

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

SENT TO D.C.  
9/28/95

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Oak Hill Cemetery

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1000 Block North Main Street, SR 97 and 100  not for publication

city or town Lewistown  vicinity

state Illinois code IL county Fulton code 057 zip code 61542

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William L. Wheeler / SHP 9-26-95  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____

Oak Hill Cemetery  
Name of Property

Fulton County, Illinois  
County and State

**5. Classification**

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

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary/Cemetery  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary/Cemetery  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A  
walls N/A  
N/A  
roof N/A  
other N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Literature

Period of Significance

1915

Significant Dates

1915

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Western Illinois University Archives

Oak Hill Cemetery  
Name of Property

Fulton, Illinois  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** approximately 13 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	5
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7	4	1	1	20
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4	4	7	6	1	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

3 

1	5
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7	4	1	4	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	4	7	6	0	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Lois Ganyard, Assistant Planner

organization Western Illinois Regional Council date August 1, 1995

street & number 223 S. Randolph St. telephone 309-837-3941

city or town Macomb state IL zip code 61455

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Lewistown Township Cemetery Board, Mark Lange Trustee

street & number 203 North Illinois St. telephone 309-547-2013

city or town Lewistown state IL zip code 61542

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Oak Hill Cemetery

DESCRIPTION

General Description. Oak Hill Cemetery is located in Lewistown, Fulton County, Illinois, a town of 2,800, situated approximately 40 miles southwest of Peoria. It lies between two rivers; the Illinois River which flows from Joliet to its junction with the Mississippi River at Grafton and the Spoon River which rises near Kewanee and meets the Illinois River above Havana, approximately 8 miles southeast of Lewistown. Access to Lewistown is from U. S. Route 24 which runs from Peoria to Quincy, from State Route 97 which runs from Springfield to just east of Knoxville, and State Route 100 which runs from Alton to Canton. The two state routes proceed through Lewistown on Main Street. Oak Hill Cemetery is on the west side of Main Street about one-half mile north of the central business district.

The Lewistown Cemetery Association which operated Oak Hill was a function of the city until 1950 when the Township Cemetery Act was passed. At that time, the cemetery was turned over to a newly constituted Township Cemetery Board. Any notes, minutes of meetings and so forth pre-dating 1950 are missing, either lost or perhaps lying hidden and ignored in some attic. The first tract of land contained approximately one acre and is located at the southeast corner of the cemetery. Courthouse records show that the second plot of land north and west of the original parcel, approximately 6 1/2 acres, was deeded to the Lewistown Cemetery Association in 1865 by Rueben and Ruth McDowell for a price of \$100. The Greenwood Addition of approximately 6 acres was acquired from George Shawver in the 1890s, at a cost of \$2000. Two later additions brought the total acreage of the cemetery to 29 1/4 acres. Only the south portion of the cemetery including the original tract, second plot, and the Greenwood Addition are being nominated to the National Register as this area was the part of the cemetery familiar to Edgar Lee Masters during the period when he lived in Lewistown and drew inspiration for the *Spoon River Anthology*. The south portion of the cemetery contain many of the graves identified with the *Anthology*, an area comprising approximately 13 acres.

The topography of the cemetery is one of hills, valleys, and gentle slopes in the southern portion. The northern portion is a level plateau. Drainage in the deep valley between the eastern-most hills flows to a ravine on the south border. The natural vegetation was probably oak and hickory forest. This has been supplemented with plantings of maples, cedars and yews. Boundaries of the historic portions of the cemetery being nominated are Main Street to the east; a ravine on the south that eventually flows southward into Spoon River near Duncan Mills; the right of way of the former Fulton County Narrow Gauge Railway

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Oak Hill Cemetery

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(abandoned) to the west; and the northern road of Sections E and F which divides the historic areas of the cemetery from the newer sections to the north.

Originally, the cemetery hill sloped down to the center of Main Street. However, as Main Street was widened and developed with an interurban rail line running up the center, run-off and erosion became a problem. This was especially threatening to the oldest parts of the cemetery. A handsome brick retaining wall was built during the 1930's by the WPA along the Main Street side of the cemetery. Lloyd Chambers, the sexton who recently retired after 60 years, and young Ed Zempel went to the brick yard at Frederick on Route 100 between Beardstown and Lewistown and brought back all the brick for the wall. The WPA put local residents to work constructing the wall. The wall is, however, endangered. In the late 1940's or early 1950's the State of Illinois widened Main Street, now State Routes 97 and 100, and installed sidewalks at the base of the wall. In 1992 a forty-foot stretch of the wall collapsed onto the walk, creating a hazard for pedestrians and an eyesore along the boundary of the cemetery. Professionals who have examined the collapse, believe that the road widening and sidewalk installation undermined the wall. The choices facing the Cemetery Board today include removing the old wall entirely and replacing it with poured concrete, attempting to restore the wall to its original design and strength, or a cobbled up combination of the two. The wall, now topped by evergreen trees planted on the hillside, dominates the view of the cemetery along much of the Main Street frontage. (Photo 2)

Integrity of Site. Oak Hill Cemetery appears little changed from the late 19th century, although burials have continued down to the present and the town of Lewistown has grown north and west of the cemetery. Of course, some trees have died and been removed and others planted, but old oaks, hickories and cedars, along with more recent maples, still dominate the vistas and shade much of the cemetery. In the older portions of the cemetery, ornate iron fences surround a few of the family plots; they suffer from some rust and tilting, but are essentially sound. The headstones are white stone or polished marble and granite. The cemetery has not experienced the kind of monument-smashing vandalism that many old cemeteries have. In the one incidence of headstone-toppling vandalism, none were broken and a Canton monument company re-set them in their original positions. One of the monuments important to the Edgar Lee Masters poems, William Cullen Bryant, was smashed when a rotting oak that was being cut down fell on it. Again, the Canton monument company came to the rescue, carefully re-assembling the shards so that evidence of the accident is almost invisible to the naked eye.

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Oak Hill Cemetery

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The contours of the valley that runs through the east side of the cemetery were somewhat altered when the State of Illinois widened routes 97/100 (Main Street), adjacent to the cemetery. They deposited some of the excavated material in the valley. Even with the fill, this is an area too steeply sloped to accept graves and remains a deep valley between one hill and another. The pattern of the old dirt lanes through the cemetery was maintained when the Township Cemetery Board blacktopped the surfaces, allowing the hard surfaces to blend into the landscape. The evergreen lined entry to the cemetery probably post-dates the period designated in this application. It however, adds to the sylvan character of the cemetery. The newer parts have newer grave markers, but the plots of the subject period have few modern incursions.

Among the several thousand graves in the cemetery there are 37 markers connected with 46 persons, that have been identified as associated with specific poems in Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*. This number could increase as scholars continue to research the possible or probable connections. By Masters' own count 66 *Anthology* characters are buried in Lewistown. The locations of additional grave sites would almost certainly be in the same sections of the cemetery already identified. The following paragraphs describe the monuments and markers of these sites as well as their settings.

Curved drives are located at grade on either side of the hills and ravine that formed the original cemetery. Whether the layout of the drives was planned or merely dictated by the topography remains uncertain. The north drive is the main entrance. Its curving ascent is lined with evergreens that obscure the views on either side; to the right is a private home which abuts a small portion of the original site and backs up to the newer sections of the cemetery; to the left is the oldest portion of the cemetery. About halfway up the approach, the road forks to the right and offers access to the newer northern sections of the cemetery. The main drive continues uphill. Near the top of the hill, the row of yews ends and the drive intersects with a north/south drive. (Photo 1)

This drive turns south along the rim of the hill. The portion of the cemetery that lies east of this drive is designated Section A. It consists of two hills separated by a deep valley. The oldest graves are located on the far east hilltop.

Located there also, surrounded by many other headstones, a goodly number from earlier years, are the grave sites of some of the Lewistown residents who were models for the Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology* characters. Many of the headstones are not

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Oak Hill Cemetery

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especially notable for their design; they tend to be simple blocks or upright slabs of stone or granite. Frequently a more massive or ornate monument of a typically Victorian character marks a family plot. Obelisks are a frequent feature. The inscriptions are most often just the names and dates of birth and death. Two or three note with pride the military unit in which the interred served. Exceptions to the conventional markers are the William Cullen Bryant and Nathan Beadles monuments, both on the east hill.

The William Cullen Bryant monument (# 1 on the sketch map) marks the grave of a Lewistown youth and relative of the famous poet, who died in 1875 at the age of 24. The monument is a marble shaft topped with a female statue, perhaps a muse. It was the inspiration for Masters' "Percy Bysshe Shelley" which described the death of the young man from a gunshot wound suffered while duck-hunting. (Photo 3)

The Nathan Beadles monument (# 2) is in a family plot, surrounded by a wrought iron fence. The fence replicates a grid of heavy vines, perhaps grape vines; the posts are slim trunks. Inside the fence are the modest head and foot stones of Mary Randall (1791-1861) and William Randall (1785-1872). Dominating the plot is the elaborate white urn-topped arch that marks the burial site of Nathan Beadles ("Nicholas Bindle") and his two wives. Nathan's dates (1811-1892) appear on the arch. The right pillar memorializes Lamira, his wife, who died in 1842. Carved above her name is a woman lying in a carriage drawn in ascent by two horses. The left support commemorates Luan, also his wife, (1821-1878). Above her name is carved a basket and wreath filled with flowers. The inscriptions note the birth of both these women in Barren County, Kentucky, a circumstance that reflects the same southern migration path that brought Edgar Lee Masters' grandparents to central Illinois. (Photo 4)

Also on the east hill are the grave sites of *Anthology* characters listed below. The *Anthology* name follows in parentheses.

John Craig ("Harold Arnett"). The family monument (# 3) in this plot is a gray polished obelisk set on a tall stepped base, inscribed "CRAIG." On one side are the names and dates of William, 1816-1873 and Elizabeth, 1828-1884. On another two daughters are commemorated; Rebecca, 1843-1845, and Ginevra, 1859-1938. On the third face is the name of John, 1858-1885. To the right of the monument is a modest white headstone, approximately 9" x 12", again inscribed with John's name and dates.



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Oak Hill Cemetery

William Phelps ("Old Bill Piersol" and "Fletcher McGee"). This upright slab (# 4) is set among many other similar Phelps markers. It is of simple white stone, inscribed, "Father, William Phelps, Born 1809, Died 1889". (Photos 6 and 7)

Frank Sayre ("Cooney Potter"). His grave (# 5) is marked by a low gray granite block carved with his name and dates, 1869-1939. Neighboring sites in the family plot have similar markers. All are announced on a large square rough stone marker set on a low base and labeled "SAYRE."

Persis Foote ("Searcy Foote"). The monument here (# 6) is polished black granite set on a gray rough stone base. The slanting top is carved with the "FOOTE" name. The face of the stone is inscribed "Mother, Persis Foote, 1821-1898." Below are the names and dates for her children, George, 1842-1862, Isabel, 1844-1916, Mary, 1847-1920 and Jerod Bradley, 1851-1940. Immediately to the left is a small white headstone, almost obscured in the grass, with no lettering remaining. One might speculate that this is the father of the Foote family. (Photo 5)

Addison Barnett ("Justice Arnett"). This marker (# 7) is a reddish marble block, the polished face sloped and inscribed with "BARNETT" at the top and the names and dates of Addison, 1845-1920, and Luellen, 1845-1942, below.

Charles Bell ("Charlie French"). This monument (# 8) is a small white stone obelisk set on a short shaft, supported by a tiered base. The inscription is almost worn away, but the name Charles Bell and the date of death, 1881, are decipherable. The date 1883 is also visible. Burial records indicate Albert Bell, who died in 1883 at age 4 months, is also interred here. Perhaps Albert was a brother, since Charles was only 14 when he died.

On the other side of the valley, but still in Section A, among the many others, are several grave sites of interest.

Andrew Barrett ("Judge Selah Lively"). This monument (# 9) is a gray sculpted shaft inscribed "BARRETT" at the top and below are the names and dates of Andrew N., 1863-1919, Jennie, his wife, 1864-1961, and their daughter, Blanche, 1888-1890.

Cassius Whitney ("Cassius Hueffer" and "Harmon Whitney"). This monument (# 10) is a white hexagonal pillar with rounded cap, set on a shaft of almost equal height and supported

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by a two-step base. On the face of the shaft is inscribed Cassius' name and dates, 1846-1886. (Photo 10)

Margaret M. Wheadon ("Minerva Jones"). The Wheadon monument (# 11) is an impressive, square, gray polished granite. The base is inscribed "WHEADON." The face above is inscribed with the names and dates of Margaret M., 1880-1900, and John, 1871-1953.

William Jones ("Samuel Gardner"). This grave site (# 12) is marked by a family monument of black polished granite. At the top of the face "J" is carved inside a shield-shaped outline. Below that is "JONES." The next inscription is "William. 1835-1924. Sargt. Maj. 8th. ILL. Vet. Vol. Inf." Below that is the name and dates for his wife, Elizabeth J., 1842-1933.

The drive continues in a semicircle and exits on the south drive or forks and continues west in an arc around Sections B and C. Retracing the route, west across the drive from Section A are Sections B, C and D. Section B, the southern-most section, although obviously in use from early years and part of the cemetery as Masters knew it, has no sites pertaining to the *Anthology*. Section C contains the sites of two *Anthology* characters.

Mary Ross ("Mary McNeeley"). This is in the family plot (# 13) of Leonard Fulton Ross (1822-1901), for whom Fulton County is named. The plot's centerpiece is a large rectangular monument inscribed "ROSS." Two Mary Ross grave sites are here. One (1838-1896) is the second wife of Leonard Fulton Ross. Her headstone flanks the center monument. On the other side of the monument is the headstone of Leonard Fulton Ross' first wife, Catherine, 1830-1862. The other Mary Ross is the daughter of Catherine and Leonard, who died in 1856 at age 4. The simple white stone slab with barely readable lettering, set upright in concrete is at the front of the Ross family plot, between similar markers for Emma, 1859-1875, Leonard, 1847-1864, and Ralph Lee, 1854-1856, also children of Leonard Fulton and Catherine. (Photo 11)

Harry Waggoner ("Henry C. Calhoun"). This red marble block, approximately 1' x 2' (Site #14) is inscribed with "Father" and his name and dates, Harry M. Waggoner, 1856-1935.

Section D is dominated by the so-called "Lincoln Pillars" (# 15) which are assembled as a civil war monument complete with cannon and flag pole. The backdrop is an excedra inscribed "In Memory of our Patriot Dead. MDCCCLXI - MDCCCLXV." The pillars are two of the four 40-foot tall limestone pillars that had supported the classical pediment of the

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Fulton County Courthouse until it was burned in 1894 by Frank "Chase" Henry and two accomplices ("Silas Dement" and "Chase Henry"), in this site they commemorate not only the courthouse and the link with Lincoln who spoke from its steps in 1858, but also the infamy of the courthouse arsonist. (Photo 12)

Anna B. Reese and George W. Reese ("Mrs. George Reece"). In a corner of Section D (# 16) are the simple flush headstones of Anna, 1840-1893, and George, 1838-1919.

Returning to the entrance drive just beyond the Reese site, directly ahead to the north lies Section E which contains 13 sites associated with the *Anthology*, as well as many other monuments. (Photo 16)

Harry McFall, 1865-1901, ("Mickey M'Grew"). This family marker (# 17) is a 6-foot tall pink marble obelisk on a stepped base. Also interred in this plot are H. B. (1826-1910) and Margaret (1830-1892) and several children who died in infancy, three of them probably Harry's siblings but two of them more likely Harry's daughters.

Elizabeth Turner Phelps ("Amanda Barker"), Henry Willis Phelps ("A. D. Blood" and "Ralph Rhodes.") This family plot (# 18) is centered with a large monument with a stepped base, and tall shaft of gray granite, topped with a pediment and rounded cap. One face is inscribed "Elizabeth Turner, wife of H. W. Phelps, July 28, 1865: Nov. 19, 1890." On another is Henry's name and dates, 1863-\_\_\_(no date). On a third is carved, "Infant Dau. Dec. 2, 1887" and "Infant Son, Nov. 17, 1890." The plot is surrounded with a low concrete curb with decorative pyramids at the corners. Like the Leonard Fulton Ross family plot, this one is mute testimony to the tenuous hold on life that infants and small children had in that time and the risks that accompanied childbirth. A marker nearby notes Henry Phelps, 1837-1924 ("Thomas Rhodes," "Henry Phipps"), although he is buried in Waukesha, Wisconsin. (Photo 14)

William T. Davidson ("Robert Davidson," "Editor Whedon," and "Deacon Taylor") and Margaret George Davidson ("Julia Miller," "Louise Smith," "Caroline Branson," and "Amelia Garrick"). The Davidson family plot (# 19) is a large one, at the center of which is a large square dark gray monument with a pointed cap. "DAVIDSON" is inscribed on the middle tier. Matching arched upright headstones mark the burial sites of William Taylor Davidson, 1837-1915, and Margaret Gilman George Davidson, 1869-1896. Other family members are recognized with similar headstones. (Photo 13)

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Lewis W. Ross and Frances Ross ("Washington McNeeley"), Lewis Cass "Lute" Ross ("Lucius Atherton"), and Harvey Lee Ross ("Thomas Ross, Jr."). Lewis W. Ross is the older brother of Leonard Fulton Ross and the Ross for whom Lewistown is named. "Lute" is his son. Harvey Lee Ross is the third son of Ossian. This family plot (# 20) has a large chest marker with a three-step base and stacked pediment of gray granite. "ROSS" is engraved on its face. Individual headstones are modest gray blocks, inscribed on the curved tops "L. W. R. 1812-1895," "F. M. R. 1822-1902," "L. C. R. 1848-1916," and "H. L. R. 1817-1907." Nearby are the grave sites of the Ross progenitors, Ossian, 1790-1837, his wife, M. R., 1793-1875, and his mother, Abigail, 1760-1834. It is possible that Abigail and Ossian were originally buried in the first cemetery near the center of town and later moved here when that cemetery was abandoned. (Photo 15)

Moses Turner ("Mrs. George Reece"). Moses' grave site (# 21) is marked with a joint monument for Moses, 1840-1913, and his second wife. Nearby is a weathered rounded stone shaft about three feet tall, memorializing his first wife. (Photos 17 and 18)

Judge Thomas A. Boyd ("Hamilton Greene" and "Granville Calhoun"). The modest gray headstone reads "T. A. Boyd, June 25, 1830, May 28, 1897." The family plot (# 22) is marked with a large monument at the base of which is inscribed "BOYD."

Judge John Winter ("Seth Compton" and "Judge Sommers"). This site (# 23) is marked with a small, 9" x 18", upright stone slab. All the lettering has been obliterated by time. His dates are 1826-1906.

Frank Standard ("William Lloyd Garrison Standard"). This headstone (# 24) is polished black granite, almost flush with the ground. It is inscribed with his name and dates, 1871-1904. The family plot is marked with a monument inscribed "STANDARD" on the base above which is a short pillar and pointed pediment, topped with a 4-foot obelisk.

Simeon Shope ("The Circuit Judge"). Just west of the Hull plot is the family monument of the "SHOPE" family (# 25). This is a large granite chest marker, approximately seven feet high and eight feet long with a rounded cap. Its cap is carved with stylized leaves. Simeon (1836-1920), is surrounded by his wife, Sara Marie Jones, 1839-1883, son Charles Edwin, 1861-1880, and daughter Clara Alta Barnett, 1858-1888. (Photo 19)

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Oak Hill Cemetery

Dr. Alexander Hull and his daughter Caroline Hull ("Doc Hill" and "Flossie Cabanis"). The large family monument (# 26) is gray granite. One face is inscribed with the names and dates of Alexander, 1821-1895, Phillip, 1795-1884, Sarah, 1801-1884, and Nancy (Heckard) 1832-1919. Caroline, 1867-1923, alone is noted on the other face. An individual headstone, a small, 15" x 15" upright white stone, marks Dr. Hull's resting place. No lettering remains. Caroline's individual headstone is an almost flush gray block, inscribed with only her name.

Dr. David Talbott and Amelia Talbot ("Dr. Meyers" and "Mrs. Meyers"). The joint marker (# 27) is a gray polished granite upright shaft. The slanting top is inscribed "TALBOTT," carved in reverse relief. The face reads "Dr. David D. 1837-1918" and "Amelia F, 1847-19\_\_ (no date)."

James Phillip Randall (1855-1906) and R. A. "Eck" Randall (1857-1900) ("Trainor, the Druggist"). The Randall family plot (# 28) is marked by a red marble shaft inscribed with several family names, including Phillip's wife, Custa, 1857-1889.

Major Newton Walker ("Major Walker" and "Hod Putt"). The base of this dignified monument (Site # 29) is inscribed "WALKER." The polished black marble shaft above has two arched intrusions into the pediment labeled "Mother" and "Father." Below are the inscriptions "Major Newton Walker. Dec 18, 1803. Sept 13, 1899" and "His Wife Ann E. Simms. Nov. 8, 1814. May 3, 1904." Several family members, presumably children and a grandchild, share the plot. (Photo 20)

West of Sections D and E is a second north-south drive. Directly west across this drive lies Section F, which stretches over rolling hillsides and gentle valleys to the western boundary of the cemetery. This is a more sparsely occupied section, with significant areas left for future use. There are four grave sites associated with the *Anthology* in this section.

Andrew Stevenson ("Andy the Night Watcher"). A large rough granite block (# 30) is inscribed on its polished face with Andrew's name and dates, 1829-1919 as well as those of Martha A., his wife, 1838-1901 and Charity Johnson, 1844-1876.

George "Bones" Weldy ("Jack McGuire"). The marker here (# 31) is a low long granite block, inscribed with family names and no dates. "WELDY" is at the top center. Below are "Henry & Martha," "William & George," and "Charley & Henry, Jr."

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Charlie Metcalf, 1865-1925 ("Willie Metcalf"). If there ever was a marker for this grave, (# 32) it no longer exists. There is only the numbered stake that refers to the walking tour guide.

Jonas Staton ("Indignation Jones"). This upright slab of moss-covered white stone (# 33) is inscribed "Corpl. Jonas R. Staton. Co. C. 8 Ky. Cav." His dates, 1832-1905, are not visible. (Photo 21)

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Oak Hill Cemetery is nationally significant for Criterion A, association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. It is significant in the area of literature. The cemetery and those buried there are immortalized in a major literary work, Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*. The poems describe the people, events, and dramas of a small town at the end of the 19th century. Its period of significance is 1915 the year the *Anthology* was published although Masters was familiar with Oak Hill Cemetery from 1880, when he and his family moved to Lewistown to 1915 when the book was published. Oak Hill Cemetery meets Criteria Consideration D for cemeteries for its association with a nationally significant event, the publishing of the *Spoon River Anthology*.

The Settlement of Lewistown. The settlement of Lewistown is attributed to Ossian Ross, who received one of the first land grants in the Military Tract awarded to veterans of the War of 1812. Ross brought his wife and three children from Seneca, New York, by boat down the Ohio River to the Mississippi and back up the Illinois River, a journey that required more than a year, with a winter layover in Alton. When he arrived in 1821 with his family, a carpenter, a blacksmith and several other workmen, he found one other family, the Eveland's, living in the area, about six miles from the Ross land grant. Under Ossian's leadership, Lewistown, named for his first son, Lewis W., was surveyed in 1822. In 1823, Lewistown became the county seat of Fulton County, named for his second son, Leonard Fulton. In that era of rapidly changing boundaries, Fulton County encompassed all of northern Illinois, including Fort Dearborn and the Chicago area. For a brief period, people had to travel from Lake Michigan to Lewistown to get marriage licenses and pay their taxes. By 1827, the county's present boundaries were established.

The first settlers were frontiersmen; hunters, trappers and fishermen. The first trading post for commerce with the Indians was established in 1825 by Steven Phelps. His son, William, made Lewistown his home base, but he, with his family, regularly traveled west across the Mississippi, up the Des Moines River and back down to St. Louis to ply his fur trade.

Ossian Ross promoted the development of Lewistown by donating land for a courthouse and jail, the first "burying yard," and sites for a meeting house, school house and Masonic temple. He was a Justice of the Peace and the first Sheriff of Fulton County. In 1831 Ossian moved 8 miles southeast to Havana, but his ties to Lewistown were strong and his burial site is in

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Oak Hill Cemetery. Lewis W. Ross, his son, became a leading citizen of Lewistown, representing Fulton County in the state legislature, where he served with Abraham Lincoln, and in the U. S. Congress from 1863-1869.

By 1840, Lewistown had a hat factory, brickyards, a blacksmith, a flour mill, a woolen mill, a saw mill, and a tailor shop. By 1866, the population had reached 1500 and the town boasted three hotels, a three-story high school, and many churches.

Mining became an important economic activity. In 1870, the Fulton Coal Company was founded with Dr. Alexander Hull as its first president. At one time there were 25 shaft mines working the deep vein of coal that underlies four-fifths of Lewistown Township. Stone, sand and gravel were also quarried.

Agriculture was slow to develop. The prairie was unfriendly and difficult to break with to a plow. By mid-century, enough acreage had been tamed by cutting the trees and wrenching out the native prairie grass to support family farms.

When Masters arrived in Lewistown in 1880, the community had two banks, an opera house, a pair of newspapers and a number of lodges and community organizations. A narrow gauge railroad and the Peoria and Hannibal Railroad line which later became part of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad system (now Burlington Northern), ran through town.

The major activity, however, then as now, was the business of the county seat including the land records, the courts, the tax system and the activities, politics and professions that surround those functions. In the 1890's this economic base was threatened by neighboring Canton. Canton thought it should have the county seat because of its more central location and industrial development. In spite of Canton's success in a referendum, the county seat remained in Lewistown, and the fateful courthouse fire in 1894 played a role. The insurance on the courthouse stipulated that if destroyed the courthouse would have to be rebuilt on the same site or the county would forfeit 70% of the insurance amount. The thrifty, or crafty, county officials were persuaded to rebuild on the old site. (*Atlas Map of Fulton County, Illinois*, p. 38)

Today, Lewistown's population is about 2,800. The economy is still dominated by the business of the courthouse. In addition, there are elementary schools and a high school, dozens of churches, doctors and dentists, local trades and service businesses, banking,



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insurance, lumber yard, Farm Bureau and a multitude of retail establishments. Strip mining for coal did not come to Lewistown Township and the shaft mines have long since closed. In the rural areas, corn and soy beans are successfully cultivated; hogs and cattle dot the landscape. Many townspeople commute to jobs in industry, health care, and education in Peoria, Canton and Macomb. Families still bury their dead in Oak Hill Cemetery.

Background of Oak Hill Cemetery. Oak Hill Cemetery has served as the burial ground for Lewistown for more than 150 years. The actual date of the first interment is not known. The earliest date of death shown on a headstone is 1829, but this could be a grave moved from the first cemetery donated by Ossian Ross, which was abandoned after only a few years. Like most early cemeteries, Oak Hill has interesting markers like that of Nathaniel Bordwine, a man who lived in three centuries (1799-1900), and of Emma Lee, on whose stone in the Lee family plot the word "Colored" is inscribed. Interred here also are early settlers like the Ossian Ross family, the Phelps', Davidson's, Walker's and Beadles' families.

The cemetery is also the resting place for the massive columns which once graced the courthouse in Lewistown. In 1858, Abraham Lincoln delivered his much quoted "Declaration of Independence" address from the steps of the old courthouse on a platform erected between these pillars. The courthouse burned in 1894, an act of arson by Frank "Chase" Henry. ("Silas Dement" in the *Anthology*) "Chase" Henry was refused burial in Oak Hill and is interred instead at St. Mary's Cemetery. The pillars, though, are a monument to his infamous deed.

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### SILAS DEMENT

It was moon-light, and the earth sparkled  
With new-fallen frost.  
It was midnight and not a soul was abroad,  
Out of the chimney of the court-house  
A grey-hound of smoke leapt and chased  
The northwest wind.  
I carried a ladder to the landing of the stairs  
And leaned it against the frame of the trap-door  
In the ceiling of the portico,  
And I crawled under the roof and amid the rafters  
And flung among the seasoned timbers  
A lighted handful of oil-soaked waste.  
Then I came down and slunk away.  
In a little while the fire-bell rang --  
Clang! Clang! Clang!  
And the Spoon River ladder company  
Came with a dozen buckets and began to pour water  
On the glorious bonfire, growing hotter,  
Higher and brighter, till the walls fell in,  
And the limestone columns where Lincoln stood  
Crashed like trees when the woodman fells them...  
When I came back from Joliet  
There was a new Court-house with a dome  
For I was punished like all who destroy  
The past for the sake of the future.

This poem is based on the burning of the Fulton County Courthouse at Lewistown on December 14, 1894. The name of the incendiary was Frank ("Chase") Henry, who later confessed but did not serve time at Joliet. Newspaper accounts are in the *Fulton County Democrat*: "Indicted," August 31, 1895 and "The Conspiracy," September 4, 1895.

The period in which Masters worked was a time of transition in America from a largely rural, agrarian society to one of flight from the small towns to the burgeoning urban centers. To Masters, the rise of urban America confirmed the decline of America's heroic age as

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embodied in Jeffersonian democracy, Jacksonian frontiersmen, the mythic America of rugged individuality and self reliance. "Because of his background, Masters viewed himself as a latter-day prophet of Americanism, uniquely qualified to recall his nation to its 'primal vision' in an era of cultural degeneracy." (Hallwas, p. 43) Yet in Masters' depiction of the pervading realities of small town life we can see some of the personal motivations behind urban migration. The events and accounts instruct us about who we, as Americans and midwesterners, are as a result of who we were.

### HARE DRUMMER

Do the boys and girls still go to Siever's  
For cider, after school, in late September?  
Or gather hazel nuts among the thickets  
On Aaron Hatfield's farm when the frosts begin?  
For many times with the laughing girls and boys  
Played I along the road and over the hills  
When the sun was low and the air was cool,  
Stopping to club the walnut tree  
Standing leafless against a flaming west.  
Now, the smell of the autumn smoke,  
And the dropping acorns,  
And the echoes about the vales  
Bring dreams of life. They hover over me.  
They question me:  
Where are those laughing comrades?  
How many are with me, how many  
In the old orchards along the way to Siever's,  
And in the woods that overlook  
The quiet water?

This poem is probably based on Frank Ehrenhardt (Hallwas, p 374.) It recalls the way things were in Masters' youth.

From the dates on the grave markers, it becomes clear that Masters was dealing with three generations in Lewistown. The first generation was the settlers, those who established the town and were the bridge with earlier times and other places. For instance, Major Newton

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Walker, born in 1803 in Virginia, had talked with veterans of the Revolution. He represented the Jeffersonian democracy that Masters admired. He was a survivor of challenging times and lived 96 years. William Phelps, born in 1809 and brought to Lewistown in 1825, was a fur trader who represented the frontier spirit that Masters appreciated. Masters would have known this generation only in their old age. All of the models from this generation were gone by the time Masters wrote his *Anthology*.

The second generation was the contemporaries of Masters' parents, beginning about 1835. These were the adults during Masters' youth. They set the moral, political and cultural standards of the Lewistown Masters knew. Among them were William T. Davidson, editor of the *Fulton County Democrat*, and banker Moses Turner. Many of this generation lived into the 20th century, but only a few of those lives extended beyond the 1920's. One was Frank Ehrenhardt, who lived until 1945.

The third generation was Masters' own, beginning about 1865. The latest birthdate in this generation was Margaret Wheadon in 1880. A number of models in this generation had relatively brief lives; three of the women died before they were thirty, and before the *Anthology* took shape. One boy died at 14, others died as young men. Although many lived beyond the date of the *Anthology*, none outlived the poet.

The late 19th century described in Masters' work is represented in monuments in Oak Hill Cemetery that recall not only the real persons interred there, but also their poetic counterparts. The events recounted in Masters' poems reflect real life in the late 19th century and many of the poetic accounts have been correlated with real events through newspaper stories and other contemporary sources. (*Spoon River Anthology*, John E. Hallwas, ed. "Notes to the Poems," pp. 363-436)

Literary Significance of the *Anthology*. As a work of literature, the *Anthology* is nationally significant first, as an early example in the "revolt from the village" school that also produced Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919) and Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street* (1920); and second, for its free verse, which continued a style pioneered in Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and used by another Illinois poet, Carl Sandburg.

The *Anthology's* impact on Sherwood Anderson was noted by John and Margaret Wrenn in their book, *Edgar Lee Masters*. When Anderson was given a copy of the poems, he read through the night and shortly after began working on the Winesburg book. "What Anderson

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must have felt as he read all night was a clue to the possibility of coming to terms with his own Midwest village background, of discovering in his own backyard, so to speak, known people to be developed into living characters, of finding in ordinary village lives truths of American life and of the human heart." (Wrenn and Wrenn, p 120)

Other contemporary literary figures who were also influenced by the *Anthology* include Ezra Pound, friend, critic and teacher of poets in the early decades of the 20th century, who recognized the *Spoon River Anthology* poems as a distinctly American poetic voice. John Dos Passos' *U. S. A. Trilogy* (1930-1936) strikes similar themes, some of which bear remarkable resemblance to particular poems in the *Anthology*, and he uses similar techniques but in the prose medium. In *Our Town* (1938), Thornton Wilder acknowledges his debt to Masters with a reference to "one of those Middle West poets."

The *Anthology's* influence on poetic styles can be seen in succeeding generations of poets from the poems of Midwesterners August Derleth about the Sac Prairie people (1945) and Dave Etter's free-verse sketches in *Go Read the River* (1966) to Robert Lowell's *Life Studies*, (1959) John Berryman's *Dream Songs*, (1972) and the contemporary works of Gwendolyn Brooks and others.

A more complete discussion of the *Anthology's* place in the literary pantheon can be found in Wrenn and Wrenn, pp. 120-123.

The *Spoon River Anthology* has sold more copies than any other book of American poetry except possibly *Leaves of Grass*. It went through seventy editions before 1961, was translated into at least eight foreign languages, was the basis for a play, and an opera based on it was performed at La Scala. ("La Collina" by Mario Pergallo, Barnstone, p. xviii) The volume has a large international audience, many of whom value it for its depiction of small town life in America. (Hallwas, p. 363) The 1992 Hallwas edition provides the most thorough annotations to date correlating the poems with actual people and events. Although the quality of the poetry is uneven, the abiding significance of this volume is described in the following sources:

"the most talked-of volume of poetry that has ever been written in America." Percy Boynton, *Some Contemporary Americans*, p. 54.

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"The value of the *Spoon River* volume lies in its originality of design, its uniqueness, its effect upon its times. Its colossal success started a choir of young poets. Whether we condemn or praise, we must accept it as a major episode in the history of the poetic movement in the second decade of the new century." Fred Lewis Pattee, *The New American Literature 1890-1930*, pp. 289-90.

"The success of the volume was extraordinary. With every new attack (and its frankness continued to make fresh enemies) its readers increased. It was imitated, parodied, reviled as 'a piece of yellow journalism'; it was hailed as 'an American Comedie Humaine.' Finally, after the storm of controversy, it has taken its place as a landmark in American literature." Louis Untermeyer, *Modern American Poetry*, 1964 edition, pp. 139-40.

"...the book in its completed form [is] one of the most momentous in American literature." Robert E Spiller, et al, *Literary History of the United States*, 1963 edition, p. 1108.

"The quantitative effect of *Spoon River Anthology* on the readers of its time is obvious. It was simply the most widely read and discussed book of poetry that had yet appeared in America." John H. Wrenn and Margaret M. Wrenn, *Edgar Lee Masters*, p. 119.

Association With Events That Have Made a Significant Contribution To The Broad Patterns of Our History. It is literature as social and cultural history, however, that gives the *Anthology* and its setting significance. The *Anthology* is set in the town cemetery and the markers speak for the person buried beneath. Each monologue is an epitaph. Taken together, the poems present a stunning picture of the culture of one small town like many other small towns, at one period of history, from one point of view. Masters' small town is not the romanticized, bucolic village so often memorialized; it is rife with the universal scandals and tragedies of human life and firmly rooted in the gritty particulars of a late 19th century midwestern locality.

The Spoon River village of the *Anthology* is an amalgam of Petersburg, Illinois, where Masters lived until he was eleven, and Lewistown, where he spent his adolescent and young adult years.

Edgar Lee Masters was born in Garnett, Kansas in 1868 while his parents were homesteading there. That farming venture was not successful and the family soon returned

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to Illinois and settled close to his grandparents' farm near Petersburg. In 1872, Masters' father was elected states attorney of Menard County and the family moved into Petersburg. Throughout his childhood years, Masters enjoyed frequent visits to the Masters family farm of his grandparents, Squire Davis and Lucinda Masters, who became a beloved touchstone for Masters' positive views of rural America. In 1880, Hardin Masters moved the family to Lewistown where he hoped to establish a law practice under the sponsorship of Colonel Lewis W. Ross.

Masters' father, Hardin, was the son of a Tennessee-raised farmer who had migrated to Illinois about 1830. Much of his southern background persisted in the culture and politics of the Masters family. The southerners were "Indian-fighting, game-hunting, story-telling and whiskey-drinking frontier people who celebrated courage, stressed kinship, prized hospitality, opposed abolition, advocated individual rights, idolized Andrew Jackson and supported the Democratic party." (Hallwas, p. 3)

His mother, Emma Dexter Masters, was the daughter of a Methodist minister with roots in Vermont and New Hampshire. The Yankees, whose values she represented, were "...community organizers, business founders, churchgoers, school teachers and social reformers... They were ambitious, self-confident, upwardly mobile people who advocated and enacted change. Opposed to drinking and slavery, they were not afraid to place limits on individual freedom in order to promote social change." (Hallwas, p. 4)

In the very personal clash between these two cultures, Masters rejected his mother's values, except for love of learning, and celebrated the southern values of his father's family. The two towns came to symbolize this cultural dichotomy. Petersburg embodied his father's kind of people; Lewistown his mother's. Although Lewistown was superficially like Petersburg, its society had a strong contingent of Yankee Republican movers and shakers who threw up obstacles to Hardin's hoped-for acceptance and success.

There are 246 poems in the *Anthology*. Some of them reflect Edgar Lee Masters' Petersburg origins. These include "Johnnie Sayre", a poem about a childhood friend who died after losing a leg under a train, and "William and Emily" based on his paternal grandparents. Ann Rutledge was the subject of his most famous poem. Although she died in 1835, her legend was kept alive by Lincoln's friend, William Herndon. As a result, in 1890 her grave was moved from the country graveyard to Oakland Cemetery in Petersburg. In 1921 a large new headstone was erected engraved with Masters' "Anne Rutledge", written long after her death.

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In spite of these few examples, the Petersburg cemetery is not generally associated with *Spoon River Anthology*. The "Petersburg" poems are generally more idealized than the Lewistown poems, reflecting Masters' happy memories of his early childhood.

Some of the poems are based on Masters' literary and intellectual mentors and idols, most of whom came into his life after his Lewistown years. A number of the poems are autobiographical. But the bulk of the work can be firmly traced to his Lewistown experiences and observations. Many of the characters appear in more than one poem and some poems reflect more than one model. Of course, not all of the models were dead when Masters consigned them to their fictional graves.

"The Hill," which sets the scene for the poem-epitaphs, refers to Oak Hill, the Lewistown cemetery. Many of the poems that follow were inspired by or modeled after real people living in Lewistown in the late 19th century. Many of the Lewistown epitaphs express Masters' own frustrations and bitterness at an unfair world. Some of them reveal the dark underside of "The Village." The epitaphs bespeak domestic violence, rape and abortion, compassion, adultery, revenge, nurturing, remorse, stultifying pettiness, wasted effort, fidelity, temperance, suicide, kindness, pride, villainy, corruption in public figures, corporate negligence, and quiet desperation, all framed in a community where everybody knew everybody and everybody's business, but the private motivations and consequences remained secret unto the grave. Although Masters gave his subjects pseudonyms in the poems, sometimes barely disguised, and although he took some creative liberties with the stories he told, the identities of his subjects were well known locally.

Their descendants continue to be part of the community. For instance, the Davidson family ("Editor Whedon") owned the local newspaper, the *Fulton County Democrat* until 1968, when it was sold to a nephew whose son still puts out the paper; and the Henry family, ("Chase Henry" and "Silas Dement") members of which have represented Lewistown in the state legislature, served as postmaster and postmistress, and today own and operate the mortuary. The Beadles Block ("Nicholas Bindle") still graces the central business district.

It is no secret that Lewistown considered Edgar Lee Masters *persona non grata* for many years because they saw his work as a defamation of the town's character. However, the current generation has a new outlook on Edgar Lee Masters and a new appreciation for the interest in the site of his most famous work. More than three dozen of the folk who were Masters' models rest in Oak Hill Cemetery. The graves can be viewed on a walking tour of



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the cemetery that correlates the poetic and real identities of the subjects. Each spring, Lewistown celebrates an Edgar Lee Masters Day which features a pilgrimage to the cemetery where local actors enable the poem's characters to speak again in the voices of the 19th century.

### THE HILL

Where are Elmer, Herman, Bert, Tom and Charley,  
The weak of will, the strong of arm, the clown, the boozier, the fighter?  
All, all are sleeping on the hill.

One passed in a fever,  
One was burned in a mine,  
One was killed in a brawl,  
One died in a jail,  
One fell from a bridge toiling for children and wife --  
All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where are Ella, Kate, Mag, Lizzie and Edith,  
The tender heart, the simple soul, the loud, the proud, the happy one?--  
All, all are sleeping on the hill.

One died in shameful child-birth,  
One of a thwarted love,  
One at the hands of a brute in a brothel,  
One of a broken pride, in the search for heart's desire;  
One after life in far-way London and Paris  
Was brought to her little space by Ella and Kate and Mag -  
All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where are Uncle Isaac and Aunt Emily,  
And old Towny Kincaid and Sevigne Houghton,  
And Major Walker who had talked  
With venerable men of the revolution? --  
All, all are sleeping on the hill.  
They brought them dead sons from the war,

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And daughters whom life had crushed,  
And their children fatherless, crying --  
All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where is Old Fiddler Jones  
Who played with life all his ninety years,  
Braving the sleet with bared breast,  
Drinking, rioting, thinking neither of wife nor kin,  
Nor gold, nor love, nor heaven  
Lo! he babbles of the fish-frys of long ago,  
Of the horse-races of long ago at Clary's Grove,  
Of what Abe Lincoln said  
One time at Springfield.

Oak Hill Cemetery, as the rostrum from which the powerful and powerless alike speak, chronicles a period in the social and cultural history of a small town. The events are not national disasters, or conquests of war or speeches that stir the national soul. They are a bank failure with widespread local consequences, the amputation of a young boy's leg in a train accident, a young man running away to join the army to evade punishment for stealing hogs, an explosion at the canning factory that kills a hapless worker, a botched abortion, the burning of the courthouse. Events such as these and the response of the social order to them make up the broad patterns of a local history and help to define the people who lived them.

### LYDIA PUCKET

Knowlt Hoheimer ran away to the war  
The day before Curl Trenary  
Swore out a warrant through Justice Arnett  
For stealing hogs.  
But that's not the reason he turned a soldier.  
He caught me running with Lucius Atherton.  
We quarreled and I told him never again  
To cross my path.  
Then he stole the hogs and went to the war--  
Back of every soldier is a woman.

### KNOWLT HOHEIMER

I was the first fruits of the battle of  
Missionary Ridge.  
When I felt the bullet enter my heart  
I wished I had stayed home and gone to  
jail  
For stealing the hogs of Curl Trenary,  
Instead of running away and joining the army.  
Rather a thousand times the county jail  
Than to lie under this marble figure with wings  
And this granite pedestal

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Bearing the words, "Pro Patria."  
What do they mean, anyway?

The society's response, in Masters' Lewistown, is heavily influenced by the migration pattern that formed the settlement of much of central Illinois and, in fact, was reflected in Masters' own family through his Yankee mother and southerner father. The Yankees, migrants from the Northeast, brought elements of Puritanism in their serious approach to life; the work ethic, the commitment to education, and a stern morality. The Southerners, in this case Virginians, brought a more laid back and convivial approach. Masters saw these as "two hostile and never to be reconciled kinds of human nature." (Hallwas, p. 61) The clash between these two strains is depicted in the poems describing the continuing conflict between temperance activists and defenders of alcoholic beverages in Lewistown's politics.

### DEACON TAYLOR

I belonged to the church,  
And to the party of prohibiton;  
And the villagers thought I died of eating  
watermelon.  
In truth I had cirrhosis of the liver,  
For every noon for thirty years  
I slipped behind the prescription partition  
in Trainor's drug store  
And poured a generous drink  
From the bottle marked  
"Spiritus frumenti."

### JACK McGUIRE

They would have lynched me  
Had I not been secretly hurried away  
To the jail at Peoria.  
And yet I was going peacefully home,  
Carrying my jug, a little drunk,  
When Logan, the marshall, halted me  
Called me a drunken hound and shook  
me  
With Prohibition loaded cane -  
All this before I shot him.  
They would have hanged me except for  
this:  
My lawyer, Kinsey Keene, was helping  
to land  
Old Thomas Rhodes for wrecking the  
bank,  
And the judge was a friend of Rhodes,  
For fourteen years for me.  
And the bargain was made. I served my  
time  
And I learned to read and write.

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"Deacon Taylor" presented one unflattering view that Masters held about William T. Davidson, editor of the Lewistown newspaper. Others are expressed in "Editor Whedon" and "Robert Davidson." None of Masters' implications were true. His animus stemmed from a perception that Hardin Masters' career in Lewistown was thwarted by a hypocritical establishment that was arrogant in its exercise of power, which he personalized in Davidson. (Hallwas, pp. 383, 396, 399)

The model for "Jack McGuire" was George "Bones Weldy" who killed the Lewistown marshal in 1887 (Hallwas, p. 379)

Other elements in the culture of that time and place which Masters elucidated in the *Anthology* include the influence of the local press, the power of bankers to control individual fortunes, the hazards endured by workers in order to earn a living, and the biology-is-destiny view of womanhood.

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### RALPH RHODES

All they said was true,  
I wrecked my father's bank with my loans  
To dabble in wheat; but this was true -  
I was buying wheat for him as well,  
Who couldn't margin the deal in his  
name  
Because of his church relationship.  
And while George Reece was serving his  
term  
I chased the will-o'-the-wisp of women  
When nothing else is left in life.  
But suppose your head is gray, and  
bowed  
On a table covered with acrid stubs  
Of cigarettes and empty glasses,  
And a knock is heard, and you know it's  
the knock  
So long drowned out by popping corks  
And the peacock screams of demireps -  
And you look up, and there's your Theft,  
Who waited until your head was gray,  
And your heart skipped beats to say to  
you:  
"The games is ended. I've called for  
you.  
Go out on Broadway and be run over;  
They'll ship you back to Spoon River."

### MRS. GEORGE REECE

To this generation I would say:  
Memorize some bit of verse of truth or  
beauty.  
It may serve a turn in your life  
My husband had nothing to do  
With the fall of the bank--he was only  
cashier.  
The wreck was due to the president,  
Thomas Rhodes,  
And his vain, unscrupulous son.  
Yet my husband was sent to prison,  
And I was left with the children,  
To feed and clothe and school them.  
And I did it, and sent them forth  
Into the world all clean and strong,  
And all through the wisdom of Pope, the  
poet:  
"Act well your part, there all the honor  
lies."

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"Ralph Rhodes is based on Henry Willis Phelps, son of a partner in the Lewistown Bank that failed in 1894. (Halwas, p. 401). "Mrs. George Reece" is based on Moses Turner who was also a partner in the Lewistown Bank, blameless in Masters' opinion. (Hallwas, p. 390)

### "BUTCH" WELDY

After I got religion and steadied down  
They gave me a job in the canning works,  
And every morning I had to fill  
The tank in the yard with gasoline.  
That fed the blow-fires in the sheds  
To heat the soldering irons.  
And I mounted a rickety ladder to do it,  
Carrying buckets full of the stuff.  
One morning, as I stood there pouring,  
The air grew still and seemed to heave,  
And I shot up as the tank exploded,  
And down I came with both legs broken  
And my eyes burned crisp as a couple of eggs,  
For someone left a blow-fire going,  
And something sucked the flame in the tank.  
The Circuit Judge said whoever did it  
Was a fellow-servant of mine, and so  
Old Rhodes' son didn't have to pay me.  
And I sat on the witness stand as blind  
As Jack the Fiddler, saying over and over,  
"I didn't know him at all."

### JULIA MILLER

We quarreled that morning,  
For he was sixty-five, and I was thirty,  
And I was nervous and heavy with the child  
Whose birth I dreaded.  
I thought over the last letter written me  
By that estranged young soul  
Whose betrayal of me I had concealed  
By marrying the old man.  
Then I took morphine and sat down to read.  
Across the blackness that came over my eyes  
I see the flickering of these words even now:  
"And Jesus said unto him, Verily  
I say unto thee, Today thou shalt  
Be with me in paradise."

"Butch' Weldy" is based on the accidental death of Charles Beggs at the Lewistown canning factory, recounted in "From Lewistown" in the *Fulton County Ledger*, August 8, 1889.

"Julia Miller" is based on Margaret George, a sweetheart of Masters' youth, who married William T. Davidson, a much older man, but it was apparently a happy union until she died at age 28 of a heart ailment. (Hallwas, p. 376)

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Oak Hill Cemetery is significant not because of notable people interred there, but because of the ordinary people, real and poetic, whose lives and deaths Edgar Lee Masters used to immortalize a time and place in the social and cultural history of America.

Oak Hill Cemetery is inseparable from Edgar Lee Masters and his major work. Although Masters himself chose to be buried near his grandparents in Petersburg, the *Spoon River Anthology* is unquestionably dominated by a collection of Lewistown characters, speaking from Oak Hill Cemetery. The events are predominantly Lewistown and its environs events, based on Masters' experiences and observations from about 1880, as a boy and young man. Masters' *Anthology* is a significant record of our past and his work remains significant in our present.

Other Lewistown Masters Sites. Edgar Lee Masters recounted in *Accros Spoon River* that the family when moving to Lewistown in 1880 lived in various places including a house one block north of the square and a house near the woolen mill. In 1883, Masters' father purchased a house at 103 East Avenue D, three blocks south of the square. This two-story wood frame building still stands and served as one of Masters' boyhood homes. After Masters left for Chicago, his father and mother purchased a home at 306 North Adams Street, north of the square and lived there for many years. This towered Queen Anne wood-frame home has been covered with synthetic siding.

The three-story high school that Masters attended has not survived. The Lewis W. Ross Mansion described in "Washington McNeeley" was first restored, then razed by the state in the 1960s. The Major Newton Walker house at 1127 North Main Street survives. It was built by Major Walker in 1833 on the site of Ossian Ross' first house. Local tradition has it that Abraham Lincoln was several times a guest in this house. The Beadles Block, a three-story Italianate brick commercial building and location of the opera house remains on the northwest corner of the square opposite the current courthouse. The Fulton County Democrat Building on the south side of the square still remains, but was damaged by a recent fire in the upper story. The present Fulton County Courthouse was built in 1898 after the second courthouse was burnt down. Numerous houses and commercial buildings remain in Lewistown that were associated with the Masters' characters from the *Anthology*. But none convey the significance of the book, as the setting for the *Anthology* at the hill of Oak Hill Cemetery.

Masters After the Lewistown Years. Masters left Lewistown in 1889 to attend Knox Academy in Galesburg. He returned the following year to read law in his father's office. In 1893 he

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moved to Chicago and established a successful law practice; from 1903 to 1908 Clarence Darrow was a partner. He married Helen Jenkins in 1898. A son, Hardin Wallace, and two daughters, Marcia and Madeline, were born to that union. His parents continued to live in Lewistown until 1906, when they moved to Springfield. Masters' own flight from the village to urban centers alienated him from his roots and in visits to his midwest origins, he failed to find the reconnection that he sought to his roots.

During his twenty-five years in Chicago, he wrote prolifically and participated in the "Chicago Renaissance," with Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg and others. The Chicago Renaissance was a literary movement based in Chicago during the early 1900s. Masters began writing the *Anthology* in 1913-1914. In *Across Spoon River*, Masters recalled that he wrote many of the poems at a rented summer house in Spring Lake, Michigan in the summer of 1914. Spring Lake was located on the east side of Lake Michigan. Masters also mentioned that he wrote some of the poems at the Metropole Hotel in Chicago. The *Spoon River* poems began appearing weekly in William Marion Reedy's *Mirror* magazine in 1914 under the pseudonym Webster Ford. In the December 4 issue of the *Mirror*, Reedy announced that the real name of the writer was Edgar Lee Masters. In 1915 the collection of poems was published by the Macmillan Company and titled the *Spoon River Anthology*.

Masters separated from his wife in 1917 and an acrimonious divorce followed in 1921. At about that time Masters moved to New York and remarried. A second son, Hillary, was born. He lived in the east and worked in the literary milieu centered in New York City until his death in 1950.

Edgar Lee Masters produced a remarkable body of work, publishing almost every year, 48 books between 1898 and 1942. The themes first addressed in the *Anthology* were frequently revisited and expanded upon. Among these works were numerous books of poetry and essays, five novels, six plays, four biographies and his autobiography, *Across Spoon River*. The biographies of Lincoln (1931), Vachel Lindsay (1935), Walt Whitman (1937), and Mark Twain (1938) were critically acclaimed. However, none of his other works equaled the popular success, the literary impact, or the longevity of the *Spoon River Anthology*.



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### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description. The Oak Hill Cemetery covers 29 1/4 acres in Section 22, Township 5, range 3 in Lewistown Township. The property nominated here is approximately 13 acres of the total.

The boundary of Oak Hill Cemetery is shown as the solid line on accompnay map entitled "Oak Hill Cemetery, Lewistown, Illinois, Aerial Map."

Boundary Justification. The boundaries include those sections historically associated with Oak Hill Cemetery in the 1880s and 1890s during Edgar Lee Masters' residence in Lewistown, Illinois and that maintains historic integrity. Sections to the north in the cemetery are not included as they were not added to the cemetery until after the publication of the *Anthology* in 1915.





IN REPLY REFER TO:

# United States Department of the Interior

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The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to announce actions on the following properties for the National Register of Historic Places. For further information call 202-343-9542 or 202-343-1572 or you may respond via cc:Mail.

DEC 5 1995

NOV 24 1995

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 11/13/95 THROUGH 11/17/95

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number, NHL, Action, Date, Multiple Name

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STATE EQUIVALENT, Frelinghuysen University, Former Classroom Building, 1800 Vermont Ave., NW., Washington, 95001228, LISTED, 11/06/95

ILLINOIS, FULTON COUNTY, Oak Hill Cemetery, 1000 Blk. N. Main St. (IL 97 and 100), Lewistown, 95001240, LISTED, 11/13/95

MASSACHUSETTS, BERKSHIRE COUNTY, Shaker Farm, Dublin Rd., Richmond, 95001198, LISTED, 11/06/95

OHIO, PORTAGE COUNTY, Olin, Arvin, House, 1425 Ravenna Rd., Kent vicinity, 95001157, LISTED, 10/20/95

PENNSYLVANIA, GREENE COUNTY, Greensboro Historic District, Roughly bounded by County, Second, Walnut, Front and Clear Sts. and the Monongahela R., Greensboro, 95000118, LISTED, 11/17/95 (Greensboro--New Geneva MPS)

VERMONT, CHITTENDEN COUNTY, Buell Street--Bradley Street Historic District, 2-71 Bradley St., 24-125 Buell St., 16-75 Orchard Terr., 9-96 S. Union St., 11-87 Hungerford Terr., Burlington, 95001260, LISTED, 11/13/95

VERMONT, WINDSOR COUNTY, White River Junction Historic District, Railroad Row, Main, Currier, Bridge, and Gates Sts., Hartford, 80000390, ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVED, 11/13/95

VIRGINIA, HENRICO COUNTY, Richmond National Cemetery, 1701 Williamsburg Rd., Richmond (Independent City) vicinity, 95001183, LISTED, 10/26/95 (Civil War Era National Cemeteries MPS)

VIRGINIA, HENRICO COUNTY, Seven Pines National Cemetery, 400 E. Williamsburg Rd., Sandston, 95001182, LISTED, 10/26/95 (Civil War Era National Cemeteries MPS)