

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER/GEORGIA REGISTER NOMINATION

1. Name: Jackson Street Cemetery.

2. Location: Jackson Street, University of Georgia campus, Athens, Clarke County, Georgia. *USGS Quadrangle: Athens East, Ga.*

3a. Description: Jackson Street Cemetery (also called Old Athens Cemetery) is located one-quarter mile south of downtown Athens on Jackson Street on the University of Georgia campus between the Lamar Dodd School of Art and Baldwin Hall. Founded c.1810, the cemetery has an irregular-shaped lot and is situated on an east-west sloping hillside. The cemetery developed over time as opposed to having a formal plan. Consequently, there are north-south rows of grave markers but no formal east-west rows and there are no formal pathways. The cemetery contains 135 known burials, 124 unassociated gravestones, and 221 gravestone pieces. A wide variety of funerary art is found in Jackson Street Cemetery including flat slab markers, decorative upright markers, obelisks, footstones, and box tombs. Most of the markers are marble and granite. Five plots are surrounded by cast-iron fencing that dates from the 1870s through the 1890s. There are a number of unmarked burials also within the cemetery. The landscaping is informal with ornamental and hardwood trees and shrubs. Cedar trees and a cedar hedge were added in the early 20th century and magnolia, Chinese elm, mulberry, oak, and pine trees are also found in the cemetery.

3b. Period of Significance: c.1810-1958.

3c. Acreage: Approximately 2.5 acres.

3d. Boundary Explanation: The proposed boundary is the land historically associated with the cemetery.

4a. National Register Criteria: Criteria A and C and Criteria Consideration D.

4b. National Register Areas of Significance: Art and Community Planning and Development.

4c. Statement of Significance: The Jackson Street Cemetery is sited on 2.5 acres of land within the original 633-acre tract deeded to the University of Georgia by John Milledge in 1803. The property was unofficially donated to the city of Athens by the University's Board of Trustees c.1810 for use as a public cemetery. The cemetery was used by white residents of Athens and includes graves of farmers, prominent citizens, university students and faculty, and soldiers from the Revolutionary and Civil wars. The cemetery was heavily used through the 1840s when it became crowded, and by 1848 the city announced that no new burials were allowed in the cemetery. Although burials continued into the 1890s, Jackson Street Cemetery's time as the official city cemetery ended in September 1855 with the opening of nearby Oconee Hill Cemetery. Many families moved graves from Jackson Street to the new cemetery. During the 20th century, university buildings were constructed on either side of the cemetery (Baldwin Hall in 1938 and the art school in 1962). By the 1970s and 1980s, the cemetery was deteriorating due to lack of maintenance, erosion, and vandalism. The Friends of the Old Athens Cemetery took over maintenance from 1983 through 2004, when the responsibility was turned over to the university with a small endowment. Since then, preservation has been done including a boundary survey, marker recordation and assessment, ground-penetrating radar surveys, GIS mapping of marked and unmarked burials, and stabilization work. The Jackson Street Cemetery is significant in the area of art for its numerous examples of 19th-century funerary monuments and ornamental fencing. Decorative grave markers including slab, obelisks, box tombs, headstones, footstones, and ornamental fencing and coping are all representative of the burial practices and funerary symbolism in the 19th century. The cemetery is significant in the area of community planning and development for its historic association with the development of Athens. The land was unofficially donated to the city by the University of Georgia for use as a city cemetery. The Jackson Street Cemetery was the primary cemetery for white citizens of Athens until Oconee Hill Cemetery was opened in 1855.

4d. Suggested Level of Significance: The cemetery is being nominated at the local level of significance as a good example of a 19th-century city cemetery.

5. Sponsor: The nomination is sponsored by the University of Georgia and nomination materials were prepared by UGA's Campus Planner.