

City of Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Layman's Cemetery

Other Name/Site Number: Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery

2. Location of Property

Street and Number: 2925 Cedar Avenue South

located on original site not for publication ()

() moved/date:

3. Ownership

Owner's Name: City of Minneapolis, Individual plot-holders

Street and Number: 309 Second Avenue South

City: Minneapolis

State: MN Zip: 55401

3. Classification

Ownership of property: () private
 () public
 (X) both

Category of property: () building
 (X) site
 () district
 () structure
 () object

Number of resources within property:

Contributing	Non-contributing
(2)	(0) buildings
(1)	(0) sites
(3)	(0) structures
(~1,831)	(0) objects
(~1,837)	(0) Total

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Date: 2002

5. Function or Use

Historic: Cemetery

Current: Cemetery

6. Description

Architectural classification (style): Classical Revival; Eclectic

Materials:

foundation: stone

roof: asphalt shingles

walls: stone

other: sandstone, granite, marble, limestone, concrete, iron, bronze

Describe present and historic physical appearance: See continuation sheets.

7. Statement of Significance

Applicable local designation criteria: 1 and 2

Related local context (s): Early American & European Settlement (1848-1865); Early Industry, Commerce & Residential Development (1865-1880); Urbanization: Growth & Expansion (1880-1920); Early Historic Preservation Movement (1896-1942)

Areas of significance: Social History (See continuation sheets)

Period (s) of significance: 1853-1942

Significant dates: 1853, 1860, 1871, 1886, 1919, 1927, 1942

Significant person (s): Philander Prescott, Charles W. Christmas

Significant group (s): Minneapolis pioneers, U.S. military veterans, European immigrants, African-Americans, abolitionists

Cultural affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: N/A

8. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheets

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 27 acres

PIN number: 3602924330001

Legal Description: South Half (S ½) of the Southwest quarter (SW ¼) of the Southwest Quarter (SW ¼) and all that is part of the Northwest Quarter (NW ¼) of the Southwest Quarter (SW ¼) of the Southwest Quarter (SW ¼) lying South of the right of way of the Hastings & Dakota Railroad (also known as Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad) all in Section Thirty-six (36), Township Twenty-Nine (29), North of Range Twenty-four (24), West of the Fourth Principal Meridian, and comprising all the land heretofore known and platted as Minneapolis Cemetery, also known as Layman's Cemetery.

See continuation sheets.

10. Form prepared by:

Name/Title: Jeffrey L. Adams, Historic Preservation Intern, and Marjorie Pearson, Ph.D.

Organization: City of Minneapolis, Department of Community Planning and Economic Development, Heritage Preservation Division, and Hess, Roise and Company

Street and number: 350 S 5th Street, #210

Telephone: (612) 673-2597

City: Minneapolis

State: MN

Zip: 55415

11. Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission Comments

Date submitted to Minneapolis HPC:

Date of Minneapolis HPC comment:

12. Description of City Council

Designation of property pursuant to:

Date of action:

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Layman's Cemetery

Description

Layman's Cemetery occupies a twenty-seven-acre site in South Minneapolis. It is bounded by Cedar Avenue on the west, Lake Street on the south, Twenty-First Avenue South on the east, and the irregular line of the south edge of the right-of-way of the Benton Cutoff of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad and the vacated edges of Nineteenth Avenue South and Twenty-ninth Street East on the north. This is the historic extent of the cemetery, which largely attained its existing plan and features between 1928 (when it was officially renamed the Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery) and 1936. The site contains two contributing buildings, three contributing structures, an assortment of deciduous overstory trees, and approximately 1,891 contributing objects, including six monuments, two birdbaths, a planting circle, and approximately 1820 markers. Collectively, they contribute to the character of the nominated area.

The grass-covered terrain of the cemetery site is relatively flat; however, it slopes downward in the northeast section towards Twenty-First Avenue South and slopes upward in the northwest section towards Cedar Avenue.¹ Examination of topographical maps suggest that this is the natural terrain pattern, and one late nineteenth-century description reinforces this analysis.² Historically, unpaved carriage lanes extended north-south and east-west through the cemetery, and along the northwest boundary. These lanes were closed and replaced by grass in the 1930s. Trees planted in north-south rows that paralleled the lanes dominate the cemetery landscape. Some appear to be nineteenth-century elms, but many of the existing trees -- maple, aspen, ash, poplar, and a few evergreens -- appear to date from the 1920s and 1930s, when the cemetery was partially redesigned. Trees clustered near the northern edges of the cemetery also appear to date from the 1930s. Another allée of trees lines the main entrance drive into the cemetery. Other landscape features are planting circles, outlined by stone blocks and birdbaths with concrete and stone basins set on rough limestone-block bases. These elements were added sometime between 1928 and 1931.

The site is enclosed on Cedar Avenue and Lake Street by a contributing fence, installed in 1928-1929. The fence, composed of posts formed by rough-cut, random limestone blocks set at twenty-foot intervals and linked by wrought-iron pickets, helps to reinforce the sense of Layman's Cemetery as a protected enclave, set apart from the surrounding urban area. The posts are about seven-and-one-half feet high, and the pickets, painted green, are about six feet high. Paired wrought-iron gates, flanked by limestone posts approximately ten feet high, protect the entrances to the cemetery on these two thoroughfares. All the limestone blocks are set with rough sand mortar and the posts rest on concrete bases. Bronze plaques bearing the inscription "The Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery" are placed on the gateposts. Pedestrian entrances with their own wrought-iron gates flank the main gate on Cedar Avenue. Historic accounts state that a wood archway with iron gates once signaled the cemetery entrance on Cedar Avenue.³ Contributing chain-link fences supported on pipe-rail posts and crosspieces enclose the cemetery on the east and the north. These were also installed in 1928-1929.

¹ The northeast section is part of the original Minneapolis Cemetery plat (1860), while the northwest section was added to the cemetery in 1886.

² Timberlake, 956.

³ Byron Harvey Timberlake, "Cemeteries," in *History of the City of Minneapolis, Minnesota*, ed., Isaac Atwater (New York: Munsell and Co., 1893), II: 1956.

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A paved asphalt driveway extends east from the Cedar Avenue gate past the cemetery office building and around a flagpole to a turnaround circle located approximately two-thirds of the way across the cemetery. The contributing driveway and turnaround circle, even though resurfaced and somewhat altered in configuration as the driveway passes the office, are among the oldest surviving features of the site, predating the reworking of the cemetery in the 1920s and 1930s. The driveway and turnaround circle are considered to be a contributing historic structure. The gate from Lake Street, which is opposite Nineteenth Avenue South and historically had its own driveway, is now marked by an allée of trees. Sidewalks composed of concrete slabs surround the outer edges of the cemetery on Cedar Avenue, Lake Street, and Twenty-first Avenue South. Most of the sidewalk slabs appear to date from 1928-1929, although later concrete slabs extend the sidewalk to the curb line on Lake Street and portions of Cedar Avenue. Grass-planted boulevards extend from the sidewalk to the curb line on Cedar Avenue and Twenty-first Avenue South.

The cemetery office building, a contributing structure constructed ca. 1871, is located in the middle of the cemetery, north of the flagpole and the driveway. The one-story building is constructed of rough-cut limestone blocks and is oriented in a north-south direction. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Cornice returns on the north and south sides of the building give it a modest Greek Revival appearance. A wood and glass door leads to the office area in the south end of the building. Two doors on the east side of the building lead to a hallway, workroom and vault area in the north end. An original cast-iron stove is located in the workroom. A third contributing structure, a wood-frame, gable-roofed vehicle shed, circa 1930, is located to the north of the office.

A variety of contributing, commemorative monuments were added to the cemetery in the 1920s and 1930s, after it was acquired by the City of Minneapolis and renamed the Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery. The first of these is the flagpole, installed on a base of rough, random, limestone blocks, to the south of the office. It bears a bronze plaque inscribed "In memory of the Pioneers and the Soldiers by the Auxiliary M.C.P.A., 1928." In 1936, the G.A.R. monument with a bronze plaque reading "In Memory Of The Nation's Defenders" was installed south of the office and east of the allée that leads to Lake Street, by the Soldiers' Section that was marked in the 1930s. Also in 1936, the headstone of Philander Prescott and his family was set in a tall vertical surround. The Charles W. Christmas monument in the form of a modified obelisk dates from 1942. These are located east of the G.A.R. monument. A stone boulder with a bronze plaque that reads, "In Memory Of Pioneer Mothers/Erected May 8, 1937 By Descendants And Friends/All That I Am Or Hope To Be I Owe To My Angel Mother - Abraham Lincoln," stands east of the office. To the west of the office and adjacent to the entrance driveway is a monument to Annie Holl with a bronze plaque reading: "In Loving Memory Of Annie M. Holl, Wife Of Dr. Peter M. Holl, Daughter Of Seymour And Ann Fillmore, Granddaughter Of Deacon James And Ann Sully, Her Untiring Efforts And Devotion To Bring About The Preservation Of This Sacred Ground As A Memorial To The Pioneers And Soldiers Was An Inspiration To All Who Were Interested In This Worthy Work. Erected By Auxiliary M.C.P.A. 1938."

About 20,000 graves remain in the cemetery, but only about 1,820 headstones, markers, and monuments survive. The small proportion of extant markers is the result of decay, discard, vandalism, and the fact that many graves never had markers. No comprehensive inventory has been made of the surviving markers, although all are contributing objects to the nomination. The markers are arranged in rough north-south rows, reflecting the original rectilinear layout of plots within rectangular blocks designated by letter. As the cemetery grew, new blocks adhered to this original grid pattern. Some blocks were

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reserved for families, others for individuals. Block H, in the northeast part of the cemetery, was designated the Potter's Field, which explains the lack of markers in that area. Smaller, numbered plot sections fill eccentric areas such as those within the turnaround circle and bordering the railroad right-of-way. The paths of lanes that originally ran through the cemetery are still discernable in the form of long, north-south and east-west-running areas devoid of markers and roughly delineated by rows of trees.

The majority of markers in Layman's Cemetery are late nineteenth and early twentieth century in date, in a variety of forms and styles, and in widely varied states of repair. They are made of marble, sandstone, granite, iron and zinc. Some of the headstones appear to be of mid-twentieth-century date, but record earlier burials. The inscriptions on many of the earliest headstones have deteriorated beyond legibility. The marker assemblage is made up predominantly of tablets and blocks, but includes a wide array of Classical and Egyptian Revival plaques, obelisks, columns, pedestals and other types. Eight iron and three zinc markers are scattered throughout the cemetery.⁴ Marble military tablets mark the graves of many veterans. Other distinctive markers include those erected by fraternal organizations, which mimic logs or feature special symbols, and those bearing inscriptions in German, Swedish, Norwegian, and Russian.

⁴ "The Lone Tree Cemetery Survey" of Telluride, Colorado, contains a useful compilation of information on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century gravestones. See www.town.telluride.co.us/plan/cemmain.html. For wrought-iron crosses, see Timothy J. Kloberdanz, "German-Russian Wrought-Iron Cross Sites in Central North Dakota Multiple Property Submission," 1988, prepared for the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office.

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Significance

Introduction

Layman's Cemetery in South Minneapolis is eligible for local landmark designation under Criteria 1 for its association with significant events and periods which have made broad contributions to our social history, and under Criteria 2 for its association with the lives of significant persons and groups. For one hundred and fifty years, this plot has been the site of repose and remembrance for a diverse cross-section of Minneapolitans whose efforts contributed to the early development of the rapidly expanding city. Layman's Cemetery, established in 1853 on land owned by Minneapolis pioneer Martin Layman and adjacent to his farmstead, is the oldest surviving cemetery in the city of Minneapolis and is one of the few surviving features from the city's first fifteen years of American and European settlement (1848-1865). It contains the graves of some of the first settlers of the city, many of whom made major contributions to state and local history; soldiers and veterans of the War of 1812, the Dakota Conflict, the Civil War, the Mexican American War, the Spanish-American War, and World War I; mid- to late nineteenth century European immigrants; early African American citizens and transposed abolitionists. Notable individuals buried in the cemetery include Philander Prescott, Charles W. Christmas, and William Goodridge. The effort to preserve and rehabilitate the cemetery in the 1920's and 1930's is part of a nascent local historic preservation movement that sought to protect sites deemed significant to Minneapolis history.

Early Minneapolis Settlement and the Founding of Layman's Cemetery

Minnesota became a territory in 1849. Hennepin County was established in 1852 with eighteen townships that included a Township of Minneapolis, which was much larger than the town that was established in 1856. That year, the southern boundary of the town was set at Franklin Avenue. Additional land to the south was annexed in 1867, 1872, 1881 and 1883. The 1883 annexation took in the land occupied by Layman's Cemetery.⁵

Land in South Minneapolis, previously under military jurisdiction, was made available for claims in 1849 and 1853. Martin Layman (1811-1886), one of the first settlers of Minneapolis, established a claim in 1853 in the vicinity of Cedar Avenue and Lake Street. He stated that his house at Cedar and Twenty-ninth Street East was the sixth house built on the west bank of the Mississippi. Layman, born in Catskill, New York, married Elizabeth Brown in 1831. They moved to Illinois in 1845, where they farmed, before moving to Minneapolis in 1853, where they continued farming. When the city of Minneapolis was established in 1856, Layman's land was within the boundaries of the township of Minneapolis, but south of the city. Problems arose with his title to the property when it was found that he claimed land that was allocated to school use, so congressional action was required for him to obtain clear title to the property.⁶

The beginnings of the cemetery are somewhat conjectural. The citizens of the nascent city had tried to negotiate for a cemetery site from J. S. Johnson, adjacent to Johnson's Lake in the fall of 1854. Prior to

⁵ Pearson, South Minneapolis: An Historic Context, p.13

⁶ Warner and Foote, 340-341; Beatrice Morosco, "Last Farm on a Minneapolis Lake," *Hennepin County History* 38 (Fall 1978): 19; Winifred Layman Fernstrom, "The Layman Story, 1760-1976," Minneapolis, 1976, 27; Timberlake, 955; John H. Stevens, *Personal Recollections of Minnesota and Its People and Early History of Minneapolis* (Minneapolis: Tribune Job Printing Co., 1890), 141, 149.

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that time, what burials there were on the west bank took place in a grove of trees behind Hoag's Lake (long filled in). Of course, settlers associated with Fort Snelling could be buried in the graveyard there. Given the tenuous nature of the settlers' rights on the west bank, such an indeterminate state of affairs for the burial of the dead is understandable.⁷

When ten-month-old Carlton Keith Cressey, son of the Reverend W. E. Cressey, the first minister of the First Baptist Church, died on September 11, 1853, Layman allowed for burial on his land. George Wardwell, the father of Ebenezer Hodsdon's wife Jane, helped Layman survey the proposed cemetery site, receiving two grave lots in exchange. His wife, Jean Robbins Wardwell, was buried there in 1855. A late nineteenth-century account calls this the burial of "Uncle Wardell," a poor hired hand. Two of Layman's young grandchildren were buried there in 1858 and 1859. Supposedly, Layman began to sell cemetery lots in 1858 or 1859. The location was advantageous, since it was easily accessible from the village center and close to the major roads that led from Minneapolis to Fort Snelling.⁸

The eastern ten acres were platted under the name of the Minneapolis Cemetery in 1860, with an additional ten acres to the west platted in 1871. The twenty acres were organized in a rectangular plan bounded by Cedar Avenue on the west, Twenty-first Avenue on the east, Lake Street on the south, and Twenty-ninth Street on the north. The last irregularly shaped seven-acre addition to the cemetery was planned in 1881, but was not formally added until 1886, three years after the land was annexed to the city of Minneapolis. This section extends northward between Cedar Avenue and Nineteenth Avenue South [vacated] to the curving right-of-way of the Benton Cutoff of the Chicago, Milwaukee and Saint Paul Railroad.⁹

Martin Layman had constructed a new house across the street from the cemetery entrance in 1876. (The house was destroyed by a fire in 1887.) Even then, the surrounding area was largely rural, although Layman had platted land for development. In an 1881 account, the Minneapolis Cemetery is described as "located south of and near the city limits. It embraces twenty acres of high, dry land, . . . This cemetery has received extra attention and shows care and taste in the arrangement of its ornamentations."¹⁰ At that time, two drives led into the cemetery. One extended from Cedar Avenue, past the cemetery office building and vault structure set in the middle of the cemetery, to a turnaround circle, and on to Twenty-first Avenue. The other drive extended from Lake Street, opposite Nineteenth Avenue South, to the middle of the cemetery, by the office building.

After the cemetery had reached its full extent, it was described in an 1893 account as being "laid out so as to make a large portion of the ground accessible (*sic*) for burial purposes. The main entrance is on Cedar Avenue, . . . and is guarded by a large wooden archway with iron gates for both pedestrians and

⁷ Stevens, 241.

⁸ Fernstrom, 8-9; Warner and Foote, 346. The Wardwell marker was still there in 1976, located in the southeast corner. Timberlake, 955, seems to be the first to recount the Uncle Wardell story.

⁹ Fernstrom, 9; Timberlake, 955. The ownership and burial record book for the period 1861 through 1872 recording lots in Sections A through G indicate that this was the earlier portion of the cemetery; available at the Minneapolis Archives, Office of the City Clerk. The 1881 "Addition to Minneapolis Cemetery" is also available at the Minneapolis City Archives. G. M. Hopkins, *A Complete Set of Surveys and Plats of Properties in the City of Minneapolis* (Minneapolis: G. M. Hopkins, 1885), pl. 19, shows the twenty-acre cemetery site. The annexed portions of the city are depicted on Plate 12B in *1940 Atlas of the City of Minneapolis* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis City Planning Commission, 1941).

¹⁰ Fernstrom, 24, describes the new house and its setting. Warner and Foote, 346, describe the cemetery. Hopkins depicts the layout.

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vehicles, which are always open to the great number of visitors who may be found strolling about the pleasant grounds in fine weather. . . . The cemetery throughout is well supplied with shade trees and is beautifully sodded and is well cared for. The monuments as a rule, are not large and expensive, yet there are a great many very pretty ones, and almost every grave is marked by a neat stone.”¹¹

Various detailed plans drawn of the cemetery in the late nineteenth century and in the 1920s and 1930s illustrate the drives and lanes that made the grave sites accessible. An east-west drive running from Cedar Avenue to Twenty-first Avenue South, now the existing main entrance drive, was called Elizabeth Street, after Martin Layman's wife. It was interrupted by turnarounds in the eastern and western sections. The eastern turnaround still exists. The north-south drive leading in from Lake Street was called Walnut Avenue. Regularly spaced lanes extended north-south. From west to east they were: Maple Avenue, Cedar Street, Evergreen Avenue, then the Walnut Avenue drive which led past the east side of the office, Monument Avenue leading from Lake Street to the eastern turnaround, and Willow Street at the eastern edge, adjacent to Twenty-first Avenue. The east-west lanes were: Rose Street along the northern edge, Vine Street, Eudocia Street, then Elizabeth Street which passed the office on the south side, Genevieve Street, and Poplar Street by the Lake Street edge. These drives and lanes defined the sections of the cemetery, each of which was assigned a letter or number. The sections, called blocks, were subdivided into numbered burial plots, although a portion of Block H in the northeast corner was used as a potters' field for the burial of indigents. The sections within and surrounding the turnaround circles and at the northern edge by the railroad right-of-way were assigned numbers.¹²

Nineteenth-century cemeteries in Minneapolis and elsewhere

Layman's Cemetery is the oldest surviving cemetery in Minneapolis. Although Maple Hill Cemetery was contemporaneous with Layman's Cemetery, it was situated on the east bank of the Mississippi in the Village of St. Anthony, not Minneapolis, and no longer exists. The ten-acre site, located on Broadway between Polk and Fillmore Streets Northeast, was opened in 1857, but closed after burials were prohibited in 1890 for health reasons. Many of the bodies were removed and the site converted to parkland in about 1910, which was renamed Beltrami Park in 1947.¹³

While Layman's and Maple Hill were non-sectarian and, at least in theory, open to all, Catholic and Jewish citizens established their own cemeteries. Saint Anthony Cemetery (extant) at Central Avenue and Twenty-eighth Avenue Northeast opened in the early 1860s. Saint Mary's Cemetery (extant), also called the Cemetery of the Immaculate Conception, was established at Chicago Avenue and Forty-sixth Street East in 1867. Montefiore Cemetery (extant – Minneapolis Landmark 2000) at Third Avenue South and Forty-second Street was established in 1876 by the Reform Jewish congregation of Minneapolis, while the Adath Jeshurun Association established a small cemetery (extant) at France

¹¹ Timberlake, 956

¹² These detailed layouts are depicted in: "Addition to Minneapolis Cemetery"; "Layman's Cemetery, now officially known as the Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery by authority of the City Council, Feb. 10, 1928," available at cemetery office; and "Plan Showing the Approximate Location of Soldiers Graves at Layman's Cemetery," prepared by the City Engineers Office, Minneapolis, June 1931, reproduced in "The Historic Layman's Cemetery," *Hennepin County History* 28 (Spring 1969): 11.

¹³ Timberlake, 956-957; Theodore Wirth, *Minneapolis Park System 1883-1944* (Minneapolis: Board of Park Commissioners, 1945), appendix, 1912 map of parkland shows Maple Hill; information from Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board.

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Avenue South and Fifty-seventh Street, now part of Edina, in 1888 for the burial of Orthodox Jews. An 1893 account describes the layouts, features, and monuments of these cemeteries.¹⁴

As Minneapolis grew, more cemetery space was needed. In 1871, Layman expanded his cemetery to the west, increasing its size from ten to twenty acres. In so doing, he may have been trying to counteract the establishment of Lakewood Cemetery that year by some of the city's most prominent citizens. This group, headed by Colonel William S. King, acquired a 128-acre tract to the east of Lake Calhoun and north of Lake Harriet. Initially platted according to a plan drawn by C. W. Falsom, superintendent of the Mount Auburn (Mass.) Cemetery, it was dedicated in 1872. Soon thereafter the plan of Lakewood was revised to reflect the more popular, "lawn park" cemetery type that had been introduced by Adolph Strauch at Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati. Lakewood soon offered major competition to Layman's and other cemeteries, as many bodies were removed from the earlier cemeteries and moved there.¹⁵

The comparison between Layman's and Lakewood reflects changing patterns in cemetery design in nineteenth-century urban America. Unlike East Coast cities and rural communities in both the East and the Midwest, Minneapolis did not have burials in churchyards. The picturesque, rural cemetery close to an urban setting had been introduced at Mount Auburn in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1831. This type of cemetery planning, with its emphasis on family monuments, planned landscapes, picturesque vistas, and rolling roadways spread throughout the eastern United States in the 1840s. When Adolph Strauch took over Spring Grove in 1855, he introduced changes in landscaping patterns, de-emphasizing the picturesque and family monuments in favor of a more direct, pastoral landscape interspersed with monuments. The rise of the "lawn park" cemetery was concurrent with the rise of the urban park movement in the United States, and the patrons of both were often the same. This was certainly the case with Lakewood Cemetery. However, Layman's Cemetery preceded both the establishment of Lakewood and the movement for the establishment of a Minneapolis park system.¹⁶

When Martin Layman laid out, and subsequently expanded his cemetery, he seems to have looked more to the churchyard pattern of closely set, regularly spaced graves than to either the picturesque rural cemetery or the lawn park plan. In addition, the layout follows the lines of his claim (governed by the section-township-range system), as well as what came to be the grid pattern of the local street system. Regularity, symmetry, and accessibility through lanes lined by rows of trees were the hallmarks of Layman's Cemetery. The earlier sections of the cemetery (Blocks A through D) were sold with large family plots, and family monuments were encouraged. With a relatively flat site, there was little impetus to create picturesque landscape effects, although the emphasis on grass and trees may owe something to Strauch. In any case, Layman was providing a public necessity to those who initially had no other choice.

After the initial expansion, the management and general maintenance of the cemetery was turned over to the Minneapolis Cemetery Association in 1873, although plot owners were still responsible for the care

¹⁴ Warner and Foote, 345; Timberlake, 960-962; Albert G. Minda, *The Story of Temple Israel* (Minneapolis: Lund Press, 1971), 4. The licensed cemeteries of the city are listed in *Hudson's Dictionary of Minneapolis: A Guide and Handbook* (Minneapolis: Hudson Company, 1925), 33.

¹⁵ Timberlake, 951-955; David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 107-109.

¹⁶ Sloane, 66, 104, 116-119.

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of their own grave sites, as no perpetual maintenance fund was ever established. The first association members were Martin Layman, Judge Charles F. Vanderburgh, Judge Henry G. Hicks, R. E. Grimshaw, and D. M. Gilmore.¹⁷

Layman's Cemetery is the only surviving non-sectarian 19th-Century cemetery in Minneapolis exhibiting an original churchyard-style geometric plot layout. This vernacular design, essentially an enlarged frontier cemetery, stands in contrast to the asymmetry, winding roads and aesthetic emphasis of the lawn park style, in evidence at Crystal Lake, Lakewood, Hillside and St. Mary's cemeteries. The Catholic St. Anthony's Cemetery and Jewish Montefierre Cemetery are the only other roughly contemporaneous cemeteries in Minneapolis still displaying an original rectilinear plot layout. While Lakewood Cemetery reflects the mushrooming prosperity of late nineteenth century Minneapolis, Layman's Cemetery reflects the humble origins and ethnically diverse character of those whose aspirations and physical labor helped to fuel the boom.

Nineteenth-century burials

Layman's Cemetery is the burial place of some of Minneapolis' earliest pioneers, including victims and survivors of the Dakota Uprising of 1862. The earliest surviving plot ownership and burial records date from 1861 and include mention of the interment of the first child born in Minneapolis, a daughter of Colonel John Stevens, who died in 1867 (her remains were later reburied in Lakewood Cemetery). Two of the most prominent of early Minneapolitans buried in Layman's Cemetery are Philander Prescott and Charles W. Christmas.

Philander Prescott (1801-1862) was one of Minnesota's earliest pioneers who played a role in the events that influenced the settlement of the Northwest frontier. After the demolition of his house that stood at 4458-4460 Snelling Avenue South in 1980, his grave is the last tangible link to this historic Minnesota figure. Prescott came to Minnesota in 1819 as a sutler's assistant at Cantonment New Hope, prior to the construction of Fort Snelling. As an Indian trader, he learned the language and formed close associations with the Dakota Indians. Under Major Lawrence Taliaferro, he initiated farming activities at Eatonville, on the shores of Lake Calhoun, in 1829. About this time, he married the daughter of the Dakota chief, who took the Christian name of Mary. In 1843, he was appointed government interpreter for Colonel McLean and moved to Fort Snelling. Prescott was the interpreter for Henry M. Rice when the latter was negotiating a treaty with the Dakota tribes that would open most of southern Minnesota, parts of Iowa, and South Dakota to white settlement. After the treaty was signed in 1851, Prescott was able to exercise a claim for land near Minnehaha Creek, which is where he built the house that survived until 1980. In 1860 Governor Alexander Ramsey asked Prescott to write about his personal experiences while participating in the development of the state between 1819 and 1852. These records were given to the Minnesota Historical Society by his daughter, Mrs. Eli Pettijohn, in 1893. Prescott was killed on August 18, 1862, during the Sioux uprising, while serving as the government interpreter at the Lower Sioux Agency. His body was recovered and returned to Minneapolis, where it was buried in Layman's Cemetery. His wife Mary, who died in 1867, in Shakopee at the home of her daughter and son-in-law,

¹⁷ Fernstrom, 9.

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lies beside him.¹⁸ The significance of Prescott's marker is enhanced by the fact that it is the primary surviving physical link to his life, since the demolition of the Prescott House in 1980.¹⁹

Charles W. Christmas (1796-1884) was the first to survey land in Hennepin County for Colonel John Stevens, thus forming the basis for the city of Minneapolis. He came to the area in 1850 from Wooster, Ohio. Previously he had surveyed public lands in Michigan and had been the first register of the United States land office in Sauk Rapids. When Hennepin County was formed, he was elected county surveyor, and he laid out the territorial roads to and from Saint Anthony and Minneapolis. In 1851, he laid claim to land on what became Broadway, near the Mississippi River. In 1854, Stevens asked him to do the survey for a town that covered more than two-thirds of Stevens's claim. The monument that marks Christmas's grave is the only physical connection to this notable, historic figure. Christmas's wife Mary Ann and two children, all of whom died before him, are buried next to him.²⁰

While Philander Prescott and Charles W. Christmas are the most prominent early settlers buried in Layman's Cemetery, a number of other historic figures are also interred there. These include Justice Edwin Hedderly, who presided in the 1860's over the first jury trial in Hennepin County justice court; Benjamin Brown, the first town marshall of St. Anthony; Emanuel Case, owner of the first store in St. Anthony, co-organizer of the first Masonic Lodge in Minnesota and reputed builder of the first bridge across the Mississippi River; Shepherd C. Dickenson, boarding keeper at the Lower Sioux Agency, who escaped the Dakota massacre only to be killed at the Battle of Birch Coulee; and Lathrop Dickenson, brother of Shepherd, a teamster at the Lower Sioux Agency who was killed by Indians while resisting the theft of his horses. Other well-known family names represented at Layman's Cemetery include Sulley, Stanchfield, Pease, Peterson and Payne.

Layman's Cemetery has the little-known distinction of having never been segregated at a time when most cemeteries either excluded African-Americans or relegated them to separate sections. Around the time of the Civil War, significant numbers of New Englanders and African Americans came to Minnesota, seeking to establish new lives in a frontier 'free' state. The First Baptist Church of Minneapolis was founded by New England abolitionists. Its congregation included Martin Layman, James Glover and Hezekiah, Asa and Nancy Fletcher, all of whom - except the former - are interred in Layman's Cemetery. The cemetery is also the resting place of William Goodridge, a successful African-American businessman and an abolitionist of national reknown. Mr. Goodridge, himself a freed slave, operated a Pennsylvania leg of the Underground Railroad in the 1850s. Other early African-American Minneapolitans buried in Layman's Cemetery include one of the city's first African-American firemen, John Cheatham, and seven Civil War veterans, including Oscar Vaughn of the 16th U.S. Colored Infantry.

Despite the desertion of Layman's Cemetery by many prominent Minneapolitans, it fared well enough for an addition to be opened in 1886. This last addition encompassed Blocks S, T, V and W. Many of

¹⁸ This brief account of Philander Prescott has been adapted from John J. Hackett, "Prescott House," 1974, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, prepared by Minnesota Historical Society. Further information about Mary Prescott can be found in Stevens, 43-44, and A. J. Russell, *One of Our First Families* (Minneapolis: Leonard H. Wells, 1925), 24-26.

¹⁹ Nord, 293

²⁰ Marion Daniel Shutter, *History of Minneapolis, Gateway to the Northwest* (Chicago and Minneapolis: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1923) I: 100; Warner and Foote, 366, 374-375; Stevens, 118. According to the card file records at Layman's Cemetery, the members of the Christmas family are buried in Block A, lot 37.

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these lots, being smaller in size and less expensive, were sold to the rapidly expanding immigrant population on the south side of Minneapolis, especially those of German and Scandinavian origin. Because of the high incidence of infant and child mortality, many of these grave sites were sold for the burial of children.

Scattered throughout Layman's Cemetery are the remains of U.S. military veterans whose service spans the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Three veterans of the War of 1812, Asa Brown, Walter Carpenter and James Glover, are known to rest there, as are 160 veterans of the Civil, Indian and Mexican War, and 16 of the Spanish-American War. A single veteran from the First World War, Oscar Sandell of the 680th Aero Squadron, has his final resting place in Layman's cemetery as well.

In 1869, Layman's Cemetery was the site of the first Decoration Day (Memorial Day) observance in Minneapolis. Attracting as many as 15,000 people, these events were well attended throughout the late nineteenth century. One of Layman's granddaughters recalled the Memorial Day celebrations in the cemetery: "I remember every Memorial Day the school children met and arched their flags and bunting dresses in a parade to the soldiers' lot in my grandfather's cemetery where a program was held and a gun salute was fired over the graves. It seemed to be a real Memorial Day, and also, a gala day for the crowds that came. . . . When I was old enough I sold plants from the cemetery vault to people who wanted to decorate their graves."²¹

The late nineteenth century saw the burial in Layman's Cemetery of many members of fraternal organizations, such as the Masons, Odd Fellows and the Woodmen of the World. These "benevolent societies" were extremely popular in the late 1800's. In addition to providing venues for fellowship and community service, they offered health and death care benefits to their members. The Woodmen of the World, for example, provided every one of its members with a tombstone. German-American immigrants sought to preserve the honor and traditions of their home country in societies such as the Sons of Herman, Freemasons, Odd Fellows and the Druids, etc., while Anglo-Americans ensconced themselves in their own clubs and chapters.²² Such fraternal organizations were an important part of the Minneapolis social fabric until their decline in the late 1920's and early 1930's.

Of lesser historical significance, but still important for their contribution to the color of the developing City of Minneapolis, are a number of individuals buried in Layman's Cemetery. These include August Smith and Alexander Shay, killed in the 1872 flour-mill explosion; the Nichols family, all five of whom drowned in Lake Calhoun in 1860, "Banjo Ben," an itinerant musician who fell to his death from a bridge in 1876; and Harry Hayward, who was hanged in 1895 for arranging the murder of Kitty Ging.²³ Eleven infants interred in the cemetery were a few of the many premature babies who were displayed between 1905 and 1912 in incubators at the 'Infantorium' at Wonderland Amusement Park, which was located at Lake Street and 31st Avenue.²⁴

Nineteenth-century grave markers

²¹ Fernstrom p. 26

²² Miller, Ch2, p.7; Keister, 181

²³ "The Historic Layman's Cemetery, p. 6; Kokman

²⁴ Hunter-Weir, Friends of the Cemetery: History: Wonderland Babies.

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Many of the burials in Layman's Cemetery never had grave markers. Of those that did, vandalism and decay have left only a small fraction intact. The approximately 1,800 surviving markers represent less than ten percent of the total number of individuals buried in the cemetery. It is likely that many graves were originally marked with wooden crosses, which disintegrated or were removed over time. While the earliest extant marker may be that of Lucy F. Hawkins, dating to 1865, the majority of the markers and monuments still in the cemetery date from the period between 1885 and 1915. Interestingly, markers are oriented both towards the east and the west.

An informal field survey supports some broad generalizations about materials and styles of the markers in Layman's Cemetery. Marble, granite and sandstone are the most common materials. Markers made of marble, which tend to be older and are most susceptible to acid rain, have, on average, deteriorated the most. Many of these are illegible and dozens of marble tablet markers lie on the ground, broken in two. Granite markers, which tend to be of later dates, display moderate deterioration. A pair of sandstone gothic tablet markers illustrate the highly variable nature of decay seen throughout the cemetery: while one is in pristine condition, the adjacent one is badly eroded. A small subset of the grave markers at Layman's Cemetery are made of metal. Three rare, zinc markers from the 1880's display the handsome patina and exceptional durability which are hallmarks of the type. Of the eight remaining iron markers, which are otherwise in good condition, four are broken.

Considering the relatively brief, fifty-year history of interments at Layman's Cemetery and the large number of missing markers, those still in place exhibit a wide variety of styles. These may be divided into a generic 'marker' type, encompassing tablets, blocks, flat stones, plaques, and others; obelisks; columns; pedestals; crosses; and eclectic types. Simple, domed and shouldered tablets are the most frequently occurring type. Variations include round, elliptical, gabled, diamond-shaped, rustic, gothic and conjoined double markers. Military tablets, marking veteran's graves, are sprinkled throughout the cemetery and date from the late 1800's through the 1930's, when a number of new, replacement markers were installed. Other types in the 'marker' category also found in Layman's Cemetery include simple granite blocks, flat markers, bronze and granite plaques, slant-faced markers and a handful of open-book markers. One large granite marker recalls the shape of an early Christian reliquary. There are also examples of rustic blocks; markers carved to resemble tree stumps and log crosses; and small blocks surmounted by sheep figures, marking the graves of children. One fairly common, later marker type seen at Layman's Cemetery is the polished granite cylinder.

Many of the cemetery's more impressive gravestones are examples of the late nineteenth-century Egyptian and Classical Revival styles in art and architecture. These larger, more expensive markers most often denote the graves of family groupings. Approximately 175 vaulted obelisks still stand in Layman's Cemetery, most often of gray sandstone. While many of these terminate in gabled, gothic or rounded cross-vaulting, a large proportion are missing finials in the form of spheres, urns and other shapes. There are about twenty-five standard Egyptian Revival obelisks, which may be tapered or straight; round, four- or eight-sided; and of varying proportions. There are also a few marble, truncated obelisks and one rustic, granite obelisk.

The few columnar markers in Layman's Cemetery are derived from Classical Greek and Roman forms. They include draped, broken square columns, of marble and granite; doric columns of varying height; pilaster columns, such as the Hedderly marker; and stelae. Two or three examples of a related form, the pedestal marker, are also present in the cemetery. A few of the Classical Revival markers are the sole

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representatives of their type at this site. These include a marble, draped figure supporting a cross - the only statue in the cemetery - and a small, cross-gabled pavilion, also of marble. Finally, a small number of stone crosses and pedestal-mounted stone and metal urns, dating to the early twentieth century, dot the cemetery grounds.

Two marker types, the iron crosses and zinc markers mentioned above, warrant further comment. There are seven iron crosses remaining in the cemetery, out of an initial population of dozens. The iron crosses are rare examples of a funerary art tradition brought to America by European immigrants in the late nineteenth century. Such crosses are found in small numbers throughout the Great Plains and were erected between the 1870's and 1930's. They were originally hand-forged and were later mass-produced in Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati and Bismarck.²⁵ Those iron crosses surviving in Layman's Cemetery, which may be simple or ornate, mark the graves of Slovakian and Scandinavian immigrants who lived in the Bohemian Flats neighborhood adjoining the Mississippi River. (It should be noted that the bottom portion of an iron anchor marker is the only remaining vestige in Layman's Cemetery of a distinct Naval marker type.) Zinc or "white bronze" markers, as they were originally billed, are also quite rare, having only been produced between 1874 and 1914. These attractive, inexpensive markers were purchased out of catalogs and were fully customizable. Although they never really caught on, and were prohibited at some cemeteries, they form a blue-green, zinc carbonate skin which effects a remarkable degree of preservation.

One unusual marker in Layman's Cemetery is a small, marble stele, from the top of which protrudes an iron rod supporting a bronze hand holding a heart. Beneath the hand is a three-linked chain enclosing the initials FLT (friendship, love and truth) and at the base a dedication by the "Flour City Lodge," the Odd Fellows chapter responsible for erecting the monument for one of its members. Numerous other markers in the cemetery bear Masonic symbols, such as the compass and square, many of which mark the graves of European immigrants. Markers erected by the Woodmen of the World for its members are especially distinctive. These carved sandstone logs, stumps and tree trunks are found in older cemeteries throughout the United States. The Russell marker in the south-central part of Layman's Cemetery is a fine example of this type. A final headstone that merits description is that of John Effert (1884-1911). It is a rough granite block and is incised with the Socialist Party symbol and the slogan, "Workers of the World Unite." Mr. Effert was a railroad worker, and his marker was probably paid for by the Socialist Party.

While the formal characteristics of grave markers are expressive indicators of past attitudes toward death, epitaphs and inscriptions often have more personal immediacy. Unfortunately, many grave stones in Layman's Cemetery have lost, or are in the process of losing, their inscriptions. Those still legible have many poignant stories to tell. A field survey reveals that many markers in Layman's Cemetery bear Norwegian-, Swedish- and German-language inscriptions; diverse personal sentiments; and symbolic images carved in shallow relief. Often, European-language inscriptions refer to Old World birthplaces and include biblical or philosophical passages. Occasionally, markers bear personal thoughts or references such as "Sisters - will try and meet you," "Our Maxie," and "Wee Scotty." Symbols such as doves, bibles, raised hands, flowers, draperies and open gates adorn various markers throughout the cemetery.

²⁵ Winistorfer, *Iron Crosses: Sentinels of the Prairie*, p. 18-20

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Early twentieth-century downturn

The rise and fall in the popularity of Layman's Cemetery is reflected in the demographics of those interred there. Initially, it was a humble pioneer graveyard. A few years later it was an attractive and well-kept cemetery patronized by prosperous citizens of the city. As Lakewood Cemetery attracted more of Minneapolis' elite, including those buried at Layman's Cemetery whose families could afford to relocate them, the latter increasingly became the resting place of immigrants, laborers and indigents from the surrounding area.

By 1900, Layman's Cemetery was facing further competition from newer, more fashionable cemeteries in the city, especially Crystal Lake in north Minneapolis and Hillside in northeast Minneapolis. Burials continued at Layman's Cemetery, but the heirs and descendants of long-time lot holders chose other alternatives for family burials, moved away, or just ceased tending family gravesites. The cemetery lots were becoming increasingly neglected, as there was no perpetual maintenance fund for lot upkeep. The City Council was petitioned in 1917 to close the cemetery to further burials, a move that was opposed by the Minneapolis Cemetery Association because new burials provided the only cemetery income. Nonetheless, the Council passed an ordinance prohibiting burials after August 1, 1919. This in turn led to a great debate over its future. At the time the cemetery closed, approximately 24,000 to 27,000 burials had occurred. Given such uncertainty over the fate of the cemetery, many families began to move bodies to other locations. Local business interests began to urge removal of the cemetery altogether and the sale of the property for commercial uses. One suggestion was that a new Milwaukee Road depot be constructed on the site, although that idea was quickly rejected. Conversion of the cemetery to parkland, as had been done with Maple Hill, was another popular proposal. The state legislature enacted a law in 1925 to allow the City of Minneapolis to acquire the property for park purposes under the Elwell Act. Martin G. Layman urged the city to remove the cemetery as a whole to a new location.²⁶

The movement to save the cemetery

Minneapolis Journal columnist A. J. Russell described the sad state of Layman's Cemetery in 1925:

On the prairie "where the quiet end of evening" smiled, and not far beyond the sound made by the Falls of St. Anthony, the pioneers of the region laid out one of the first "graveyards" beyond the Mississippi. It was thought that this level and flowery prairie cemetery would always be a quiet and peaceful spot. Abandoned today, and surrounded by a city, Layman's Cemetery gathers up the roar of urban traffic and knows no peace. One of the great transcontinental railroads has considered the possibility of locating a monstrous passenger station upon the site, excavating the soil far below the bottom of the lowest grave, and piling thousands of tons of steel, stone and concrete far above its loftiest monument. Hundreds of pioneers and "empire builders" who had helped to make the state and city great - and thousands of other pioneers and empire-destroyers who had done nothing of the sort - it has gathered to its sandy bosom. Every working and resting day, tens of thousands of hard working men and women hurry past this once hallowed

²⁶ A newspaper account in 1921 used the figure of 27,000 burials. *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune*, July 24, 1921. Martin G. Layman, cemetery superintendent and grandson of Martin Layman, stated in 1925 that 6,500 bodies had been removed and 17,410 graves remained occupied. *Minneapolis Journal*, June 4, 1925. Layman family members who had been buried here were removed on September 19, 1919, to Crystal Lake Cemetery, and the family monument re-erected. Fernstrom, 9.

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spot. Some of us - but we are the negligible minority - look out upon the place with interest and even with quickened hearts, because it holds, or did hold, before they had been resolved to their native dust, the mortal bodies of Philander Prescott and of Mary Kee-ehe-ie, his wife.²⁷

In the spring of 1925, a group began to organize to save Layman's Cemetery as an important site of the early history of Minneapolis. The effort to save the cemetery may be seen as part of an early, local, historic preservation movement. The original impetus for this nascent historic preservation movement came from such patriotic organizations as the Sons of the Revolution, the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.), and the National Society of Colonial Dames, who sought to save sites important to the nation's colonial past. The movement grew and broadened in scope to include sites important to local history and settlement. The passage of the American Antiquities Act of 1906, which protected historic and ancient properties on federal land, signified the maturation of this historic preservation movement into a matter of national concern.

In Minneapolis, the movement to save the Stevens House, the Ard Godfrey House, the Henry Sibley House and Layman's Cemetery were local manifestations of the larger national historic preservation movement. One of the goals of early preservationists in saving historic sites was to educate children and immigrants in the traditions of American history. Saving a structure for its associations with historic figures or events, even if it meant moving it or restoring it in a less than accurate manner, was the paramount value. The early relocation and creative restoration of historic homes in the Minneapolis area reflected this broader tendency. In 1896, the John Stevens House (1850), the first house constructed on the west bank of Minneapolis for the first white settler, was purchased by the *Minneapolis Journal* and moved to to Minnehaha Park. A few years later, the Ard Godfrey House (1849), the first house constructed for the first white settler on the east bank of Minneapolis, in what was then the community of Saint Anthony, was threatened with demolition. The *Minneapolis Journal* published editorials stirring public support for its rescue and, in 1905, a group called the Hennepin County Territorial Pioneer's Association purchased the house. Four years later they sold it to the Minneapolis Board of Park Commissioners, who moved the house and restored it for use as a museum operated by the Territorial Pioneers.²⁸ In 1910, the D.A.R. purchased the historic Henry Sibley House (1836) in Mendota, Minnesota, in order to facilitate its preservation. Henry Sibley, one of Minnesota's first settlers, was elected the first governor of the state in 1858 and achieved heroic status as the leader of the volunteer militia that had subdued the Dakota Indians in 1862. The D.A.R. retained the site until 1996, when it was transferred to the Minnesota Historical Society.²⁹ These early efforts on the part of concerned citizens and the *Minneapolis Journal* to save Layman's Cemetery and three historic houses, constitute important local expressions of an embryonic, national historic preservation ethic.

Many of those who organized in 1925 to save Layman's Cemetery were lot holders or the descendants of those buried in the cemetery. They rallied the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), the D.A.R., and the American Legion - all groups concerned with early local history and the heroic efforts of soldiers - to the cause. The group was officially incorporated as the Minneapolis Cemetery Protective Association

²⁷ Russell, *One of Our First Families*, 9-10.

²⁸ Norene Roberts, "St. Anthony Falls Historic District, Ard Godfrey House," 1991, National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet, prepared by Historical Research, Inc., available at Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office.

²⁹ "The Henry H. Sibley House, Mendota, Minnesota, Historic Structures Report," 1997, prepared by Landscape Research for the Minnesota Historical Society, 15, 40-44.

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(M.C.P.A.) in the summer of 1925, with Marion P. Satterlee as president, Mrs. Jacob Knapp as vice-president and Dr. Peter M. Holl as secretary-treasurer. Backed by editorial support from the *Minneapolis Journal*, the group began to lobby for the City to take over the cemetery as a memorial to the pioneers and soldiers of Minneapolis. One of the Protective Association's first tasks was to clean up a portion of the cemetery, so that Memorial Day could be properly observed. Mrs. Knapp organized a group of housewives and Boy Scout troops to assist in the task. In May 1927, the Minneapolis City Council voted to issue \$50,000 in bonds to purchase Layman's Cemetery from the Layman heirs and to implement improvements. To complement this effort, the Protective Association began to raise funds to assist with the maintenance of the grave sites. The City acquired the cemetery that August, and renamed it the Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery on February 10, 1928, after being petitioned by the Minneapolis Cemetery Protective Association.³⁰

Cemetery redesign and new memorials and monuments

Even before the city took title to Layman's Cemetery, the city engineer, N. W. Elsberg, was authorized to prepare plans for site improvements. The first task was to install sidewalks and fences with gates around the perimeter of the cemetery. The plans specified a six-foot tall chain-link fence on Twenty-first Avenue and the northern edges of the cemetery, and fences of limestone-block posts and wrought-iron pickets with wrought-iron gates on Cedar Avenue and Lake Street. The ironwork was fabricated by the W. Olson Manufacturing Company of Minneapolis. The proposal originally called for the paired limestone gate posts to be linked by stone arches. The arches were not installed, but otherwise the fence surrounding the cemetery remains as it was designed in 1927. Construction work took place between 1928 and 1929. Elsberg's office also designed the flagpole that was placed in front of the cemetery office. Dedicated in 1928, its plaque reads "In memory of the Pioneers and the Soldiers by the Auxiliary M.C.P.A., 1928." Veterans' organizations arranged for the installation of cannons and mortars near the flagpole.³¹

When A. J. Russell made a return visit to the cemetery in June 1929, he commented:

Layman's Cemetery . . . shows signs now of a growing appreciation of its importance in the early life of this community and of the care that has at last been given to it. An artistic iron and stone fence surrounds it and the grounds show evidence of the work expended on them.³²

The City Engineer's Office was also charged with the ongoing maintenance of the cemetery, and to simplify that task, a project was begun to grade, fill in, and level off the site, as "some graves have

³⁰ *Minneapolis Memorial Cemetery* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Cemetery Protective Association, 1928), 7-9; Minnesota Historical Society photographs MH5.9 MP4.4 r1, neg. 41553, and MH5.9 MP4.4 r2, neg. 80063; Minneapolis City Council, *Proceedings* 53 (1928-1929): 153, 299, 304, 880. William Watts Folwell, *A History of Minnesota* (Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1924), 2: 392. The role of the *Minneapolis Journal* in rallying support for the cause of local history is one that deserves further investigation.

³¹ Original plans and drawings for the sidewalks, fences, and flagpoles are in the Minneapolis City Archives. [N. W. Elsberg], "Report to the City Council, Committee on Public Grounds and Buildings on Facts and Problems of the Minneapolis Pioneers' and Soldiers' Cemetery (Layman's Cemetery)," [1931], available at Minneapolis City Archives. The driveway from Lake Street had been closed by 1940 as indicated in *The 1940 Atlas of the City of Minneapolis*, pl 44A.

³² A. J. Russell, "Philander Prescott's Grave Visited," *Minneapolis Journal*, June 19, 1929

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sunken, there are mounds over others, and some burials have been removed and holes left." The lanes were also closed to automobile traffic, leaving only the main east-west driveway, the north-south driveway from Lake Street, and the eastern turnaround. The state legislature appropriated funds to improve and maintain soldiers' graves in the cemetery, and Elsberg proposed that a "Soldiers' Section" be created with monuments erected in that section over pre-existing graves. At the same time he proposed a new landscaping plan that would remove most of the existing trees and replant trees to leave views to the flagpole from the entrances on Cedar Avenue and Lake Street, from Cedar Avenue and Lake Street themselves, and from the corner of Twenty-first Avenue South and Lake Street. Background trees and shrubs were proposed to hide the railroad tracks and car barns to the north. Lists of soldiers buried in the cemetery were supplied to Adjutant General E. A. Walsh in 1932, to enable the U.S. Army to provide official markers for them, listing names and Army company. These were installed by 1936, along with a separate G.A.R. monument with a bronze plaque reading "In Memory Of The Nation's Defenders." According to cemetery records, there were 173 known soldiers' graves.³³

The Minneapolis Cemetery Protective Association and its Women's Auxiliary continued to be concerned with the pioneers and recognizing them in the cemetery. Picking up the call that A. J. Russell had issued in 1929 for the preservation of the Prescott headstone and the installation of a suitable memorial, a new monument that encompassed the original marker was unveiled on December 13, 1936. A memorial to the Pioneer Mothers, a stone boulder with a bronze plaque reading "In Memory Of Pioneer Mothers, Erected May 8, 1937 By Descendants And Friends/All That I Am Or Hope To Be I Owe To My Angel Mother – Abraham Lincoln" was installed. Annie Holl, the wife of M.C.P.A. founder, Dr. Peter Holl, was remembered with a monument that proclaims:

In Loving Memory Of Annie M. Holl, Wife Of Dr. Peter M. Holl, Daughter Of Seymour And Ann Fillmore, Granddaughter Of Deacon James And Ann Sully, Her Untiring Efforts And Devotion To Bring About The Preservation Of This Sacred Ground As A Memorial To The Pioneers And Soldiers Was An Inspiration To All Who Were Interested In This Worthy Work. Erected By Auxiliary M.C.P.A. 1938.

In 1942, the newly organized Hennepin County Historical Society erected the last significant addition to the cemetery, the Charles W. Christmas monument.³⁴

Caroline Faulkner, state chairman of genealogical records of the Minnesota D.A.R., prepared a study of tombstone inscriptions with notes from the files of the custodian in 1938. The history of the cemetery was also recognized by the efforts of the Minnesota Works Projects Administration which resulted in a major reorganization of the cemetery records, including the creation of card files and the reconditioning and rebinding of various cemetery record books.³⁵

³³ Elsberg report; N. W. Elsberg, Letter to Adjutant General E. A. Walsh listing the soldiers in Layman's Cemetery, February 19, 1932, available at Minneapolis City Archives.

³⁴ *Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Protective Cemetery Association, 1936), 9-15; "The Historic Layman's Cemetery," 9-10; "Layman's Cemetery," *Hennepin County History* 30 (Winter 1971): 23.

³⁵ Caroline W. Faulkner, "Layman's Cemetery, Minneapolis, Minnesota: Tombstone Inscriptions and Notes from Files of the Custodian," typescript, 1938, available at Hennepin County Historical Society. The card files and record books are available at the Minneapolis Archives. Each book carries the following label on the inside cover: "Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery (formerly known as Layman's Cemetery). This cemetery is a property of the city of Minneapolis and is under director supervision of the City Engineering Department. This book is an original record as kept by the cemetery owners and was delivered to the city of Minneapolis when the cemetery was purchased by the city on August 11, 1927. This

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Subsequent history

The City Council was petitioned to reopen the cemetery for burials to existing holders of cemetery lots in 1935 after the death of Ann Maria Lynde. Her descendants wished to bury her beside her “pioneer and soldier husband.” The City Council granted the request, recognizing that this woman had “endured the hardships of pioneering in Minnesota.”³⁶ There have been approximately 45 burials in the cemetery since 1950. The most recent burial took place in 2002.

The present size and configuration of the cemetery date from its last expansion in 1886, while the overall plan and arrangement that characterize it as the Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery has been in place since the 1930's. The artillery pieces that were installed in the late 1920s have been removed. All of the original wood markers and most of the iron markers are gone. A few dozen toppled or broken markers lie on the ground. An occasional replacement marker has been installed over the course of the last seventy years, and many original markers have undergone repair efforts of varying quality. Examination of photographs of the cemetery taken in the 1920's and 1930's shows that it retains its early twentieth century appearance to a remarkable extent.

Conclusion

Layman's Cemetery, established in 1853 on land owned by Minneapolis pioneer Martin Layman, is a rare remnant of the early period of Minneapolis settlement and is the city's oldest surviving cemetery. As Martin Layman's original farmstead was platted for development and the area around it was built up with houses and industry in the late nineteenth century, the cemetery remained within its enlarged 1886 boundaries. The extant layout, landscaping, buildings, structures and objects in the cemetery retain the character of the site as it appeared at the end of the period of significance. This funerary landscape, with its diverse collection of historic markers, memorializes the lives of pioneers, city fathers, immigrants, war veterans, families and others who shaped late nineteenth-century Minneapolis. Distinctive markers, including those of settlers, veterans, and members of fraternal organizations, as well as wrought-iron crosses, zinc tablets and marble sculptures, are irreplaceable memorials to past lives and forms of artistic expression.

The campaign to save the cemetery, begun in 1925, is part of an early historic preservation movement that sought to recognize and protect sites deemed significant to local history. This recognition was strengthened by the renaming of Layman's Cemetery as the Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery in 1928. The flagpole and monuments added in 1928 and the 1930s reinforce the history of the cemetery as the burial place of pioneers and soldiers. The additions and alterations made between 1928 and 1942 embody the development of local, grass-roots support for historic preservation, and are themselves historic. Due to its character, integrity and significance for Minneapolis history,

book was reconditioned and rebound by W. P. A. Project 9100-40 in 1941, in order to preserve a valuable and historical record. Minnesota Work Projects Administration, O. P. 165-1-71-455(0) Proj. No. 9100-46, March 1942.”

³⁶ Abe Altowitz, “Cemetery Has First Burial in One-and-one-half Years,” *Minneapolis Star*, February 18, 1961.

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Layman's Cemetery in South Minneapolis is eligible for Minneapolis Local Landmark designation under Criteria 1 for its association with significant events and with periods that exemplify broad patterns of local social history. Additionally, it is eligible under Criteria 2 for its association with the lives of significant local persons or groups.

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