. **POPPLETON** — Andrew Jackson Poppleton also opened a law office in 1854, and with John L. Webster successfully defended the Ponca Indian, Chief Standing Bear. This famous case determined that Indians were “persons with all rights under the law.” Poppleton Street and Webster Street are named for these two attorneys.



*Andrew J. Poppleton*

**(19) WILLIAM P. (1825-1909) and  
RACHEL (1831-1898) SNOWDEN**

Following the U.S. Treaty with the Omaha Tribe, Omaha's first permanent white settlers arrived on Mrs. Brown's flatboat ferry from Kanesville (now Council Bluffs) on July 11, 1854. They were "Uncle Billy" and "Aunt Rachel" Snowden. While others from Kanesville visited the site in 1854 and returned to Iowa, the Snowdens stayed. Near the present 12<sup>th</sup> & Jackson Streets, their rough log house was known as the "Claim House," and was also called the St. Nicholas Hotel, serving ferry workers and brick makers. Omaha's first religious services were conducted there on August 13, 1854, by Rev. Peter Cooper, a Methodist clergyman from Council Bluffs.



Born in 1825 in Bourbon County, Kentucky, in 1825, Billy came to Missouri with his parents. During the Mexican War, he served in combat with the Missouri Mounted Volunteers in California under Colonel Alexander Doniphan. While the lure of the West beckoned him, he married Rachel in 1847, and in 1853, they moved with their children to Kanesville (now Council Bluffs) seeking more opportunities.

A popular figure, "Uncle Billy" dug the first grave in Omaha near the present 10<sup>th</sup> and Howard Streets for an Omaha Indian woman abandoned by her tribe. Among his pursuits, he was the first auctioneer in Omaha, a City Marshall in 1875, and a charter member of the Old Settler's Association. He also served as a sergeant in Company B of the Curtis Horse Patrol, an early militia organization. During the Civil War, he served with the 5<sup>th</sup> Iowa Cavalry.

Today, a plaque at the southwest corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Jackson Streets commemorates the Snowdens and their early home.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 30, 1994*



*Rachel and William Snowden*

*Facing the main road, toward the west, you see...*

23. **BAUMAN** — Joseph S. Bauman, a German brewmaster, started the Columbia Brewery in 1863, and just before his death in 1876, brought Gottlieb Storz here from Germany. Joseph's widow, Wilhemina, ran the brewery until 1884, when she sold it to Storz and J. D. Iler. Storz later went into business for himself as head of the Storz Brewery.



*Joseph S. Bauman*

*The large stone facing the Circle is...*

24. **DEUEL** — Harry Deuel was a pioneer steamboat clerk and ticket agent for the St. Joseph Packet Line. With the advent of the railroads, he became local passenger agent for the Union Pacific Railroad. His home stood where the Douglas County Courthouse now stands. Deuel County was named for him.

*Behind Deuel, to the east, is...*

25. **REEVES** — Dr. Elizabeth Reeves (see p. 16) was Omaha's first woman doctor. Her son, Cameron, became Omaha's first sheriff in 1856, and her son-in-law, Alfred D. Jones, was Omaha's first postmaster.

*Just to the east is ...*

26. **BUFFETT**— Sidney H. Buffett came to Omaha at age 15 and opened the Buffett Grocery five years later on S. 14th Street. For many years he obtained his supplies by steamboat. As his business grew, he operated a wagon delivery service. Sidney Buffett's three guiding principles were "quality, service, and fair prices." A second store operated until 1969.



*Sidney H. Buffett*

### **(23) JOSEPH FRANCIS BAUMAN, 1822-1876**

Born in Germany, Joseph Francis Bauman came to Omaha in the early 1860s. Like many others, he may have been escaping the wars that plagued Central Europe at that time. In 1863, with his partner John Green, he purchased a brewery from a Mr. McCombe that occupied nearly all the block from 6th to 7th and Leavenworth Streets. Brewing beer to serve the thirsty settlers was big business in the frontier town. In 1864, he sold the company to Metz & Brothers, who later moved their operation to 3rd and Hickory Streets.

In 1865 Joseph Bauman built a plant at Sherman Avenue (North 16th Street) and Yates Street, naming it the Columbia Brewery. In 1876, Bauman brought Gottlieb Storz from Germany to be his foreman. En route to the Omaha railroad station to meet Mr. Storz, he was involved in a carriage accident at 14th and Farnam Streets. He never recovered from his injuries, and was buried at Prospect Hill Cemetery on December 18, 1876. He was only 54 years old.

Bauman's wife, Wilhelmina (also from Germany), continued to operate the business until 1884, when she sold it to Gottlieb Storz and his partner, Joseph D. Iler, a prominent distiller who also imported wines, liquors and cigars. Together, Storz and Iler expanded the business, adding new machinery and enlarging the building as sales increased. In May of 1891, Iler sold out and Storz changed the company name to Omaha Brewing Association.

In 1898, to meet expanding demand, Storz moved the brewery a few blocks to the south, building between Clark and Grace Streets on a tract of ground that connected with railroad tracks on the east. The plant (right) cost roughly \$500,000, and was designed to produce 150,000 barrels per year. This move coincided with the Trans-Mississippi Exposition taking place north of his new plant. (The gazebo from the Storz Beer Garden there was relocated to 37th and Farnam Streets next to the large home Storz had built. )



*Storz Brewery, Constructed in 1898*

In 1902, the firm's name was changed to the Storz Brewing Company. It continued in business until 1972, 70 years later.

Mr. Bauman belongs to the great company of German-born brewers in Omaha that includes Frederick Krug, the Metz Brothers, Gottlieb Storz, and many others.

*Historic marker dedicated on September 24, 2005*

**(25) DR. ELIZABETH REEVES, 1799-1892**

Elizabeth Reeves was born in Grayson County, Virginia, in 1799. According to an unsubstantiated family letter, she was married to George Reeves at age 12. They had 14 children. In 1854, with some of her family, she came to Omaha, becoming Nebraska's first practicing physician, delivering the first three babies born here. She considered it her special life's work to minister to the poor. She died on December 30, 1892, at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Saphrona and A. D. Jones (Omaha's first postmaster). According to her obituary, she left "many friends, especially among the poorer classes, to mourn her death."



We do not know what formal medical training she received before coming to Omaha, and she may have been a skilled midwife rather than a physician. However, formal medical training then was a rarity, especially on the frontier.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 27, 1985*

*Her tombstone reads:*

*"Will you come to my grave when my spirit has fled  
and beneath the green sod I am laid with the dead.  
When the heart that loved you is turning to clay  
and in Calvary's cold dews I am passing away."*



*Each year before the cemetery's Memorial Day service, Boy Scouts place flags on veterans' graves.*



*Andrew Jackson Hanscom (21)*



## **SIDNEY H. BUFFETT, 1848-1927**

Sidney H. Buffett was born in 1849 in Dix Hills, Long Island, New York. In 1864, at the age of 15, he came to Omaha. Five years later, on August 20, 1869, he opened the Buffett Grocery at 315 South 14th Street (between Farnam and Harney Streets). At the time, “Omaha” extended just to 16th Street. We do not know if his business was strictly groceries or if he operated more of a general store in the fledgling town.

As there was no bridge connecting Omaha with Council Bluffs until 1873, for many years Sidney Buffett obtained his supplies by steamboat. To serve his growing list of customers, he operated a wagon delivery service using a mule team that he stabled behind his store.



*Sidney H. Buffett*

*Image courtesy of Douglas County Historical Society*

According to a *Dundee News* advertisement about the Buffett family in 1950, Sidney Buffett’s three guiding principles were “quality, service, and fair prices.”

When Buffett’s son Ernest joined the firm on February 1, 1894, the name was proudly changed to S. H. Buffett and Son Grocery. Frank, the second of six Buffett children, also went to work at the store with his father and older brother. After Sidney Buffett’s death in 1927, Frank continued to operate the store until he retired and closed the store in 1936.

Ernest Buffett opened a second Buffett Grocery on the corner of 50th and Underwood in 1915, about the time the city of Omaha annexed the village of Dundee. The store was relocated to 5015 Underwood Avenue in in early 1920s. The third generation of Buffetts in the grocery business in Omaha dates from June 1, 1929, when Ernest’s son Fred went to work for his father.

Typical of many grocery stores of the day, the Buffett Grocery’s shelves reached up to the ceiling. Throughout the store, tall ladders were attached to rails. Store clerks could reach the highest groceries by sliding a ladder on the rail to the desired location, then climbing up.

On Fred Buffett’s retirement in 1969—a century after the first store was opened on 14th Street—the Dundee store, too, was closed. By then supermarkets dominated the grocery trade, yet stores like Buffett’s filled a valuable niche in the community.

Pioneer grocer Sidney H. Buffett would be proud of the generations who followed him in the business, continuing his principles of quality, service, and fair prices.

*Historic marker dedicated on September 24, 2005*

*Across the road from Reeves, near the circle, is ...*

27. **KOUNTZE** — Five Kountze brothers came to Omaha very early. William died at 22 years of age and the others erected this tall stone in his memory. The other four became well-known bankers and entrepreneurs.

*To the east is ...*

28. **REED** — Byron Reed (see p. 19) arrived in Omaha in 1855, becoming a pioneer real estate man and insurance agent. He gave generously to the city, including the site of the old downtown library at 19<sup>th</sup> and Harney Streets, his valuable coin collection, his collection of autographs, and fine books. Reed formally organized Prospect Hill Cemetery in 1860, and operated it for many years.



*William Kountze*

*Just to the north ...*

29. **REDICK** — The large stone is that of John Redick, attorney and wealthy landowner. He built Redick's Opera House at 16<sup>th</sup> and Farnam Streets; the building later became involved in Omaha's first lottery. Redick Avenue is named for him.

*Go north to...*

30. **McCAGUE** — The Rev. Thomas McCague, from a pioneer family in Ohio, was educated in Pennsylvania. He established a Presbyterian missionary in Africa and then served in Des Moines. He was the first Presbyterian minister in Omaha, arriving in 1867 and establishing the first mission church in Nebraska. He was known for "his zeal, earnestness, and Christian character."



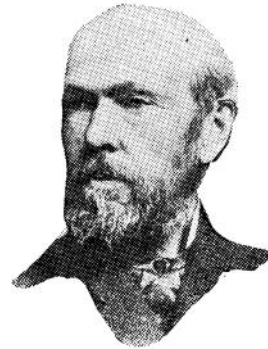
*Rev. Thomas McCague*

**(28) BYRON REED, 1829-1891**

At one time the wealthiest landowner in Omaha, Bryon Reed descended from Illiam Reed, the first Puritan to land in Boston in 1635. Born in Genesee County, New York, he was a reporter for the *New York Tribune*, and was sent west to cover “Bloody Kansas” fighting in 1855. Going there via Omaha, he filed a few reports, but was forced to flee back to Omaha in fear for his life. (His newspaper colleague was not so lucky and was murdered by the “border ruffians.”)

He entered the real estate business in this wild frontier town, also serving as city clerk (1860-66) and county clerk (1863-65). From 1871 to 1873, he represented the Fourth Ward in the City Council, and served as Council president in 1872.

In 1858, the Territorial Legislature authorized cemeteries to be formed. In 1860, Mr. Reed put together the land for formal organization of Prospect Hill Cemetery out of the Cedar Hill and Omaha City Cemeteries, which had begun in 1858.



*Byron Reed*



*Byron Reed's monument, with a view to the east across the Missouri River into Iowa*

When Sherman Barracks (later known as Omaha Barracks—see #41) was opened in 1868, the 40-acre post had no cemetery. Byron Reed persuaded Army officials to bury their dead at Prospect Hill, which already had military burials from the Civil War. Most of these U.S. Army burials are interred in what is called today the “Omaha Barracks” area of Prospect Hill.

In 1885, Reed sold the cemetery to Forest Lawn Cemetery for \$1. In the 1890s, unhappy with Forest Lawn's lack of concern, a group of lot owners re-formed the Prospect Hill Cemetery Association (superseded in 1979 by the Prospect Hill Cemetery Historical Site Development Foundation) to operate the cemetery.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 27, 1981*

*Across the road a bit, to the north, is...*

31. **CARTER** — This large, outlined lot (see p. 21) is that of Levi Carter, founder of the Carter White Lead Company. His widow, who later married E. J. Cornish, donated the land for Carter Lake Park to Omaha in his memory.

*Just west is...*

32. **THORNBURGH** — The tall gray spire once marked the burial place of Major Thomas Thornburgh. He was in command of Fort Fred Steele in Wyoming in 1879 when the White River Ute Indians rebelled and killed agent Nathan Meeker and others at the reservation. Major Thornburgh was sent south to put down the rebellion, but Indians ambushed his troops and he was killed. Packed in mud, his body was returned to Omaha, home of his wife's family, and buried at Prospect Hill Cemetery. The body of his son, who had died six months earlier, was disinterred from the Fort Steele cemetery and reburied with his father at Prospect Hill. In October 1903, both bodies were removed to Arlington National Cemetery. A memorial window to Major Thornburgh and his son is located in Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in downtown Omaha.



*Maj. Thomas Thornburgh*

*To the northeast is...*

33. **JORDAN** — Robert C. Jordan (see p. 21) was an Ohio Quaker who became very interested in Freemasonry. He helped establish a strong Masonic organization in Omaha when he came here in 1857, and was first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska.

### **(33) ROBERT CARREL JORDAN, 1825-1899**

Born in Chillicothe, Ohio, on January 18, 1825, Robert C. Jordan received his early education in private schools (probably Quaker, as his parents were Quakers). At that time there were no public schools for this bright young man. While clerking in a hardware store, he took an active part in local public affairs and held a number of important positions in government and politics.

At that time, Freemasonry was not highly regarded in Ohio. Young Robert, however, followed in his father's footsteps and became active in the organization. Like so many Ohioans of his generation, he went west to earn his fortune, arriving in Omaha in 1857. Here, he helped to establish a strong Masonic organization. On September 23, 1857, he was a delegate to a meeting in Omaha to organize the Grand Lodge of Nebraska, and was elected to become its first Grand Master, a post he held for three years. His devotion to the principles of Masonry was dubbed "outstanding."

He served on the City Council in 1867, and was county surveyor from 1886 until his death in 1899. A trustee of Brownell Hall School, he also helped found St. Barnabas Episcopal Church in 1869.

Following his death, the Masons struck a bronze medal in his honor. In 1907, it was replaced by a gold medal to be awarded to and worn by the oldest living Mason in Nebraska. Thereafter known as the Gold Jordan Medal, men wearing it had their names inscribed on the Mason's Honor Roll. The first man to wear the medal was the 4<sup>th</sup> grand master, Robert W. Furnas, former governor of Nebraska, for whom Furnas County was named.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 26, 1986*



*Levi Carter (31)*

*To the west, near the main road, is...*

34. **HUMMEL** — Joseph Hummel came to Omaha with his parents in 1862. A contractor, he was known for his honesty. He served as commissioner for Omaha parks and boulevards, and did much to beautify and improve Omaha. Hummel Park is named in his honor.



*Joseph Hummel*

*Across the main road and to the south is...*

35. **YATES** — In 1863, Henry W. Yates became cashier and bookkeeper for Kountze Brothers Bank (later First National), but resigned in 1882 to form the Nebraska National Bank. Yates School (next to his home) was named for him, as was Yates Street.



*Image courtesy of Omaha Public Library*

*Yates Residence*

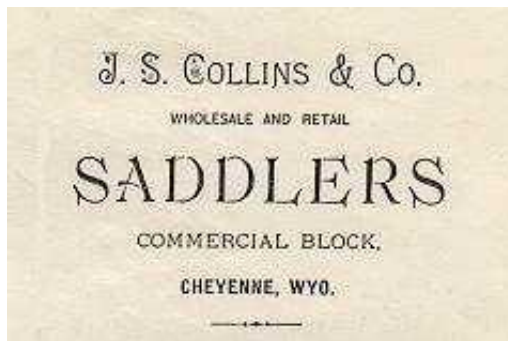
*Just to the south is...*

36. **COLLINS** — Eli A. Collins was a partner of Jesse R. Grant of Galena, Illinois, in the fine saddle business. When Grant's son, Ulysses, returned to military service to fight in the Civil War, Eli provided his uniform, horse, and saddle. Eli's son, John, wrote *Across the Plains in '64*, a story of his trip to the Montana goldfields. With his brother, Gilbert, John was active in the saddle business, and later in wholesale guns and ammunition. He supplied western Army posts, Union Pacific workers, and even "Buffalo Bill" Cody's Wild West Show with tack and weapons. During President Grant's administration, John served as post "suttlar" (trader) at Fort Laramie (see p. 23).

### (36) JOHN S. COLLINS, 1839-1910

After the Civil War, John S. Collins and his brother Gilbert operated a fine harness shop in Omaha at 14th and Douglas Streets, supplying both military customers and contractors building the Union Pacific Railroad. Before the Civil War, their father, Eli A. Collins, had been engaged in the saddle business in Galena, Illinois, with Jesse R. Grant, father of Ulysses S. Grant. A West Point graduate and Mexican War hero, U.S. Grant was an impoverished businessman at the start of the Civil War. He was appointed colonel by the governor of Illinois, but needed a saddle, mount and uniform to serve. Eli Collins provided them, and Grant never forgot. As President (1869-77), he asked Eli Collins how he could return the favor. Collins replied that he preferred Grant to help his sons, John and Gilbert.

Late in 1872, John Collins was appointed post sutler at Fort Laramie for a 5-year term, an opportunity to become wealthy. The post held 600-800 people, civilian and military, all served by Collins' "post exchange." During his tenure, the fort was a flash point in the Indian Wars. There was the gold rush to the Black Hills, Custer's defeat, and many wagon



*Business Card for J.S. Collins & Co.*

*Image courtesy of Wyoming Tales & Trails*

trains passing through to be protected. While in Wyoming, the Collins brothers made "Cheyenne" saddles, which were popular on trail drives; they also supplied Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Theodore Roosevelt had a Collins holster. John Collins stated that he made between \$8,000 and \$15,000 profit per year, even building a hotel near Fort Laramie in 1876.

In 1877, John's brother Gilbert succeeded him as sutler, and John returned to Omaha, engaging in the saddle business and adding a wholesale gun division. John retired in 1890, selling the firm to another former Galena, Illinois resident, Albert Cornish, who had been his associate for many years. By then, the frontier had been tamed. Gilbert had died in 1880, but John lived until 1910.

Today, the Collins family is together in the Collins plot at Prospect Hill — Eli and his wife Nancy, John and his wife Sarah, and Gilbert and his wife Cecilia.

*Historic marker dedicated on September 24, 2005*

*To the west, across the road, is...*

37. **STRICKLAND** — Brevet Brigadier General Silas Allen Strickland (see p. 25) founded the Nebraska Chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), and was a charter member and commander of the “Custer Post” in Omaha. When the Civil War began, he helped organize the 1<sup>st</sup> Nebraska Volunteer Regiment, and eventually fought in the battles at Fort Donaldson and Shiloh. For his leadership, President Andrew Johnson appointed him Brevet Brigadier General in 1865. His framed commission is on display in the Prospect Hill Chapel.

*Across the road to the south, at the edge of the circle, is...*

38. **SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR MEMORIAL** — This handsome memorial on the Circle (see p. 27) was erected by the Lee Forby Encampment #1 of the Spanish-American War Veterans. Names of others who served and died with Forby are engraved on the east side of the stone. Sadly, the statue atop the memorial was stolen from the Cemetery in 2005.

*Just southwest is...*

39. **REDMAN & ELLINGWOOD** — These two families were part of a large group from Blair County, Pennsylvania, who traveled down the Ohio River and up the Missouri River to Omaha. They were in business together as Ellingwood & Redman, and are interred as neighbors at Prospect Hill. Redman Ave. is named for one family.

*Down the hill you will see...*

40. **METZ** — Frederick Metz, from Germany, was a one-time partner with Joseph Bauman. He opened his own brewery at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Hickory Streets in the 1870s. He became very important in the early development of Omaha and served as a Nebraska state senator for two terms (see p. 27).



*Frederick Metz*



**(36) SILAS ALLEN STRICKLAND, 1831-1878,  
Brevet Brigadier General, U.S. Volunteers**



*Gen. Silas Strickland*

An outstanding lawyer and civic leader, he organized the Nebraska Chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic, and was a charter member and a commander of the “Custer Post” in Omaha.

Born in Rochester, NY, he lost his father at the age of one. After completing his formal education, he taught school and read law at night at the law offices of Fillmore, Hall and Haren, in Buffalo, NY. Though admitted to the bar in 1850 at the age of nineteen, he was too poor to practice law, and worked for canal and

railroad contractors until 1854.

With the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, he moved to Bellevue, and soon became District Attorney. In 1856, he was elected to the Territorial Legislature (located in Omaha) and served a term as speaker of the lower house. He was influential in the creation of Sarpy County out of Douglas County and worked to move the territorial capitol to Bellevue or Lincoln.

When the Civil War began in 1861, he helped organize the 1<sup>st</sup> Nebraska Volunteer Regiment, enlisting as a private. Soon elected a Second Lieutenant, he became regimental adjutant and fought in the battles at Fort Donaldson and Shiloh. Resigning his commission, he went to Cincinnati, where he helped raise the 50<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment. For his services, the Ohio governor commissioned him a Lieutenant Colonel, and further combat followed. In 1865, President Andrew Johnson appointed him a Brevet Brigadier General. You can see his commission in the Prospect Hill Cemetery Chapel.

After the war, he returned to Bellevue to resume his law practice. Once more, he was appointed District Attorney, later serving as president of the State Constitutional Convention. He died an untimely death at the age of 47, leaving a widow, Mary (who also is buried at Prospect Hill), and a daughter. He contributed much to our country, and to our state.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 29, 1995*

*Look due west, near the fence ...*

41. **McCLARE** — Sgt. Allen McClare was a “Buffalo Soldier” (see p. 29). Born in Virginia in 1879, he served in the U.S. Army’s 9<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment in the West and with the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry at the Battle of San Juan Hill in 1898. He was buried at Prospect Hill in 1944 with full military honors by Camp Allenworth No. 25, Spanish-American War Veterans. (Research is underway to determine if other Buffalo Soldiers are buried at Prospect Hill.)



*Sgt. Allen McClare*



*“The Buffalo Soldier”*

*Look south along the fence, and you will see ...*

42. **“OMAHA BARRACKS”** — Here is a group of small matching headstones — the star emblems of the Grand Army of the Republic indicate service in the Union Army during the Civil War. Under contract with the Army, soldiers and some dependents from Omaha Barracks (later Fort Omaha) were buried here, with over 60 Indian fighters, “Galvanized Yankees,” and Civil War Union soldiers among them. Omaha Barracks/Fort Omaha had no cemetery of its own (see p. 30).



*“Omaha Barracks”*

### **(38) SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR MEMORIAL, erected 1900**

This beautiful monument to the soldiers of the Spanish-American War was erected in 1900 by the Lee Forby Encampment #1 of the Spanish-American War Veterans.

Captain Lee Forby, born January 3, 1871, was wounded at the battle of San Francisco del Norte, and died near Manila, Philippine Islands, on March 28, 1899.

Names of others who died with Captain Forby are engraved on the east side of the monument, which notes their unit's original name, Company L. However, when Company L (Thurston Rifles) of the Nebraska National Guard was called to active duty, it was redesignated as Company G of the 1st Regiment, Nebraska Volunteers.

To the east of the main road in the Cemetery (see #5), you can see a large, square monument with an eagle on the top (which has turned green with age). This is the actual burial plot of Captain Forby and other members of his family.

Unfortunately, the figure atop the monument was stolen from the Cemetery in 2005.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 28, 1984*



*Spanish-American  
War Memorial*

### **(40) FREDERICK METZ, 1832-1901**

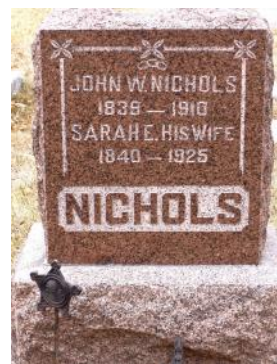
The name Metz has been well-known in Omaha since the early days. Frederick and his brother, Phillip, both born in Germany, came to the United States in the early 1800s. Arriving in New Orleans, Frederick went to St. Louis, where he engaged in the mercantile business for two years. He then worked in the same business in Bellevue and Denver, Colorado, before returning to settle in Omaha permanently.

Here, he and Phillip entered the brewery business, with Frederick later owning the Metz Brewery outright. After his sons took over the business in 1875, making him honorary president, he devoted himself to managing his real estate holdings, and took an active part in civic affairs. He was a state senator in 1871 and again in 1885. He was involved in many German-American groups in the city, maintaining an interest in the general welfare of Omaha.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 25, 1992*

*Up on the main road near the Circle is...*

43. **NICHOLS** — John W. Nichols (see p. 31) was a capitol guard for President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, and was chosen for the honor guard on the president's funeral train to Springfield, Illinois, in 1865. He served in Omaha's first volunteer fire department after the Civil War.



*John Nichols, Union Army.  
Note the Grand Army of the  
Republic star at lower left.*

*To the south along the main road, you  
will see...*

44. **SORENSON** — Alfred Sorenson was a lawyer, but from his youth was also a newspaper man (see p. 32). He made the recording of Omaha's early history practically his life's work, writing *The Early History of Omaha*. His father-in-law, William Brown, ran the first ferry from Council Bluffs to Omaha.

*Just to the south is...*

45. **BROWN** — William D. Brown (see p. 33) is credited as Omaha's founder. He operated a Missouri River ferry from Council Bluffs and was a principal in the company that first developed the Omaha townsite.

*A little to the southwest lies...*

46. **HALL** — Augustus Hall practiced law and served as Congressman from Iowa before he was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Nebraska Territory and moved to Nebraska in 1859. He was a charter member of the first lodge of Freemasons in Nebraska (see p. 35). Hall County, Nebraska, was named for him.

*Across the road to the east is...*

47. **WINDHEIM** — Peter Windheim was a member of the surveying party that laid out the town of West Point, Nebraska, in 1857. Note the handsome carving on this stone.



*Peter Windheim*

**(41) ALLEN McClARE, 1879-1944, "BUFFALO SOLDIER"**

Born in Virginia on December 7, 1879, Sgt. Allen McClare served several enlistments in the 9<sup>th</sup> Cavalry and the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry in the West. Both regiments have strong ties to Nebraska and Fort Robinson. The term "Buffalo Soldiers" was an honored name given to African-American troopers by many western Native American tribes.

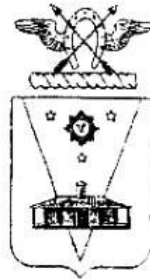
Sgt. McClare was both a cook and a marksman. He served in the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry at the Battle of San Juan Hill. In the final assault, Roosevelt's Rough Riders and Buffalo Soldiers were mixed together. Roosevelt's tribute, "They can drink from our canteens," served as a tribute to the bravery of the gallant African-American regulars.



**9th  
CAVALRY**



**10th  
CAVALRY**



*Regimental Crests Associated with Sgt. Allen McClare's Military Service*

McClare rose to the rank of Mess Sergeant in the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry and later had a career with the Union Pacific as Chief Cook and Private-Car Chef for William Jeffers, U.P. President in the 1930s. A 35-year resident of Omaha, he was a longtime member of Zion Baptist Church and was buried with full military honors by Camp Allenworth No. 25, Spanish-American War Veterans, in August 1944. His wife, Sophie, who had died only a few months earlier, is buried beside him.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 29, 2000*

**(42) “OMAHA BARRACKS” BURIAL AREA  
(used 1869-1885) [FORT OMAHA GRAVES]**

Following negotiations with the War Department and the Kountze Brothers (bankers), “Sherman Barracks” was opened in 1868 northwest of Omaha. Its mission was two-fold: first, protect Omaha from a perceived Indian threat, and second, provide housing for troops who wintered at Sherman Barracks. These troops were delivered to and later picked up from Army posts along the Union Pacific right-of-way as far west as present-day Colorado.

With only 40 acres of ground, the post had no room for a cemetery. Already, transient soldiers and personnel stationed at the “Military Bridge Barracks” (now 24<sup>th</sup> and Cuming Street) during the Civil War had been buried at Prospect Hill Cemetery. Having a semi-permanent post nearby, it was logical to set aside a section of Prospect Hill for interments. The Army would pay \$5 per burial, and provide a military headstone. (By 1869, the post’s name had been changed to “Omaha Barracks” since the Army Chief of Staff, General William Tecumseh Sherman, objected to using his name for the new installation.)

From 1869 until the Forest Lawn Cemetery Association took over Prospect Hill’s management in 1885, more than 60 (known) soldiers were buried in the “Omaha Barracks” area of the Cemetery. (The “Omaha Barracks” post had been renamed Fort Omaha in 1875 to allow funding for permanent buildings.) Between 1885 and the opening of Fort Crook south of Bellevue in the early 1890s, Forest Lawn was the final resting place for soldiers from Fort Omaha.

As inspection of burial records reveals a wide variety of causes for death, none directly connected with fighting the Indians. On this sparse frontier post, some committed suicide. Others were killed in fights, by railroad trains, or in horse accidents. Some died of “natural causes,” probably related to the hard life and poor living conditions of soldiers. There were others buried there, too. The 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry drum major’s wife, Mary C. Kourtman, is there. She had watched her husband lead his band in review for former President U. S. Grant in 1882. Next to “Omaha Barracks” are two tiny unmarked graves belonging to the infant children of Major General E.O.C. Ord, for whom Fort Ord in California was later named.

Over time, thousands of soldiers were stationed at Sherman Barracks/Omaha Barracks/Fort Omaha. Their blue uniforms were trimmed white for infantry, yellow for cavalry, or red for artillery. They were immigrants, “galvanized Yankees” from the former Confederacy, poor farmers, Civil War veterans—hard-working men all. Unfortunately, the Cemetery records do not reveal much about any of these men, because the Army did not feel it important to release personal information about their enlisted personnel. Now these soldiers remain at attention, side by side, at Prospect Hill Cemetery, in “Omaha Barracks.”

*Historic marker dedicated on May 30, 1983*

### **(43) JOHN WESLEY NICHOLS, 1839-1910**

John Wesley Nichols was born January 28, 1839, in Crawford County, Pennsylvania, the son of Samuel and Katharine Maxwell Nichols. Little is known of his early years. In 1860 he married Sarah Elizabeth Dearborn, also born in Crawford County.



*John W. Nichols*

Nichols joined the Union Army on August 15, 1862, and served as a private in Captain Huidekoper's Company, subsequently Co. K, 150th Regiment Pennsylvania Infantry, also known as "The President's Bodyguard." He was mustered out with the company and honorably discharged on June 15, 1865.

As a member of President Abraham Lincoln's bodyguard, Nichols saw the President almost daily between 1862 and Lincoln's death in 1865, according to a newspaper interview late in Nichols' life. During his presidency, Lincoln spent summers at the Soldiers' Home, 3 miles north of the White House. Nichols was on duty there one August night in 1864 when he heard a rifle shot and approaching hoof beats. A bareheaded Lincoln soon appeared, saying that the shot had scared his horse and caused him to lose his hat. Nichols calmed the horse and led it and its rider to the Executive Cottage. After stabling the horse, Nichols and a corporal searched the grounds for Lincoln's hat. They found it near the main road, where the sound of the shot had originated, with a bullet hole through the crown. Upon delivering the hat to the President the next day and pointing out the bullet hole, Mr. Lincoln remarked humorously that it was made by some foolish marksman, and added that he wished nothing said about it. However, the Bodyguard believed that it had been an assassination attempt, and after that Mr. Lincoln never rode alone.

"I don't want any guard tonight. If you want to go to the theater you may." Those were the words Mr. Lincoln spoke to his guard before he left for Ford's Theater on April 14, 1865. After the assassination, the guards were in attendance at the White House and the funeral. Nichols remained in the President's Bodyguard for Andrew Johnson until June of 1865.

John and Sarah Nichols came to Omaha in 1866. They homesteaded for several years in Washington County. He worked as a brickmaker and later was the watchman for the Omaha post office. He also was a member of Omaha's first volunteer fire department. Mr. Nichols died on February 11, 1910, at the age of 71. Sarah died in 1925 and is buried beside him.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 30, 2005*

**(44) ALFRED SORENSON, 1850-1939**

Alfred Sorenson, the doyen of Omaha newspapermen, was a picturesque figure familiar around Omaha. His varied career led him to seek the offices of U.S. Senator twice and Congressman once. He was unsuccessful all three times, but remarked that he did it merely for “the joy of running and advertising.”



*Alfred Sorenson*

Mr. Sorenson was born near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, educated at Racine College, and then graduated from Harvard Law School in 1870. He came to Omaha in 1871, joined the *Omaha Bee*, and in 1872 was made city editor, remaining in that capacity until 1881. He became city editor of the *Omaha Republican* for two years. Returning to the *Bee* as managing editor for five years, he then became managing editor of the *Omaha Herald*. From 1889 to 1899 he worked on newspapers in Denver, Salt Lake City, Butte, Montana, and San Francisco. After returning to Omaha, he started his own publication, the *Examiner*, which expounded his rare philosophy in editorial comment which was widely read and which was simply signed, ironically, “The Senator.”

He also gave Omahans a great service through his book, *The Early History of Omaha*. Three editions of this popular work were published, in 1875, 1889, and 1923. An interesting and humorous writer, he also wrote many articles for magazines. His special sense of humor was ever present, as shown on his 70th birthday when he wrote his own obituary and sent it to Omaha newspapers for their morgues. (The paragraphs above are excerpted from the obituary Mr. Sorenson wrote nineteen years before his death in 1939.)

Beside Mr. Sorenson lie his wife, Mary, their daughters, Blanche and Grace, and Alexander MacKenzie, the husband of Mary’s sister, Emma (who is buried elsewhere in the Cemetery). The stones to the south are those of Mary’s father, William D. Brown, her mother, Martha, and her other sister, Helen Brown VanCamp. William Brown (see #44) was the original owner of the Lonetree Ferry Company, which founded Omaha in 1854.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 30, 1988*



#### **(45) WILLIAM DAVIS BROWN, 1813-1868**

William Brown is credited as Omaha's founder (although not its first settler). He operated a Missouri River ferry from Council Bluffs and was a principal in the company that first developed the Omaha townsite.

Mr. Brown came west as a young man with California gold in mind. Born in Kentucky, he migrated to Iowa, where he served as a town sheriff and met his wife, Martha. They arrived in Council Bluffs in 1850, expecting to continue west. But Brown had a practical side, and he could see that there might be more treasure in carrying other gold seekers across the Missouri River than in chasing that dream himself.



*William D. Brown*

He established the Lone Tree Ferry in 1850 with a flat-bottom boat he rowed across the river, tying up at a solitary tree on the Nebraska side. Brown frequently roamed the plateau near his landing and imagined the city that could take root there once the federal government settled with the Indians and opened the land to homesteading.

In 1853, Brown took on partners and established the Council Bluffs and Nebraska Ferry Company. The new company bought a steamboat to handle increased river traffic. It also positioned itself to develop a new townsite across the river. When the Nebraska Territory was created in 1854, Brown's ferry company surveyed and sold 320 lots in what would become downtown Omaha.

William Brown was among those who celebrated the new territory with a picnic on Capitol Hill (now the site of Central High School) on July 4, 1854. A week later, his ferry carried William and Rachel Snowden across the river to their new home in Omaha City. The Snowdens became Omaha's first permanent white settlers.

Mr. Brown moved his family to Omaha the following year. The family lived at 15<sup>th</sup> and Harney Streets, where the Orpheum Theater now stands. He was involved in real estate on both sides of the river and owned a large parcel in South Omaha, including the land now known as Brown Park.

His daughter, Mary, and her husband, Alfred Sorenson, are also buried in this plot.

*Historic marker dedicated on September 25, 2004*

*Head back down the main road toward the Sexton's House.  
Looking south along the main road, you will see...*

48. **DAN ALLEN and ANNA WILSON** — This is a distinctive monument with four pillars and an urn on top (see p. 35). Here lies Dan Allen, a riverboat gambler, and beside him is his consort, Anna Wilson. Dan came to Omaha in 1866 and within five years was running the largest and most popular gambling house in Omaha. Anna was a “madam” who became known as “Queen of the Underworld,” although she was reportedly a lady of refinement and culture. When Dan died, she tended his grave faithfully. When Anna died in 1911, she left her large estate to various hospitals and charities, including Prospect Hill. Her “house” at 9<sup>th</sup> and Douglas Streets became Omaha’s charity hospital. At the annual Memorial Day Observance, a yellow rose is now placed at her grave with an appropriate eulogy and music, continuing a practice begun in 1912 by Mrs. Thomas Kimball, mother of the famed architect and a noted civic worker.

*Across the road, underneath a broken tree, are ...*

49. **“THE FOUR BOYS”** — This memorial, four broken columns of varying lengths, marks the common grave of four boys, ranging in age from 10 to 19 years, who were rabbit hunting in 1884 near a powder magazine close to the railroad station. Somehow the magazine blew up, literally blowing the four boys to pieces. Their remains were buried here in a common grave. The broken pillars signify the broken lives of the four young boys.



*“The Four Boys”*

*To the west lies ...*

50. **CURRY** — Richard Curry, a Civil War veteran, was the first master of the Rough Ashler Blue Lodge 74 of the Prince Hall Masons in 1875. The lodge continued its affiliation with its sponsor, the Missouri Grand Lodge. Other lodges were created as far west as Fort Robinson, home of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry. In 1919, the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Nebraska, F&AM, was established to serve the state’s growing African-American population.

**(46) AUGUSTUS HALL, 1814-1861**

Born in Batavia, New York, Augustus Hall graduated from Middleburg Academy in the early 1830s. After studying law with Phineas L. Tracy there for two years, he went to Mount Asa, Ohio, and was admitted to the Ohio bar at age 22. He moved to Keosauqua, Van Buren County, Iowa, and in 1854 was elected to Congress, where he served two terms.

In January of 1859, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Nebraska Territory Supreme Court and moved to Nebraska. He was a member of the Democratic party and a charter member of the first lodge of Freemasons in Nebraska.

James M. Woolworth paid him this tribute: "His best epitaph is written in his judicial opinions."

Hall County, Nebraska, was named for him.

*Historic marker dedicated on May 28, 1990*



*Chief Justice Augustus Hall*



*Dan Allen (48)*



*Anna Wilson (48)*



### **The Prospect Hill Cemetery Legacy Arboretum**

As you visit the Cemetery, you will see young trees that have been planted to replace those lost to weather or disease over the years. The new trees have been chosen to celebrate species that are native to the area. This arboretum adds to the historical value



*Bur Oak*

of the cemetery by exhibiting tree species that would have been present in the region when Omaha's first settlers arrived in the mid-19th Century. In addition to the historic benefit, native tree species are adapted to Omaha's climate and require less watering and maintenance than many trees typical of wetter environments. Species planted so far include varieties of oak, maple, and flowering trees chosen to enhance the Cemetery's beauty.

*This completes the Prospect Hill Cemetery Walking Tour. We hope you've enjoyed "getting to know" some of Omaha's historic figures and would like to contribute to the support of Omaha's Pioneer Cemetery. A contribution form is found on the facing page of this brochure. Thank you for your interest and support!*

*"Today we are sending the Rev. Henry W. Kuhns to minister to the wilderness that is Nebraska."*

*—Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Pennsylvania, c. 1857*



**PROSPECT HILL CEMETERY**

*Omaha's Pioneer Cemetery*

**Please help now!**

To continue the important mission of historic preservation and education, the Cemetery needs your financial support and your prayers, now.

All funds are professionally administered by the First National Bank (of Omaha) Wealth Management Group. Your donation is tax-deductible under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

**YES**, I will support the historic preservation at Prospect Hill. Attached is my check (made payable to P.H.C. Historic Site Development Foundation) for:

\$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (*please enter amount*).

*I would like more information on the following:*

- Making a planned gift to the Foundation in my will or living trust.
- Making a gift to the Foundation in the form of securities—stocks, bonds, or mutual fund shares—or appreciated real estate.
- Please have a Foundation representative contact me. All inquiries are completely confidential.

***Please print this page and page 38, complete the information, and mail to the address shown on page 38.***

**Thank you for your support.**





**PROSPECT HILL CEMETERY**

*Omaha's Pioneer Cemetery*

*Please mail this page with your check to:*

**Prospect Hill Cemetery Foundation**

**Attn: Treasurer**

**3202 Parker Street)**

**Omaha, Nebraska 68111-4254**

**(402) 556-6057**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City / State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** Daytime: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Member(s) Interred at PHC (if applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

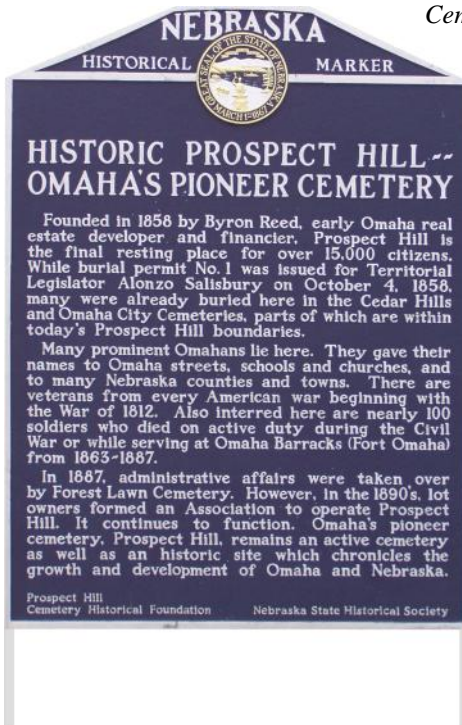
*Please mark with a "v" if family member is a veteran of military service.*



*Installed in 2002 by the City of Omaha, signs on North 30th Street, just north and south of the intersection of 30th and Parker Streets, direct visitors to the Cemetery.*



*Dedicated in 1979, this historic marker gives a brief history of the Cemetery, and is located just inside the entrance.*





## **HISTORIC PROSPECT HILL CEMETERY**

**Omaha's Pioneer Cemetery  
and  
Legacy Arboretum**

**32nd and Parker Streets  
Omaha, Nebraska  
402-556-6057**

### **Caution—please watch your step!**

Exercise care when walking around the Cemetery. In an old cemetery, ground settles and becomes uneven. We cannot be responsible for accidents due to uneven ground.