

# Urbanization and the Changing Role of the Nashville City Cemetery



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# Abstract



Through the process of urbanization, Nashville has changed as a community since the nineteenth century, and this change can be seen in the cemetery.

Moreover, the site serves as a historical landmark that gives one a glimpse into Nashville's past. Through comparing the cemetery's past and present physical function and communal properties, one can make observations concerning Nashville's growth as an urban center.

# Thesis



❧ Does Nashville's growth as an urban center affect the role of the cemetery?

1822-  
Cemetery  
built



1890- go  
Belmont!



21<sup>st</sup> century

Nashville's growth as a city was a paramount reason  
for why the role of the cemetery changed.



# Context and Introduction

In 1822, the Nashville City Cemetery was built for the proper burial and sanitation of the city's deceased.

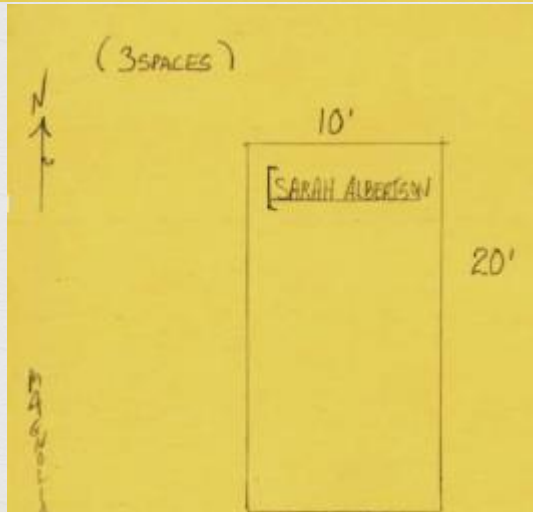


Pattern of cemetery use: now for historical and leisure purposes.

Past Function

Present function

Section	Part of Section	Lot No.	Size of Lot
10	---	14	10x20
Deed No.	Deed Book No:	Date Sold	
55	111	Feb. 12, 1857	
[Albertson, Sarah 1843-1847			



# Subtopic #1:

## Past Function

- The cemetery was initially needed to provide proper burial.
- People of all “walks of life” were buried here.
- 140 of the burials from between 1850 to 1860 were victims of cholera.
- Only 3 cholera victims were recorded between 1900 and 1910.

Name	Burial Month	Burial Day	Burial Year	Sex	Race	Age	Residence	Cause of Death/Burial	Ave	Section/Lot
Clefter, Mr.	Dec	27	1848	M	W		City	Said to be cholera	Central	pauper
Napier, Richard C.	Apr	19	1853	M	W	19	Kingston Spr	Cholera	Family	lot
Infant	Aug	20	1853	M	W		City	Cholera Morbus	Poplar	lot
Woman slave	Dec	3	1853	F	B	25	City	Cholera Morbus	Negro Groun	200p
Infant	Jul	9	1853	M	W		Country	Cholera Morbus	Poplar	lot
Infant	Jul	16	1853	M	W		South Nashv	Cholera Infantum	Cherry	lot
infant	Jul	18	1853	F	B		City	Cholera Infantum	Negro Groun	old gra
Infant	Nov	2	1853	F	W		City	Cholera Infantum	City	Lindsy:
Infant	Oct	15	1853	F	W		City	Cholera Infantum	Magnolia	lot
Infant	Sep	8	1853	F	W		City	Cholera Infamtum	Oak	lot
Swan, George L.	Apr	28	1854	M	W	60	City	Cholera Morbus	Central near	200p
Adams, Alfred	Jul	2	1854	M	W	50	City	Cholera	Cedar	lot
Infant	Jul	2	1854	M	W		City	Cholera	Cedar	50p
Harrison	Jul	3	1854	M	B	51	City	Cholera	Negro Groun	200p
Ephragm	Jul	4	1854	M	B	23	South Nashv	Cholera	Negro Groun	400 p
Kelly, Josephine	Jul	5	1854	F	W	8	City	Cholera	Magnolia	lot
Finly, Brittan	Jul	6	1854	M	W	50	South Nashv	Cholera	Poplar	200p
Woman slave	Jul	8	1854	F	B		South Nashv	Cholera	Negro Groun	400
Infant	Jul	8	1854	M	W		City	Cholera Infantum	Central	lot
Homes, Fran	Jul	8	1854	F	W	26	City	Cholera	Cherry	pauper

Filter

Conditional Formatting

Sort & Roll-Up

Filter

Filter this dataset based on contents.

Name contains

Burial Year is

Sex is

Race is

Cause of Death/Burial contains

☒ cholera



## Subtopic #2: Present Function

- Restoration and beautification
- Historical landmark
- Community activities



*Governor Carroll talking to the visitors*





## Subtopic #3:

### Author Insight

- **Rebecca Marrall:** suggests some reasons why the function of an urban cemetery might change.
- **Richard Meyer :** gives insight into why having a beautifully kept cemetery is necessary within the city.
- Ideas combine to provide a holistic explanation for how the function of the cemetery was shaped by urbanization.



# Conclusions



- ❧ The growth of urban space directly affects but also is affected by the interaction of the individuals living within it.
- ❧ Bigger picture: Meyer and Marrall were both discussing different cities, yet the patterns applied to Nashville.
- ❧ Important sources used:
  - ❧ Interment records accessed through cemetery website
  - ❧ Marrall, Rebecca. "Urbanism and North American Funerary Practices."
  - ❧ *The Nashville City Cemetery*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. The Nashville City Cemetery Association.