

ADDENDUM TO:
WOOD NATIONAL CEMETERY
5000 West National Avenue
Milwaukee
Milwaukee County
Wisconsin

HALS WI-6
HALS WI-6

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

WOOD NATIONAL CEMETERY

HALS No. WI-6

Location: 5000 West National Avenue, Milwaukee,
Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Wood National Cemetery is located adjacent to the grounds of the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center. Its geographic coordinates are latitude 43.02948, longitude -87.98189 (Google Earth, Simple Cylindrical Projection, WGS84). These coordinates represent the location of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument.

Present Owner: National Cemetery Administration
U.S. Department of the Veterans Affairs

Present Use: Cemetery

Significance: Wood National Cemetery is located on the grounds of the Clement J. Zablocki Veterans Administration Medical Center, originally the Northwestern Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS). The cemetery was created in 1871 and has been expanded numerous times. It now covers 51.1 acres and contains nearly 38,000 interments in more than 33,000 grave sites. The remains of soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen from all American wars except the Revolutionary War are buried there along with hundreds of spouses and dependents and numerous civilian employees of the home and hospital. About 36.5 acres of the cemetery (Sections 3-7, 8-48, and A-D) lie within and contribute to the Northwestern Branch NHDVS National Historic Landmark District, designated in 2011.

Historian: Michael R. Harrison, 2013

Project Information: Wood National Cemetery was documented by the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS), one of the Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service. The principals involved were Richard O'Connor, Chief of Heritage Documentation Programs, and Paul D. Dolinsky, Chief of HALS. The project was sponsored by the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Douglas D. Pulak, Deputy Federal Preservation Officer. The documentation was produced during the summer of 2013 by project supervisor Christopher M.

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PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of establishment: 1871

2. Landscape designer: The cemetery was laid out by John Woolley, deputy governor (i.e., officer in charge) of the Soldiers' Asylum from September 14, 1870, to December 31, 1872.

John Woolley (1824–73) was from Indianapolis and may have been the eponymous banker who ran John Woolley & Company, the firm later known as the Bank of the Capital. He enlisted in the Second Indiana Calvary in October 1861 and, by the end of the Civil War, was provost marshal of the Middle Department, 8th Army Corps, under the command of Gen. Lew Wallace, and held the ranks of brevet brigadier general of the U.S. Volunteers and lieutenant colonel in the 5th Indiana Cavalry. Woolley served as an adjutant before becoming provost marshal, and these roles no doubt qualified him for his appointment as deputy governor of the Northwestern Branch in 1870.¹ Woolley is not known to have had any experience or training in landscape gardening. He died suddenly on April 4, 1873, and was buried in the Soldiers' Home cemetery (Section 5.I, grave 72).²

3. Builder: Unknown

4. Original and subsequent owners and occupants: The cemetery has been federal property since its creation, and all the land it now covers was originally part of the extensive grounds of the Northwestern Branch of the National Asylum (after 1873, Home) for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS), which opened in 1867. The NHDVS, the Bureau of Pensions, and the U.S. Veterans Bureau were consolidated to form the Veterans Administration (VA) in 1930, at which time the cemetery became part of the Veterans Administration Home and Hospital, Milwaukee. The post office for the home and hospital was renamed Wood in 1937 to honor Gen. George H. Wood (who for many years had been

¹ Although the title suggests otherwise, the deputy governor was the officer appointed to lead each branch of the National Asylum. The title was changed to commandant during the tenure of Woolley's successor.

² General Woolley's connection to John Woolley & Co. has not been positively confirmed. *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana*, vol. 2: 1861–1865 (Indianapolis: W. R. Holloway, 1865), 26; *Official Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army for the years 1861, '62, '63, '64, '65*, Part 6: Indiana – Illinois (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., [1865?]), 9; George B. Davis, Leslie J. Perry, and Joseph W. Kirkley, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. 46, part 2: Correspondence, etc. (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1895), 51–52; "A charming drive," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 25, 1871, 4; "A happy thought," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, July 20, 1871, 4; "Gen. Woolley," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, Apr. 5, 1873, 8; "Funeral of General Woolley," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, Apr. 9, 1873, 8.

president of the Board of Managers of the NHDVS), and the cemetery became known as Wood Veterans Cemetery as a result. After the national cemeteries and soldiers' lots operated by the U.S. Army Memorial Affairs Agency were transferred to the VA in 1973, the VA's twenty-one veterans' cemeteries, including Wood, were redesignated as national cemeteries. The cemetery is now administered by the National Cemetery Administration within the Department of Veterans Affairs.³

5. Periods of development

a. Original plans and construction: The Northwestern Branch of the National Asylum (later Home) for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was established on a 364.6-acre site in Waukesha Township, Wisconsin, in 1867. The land was purchased for \$75,700 in April 1867 from John L. Mitchell, John H. Tweedy, Henry Williams, and Mrs. Ann Fennell Hathaway. The cemetery was established on land entirely within the parcel purchased from Ann Hathaway, executrix of the estate of her late husband Joshua Hathaway. Over time, as the cemetery was expanded, it came to cover a portion of the parcel acquired from John Mitchell as well as part of another 16.82-acre parcel purchased in 1884 from the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railway Company.⁴

The cemetery was initially developed in May and June 1871 in the far northwestern corner of the Soldiers' Asylum grounds. The chosen site was hilly and wooded and lay above a shallow ravine cut through by a spring-fed creek. John Woolley laid out the cemetery on an irregular plan with curving paths that divided the burial ground into more than twenty small blocks, the smallest of which were only large enough to provide about a dozen grave sites each. Woolley intended that burials would be grouped by state of origin, but burial records reveal this system was abandoned after just a few years.

b. Changes and additions: A lake—called Spring Lake or Cemetery Lake, and later renamed Lake Huston—was created along the course of the spring-fed creek southeast and east of the cemetery in the mid 1870s. South of the lake, a roughly 5-acre wooded area was developed into parkland around the same time. The lake and park enhanced the picturesque quality of the cemetery and knit the burial ground into a larger landscape of recreational lands which officials developed at the home for the use of the

³ Jessica Berglin and Charlene Roise, "National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, Northwestern Branch," HALS No. WI-13, Historic American Landscapes Survey, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2012, 40. Wood VA Medical Center was renamed Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center in 1985, and the VA was elevated to the cabinet-level Department of Veterans Affairs in 1989.

⁴ "The site for the National Military Asylum," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, Mar. 2, 1867, 1; "The National Military Asylum," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, Apr. 30, 1867, 1; William Y. Hartman, *History of Veterans Administration Center, Wood, Wisconsin* (Privately printed, [1966?]), 9-11.

residents and of the general public. Although diminished in size due to the development of new burial sections over time, the park continues to contribute to the cemetery's bucolic character today.

The Soldiers' Home began using a plot in neighboring Calvary Cemetery to the north for the burial of Catholic veterans in 1875. (This non-federally-owned plot is now Section 1; see Figures 2, 3, and 4.) In 1887, the cemetery was expanded for the first time within the Soldiers' Home campus proper with the first interments in what is now Section 4. Further expansion followed in the 1890s as new burial sections were laid out on the undeveloped land south of the creek ravine. The irregular plan from 1871 was not continued in the new portions of the cemetery; instead, Soldiers' Home officials adopted a more regular plan, with rectangular sections laid out on either side of an axial north-south-running road (now Juneau Avenue). Paths between the new sections crossed the axial road at right angles, creating a formal grid that was reinforced by the straight lines of headstones that eventually came to occupy the land. As additional sections were needed, additional rectangles were added to plan. A second road, American War Mothers Avenue, was opened running east-west after World War I.

Photographs and postcard views indicate the cemetery was simply landscaped, with trees lining the roads and paths, and grass covering the graves. The oldest burial sections remained more wooded than the newer sections well into the 1960s.

An octagonal reception house was built in the cemetery in 1900. The tall and prominent Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Monument was dedicated nearby in 1903.

The cemetery has been altered three times by the construction of transportation infrastructure. In 1898, an elevated streetcar track with a passenger station opened for service on the boundary line dividing the Soldiers' Home Cemetery from Calvary Cemetery. This right of way was converted to a surface rapid transit line in 1924, and all interments in Section 2 were moved into new graves in Sections 5 and 6 to make room for the new tracks. Finally, the construction of the East-West Expressway (now Interstate 94) in the 1950s led to the draining and filling-in of the lake and the cutting through and grading of a roadbed in the low land between the original cemetery and the extensions. A bridge was constructed over the expressway to link the now discontinuous northern and southern portions of the cemetery.

Demand for additional burial sites led to the conversion of the footpaths throughout the cemetery into graves between 1939 and 1950. This work erased the borders between the irregularly shaped early sections of the cemetery (Sections 3-7), obscuring the logic of the original plan.

In 1974, the land containing the cemetery plus a ball field south of it were transferred from the VA's Department of Medicine and Surgery to the National Cemetery System. By 1986, the ball field had been developed into burial sections and the cemetery filled the entire eastern edge of the historic Soldiers' Home property from Calvary Cemetery to the campus-bisecting right of way of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad (since 2000 the Hank Aaron State Trail). A transfer from the hospital to the cemetery of 12 additional acres south of the right of way in 1986 allowed the development of a final group of burial sections, which were laid out as a great lawn around a circular roadway. The cemetery was closed to all new first interments in 1999.

B. Historical Context

The Wisconsin Soldiers Home Society, chartered by the state in 1865, was an outgrowth of women's charitable work on behalf of soldiers in Milwaukee during the Civil War. The society organized a state fair in the summer of 1865 and raised about \$100,000 to purchase a site and built a permanent soldiers' home in Milwaukee, intended to be the successor of a soldiers' home operating in rented quarters in the city since April 1864. The same year, Congress established the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (renamed the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers in 1873) to provide care to indigent veterans. In 1866, George H. Walker, a former mayor of Milwaukee, was selected to sit on the asylum's Board of Managers. Through his influence, the lady managers of the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home donated their land and endowment to the federal government in exchange for the selection of Milwaukee as the site for the Northwestern Branch of the National Asylum. The Wisconsin Soldiers Home Society's land was eventually sold, but its cash allowed the National Asylum to purchase 364.6 acres in Wauwatosa Township in 1867. The Northwestern Branch was built on this land starting that same year.⁵

The site plan for the Northwestern Branch was designed by U.S. Army chaplain Rev. Thomas Budd Van Horne, who also planned the Central Branch in Dayton, Ohio. Although Van Horne had previously laid out the Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Marietta, Georgia, national cemeteries, there is no evidence he included a cemetery in his plans for the Northwestern Branch. The frequent assertion that he designed the 1871 cemetery at the Milwaukee Soldiers' Home is not supported by evidence.⁶

⁵ Robert J. Neugent, "The National Soldiers' Home," *Historical Messenger of the Milwaukee County Historical Society* (autumn 1975): 88-96; Lisa P. Davidson, "National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, Northwestern Branch, Main Building," HABS No. WI-360-A, Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2008, 7-8.

⁶ Davidson, "National Home," 10. Assertions that Van Horne designed the cemetery appear in, for example, Berglin and Roise, "National Home," 12 and 19, and Suzanne Julin, "Northwestern Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers," Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. National Historic Landmark Registration Form, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2010, 27 and 35.

Soldiers who died at the general hospital in Milwaukee during the Civil War, and whose remains were not claimed by relatives or friends, were buried in a potter's field in Forest Home Cemetery, a burial ground owned by St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Milwaukee County. In 1868, the federal government purchased four lots in Section 24 of this cemetery for \$525 and paid the cemetery association \$63 to move the remains of twenty-one known soldiers from the potter's field into the government's lots. Period sources imply that unknown soldiers were left in the potter's field.⁷ Soldiers who died at the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home whose remains were not returned to relatives were buried in a plot comprising four lots owned by the home in Section 31 of the same cemetery. Each soldier buried by the lady managers of the home received a headstone, and the home's plot was marked by a monument (no longer extant) donated by the stone cutting firm of Moffat & Eccles.⁸ The lady managers buried those soldiers who were Catholic in Calvary Cemetery, in a plot in block 5 donated to the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Calvary Cemetery was located in Wauwatosa Township, immediately adjacent to the land purchased for the Northwestern Branch of the Soldiers' Asylum in 1867.

Veterans who died at the Northwestern Branch after it began admitting residents in May 1867 were initially buried in the plot in Section 31 at Forest Home Cemetery or in the plot in block 5 of Calvary Cemetery. In 1870 and 1871, some asylum burials were also made in a plot in Section A of Forest Home Cemetery.⁹

In spring 1871, Bvt. Brig. Gen. John Woolley, deputy governor of the asylum, had a winding road cut through the northern portion of the grounds to connect the central part of the campus with the Spring Street Road (now Bluemound Road). At the same time, he had a cemetery laid out in the woods at the asylum's northwestern corner. He located the cemetery on a rise adjacent to a small spring-fed creek. Period newspaper reports give the size of the cemetery site as 10-12 acres, but modern measurements put it at 4-6 acres. Woolley's design called for different portions of the cemetery to be devoted "to each state having or likely to have representatives in the institution." White painted headboards

⁷ Oscar A. Mack, special report to Secretary of War W. W. Belknap relative to Forest Home Cemetery, Milwaukee, Oct. 17, 1872, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, General Correspondence and Reports Relating to National and Post Cemeteries (Record Group 92, Entry 576), box 47, docket for "Milwaukee."

⁸ *Second Annual Report of the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home* (Milwaukee: Daily Wisconsin Printing House, 1866); "The Soldiers' Home," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, Feb. 5, 1866, 1.

⁹ Burial ledgers for the Northwestern Branch are deposited in the Records of the Veterans Administration (Record Group 15), National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. See also "List of the dead soldiers in Forest Home," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 23, 1874, 8; *Letter of the Secretary of War communicating...the report of the inspector of national cemeteries of the United States for 1869*. Senate Ex. Doc. 62, 41st Cong., 2d sess., Mar. 15, 1870, 78-79.

originally marked each state's plot. This system was followed for a few years, but burial records indicate that the effort to group burials by state had been abandoned by 1876.¹⁰

Improvement of the cemetery had not yet begun when veteran John K. Afton became the first person buried there within a few days of his death on May 22, 1871.¹¹ Veteran Edward Schluesselberg was buried nearby a few days later. On May 26, a resident at the asylum wrote,

A company of men are now engaged in making an avenue, oval shaped, to the new burial ground. Already two inmates are buried there and it is rumored that some buried elsewhere who died here, are to be disinterred and their remains deposited in this cemetery. [This was not done.] The bridge across the ravine nearest the burying ground, on the new road from it to the Asylum, is to be taken up and raised about six feet as the descent to the same is rather steeper than convenience seems to require.¹²

Memorial Day was observed in the cemetery before the improvement work was completed. On Tuesday morning May 30, about 170 members of the asylum led by the asylum band marched to Calvary Cemetery, where members of Grand Army of the Republic Veteran Post No. 8 strewed flowers on the soldiers' graves and Rev. William Schmidt of St. Gall's Church delivered an address. The procession then moved to the Soldiers' Asylum cemetery, where local businessman James C. Pollard delivered a second address. In the afternoon, members took part in Milwaukee's main Memorial Day exercises in the center city.¹³

The asylum cemetery was dedicated Monday, June 12, 1871. The *Milwaukee Sentinel* reported,

At precisely 3 o'clock the scarred and warworn veterans of the Home, to the number of about four hundred, fell into line, and headed by the Asylum Band, and marshalled by the kind and gentlemanly Deputy Governor, General Woolley, took up their march for the cemetery, located in a beautiful grove on the northwest corner of the grounds. The officers of the institution, several members of the Board of Managers, a number of the city clergy and

¹⁰ "A charming drive," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 25, 1871, 4; quote from "A happy thought," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, Aug. 20, 1871; "At the National Home...," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 1, 1874, 4.

¹¹ "A charming drive," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 25, 1871, 4. Afton was interred in Sec. 2, gr. 57. His remains were disinterred and reburied in their current location, Sec. 5.II, gr. 163B, about 1924.

¹² "The National Military Asylum," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 30, 1871, 2.

¹³ "Decoration Day," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 27, 1871; "Decoration Day," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 31, 1871, 1; "Honors to the Union dead; decoration of soldiers' graves in memoriam," *Milwaukee Weekly Sentinel*, June 6, 1871.

other invited guests, with citizens and strangers, also joined in the procession.

The ceremonies, punctuated by music from the band, included three extended speeches by Rev. John Allison of Milwaukee; Samuel Fallows, state superintendent of public instruction; and Maj. Gen. Thomas O. Osborn of Chicago, a member of the Board of Managers.¹⁴

A reporter described the cemetery site in 1874 as “a piece of wild and extremely beautiful light woodland, pierced with ravines and approached by a serpentine road made by the authorities of the home. . . . The dead sleep under the trees and the soft air murmurs a requiem over them.”¹⁵

The Soldiers’ Asylum was renamed the Soldiers’ Home in 1873, and the first expansion of the cemetery was made in late 1875, when the Archdiocese of Milwaukee donated to the home a plot within Calvary Cemetery for Catholic burials.¹⁶ This 7/10ths-acre plot, which is now numbered as Wood National Cemetery’s Section 1, was located along the southern boundary of Calvary Cemetery, immediately adjacent to the home cemetery. (See Figure 2.) Martin Hays, who died October 2, 1875, was the section’s first interment. Increasing numbers of Catholic veterans were buried in this section over the next twenty years, although some Catholics continued to be buried in other sections of the home cemetery. Interments ceased in this section in 1897, when a new section developed on the Soldiers’ Home property (now Section 15) was set aside for Roman Catholic burials.¹⁷

¹⁴ “Brevities,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 10, 1871, 4; “Dedication ceremonies,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 13, 1871, 4. Samuel Fallows later served as chaplain at the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., in 1922.

¹⁵ “At the National Home...,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 1, 1874, 4

¹⁶ In general, Protestant and Catholic residents of the Soldiers’ Home were buried side by side in the home cemetery from its opening in May 1871 until autumn 1875, although a few burials were made in the remaining grave sites in the old Wisconsin Soldiers’ Home lot in block 5 of Calvary Cemetery in 1874–75 and 1877–78. The soldiers’ graves in Calvary Cemetery block 5, although still extant, are not considered part of Wood National Cemetery and are not administered by the VA. Maintenance such as grass cutting for Section 1, also within Calvary Cemetery and not federally owned, is currently being performed by the Wood National Cemetery maintenance staff. Block 5 and Section 1 are not part of the Northwestern Branch NHDVS NHL District.

¹⁷ Dean W. Holt, *American Military Cemeteries*. 2nd ed. (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., Inc., 2010), 299; Randal S. Chasco, *Self-Guided Tour of Historic Calvary Cemetery* (Milwaukee: Archdiocese of Milwaukee, n.d.), n.p. Information on first interments and expansion of the cemetery are reconstructed from the cemetery burial ledgers in the National Archives. Additional information culled from the Historical Registers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 1866-1938 (National Archives Microfilm publication M1749; also available online through Family Search, <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1916230>) and a plat book of the cemetery preserved in the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center Library.

As the cemetery filled, new sections were developed to expand burial capacity. What is now Section 4 received its first interments in 1887. In 1890, a new section (modern-day Section 10), was opened south of the creek ravine, and five more sections were opened nearby over the next decade. The sections south of the ravine followed a new plan that extended the cemetery in more or less rectangular blocks southward along the western edge of the Soldiers' Home grounds. (See Figure 2.)

Multiple sections of the cemetery were typically in use for burials simultaneously, but as sections filled up, new ones were opened. By 1917, the cemetery comprised twenty-two sections; by 1942, it had thirty. Pressure for space eventually led to the reopening of sections previously regarded as full, usually by converting pathways into burial sites. Section 13, first used in 1900, was the first section reopened, in 1927. Sections 3, 9, 10, 11, and 12 were all reopened in 1939. (A complete list of cemetery sections and their dates of first interment and reopening appears in Appendix II.)

The preponderance of burials from 1871 into the 1910s were members of the home. Home staff were also buried there from time to time, as were, very occasionally, non-member veterans. After World War I, veterans of allied nations could be buried in the cemetery, and by 1931 there were Polish, Canadian, Italian, French, and Czechoslovakian nationals interred there. During World War II, a number of German prisoners of war were also buried in the cemetery.¹⁸

In 1930, the Soldiers' Home became part of the new Veterans Administration, and in 1935 the cemetery was opened to non-resident and non-patient veteran burials. By the 1960s, most interments at the cemetery came from the Milwaukee VA hospital or from the VA hospital at Downey, Illinois. When Pfc. Duncan F. Krueger, 18, of West Allis, Wisconsin (just west of the VA hospital) was killed in action in Vietnam in late 1965, the central VA in Washington, D.C., had to give special permission for him to be buried at Wood. Krueger was the first Vietnam casualty buried in the cemetery.¹⁹

The VA granted the federal Bureau of Public Roads an easement through the hospital grounds in 1952 to allow construction of the East-West Expressway, which is now Interstate 94. Congress authorized the VA to transfer the land in this easement, plus additional acreage, to Milwaukee County in 1954, and this transfer was made in early 1955. The section of interstate through the cemetery was completed in 1961, permanently dividing the oldest sections of the cemetery from the later additions. Construction of the interstate required draining and filling in the cemetery lake and the removal of graves in Section 8, which lay directly in the right of way. Veteran burials from Section 8 were moved to Section 38 in July

¹⁸ "The dead have a bivouac here," *Milwaukee Journal*, Oct. 11, 1931.

¹⁹ "2 Vietnam dead buried at Wood," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, Jan. 13, 1967, 5.

1959, while civilian and Soldiers' Home staff graves were moved at the same time to a new Section 8 adjacent to Section 11.²⁰

The land containing the cemetery was transferred from the VA's Department of Medicine and Surgery to the VA's National Cemetery System in 1974. Included in this transfer was undeveloped land containing a ball field that lay between the cemetery and the right of way of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad. Plans were made to develop 9 acres around the ball field into burial Sections A, B, C, and D in 1974. The first interments were made in Sections A and B in 1976.²¹ The same year the VA opened a memorial section in the area surrounding the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Headstones in this section memorialize service members whose remains have not been recovered or were otherwise unavailable for burial.

In 1977, a 6.27-acre parcel bounded by the cemetery on the west, Mitchell Boulevard on the northeast, and the northern leg of General Wolcott Avenue on the south, was transferred from the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery to the cemetery to provide a site for a new administration and service building and to create about 3,500 grave sites.²² This land contained three historic residential buildings for which demolition permission from the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Officer could not be obtained. Because these buildings interfered with development of the land into grave sites, the entire parcel was transferred back to the Department of Medicine and Surgery in June 1981.²³ In January 1984, about a third of this parcel was again transferred to the cemetery. This time, the historic residential buildings were omitted from the transfer, and the cemetery service made plans to demolish several old garages on the land and develop it as grave sites. Sections 37B, 37C, and 37D were the result.

Another parcel of 2.5 acres, extending east from the cemetery along the railroad right of way, was also transferred to the cemetery in January 1984. Plans to develop it for grave sites were abandoned in late 1984 because of high cost estimates for landscaping and moving

²⁰ Berglin and Roise, "National Home," 38.

²¹ Veterans Administration, *Site Plan, Develop Nine Acres for Gravesites*, Aug. 23, 1974, National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, D.C.

²² V. P. Miller to Administrator of Veterans Affairs, Aug. 30, 1977; Donovan E. Hower to Arthur L. Modin, Apr. 19, 1978; both National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., Records of the Veterans Administration, Department of Memorial Affairs, National Cemetery Historical File (Record Group 15/A-1, Entry 25), folder for Wood N/C.

²³ Carl T. Noll, memo to Assistant Administrator for Construction, Dec. 18, 1978; W. A. Salmond, memo to Acting Administrator, June 10, 1981; VA Real Estate Tract Register for Wood N/C, all in Wood N/C deed file, National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, D.C. [hereafter NCA]. The buildings that could not be demolished were buildings 14, 16, and 17. Building 17 was briefly considered for reuse as a cemetery lodge and administration building.

utility lines, and because the site faced the front of the recently established VA Regional Office. As the director of the cemetery service commented, "It would be inappropriate to exit the VA Regional Office and be confronted by a National Cemetery." The 2.5-acre tract was returned to the Department of Medicine and Surgery in July 1986.²⁴

In late 1984, cemetery administrators mooted the idea of obtaining from the hospital a large triangular parcel located toward the southern end of the VA Medical Center's western edge. This parcel, at first believed to cover 16 acres but later resurveyed at 12 acres, would allow for the development of 4,000–5,000 grave sites and provide a site for a new administration building. Preliminary building and site plans were drafted in December 1984 that envisioned several large burial sections accessed by a single road loop entering the parcel from the south. A building combining administrative offices with equipment and vehicle storage was designed to sit between the access road and the western edge of the cemetery.²⁵

The 12-acre parcel was transferred to the National Cemetery Service in July 1986, bringing the cemetery to a size of about 49.4 acres. This land was soon graded to create the access road and Sections E through M. The road was named Afton Circle in honor of John Afton, the first person buried in the cemetery. The first interments in this new area were made in Section H in April 1987.²⁶

Further work was done on the design of the administration building in 1987 and 1988 with the intention of locating it within the 12-acre addition. At the end of 1987, however, residents of the neighborhood adjoining the cemetery to the west objected to the construction of a service building close to their houses. In 1988, cemetery and medical center administrators agreed to study the feasibility of locating the administration building on the site of the old Soldiers' Home greenhouse, which was to be demolished. A new design for the building was made in 1989. This site was within the boundaries of a proposed National Register of Historic Places historic district covering the oldest portions of the Soldiers' Home, however, and the Wisconsin SHPO disapproved the plans, finding the building's Prairie Style-inspired design incompatible with nearby historic structures.²⁷

²⁴ Quote from Bob R. Beller, memo to Chief Memorial Affairs Director, Oct. 30, 1984; VA Real Estate Tract Register, Wood N/C, both in NCA.

²⁵ Bob R. Beller, memo to Chief Memorial Affairs Director, Oct. 30, 1984; Veterans Administration, *Conceptual Development Plan for Wood National Cemetery Expansion*, Dec. 4, 1984, National Cemetery Administration plans files.

²⁶ VA Real Estate Tract Register for Wood N/C, NCA.

²⁷ Design drawings for the administration/maintenance building, dated Feb. 1, 1988, are held at headquarters of the National Cemetery Administration. "Wood National Cemetery, Administration/Service Building and Gravesite Development Project No. 787-823-006," [timeline] Apr. 20, 1990; Richard W. Dexter to Thomas A. Heydel, Jan. 25, 1990; both in NCA.

In light of this disapproval, the National Cemetery Service decided in August 1990 to develop a new master plan for the cemetery. A site plan from February 1991 shows a new service road connecting Kilbourn Circle and Sections A-D to Afton Circle in the 12-acre addition. A small administration building was proposed at the northern end of the VA medical center grounds, across Mitchell Avenue from Section 50 (former parkland converted to burial ground in 1986). An entrance gateway was designed to span Mitchell Avenue; it incorporated a campanile for an AMVETS carillon that had been installed on the cemetery grounds in 1987. Other improvements included a metal picket fence between the cemetery and the VA medical center grounds; a 6'-high board fence between the cemetery and the private homes to the west; a new maintenance building in the valley between Sections D and H; and a new committal shelter in Section 50 near the octagonal reception house. American War Mothers Avenue would have been removed under this plan.²⁸

R. E. Struble, director of the medical center, objected to the planned fence and informed the director of the National Cemetery System that a fence would be antithetical to the center's efforts "to project a more open" rather than an "institutional" image. Officials at the VA felt that the cemetery required a "clear and definitive identity as a component separate from the Medical Center. The establishment of some attractive and aesthetically pleasing definition of boundaries is a fundamental portion of the scope of the construction project. Thus any restrictions concerning fence or landscaping directly jeopardize our goal of enhancing the sanctity and privacy of the cemetery grounds."²⁹

A reduction in funding in fall 1991 led to a reconsideration of the scope of the master plan. The service road, fencing, and gateway were eliminated, and the idea of a combined administration and service building, based on the 1988 Prairie Style design, was revived for the greenhouse site. Land for the building – 1.84 acres – was transferred from the hospital to the cemetery in 1991, and construction of the administration building began in 1993. The building opened February 9, 1994. It is not clear if the Wisconsin SHPO raised any further objections to construction of the building on the greenhouse site, but, in the end, the site ended up outside the boundary of the historic district, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.³⁰

²⁸ Veterans Administration, *Schematic North and South Areas Site Plan*, drawing L-1, Feb. 12, 1991, National Cemetery Administration plans files; "Briefing Note," Jan. 31, 1992, NCA.

²⁹ R. E. Struble to National Cemetery System Director, Feb. 25, 1991; Robert B. Holbrook to Executive Assistant to the CMD, Mar. 14, 1991, both NCA.

³⁰ "Briefing Note," Jan. 31, 1992, NCA; "Wood National Cemetery, a Brief History," in *Wood National Cemetery Lanternlight Tour, May 31–June 3, 2003* [program booklet], copy Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center Collection (MSS 237), Milwaukee County Historical Society, 6.

The cemetery officially closed to first interments of casketed remains on October 1, 1996. It was closed to the first interments of cremated remains on May 15, 1999. Eligible spouses and dependent children of those already buried in the cemetery may still be interred there.³¹

PART II. PHYSICAL INFORMATION

A. Landscape character and descriptive summary

Wood National Cemetery covers about 51.1 acres of gently rolling land along the western edge of the Clement A. Zablocki VA Medical Center. It is characterized by long, straight rows of uniform, upright marble headstones standing in large expanses of neatly cut grass.

The cemetery is divided by transportation infrastructure into four unequal portions:

Section 1	0.7 acre	Within the bounds of Calvary Cemetery, a private burial ground. Although this portion of the cemetery is not federally owned, it is maintained by the National Cemetery Administration as part of Wood National Cemetery.
Sections 3-7	2.93 acres	Divided from Section 1 by a former streetcar right of way now used for electrical power transmission, and from the balance of the cemetery by Interstate 94
Sections 8-50, A-D, et al.	33.6 acres	Located between Interstate 94 and the Hank Aaron State Trail bicycle path
Sections E-M and administration building	13.884 acres	Bounded by Washington Drive and a storm drainage channel south of the Hank Aaron State Trail. The administration building is located immediately north of the drainage channel. ³²

B. Character-defining features

1. Natural features

³¹ "Wood National Cemetery, a Brief History," 6; Department of Veterans Affairs news release, "Wood National Cemetery to Close for Casket Burials," July 2, 1996, NCA.

³² Acreages from VA Real Estate Tract Register for Wood N/C; *Plat of Survey No. 134868-S*, June 13, 1974, NCA; and field measurements, summer 2013. Acreages given in Julin, "Northwestern Branch," 27, are not accurate.

a. Topography: The cemetery is sited on rolling terrain and ranges in elevation from about 630' at the Administration Building to about 711' at the intersection of Juneau Avenue and American War Mothers Avenue. The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Monument sits on another high point in the cemetery at an elevation of about 708'. A 20-30'-deep natural ravine between Sections 4 and 9 toward the northern end of the cemetery once enhanced the picturesque quality of the cemetery, but the ravine is now occupied by Interstate 94. The terrain drops about 16-18' south of Sections C and D to the Hank Aaron State Trail and an area of industrial buildings that support the medical center. The southernmost portion of the cemetery sits on a rise south of the industrial area with an elevation in Section J of about 665'.

b. Vegetation: All sections of the cemetery are planted with grass that is kept neatly mowed. Honey locust trees line Juneau Avenue; both honey locust and American linden trees line American War Mothers Avenue. Scattered shade trees, including many ashes and maples, dot the cemetery and line the walking paths. Three extremely large catalpa trees line the western edge of Sections 16 and 17. Two denser stands of mostly oak and maple trees are found in the oldest burial sections toward the north end of the cemetery (Sections 3-7) and in the park on either side of Walker Drive. A row of honey locust trees line Interstate 94 in Section 4. Thickets of trees and undergrowth line the slope between the Hank Aaron State Trail and Sections C and D as well as the edge of the storm drainage channel north of Sections E, G, and H. These thickets contain ash, hawthorn, willow, apple, oak, and mulberry trees. A double line of coniferous spruce and fir trees has been planted west of Sections H, I, and K to screen neighboring houses from the cemetery. Clusters of coniferous trees have been planted to the east of Sections E, F, and L along Washington Road. Various small ornamental trees and shrubs are planted near the Administration Building.

c. Water: The cemetery no longer contains any exposed natural water features. It formerly contained a spring-fed creek and a lake adjacent to Sections 4 and 7. The creek was culverted prior to 1955, and the lake was drained and filled in the early 1950s for the construction of Interstate 94. The line of a storm sewer that runs between Sections 49 and 50 can be discerned by the headstone-free area that divides these sections.

2. Designed features

a. Land use (spatial organization): Much of the cemetery is rigidly organized into rectangular burial sections by orthogonal drives and paths. Sections 3-7 once followed a more picturesque plan, with curving paths and small, irregularly shaped burial blocks, but the original logic of these sections has been obscured by the conversion of the walking paths into grave sites. The irregular shapes of Sections A-D, planned in 1974, are defined by the curve of Kilbourn Circle. Sections E-M, planned in 1986, feature flat granite headstones, which give this portion of the cemetery the appearance of a large, grassy lawn.

Although portions of the old park adjacent to Walker Drive have been maintained with their old shade trees, virtually all other space in the cemetery appropriate for grave sites is now occupied by burials.

b. Circulation: A half dozen roads provide vehicular access within the cemetery, while additional roads connect the cemetery's noncontiguous portions.

- *Mitchell Boulevard (also called General Mitchell Boulevard).* This road runs generally north to south through the entire Zablocki campus, connecting Bluemound Road to the north with National Avenue to the south. Its entire length "from the Blue Mound gateway to [the] gateway at [the] southeast corner on National Avenue" was officially named John L. Mitchell Boulevard by order of VA hospital manager Charles Pearsall in May 1941. Mitchell was a prominent Milwaukee politician and owned three of the parcels purchased to create the Northwestern Branch of the Soldiers' Home in 1867. He later served on the home's Board of Managers. His son was Gen. William "Billy" Mitchell, a well known early promoter of U.S. air power, and confusion between the two men has frequently led to portions of the road being labeled on maps and in reports as "General Mitchell Boulevard."³³

Today, the road begins at Bluemound Road opposite North 52nd Street. It gently curves its way south through Mitchell Boulevard Park before passing underneath Interstate 94, ascending a slope, and then curving past the cemetery immediately east of Sections 49 and 37b. Before the construction of the interstate in the late 1950s, the road ascended the slope further north and curved to pass the cemetery at the junction of Cemetery Road (now Walker Drive). The section of road between where Mitchell Boulevard used to curve at Walker Drive and where it now curves at Section 49 is still labeled on some modern maps as a portion of Mitchell Boulevard. It is labeled on other maps as the southernmost portion of Zablocki Drive.

- *Zablocki Drive (formerly called Cemetery Road).* When construction of the East-West Expressway cut off the oldest sections of the cemetery in the north from the balance of the cemetery to the south, this road was constructed in the early 1960s to reconnect them. It runs north from the intersection of Mitchell Boulevard and Walker Drive, crosses over Interstate 94 on an overpass, turns east briefly, then heads straight north to meet Bluemound Road just west of the intersection with Mitchell Boulevard. The drive is named for U.S. Congressman Clement J. Zablocki, after whom the entire campus was renamed in 1985. The drive is built mostly within the historic streetcar right of way that borders the eastern edge of Calvary Cemetery.

³³ Charles Pearsall, "Names of Streets in the Reservation at Wood, Wisconsin," General Order No. 14, May 6, 1941, copy in Zablocki Library scrapbooks.

- *Walker Drive (formerly called Cemetery Road or Cemetery Avenue)*. This road leads into the cemetery from Mitchell Boulevard, joining the northern end of Juneau Avenue near the Soldiers and Sailor Monument. It is a fragment of the road built in 1871 to connect the cemetery to the central portion of the Soldiers' Asylum campus. Most of the road was removed during expressway construction in the 1950s. Another portion of the road that curved past the eastern ends of Sections 9, 11, and 12 was removed about 1970. The road is named for George H. Walker, one of the founders of Milwaukee and the city's fifth mayor. As a member of the National Asylum's Board of Managers, he was influential in the establishment of the Northwestern Branch at Milwaukee. The drive was renamed for Walker in the late 1970s or early 1980s.
- *Memorial Drive*. A short drive at the eastern end of American War Mothers Avenue. The cemetery headquarters stood along this road from 1951 until about 1988.
- *Juneau Avenue (formerly Cemetery Road)*. This is the main north-south axial road through the cemetery. Its northern end dates from the 1890s, and it was gradually extended southward as burial sections were added to the cemetery, reaching its final length in the early 1970s. It was named for Solomon Juneau, one of the founders of Milwaukee, sometime in the late 1970s or early 1980s.
- *American War Mothers Avenue*. This is the primary east-west axial road in the cemetery, running from Mitchell Boulevard almost to the western edge of the cemetery. The date it was laid out is not clear. The American War Mothers, a social organization founded in 1917 for women with children serving in the military, began planting memorial elm trees along the road in the early 1930s, leading to its dedication as "American War Mothers Memorial Avenue" in 1935. The name was made official as "American War Mothers Avenue" by order of hospital manager Charles Pearsall in 1941.³⁴
- *Gold Star Drive*. A short road running south from American War Mothers Avenue along the eastern edge of the cemetery. It was named in the 1990s, probably in honor of the Gold Star Mothers, a social organization founded to support women who had lost sons during World War I.
- *Kilbourn Circle*. A short, east-west axial road was constructed from the southern end of Juneau Avenue to General Wolcott Avenue about 1970. When a curving extension of Juneau Avenue was built in 1974, both it and the axial road were given the name Kilbourn Circle. It is named for Byron Kilbourn, one of the founders of Milwaukee.
- *General Wolcott Avenue*. A section of this road forms part of the eastern border of the cemetery. It honors Dr. (and Maj. Gen.) Erastus Wolcott, surgeon general of Wisconsin during the Civil War and the first deputy governor of the Northwestern Branch.

³⁴ Pearsall, "Names of Streets."

- *Afton Circle*. Laid out in 1986, this circle provides access to Sections E–M. It is named for John K. Afton, the first veteran buried in the cemetery after its establishment in 1871.
- *General Hines Avenue (also called Hines Avenue and Hines Boulevard)*. The cemetery administration building is located along this road, which connects Washington Drive and Mitchell Boulevard. It was named in 1941 to honor Gen. Frank T. Hines, the administrator of the Veterans Administration.³⁵
- *Washington Drive*. This street forms part of the eastern boundary of the cemetery. It was created in the 1960s as part of substantial development work within the VA medical center campus. Its name comes from the residential street it connects to at the western edge of the campus.

c. Constructed water features:

Lake Huston (formerly Spring Lake, Cemetery Lake). Although no longer extant, this artificial pond was for seventy-five years a significant defining feature of the cemetery. The cemetery was laid out in 1871 north of a ravine. Early newspaper descriptions mention this “little valley” and its “trickling rill.”³⁶ About 1875, the “rill,” a spring-fed stream, was dammed to create a picturesque pond adjacent to the cemetery. The pond first appears on maps in 1876 and was first described in print in 1889, when veteran and Soldiers’ Home resident Frank Hoffman drowned in it.³⁷

Originally called “Spring Lake” and “Cemetery Lake,” the pond’s name was officially changed to Lake Huston in May 1938 to honor Father Michael J. Huston, the first resident Catholic chaplain assigned to the Northwestern Branch.³⁸ The lake was occasionally used for memorial services, such as the one on May 28, 1939, when wreaths were cast onto its waters to remember sailors, marines, and soldiers who died and were buried at sea.³⁹ The lake was drained and filled in during the early 1950s, prior to the construction of the East-West Expressway (now Interstate 94). More than half of the

³⁵ Pearsall, “Names of Streets.” Hines served seven years as director of the Veterans Bureau before becoming the first administrator of the Veterans Administration in 1930. He held the position until 1945.

³⁶ “At the National Home...,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 1, 1874, 4.

³⁷ The earliest map found showing the lake is “Map of Wauwatosa Township,” *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Milwaukee County, Wisconsin* (Chicago: H. Belden and Co., 1876), 20–21. Frank Hoffman’s death in the lake is reported in *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 7, 1889, 3. Hoffman was buried in Sec. 1, gr. 622. Soldiers’ Home members Thomas Smith, Francis Philips, and others also drown in the lake.

³⁸ Veterans Administration General Order No. 78, June 6, 1938, copy in Scrapbook 1937–41, 38, Zablocki Library. Father Huston served at the home from July 1, 1903, to October 10, 1932, and died February 3, 1934.

³⁹ “In Commemoration,” memorial program leaflet, May 28, 1939, Zablocki Collection, Milwaukee County Historical Society.

former lakebed is now covered by the interstate and by the abutment for the bridge that carries Zablocki Drive across the interstate. The balance of the lake site is now covered with graves in an expansion of cemetery Section 4.

A headstone-free area between Sections 49 and 50 indicates the line of an underground storm sewer that runs between those two sections. Another storm sewer runs along the northern edge of Sections E, G, and H. It emerges from a culvert beneath the residential neighborhood to the west and flows past the cemetery to a culvert by the administration and maintenance building. From there the water flows to Lake Wheeler on the medical center campus. The floor of the channel is poured concrete, and the sides are lined with a mortared Lannon stone blocks laid in random courses. Old footbridges cross the channel, whose verge is protected by an iron-pipe railing. The channel was probably constructed by the Work Projects Administration in 1939, and its masonry resembles the platforms that support the "Bivouac of the Dead" tablets throughout the cemetery.⁴⁰ This once picturesque storm sewer is currently concealed by a chain link fence and a dense thicket of vegetation.

d. Buildings and structures:

Headstones. A reporter visiting the cemetery on Memorial Day 1874 noted that "each soldier's grave has a headstone, on which are cut the name, date and other particulars."⁴¹ These early headstones were paid for by the Soldiers' Home and bore the name of the deceased, his company and regiment, date of death, and age at death. (See Figure 8.) Made of marble, they were subject to weathering, and all but two have been replaced over time.⁴² The rest of the headstones in the cemetery, with certain exceptions, were paid for by the War Department or the VA. The first standard government headstones were installed for the Quartermaster's Department in the national military cemeteries between 1874 and about 1878. Congress authorized the erection of similar markers over soldiers' graves in private, village, and city cemeteries in February 1879, with the first such headstones being installed in the second half of 1880.⁴³ The first standard federal headstones appear to have been installed at the Soldiers' Home Cemetery in 1882, and the *Milwaukee Sentinel* reported in May of that year that "[a]bout one hundred headstones for deceased soldiers are to be erected in the veterans' cemetery at Soldiers' Home during the next few days."⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Berglin and Roise, "National Home," 44-45.

⁴¹ "At the National Home..." *Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 1, 1874, 4.

⁴² The two early headstones that survive mark the graves of Roger L. Walsh, Co. E, 8th Ohio Volunteers, died May 6, 1876, Sec. 3, no. 46, and Henry Meinhart, Co. E, 11th Pennsylvania Cavalry, died May 3, 1876, Sec. 3, gr. 48.

⁴³ Act of Feb. 3, 1879, 20 Statutes at Large 281; *Report of the Secretary of War*, 1880, vol. 1, House Ex. Doc. 1, pt. 2, 46th Cong., 3d sess., 334.

⁴⁴ *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 27, 1882, 2.

The standard headstones are marble with a rounded top and bear the name, company, and regiment of the deceased in raised letters on a recessed shield. The earliest examples measure about 10" wide x 4" deep x 24" high above ground. Headstones cut after 1902 are 12" wide. Veterans buried after 1922 have so-called "General"-type headstones. These, measuring about 12" w x 4" d x 24" high above ground, bear the name, home state, service information, and date of death of the deceased cut into the front surface of the stone, with a Latin cross or a Star of David in an inset circular field appearing above the name. Stones made beginning in the early 1960s are similar but replace the circular field with an incised circle around the emblem of belief. Stones installed after about 1988 omit the circle entirely. Where a spouse or child is buried in the same grave as a veteran, the second individual's name is carved on to the rear of the headstone.⁴⁵

Flat granite markers – some measuring about 12" high x 24" wide x 4" deep, others measuring 12" high x 18" wide x 4" deep – are used in the cemetery's three cremated remains sections (37C, CAA, and CAB) and in Sections E through M to facilitate maintenance of the grounds.

Many headstones in the cemetery are replacements for earlier markers that became damaged or worn or that were found to contain incorrect information. Formerly, headstones were replaced with new examples in the style that was current at the time of replacement. Beginning in the 1970s or 1980s, headstones with recessed shields were replaced when worn with headstones bearing the incised outline of a shield around the name and service information. This type of headstone is no longer used, and recessed-shield headstones are now replaced by replica recessed-shield headstones.

There are no Confederate burials in Wood National Cemetery, but it was previously believed that there were some. In 1900, Congress funded the erection of headstones over the graves of Confederate soldiers buried at Arlington National Cemetery. The Quartermaster's Department selected a design for these headstones that had a pointed top and bore the initials "C.S.A." under the name of the deceased. In 1906, Congress directed the Secretary of War to identify and mark the graves of all Confederate soldiers and sailors who had died in federal hospitals and prisons during the Civil War. The secretary was instructed to use white marble headstones similar to those used at Arlington. Although the only graves the Commissioner for Marking Confederate Graves identified and marked in Wisconsin were in Forest Hill Cemetery, Madison, at least three burials at the Soldiers' Home appear to have been assumed by local officials to have been Confederate: Lewis Jolliot, private in Battery G, Second Missouri Light Artillery, who died in 1885; John Sheehy, Company K, First Missouri Light Artillery,

⁴⁵ Information on the development of federal headstones provided by historian Jennifer Perunko, National Cemetery Administration.

died 1890; and William Ryan, private in Company C, Tenth Tennessee Infantry, who died 1892. These men were all buried in Section 1. Rather than purchase completely new headstones, it appears that workers modified the existing recessed-shield headstones over these men's graves by grinding their rounded tops into points. In 2007, Zablocki Medical Center nurse Paul Komlodi and Civil War re-enactor Rich LeCount, curious that Confederate soldiers should have been buried at a federal veterans' home, discovered that Jolliot and Ryan had, in fact, served in Union military units. Through Komlodi and LeCount's prompting, the National Cemetery Administration installed replacement headstones over Ryan and Jolliot's graves in 2008. Sheehey's grave, as of 2013, retains its modified headstone.⁴⁶ (See Figure 9.)

Graves of employees buried in Section 8 are marked with a variety of private headstones.⁴⁷ The most prominent of these are those of Gen. Kilburn Knox and Harry E. Ransom. Knox was governor of the Soldiers' Home from May 1889 until his death in April 1891. His gray granite monument, in the form of a Classical pedestal with base, plinth, dado, cornice, and pyramidal cap, was made by the Joseph Shaver Granite and Marble Company of Milwaukee and paid for with \$600 raised by the members of the home. The monument was unveiled on Memorial Day, 1892. It originally stood in the old Section 8, now covered by Interstate 94, but was moved along with Knox's remains to their current location in July 1959.⁴⁸

Harry Ransom's headstone is a tall monolithic slab of mottled pink granite. Ransom served as a lieutenant colonel in the infantry reserve during World War I, and his headstone prominently displays emblems of his membership in *la Société des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux*, or "the Forty & Eight." This fraternity, founded in Philadelphia by members of the American Legion in 1920, adopted a French boxcar, such as those that carried American soldiers to the front during World War I, as its emblem, and a boxcar pulled by a locomotive and tender is depicted on the headstone. Ransom served as *Chef*

⁴⁶ *Final Report of the Commissioner Appointed to continue the work of locating and marking the graves of Confederate dead*, Dec. 9, 1912, H. Doc. 1105, 62d Cong., 3d sess.; "Wood National Cemetery, a Brief History," 10; "Fallen Civil War veterans finally rejoin Union side," *OnMilwaukee.com*, May 23, 2008, viewed July 17, 2013. The specific graves in question are Sheehey: Sec. 1, gr. 117; Jolliot, Sec. 1, gr. 380; and Ryan, Sec. 1, gr. 657. Sgt. Edward Lynch served in the same Tennessee regiment as Ryan; his grave at Wood N/C (Sec. 1, gr. 154) may also have had a modified headstone, but it is now marked by a replacement modern stone installed in the 1990s.

⁴⁷ Not all employee graves are in Section 8. Price H. Russom, who died Nov. 10, 1930, is buried under a recessed-shield headstone in Sec. 6, gr. 154.

⁴⁸ "Monument to General Knox," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 13, 1892, 3; "Decoration day at the National Home," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 2, 1892, 6.

de chemin de fer ("President of the Railroad") or national head of the fraternity in 1937, a fact also acknowledged on the headstone.⁴⁹

The only private headstone remaining in the cemetery outside of Section 8 is the one in Section 14 marking the joint grave for brothers Hiram N. and Arthur J. Robinson, veterans of the Civil War. The gray granite stone bears the following inscriptions (spelling and punctuation are as they appear on the stone):

[top]
HIRAM N. | ARTHUR J.
ROBINSON

[front]
Co. E 33. Reg. Wis. Inft.
1862-1865
We have answered the call of the reveille
The tattoo and the retreat,
We have rallied to the call of the long roll,
From our bivouac of rest and sleep.
We now lay in peacefull slumber,
As the tap's sound there last solemn beat.
ARobinson.

Fourteen-year-old Hiram Robinson ran away from his parents' home in Orfordville, Wisconsin, in July 1862, and enlisted in the Wisconsin volunteers. His father intervened before Hiram could join his regiment, and he returned home, only to run away and enlist again the next month. "Father was put to a stress to decide what to do," Arthur later wrote, "and as I had been begging him to allow me to enlist, he had finally concluded that it would be best to allow me to go with Hiram." Therefore, 16-year-old Arthur enlisted in the same regiment as Hiram, and they spent the war together. Hiram was later admitted to the Soldiers' Home, where he died in October 1903. Arthur paid for the private headstone bearing both their names, which was dedicated October 1, 1916. Arthur died at the Soldiers' Home in May 1930.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ "History Highlights of the Forty & Eight," <http://www.fortyandeight.org/history-of-the-408/>, viewed July 19, 2013.

⁵⁰ Arthur J. Johnson, *Memorandum and Anecdotes of the Civil War, 1862 to 1865* (Spokane, Wash.: Press of Coates, Hughes & Coates, 1910), 6, copy in Wisconsin Historical Society; Paul Johnson, "The Hiram & Arthur Robinson Grave," <http://www.newnorth.net/~johhson/cw/grave.html>, viewed July 19, 2013. The Robinsons are buried in Sec. 14, gr. 197.

Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Monument (Building 120). This 46'-high, 85-ton stone monument sits on an elevated knoll in the middle of Section 12. Built entirely of granite, the monument comprises a podium and a rectangular shaft surmounted by a statue of a Union infantryman in greatcoat and kepi standing with his rifle at parade rest. Four pyramids of iron cannonballs form ornaments at the corners of the monument. The shaft comprises three massive quarry-faced blocks. The blocks of the pedestal are also quarry faced on their vertical surfaces, but are hammer-finished otherwise. The central block in the podium is polished and decorated with incised inscriptions and ornamental designs executed by sandblasting over stencils. A motif of crossed sabers appears on each face of this block, with the north face also displaying crossed cannon and the south face bearing an anchor design. The capstone on the pedestal carries a roundel on its east side that displays crossed flags, also executed though sandblasting.⁵¹

The inscriptions are as follows.

[East (front)] "ERECTED / BY THE SOLDIERS / AND SAILORS MONUMENT / ASSOCIATION / N.W.B.N.H. FOR D.V.S. / JAN. 1903"
[North] "THE UNION FOREVER"
[West (rear)] "IN MEMORY OF COMRADES BURIED IN THIS HOME CEMETERY"
[South] "1861-1865"

Members of the home formed the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument Association in 1901 to raise funds for a monument in the cemetery. Patrick O'Connell, a veteran army engineer, served as president of the association, and under his leadership the association raised \$2,500 through subscriptions and refreshment sales from a stand on the grounds. The Joseph Shaver Granite and Marble Company of Milwaukee built the monument in 1902 and 1903 using New Hampshire granite. Joseph C. Shaver, the founder and owner of the company, designed the monument himself. A 1902 report in the monumental-stonework trade journal *The Reporter* noted that Shaver intended to have the statue at the top executed in bronze and to have two bronze cannon, an anchor, and four cannon balls positioned around the base. In the end, the statue was made of granite and the cannon and anchor merely represented as ornamental designs on the monument's podium.⁵²

⁵¹ Period sources alternately give the height of the monument as 60' or 70'. Field measurement indicates it is just 46' high, however. The 85-ton weight quoted in historic sources may also be suspect.

⁵² "Proposed monuments," *The Reporter* (Aug. 1901), 33; "Proposed Monuments and Monumental News," *Granite* (Apr. 1, 1902), 25; "Among old soldiers," *Wisconsin Weekly Advocate*, Aug. 28, 1902, 1; "Among the dealers," *The Reporter* (July 1902), 7. The Shaver firm was a leading stonework supplier in the city. In addition to facade and interior stonework for many buildings in Milwaukee and elsewhere, the company erected the Barr-granite pedestal of the Schiller-Goethe Monument in the city's Washington Park in 1908; see *The Reporter* (June 1908), 29 and (July 1908), 7.

The foundation for the monument was built in August 1902, and the entire work was completed in January 1903. It was dedicated on May 30, 1903, during the annual Memorial Day observances. Fifteen hundred veterans marched to the cemetery from the home's administration building, where they were joined by a crowd of about 2,000 civilians. A reporter for the Milwaukee Sentinel described the scene:

Hundreds of graves around the spot had been bedecked with flowers during the early morning, making a beautiful sight. The speaker of the day was Former Senator John L. Mitchell, and after a prayer by Chaplain E. P. Wright and a selection by the band, he was introduced by Gov. Cornelius Wheeler. Mr. Mitchell's address was a glowing eulogy of the men who had fallen, while fighting for their country in the days of 1861 to 1865, and of the significance and moral value of such a monument as was now unveiled.⁵³

Historian Sarah Denver Beetham has identified the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument as an example of a formulaic type of military monument developed in the United States after the Civil War, but she appraises its simple design as the "much sparer and less expensive option for a community looking to erect a monument to its war dead quickly and cheaply."⁵⁴

The mortar joints in the monument were repointed in 2002 and more extensive cleaning and masonry restoration work carried out in June and August 2010.⁵⁵

Cemetery Reception House (Building 57). The reception house is a one-floor octagonal building built of rock-faced cast-concrete blocks on a poured-concrete foundation. It measures 6' on a side. There is a door on the north side, a brick chimney on the southeast side, and double-hung windows on the northwest, northeast, west, and south sides. The lintels and sills are cast concrete; the window and door frames, plus the eaves, are wood. The building has a flat-seam, tent-form metal roof with a ball finial at the apex. The single-room interior has tongue-and-groove wood flooring and a tongue-and-groove ceiling with quirked edges. The building covers about 185 square feet and was

Burial records indicate Patrick O'Connell was originally interred in Sec. 14, gr. 54 after his death in 1905, but his remains were removed to Dayton, Ohio, in 1909.

⁵³ *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 31, 1903.

⁵⁴ Sarah Denver Beetham, *Soldiers' and Sailors' Monuments and the Rhetoric of Reunion* (Master of Arts thesis, University of Delaware, 2008), 37-38, 40.

⁵⁵ Glenn Madderom to George L. Vogt, Feb. 7, 2002, NCA.

constructed in 1900 for \$380. At one time an indexed file of gravesites was kept in this building for visitors' reference.⁵⁶

Memorial platform. A raised concrete platform 15' x 10' surrounded by a metal railing stands immediately south of the reception house. It is used as a speakers' rostrum on memorial occasions. Two concrete flag stands flank a flight of steps along the platform's north side. A bronze plaque on the west side notes that the structure was reconstructed or improved through the efforts of eagle scout Mitchell Casper in 2009.

Concrete pad. A 28' x 25' concrete pad for use on ceremonial occasions is located immediately east of the reception house.

Committal Shelter. Built in 1989 at the southeast corner of Section 48A, the committal shelter provides a covered space where burial services are held.⁵⁷

Administration and maintenance building. The present administration and maintenance building was completed in February 1994. U-shaped in plan, it is built of concrete and faced in brown brick laid in running bond. It has a hipped roof with deeply overhanging eaves in a style loosely inspired by the Prairie School. It provides about 8,000 square feet of office, meeting, shop, locker room, and storage space. A service yard behind the administration building contains two substantial metal sheds for equipment storage.

AMVETS carillon. An electronic carillon manufactured by Schulmerich Carillons of Sellersville, Pennsylvania, is housed in a steel tower adjacent to the administration building. The loudspeakers and electronic components that play tunes at set intervals throughout the day are housed in a louvered box at the top of the tower, while three bronze bells for decoration are hung dead on open steelwork below the box. A bronze plaque mounted to a granite block at the base of the tower reads,

AMVETS dedicated this carillon as a / living memorial to Wisconsin veterans
/ who served their country honorably / for the cause of freedom / April 18,
1987 / Wood National Cemetery / Milwaukee, Wisconsin / "As these bells
ring . . . honored dead rest . . . freedom lives . . .

The quote that concludes the plaque is adapted from President Harry S. Truman's remarks at the dedication of the first AMVETS carillon at Arlington National Cemetery

⁵⁶ *Description of Buildings at Northwestern Branch N.H.D.V.S.*, [1912?], 156, Zablocki Library; "The dead have a bivouac here," *Milwaukee Journal*, Oct. 11, 1931. Date and cost of the reception house appear on an annotated "Building Schedule" found in the Zablocki Library collections. No other source for this information has been found.

⁵⁷ Julin, "Northwestern Branch," 26.

in 1949. The American Veterans of World War II, or AMVETS, has placed similar carillons at dozens of veterans cemeteries in the United States and abroad as part of an ongoing program of its National Service Foundation. The carillon at Wood was the forty-third donated by AMVETS to a veterans' cemetery, and its dedication was attended by about 400 people including Wisconsin governor Tommy Thompson. The carillon tower originally stood in the northern portion of the cemetery but was moved to its present location about 1994.⁵⁸

Streetcar right of way. A former streetcar right of way, now used as a path for high-tension electrical power lines, passes between Sections 5, 6, and 7 and Section 1 within Calvary Cemetery. The Board of Managers of the Soldiers' Home authorized the Milwaukee Street Railway Company to build an elevated streetcar line along this path in 1892, and the cars of the Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company began operating along it about 1898. (See Figure 7.) An elevated station along the line connected to a path between what are now Sections 6 and 7. The conversion of the right of way to a ground-level, four-track rapid transit operation in 1924 led to the demolition of the elevated track and the station and to the removal of all the graves in Section 2 to plots in Sections 5.I, 5.II, and 6.⁵⁹

Interstate 94. The East-West Expressway, now Interstate 94, was built across the cemetery in the late 1950s. Cutting east to west through the natural ravine that once separated the earliest portion of the cemetery from rest of the Soldiers' Home grounds, the expressway required the draining and filling in of Lake Huston and the removal of the graves in the original Section 8. Veterans' graves from Section 8 were relocated to Section 38 in July 1959; civilian and staff graves were moved to the present Section 8.

f. Small-scale features:

Flagpole. The current cemetery flagpole, near the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, was put up in 1956 through the efforts of the Gold Star Mothers, an organization for parents of soldiers killed in military service.

Headquarters flagpoles. Two flagpoles in front of the administration building were donated by the Wisconsin chapter of the Jewish War Veterans and dedicated February 8, 1994. A granite marker between the poles commemorates the gift.

"Memorial Day Order" tablet. A cast-iron tablet, painted black with white-painted lettering, reproduces the text of Grand Army of the Republic General Orders No. 11,

⁵⁸ AMVETS National Service Foundation National Carillon Program, <http://www.amvetsnsf.org/carillon.html>, viewed July 24, 2013; Gary W. Smith to Area Director, VA National Cemetery Area Office, Apr. 22, 1987, NCA.

⁵⁹ Berglin and Roise, "National Home," 28.

May 5, 1868. This order, written by N. P. Chipman and signed by Gen. John A. Logan, issued the first call for a national memorial day observance. The plaque is mounted to a granite boulder near the reception house.

"Bivouac of the Dead" tablets. Seven cast-iron tablets installed at intervals along the cemetery roads display pairs of lines drawn from Theodore O'Hara's 1847 poem "The Bivouac of the Dead." The U.S. Army Quartermaster's Department installed these tablets at most Soldiers' Homes and national cemeteries in the early 1880s. The tablets at the Soldiers' Home were originally mounted on wood posts. At the instigation of home manager Col. Charles M. Pearsall, the Work Projects Administration cleaned and painted the tablets in 1941 and reset them in angled mountings made of Lannon stone, a dolomite used extensively for building in Wisconsin. The tablets and their stone mounts were restored in 2002.⁶⁰

Gettysburg Address tablet. A tablet bearing the text of Pres. Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is displayed adjacent to Section CAA. Painted bluish-gray with white lettering, the cast-iron tablet is mounted vertically on iron rods between two buttressed piers constructed of local Lannon stone. The tablet is identical to ones cast at the Rock Island Arsenal in 1909 for the U.S. Army Quartermaster's Department in 1909 under a special appropriation from Congress and placed at seventy-seven national cemeteries. The tablet at Wood was probably installed at the Soldiers' Home cemetery about the same time. Its original position in the cemetery is unknown, but it was cleaned, painted, and remounted in its current location between the stone piers by the Work Projects Administration in September 1941. The tablet and piers were restored in 2002.⁶¹

Memorial area plaque. Since 1976, the Soldiers and Sailors Monument has shared its section of the cemetery with memorial markers that commemorate veterans whose remains are not buried in the cemetery. A bronze plaque mounted to a granite block at the eastern edge of the section explains, "The markers in this memorial area honor veterans whose remains have not been recovered or identified, where buried at sea, donated to science, or cremated and the ashes scattered."

"American War Mothers Memorial Avenue" tablet. This commemorative tablet is affixed to a stone located along the edge of Section 38A. The Milwaukee County chapter of the American War Mothers began planting and dedicating memorial elm trees along a road

⁶⁰ "Plaques take on new glitter in bivouac of dead soldiers," *Milwaukee Journal*, Sept. 21, 1941; Glenn Madderom to George L. Vogt, Feb. 7, 2002, NCA.

⁶¹ *Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1910*, 296; "Plaques take on new glitter in bivouac of dead soldiers," *Milwaukee Journal*, Sept. 21, 1941; Glenn Madderom to George L. Vogt, Feb. 7, 2002, NCA. The *Milwaukee Journal* article reported erroneously that the tablet was installed in the cemetery about 1881.

into the cemetery in the early 1930s. Additional trees were dedicated every few years until at least 1941. In June 1935, eighteen trees were planted and the road was given the name "American War Mothers Memorial Avenue"; the plaque was dedicated at that time. None of the elms survive, shaded now by an American linden tree.⁶²

AMVETS memorial marker. A granite marker in Section 4, donated by the Ralph A. Ignatowski AMVETS Post 60 of Oak Creek, Wisconsin, reads, "In remembrance of our forgotten heroes." It was dedicated May 16, 2010.

Medal of Honor plaque. A bronze plaque honoring the five Medal of Honor recipients buried in the cemetery reads, "This tree dedicated by the Veterans Administration in 1976 to America's Medal of Honor recipients who helped make this Bicentennial observance possible "by gallantry above and beyond the call of duty"." It was dedicated October 25, 1976, southeast of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, along with a sugar maple memorial tree, which still stands.⁶³

Afton Circle Memorial Walkway monuments. Eight granite commemorative monuments positioned along Afton Circle were donated to the cemetery by a variety of veterans' and veteran-service organizations. They are inscribed as follows:

- IN MEMORY AND HONOR OF UNITED STATES MARINES / "Once a Marine / always a Marine" / 1993 / BADGER DETACHMENT M.C.L.[.]
- FOURTH MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION / Uncommon Valor was a Common Virtue / WWII 1993 / WISCONSIN BADGERLAND CHAPTER No. 30
- Navy SEABEES / WITH WILLING HEARTS AND SKILLFUL HANDS THEY DIFFICULT WE DO AT ONCE, THE IMPOSSIBLE TAKES A BIT LONGER / SEABEES CAN DO / We Build We Fight
- WAVES National Badger Unit #39 / Dedicates this Memorial to Women of the Sea Services / NAVY WAVES / COAST GUARD SPARS / WOMEN MARINES / Still Something Special / September 1995
- VETERANS / OF FOREIGN WARS / OF THE / UNITED STATES / IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO SERVED / OVERSEAS IN TIME OF CONFLICT / DEDICATED BY / CHARLES E FIDLER MEMORIAL POST 9469 / AND AUXILIARY / 1995
- Memorial / A UNITED DEDICATION JUNE 1996 // GENERAL PEARSALL / POST 2028 / VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS // RAPHAEL HEINZ / POST 498 / AMERICAN LEGION // LOCATED AT THE ZABLOCKI VA MEDICAL CENTER / IN FOND MEMORY OF ALL WHO SERVED AND GAVE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

⁶² Dedication programs, June 16, 1935, Sept. 20, 1936; Sept. 25, 1938; June 25, 1941; undated news clippings [June 1935]; Charles M. Pearsall, memo to all members, Sept. 15, 1936; "War mothers dedicate trees," clipping from unknown newspaper, June 25, 1941; all in Zablocki Library scrapbooks.

⁶³ "Wood National Cemetery, a Brief History," 6.

- CHINA-BURMA-INDIA / THE FORGOTTEN THEATRE / WORLD WAR II / 1941-1945 / IN MEMORY AND HONR / OF THOSE WHO SERVED / CBIVA FOUNDED 1948 – MILWAUKEE, WI / DEDICATED BY MILWAUKEE BASHA #1
- In Remembrance • the Last Taps / DISABLED / AMERICAN / VETERANS / Milwaukee Chapter No. 1 & Auxiliary / 1996

g. Structures formerly in the cemetery but no longer extant

Small pavilion. An eight-sided open pavilion built of wood with a tent roof once stood at the highest point of the cemetery, in what is now Section 5. It appears in a photograph published in the 1890s (see Figure 1) and on a plat of Section 5 drawn in 1903.⁶⁴ Its dates of construction and demolition are uncertain, although a report of Memorial Day observances in 1874 makes reference to a “pavilion” standing in the cemetery by that date.⁶⁵

Cemetery guard station. A one-room cement-block guard station for the cemetery is mentioned in a ca. 1912 catalog of buildings at the home. Nothing more is known about this building.⁶⁶

First cemetery outhouse. This was a frame building containing one room. Its date of construction is unknown.⁶⁷

Second cemetery outhouse or Comfort Station (Building 75). A frame building 20.4' x 10.4' with hipped roof contained separate men's and women's toilet rooms. It was built in 1928 for \$375 and was located in the park north of Section 23A. It was demolished after 1988.⁶⁸

Cemetery tool house (Building 76). Built in 1919 for \$200, this wood-frame tool house was demolished in 1956.

⁶⁴ *Description of Buildings...*, 148; A. Wittemann, *National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, Northwestern Branch* (New York: Albertype Co., 1894); [*Plat book of the cemetery at the Northwestern Branch*], 1903-62, Zablocki Library.

⁶⁵ “At the National Home,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 31, 1876, 2.

⁶⁶ *Description of Buildings...*, 136.

⁶⁷ *Description of Buildings...*, 160.

⁶⁸ “Building Schedule at Veterans Administration, Wood, Wis.,” 1944 [annotated at unknown date], Zablocki Library; Potter Lawson, *Historic Preservation Plan to Identify, Inventory and Evaluate the Historic District located at Clement J. Zablocki Veterans Administration Medical Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin* (Pawlowsky Architects, 1988), 2.201.

Cemetery tool house (Building T-119). A Quonset hut used as a tool house formerly stood at the western end of American War Mothers Avenue. It is reputed to have been built in 1948. It was demolished after 1988.⁶⁹

Cemetery office (Building 122). Built in 1951 on a site north of the Soldiers' Home Surgeon's Quarters (Building 17) that is now within Section 37C, this single-floor frame residential building served for a time as the cemetery office. Clad in cement-asbestos panels and sitting atop a concrete-block foundation, the building contained living room, three bedrooms, kitchen, bath, and a single basement room. For many years a prefabricated trailer building stood immediate to the west, providing additional office space. The house and trailer were demolished after 1988.⁷⁰

Garage (Building 74). This was a five-car garage associated with the Surgeon's Quarters (Building 17). Like all the garages that follow, it was constructed of glazed masonry blocks and had a wood-frame roof. It was built in 1938 for \$1,300 on a site now within Section 37D. It was demolished after 1988.⁷¹

Garage (Building 95). This eight-car garage was near the Catholic Chaplain's Quarters (Building 14) was built 1938 for \$2,080. It was located on a site now within Section 40A and was demolished after 1988.⁷²

Garage (Building 96). This sixteen-car garage was built in 1939 for \$3,960 on a site behind Building 15 that is now located in Sections 40A and 39A. It was demolished after 1988.⁷³

Baseball pavilion (Building 68). Built in 1916 for \$800,⁷⁴ although another source says it was built in 1921.⁷⁵ It was removed in the 1980s for the construction of Sections A, B, C, and D.

h. Archeological sites: None within the cemetery boundaries.

⁶⁹ Construction date given in Kristin Gilpatrick Halverson, et al. "Northwestern Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers Historic District," Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. National Register of Historic Places registration form, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2005, 7-34.

⁷⁰ Lawson, *Preservation Plan*, 2-238.

⁷¹ Lawson, *Preservation Plan*, 2-183.

⁷² Lawson, *Preservation Plan*, 2-183.

⁷³ Lawson, *Preservation Plan*, 2-183.

⁷⁴ Buildings list.

⁷⁵ Berglin and Roise, 35.

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WOOD NATIONAL CEMETERY

HALS WI-6

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FIGURE PAGES



Figure 1. The Soldiers' Home cemetery, ca. 1894, view looking northwest across the western end of Spring Lake. The pavilion is visible in the center of the photo at the top of the hill. From A. Wittemann, *National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, Northwestern Branch* (New York: Albertype Co., 1894).



Figure 2. This not entirely to scale plat shows the contrast between the small, irregularly shaped blocks laid out in 1871 at the north end of the Soldiers' Home grounds and the rectilinear arrangement adopted as the cemetery was expanded southward in the 1890s. The lake was created ca. 1875. Burial registers indicate the block numbering used on the map was adopted in mid 1902. H. G. Claus, *Map of the Cemetery of the North Western Branch N.H.D.V.S.*, March 1903, copy provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration.

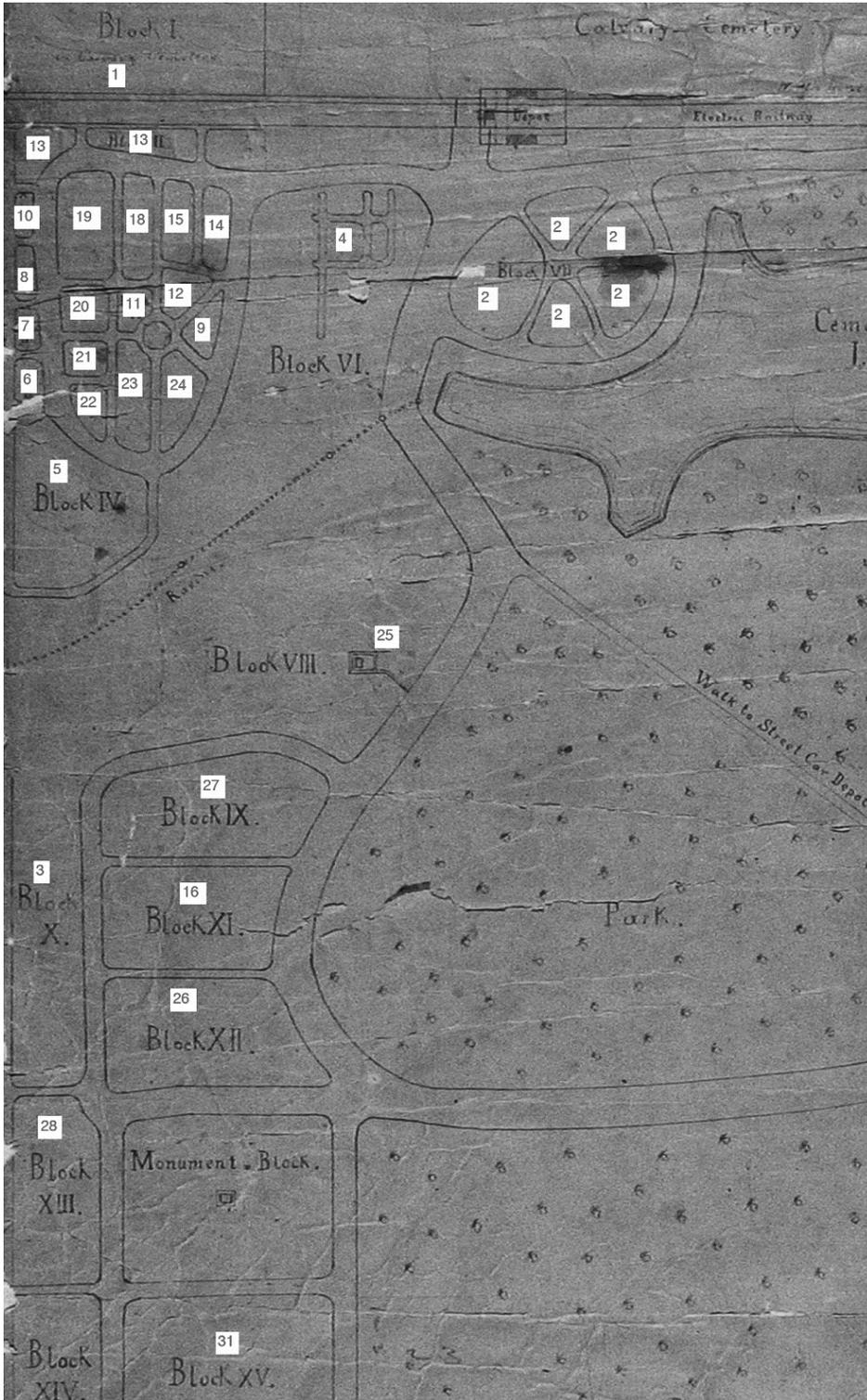


Figure 3. Detail from H. G. Claus, *Map of the Cemetery of the North Western Branch N.H.D.V.S.*, March 1903, with earlier block numbers overlaid.

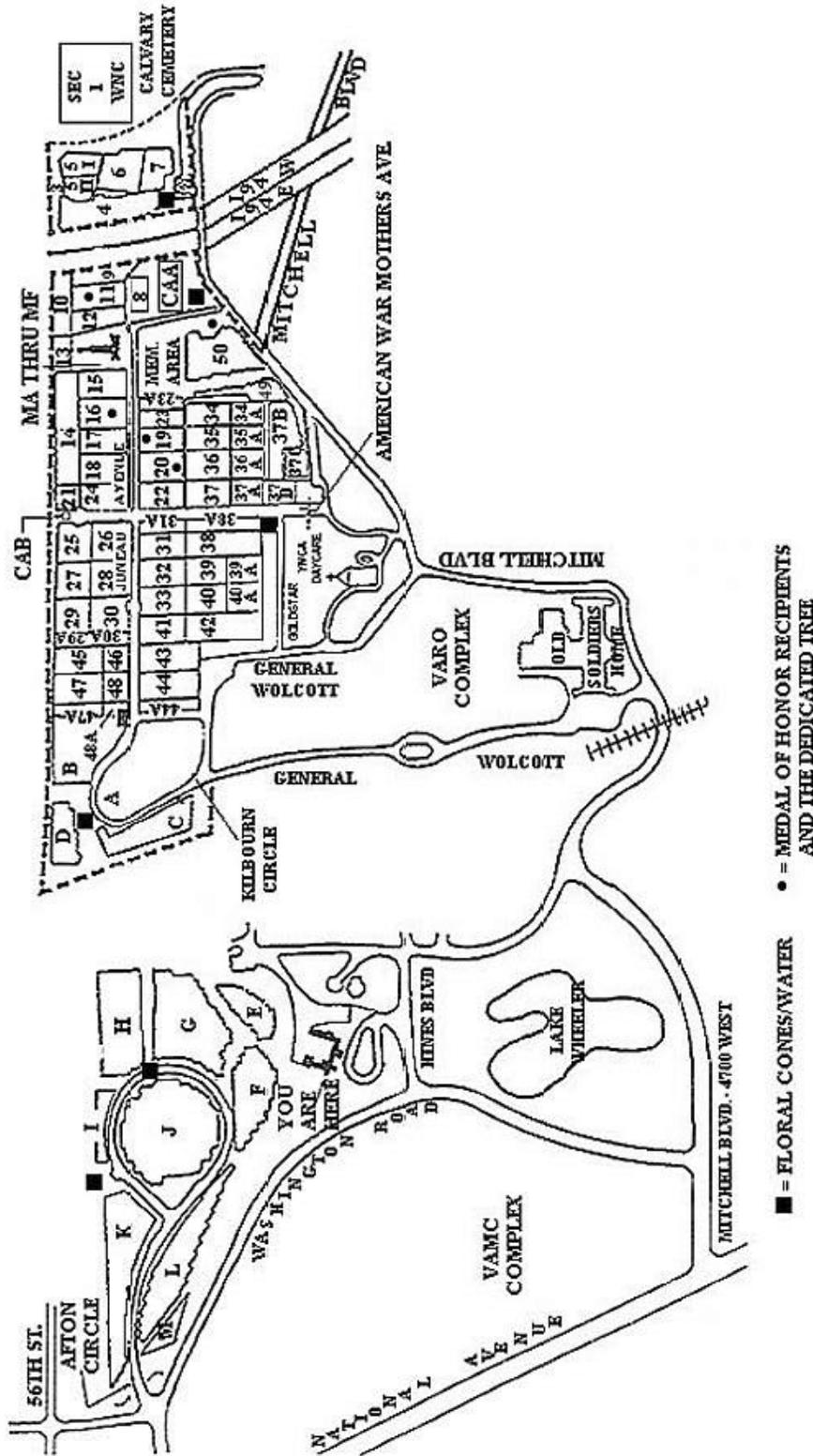


Figure 4. Diagrammatic map of Wood National Cemetery, 2013, showing the modern section numbers. From <http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/wood.asp>

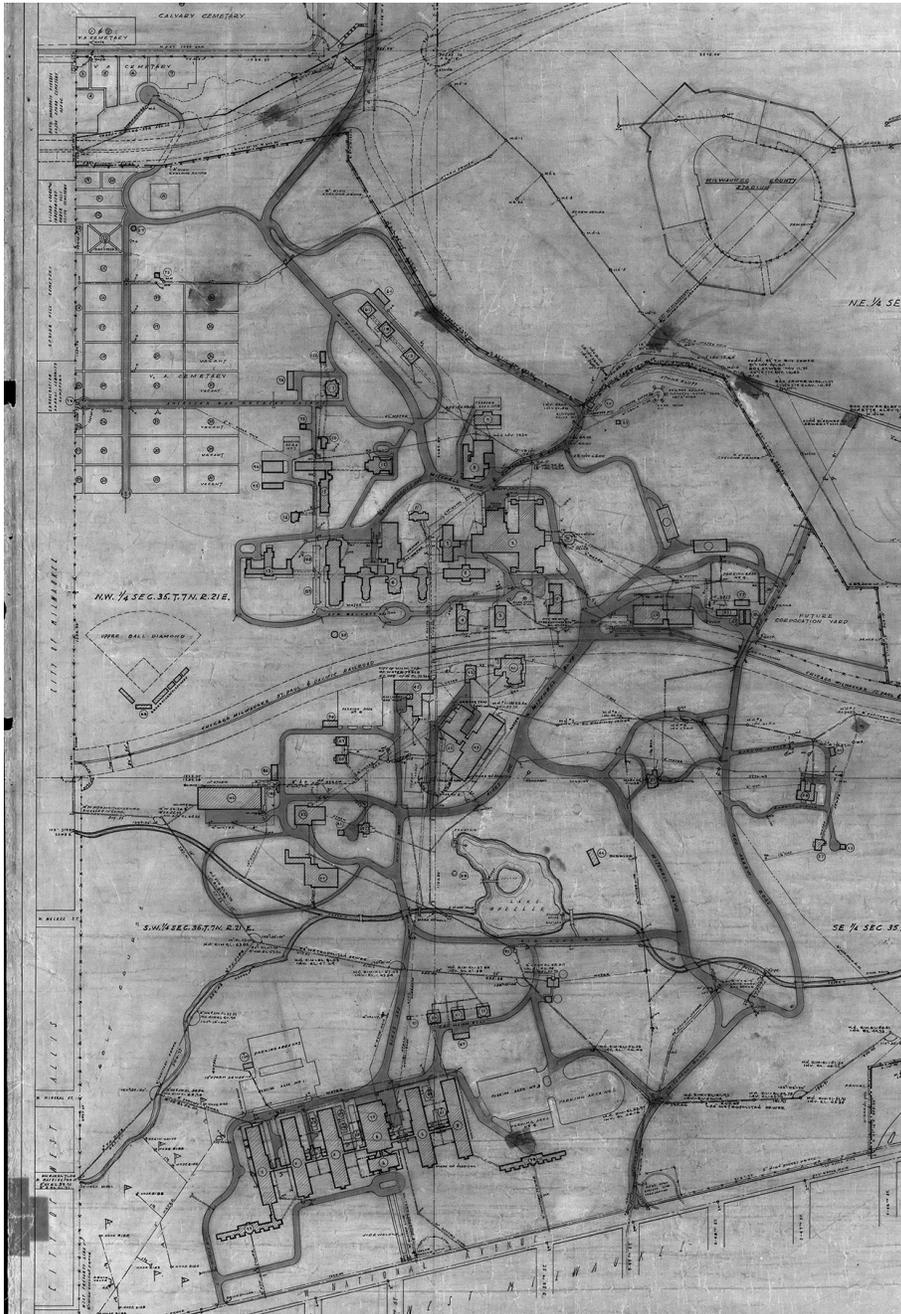


Figure 5. The position of the cemetery in relation to the entire VA Medical Center campus is shown on this 1955 plan. As depicted, the cemetery fills the northwest corner of the grounds, seen at upper left; today, it also covers the ball field at center left and the empty land between the two water courses at lower left. The proposed route of the East-West Expressway (now Interstate 94) bisects the cemetery at upper left, partially covering the outline of the recently drained Lake Huston. Milwaukee County Stadium (now the site of Miller Park) appears at the upper right, and the VA medical center fills the rest of the plan. Detail from *Plot Plan of Veterans Administration Center, Wood, Wisconsin, from 1917 survey by J. A. Prudell, engineering officer, redrawn & revised 1949, 1954, 1955*. Courtesy of Clement J. Zablocki Veterans Affairs Medical Center Library, Milwaukee, Wisc.

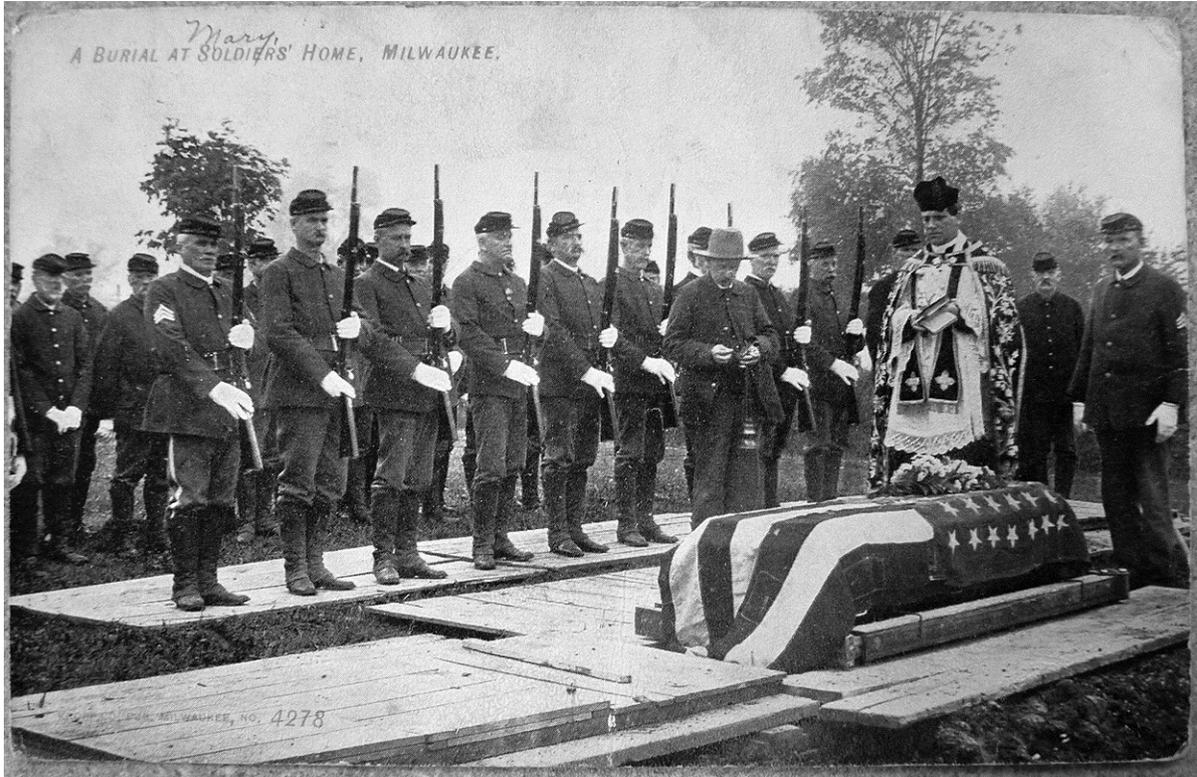


Figure 6. A Catholic veteran's funeral at the Soldiers' Home Cemetery, ca. 1905. From a postcard in the collection of the Clement J. Zablocki Veterans Affairs Medical Center Library, Milwaukee, Wisc.



Figure 7. The Soldiers' Home Cemetery in the 1910s or 1920s. View looking west into Section 2. The elevated streetcar track at right runs along the northern boundary of the cemetery; Calvary Cemetery lies beyond. Photograph courtesy of Clement J. Zablocki Veterans Affairs Medical Center Library, Milwaukee, Wisc.



Figure 8. The headstone for Henry Meinhart, Co. E, 11th Pennsylvania Cavalry, who died May 3, 1876, and was buried in Sec. 3, gr. 48. This is one of two surviving early, National Asylum headstones in the cemetery. Photograph by the author.



Figure 9. The standard federal headstone over the grave of John Sheehey, Sec. 1, gr. 117, with its rounded top ground into a point to mark Sheehey (mistakenly) as a Confederate veteran. Photograph by the author.

APPENDIX I:
 LAND PARCELS ADDED TO AND REMOVED
 FROM WOOD NATIONAL CEMETERY, 1974-92

The veterans cemetery at Wood, Wisconsin, was administered as part of the adjoining medical center until 1974, when it was transferred from the VA's Department of Medicine and Surgery to the VA's National Cemetery System. This chart lists all land transfers between the medical center and what is now the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) between 1972 and 1992.

Note that Section 1 of Wood National Cemetery lies within the privately owned Calvary Cemetery. Although it is not federal property, it is maintained by NCA as part of the national cemetery.

Date	Parcel	Acreage
1974	Land comprising Sections 3-7 (2.9273 acres) plus Sections 8-50 and future Sections A-D (31.4476 acres) transferred to the National Cemetery System	34.3749
1978	Addition	6.2693
1981	1978 addition wholly returned	-6.2693
1984	Addition in 2 parcels (A & B)	4.8507
1986	Parcel B of 1984 addition returned	-2.5
1986	Addition for Sections E-M	12
1992	Return of land behind Building 17	-0.1786
1992	Addition for Admin Building	1.844
	Total federally owned acreage of Wood National Cemetery	50.391
	Acreage of Section 1 (in Calvary Cemetery)	0.7
	Total acreage of Wood National Cemetery	51.091

APPENDIX II:
 CEMETERY SECTIONS BY DATE OF FIRST INTERMENT

The table below gives the year the first interments were made in each section of Wood National Cemetery. What are now known as Sections 3, 5.I, 5.II, and 6 (as well as Sections 2 and 8, which no longer exist) made up the original cemetery as laid out in 1871. All other sections are additions to the original plan made over time as additional grave sites were required. Beginning in the 1930s, older sections previously regarded as full were reopened by converting pathways and other open spaces into burial sites.

Section	Year of first interment	Years of significant expansion and notes
2	1871	All interments in Section 2 removed to Sections 5.I, 5.II, and 6 ca. 1924.
3	1871	1939
5.I	1871	1940
5.II	1871	1940
6	1871	1940, 1944, 1981. Civilian burials were made in this section in 1926, 1935, 1940
8	1871	All Soldiers' Home staff interments in Section 8 were moved to a new Section 8 in July 1959. Military burials were moved to Section 38.
7	1872	1940, 1944, 1981
1	1875	Section 1 is part of Calvary Cemetery and not federally owned. It is not part of the Northwestern Branch NHDVS NHL District.
4	1887	1940, 1981
10	1890	1939
11	1894	1939, 1980
9	1896	1939, 1980
12	1897	1939, 1980
15	1897	1948
13	1900	1927 (only a few burials made)
14	1903	1946, 1947
16	1905	1947
17	1908	1948
18	1910	1948
19	1912	1950
20	1915	1950
21	1917	1949
22	1917	1950

24	1922	1949
23	1926	
25	1928	
26	1931	
28	1935	
27	1937	
29	1941	
30	1942	1964
31	1944	
32	1946	1950
23A	1948	
33	1951	
34	1952	
35	1954	
36	1955	
37	1957	
40	1958	
new 8	1959	
31A	1959	
39	1959	
38	1960	
38A	1960	
41	1962	
42	1963	
34A	1965	
37A	1965	
35A	1966	
36A	1966	
29A	1968	
43	1968	
30A	1970	
44	1970	
44A	1972	
45	1972	
47	1973	
46	1974	
47A	1975	
48	1975	
48A	1976	
A	1976	

B	1976	
Memorial	1976	This section contain no remains, only memorial headstones.
D	1977	
C	1981	A single interment was made in this section in 1973.
37B	1984	
49	1985	
50	1986	Single interments were made in this section in 1973 and 1983.
H	1987	
CAA	1987	This section is for cremated remains.
G	1988	
I	1989	
J	1990	A single interment was made in this section in 1983.
E	1991	
F	1991	
K	1992	
L	1993	
M	1994	
37C	1995	A single interment was made in this section in 1980.
39A	1995	
40A	1995	
37D	1996	
CAB	1998	This section is for cremated remains.

APPENDIX III.
 CONCURRENCE BETWEEN MODERN SECTION NUMBERS
 AND HISTORIC BLOCK NUMBERS

Cemetery burial records suggest that Soldiers' Home staff did not record the precise locations of individual graves until the early 1880s. At that time, the various portions of the cemetery – called blocks – were assigned letters. These letters were changed to numbers in the early 1890s, with Block A becoming Block 1, Block B becoming Block 2, and so on. (The letter Q and equivalent number 17 appear not to have been used.) An alternative, simplified system that divides the cemetery in numbered sections was adopted in mid 1902 and is still used today.

Current section number	Equivalent 1880s block letters	Equivalent 1890s block numbers
1	A	1
2 ⁷⁶	M	13
3	F,G,H,J	6,7,8,10
4	E	5
5.I	I,K,L,N,O,R,S,T	9,11,12,14,15,18,19,20
5.II	U,V,W,Y	21,22,23,24
6	D	4
7	B	2
8 ⁷⁷	"Knox"	25
9	[not yet laid out in the 1880s]	27
10	C	3
11	P	16
12	[not yet laid out in the 1880s]	26
13	[ditto]	28
Monument section	[ditto]	29 or 30
14	[ditto]	29 or 30
15	[ditto]	31

⁷⁶ All interments in Section 2 were removed to Sections 5.I, 5.II, and 6 ca. 1924.

⁷⁷ Soldiers' Home staff interments in Section 8 were moved to the current Section 8 in July 1959. Military burials were moved to Section 38.

APPENDIX IV.
MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS INTERRED AND MEMORIALIZED
AT WOOD NATIONAL CEMETERY

Ordinary Seaman James K. Duncan (Civil War), Sec. 19, gr. 41
Private Milton Matthews (Civil War), Sec. 11, gr. 61
Corporal Winthrop D. Putnam (Civil War), Sec. 16, gr. 109
Private Lewis A. Rounds (Civil War), Sec. 20, gr. 256
Boatswain's Mate Michael McCormick (Civil War), Sec. MA, site 10A (monument only)