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OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND: 
A GIS STUDY OF CHANGES IN CEMETERY LOCATIONS 
IN SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA FROM 
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE, 1930-1997

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the 
Louisiana State University and 
Agricultural and Mechanical College 
in partial fulfillment of the 
requirements for the degree of 
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Geography and Anthropology

by

Cindy Ann Nance
B.A., University of California Berkeley, 1983
M.A., Northern Arizona University, 1995
December 1999
Dedicated

to the loving memory of

my dad

Billy Dewayne Nance
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ABSTRACT

Cemeteries in southeastern Louisiana are in varying stages of use — from presently in use and maintained to no longer visible on the surface. The abandonment of traditional cemeteries in southeastern Louisiana illustrates evolving settlement patterns. Earlier settlement patterns were dependent on physiographic and cultural landscape features. As settlement patterns evolve, the preferred locations of cemeteries change.

As a recent participant in the nationwide preference for urban-associated Memorial Parks, is Louisiana in the process of abandoning traditional cemetery landscapes? Six factors that contribute to the abandonment of traditional cemeteries from 1930 to 1997 are presented in this study. Evolving communities, demographic shifts, transportation development, urbanization and recent local and national legislation are examined as factors contributing to the abandonment of traditional cemetery landscapes.

By applying archaeology to geography, changes in temporal and spatial relationships of cemeteries are examined as indicators of socio-cultural and settlement pattern change. In this study, I use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) combined with historic to present cartographic research and field survey to assess cemetery conditions within a 90-kilometer radius of Louisiana’s capital, Baton Rouge. I apply a multi-scale approach to data from the United States Census, United States Geological Survey, Geographic Names Information System, United States Army Corps of Engineers, State of Louisiana Division of Archaeology, Transportation Development, Cemetery Board, and various local archives, news media and ethnographies.
In southeastern Louisiana, Memorial Parks are situated at intervals approximating 30 kilometers along interstates and near urban cores. Traditional cemeteries are distributed throughout the landscape at intervals as frequent as 3 kilometers apart. Historically, in southeastern Louisiana burial places were highly visible and dependent upon waterways, railroads and rural highways as transportation corridors. Memorial Parks, however, are situated near commercially advantageous superhighways and serve to displace visible signs of burial. A change in cemetery landscape preference is evidence for evolving perceptions of space, time and distance. In America, and globally, the elimination of spatial barriers and the annihilation of space by time has created new spatial relationships for burial places.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of Purpose

Cemeteries in southeastern Louisiana are in varying stages of use — from presently in use and maintained to no longer visible on the surface. Since 1930, demographic, transportation and legislative changes in America reflect changing socio-economic and cultural patterns. These cultural processual changes coincide with settlement pattern changes that impact cemetery landscapes. Cemeteries are integral to settlement patterns. Traditional cemetery landscapes are good indicators of socio-economic and cultural change.

Previous to this century, cemeteries had been a long and stable land use activity. However, globally the once empty expanses of land surrounding cemeteries were consumed by transportation, industry and suburban development. While the landscapes of many urban cemeteries were altered or destroyed through successive stages of growth, rural cemeteries were commonly abandoned. As derelict landscapes, abandoned cemeteries fell prey to the elements and were subsumed within new settlement patterns.

The purpose of my research is to determine factors that contribute to the abandonment of cemeteries within a 90-kilometer diameter of Baton Rouge, in southeastern Louisiana. Over a period of sixty years, from the 1930s to present, southeastern Louisiana has undergone change as a result of modern development. Demographic changes include a rural to urban population shift that is evident nationwide coinciding with socio-economic development. Apparent nationally are
transportation changes — from rail to water to primary highways — that bypass old communities while creating new places of economic growth.

As a consequence of transportation development and demographic shifts, settlement patterns evolved. Newly developing economies in southeastern Louisiana altered traditional landscapes. From 1930 to 1997, evolving settlement patterns have left the traditional landscapes of cemeteries in various stages of abandonment. Until recently, cemeteries were situated in accordance with early settlement patterns that were dependent upon available transportation routes for commerce and communication. Limited by means of transportation, cemeteries were located near the populations they served and often within a feasible distance for daily pedestrian visitations.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, corporate-owned and urban-associated Memorial Parks have become increasingly popular as burial places (Sloane 1991). The prototype was Forest Lawn Memorial Park established in 1917 in California (Sloane 1991:159). Forest Lawn Memorial Park was built on the remains of an abandoned historic cemetery.

Prior to 1966, a lack of national protective legislation for places designated as cemeteries resulted in the destruction of many cemeteries. Furthermore, local cemetery regulations played a role in cemetery abandonment. Cemeteries are abandoned when the caretakers of poorly-maintained cemeteries are unable to comply with civil codes for health and safety. Cemeteries that lack representation or local associations are engulfed amidst overgrowth and become derelict. The unsightliness of these formerly-sacred places encourages their removal. Cemetery preservation legislation (nationally and
locally) addresses unmarked burials and Native American graves. However, rarely are designated cemeteries protected.

Socio-economic development in southern states lagged behind development in other parts of the country. As a result, traditional settlement patterns in the south had a longer endurance. Prior to the construction of federally-funded highways, Louisiana consisted of rural settlements with local cemeteries. The abandonment of widely-dispersed cemeteries in the rural landscape of southeastern Louisiana may be indicative of abandonment of earlier settlement patterns.

The location for burial places is indicative of cultural preference within a settlement pattern. In my research, I examine cemeteries in various stages of abandonment to illustrate changing settlement patterns in southeastern Louisiana. If traditional patterns of cemetery locations are being abandoned in southeastern Louisiana, then an increase in the establishment of Memorial Parks supports a theory of changing settlement patterns in southeastern Louisiana. As settlement patterns evolve, the preferred locations of cemeteries change. As a recent participant in the nationwide preference for urban-associated Memorial Parks, is Louisiana in the process of abandoning traditional cemetery locations?

For more than sixty years, various factors have contributed to the abandonment of cemeteries in southeastern Louisiana. A model of cultural change illuminates the interrelatedness of various factors that adversely impact cemeteries in southeastern Louisiana. Six factors that contribute to rural cemetery abandonment and promote urban-associated Memorial Parks are examined. Figure 1-1 illustrates the order in
which these factors are related. For instance, Factor I “Evolving Communities” involves initial cartographic research of cemetery locations and names. The findings in support of each contributing factor to traditional cemetery abandonment provides the base information for the next factor. The purpose of examining each factor separately is to reveal the impact each factor has on traditional cemetery abandonment. Considered together, these factors show a preference for Memorial Parks within my study area.

Figure 1-1. Factors of Traditional Cemetery Abandonment.

Factor I: Evolving Communities. Are historic to present cemetery name changes indicative of cemetery abandonment? If cemeteries were recorded on maps with toponyms (place names) that signify associations with other cultural features, then subsequent cartographic disassociation is often evidence of cemetery abandonment.

Factor II: Cemetery Conditions. Are clusters of abandoned cemeteries indicative of subregional adverse conditions? If cemeteries are vulnerable to natural...
disasters and socio-economic change, then clusters of cemeteries in various stages of abandonment reveal the impact of several factors on the landscape.

**Factor III: Demographic Shifts.** What are the demographic transitions within parishes that are related to cemetery abandonment? If predominantly rural and agriculturally-dependent earlier settlement patterns are abandoned, then the occurrence of cemetery abandonment is greatest in parishes of substantial demographic shifts.

**Factor IV: Transportation Development.** Is cemetery abandonment related to transportation development along new corridors? If the development of new modes of transportation alienated cemeteries that were established in accordance with earlier modes of transportation, then a high percentage of derelict cemeteries are associated with former transportation routes.

**Factor V: National Historic Preservation Legislation.** Were cemeteries destroyed prior to national historic preservation legislation? If historic cemeteries were established at regular intervals along earlier transportation corridors (such as levee roads), then disruptions in the sequence of cemetery occurrence may be used to predict cemetery locations that were destroyed during stages of modern development predating national historic preservation legislation.

**Factor VI: State Cemetery Regulations.** Have local statutes encouraged cemetery abandonment? If a misinterpretation of state cemetery regulations inadvertently caused the closure of cemeteries that were unable to comply, then the unwarranted registration of nonprofit cemeteries confirms a regulation misinterpretation.
B. **Study Area**

The study area is an arbitrary circular region formed by a 90-kilometer radius centered on Baton Rouge, at the Mississippi River bridge (Zone 15, UTM Easting 673800, Northing 3368600) (Figure 1-2). The study area was selected for distance and time to travel during field work. The study area is conveniently centered upon Baton Rouge, the state capital of Louisiana, which has State of Louisiana archives of cartographic, demographic and transportation data.

For my study, a Landsat Thematic Mapper satellite image is used as a raster background image to enhance interpretation and analysis. This image is an 8 bit, 30-meter resolution, RGB combination of bands 753 which simulates true color. Topographically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER) files from the 1990 United States Census are used. Vector files of United States Geological Survey 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles, parish boundaries, populated places and roadways (secondary and primary) are also used in this study.

The study area covers a variety of physical features. Figure 1-2 shows the diversity of landscape features within the study area which includes agricultural prairies, forests, lakes, bayous, rivers and swamps. Early settlement patterns were predominantly rural and agricultural. The diversity of settlement history in the study area is represented by hill, bayou and river plantations. In Figure 1-2, the inset of the state of Louisiana shows rural settlement patterns "based on a combination of house types and other aspects of rural settlements" (Kniffen 1978:199). Early settlements in southeastern Louisiana were culturally distinct. Today subregions are still distinguished
Figure 1-2. Study Area Topography and Cultural Enclaves.
(The Louisiana Oil Spill Contingency Plan Map 1995 courtesy of the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office (LOSCO))
as culturally distinct settlements of Creole, Cajun, Acadian, French, Spanish, German, Hungarian or British.

The transition from isolated and rural settlements with strong community ties to more densely-populated areas that are well-integrated by roadways and urban centers is well-represented in the study area. The historic to present growth of the Baton Rouge metropolitan area as an urban core illustrates increasing urbanization and suburbanization which are related to transportation development. The temporal evolution of urban and economic growth are apparent in the expansion of city limits, corporate limits and Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) over several decades. As shown in Figure 1-2, from 1900 to 1980 Baton Rouge’s MSA expanded to encompass urban and economic growth of surrounding areas. The evolution of population trends within the study area is exemplary of the combined effect of modern amenities and capital access upon traditional settlement patterns.

As shown in Figure 1-3, thirteen parishes are completely encompassed by the study area. Eleven parishes are partially included. The study area is represented by 151 United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles (scale 1:24000). A network of railroad tracks, for both public and commercial enterprise, previously connected small communities locally and nationally, while facilitating communications. Railroads are now limited to urban depots for commercial transport of goods.

The Mississippi, Atchafalaya and Amite Rivers, along with numerous streams and bayous, traverse the study area. Prior to the twentieth century, waterways were a
Figure 1-3. Study Area Cartography.
primary mode of transportation and communication. Since early historic settlement, levees were constructed to contain the rising Mississippi River flood waters. The viability of historic settlements was dependent upon their association with waterways, levees and railroads. The construction of bridges and causeways over rivers and swamps altered transportation routes and settlement locations. Previously, wetland areas were circumvented and rivers were ferried or forded (Barry 1997).

Prior to the State of Louisiana Transportation and Development pavement projects of Huey P. Long's administration (1928-1936), private automobiles were inefficient as means of transportation (Wall 1990:274-278). Today, ten primary highways intersect the study area: Interstates 10, 12, 49 and 55 and US Routes 51, 61, 71, 90, 167 and 190. Over a period of sixty years, many local highways were supplanted in popularity by new highway networks and thus, several historic primary highways became secondary routes.

By overcoming physical obstacles, transportation development changed the landscape of southeastern Louisiana. A new infrastructure of communications, transportation and commerce encouraged the establishment of settlements along earlier networks of waterways, levees, bridges, railroads and highways. Recent transportation improvements, such as intra coastal waterways, causeways, interstates and airports, overcome the obstacle of distance by time to travel these direct routes. As former modes of transportation were abandoned, a population shift toward new urban economies resulted in the abandonment of traditional landscapes that were locally dependent upon community and parish government.
The diversity of physical and cultural features within the study area enhances an evaluation of regional factors that contribute to the abandonment of cemeteries. Within the study area, there is an abundance of widely dispersed low-profile family and rural community cemeteries. The study area is also illustrative of high-profile urban cemeteries and cemeteries along well-established transportation routes.
CHAPTER 2. MODEL, METHOD, THEORY

In 1953, Gordon R. Willey published the first archaeological study of settlement patterns. His study of "Prehistoric Settlement Patterns in the Viru Valley, Peru" emphasized the arrangement of features within a site as well as disposition of ruins over a region. Through a combination of aerial photography, map interpretation, ground survey and excavation, Willey combined geography with archaeology. According to Willey, a settlement pattern is defined as:

... the way in which man disposed himself over the landscape on which he lived. It refers to dwellings, to their arrangement, and to the nature and disposition of other buildings pertaining to community life. These settlements reflect the natural environment, the level of technology on which the builders operated, and various institutions of social interaction and control which the culture maintained. Because settlement patterns are, to a large extent, directly shaped by widely held cultural needs, they offer a strategic starting point for the functional interpretation of archaeological cultures (Willey 1953:1).

In this study of settlement patterns, Willey discusses Pre-Columbian occupancy of the Viru Valley with regional comparisons to other Peruvian settlements.

Similar to my research of evolving community and cemetery abandonment, Willey's section on community patterns shows how different kinds of sites were integral to the overall living pattern at different time periods. A cultural-historic reconstruction of the temporal and spatial relationships of Louisiana's abandoned cemeteries reveals the severing of traditional ties to these landscapes. The continued use, care, and contextual significance of cemeteries is dependent upon stability, continuity and
perpetuity of local families, neighborhood, communities and religious ceremonies of nearby churches. With changing settlement patterns and laws pertaining to cemeteries, the ties that bind the present to the past, weaken and finally break. In this study, cultural-historic processes of those weakening ties are reconstructed.

A. Model - Multi-scale and Multi-factor

Studies of settlement patterns involve analysis of the human-environmental relationships evident in landscapes. These relationships are analyzed as abstractions of components that vary between individuals and groups across space and time. Thus, various spatial and temporal scales are applied at different levels of analysis to identify cultural patterns. By varying the scale of inquiry, contradictions in past human-environmental relations are uncovered; the paths of their resolution through time can be traced (Crumley and Marquardt 1990). In this way, the spatial aspects of cultural continuity and change may reveal socio-historic processes as they impacted the landscapes of cemeteries in southeastern Louisiana.

Questions of how regions are related to one another, the patterns of sub- and supra-regional variation, and temporal patterns of change are best analyzed with a model that uses multiple scales. A multi-scalar and multi-temporal analytical strategy permits the conceptualization of temporal relations as connections with the past and future. Spatial relations are the connections with other areas that are apparent at one scale, and even more meaningful at another. With a multi-scale approach, boundaries such as political jurisdiction and waterways (which often co-occur) are emphasized. At another scale, thoroughfares that bypass areas at the local, parish or state levels are addressed.
A contextual perspective of regional patterns of mortuary ritual presents a good framework for understanding the impact of cultural process changes to cemetery location. Such social characteristics as cultural boundaries and barriers are readily visible when examined at the regional scale (Beck 1995:167). The operation of environmentally and culturally mediated constructs evident in cemetery landscapes is revealing at the regional level of study. By broadening the geographic focus, regional studies of intersite cemetery practices enhance an archaeological approach to isolated phenomena. Examined on a regional scale, intrasite variability of mortuary practices yields reservoirs of information (Brown 1995:23). The critical components of intra and intersite spatial relationships among burial places reveal patterns of settlement, land use and community interaction (Goldstein 1995:101).

A temporal and spatial examination of cemetery locations within a region permits reconstruction of the conception of space for the dead, and by extension social organization over time among the living. Cemetery landscape conditions are evidence for changes in living circumstances, such as family, church and community organization. With the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), a regional approach to the evolution of cemetery locations in southeastern Louisiana reveals several factors which are evidence for change in cultural processes that have contributed to cemetery abandonment.

A regional approach to cemetery abandonment provides a new perspective to evolving cultural processes of mortuary practices, socio-cultural transition and land use in general. By treating cemeteries as landscapes within a regional network, the
conditions of cemetery landscapes are examined as an integrated whole within a spatial context. With a temporal approach, several factors of cultural process change that contribute to cemetery abandonment will be examined.

With a spatial and temporal approach, this study examines series of landscape phenomena that are usually considered in isolation. These spatial and temporal phenomena are examined as part of a regional system. Historic map research presents cemetery distribution and changes in cultural feature association. Field survey assesses current cemetery conditions. Select population characteristics from United States decennial census statistics (1930 to 1990) reveal the human dimension of living populations adapting to socio-economic conditions. The changing spatial relationships of human constructs (such as railroads, highways and urban places) with the physical environment (such as waterways) are evidence for a changing infrastructure. Cemeteries that were only recorded during archaeological surveys illustrate the potential for cemeteries never map documented and no longer visible on the surface. Voluntary registration of cemeteries with state officials indicates concern for preservation of nonprofit cemeteries. Increasing registration of large and newly-established profit cemeteries (required by law) reveals a demand and supply relationship for Memorial Parks.

A model of convergence and integration is useful when considering the contributive effect of factors. Because multiple factors are not mutually exclusive, they play an integral role in the system under investigation. Exploring spatial data with computer mapping applications (such as Geographic Information Systems) permits
estimates of the influence of varying factors as an interacting system. The method followed in this study has developed from the assumption that archaeological situations are likely to be multi-factor rather than single-factor systems and, consequently, each factor must be considered in search of a comprehensive hypothesis (Clarke 1968).

B. Method - Geographic Information Systems Application

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are advanced tools for computer mapping science that are particularly well suited for examining the changing conditions of cemetery landscapes in relation to demographic and transportation changes. In the GIS environment, a database can be attached to a map, thus creating a spatial database, which is most appropriate for the display and investigation of a spatial study. In this study, GIS is used to input, store, manipulate and analyze historic to present geographic data from maps, field survey, and statistical tables. As an exploratory tool, GIS is implemented to improve decision making in support of the six proposed factors of cemetery abandonment. Temporal geographic data are stored, manipulated and displayed for exploratory data analysis in a vector (point, line and polygon) GIS environment.

In my study, computer mapping technologies made compilation of the information about map-researched cemeteries from hundreds of historic to present map editions possible. The seaming together of various types of data at varying scales was feasible in a computer mapping environment. In the GIS program ArcView 3.1 and database management program Visual dBASE V, large data sets of spatial and temporal information were digitally captured, organized and manipulated. Then, cemeteries were
selected for field survey of cemetery conditions. In this manner, the conditions of various stages of cemetery dereliction (point locations) were prepared for analysis within the context of changing demographics (by parish) and transportation development (within the study area). A multi-scale approach permitted me to examine at varying degrees of detail, both locally and as a part of a larger cultural system, the various factors that impact cemetery landscapes.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) map locations of cemetery sites were the base information for comparison with references to cemeteries from other sources. The USGS Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) cemetery locations were combined with USGS cemeteries into one database of cemetery locations and characteristics. In later chapters, the combined USGS and GNIS researched site database will be correlated with State of Louisiana Division of Archaeology sites and State of Louisiana Cemetery Board registered cemeteries. Of the four sources of cemetery locations used in this study (USGS, GNIS, Division of Archaeology and Cemetery Board), only cemeteries that were historically recorded in USGS maps were used for temporal studies. Comparison among cemetery sources reveals that many cemeteries, especially low-profile family and rural cemeteries, were never recorded on USGS maps or otherwise officially acknowledged.

For the purposes of this study, three data sets, names of cemetery locations, population by parish area, and transportation development were coordinated for analysis as time series from circa 1930 to 1997. Geographic data were stored and manipulated at two levels of investigation including: (1) parish maps of transportation routes, census
data, cemetery locations, and cemetery conditions, and (2) maps that display spatial relationships of these data for the entire study area at different times. In this way, changes in historic land use patterns and cemetery landscape conditions over time were examined, contextually interpreted and empirically described as evolving cultural phenomena at varying scales.

An integrative GIS model represents a continuum of inquiry for exploring data at different scales and times (Verhagen et al. 1995). In the analytical environment of GIS, the data are examined at three levels of transformation: (1) representative as map documentation, (2) descriptive as cemetery conditions, observations and landscape feature co-occurrences, and (3) interpretive as contextual spatial and temporal relationships. An iterative model links divergent data sets in a GIS within a hierarchical interpretive framework. With this GIS model there is a reciprocal and dynamic relationship between the data and the three levels of transformations.

The obstacles of scale (horizontal) and time (vertical) are overcome with the use of Geographic Information Systems.

Data in a GIS are automatically spatially referenced, and different themes may be explored with reference to other themes through mathematical and Boolean methods. Landscape archaeology and GIS provide a powerful combination of theory and method that promises to advance the study of past social systems in relation to their physical and cultural environments (Savage 1990:29).

GIS is useful as tools for social reconstruction and for modeling exploratory expectations with a scientific problem-solving approach. With GIS, long-term cultural
change through models of both diachronic and synchronic social processes are effectively explained.

C. Theory - Systems and Middle-Range

Studies of the less visible ideational aspects of culture, such as changing preferences or fashions, are made feasible with systems theory. For archaeologists studying the ideational realm, system theory provides the potential for bridging the credibility gap. The aim of systems theory is to examine the way in which components are related as a whole (Hodder 1986:33). The conditions of past systems that produced patterns found in the archaeological record are used to explain past dynamics that produce the currently visible static record. In accordance with David Clarke (1968:42):

The sociocultural system is a unit system in which all the cultural information is a stabilized but constantly changing network of intercommunicating attributes forming a complex whole - a dynamic system.

Thus, the goal of systems theory is explanation for dynamic systems of the past that produced the static record visible today, such as abandoned cemetery landscapes.

A search for meaning in the archaeological record is called the middle-range or bridging theory (Binford 1977; Willey and Sabloff 1980). The bridging aspect of middle-range theory serves to link the archaeological record statics to general propositions about cultures and conditions that produced the static record. A history based on map documentation, provides context for the evolving landscapes of cemeteries. When documentary records and landscape evidence are linked, then the multi-causal and interdependent factors that impacted these cemeteries can be assessed.
The cultural process approach of middle-range theory is most appropriate when considering interactions of the natural environment with infrastructural cultural changes.

A middle-range theory that employs quantitative analysis of temporal cemetery conditions in conjunction with demographic and transportation changes will support a qualitative argument for socio-cultural changing preferences for burial place.

The empiricism requisite for landscape studies is not rooted in the positivism of the New Archaeology of the 1960s and 1970s; rather, it follows a trend Colin Renfrew has referred to as “cognitive processual” (Renfrew 1989). Such an approach blends concern for scientific method and the search for generalizations about the past with attention to the singular, the everyday, and even the idiosyncratic uses of and attitudes toward past landscapes (Beaudry 1996:4).

Applying middle-range theory to a multi-scale and multi-temporal approach enables contextual explanations of cemetery landscape abandonment.

The tangible aspects of culture — historic cemetery landscapes — can be bridged with historic documentation — that is cartographic cultural features, census population characteristics, transportation development, and cemetery regulations — to explain the intangible — changes in location preference that permit the abandonment of formerly revered cemeteries. As Peter Jackson states in Maps of Meaning (1989):

This focus on culture-as-artefact has led to a voluminous literature on the geographical distribution of particular culture traits from log buildings to graveyards, barn styles to gasoline stations (tangible). In contrast, much less consideration has been given to the non-material or symbolic qualities of culture or to other dimensions of the concept that cannot be ‘read off’ directly from the landscape (intangible). (Emphasis added)
A footnote to this passage refers to Terry Jordan’s (1978, 1982) study of Texas graveyards and log buildings and Kniffen’s (1979) study of folkhousing. Both studies focus on human transformation of raw materials and thus focuses on defining the boundary between nature and culture.

My multi-disciplinary study focuses on three dimensions to mortuary studies – temporal, spatial and ideational. In general, archaeologists study prehistoric and historic populations of the past. With excavated mortuary materials, archaeologists enhance our understanding of differing cultural attitudes toward death over time – vertical dimension. Geographers tend to study death as it relates to changing settlement patterns from a spatial perspective that emphasizes surface relationships of place over space – the horizontal dimension. Typically, sociologists discuss death in regards to the psyche – the ideational dimension. These three disciplines methodologically converge in mortuary studies.

Changes in mortuary practices are important to geographical and archaeological studies of population mobility, ethnic identity, land use needs, and changing settlement patterns. With the use of GIS, the temporal abandonment of cemeteries in relation to other cultural features is portrayed vertically (similar to stratigraphic excavation layers) as time series. The array of cemeteries and their differentiation on the surface are examined horizontally as geographic spatial relationships. Finally, traditional cemetery abandonment indicates an ideational change in attitude with a recent preference for urban associated Memorial Parks.
CHAPTER 3. ARCHAEOGEOGRAPHY: LANDSCAPES OF DEATH

Cemeteries evolve in place over time with different perceptions and values expressed (Francaviglia 1971). Cemeteries are miniaturized emulations of American ideals, and thus are expressive of larger settlement patterns (Francaviglia 1971). As part of the settlement pattern, cemeteries are good examples of cultural phenomena that are revealing of diffusion, evolution, and invention (Kniffen 1967). Cemeteries are cultural markers that hold valuable information about past communities that are not available in other sources (Dethlefsen and Deetz 1966). Archaeologists, geographers and researchers in material culture studies from other disciplines, such as history and art, have demonstrated interesting ties between cemeteries and social behavior (Aries 1974; Farrell 1980; Jackson 1968; Jordan 1982; McKillop 1990; Oring 1982; Sloane 1991; Stannard 1975; Warner 1959).

Death is not a favorite topic in a future-oriented society (Zelinsky 1975:172). A perusal of geography journals prior to 1970 is remarkable for the “dearth of scholarly interest” in death and death-related topics, such as cemeteries and mortuary art.

According to Zelinsky (1975:172):

Economists, sociologists, and geographers have all pointedly shunned the theme of mortality, although it is a commonplace that funerary practices offer some of the most profound insights into the social and psychological structure of cultural groups, past and present.

Prior to 1975, geographers cursorily studied cemeteries as an element of the cultural landscape. Pattison (1955) and Price (1966) published brief geographic articles on cemeteries as land use patterns. Zelinsky’s scholarly focus was redirected from rural
demography to the cultural geography of cemetery landscapes through map interpretation. As Zelinsky (1975, 1994) points out, the economics of cemetery land use has great potential for cultural studies of changing values and attitudes toward cemeteries.

Cultural geographers and archaeologists share a number of common interests and goals which often seem anthropological. New to studies of cultural geography and archaeology are recent efforts to situate landscape formation and change within a cultural and social context. Archaeological and geographical approaches to data recovery and interpretation of landscapes are integrated when studying multiple stratified layers (temporal) of meaning (ideational) at a variety of scales (spatial) (Binford 1971; Brown 1995; Chapman et al. 1981; Crumley and Marquardt 1987; Goldstein 1981, 1995; O'Shea 1995; Saxe 1968, 1971). In settlement pattern studies, the differences between archaeology and geography are difficult to discern.

A. Necroarchaeology and Necrogeography

Settlement pattern studies are broad-based regional analysis of the use of space. Archaeologists focus on sites as places of occupation, where people lived and died, at the local level. Studies of human geography focus on settlement patterns at the regional level. Regionally, archaeologists are concerned with inter and intra site activities. Although geographers and archaeologists tend to use different scales of analysis, both disciplines use temporal and spatial analysis to explain the presence or absence of cemeteries, frequency in occurrence of cemeteries, and cemeteries that are in between other places.

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In an archaeological study, *Regional Dynamics: Burgundian Landscapes in Historical Perspectives*, Crumley and Marquardt (1987) examine cultural conflicts and tensions that are evident in historic landscapes at many scales.

A dynamic tension exists between the infrastructure (the realm of material production and social relations) and the superstructure (the realm of ideas) that characterizes human life. Landscapes are manifestations of that totality . . . (Crumley and Marquardt 1990:73).

In their comprehensive study, Crumley and Marquardt (1987) use a multi-scale and multi-disciplinary approach to uncover the conscious and unconscious attitudes that inhabitants exhibit toward their surroundings. The effect of cultural change is evident in changes in attitude toward environment, such as the neglect or preservation of particular landscapes.

In *Landscape Archaeology*, Yamin and Metheny (1996:xv) state that the convergence of several fields is apparent in efforts to:

... explore issues of symbolism and meaning, human perception and the experience of landscape, and the interaction of individuals, culture, and society with the landscape (e.g., Agnew and Duncan 1989; Cosgrove 1984; Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Harvey 1973, 1985; Ley 1977; Meinig 1979; Tuan 1977, 1979).

The convergence of geography and archaeology is apparent in cemetery studies.

In 1927, Kroeber's article on human geography and settlement patterns discussed "Disposal of the Dead." In this article, Kroeber proposed that cemetery landscapes are subject to changes similar to those in fashion, and thus mortuary studies offer information of cultural dynamics. However, it was not until 1966 that an
experimental archaeology approach to colonial graveyards was undertaken by Dethlefsen and Deetz. "Death’s Heads, Cherubs and Willow Trees: Experimental Archaeology in Colonial Cemeteries" was a seminal article from which new studies in archaeology would emanate. With a scientific approach, Dethlefsen and Deetz implemented statistics to illustrate the spatial and temporal changes apparent in the material culture of grave markers. The statistical analysis of the material culture of New England grave markers influenced researchers from various disciplines for more than three decades.

In Geography of Religions (1967), Sopher classified the cemetery as: "a formal positive expression of religion upon the landscape." Sopher influenced the interests of both geographers and anthropologists. Also in 1967, a brief article by Fred Kniffen presented the need for "Necrogeography in the United States." Kniffen emphasized the potential for studies of American graveyards and encouraged studies of both mortuary material culture within cemeteries and the arrangement of cemeteries on the landscape. Kniffen (1967) argued that temporal and spatial cemetery studies offer information about areal phenomena, genealogy, established practices and cultural values of the past.

Both Sopher and Kniffen’s publications generated a flurry of geographic concern for the potential of cemetery studies. Another article published in 1967 was John B. Jackson’s "From Monument to Place." In this brief article, John B. Jackson proposed that cemeteries are not simply reflections of settlement patterns, but places of devotion where the desire for maintained relationships with the departed are expressed. Traditional communities integrate the living with the dead, and thus:
the public graveyard is a reminder of duties constantly recurring; in the true meaning of the word, it is a monument, a “bringing to mind” (Jackson 1968:22).

In 1971, an archaeological symposium further encouraged mortuary analysis in search of patterns in material culture that reveal social organization or ideology. Rather than viewing mortuary practices as indicators of cultural diffusion, or fashion, the context of variations within a society and its social complexity were proposed. Studies of the tangible artefact and the intangible ideology followed. It was proposed that mortuary practices change in response to social, demographic, and even economic conditions (Aries 1982; Binford 1971; Brown 1971, 1995; Saxe 1970, 1971). By the early 1970s, the Saxe/Binford approach to mortuary analysis influenced subsequent studies of social status and organization for which the increased number of mortuary articles (from a variety of scholarly backgrounds) in professional journals attests.

Prior to 1970, art historians and archaeologists had shown some interest in gravestone studies while landscape architects explored cemetery design. The 1970s Parks and Recreation movement stimulated interest in cemeteries while exploring the secondary land use of cemetery landscapes for recreational purposes (Howett 1976; Leasher and Millward 1971; Walsh 1975). Professional journals in support of the Historic Preservation movement produced articles in a variety of disciplines on such subjects as monument restoration while architectural studies of cemeteries focused upon stylistic changes of the built environment (Jakle 1980; Linden-Ward and Ward 1985; Thompson et al. 1989; White 1989). Folklorists and archaeologists followed Dethlefsen and Deetz’ study of gravestones and material culture within and between cemeteries.
(Refer to bibliographies by Bell 1994 and Harrah and Harrah 1976.) However, in the 1990s studies of cemeteries as total landscapes, including both spatial and architectural elements, are still rare.

The need for studies of changing attitudes toward a place for the dead and social expressions in landscapes of death (both tangible and intangible) has been the topic of much discourse amongst geographers, anthropologists, sociologists and folklorists. However, most scholarly studies focus on the psychology of death and material culture of mortuary art, rather than regional studies of cemetery landscapes amidst new surroundings.

Cultural geography and anthropology studies of cemeteries often appear in compendiums as edited volumes (for example, Meyer 1989). Unfortunately, a majority of scholarly interest in cemeteries is never published. Therefore, research findings of these studies are not publicly disseminated. There are numerous unpublished dissertations, master theses, and professional association presentations that focus on both the material culture and spatial aspects of cemeteries at the local and regional level.

Although there is a great deal of enthusiasm for cemetery studies by scholars and avocationals, until recently the collection and processing of large data sets for intrasite and intraregional studies was limited by scale. The large amount of data collected for such studies was too cumbersome for analysis on a regional scale without computers. The availability of computer programs, such as database management and GIS software, has lifted research limitations of cemetery studies.
B. Southern Cemetery Landscape Studies

Before Jordan's (1982) study of *Texas Graveyards*, there were few geographic studies of cemeteries as a cultural whole. Over several years of field survey, Jordan gathered empirical data on low profile cemeteries in Texas. Jordan’s regional study of cemeteries presents a variety of material culture characteristics that are geographical, historical and ethnic. In the past decade, studies of cemeteries as inter and intrasite cultural phenomena from both a temporal and spatial perspective have become increasingly popular (refer to bibliography in Meyer 1989).

Gregory Jeane (1969, 1972, 1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1989) is most well known for his studies of Upland South Cemeteries. In Jeane’s (1987a) article on “Rural Southern Gravestones,” he states that there have been few studies of Southern landscapes of death. Jeane (1987a:57-58) identifies the study of Southern folk cemeteries as a traditional model in the South:

... that lasted from initial occupancy until approximately World War II, with remnants widely extant today. A transitional stage began in some areas of the South in the 1930s and is widespread currently. The commercial, or memorial garden stage is a phenomenon of the 1960s onward.

Jeane describes the traditional rural cemetery in the South as situated on a small piece of preferably elevated land. Since the 1970s, the South has been evolving from a predominantly rural to an increasingly urban society. Cemeteries mirror this transition toward urbanism as economic changes, residential mobility and other social factors impact cemetery landscapes.

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Newton's (1961, 1970, 1971, 1974, 1975, 1987) studies of "peasant" culture in Southern Louisiana Upland parishes frequently mention cemetery dispersal in the context of church dependent communities. Newton's studies of early settlement patterns are cultural-historic explanations of material remnants evident in the landscape, such as relic roads. Studies of rural populations with a long settlement history of traditional close-knit communities are useful for explaining physical manifestations found in surrounding regions that are not static. Since the 1970s, rural communities of subregional parishes within Louisiana have been impacted by development in surrounding areas. For example, when an interstate is constructed through a parish, new access routes and interstate associated commerce attract populations toward new centers of activity.

Jeane, Kniffen and Newton's cultural-historic studies of Louisiana influenced Nakagawa's 1987 dissertation: "The Cemetery as a Cultural Manifestation: Louisiana's Necrogeography." Nakagawa's dissertation (1987) and articles (Nakagawa 1986, 1987, 1989, 1992, 1994) emphasize cultural features visible in the material culture of cemeteries, regionally. In contrast to my study, Nakagawa's study area encompassed the entire state of Louisiana, including sixty-four parishes. For his sampling parameter, Nakagawa used 15-minute USGS quadrangles as a grid. Nakagawa limited his study to cemeteries that predated the 1930s, excluding Memorial Parks as commercial cemeteries because they lacked regional variation.

Furthermore, Nakagawa's research excluded abandoned cemeteries, by focusing on cemeteries that are still in use. The purpose of Nakagawa's study was to document
regional and denominational cultural variations within the state, not historic changes in land use. Therefore, the cemeteries Nakagawa selected for sampling were urban cemeteries, preferably located in parish seats. Nakagawa’s research emphasized historic, large and high-profile cemeteries while avoiding low-profile, small and rural cemeteries. In many ways, Nakagawa’s dissertation complements my subregional study of factors that contribute to cemetery abandonment.

C. Landscape Archaeology

An archaeology of the landscape focuses on human perception, shaping and use of space (Kryder-Reid 1996:228). Studies of landscape consider a variety of characteristics, such as design, construction, control of space, and the meaning of social interactions within and between places. How we make sense of our world through the creation of particular spaces and how those spaces define and reshape who we are, over time, are read and interpreted by landscape archaeologists. How particular spaces are visually organized, how movement is controlled around or through these spaces, and patterns of specific spaces in a larger context define our sense of whom we are, our interrelations and our position in relation to our geographical limitations.

Landscape studies are concerned with the interdependence of areal phenomena. As Sauer (1963:318) stated, "phenomena that make up an area are not simply assorted but are associated, or interdependent." The cultural landscape is the product of the constructs of people that characterize the landscape, and thus humanity's record on the landscape (Sauer 1963:342). ‘Human culture is the agent, natural area the medium and human interaction with the natural environment produces a cultural landscape’ (Sauer
Historical geography involves the reconstruction of past cultural landscapes and the study of series of changes that landscapes have undergone (Sauer 1963:344). In keeping with Sauer’s “archeogeography” and his concept of the cultural landscape, entire landscapes should be considered as appropriate units of archaeological analysis (Mathewson 1986; Sauer 1963; West 1979).

Human geographers with an appreciation for anthropology and archaeology understand the cultural influences at play upon infrastructural features visible in the landscape. Infrastructural landscape features (for example, roads, causeways, and bridges) offer information at a different scale than familiar artifacts of daily life (for example, ceramics, lithics and biotic remains, Mathewson 1986:51). Although cemeteries do not facilitate trade and transport, they are cultural infrastructures crucial to the disposal of human remains. The manner in which various cultures dispose of human remains differs greatly. How particular cultures maintain cemeteries and where cemeteries are situated in the landscape informs us of the significance these sacred and profane places had over space and time.

From the adaptation of available resources used in the construction of a cultural landscape, we have a sense of harmony or chaos depending upon how the landscape blends with surrounding cultural expressions. In "The Morphology of Landscape" (1925; 1963:320) Sauer summarizes the objective of geography as:

... establishment of a critical system which embraces the phenomenology of landscape, in order to grasp in all of its meaning and color the varied terrestrial scene.
A morphological study of the cultural landscape of Louisiana's cemeteries is both a historical and cultural geography study. Regardless of whether a cemetery is rural or urban, low or high-profile, cemetery landscapes are testimonials of a synchronous past once associated with other landscape features. Today, however, many cemeteries appear anachronistic amidst new landscape features.

While defining “landscape” Jackson (1984:305) stated:

... that a landscape is not a natural feature of the environment but a synthetic space, a man-made system of spaces superimposed on the face of the land, functioning and evolving not according to natural laws but to serve a community - for the collective character of the landscape is one thing that all generations and all points of view have agreed upon ... it represents man taking upon himself the role of time.

As such, landscapes are models of perceived reality that culture imposes on the environment. Landscapes are the stages of human action and interaction; they are manipulated (such as roads and levees) to invite interaction or discourage it (McGuire 1991:108).

Similar to the frequency in occurrence of historic public railroad depots that are no longer in use, the locations of many old cemeteries (as human remain depots) are no longer a functioning feature in the modern infrastructure. An infrastructure links activities of home and society, but processual alterations to the infrastructure disrupt social links to the past. Regardless, if a cemetery is stranded in the landscape or erased from the surface, lack of visibility is a strategy for discarding the past and its traditions.

As Yamin and Metheny state in their introduction to Landscape Archaeology (1996:xv):

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Because the landscape is the stage for human action, it both reflects past activities and encodes the cultural landscape in which people's views of the world are formed. The trick is to disentangle the various strata that represent physical changes to the land or changing land-use practices in order to analyze the changing symbolic meanings of the landscape over time.

Recent studies express interest in everyday and ordinary landscapes, emphasizing the not so readily visible cultural elements (for example, Jackson 1984 and Meinig 1979). The following passage by Pierce Lewis (1979:12) is often quoted by cultural geographers and landscape archaeologists:

Our human landscape is our unwitting autobiography, reflecting our tastes, our values, our aspirations, and even our fears, in tangible, visible form... the cultural record we have "written" in the landscape is liable to be more truthful than most autobiographies because we are less self-conscious about how we describe ourselves... our ordinary day-to-day qualities are exhibited for anybody who wants to find them.

Material culture is expressive of the everyday negotiation of life for all people, regardless of race or class. Landscapes as artifacts of material culture are tangible incarnations of social relationships and as such embody the attitudes and behaviors of the past (Beaudry 1991:150). The abandonment and dereliction of historic landscapes are indicative of changing cultural attitudes that condone the neglect of traditional values.

Archaeology and cultural-historical geography often have the same purpose — to uncover evidence of cultural process as it is materially expressed in changing values over time. As Jakle and Wilson (1992:12) state:
Civilizations have been built on the dust of predecessor societies seemingly without end as archaeologists bear witness. Every archaeological site may be regarded as the skeleton of a dead community (Adams, 1980 p. 23). What are the signs of death in the archaeologist’s landscape? As it was with ancient Ur, so yet it might be with the urban places of today’s America. William Adams provides a check list of symptoms: physical contraction, lack of new construction, dilapidation, neglect of public monuments, disorderly new development, refuse accumulation, declining standards of craftsmanship, excessive diversity in artistic expression, neglect of the dead (p. 48). Dereliction may be inescapable like death itself. As some see abandonment as the necessary accompaniment to change, others see waste as the necessary companion of growth, with dereliction the common outcome.

For centuries, cultures have left their imprint in the environment. These imprints are visual expressions of cultural perceptions of how landscapes should appear. Extreme changes in social values, such as Nazism, are dramatic examples of justified vandalism of churchyards, cemeteries and graves (Schama 1995). Amidst descriptions of decay, mold, fungus and other crumbling rot, Schama (1995) used cemeteries and symbols of death as evidence for changing values impressed upon the historic environment of landscapes.

The cultural, ecological and historical environment of cemeteries has much to offer in recovering respect for a diverse past. Schama (1995:35-36) presents an example of landscape abandonment with a Jewish cemetery in Poland that was left untended as a result of forced relocation. Nazism created an historic shift in attitude which erased a history of Jews as former occupants of Poland. Rewriting history suits the purpose of
denying past events. But the landscapes of derelict cemeteries tell another, more believable, story.

As marginal places, cemeteries are landscapes caught between the past and future, tradition and modernity (refer to Samuels and Samuels in The Power of Place (1989) and Shields (1992) Places on the Margin). As society evolves the cultural-historic context of cemetery landscapes are altered, abandoned and in some cases, erased from the surface. Culture transforms landscapes as surroundings are reinterpreted and molded to conform to evolving landscape models. The cultural-historic aesthetics of desirable places for burial and mourning play a primary role in the determination of appropriate places for cemeteries in the landscape. For this reason, a Feng Shui model as a location index is appropriate for proposing the location of a historic Chinese cemetery no longer visible in the cultural landscape of Victoria, Canada (Lai 1974).

D. Existentialism and Archaeogeography - Space, Time and Being

As late as the 1960s, history (temporal) took precedence over geography (spatial) in scholarly studies. Foucault observed that philosophical discourse on history ignored space, that space was philosophically invisible in relation to time (Soja 1989:119).

Space is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in the exercise of power (Foucault 1984:252).

Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the other hand, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic (Foucault 1980:149).
Archaeogeography has the potential to bring together concepts of space and time through the evolving ideas of proper burial place.

A time-space saturation, according to Giddens, is an existentially structured spatial topology:

Building on Giddens, one can see more clearly an existentially structured spatial topology and topos attached to being-in-the-world, a primordial contextualization of social being in a multi-layered geography of socially created and differentiated nodal regions nesting at many different scales around the mobile personal spaces of the human body and the more fixed communal locales of human settlements (Soja 1989:8).

Existential phenomenology is concerned with understanding the structure of human existence, of being, and being-in-the-world (Soja 1989:131). Lefebvre (1976:31) further states:

Space has been shaped and molded from historical and natural elements, but this has been a political process. Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideologies.

Castells (1977:115) states:

... space is a material product, that in relation with other elements, such as men in particular social relations, is given form, function and social signification. Space then is an historic ensemble that exists and is transformed with other historic elements as an integral part of a society.

A major rethinking of capitalist spatial practices and modern ontology and epistemology is necessary to make space visible as a referent of social being without historic devaluation (Soja 1989:119-120).
Concepts of space and time serve purposes of material and social reproduction (Harvey 1990). The organization of material culture changes in accordance with concepts of space and time. As societies change and grow, they are transformed from within and adapt to pressures and influences from without. As such, locations of older cemeteries are temporal-spatial material manifestations of places that were considered appropriate for disposing of the dead. Several decades of social transformation have reassessed the practical use of these spaces in a new order. Thus, places for disposing of human remains have been conceptually reorganized.

A regional study of cemetery landscapes is expressive of how humans dispose of themselves across the landscape. Cemeteries have evolved from locations of personal care that were highly visible – cemeteries that were well-integrated within a local community – to cemeteries of care by proxy in urban-associated Memorial Parks. Memorial Parks are cemeteries of low visibility, established outside city limits, a distance from the nexus of everyday community activities.

Throughout history and across cultures, the dedication of a place as a memorial to a deceased person attaches human meaning and emotion to a place. Humans place importance on the biological events of birth and death and have erected shrines that memorialize the sites of these events (Tuan 1976). Cemeteries are monumental places that are sensory bound. Thus, they are both public symbols and fields of care. As set forth by Yi-Fu Tuan (1975): "Public symbols command attention and even awe; fields of care evoke affection." However, a modern industrial and capital oriented society is predominantly secular in that it pragmatically approaches land use needs while
decontextualizing sacred and secular historic spatial relationships. Many cultures' belief systems speak of the spirit of place but, according to Tuan (1975:237) today's:

> ... modern secular society discourages belief in spirit, whether of nature or of the illustrious dead, but traces of it still linger in people's attitudes toward burial places . . .

Yi-Fu Tuan further elaborates the purpose of the humanist geographer as drawing attention to and clarifying certain kinds of human experience (1975:246):

> The broad aim of the humanist geographer must be: Given human nature and the direct experience of space and place in the ordinary world, how can man have conceived different worlds, more or less abstract, among which being the maps of utopia and the geographer's own concepts of location?

Accordingly, cemeteries are utopian landscapes designed to evoke emotions. Dereliction of these utopian landscapes is contrary to their conceptual origins as sacred places.

Foucault (1986) in his article on "other spaces" uses cemeteries as an example of heterotopias. Cemeteries are situated within a culture's perception of reality. In contrast to utopias, the heterotopias of cemeteries (under Foucault's "second principle") change as history unfolds and over time can function in a different fashion. Each heterotopia has a precise function within a society but as the synchrony of the culture transforms so does the function of heterotopias. As a general overview of the changing utopias of cemeteries, Foucault states (1986:25):

> The cemetery is certainly a place unlike ordinary cultural spaces. It is a space that is however connected with all the cemeteries of the citystate or society or village, etc., since each individual, each family has relatives in the cemetery.
In western culture the cemetery has practically always existed. But it has undergone important changes. Until the end of the eighteenth century, the cemetery was placed at the heart of the city, next to the church. . . . it is from the beginning of the nineteenth century that everyone has a right to her or his own little box for her or his own little personal decay; but on the other hand, it is only from the start of the nineteenth century that cemeteries began to be located at the outside border of cities. In correlation with the individualization of death and the bourgeois appropriation of the cemetery, there arises an obsession with death as an "illness." The dead, it is supposed, bring illnesses to the living, and it is the presence and proximity of the dead right beside the houses, next to the church, almost in the middle of the street, it is this proximity that propagates death itself . . . . The cemeteries then came to constitute, no longer the sacred and immortal heart of the city, but "the other city," where each family possesses its dark resting place.

Heterotopias simultaneously 'represent, contest, and invert' cultural perceptions of reality (Foucault 1986:24). As such, cemeteries are cultural representations of perceived reality, material miniaturizations of a changing social order. Cemeteries are immobile spaces that display accumulation over time with material culture expressions of ideological evolution.

Cemeteries represent, contest and invert perceptions of life, death and prospects for an afterlife. As representations of a perceived netherworld, cemeteries are places of variously described sensation. As heterotopias, cemeteries are juxtaposed perceptions of experiential reality. Through their presence and location within a community, cemeteries are intended to memorialize the absence (lack of) specific individuals. Traditional cemeteries were an integral part of everyday community activities with highly visible monuments that memorialized individuals to anyone who happened to
pass by. However, the concept of aesthetic space for placement of the dead has undergone significant changes as evident in the popularity of commercial Memorial Parks. The flat, open expanses of modern Memorial Parks are devoid of individual expression. Commercial cemeteries restrict mourning activities to business hours and grave markers conform to mass-marketed styles.

E. Summary

Archaeology and geography converge when theories of settlement patterns focus on human interaction with landscapes over time and changes in environmental perception. In landscape studies, cemeteries play a significant role in settlement patterns. They become places on the margin as landscapes transform. Changing cultural processes are evident in changing preferences for cemetery location.

A lack of visibility of once sacred spaces, such as abandoned cemeteries, is anachronistic to our sense of history and existence. Existentially, cemeteries evoke feelings of being a part of a community. Changes in the spatial order of cemeteries across a regional landscape over time are illustrative of changes in our perceptions of place and belonging.
CHAPTER 4. CEMETERY HISTORY

The preferred locations for cemeteries change as settlement patterns evolve. The manner in which cultures dispose of human remains (tangible) reveals a changing socio-cultural attitude toward burial place (intangible). Cemeteries are designated locations for the disposal of human remains which also function as visible reminders that death is pervasive and life a limited resource. As collective burial places, cemeteries impose order over the chaos of death while serving the strategic function of displacing grief. As places both profane and sacred, placement of cemeteries in the landscape indicates the cultural importance of death to the living.

Americans have become increasingly indifferent to the cemetery as a sacred space with a community function. The cemetery's role as a repository for history and memories of local community is fading (Sloane 1991:7). Typically, once a cemetery is disassociated from living memory, isolated or abandoned, monuments fall into disrepair and are abolished (Sloane 1991; Whyte 1968). Few historic cemeteries are preserved or restored.

Land that was historically designated as cemetery has an internationally shared history of yielding to urban, industrial and commercial land uses (Curl 1972:37). There are many cases globally where, in spite of laws that guarantee the eternal inviolability of graves, cemeteries are deconsecrated and the land reappropriated for new purposes (Ehl et al. 1991:21; McKillop 1995). Worldwide, cemeteries have been encroached upon or reappropriated with urban development and population pressures (Bell 1994; Clad 1984a, 1984b; de Blij and Muller 1997:297; Ehl et al. 1991; Knapp 1977; McKillop
The amount of space used by cemeteries was not a consideration, nor were future urban land use needs and values when older cemeteries were first established.

A. American Cemetery Types

The evolution of cemetery types is expressive of changes in American culture - religious, social and aesthetic (Farrell 1980). Price (1966) suggested four classifications of American cemetery types:

1. **Undifferentiated cemeteries** are dispersed and isolated. The burial sites of voyagers and early settlers were often at the location of death.

2. **Small family plots** are found in rural areas and may be surrounded by urban development. These cemeteries are scattered on former family land holdings and often inaccessible by public road.

3. **Rural community cemeteries** are located at nodes of activity, such as a railroad depot, road junction, church or school.

4. **Population center cemeteries** are located near town or city activities. These cemeteries often act as buffer zones between historic city limits and recent development.

The **plantation cemetery** is peculiar to the South, and could be considered a cemetery type under “small family plots.” The plantation cemetery contained the remains of family members of the owners and overseers of the plantation, as well as slaves and other laborers.
Sloane (1991:4-5) presents a chronological table that identifies "Characteristics of American Cemeteries" with examples of cemetery types based on: management, model followed, descriptions of design layout, burial distinctions, and monument style and material. Simply stated, from the seventeenth to twentieth century frontier graves were located at the site of death, domestic homestead graveyards were located in a farm field, churchyard cemeteries were located next to a church, and town or city cemeteries were located at the city limits. From 1831 to the 1870s, the "Rural Cemetery" was located in the suburbs or outskirts of cities. From 1855 into the 1920s, the "Lawn Park" was popular as a commercial cemetery. The "Memorial Park" was first introduced in 1913 and replaced the Lawn Park in popularity as a large public graveyard (Sloane 1991:159).

B. Regional Cemetery History

A traditional organization of time and space prevailed in the New England colonies (Jackson 1979:156). Space was perceived as centripetal and hierarchical, and time as a stately procession of inevitable events leading to a climax. In the New World, metaphorical gradations of space and time were displayed in, for instance, seating arrangements of church congregations which were organized by social status. Graveyards were laid out by social rank and time was organized in fixed sequences of sanctity (Jackson 1979:156). Around 1730 A.D., the Great Awakening altered the old organization of time and space and introduced a new vernacular landscape (Jackson 1979:156).
The Great Awakening altered the notion of religious territoriality by separating state (secular parishes) from religious identity. As an integral part of local government, early settlement cemeteries associated with parish churches were established within city limits of parish seats at visible locations. As the religious movement of the Great Awakening spread, it abolished the idea of different kinds of space with varying degrees of sanctity. New sects built churches a distance from established communities in defiance of the traditional spatial organization. Thus, a nontemporal, nonhierarchical doctrine of undifferentiated space was introduced to ideas of American social order (Jackson 1979:157). During the Second Great Awakening (circa 1790), changes in religious attitudes introduced new conceptions of life, death, environment, individualism and society. A beautification of death evolved from this new religious and social order (Little et al. 1992). Death was disguised with mass-produced commercial funerary goods and professional burial services of morticians.

The mid-nineteenth century American Industrial Revolution, resulted in segregation by class, religion and ethnicity. Social status differentiation between social rank and immigrants were emphasized by a rising middle class. The differentiation of inner-city districts by ethnic-religious heritage and economic class was mirrored in the segregation within and between cemeteries. Two centuries (1730 to 1930) of change to the social order — from Puritans to Industrialists — are characterized by changes in the placement of cemeteries in the landscape and material culture displays in reverence for the dead within cemeteries (Bell 1990; Farrell 1980; Little et al. 1992; McKillop 1995).
1. American Cemeteries

Prior to the nineteenth century, historic cemeteries in the United States were not constructed in an artistic moment or planned with forethought of ultimate placement in their surroundings (Darden 1972; Pattison 1955). There was little government concern in America with the physical location of a final resting place (Jackson 1977). Urban development and land use values were not a concern when historic cemeteries were established (Hardwick et al. 1971; Pattison 1955; Price 1966; Reps 1965). Burial places had been situated amongst the living - usually in the middle of towns or churchyards. Before the beautification of death, graveyards were treated as unattractive but necessary and were avoided by the living (French 1975:71). As cities became congested, public health concerns were raised over the decay of old graveyards that were now engulfed by urban activities. America became increasingly urban as a result of the Industrial Revolution.

During the 1800s, the stench, decay and quagmire of encroached upon and overpopulated inner-city cemeteries encouraged establishment of new cemeteries outside city limits (French 1975:70, 81). A new mental template based on a mathematical order inspired design environments, such as the New Burying Ground in New Haven (Jackson 1979:158). Between 1830 and 1855, the urban-associated "rural" or "garden" cemetery was introduced to alleviate the sternness and oppressive finality of death (French 1975). The development of the Rural Cemetery movement coincided with the profession of landscape architecture and the public parks movement (Farrell 1980). Designed as a harmonious burial ground, Rural Cemeteries were aesthetic
landscapes that were planned with horticulture, ponds, pedestrian pathways, and caretakers for maintenance (Reps 1965:325-330).

Mount Auburn (1831) was a new type of burial place that served as a cultural institution and thus marked the prevailing change in attitudes toward death and burial (Farrell 1980:100; French 1975:70). Mount Auburn was a Rural “Garden” Cemetery established outside the city limits, secure from the encroachment of new establishments (Farrell 1975; French 1975). Around the time of the Civil War (1860s), a demographic shift toward urban centers (away from farms) contributed to the popularity of urban associated Rural Cemeteries. During the colonial period, human remains were disposed of quickly and at a location near the site of death. The development of transnational rail lines permitted the shipment of deceased persons to their family cemetery during the nineteenth century.

In 1855, the controversy over individuals enclosing and embellishing their family plots with material displays of class differentiation led to the development of Spring Grove as a Lawn Park cemetery. Lawn Park cemeteries coincided with the municipal parks movement (Farrell 1980:113). Lawn Parks were created in a socio-cultural context that was at odds with the Rural Cemetery movement. This new cemetery type offered a vista that was uninterrupted by tombstones, such that graves appear unmarked from a distance. Individuals and their aesthetic preferences were subsumed under a predetermined park-like plan. Private burial places were discouraged because of the decay and ruin evident in earlier cemeteries when families, congregations and even communities disbanded.
A maturing capitalism is evident in the institutional changes in burial places. The desires of a dominant middle class with its obsession for control and regularity were expressed in Lawn Parks. Lawn Parks were intent upon removing reminders of death, sorrow or pain by eliminating any suggestions of death, such as headstones and copings (Farrell 1980:120). Perpetual care plans promise continuous upkeep and undertakers, funeral homes and directors, relieve living relations from the burdens, duties, and chaos of death. The unified intent of this stylistic evolution of the commercial mortuary landscape was to efface the inevitable confrontation with death (Farrell 1980:131, 145).

Prior to World War II, America was primarily a collection of rural communities whose inhabitants mourned the passing of relatives, friends, neighbors, and leaders (Pike and Armstrong 1980). In rural America, family, church and crossroad graveyards were popular into the twentieth century. Family cemeteries were situated on private farms and plantations. Graveyards for the burial of congregation and community, were situated along transportation corridors. Community cemeteries were situated on the edge of city limits or at railroad depots. Cemeteries were situated at locations easily accessed by pedestrians. As gathering places, they were highly visible and an integral part of daily activities.

The commercialization of cemeteries by 1920 led to the redesign of the cemetery into the Memorial Park which succeeded Lawn Parks in popularity (Sloane 1991:127, 181). Memorial Parks are based upon the template of Forest Lawn Memorial-Park of Glendale, California (Curl 1993:275). In 1913, Eaton designed an ideal cemetery and
founded Forest Lawn on the site of an historic cemetery that had gone to ruins since 1906 (Curl 1993; Sloane 1991:159). Eaton streamlined the burial process by combining monument sales, funeral directing and interment at one location, the Memorial Park. By employing tactics of cemetery operators, real estate developers and southern California culture, Eaton refashioned the historic cemetery into a burial place for the middle-class. As with Lawn Parks, most traces of death were removed from the landscape of Memorial Parks (Sloane 1991:159). Forest Lawn has many concert halls, chapels, a cinema and other facilities for weddings, and has become a popular tourist attraction.

Memorial Parks are similar in appearance to open pastures, with flat topography or gently rolling hills, of sections set out as gardens (Sloane 1991:181). Memorial Parks are strictly commercial enterprises; they do not contain streams, woodlands, vistas or other picturesque features of earlier cemetery types — Rural Cemetery or Lawn Park. Entrepreneurs commercialized these burial grounds with sophisticated business techniques. Marketing techniques included strategic locations, a short distance from the center of cities, on a main arterial route (Sloane 1991:181). In urban areas, modern commercial cemeteries have essentially replaced historic rural cemeteries that served family, church and community.

Since 1860, populations increasingly shifted toward urban centers (away from farms) and thus, the popularity of urban cemeteries increased. By the close of the nineteenth century, close-knit communities with functional personal relationships were disintegrating in new urban settings and earlier efforts to maintain a living relationship with the deceased were abandoned. It is suggested that urbanization, advances in
medical science and health care, and increased secular and temporal outlooks on life were some of the causes (Jackson 1977:305).

Death is so closely linked with life that changes in the American way of life inevitably affect our way of death. Between 1830 and 1920 urbanization, industrialization, and professionalization joined changes in transportation, science, medical practice, religion, philosophy, psychology, aesthetics and domestic life to modify American beliefs and behavior concerning death (Farrell 1980:213).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Americans began to lose contact with death; direct exposure to death was minimized in many ways, one of which was the professional undertaker. Close-knit communities with functional personal relationships were disintegrating in new urban settings. Massive leaps in geographic mobility, especially after World War II, contributed to the declining popularity of local family and community cemeteries.

2. Southern Cemeteries

Well into the twentieth century, Southern burial practices remained predominantly rural. A lag in urban development of the South fostered a regional preference for family cemeteries. Southern rural cemeteries are modest in size (two to five acres) and commonly are either family or community based, with or without a church associated. Greater simplicity and a larger community role are found in rural cemeteries.

. . . the South has one of the most varied cemetery landscapes found anywhere in the United States. There are still pristine examples of the folk graveyard; there are black cemeteries embodying a number of the same
cultural traits found in white graveyards; examples of aesthetically appealing memorial gardens can be found in nearly all modest-sized southern towns and certainly in the cities. . . . the southern cemetery remains an important element of the cultural landscape. It remains a barometer of the economic and social viability of a community and a looking glass into the southerner’s innermost feelings about proper burial and veneration of the dead (Jeane 1989:464-465).

Rural burial grounds express a region’s cultural attitude toward proper place for burial (Jeane 1989:461).

In the South, there are two cemetery types: urban and rural (Jeane 1989:463-465). The most common Southern cemetery is the public graveyard associated with a hamlet or crossroads. In towns, church-associated cemeteries are most common. Urban cemeteries of southern cities have a greater degree of cross-cultural exchange and are less regionally distinct. In contrast, small graveyards of rural communities experienced minimal change to mortuary art and landscape architecture.

In the Upland South, the traditional folk cemetery lasted from initial occupance until approximately World War II (Jeane 1987a). Traditional folk cemeteries were established according to settlement patterns, and thus, are widely scattered throughout the landscape. The large number of rural cemeteries scattered throughout the South is a result of several factors, but most notably, racial segregation and the numerous religious denominations.

Unique to the South are the remnants of former plantation cemeteries with separate burial grounds for slaves. In contrast to a family graveyard, the burial place of slaves was an important aspect of their fragile community. Slaves were particularly
susceptible to losing their rights to burial places. Slaves were buried in separate sections within plantation cemeteries or at spatially distinct locations. After emancipation, the self-sufficient agrarian communities of plantations established church and schools with associated cemeteries for laborers. With emancipation and the introduction of mechanized and corporate agriculture, many plantation graveyards were eventually abandoned. Plantation cemeteries have passed through several hands, and in many cases, the land holdings of plantations were transferred to corporate industries, such as petrochemical plants. In rare instances, plantation or family cemeteries were donated to benevolent societies for use by the remaining community.

Many cemeteries in the South are segregated as black or white. As stated by Mitford (1963:128):

> Prevailing prejudices in the land of the living are mirrored in the land of the dead, and racial segregation as practiced in cemetery land parallels that which prevails above-ground.

The landscapes of cemeteries that were segregated, for instance "Colored," "Pauper," or "Jewish," are expressive of the precarious and fragile living community. Often the cemeteries of minorities or under class persons, no longer have any known ties or affinities with persons living in the region. Cemeteries that lack continuous association have been reappropriated for other land uses. For instance, cemeteries have been refashioned as recreational parks and parking lots (Sloane 1991:24-25).

Speculations today about the ethnicity or social class of a cemetery that has incomplete material remains are questionable when rumor, prejudice, and dereliction
devalue the history of a place. Jeane (1989:463) states that “black cemeteries tend to be
less well cared for than those of the whites.” However, the characteristics of Upland
South folk cemeteries are shared by rural blacks and whites. Thus, distinguishing an
abandoned black graveyard from a white graveyard is a difficult assessment. Often
assignations are made based on conditions of dereliction.

In the South, there is a preference for graveyard locations on hilltops (Jeane
1989:463). Although the availability and mass appeal of commercial grave markers
have made burial decoration uniform, Southern grave decoration is varied with a unique
tendency to make use of available materials. Also, cults of piety maintain traditional
connections with the dead through Graveyard Workday and Day of the Dead. Once a
year, reverence for specific plots within cemeteries is demonstrated when family
monuments are cleaned (Jeane 1989:463-464). However, Southern folkways of grave
decoration and cleaning are giving way to perpetual care plans, uniform grave markers,
and uninterrupted horizons of memorial gardens (Jeane 1989:464).

Prior to the 1950s, cemetery locations were dependent upon distance traveled
with the available means of transportation — that was, pedestrian, horse, buggy, boat
and train. Available transportation corridors — waterways, rutted dirt roads, and
railroads — were determining factors in the selection of locations for cemeteries. In
parts of the South, a transitional stage began in the 1930s when Memorial Parks were
introduced (Jeane 1987a:57-58). The incorporation of this new type of burial place was
slowly adapted in the South. Eventually, tradition gave way and from the 1960s onward
the commercial cemetery has become a widespread phenomenon (Jeane 1987a:69).
The traditional southern rural cemetery described still exists, although decreasingly so. As the South has urbanized and become more accessible via the automobile and blacktop road, ideas and attitudes concerning proper disposal and care of the dead have changed. Within towns especially the traditional cemetery landscape has given way to the memorial garden concept conceived in California and diffused eastward across the United States (Jeane 1989:464).

Until mid-nineteenth century, rural population dispersal throughout the South maintained a preference for rural and widely dispersed cemeteries. Midway through this century, attitudes toward burial place for both Southerners and ethnic Americans (who had resisted change) deviated from the traditional spatial pattern and chronology of earlier burial practices. The American South had resisted industrial capitalism in preference for family-based, agrarian and slave-labor modes of production (Farrell 1980:218). A concentration of moneyed markets and the products and services associated with dying were lacking in the South due to low levels of income and slow growth of Southern cities. In spite of intense recruitment campaigns, Southern membership in funeral associations (such as the Association of American Cemetery Superintendents) remained minimal.

Lagging behind the northern and western states in urbanization and industrialization, the South maintained a cultural continuity of close-knit communities and kinship-based networks.

In many (if not most) aspects of the dying of death, the South lagged behind other areas of the country by twenty or thirty years. Since 1920, however, and especially since 1945, the South has accepted the institutions and ideology of industrial capitalism, and a recent study of “The
Southern Way of Death” suggests that variations within the region are as great as differences between the South and the rest of the country (Farrell 1980:218).

Few Memorial Gardens or Lawn Parks were established in the South until after the 1950s. Since 1950, a growing preference for urban and commercial cemeteries in the South is apparent.

3. Louisiana’s Cemeteries

In general, historic changes in placement of the dead are well documented for North America but are less well known for Louisiana. Louisiana participated in the previous century’s nationwide geographic separation of living spaces from those of the deceased. In Louisiana, urban cemeteries were placed outside or on the edge of city limits when first established. As urban areas grew, city limits expanded and development engulfed historic cemeteries. Cemeteries inside Louisiana’s urban places served both urban and rural populations (Nakagawa 1987:65).

At various stages of urban growth, the sacred space of cemeteries were encroached. Although quite different from other regions of Louisiana, the celebrated cemeteries of New Orleans’ “Cities of the Dead” are good examples of cemetery destruction during urban growth phases. Real estate pressures resulted in the disappearance of sections and, in some cases, entire cemeteries in New Orleans. Similar to many historic urban cemeteries in America, over time they become overpopulated, encroached upon, constructed over and through, and surrounded by urban activities (Beavers et al. 1985; Coastal Environments 1986; Huber 1974; Lewis 1976; Owsley et al. 1985). A few historic cemeteries are marginally visible in urban centers, such as
Highland Cemetery in Baton Rouge. Highland Cemetery is obscured and partially built over by suburbs at Louisiana State University's southeastern border (Heather McKillop personal communication, 1996).

C. Summary

Over several decades and at a variety of scales, global, regional and local, cemeteries have evolved. Spatially and temporally, the evolution of cemetery types and landscape preferences are indicative of socio-cultural changes that coincide with evolving settlement patterns. In America, cemeteries evolved from local and private mourning places located in the center of towns to culturally-integrated community places for burying the dead on the outskirts of city limits. In Louisiana, the local, private and family-oriented southern cemetery landscape has persevered, until recently. Historic community and family cemeteries were preferred in rural Louisiana. Today, historic family, plantation and community plots are still in use throughout the rural landscape. However, since the 1950s the introduction of urban-associated Memorial Parks has influenced cemetery preference in Louisiana.

In southeastern Louisiana, many traditional cemeteries were built over and decontextualized during economic growth phases of earlier decades. As traditional settlement patterns give way to progress in southeastern Louisiana, cemetery preservation or neglect is indicative of evolving communities. The vigor of a community is evident in maintained traditions, such as burial place. A landscape of local values still exists in Louisiana from which the condition of a community can be measured by the commitment to church and cemetery maintenance (Newton 1987:198).
CHAPTER 5. THE HUMAN STAGE

Settlement is a tangible expression of a cultural configuration (Newton 1974:340). Early settlement patterns in Louisiana were complex structures that reflect changing social perceptions.

First, the individual structures (houses, fields, roads, churches, clinics) are the greatest material accomplishments of both men and their institutions. Second, the complete settlement pattern is the largest tangible expression of the configuration of the culture. As is the case with many aspects of material culture, the settlement pattern is a complex structure, acting as both cause and effect at several levels of the man-to-man, man-to-technology, and man-to-land relations of the culture; the various aspects of settlement reflect different social facts (Newton 1974:340).

Social, economic and political structures change as settlement patterns are reorganized. Reciprocally, settlement patterns are reorganized as the social, economic and political structures change.

A variety of socio-cultural and physical factors are responsible for and responding to landscape changes. Thus, over several decades the origins of distinct socio-cultural and physical boundaries in the landscape are difficult to discern. In 1970, Newton’s Atlas of Louisiana presented several cultural and physiographic characteristics to define a dividing line separating the Upland south and northern Louisiana from southern Louisiana. As shown in Figure 5-1, the division between north and south in Louisiana is called a “cultural blur” because it is not clearly defined by any single characteristic.
Figure 5-1. Cultural Blur Between North and South Louisiana.
A. Cultural Blur

Several interpretations by scholars are well-founded but no one interpretation is adequate for separating north from south Louisiana. As population fluctuates, cultural constructs redefine the characteristics of formerly distinct enclaves. Such infrastructural features as interstates and bridges have radically altered a previously static cultural landscape. Thus, contrasts between north and south Louisiana have become increasingly blurred during the second half of this century.

Shown in figure 5-1 are several interpretations of a dividing line between north and south Louisiana. In 1988, Kniffen and Hilliard (1988:5) presented a generalized triangular boundary which separated an early and predominantly French settlement in the southern portion of Louisiana from a British northern region. In 1987, Nakagawa’s (1987:53) interpretation of a cultural blur boundary between north and south is generalized from Newton’s publications. Newton (1970; 1975:48; 1987:133) presented several demarcations which emphasized boundaries based on “creek,” “branch” and “notched log” physical and cultural features. In a subsequent article, Newton (1975) further distinguished north from south based on election polls, economy, migration, ethnicity, dialect, vernacular architecture, and Catholic dominance.

Numerous criteria have been suggested for a dividing line between north and south Louisiana based on, for example, dominant foods consumed or hill settlements in contrast to marsh. But no two unrelated criterions agree as to the definition of one boundary. In general, culturally distinct traits of religion and ethnicity have a tendency to coincide. For example, persons of British descent tend to speak English and largely
adhere to Protestant faiths, whereas persons of French descent tend to speak French and are commonly affiliated with the Roman Catholic church.

As defined by “Howard 1963,” in Newton 1987, the northernmost extent of a north-south boundary in Louisiana is focused on Center Point (west of Marksville). Several other scholars form a consensus on the northernmost extent of a north-south boundary at Marksville (C) (“Kniffen 1941” in Newton 1987; Knipmeyer 1956; Newton 1970; Nakagawa 1987). Shown in Figure 5-1, various lines demarcating a cultural blur weave between parish seats with several lines converging on particular parish seats. South of Marksville, all cultural blur lines follow the course of the Mississippi River separating the Upland parishes from the flood plain. South of East Baton Rouge parish (north of the parish seat of Plaquemine) these dividing lines diverge in east and southeasterly directions.

Since the 1950s’ economic development, the construction of bridges and interstates have enabled population mobility. Consequently, a blurring of diverse cultural characteristics has occurred. In spite of recent cultural changes, the remains of cemetery landscapes are evidence of earlier cultural continuity. Furthermore, in remote parts of southeastern Louisiana, traditional ethnic settlements are still an integral part of the cultural landscape.

The distinctions of cultural landscape types between north and south Louisiana are more appropriate when considered with topography as elevated Uplands and inundated Wetlands. A generalized physiographic description distinguishes the Uplands area as hills and bluffs of the Florida parishes. To the south and west of the Mississippi
River are swamp, lakes, bayous and minimal prairies of the Wetlands. For the purposes
of this study, my interpretation of a cultural divide is identified in the following figures
as “Nance 1998” (Figure 5-1). As a generalization, my dividing line separates elevated
land mass, waterways and swamp to distinguish Wetland from Upland influences upon
cemetery locations and types.

Based on field work observations, cemetery characteristics warranted a dividing
line between north and south which generally conforms to the convergence and
divergence of the above-mentioned definitions of a cultural blur. For the purposes of
this study, the “Upland” subregion is distinguished as the Florida parishes (East Baton
Rouge, East Feliciana, West Feliciana, St. Helena, Tangipahoa and Livingston) and the
“Wetlands” subregion encompasses the remaining approximate three-quarters of the
study area (which minimally includes prairies). When viewing the differences between
burial practices, the “cultural blur” between Uplands and Wetlands (north and south) in
Louisiana is accentuated. From this point onward, the cultural blur designated as Nance
1998 is used to illustrate cultural-historic settlement patterns evident in cemetery
landscapes of the Uplands or Wetlands.

Four of the six cultural blur lines shown in Figure 5-1 converge upon the former
parish seat of Springfield (G) in Livingston parish and then deviate in easterly
directions. Earlier settlement patterns which were centered on Springfield (former
Livingston parish seat) are evident in the convergence of various cultural distinctions.
Situated along new railroads (north of inundated areas), the towns of Amite
(Tangipahoa parish) and Livingston (Livingston parish) replaced Springfield’s function
as a parish seat. Similar to many towns in Louisiana, new transportation routes bypassed Springfield. Formerly a pivotal place as a crossroad between Uplands and Wetlands, Springfield straddles the north/south divide of Nance 1998. As shown in Figure 5-1, Nance 1998 separates the Hungarian Settlement (1) in the Uplands from French Settlement (2) and German Prairie Settlement (3) to the south and west in the Wetlands.

Southwest of Springfield, fishing, boating and water-related recreational tourism are dominant industries. To the north of Springfield, interstate associated commerce and lumber activities dominate the landscape. Once a pivotal community, the Springfield Cemetery is unique in its segregation of parcels (both familial and ethnic) on an undulating landscape of knolls and valleys. The Springfield Cemetery reveals the diversity and continuity of an historic and culturally integrated community. However, within the Springfield Cemetery culturally diverse characteristics are apparent in segregated grave plot arrangements.

The long history of family and small community continuity within the study area invites speculations of physical and cultural features that can be used to distinguish cultural subregions. Diverse cultural characteristics are readily apparent in cemeteries. For instance, the Hungarian Settlement cemetery is uniquely laid out as an orderly grid of family plots with surnames posted on mock street signs.

Globally, cemeteries exhibit a predetermined socio-cultural organization to their arrangement. For instance, in Christian cemeteries graves are commonly oriented toward the rising sun. To the other extreme, some cemeteries display a haphazard
arrangement that is likely a result of space availability. It is common for neighboring cemeteries to display diverse cultural characteristics. For instance, within community cemeteries an array of grave arrangements reveals the variety of local cultural traits. Often is the case that cultural traits are shared and difficult to distinguish as separate. As the term "creolization" implies, there are no cultural road blocks or walls to prevent a blurring of cultural traits within or between cemeteries.

B. Legal Boundaries

1. Parish Boundaries

The subdivisions of counties in the state of Louisiana are known as parishes. Louisiana’s parishes are culturally meaningful units of smaller social group relations. Initially, during the period of Spanish control, parishes were based on ecclesiastical boundaries that were designated by jurisdictions of the Roman Catholic church (Calhoun 1995:166; Goins and Caldwell 1995:42). Parish boundaries are both arbitrary and natural and have been modified as new jurisdictions evolved over the years.

Natural boundaries are formed, for example by rivers, and thus are irregularly shaped. In southeastern Louisiana the Mississippi River courses diagonally through the study area and acts as both cultural and physical boundary between Uplands and Wetlands. The Amite River in the Upland parishes is the oldest parish boundary in southeastern Louisiana (refer to Figure 1-1). From its northern origins at the Mississippi/Louisiana state lines to the Gulf Coast, the Atchafalaya River and its tributaries separate several Wetland parishes.
Many parish boundaries are arbitrary. Arbitrary boundaries are agreed upon, such as meridians of longitude and latitude, and thus form straight lines across natural features. The combination of arbitrary and natural boundaries within the study area is a result of early settlement dependence upon natural features and subsequent cultural decisions to create subregions.

Upland parishes are physically distinguished by their elevation (hills) and southern Wetland borders. The Uplands are separated from the Wetlands on the west by the Mississippi River and to the south by Bayou Manchac and Lake Ponchatrain. Until 1810, the Florida Parishes were a part of the Florida Territory claimed by Spain (Calhoun 1995:167). In 1812, Louisiana entered the Union with twenty-five parishes. As settlements became more distinct, new jurisdictions were formed and parish boundaries were subdivided. There were forty-eight parishes in 1861 and fifty-nine in 1886. The present sixty-four parishes were established in 1912 (Goins and Caldwell 1995; Works Progress Administration 1939).

In the 1800s, the average population in the hill and prairie parishes of the Orleans Territory was less than one person per square mile. In 1810, the total population of the Territory of Orleans was 76,556 and was predominantly located along navigable streams (Goins and Caldwell 1995:51). The population was dependent upon waterways as primary means of transportation, communication and trade. Only 23 percent of the population could be considered urban and urban places were limited to the New Orleans area.
Based on the relatively high elevation (approximating 400 feet), soils, vegetation and culture, the Florida Parishes have more in common with northern Louisiana and the Upland South than they do with southern Louisiana (Newton 1987:9). Early settlements were along river courses and were enclaves of ethnic-cultural heritage. Parishes were named by the early settlers and frequently bear the names of saints. For example, Acadian culture is centered on Lafayette (and nearby Acadia parish) in the prairies.

During historic settlement, parish seats (courthouse towns) were the central focus of subregions (Figure 5-1). Generally, parish seats are located at the center of the parish or along a navigable stream flowing through or bounding the parish. The parish seats were situated in convenient locations, near the geographic center of evenly settled parishes or equally distant from existing population centers of randomly populated areas (Goins and Caldwell 1995:42). Parish seats in the Uplands are most frequently near the center of each parish, whereas in the Wetland parish seats tend to follow waterway corridors.

A centripetal pattern of roadways that connected rural communities within parishes was based on interconnecting government centers of each parish to the territorial government in New Orleans. Later, as highways were paved, the state capital of Baton Rouge became a central node. Few primary highways intersect parish seats in the Wetlands and northern Upland parishes are relatively isolated. In the remote Wetland and Upland parishes state highways connect parish seats to urban centers.

Territorial separation resulted in the subdivision of several parishes into new political units and thus disrupted landscape patterns. As new parishes were formed
around developing centers of activity, new parish seats were also established. For instance, Tangipahoa parish was created from the four parishes of St. Helena, Livingston, Washington and St. Tammany in 1869. The splitting of four parishes to make Tangipahoa parish is exemplary of the dominance of the railroad and the growth of industries, such as lumbering. Cultural landscape alterations to accommodate commerce through Tangipahoa are still apparent in the numerous railroad and interstates that link Louisiana to the nation.

2. Land Survey

The distinct settlement differences between the Uplands to the east of the Mississippi River and prairies to the west of the Atchafalaya Basin are characteristically displayed in road patterns that reflect terrain, population density, land survey type and other factors (French 1978; Kniffen 1974:359; Kniffen and Hilliard 1988; Newton 1987). Land survey patterns are reflections of rural settlement patterns across the country.

The differing land survey systems of cadastral metes and bounds (A) in the Uplands, French long lots (B) in the Wetlands, Midwestern grid (C) in the prairies, and River Plantation settlements (D) along the Mississippi River account for varying distribution of cultural landscape features, such as farms, roads, towns, and cemeteries (Figure 5-2). Within townships, early settlers commonly chose claims based on kinship. This pattern is evident in parish records of land ownership today, as well as on grave markers. A close-knit network of land and family relationships was established prior to
Figure 5-2. Settlement Patterns and Cadastral Systems.
the Louisiana Purchase. Subregions have maintained familial continuity well into this century.

In the Upland region, the irregular shapes of settlement grants followed metes and bounds cadastral survey system which determined the arrangement of roadway and associated cultural features in the landscape (Figure 5-2(A)). The pine and flatwood forests in the Uplands consisted of dispersed farming and lumbering practices. Many towns in the Uplands were first established near a river. Later, towns were established by railroad. The isolated or dispersed pattern of irregularly-clustered rural settlements and a rural network of highways that erratically follow the boundaries of metes and bounds is still apparent. However, as a result of transportation development, former centers of commerce that were established by waterways and railways seem randomly scattered today.

In contrast to the irregularly-dispersed cultural features of a metes and bound survey system, are the orderly row villages or line settlements of the French long-lot survey system (Figure 5-2(B)). The long-lot system partitions land allotments in rows of rectangular parcels. Dependent upon the physical landscape, the long-lot is a cadastral system in which land is sold with regular linear measurements. Typically situated along a road or river, the lengths of long lots abut one another and extend outward from a river, levee and road (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:129). Farmhouses were situated along the road or river, and each farmer was provided access to transportation along the primary waterway. Conditions of long-lot land grants made construction and maintenance of levee and river road the responsibility of each
landholder (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:129). Rivers as a transportation corridor were a primary means of shipping and communications in French settled southern Louisiana.

West of the Atchafalaya River and north and west of Lafayette are prairies of open grassland. The prairies were settled in the 1880s when development of the railroad resulted in boom towns centered upon depots (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:161). Based on the cadastral survey system of Township and Range (Figure 5-2(C)), a Midwest-like grid pattern is apparent in the landscape. Baseline roads traverse direct courses across the flat and uniform countryside following section lines north to south and east to west. In the prairies, new towns were established according to the grid system (as well as the railroads) and thus towns are dispersed in an orderly fashion across the landscape.

In the prairies and wetlands, population distribution was, in general, people of Acadian and French descent who settled the linear corridors of bayous and railroads. Linear settlements, along the courses of rivers and bayous consisted of small farms and great plantations (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:141). A plantation settlement pattern (D) is dispersed throughout all three cadastral survey systems within the study area. As an occupancy pattern the plantation settlement pattern was dependent upon agricultural resources, transport and commerce for optimum location. This settlement pattern is still apparent today along rivers. Commonly, relic unpaved roads of this settlement pattern are less than 1000 meters in length and terminate at a railroad. These relic roads connect levee, port and river roads to parallel railroads and often have a cemetery associated.
The long-lot system is a relict imprint that historically portrays, in the cultural landscape, changes in technology. The organization of day-to-day survival in the Wetlands region was quite different from that of the higher elevation Uplands. The emergence of new means of transportation, settlement expansion into the prairies, mineral extraction, industrialization, urban growth and control of the Mississippi River were technical, economic and demographic changes that altered settlement patterns and human interaction with the land.

C. Physiography

A natural region is defined by qualities of nature for which the primary criterion is relief. In Louisiana, topographic relief consists of hills, terraces and lowlands. The criterion of relief is further divided into subcategories based on differences in location, such as vegetation, soils and climate. The natural regions of the study area are divided by the Mississippi River which is surrounded by alluvial plains, swamp, coastal marshes, prairies, bluffs, and pine hills (Calhoun 1995:260).

In the Uplands, east of the Mississippi River, are hills, terraces and bluffs of longleaf and shortleaf pine. In the wetlands, the Mississippi River flood plain dominates the region to the south and west of the Mississippi River. South of the Mississippi River are coastal fresh and salt water marshes. A hundred years ago the open prairies consisted of grazing and farming. Later, rice became the dominant agricultural crop. In general, sugar cane was the dominant crop in the wetlands, cotton was grown in the upland bluffs and rice in the prairies (Calhoun 1995; Goins and Caldwell 1995; Kniffen and Hilliard 1988).
According to Calhoun (1995:260), in the state of Louisiana: “There are no pronounced relief features.” The upland region of the Florida parishes ranges in elevation from 100 to 300 feet and rise to little more than 500 feet (Goins and Caldwell 1995). The average incline from the Gulf Coast northward is about two feet per mile (Calhoun 1995:260). Bluffs rise east of Angola (northern extent of study area) and end near Baton Rouge. These bluffs slope and drain southward away from the Mississippi River and border both sides of the Mississippi River alluvial plain.

Except for natural levees, cheniers, and salt domes that punctuate the surface, the wetlands are mostly devoid of relief. The Atchafalaya Basin is a broad swamp that extends from the Three Rivers Flood Control (northern most extent of the study area) to the Gulf Coast. When the Mississippi River overflows, sediments that have been transported are deposited. Over hundreds of years, natural meanders along the course of the Mississippi River have been cut off as a result of series of flood, deposition and consequent river course changes (Calhoun 1995; Goins and Caldwell 1995; Kniffen and Hilliard 1988). For instance, in Pointe Coupee parish, False River is a settlement located on the banks of a cut off ox-bow bend from the Mississippi River. Depositional sediments from the Mississippi River and its tributaries have built up for more than six thousand years and provide habitable linear land masses that are routes for roadways through marshes and swamps (Goins and Caldwell 1995). There are numerous bayous (streams) traversing the Atchafalaya Basin that were former tributary channels of the Mississippi River (Goins and Caldwell 1995).
Prior to the present levee system, natural levees were formed adjacent to rivers and bayous from depositional sediments. The courses of bayous are banked on each side by levee ridges (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:7). The banks of the Mississippi River are generally 10 to 15 feet above the land that declines away from the river (Calhoun 1995:276). In many parts of Louisiana, the highest elevations are the levee banks and Indian Mounds. New Orleans is five feet below sea level, and ships traversing the course of the Mississippi River appear high on the horizon—above inhabitants and cemeteries that are protected by the levee (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:158).

Unfortunately, natural levees of river banks and locally maintained river controls were inadequate for protecting inhabitants and agricultural lands. Since the 1800s, series of devastating floods have incurred widespread distress to settlements throughout the Mississippi River Valley (Barry 1997).

D. Settlement and Population History

The numerous population influxes in Louisiana are attributable to migration rather than a rate of natural increase (Maruggi 1985, 1990). For example, the earlier settlement periods of Acadians, Spanish colonial and French, along with two centuries of African slavery, significantly increased Louisiana’s population during certain time periods (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988). To the other extreme, major population depletions were a result of cholera, yellow fever and influenza epidemics prior to the 1930s (American Guide Series 1938; Duffy 1966).

Louisiana has had a steady population growth since the first European settlements around 1700 (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:192). The population was 95
percent rural in 1790 and settlements were agricultural-based. Communities were relatively isolated, and settlements adhered to major streams, fertile and well-drained soils. After the Louisiana Purchase, there was a population influx and a boom in plantation agriculture. The subsequent influx of population and spread of plantations continued the pattern of settlement along waterways as a means for shipping agricultural products, such as cotton (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:193).

In 1820, the marshes, swamps, prairies, and flatwood hills of Louisiana were largely unpopulated and although the population continued to increase (doubling from 1850 to 1890) the regional distribution remained about the same (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:194-195).

Until well into the twentieth century, Louisiana was overwhelmingly a rural and agricultural state. Most commercial and industrial enterprises were related to agriculture; even timber-cutting was done by farmers and planters. Such great dependence on agriculture, and especially on a few cash crops, proved again and again to be economically hazardous (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:178).

Waterways were the first highways and no settlement could be far from a stream (Goins and Caldwell 1995; Kniffen and Hilliard 1988; Newton 1987). Roads were built along waterways (often parallel to the levees) for upstream travel. Feeder roads served as spokes from “river” roads to inland towns. Bridges were few and streams were forded or traffic ferried across. Roads were built and maintained for traversing areas in which waterways were not useful. The courses of these early roads were the foundation for several modern rural and state highways. Early settlements experienced population
shifts gradually, for example, when a roadway was constructed to connect to a railroad or highway.

The majority of Louisiana's population lived in rural areas with plantations acting as community centers. The population of Louisiana increased by 85 percent from 1810 to 1860 due to an in-migration (Goins and Caldwell 1995:51). As a result, Louisiana gradually became less rural yet population was still distributed along waterways. The population density was calculated at 15.6 persons per square mile. In 1860, New Orleans and Baton Rouge were the only urban places with populations greater than 2,500. New Orleans accounted for 82 percent of the total urban population of the state (168,675 persons) with Baton Rouge the second largest city (5,428 persons) (Goins and Caldwell 1995).

Small towns and plantation society represented agglomerated southern settlements. The larger plantations were self-sufficient and functioned as villages with a central economic focus (Goins and Caldwell 1995). Over time, river cities attracted railroads and highways that extended into the hinterlands which in turn attracted commerce to new urban cores. Exploitation of land and other natural resources added to the economic viability of cities and towns.

From 1860 to 1900 the population of Louisiana grew 95 percent and became increasingly less rural in the process. Population density increased to 30 persons per square mile (Goins and Caldwell 1995:52). The introduction of the railroad permitted expansion into areas that had previously only been navigable by waterways. New parishes were created as a result of increased population distribution. New urban
centers were also created and Shreveport displaced Baton Rouge as the second largest city. In 1890, far reaching development began to sparsely populate less desirable areas. However, the state remained 74 percent rural (Goins and Caldwell 1995).

As transportation improved, new technologies opened the prairie to rice cultivation and the forest to large-scale lumbering. A few towns grew into urban centers while others withered as natural resources exploitation relocated elsewhere. Transportation centers emerged where passengers or goods exchanged one means or route of travel for another. Emergent railroad towns displaced the popularity of bayou dependent communities (Goins and Caldwell 1995; Kniffen and Hilliard 1988; Newton 1987).

In the 1890s, lumbering in Louisiana became big business (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:169). Lumber towns sprung up near lumbering activities and then were abandoned when mills relocated to exploit new lumber leases. The policy of “cut and get out” left many railroad lines and towns, with associated churches and cemeteries, completely abandoned. In 1914, Louisiana led the country in lumber production but by 1925 most of the mills had closed (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:168).

Changes in the economy prior to the 1930s had a great impact upon rural settlement patterns. Prior to the 1930s transportation was primarily local rather than long distance (Wall 1990). Sixty percent of the state’s population was rural, and of those living on farms two-thirds of the blacks and half the whites were tenant farmers or sharecroppers (Wall 1990:285). The Great Depression, absentee farming, highly mechanized agriculture, and large-scale operations of corporate agriculture, displaced
the traditional family farm (Fagg 1936; Goldfield 1982; Kirby 1987:77). Increased movement toward urban areas within the state and to northern states furthered the demise of rural communities.

While many parishes in Louisiana remained predominantly rural and lacked any urban place, new urban places were created by the extension of railroads (Goins and Caldwell 1995:43). Population concentrated near urban places during the Great Depression to access government programs (Goins and Caldwell 1995:53). In 1900 there were only 15 urban places enumerated in the state of Louisiana but by 1940 there were 54. In 1940, the density of Louisiana’s population was 52 persons per square mile, 56 percent rural (Goins and Caldwell 1995).

In 1940, New Orleans was still the leading city, but not for long. Rural Louisiana lagged behind its urban centers, benefitting little from health, science and public service advancements (Goins and Caldwell 1995). The continued isolation of rural areas was attributed to the poor conditions of state roads outside the cities. Railroads and steamboats served larger towns and some rural districts, but most of the state’s small communities did not have access to either (Wall 1990:274). A journey from a remote area to the parish seat could take all day. A lack of paved or elevated roadways (causeways), and bridges (especially across the Mississippi River) limited the use of automobiles. As late as 1928, there were only 331 miles (533 kilometers) of hard-surface highway in the rural portion of the state (Wall 1990:275).

The administration of Huey P. Long and Oscar K. Allen (1928-1936) provided Louisiana with a statewide paved highway system, 2,400 miles of concrete, 1,300 miles
of asphalt and approximately 4,000 miles of gravel roads (Wall 1990:276). By 1935, remote areas could be penetrated by power lines and telephone due to the new road systems. Regional and national progress with its amenities infiltrated the countryside. However, most of the population continued to live below the poverty line; per capita income was $286 for Louisiana compared to a national average of $472 (Wall 1990). A rural-to-urban shift accelerated from 1900 to 1940 as Louisiana's population nearly doubled (71 percent increase) (Goins and Caldwell 1995:53). Expansion of transportation networks and the attraction to amenities of central places, increased the population density of urban areas.

From 1936 to 1950 Louisiana's urban population increased greatly (Wall 1990). There was a substantial population shift from rural to urban to escape the oppression, poverty and deprivation of farm labor existence. The provincial separation of northern and southern Louisiana waned with increased mobility and connectivity along highway thoroughfares and across bridges. While modern causeways and bridges created connections across physical obstacles, such as Lake Ponchartrain and the Atchafalaya Swamp, wetland areas remained relatively uninhabited. Since 1940, the most striking population growth has been in Louisiana's cities (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:195).

In the past sixty years was a considerable shift in the population distribution from isolated areas to urban places. Since the 1930s, the promise of economic opportunity and access to modern conveniences has drawn Louisiana's population from plantation areas, small farms and woody hills to cities, such as Baton Rouge (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:196). Rural settlements were progressively depopulated while urban
sprawl and industry claimed surrounding areas. Many rural areas were absorbed by expanding cities through the related phenomenon of suburbanization (Kniffen 1978:203). As cities grow, suburban areas experience net in-migration. In 1950, Baton Rouge’s Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (shown in Figure 1-2) was within the parish boundaries, it then grew to the parish limits and now consists of portions of several surrounding parishes (Calhoun 1995:160; U.S. Census 1950). Today, Baton Rouge’s MSA includes several portions of central parishes that contain a main population concentration within an urban area (Goins and Caldwell 1995).

Suburbanization of metropolitan areas continued to be a dominant factor in Louisiana's population growth from 1970 to 1980 (Maruggi 1985:45).

By the 1970s the rural population had decreased to 26 percent (Wall 1990). Recently, however, a population movement to corporate limits of surrounding parishes is part of a national trend for a rural to urban reversal. A rural to urban reversal involves migration from urban to suburban and rural places. By 1990 Louisiana’s population decreased to 68 percent urban (U.S. Census 1990). However, in 1990 only eight parishes lacked an urban place with a population greater than 2,500 persons (U.S. Census 1990). The population density for the state rose to 97 persons per square mile (U.S. Census 1990). While New Orleans remained the largest city, its population receded to the 1960s enumeration as its suburbs expanded to abutting parishes. By 1990, Baton Rouge had regained its status as the second largest city in Louisiana (219,531 persons) (U.S. Census 1990).
E. Socio-Economic Factors of Demographic Change

From 1900 to 1910, more than four-fifths of the black population increase occurred in the South (Taeuber 1971:13). However, the percentage of the nation’s black population living in the South decreased from 85 percent in 1920, to 77 percent in 1940, 60 percent in 1960, and 53 percent in 1970 (Taeuber 1971:13). From 1910 to 1920 there was a substantial out-migration of blacks leaving the South (Goldfield 1982; Wall 1990). Also, during this time the rural population decreased to 59 percent (U.S. Census 1920). During World War I, the “Great Migration” began and the South lost 522,000 blacks (Barry 1997:417).

The Mississippi River flood of 1927 was only one reason for many blacks to abandon their homes (Barry 1997:417). In 1930, the removal of labor mobility restrictions in the rural South led to the exodus of nearly half a million blacks to northern cities (Goldfield 1982:165). In 1935, the races were still segregated by custom and law in the South. During the 1940s, the labor needs of World War II generated a new wave of black migration northward, such that a regional Southern exodus occurred. The racial composition of the South changed as the total percentage of the black population declined.

In parishes surrounding New Orleans substantial population increases have been called “white flight” from an increasing nucleation of black populations in the city (Aiken 1990; Wall 1990:348). Similar metropolitan out-migrations are evident across the country. Although not indicated as racial or middle-class flight, influxes of in-migrating populations are apparent in several large cities with a reciprocal metropolitan
exodus (Frey and Liaw 1998:215-232). Within the state of Louisiana, socio-political factors (such as the Ku Klux Klan) are influences upon demographic distribution that are evident in census statistics – although not documented as such.

Early this century, war and economic depression deflated the Southern population (Barry 1997; Nelson 1943). In America, job-related factors have been shown to be the major socio-economic cause for migration between different areas. According to Maruggi (1985:2), migration is a function of "push" and "pull" factors. A common push factor is the lack of economic opportunities and its reciprocal pull factor is the attraction of economic opportunities in other areas. Since 1910 black laborers (a significant portion of the southern population) migrated; they were pushed by various "southern miseries" which resulted in a substantial deficit in available farm labor (Fagg 1936; Kirby 1987). The World Wars acted as pull factors (outward from Louisiana), with promises of better lifestyles for laborers (Kirby 1987:53).

Additionally, from 1920 to 1960 farms were increasingly mechanized, thus displacing itinerant and marginal farmers. The South became less self-sufficient with the introduction of corporate and mechanized farming (Kirby 1987). By 1930 more than half of Southern farmers were tenants (Kirby 1987). From 1920 to 1940, people were increasingly moving to urban areas (Goldfield 1982:141). In the 1940s, the federal government subsidized large farms and this in combination with agricultural mechanization drove landless, tenant and itinerant farmers from the countryside (Kirby 1987:77). Nationally, a rising economy in the 1950s improved the livelihoods of industrial laborers. But in the South, the historic division of black and white hardened
into a permanent caste system by 1950 (Wall 1990). A burgeoning middle-class, racial turmoil of the 1960s, and better opportunities elsewhere further encouraged a black exodus. During the 1800s, Louisiana's population was nearly half black and in some parishes more than 80 percent black (U.S. Census Statistics). But by 1970, 70 percent of Louisiana's population was white (Wall 1990:346). The higher growth rate among whites is attributed to a black exodus (Wall 1990:346).

In the South there are many social and political causes for demographic changes, such as the prospect of employment in municipalities (Aiken 1990). While the farm population continued to decline 20 percent, southern cities grew 30 percent between 1940 and 1945 (Goldfield 1982:142). The Southern economy made no concessions for persons living a semi-subsistence existence. Therefore, many farmers and laborers migrated to industrial places with a cash nexus and hopes of income stability. The urban South had few economic opportunities to offer, especially to blacks. Therefore, during periods of socio-economic difficulties the Southern population shifted, either migrating out of Southern states or relocating to Southern cities. The most effective solution for rural laborers who lack the means to make a living is abandonment of rural settlement frontiers for urban areas of expanding economies (Zelinsky 1971:236).

Hartshorne (1971:265) described the southeastern United States as a relatively undeveloped region. He supported this statement based on income levels, employment, educational achievement, age structure of the population, a rigid social system, and other cultural variables. Hartshorne (1971:265) further states: "The South has often been described as an area where tradition has seriously impeded economic progress."
From 1890 to 1960, Louisiana had a relative decline in levels of industrialization, economic and occupational activity when compared to other states of the Southeast (Hartshorne 1971:266). In 1960, the nonindustrial economy of Louisiana appears relatively deprived when compared to the rest of the United States (Hofferbert 1968).

By the 1960s, Louisiana had lost 106,811 persons through net out-migration (Maruggi 1985, 1990). Counteracting this loss, from 1970 to 1980 126,007 more people moved into the state than moved out (Maruggi 1985, 1990). Urban places that were incorporated or census designated (with a population greater than 2,500) increased from 54 in 1940 to 166 in 1990 (U.S. Census 1990). In 1990, Louisiana's population had grown nearly 80 percent since 1940 (U.S. Census 1990). This population growth is largely attributed to the 1950 to 1960 baby boom.

Modern urban centers developed based on the exploitation of oil and gas, and natural and cultural resource centers developed based on recreation, fishing and tourism. However, a period of large-scale economic distress occurred during the 1980s. From 1980 to 1990, there was an historic trough in the population statistics as Louisiana's total population increase was 0.33 percent (Goins and Caldwell 1995:54). This zero population increase was the smallest decennial increase in the state's history (Calhoun 1995:141). From 1980 to 1988, the rate of natural increase barely exceeded the net out-migration in many parishes (Maruggi 1990). In thirty-seven of the sixty-four parishes there was a marked population decline as a result of economic distress.

Demographers estimate that the 1980s "Oil Bust" caused a wave of out-migration from Louisiana that contributed to a loss of population greater than the death
toll of the Civil War (Calhoun 1995:141). Along with out-migration, there was an internal shift with twenty-seven parishes indicating increases in population. For many parishes the 1980 to 1990 declines was a continuation of trends as people moved from farm to town and from north to south (Goins and Caldwell 1995:54). However, six parishes posted population increases from 14 to 30 percent (U.S. Census 1990). Within the study area four parishes with increased population are connected to “Greater New Orleans” by interstates: Ascension, Livingston, St. Charles and St. John the Baptist.

F. Religious Diversity

The Second Great Awakening or Great Revival swept through the South altering the religious landscape of the region (Hill 1989). A fundamental evangelical fervor is still apparent today on the southern air waves of Protestant stations. In the South, the day-to-day struggle to stay alive was dispelled by dramatic and emotionally provoking sermons about the spiritual fight between good and evil. Religious hymnals, such as “Shall We Gather at the River,” contain metaphors of escape from human bondage. Southern ballads and blues express the historic importance of waterways and railroads. The significance of cemeteries is also memorialized in Southern ballads and blues that are still performed by popular artists, such as “See That My Grave Is Kept Clean.”

Aptly phrased by Flannery O’Connor, the South is “Christ-haunted” (Hill 1989:1269). Popular Southern writers (such as William Faulkner, Mark Twain, and Tennessee Williams) have satirized the formal practices of Southern religion as intolerant and hypocritical. Faulkner (Moore 1989:1292) lends insight to the
captivation of the Baptist movement as it traveled across the countryside with itinerant preachers:

   It came from times of hardship in the South where there was little or no food for the human spirit - where there, were no books, no theater, no music, and life was pretty hard and a lot of it happened out in the sun, for very little reward and that was the only escape they had.

An example of the severing of religious doctrine from space and time strictures is the movement across the Southern rural countryside of itinerant preachers, with random visits and outdoor revivals.

   Itinerant preachers, Methodist circuit riders, peddlers of religious literature, and revival and camp meetings are indicative of isolated communities in need of spiritual unity, as well as a society increasingly on the move. With an end looming large in the doom and gloom religious rhetoric, temporary and makeshift housing with burials in a backfield or under a tree were satisfactory in the hopes of utopia. As America entered the industrial revolution, a sense of transiency, mobility and even urgency affected how people related to their environment (Jackson 1979:160-161).

   In the South, religious distinctions within one denomination are as great as those between Southern and Northern Baptists. The variety of Protestant denominations in the South is a result of cultural differences, for example, between black and white or rural and urban Baptists. Congregations are often locally autonomous, most commonly evangelical fundamentalist Protestant groups. Congregations divide over small points of doctrine or social conflict. Since the turn of this century, campaigns by whites to unify and thus control the numerous rural black churches were thwarted (Barry
During the 1960s, it was the unity of black churches that lent strength and momentum to the Civil Rights Movement (Sessions 1989:1282).

One of the most noticeable social traits of Louisiana's rural communities is the high frequency of churches and cemeteries that are widely scattered throughout parishes. Church related settlements were scattered loosely across Louisiana with the church acting as a functional social unit, especially in times of hardship. The establishment of several churches with a variety of religious denominations and small congregations resulted in numerous cemeteries associated with now abandoned churches. The numerous denominations, a dispersed rural population, and the available means of transportation were directly related to the number of churches and cemeteries within a region.

Rural population depletion and diminishing congregation membership contribute to the abandonment of churches. Today, many churches of diminishing communities are in distress, as are their associated cemeteries. In general, the congregations of these churches are small and many congregations have disbanded. Multi-denominational and urban churches have formed a unity of several smaller congregations into large national conventions. The disbanding of small churches of numerous denominations, in preference for urban associated multi-denominational churches, has furthered the abandonment of small, rural and local churches along with their associated cemeteries.

G. Summary

Massive leaps in geographic mobility, especially after World War II, encouraged an abandonment of traditional ways of life. Vernacular buildings in the path of progress
have been destroyed for decades. New highway construction displaced the business of local stores as consumers traveled farther for better prices and variety. However, the layout of historic towns tells us of the importance of crossroads and waterways in earlier decades. The displacement of waterways and railroads as primary transportation routes is apparent in the numerous abandoned towns and plantations that were once thriving ports and depots. With the rising importance of central places and a rural exodus, families, like settlements, rise and fall in their fortunes and disappear but “cemeteries remain as necropolitan social structures” (Delambre 1969; Newton 1974:348).

For many cemeteries, the most recent burials are elderly congregation members. Tied to the land and rural ways of life, many elders – those who survived the hardships of the Great Depression and World Wars – are the last to be buried as churches to which they were dedicated close. Without living reverence for a site, church associated cemeteries fall into ruins. One case in particular is a small cemetery that was never map documented by the USGS or officially recorded otherwise. On an access route to Interstate 10, the cemetery was recently exposed when the church was razed. The last burial in the cemetery was Reverend Collins dated 1977. This cemetery (site no. 2002, Figure 5-1(4)) is not likely to receive burials in the future nor will it maintain its ground as commercial property values in this area increase.
CHAPTER 6. LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Factor I: Evolving Communities. The cartographic documentation of cemeteries as associated with other cultural features within settlement patterns, such as churches, railroads, and highways, indicates the integral importance of these cemeteries in communities. If cemeteries were recorded on maps with toponyms (place names) that signify associations with other cultural features, then subsequent cartographic disassociation is evidence of cemetery abandonment.

Through my cartographic research, cemeteries within the study area that were associated with other cultural features were identified. There are many interpretive clues for lost association, such as abandoned railroads, changing river courses, or new suburbs. Through this cartographic research, I was able to identify potentially abandoned cemeteries. This map research is the basis for identifying cemetery locations which were later field verified.

Cemeteries are established as a long-term inhabited land use activity. In 1955, Pattison surveyed cemeteries of Chicago to assess cemetery distribution and land use economy. Pattison (1955:245-257) examined the distribution of cemeteries, potential cemetery consolidation and amount of land used for burial places. He discovered many anachronisms in cemetery distribution due to evolving infrastructure, as well as cemeteries destroyed prior to this century. In this article, Pattison concludes that land set aside for cemeteries far exceeds the need for burial space. Zelinsky (1975:171) states:
Cemeteries account for an appreciable fraction of the land surface of the United States, but even the most tentative of percentage figures are unobtainable.

In an article presenting geographic differences in cemetery distribution nationally, Zelinsky (1994) estimates cemetery density using Geographic Names Information Systems (GNIS) Phase I data provided by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). He found that in the eastern United States, metropolitan areas generally have 20 cemeteries per 100 square miles. West of the Mississippi River (which includes most of the state of Louisiana) there are fewer cemeteries. An interregional comparison between Louisiana and California reveals some interesting contrasts: California shows 542 cemeteries named in GNIS Phase I data which equals 0.3 cemeteries per 100 square miles (Zelinsky 1994:32-33). California is one of the most populous states, including 12 percent of the nation’s population, yet only 0.55 percent of the nation’s GNIS Phase I cemeteries were documented (Zelinsky 1994:33). In contrast there are 2,140 cemeteries in Louisiana, which is equivalent to 4.8 cemeteries per 100 square miles.

Varying the scale of analysis reveals different patterns in cemetery densities within specific regions. Temporal factors may also contribute to these differences. Regionally, in the Uplands of Louisiana, Nakagawa (1987:77) estimated an average density of 17 cemeteries per 100 square miles. Earlier, Newton (1961) estimated 80 cemeteries in the Upland parish of St. Helena, which was an average of 19 cemeteries per 100 square miles. My study includes different scales of analysis to further investigate differing densities in cemetery distribution in southeastern Louisiana.
Considering the settlement longevity in Louisiana and greater available land mass in California, the relatively few cemeteries documented by the GNIS in Louisiana is suspicious. Memorial Parks, popular since the turn of the century in California, do not adequately represent a deceased population buried in historic cemeteries previous to and into this century. Although there are an adequate number of cemeteries for Louisiana’s present population, cemetery acreage may not adequately represent the accumulation of a deceased population over several centuries. For example, in New Orleans, several cemeteries were uncovered during construction of the Superdome, widening of boulevards and condominium construction (Heather McKillop personal communication, 1997; Mary Manhein personal communication, 1997; Times Picayune 4/8/84, 4/10/84, 7/24/85, 8/14/85). The discovery of cemeteries during modern construction indicates that a substantial portion of the population is not accounted for in today’s recognized cemeteries. For instance in Baton Rouge, part of Magnolia Cemetery was paved over during road expansion as the city limits increased (Heather McKillop personal communication, 1997).

A. Cartographic Research

1. United States Geological Survey and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Historic to present cartographic research was conducted at various archives by perusing hundreds of maps dating from pre-1930 to the present. Archives included the State of Louisiana: Division of Archaeology, Land Office, Department of Transportation and Development, Library, and Archive. The historic to present map scales varied from 1:24000, 1:31680 and 1:62500 on United States Geological Survey
and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maps. (Both map sources are abbreviated as USGS hereafter.) Cemetery locations were extrapolated using the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinate system. Since the maps were of varying age, scale, and coordinate systems, the point locations of some cemeteries were generalized and upgraded with the most current map coordinates.

The accuracy of the location of cemeteries and other cultural features was a concern in my research. Discrepancies in survey accuracy persist today, for example when older field survey techniques for original plat information result in modern boundary disputes (Bo Blackman personal communication, 1997). With new technologies, there is a potential for improved accuracy of map locations. However, using data that were collected with survey methods available in the early part of this century means that survey information recently entered into systems capable of greater accuracy, such as Geographic Information Systems, contain the errors of the past. The historic difference in map documentation using North American Datum (NAD) 1927 to present NAD 1996 accounts for as much as 100 to 300 meters error in UTM point locations. In addition to NAD variations, inherent in USGS maps is a 40-foot standard error.

Prior to the 1927 Great Flood, there were no comprehensive topographic maps available for the United States. Previous to 1930 and into the 1940s, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers surveyed and created topographic maps for Louisiana. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers focused on mapping densely-populated areas, such as the Florida parishes, and regions impacted by flooding, especially along the Mississippi
River corridor. By 1950, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had erratically and selectively surveyed only a few quadrangles within the study area, producing maps at a scale of 1:31680.

By the 1950s, the United States Geological Survey produced comprehensive topographic surveys of block areas within 15-minutes of longitude at a scale of 1:62500, producing USGS quadrangle maps for each state. Subsequent upgrades divided 15-minute USGS topographic quadrangles into four 7.5 minute maps at a scale of 1:24000. The larger scale 7.5-minute USGS quadrangles were often interpreted from aerial photographs and then surveyed. By the 1970s, most areas in Louisiana were represented by 7.5-minute USGS topographic quadrangles. However, since the 1970s map upgrades have involved minimal field verification.

The UTM locations of map-derived cemetery locations were entered into a USGS cemeteries database, which includes fields for date of map documentation, cemetery name, associated features, and date the cemetery was dropped from maps. Information was organized so that data could be displayed and analyzed by decade, for correlation with demographic and transportation changes over time. Shown in Figure 6-1 are 1,118 cemeteries that were documented from USGS maps of 1908 to 1995. In Figure 6-1, cemeteries are shown according to the dates of the maps, namely pre1930 to 1950s, 1960 to 1970s, and 1980 to 1990s. Readily visible in Figure 6-1 are areas where mapping efforts were concentrated.

Apparent in Figure 6-1 is the recent lack of cemetery documentation and the subregional lack of upgrades from the 1970s to the 1990s. Importantly, documentation
Figure 6-1. USGS Historic to Present Cartographic Research of Cemetery Locations.
of cemeteries on historic maps does not indicate the age of the cemeteries but rather the
date of the map. For instance, many cemeteries were not documented on maps until the
1990s but have grave markers that date to the previous century. Likewise,
documentation of cemeteries on recent maps from 1970 to the 1990s indicates increased
efforts to document cultural features — not the establishment of new cemeteries.

A lack of recent field work to upgrade historic maps creates a potential for
errors. Historic cultural features are often transferred onto new maps without field or
aerial photo verification of surface conditions. For instance, the cultural features on a
1950s 15-minute USGS quadrangle for Jackson, Louisiana were transferred without
field verification to a 1990s 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle series. Thus, new cultural
features, such as suburbs and quarries, are shown as superimposed over the location of
earlier features, such as cemeteries. Furthermore, most recent USGS upgrades used
aerial photograph interpretation rather than field surveys. Ground truthing during a field
survey is the only means to verify the continued existence of superimposed cultural
features. Field verification is both quantitative and qualitative in that survey determines
whether or not a cemetery still exists and, if so, cemetery condition, context and location
accuracy.

Table 6-1 emphasizes continuity of cemetery documentation by the USGS and
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1900 to 1995. Table 6-1 shows by decennial map
editions the number of cemeteries documented ("Occurrence"), not documented
("Missing"), continuously documented ("Continuous"), dropped from maps ("Deleted")
and not documented on previous ("No Previous") or subsequent ("No Subsequent") map editions.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occurrence</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deleted</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Previous</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Subsequent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decennial Total</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>842</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the 1960s there was a peak in map coverage. At this same time, however, little attention was given to identifying cultural features by name. As shown in Table 6-1, map documentation of cemeteries between 1990 and 1995 is minimal due to lack of map coverage. As shown in Table 6-1, there was a lull in map production during the 1970s. Consequently, the number of cemeteries recorded on 1970s maps ("Occurrence") was less than during the 1960s.

The highest occurrence of cemeteries documented on earlier maps and not recorded on later map editions ("Deleted") was during the 1960s. Fully 107 cemeteries were not recorded on 1960s maps. A total 11 percent of cemeteries were dropped from subsequent maps from pre1940s to the present. After the 1960s, there was a decrease in the number of cemeteries that were deleted from maps. From 1970 onward, improved USGS map documentation techniques and recent concerns for historic preservation are apparent. The "No Previous" and "No Subsequent" categories represent the volume of
map editions for those decades. For instance, a lack of subsequent maps during the 1990s accounts for 687 cemeteries that were not documented.

In areas for which there is only one map, errors in map transference were not comparable. For example, the Carencro, Louisiana 1983 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle (167D), north of Lafayette, Louisiana provided the first documentation of cemeteries in this area. All three cemeteries were generically designated “C-E-M.” The lack of earlier maps for the Carencro USGS quadrangle, which is an area of rapid recent development, means that other historic cemeteries may never have been documented.

In a few areas, a lack of maps for a decade or more resulted in transference of cultural features without field verification. For instance, the 1994 Clinton, Louisiana 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle (128D) is a revision of a 1954 edition without intermediate map versions. In this case, cemetery locations and names are the same in spite of landscape changes. My research indicates that cemeteries most commonly were dropped from maps when names were changed, misspelled or never documented.

On occasion recent maps transferred cultural features with associated names. Therefore, cemeteries on these maps maintain toponymic (place name) integrity, regardless of whether or not the cemetery still exists. For instance, Plaquemine 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle (163C), south of Baton Rouge, had no name changes: cemetery names were simply transferred through succession of map editions, from the first edition of 1963, 1971, 1980 to the most recent edition of 1992. At the other extreme, all cemetery names on four 7.5-minute USGS quadrangles (1950s 184A-D) lost names to generic terms, such as “C-E-M,” when transferred from the 1930 15-
minute USGS quadrangle. Lagan (204B) and Labadieville (204C) are two neighboring 7.5-minute USGS quadrangles that show an 80 percent loss in cemetery toponyms to generic identifiers.

2. Geographic Names Information System

Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) Phase I was a project developed by the USGS to digitally capture the location of cultural features and their toponyms from current USGS topographic maps. Since 1995, Phase II of this project has involved an historic upgrade of cultural-feature toponyms documented on earlier USGS map editions, including 15-minute USGS quadrangles and soil survey maps dating from about 1950 to the 1970s (Roger Payne personal communication, 1997). State-by-state, subcontracting agencies are provided with one 15-minute historic quadrangle per area, and whatever soil survey maps are available, to digitize historic places and their names.

The subcontracting agency for Louisiana’s GNIS Phase II was the University of Alabama Cartography Library. Along with other cultural-historic feature place names, the subcontracting agency digitized cemetery locations. No field surveys were carried out to verify information. Louisiana does not have an historic to present bibliography of cultural features. Therefore, cemetery discrepancies were not researched (Tom Kalsen personal communication, 1997). Bibliographies of cultural features are often used to confirm locations over time. Thus, further research is conducted when map information is inconsistent or lacking.

The GNIS web site (1997 upgrade) consists of a database with search capabilities on cultural features, such as "church," "school" and "cemetery." A query
was generated to extract site locations for cemetery names within Louisiana. Cemetery names along with latitude and longitude point coordinates were extracted and converted to UTMs by a computer-generated algorithm.

As shown in green in Figure 6-2, cemetery point locations were extracted from GNIS Phase I and II for 570 cemeteries within the study area. Within the study area, GNIS Phase II increased by one-third the number of cemeteries identified in Phase I. The increase in number of cemeteries documented by the GNIS Phase II search is substantial. Fully one-third of cemeteries were not documented during GNIS Phase I research. Research that predates GNIS Phase II did not include historic place names and locations, for instance, Nakagawa (1987) and Zelinsky (1994). GNIS Phase II data was not available until 1996. Furthermore, several states have yet to complete their Phase II GNIS.

Since the locations of GNIS cemeteries were digitized, these UTMs are more accurate than coordinates manually transferred through USGS map research. In rare instances, the digitized GNIS UTMs vary as much as 50 to 300 meters from USGS map documentation of the same cemetery. Unfortunately, GNIS cemeteries lack source information, and thus do not have the temporal dimension of USGS researched cemeteries. Since the map source, date or NAD for GNIS point locations are not known, errors cannot be rectified. Twice the number of cemeteries documented by GNIS Phase I and II were documented on USGS map editions. Many cemeteries were not documented by the GNIS because they no longer had a name. A shortcoming of the GNIS data is the number of places that lack toponyms.
Figure 6-2. GNIS Phase I and II Cemetery Locations.
There are 10 cemeteries that were solely documented by the GNIS from map sources not available to my research. The difference between the number of USGS map researched cemeteries (1,118) and locations identified from GNIS data (570) is evidence of the large number of cemeteries that lack toponyms. Within the study area, 49 percent of cemeteries documented by USGS research were not documented in the GNIS database (Phase I and II). For instance, the earlier example of Carencro 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle area lacks GNIS cemetery co-occurrence. As a further example of cemeteries not identified in the GNIS data, only two of the four well-known St. Louis cemeteries in New Orleans are identified.

B. Cemetery Name Game

From the combined cemetery locations identified from USGS and GNIS Phase I and II research, Table 6-2 indicates changes in name documentation. Temporally coordinated with Table 6-1, Table 6-2 illustrates cultural changes in attitudes in map documentation of cemetery toponyms. The anonymity of generic "C-E-M" and graphic cross or box reveals an evolution of cemetery disassociation from previous contexts. As shown in Table 6-2, the number of "Names Given" on maps peaked during the 1940s. Subsequently, in the 1960s there was a decline in designated names of cemeteries which coincides with cemeteries deleted (Table 6-1).

In the 1970s, the few named cemeteries ("Names Given") are biased by the few maps produced during this decade. However, an increase in named cemeteries on 1980s and 1990s maps shows concern for identifying cultural features and thus increased cultural heritage efforts. In general, Table 6-2 indicates that from 1950 through 1960s
names were lost or changed, resulting from a change in cemetery context or affiliation. Several cemeteries were further decontextualized during map upgrades of the 1960s. In the 1980s, a few cemeteries regained their toponyms.

Table 6-2. Cemetery Name Occurrence with Cultural Feature Association.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occurrence</th>
<th>155</th>
<th>288</th>
<th>613</th>
<th>486</th>
<th>359</th>
<th>606</th>
<th>386</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“C-E-M”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Graphic</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Graphic</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Ch &amp; Cem”</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Ch, Sch &amp; Cem”</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names Given/ % Total Cemeteries</td>
<td>110/ 208/ 381/ 172/ 171/ 252/ 153/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name Lost</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name Changed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name Recovered</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Zion”</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Mount”</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mount Zion&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Saint&quot;</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly half the cemeteries documented prior to the 1940s were associated with another cultural feature. The most common toponym of association was “Ch & Cem” (representing church and cemetery) and “Ch, Sch & Cem” (representing church, school and cemetery). There is a correlation between the decrease from 67 to 42 cemeteries that were named in association with a “Ch & Cem” or “Ch, Sch & Cem” previous to 1940 and an increase from 42 to 68 cemeteries generically designated by a graphic cross during the 1940s. Since the 1950s, few cemeteries were documented as associated with other cultural features. Rarely did cemeteries maintain an historic association with...
school and church. Today, in Pointe Coupee parish, historic “Mount Moriah Ch, Sch & Cem” is the only cemetery that has maintained its name in association with other cultural features. At the northernmost extent of my study area, the former cemetery of “Knox Plantation Ch, Sch & Cem” was located in what is now the Mississippi River Outflow Channel.

The identification of cemeteries by toponym decreased from 72 percent prior to the 1950s to an average of 41 percent after the 1960s. The tabulation of “Names Lost,” “Names Changed,” and “Names Recovered” indicate that 134 cemeteries became anonymous (generic C-E-M, Cross or Box). Only 17 cemeteries recovered their names on maps, while 58 cemetery names changed. Since the 1940s, a substantial number of cemeteries were assigned generic designations, such as “C-E-M” or were identified by a graphic cross or dashed box symbol. As the number of documented cemeteries increased on maps, the tendency for generic designations also increased. During the 1980s, more than half of the cemeteries were identified generically as a feature type rather than a cultural feature with a distinct identity and contextual association. The increase of generic designations in the 1980s is likely due to the increase in number of cemeteries documented that had already lost associations from previous maps.

The most popular church and cemetery name is “Zion,” usually combined with New, Old, Little, Greater or Mount. Cemeteries with the word “Mount” or “Saint,” either Catholic or Baptist, are prevalent throughout the study area. Common names, such as “Zion,” “Mount” and “Mount Zion,” decreased in usage since the 1950s. This diminution concurs with the decline in the occurrence of named cemeteries. Similarly,
cemeteries with the name of "Saint" decreased after the 1950s and averaged 10
cemeteries per decade after the 1960s. There are 51 cemeteries named for Saints in the
GNIS data. However, these cemeteries cannot be used for temporal disassociation
because their map source is unknown.

As evidence of the cultural differences between the Upland and Wetland areas in
north and south Louisiana, cemeteries that are named for Saints are more abundant in
the Wetlands. There are 45 cemeteries named for Saints in the Wetlands, whereas the
more densely populated but predominantly Baptist area of the Uplands has only six
cemeteries named for "Saints." By contrast, Baptist congregations in the Wetlands have
assimilated the names of Saints, such as "Saint Paul Baptist Cemetery."

On occasion, the names of cemeteries changed when land was transferred by
lease, sale or inheritance. For instance, "Joiner Cemetery" was temporarily dropped
from maps. It was placed on later maps with the new family name of "Hoffman
Cemetery." In addition, there are instances where family cemeteries were donated to
churches in exchange for grave maintenance, resulting in a change in the name of the
cemetery. Once a name was dropped historically from maps, it was unlikely to be
retrieved unless map research is specifically conducted to recover the name.

The modern map documentation of "New Beulah Cemetery," near the town of
Baptist, Livingston parish, is an example of an old cemetery which may have been
reappropriated, as it was previously documented as "Old Historic Cem" on maps. A
few family names are repeatedly associated with cemeteries in specific regions, such as
"Broussard" in the Wetlands (three cemeteries south of Lafayette and several cemeteries
west of the study area) and "Bankston" in the Uplands (six cemeteries). Thus, the prominence of certain families is apparent in the frequency of cemeteries sharing surnames within a subregion.

The tabulation of changes in name occurrence indicates the sensitivity of temporal identification. After the 1940s cemeteries that were map documented with a name were likely to become anonymous in subsequent map documentation. Subsequent research efforts to recover lost names are minimally successful. Apparent in Table 6-2 is a tendency for toponymic disassociation by the 1960s. Since the 1970s, few cemeteries regained their toponymic identification as a culturally associated feature.

C. Uplands/Wetlands Cemetery Density

When the point locations of both GNIS and USGS cemeteries within the study area were displayed in a GIS, a pattern of cemetery distribution became apparent (Figure 6-3). In the GIS environment, cemetery density and distribution were visible at many scales. Table 6-3 shows the density of cemeteries and population per square mile area for the thirteen parishes sampled. The Upland parishes are shaded to emphasize cemetery density east of the Mississippi River.

By dividing the total USGS/GNIS cemeteries within a parish by the square mile area and multiplying by 100, the density of cemeteries per 100 square miles is in Table 6-3. In this way, cemetery density can be compared with regional studies by Nakagawa (1987:77) and Zelinsky (1994:32-33). Cemetery density in the Upland parishes of East Baton Rouge (20), East Feliciana (26), Livingston (15), St. Helena (25) and West Feliciana (14) is generally greater than in the Wetlands. The density of cemeteries per
Figure 6-3. Combined USGS and GNIS Cemetery Locations.
Table 6-3. Population and Cemeteries per Square Mile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Cemetery Occurrence</th>
<th>Cemetery Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ascension</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumption</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Baton Rouge</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Feliciana</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iberville</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pointe Coupe</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Helena</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Martin</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Baton Rouge</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Feliciana</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

shaded = Upland parish

100 square miles in the Upland parishes ranges from 14 to 26. The average cemetery occurrence per 100 square miles for the thirteen parishes sampled and map researched in their entirety ranged from nine cemeteries in 1950 to 11 in 1990. East Feliciana and St. Helena parishes have the maximum number of cemeteries by area, 25 and 26 cemeteries per 100 square miles, respectively. Parishes to the south and west of the Upland parishes has cemetery densities ranging from three to 19 per 100 square miles. Ascension (19) and West Baton Rouge (14) have the highest cemetery densities in the Wetlands. Both parishes abut densely populated East Baton Rouge. St. Martin and St. John the Baptist parishes consist of mostly uninhabitable swamp and lake, and thus have fewer cemeteries per square mile (three cemeteries per 100 square miles).
East of Baton Rouge, an inspection of maps reveals approximately one cemetery every two to three square miles. The cemetery density in Livingston parish (15 per 100 square miles) would be greater if a substantial portion of the parish were not Wetlands. Although Tangipahoa parish was only partially sampled in this study (an eastern perimeter of the study area), cemetery density (168) is greater than parishes to the south — more than 21 cemeteries per 100 square miles. For example, the 1983 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle (125D) of Wilmer (63.75 square miles) in Tangipahoa parish contains 26 cemeteries — the equivalent of 41 cemeteries per 100 square miles. Thus, if Tangipahoa parish were surveyed in its entirety (790 square miles) for cemeteries, it is probable that Tangipahoa's cemetery density would be similar to St. Helena and East Feliciana's 25 and 26 cemeteries per 100 square miles.

Table 6-3 also shows the population density per square mile by parish and the relationship of 1990 population in persons per USGS/GNIS cemetery. St. Helena has the lowest population density (24 persons per square mile), the highest occurrence of cemeteries (102 cemeteries) and thus, the fewest persons per cemetery per square mile (25 persons per cemetery). In contrast, St. John the Baptist has a high population density (183 persons per square mile) and therefore a population of 5,714 persons per cemetery (seven USGS/GNIS cemeteries). Although, St. Martin has a low population density, it also has a high population per cemetery (2,199 persons per cemetery, 20 cemeteries). It is likely that parishes with too few cemeteries to represent the population density, especially those in the Wetlands, are disposing of many bodies elsewhere — for example, transporting them to cemeteries in nearby parishes.
Zelinsky (1994:35) described Louisiana's cemetery distribution west of the Mississippi River as a "relative dearth of cemeteries in Louisiana's Acadiana." Cultural and physiographic patterns are apparent within the study area in the greater distribution of cemeteries in the Uplands. The Uplands cemetery density and Wetlands relative cemetery sparsity reveal distinct patterns in cemetery distribution which are more or less dependent upon available elevated land. Figure 6-3 illustrates the weighted distribution of USGS/GNIS cemeteries in accordance with Uplands and Wetlands as defined by the cultural blur designated as Nance 1998 in Figure 5-1. Although the Uplands portion of the study area encompasses approximately one-fourth of the study area, cemetery distribution is disproportionately weighted in this northeastern portion. In the Uplands, 54 percent of USGS/GNIS cemeteries are located.

D. Summary

The state of Louisiana has an unusually high frequency of cemeteries as a result of early settlement patterns. Family, plantation and community plots are prevalent within urban centers and scattered throughout the rural landscape. The sparsity of occurrence and erratic array of Louisiana's undifferentiated cemeteries has, in many cases, resulted in their abandonment.

Cemeteries are sparse in the marshes and swamps to the west of the Mississippi River. Cemetery density in the Uplands is a reflection of available elevated land mass, cultural differences and settlement history of the Florida parishes. Cemeteries in the Wetlands are limited to elevated land that follows the linear courses of waterways and
levees, highways and railroads. Due to available elevated land mass, cemetery density in the Wetlands is less than the Uplands and cemetery distribution limited.

Several cemeteries appear to have become cartographically stranded in the landscape, for instance when isolated from roads or community. As development progressed since 1950, the identity or association of cultural features became less important. Eventually, generic terms became the most common identifiers of cemeteries. Circa 1940, historic maps documented “ice plants” and “railroad depots” as toponyms, as well as “Ch, Sch & Cem.” Prior to 1950, the cultural features of cemetery, church and school were associated as an integral part of community and thus, were map documented as common features with a single name. Introduction of a public school system in Louisiana may have encouraged the separation of church and school. A local and plantation established cultural system which determined the location of cemeteries was abandoned.

Since 1950, the transference of map information neglected the historic importance of assigning names. During the same time that “ice houses” were replaced with map symbols for utility lines, many cemeteries were anonymously and simply-documented with a dashed box, graphic cross or the letters “C-E-M.” As communities in southeastern Louisiana evolved over time, cemeteries became cartographically disassociated. The progressive disassociation of cemeteries from earlier contexts of community-associated identities indicates a severing of traditional ties to cemetery landscapes.
As Zelinsky (1994:30) states, map interpretation of cemetery conditions is only rudimentary. Maps do not tell us the age, size, number of burials, ethnicity, racial segregation, class or religious affiliations of cemeteries. In addressing the regional anomalies of named cemetery locations extracted from the GNIS, Zelinsky (1994:37) emphasizes the fallacy of assumptions made based on map interpretation:

It is essential to recall that the map does not document number of burials but rather the number of decisions per unit area to create a distinct and separate place for the interment of groups of the departed. Inspection of the topographic maps for those districts with exceptional numbers of cemeteries reveals that a considerable majority are minute in size, overwhelmingly rural in location, and bear family names in a disproportionately large percentage of cases (Zelinsky 1990). Moreover, their siting suggests that, at the present time, a great number of them are relatively inaccessible and probably receive few or no recent burials, or are abandoned. But such observations do not begin to account for their profusion, past or present.

Map interpretation does not permit the assessment of landscape qualities or material culture; maps do not imply social relations, class distinctions, ethnic or religious segregation. Likewise, maps do not indicate if a cemetery is owned by a municipality, family, community or commercial enterprise. Maps do not necessarily tell the truth as they contain artifactual topographic remnants that are transposed over time without upgrades of recent field survey or aerial photograph interpretation. Most notably, cartographic reconnaissance cannot convey the existing conditions of cemeteries in the landscape, specifically if a cemetery is still in use, closed, in peril or no longer visible in the landscape. Cartographic interpretation does however suggest, in
many cases, that cemeteries have been abandoned when they appear topographically inaccessible or in conflict with superimposed cultural features, such as new suburbs or quarries.

Many historic cemeteries in Louisiana, and other states, were never mapped and have already disappeared from the landscape. There are numerous accounts of historic cemeteries erased from the surface during development and burgeoning growth phases (Morning Advocate 1/4/51, 5/12/79, 5/16/90; St. Charles Herald 5/1/75; State Times 5/6/49, 9/2/56; Times Picayune 4/8/84, 4/10/84, 7/24/85, 8/14/85). Furthermore, many cemeteries still exist, and are in use, but were never documented by the USGS or GNIS. Solely relying on one source of data without field verification is not adequate for representing historic, abandoned or no longer visible cemeteries.
CHAPTER 7. FIELD SURVEY

Factor II: Cemetery Conditions. As communities evolved and relocated to urban areas in response to natural disasters and economic opportunities, cemeteries were abandoned. Logging activities, oil pipeline construction and new highways altered the once well-traveled local routes of southeastern Louisiana. Former market intersections with corner stores were abandoned, as were small churches and their church yards. If cemeteries are vulnerable to natural disasters and socio-economic change, then clusters of cemeteries in various stages of abandonment reveal the impact to the landscape. By focusing on subareas within the study area that have clusters of cemeteries in stages of abandonment, my research will address the variety of factors that affect cemetery land use from 1930 to 1997.

A. Sampling Strategy

A 50 percent field survey as a disproportional stratified sample that differentiated Uplands cemetery density and Wetlands sparsity was chosen for field survey to assess cemetery conditions (McGrew and Monroe 1993:107-108). Cemeteries were selected from the combined USGS and GNIS cemeteries database. By using a disproportional stratified point sample, a majority of cemeteries within the sparsely populated Wetlands area are well represented. The Wetlands, in particular the Atchafalaya Swamp area, would have been under-represented using a systematic sample. Cemeteries are absent in some areas of the Atchafalaya Swamp. For example, a 100 percent survey of accessible cemeteries in the Wetlands would have included only three cemeteries within the 15-minute USGS quadrangle area of Bayou Sorrell.
The larger areas covered by 15-minute USGS quadrangles were chosen for an arbitrary spatial sampling grid. In the densely-populated Uplands, a maximum of 20 cemeteries within each 15-minute USGS quadrangle area was chosen for the survey. With this sampling strategy, the three-quarters of the study area which has disproportionately low cemetery density was adequately represented. In this manner, the one-quarter of the study area, in which some 15-minute USGS quadrangle areas have as many as 70 cemeteries, was not over-represented.

Sample cemeteries were chosen based on map interpreted accessibility, distance, time and cost to travel to cemeteries for a total of twenty field days (approximately two 15-minute USGS quadrangles per day). Cemetery locations were selected each day prior to travel to the field. Surface conditions were continuously reassessed. Moment-by-moment decisions were made about cemeteries that were “safe” and cost-efficient to visit. Limitations to cemetery access were unimproved roads, waterway obstructions and closed bridges. Thus, the survey was further stratified in accordance with paved highways and landscape obstacles. Summer weather conditions of flash floods also prevented access to some cemeteries.

Cemeteries were located in the field with a Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) system coordinated with the most recent USGS topographic maps. Field survey UTMs derived from GPS were entered into a database. These UTMs range in accuracy from one to 100 meters concurrence with GNIS digitized cemetery locations. In many cases, GPS was essential for map orientation and identifying cemeteries no longer visible on the surface. When there was no evidence of cemetery surface remains, GPS UTMs
coordinated with USGS 7.5-minute current map editions was the only confirmation of location accuracy.

B. Landscape Sensitivity

The landscape conditions of 588 cemeteries were documented on a field survey form. Cemetery assessments were entered into a database for GIS display. As shown in Figure 7-1, the weighted distribution of USGS and GNIS cemeteries in the Uplands is reflected in the distribution of derelict cemetery conditions assessed during field surveys. Surveyed cemetery landscape conditions were ranked as follows:

0 = Not Surveyed, 48 percent  
1 = In Use, 34 percent  
2 = In Peril, 5 percent  
3 = Closed, 6 percent  
4 = Not Visible, 7 percent

Conditions of cemetery dereliction were thus ranked 2, 3 and 4. The rank of cemetery "in peril" indicates that a cemetery is in use but shows signs of dereliction. Signs of dereliction are erosion, open graves, overgrowth, and secondary unrelated uses, such as household garbage and abandoned vehicle dump sites. A "closed" cemetery is one in which there are no recent burials and the cemetery appears abandoned or overgrown. Cemeteries that are "not visible" (or no longer visible on the surface) are decontextualized by secondary uses, such as paved roads, suburbs, pasture or overgrown. To the contrary, cemeteries that are "in use" are well-maintained and have evidence of recent burials.

The Uplands represent approximately one-quarter of the study area, yet 39 percent of USGS and GNIS cemeteries are located in this area. As shown in Table 7-1,
Figure 7-1. Field Surveyed Cemetery Conditions and Subareas of Sensitivity (A to F).
Table 7-1. Distribution of Cemeteries Surveyed in the Uplands and Wetlands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Uplands</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>609</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

239 cemeteries were surveyed in the Uplands which equals 41 percent of sampled cemeteries within the study area. In the Wetlands, 349 cemeteries were surveyed which equals 59 percent of surveyed cemeteries. Of the total number of cemeteries located in the Wetlands, 67 percent were surveyed. Of the total number of cemeteries located in the Uplands, only 39 percent were surveyed. The difference between percentage of cemeteries surveyed in the Uplands and Wetlands is a result of cemetery density. In spite of a disproportionately stratified sample strategy, cemetery density in the Uplands weighted the survey.

The field survey ranking of cemetery dereliction indicates that in the study area 34 percent of surveyed USGS and GNIS cemeteries are in stages of abandonment (ranked 2, 3 or 4). As shown in Table 7-1, in the Uplands 38 percent of field surveyed cemeteries were ranked 2, 3 or 4 and 32 percent were ranked as derelict in the Wetlands. Although fewer cemeteries were surveyed in the Uplands one-quarter of the study area, a 39 percent sample survey assessed 38 percent as derelict. By way of comparison, the Wetlands represent a much larger area with a 67 percent sample survey, but only 32 percent of cemeteries were derelict.

Table 7-2 tabulates by parish the number of total USGS/GNIS cemeteries and the surveyed conditions of cemeteries with a cumulative percentage of cemeteries in...
Table 7-2. Cemeteries Surveyed and Conditions of Cemetery Dereliction by Parish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Derelict</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Dereliction</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ascension</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumption</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoyelles*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concordia*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Baton Rouge</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Feliciana</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iberia*</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iberville</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafayette*</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafourche*</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pointe Coupee</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Helena</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Landry*</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Martin</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Mary*</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangipahoa*</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrebonne*</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermilion*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Baton Rouge</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Feliciana</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*=partial parishes sampled
shaded = Upland parish
stages of abandonment ("Derelict Cems"). In Table 7-2, partially-sampled parishes are designated with an asterisk and Upland parishes are shaded. A 100 percent survey was conducted in St. Charles parish because there are only three cemeteries, and all three cemeteries were accessible. Assumption parish has minimal cemetery dereliction, 6 percent of 38 USGS/GNIS cemeteries. To the other extreme, a 59 percent survey of 91 USGS/GNIS cemeteries in East Baton Rouge revealed 56 percent are derelict including 26 percent (14 cemeteries) that are “not visible” in the landscape.

Cemeteries that cartographically appear inaccessible to the public (stranded or isolated) were not considered for the survey. However, cemeteries that were deleted from maps and cartographically appear accessible were selected for field survey in order to verify cemetery visibility in the landscape. Field survey of 34 cemeteries that were dropped from subsequent map documentation revealed: seven cemeteries still “in use,” two “in peril,” two “closed” and 23 “not visible” in the landscape. Thus, if cemeteries are not identified on subsequent maps, this may indicate cemetery dereliction. However, map interpretation of conflicting information, such as transposition of suburbs on a cemetery, is not adequate for assessing surface conditions. Field verification is the best method for determining ground conditions of cemeteries.

C. Field Observations

1. Material Culture

Most cemeteries in the Uplands are family cemeteries. Family cemeteries in the Uplands are often located on private property and behind locked gates—most notably hunting clubs with “no trespassing” signs posted. Several cemeteries in the Uplands are
plantation or crossroad cemeteries. In the Wetlands, river course changes, levees and flood control features, fishing and recreational boating activities, and petrochemical industries are the most common cemetery encroachments. Most cemeteries in the Wetlands are church associated.

A majority of plantations along the Mississippi River corridor south of Baton Rouge have been replaced by corporate agriculture and petrochemical industries. Thus, communities, churches and cemeteries have been displaced, first by flooding and second by industry. To the north of Interstate 10 in the Wetlands, large community cemeteries and small churchyards are common.

Efforts to avoid burial inundation in the Wetlands are apparent with cemeteries situated on elevated ground (such as levees) wherever land mass permits. Cemetery inundation is commonplace. One cemetery has a sign prohibiting water recreation activities — "No Fishing in Cemetery" (site no. 1186). Numerous accounts, from past to present, of coffins popping up, floating downstream, and retrieved by boat are cautious tales of the precariousness of burials in the Wetlands (Morning Advocate 1/4/51; State Times 5/6/49, 6/19/87).

2. Encroachment

Cemetery encroachment is difficult to discern. However, several mapping contradictions indicate changes in cemetery dimensions. For instance, Nickwax (site no. 400) in East Baton Rouge is situated on an irregularly-shaped parcel abutting easements of utilities and transportation corridors. Nickwax has relinquished parcel area and interments to new facilities. Map interpretation reveals that roads have cut
through or were widened into cemeteries. For instance, historic Magnolia Cemetery in Baton Rouge has in-ground burials beneath the asphalt of North Street which was widened to accommodate modern downtown traffic (Heather McKillop personal communication, 1999). Several cemeteries that have experienced encroachment, and thus reduced parcel dimensions, have stacked crypts up to a new boundary fence. In-ground burials, on the other hand, were often left in place underneath new landscape features. The scale of cemetery encroachment is beyond the scope of this study, but nevertheless implied in many instances.

Most large cemeteries, in spite of their high-profile status, are likely to have experienced some reduction in their dimensions due to land use needs of new facilities, utilities and transportation development. Surface evidence of encroachment is effectively erased by decades of cumulative landscape modifications. Many urban cemeteries are now surrounded by land use activities that are anachronistic to the serenity of their original historic settings. For instance, cemeteries share parcels with drug store parking lots and commonly abut warehouses, athletic fields, trailer parks and sewage ponds. Unfortunately, dimensions of cemeteries were rarely surveyed and recorded, such that accurate assessment of cemetery encroachment is difficult without excavation. Most often, evidence of reduced cemetery dimensions is uncovered during construction.

D. Case Studies of Sensitive Areas

Surveyed cemeteries that were ordinarily ranked 2, 3 or 4 were used to select areas of aggregated cemetery landscape dereliction. Clusters of derelict cemeteries are
designated as Subareas A to F in Figure 7-1. These six subareas are case examples that illustrate, at a scale of greater detail than the parish or regional level, contributing factors to the demise of specific cemetery landscapes. Cemeteries within the subareas were researched for land transaction at each parish assessor’s office. Specific cemetery research is illustrative of cultural differences between parishes in cemetery preservation and varying landscape impacts as a result of regionally-distinct physiography and development. For instance, flooding, logging, corporate agriculture, petrochemical industries and exurbanization have impacted cemeteries within specific subareas. Subareas A to F are discussed in the following chapters as specific examples of factors that contribute to cemetery abandonment.

Several cemeteries were selected for parish records research. Because each parish assessor’s office maintains records differently, the results of cemetery specific research varied. Although all parish offices have Tobin maps, most often they are thirty to fifty years old. A few offices (such as Pointe Coupee parish) rely on Tobins predating U.S. Army Corps of Engineers levee system completion, circa 1940. West Baton Rouge parish was the only assessor’s office that had updated land transaction records that were geographically linked to recent aerial photographs (1992). At the other extreme, East Baton Rouge, the parish with highest urban population growth and greatest frequency in land transference, lacked map locations linked to parcel records. Several parishes are in the process of integrating land transaction records with Geographic Information Systems.
Since this study focuses on location, property transactions that are recorded solely by current ownership are useless for researching abandoned cemeteries. Furthermore, most cemeteries are tax exempt and thus not recorded with parish assessors. Due to intermarriages and land leases, such as timber leases in the Uplands and oil leases in the Wetlands, tracing land transactions by family names in areas of industrial development was complicated. The following discussions are from parish assessor records, cemetery assessment during field survey and regional field observations.

1. Uplands

In the Uplands, the placement of cemeteries in the landscape is not restricted to elevated land mass. Therefore, cemeteries are widely scattered and often set back a distance from public roads. Cemeteries bearing family names are frequently located on private property, behind locked gates. Churchyards at crossroads and highway confluences are as common as family cemeteries set back a distance from main thoroughfares. Due to the topography, many cemeteries are surrounded by pasture and woodlands. Although elevated knolls are preferred locations for cemeteries, cemeteries situated near waterways have suffered flood damage in the Uplands (Morning Advocate 1/4/51; State Times 5/6/49).

As a result of settlement density, the Uplands had more extensive map coverage. The land transactions of local family holdings, especially during times of economic hardship, resulted in separation of several cemeteries from families with a long settlement history in the area. Numerous historic cemeteries were map documented in
the Upland parishes, long after living association had abandoned them. Thus, plantation, family and Civil War graveyards that were first map documented in the 1950s bear the names of families long gone.

Nesom Cemetery (site no. 163) in East Feliciana is typical of a family (or plantation) cemetery that was abandoned and mapped much later. This cemetery was not map documented on a 1942 map edition, but was recorded on a 1958 map edition long after the cemetery had fallen into disuse. The cemetery displays surface remains of eroded graves and broken markers dated circa 1900. The cemetery was probably mapped when a road was paved around the cemetery and a utility swath cut through it. The Nesom family name was common on numerous land transactions in the parish records. However, due to a lack of map reference in the parish lessor/lessee records, specific land transfer of the cemetery parcel was not possible. In this region, lumber leases were common. In the immediate vicinity of Nesom Cemetery are several other cemeteries that are “not visible” on the surface. At a nearby crossroad is a corner store and gas station that fell into ruins over the past 40 years.

Nearby, the family cemetery of Lipscomb in East Feliciana parish (site no. 156) was repurchased by a Baton Rouge fireman when he retired (John Kelly personal communication, 1997). Mr. Kelly is a descendant from the Kelleys and Dreirs, surnames that are prevalent in East Feliciana Grantor and Grantee land transaction records early this century. Many persons tell the story of family farms sold during the first half of this century (along with the family cemetery) and desires to repurchase the cemetery for family interment and preservation. Those that have maintained or
reclaimed their family cemeteries attest to how difficult and costly it is to preserve family cemeteries (Stella Williamson personal communication, 1997).

Cartographic interpretation revealed clusters of cemeteries at crossroads which lack a township while other cemeteries appear remote and isolated. At the state level, a cemetery east of LA 19 (site no. 197), along the Illinois Central Gulf railroad track, is now cartographically stranded north of the Mississippi/Louisiana state line—probably as a result of resurvey and North American Datum upgrades from 1927 to 1983. The only access to this cemetery is an unpaved road south of the Mississippi border.

At the parish level, clusters of cemeteries are conspicuous along the northern border of East Baton Rouge Parish. Mount Zion church and cemetery (site no. 443) is accessed by a graded road originating in East Baton Rouge and terminating at the cemetery one hundred meters north of the East Feliciana/East Baton Rouge Indefinite Boundary. Beech Grove Church Cemetery “No. 1” (site no. 444) is divided by the Indefinite Boundary whereas nearby Beech Grove Church Cemetery “No. 2” is inside East Feliciana’s jurisdiction. Map interpretation of cemetery dereliction reveals that settlements (and associated cemeteries) have apparently adjusted with changes in jurisdictions, either at the state, parish or ward (policy jury) level.

Within East Baton Rouge parish, Subarea A contains several cemeteries that have become decontextualized by new land uses. Along the Mississippi River, petrochemical and other industries, and associated transportation facilities have impacted cemeteries. Inland from the river in the Uplands, new suburbs have subsumed family cemeteries. Subareas A and B illustrate transportation development and
population change within urban areas of the Uplands. These subareas demonstrate the impact of urban development upon rural cemeteries in subsequent chapters.

Along Louisiana State Highway 10 through the northern Florida parishes, there is an increased occurrence of cemeteries — an average of 20 per 100 square miles. For instance, East Feliciana’s parish seat (Clinton) has several surrounding cemeteries including a recently restored historic Civil War cemetery (site no. 252). Tangipahoa’s western parish boundary divides what was once St. Helena and Livingston parishes. The creation of Tangipahoa parish (1869) diminished the square mile area of Livingston and St. Helena. With the new parish border new jurisdictions (police juries or wards) were created. As a result, several communities and their associated cemeteries were separated from earlier jurisdictions. For instance, Hammond State School for the Mentally Retarded straddles the Livingston/Tangipahoa border (152D) while the associated cemetery is located inside Livingston parish a distance from the school.

Subarea B is centered on the intersection of Interstates 55 and 12, US Routes 51 and 190, and several transcontinental railroad lines.

Livingston parish is similar to Tangipahoa parish in that it has a high percentage of cemeteries that are still "in use." Livingston parish has numerous cemeteries that are well-maintained and associated with families that have a long history in the area. There is a demonstrated pride in heritage evident in the number of cemeteries that post cemetery names on roadside signs. Relatively few cemeteries in Livingston parish are in need of maintenance. However, apparent in land ownership records is the
transference of cemetery parcels back and forth through intermarriage and inheritance between family members, such as Efferson Cemetery (site no. 736).

One cemetery in particular was transferred during a land sale to “Gaylord Container Corporation” at a time when the company bought large tracts of forest (1937 to 1955). In 1972, Smiley Davidson Cemetery Corporation legally requested and received via donation from Crown Zellerbach (Gaylord Container Corporation merger) the parcel containing Smiley Cemetery (site no. 733). The present status of the cemetery is unknown as it is located on an ungraded road behind locked gates posted “private property.”

2. Wetlands

As shown in Figure 7-1, cemeteries south of the cultural blur designated as Nance 1998 are situated along waterways of the Amite River’s southern tributaries, primary highways, old railroad tracks and the Mississippi River corridor. Recreational activities change from hunting to fishing, as forest gives way to swamp. The impact of the rising water table, and recurrent episodes of inundation in the Wetlands is apparent in the distribution of cultural features associated with settlements. To the south and west of the cultural blur designated as Nance 1998 cemeteries are most often situated along waterways.

In the Wetlands away from the Mississippi River corridor there are fewer family or plantation cemeteries. Cemeteries are situated along elevated land masses, restricted to roadway, levee and waterway corridors, and appear better preserved when located inside urban limits at nodal intersections. Cemeteries commonly appear associated with
churches. However, cemeteries may be in close proximity to a church but not affiliated. In general, cemeteries become disassociated from churches when religious affiliations change and congregations disband. Sometimes churches are reappropriated by other congregations or for public purposes, such as a meeting hall or discotheque. Today, in the Atchafalaya Basin there is an increased occurrence of churches without an associated cemetery.

Several cemeteries in the Wetlands are located at “Dead Ends,” where a local road terminates at a railroad crossing. Dead End cemeteries appear disconnected from former association and are often isolated on the “wrong side of the tracks.” These cemeteries are anachronistic amidst newer landscape surroundings of residential trailer parks, corporate agriculture, and petrochemical industries. Residential unpaved roads that perpendicularly link local inhabitants to levee highways and railroads (parallel to waterways) are common locations for low-profile cemeteries of questionable association – community, church or family. In contrast, high-profile cemeteries are commonly associated with a church on levee highways, near a river port or railroad depot, and often within a township.

Except for marginal prairie areas, settlements and their associated cemeteries are linear in contrast to the scattered clusters of cemeteries in the Uplands. The prairie area north and west of Lafayette is unusual in that parcels are laid out in accordance with a grid land survey system. Although the prairies are less likely to suffer flood damage cemeteries in these areas are in peril as a consequence of conditions similar to both Uplands and Wetlands. An example of a decontextualized cemetery (site no. 2053) in
Prairieville is exemplary of cemeteries throughout the study area that are on the outskirts of town, near a church (Truelight Church) encroached upon by highway associated activities, trailer parks and sewage ponds.

South of Baton Rouge along the Mississippi River corridor are several cemeteries that were associated with earlier land holdings, most notably plantations. Parish seats and old townships that once served as commercial terminals (river ports and railroad depots) are strategically and regularly distributed along bends of the Mississippi River. Although infrastructural changes during the past sixty years have altered the landscape, the older settlement pattern is still apparent in the regular distribution of cemeteries on either side of the Mississippi River. From Brusly to Hahnville, the locations of several decontextualized cemeteries are landscape remnants of an agricultural era – river plantations, racial segregation, and tenant farming. Along the Mississippi River, plantations and their associated river ports were reappropriated for industrial land uses.

A cemetery in Brusly (site no. 818) south of the Mississippi River bridge, was historically map documented and later deleted. Today the location of this cemetery is a small parcel of private property encroached by a dilapidated residential trailer park, automobile wrecking yard and new middle-class residential development. Several church associated high-profile cemeteries in the immediate area are still "in use." To the south, Subarea C consists of Donaldsonville (Ascension parish seat), the Sunshine Bridge, and several cemeteries that were once associated with river plantations but are
now located inside industrial complexes. The cemeteries in Subarea C represent landscape impacts of petrochemical industries upon an agricultural river economy.

Southward along the Mississippi River and West of Hahnville (St. Charles parish seat) is Holy Rosary Cemetery (site no. 1050). Holy Rosary Cemetery is exemplary of industrial landscape concession. This high-profile church cemetery is bounded by the Mississippi River and enveloped by a petrochemical plant. In the 1960s, Union Carbide purchased the surrounding acreage and relocated the church five kilometers east to Hahnville. The hub of community activities shifted circa 1960, when the last of the plantations were sold for other activities (parish assessor’s office personal communication, 1997). However, Holy Rosary Cemetery remains in situ and is still “in use” amidst a backdrop of abutting industrial smoke stacks and petrochemical transshipping activities.

In contrast to the concessions made for Holy Rosary, within the industrial complex of Union Carbide is a low-profile black cemetery (site no. 1049) – Green Hill Cemetery. Green Hill Cemetery is “in peril.” Public access and photographs are restricted by a guarded gate. Low-profile black cemeteries were commonly engulfed by petrochemical industries along the Mississippi River plantation corridor. In nearby St. John the Baptist parish, Bishop Cemetery was also engulfed by a petroleum refinery. Relatives to this former slave plantation cemetery were still visiting the cemetery in 1984 (Times Picayune 11/2/84).

Within the Atchafalaya Basin, there are several small private cemeteries. However, the cemeteries were covered with river sediments deposited during series of
floods. Very little remains of these cemeteries today. Local oral histories recount the successive relocation of churches beyond levee walls, farther and farther away from river and bayou banks. However, during successive church relocations, associated cemeteries remain in situ and prone to series of inundations.

Along the recently-upgraded rural route LA 20, St. Luke’s Church and Cemetery (site no. 1076) is illustrative of a high-profile church that was located at the confluence of a bayou bridge and highway. The French-Catholic church is in ruins. Eroding white-washed crosses adorn the tops of the few crypts still visible in the subsiding and overgrown landscape. This cemetery appears to have been abandoned to the elements for several decades, as it sits below the water table and is inaccessible. South and west of the Atchafalaya Basin, along LA 317, a cluster of abandoned cemeteries is located within one USGS quadrangle in Subarea D. Subarea D is illustrative of transportation changes from waterway dependence to the development of primary highways that bypass historically important intersections and economic enterprises.

Northward along US 90 and beyond Lafayette (Interstate 49), cemeteries are more widely dispersed at intervals that approximate railroad stops. Clusters of cemeteries are most often located in townships, parish seats, and within city limits. South of the city of Lafayette, the small town of Broussard lacks map documented cemeteries, but the surrounding landscape has several cemeteries bearing this popular French family name. Broussard cemeteries (site nos. 925, 926 and 1161) are in various stages of preservation, from “in use” and well-protected to “closed” and engulfed by modern suburbs.
The metropolitan area of Lafayette is situated at the crossroads of recently completed primary highways: Interstates 90 and 49, and US 90. In spite of development, cemeteries within the city limits of Lafayette are remarkably well-preserved. Lafayette’s historic cemeteries are encroached by new land use activities, and likely partially constructed over, yet have maintained their ground. Although Lafayette’s historic cemeteries are situated in stark contrast to new land use activities of major highway intersections and discount stores, Lafayette has managed to preserve the cultural heritage of its cemeteries. However, in the area surrounding Lafayette, several cemeteries were disassociated when churches were abandoned.

In the northwest portion of the study area, many churches have been razed and several low-profile churches with their associated cemeteries have become inaccessible by vehicle. Similar to cemeteries within the corporate limits of Baton Rouge, the widening of highways into easements has consumed driveways and parking areas. Likewise, drainage ditches and utility lines have impaired the quality of church associated activities and cemetery visitations in this subregion. Cartographically, St. Luke’s Church and Cemetery (site no. 365) was located northwest of Lebeau but is “not visible” on the surface. In this subregion, communities declined when the population shifted away from rural areas toward new commercial activities.

At the northernmost extent of the study area, south of Simmesport in Subarea E, there are more than a dozen cemeteries on either side of the Atchafalaya River in various stages of abandonment. Map interpretation reveals changes to the courses of bayous and rivers as a result of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Flood controls. In the
Wetlands, the abandonment of former ways of life is most noticeable in the rows of
derelict tenant farm houses. The prevalence of cemeteries associated with waterways is
most apparent between the Atchafalaya and Mississippi Rivers, from Simmesport to
Port Allen. In Subarea F, north of two Mississippi River bridges, several cemeteries
were impacted by cultural landscape modifications. In West Baton Rouge, Subarea F
represents changes in agricultural communities of familial descent, the attraction of new
economies associated with primary highways to the south, and Mississippi River course
changes as a result of new levee construction.

E. **Summary**

In general, Wetlands cemeteries that are associated with churches (rather than
family) have a longer continuous history. These cemeteries survive, at least until
congregations disband, the church is razed or the structure adapted for other functions.
Without the continuity of successive generations within a congregation, the roads to
cemeteries have fallen into ruins and are barely recognizable today. In contrast to the
Wetlands, most cemeteries in the Uplands predate the construction of churches (Jeane
1969:39). Approximately half of the cemeteries in the Uplands are family associated.
Many cemeteries in the Uplands are still in use as a result of maintained family
associations.

There are many socio-economic factors that have contributed to the demise of
cemeteries. Town names on maps (such as Alford) are cartographic artifacts. These
cultural landscape artifacts are reminders of places that were once thriving communities.
Similar to grave markers, dilapidated mail boxes, abandoned stores and towns post the
family names of once-prominent landholders of the plantation era. During the
Depression Era, as typical everywhere in the country, liquidation and sheriffs’ sales
were abundant. Stranded, eroding or no longer visible in the landscape, cemeteries
represent the forlorn conditions of communities under economic stress. In southeastern
Louisiana, changing economies, industrialization, agricultural mechanization, and
natural disasters compounded the troubles of communities already experiencing
economic hardships. As opportunities were sought elsewhere, in urban areas or
northward, an exodus from traditional landscapes contributed to cemetery abandonment.

In both the Uplands and Wetlands, property transferred outside family
ownership is the demise of family cemeteries as they fall into disrepair over the
generations. The results of the field survey strongly suggest cemeteries that were not
family owned were predominantly located at confluences and intersections of public
transportation routes. Cemetery conditions of community and church cemeteries at
historic confluences and intersections are significant when abandonment is related to
population and transportation changes. In general, field survey assessment indicates
cemeteries in urban areas or at high profile intersections have maintained their status.
On the other hand, rural cemeteries tend to lose their context as primary modes of
transportation and population change.
CHAPTER 8. EVOLVING POPULATION

Factor III: Demographic Shifts. An examination of changes in the United States decennial census statistics for southeastern Louisiana from 1930 to 1990 reveals, at the parish level, temporal demographic increases in total population, percent living in poverty, ratio of nonwhite to white, rural settlement patterns, and increasing urbanization. What are the demographic transitions within parishes that are related to cemetery abandonment? If predominantly rural and agriculturally-dependent earlier settlement patterns are abandoned, then the occurrence of cemetery abandonment is greatest in parishes of substantial demographic shifts.

Historic cemeteries scattered across the rural landscape of southeastern Louisiana are illustrative of diverse settlement patterns and ethnic history. Since 1865, socioeconomic changes in the South, such as emancipation, the Depression and World Wars I and II, resulted in migration to northern cities to improve livelihoods. Demographic shifts, such as rural population depletion, resulted in an abandonment of traditional life ways that maintained cemeteries as an integral part of communities. Formerly 75 percent rural and predominantly farming communities, by mid-1900s the South was more than 50 percent urban with few privately-owned farms.

A. Population Census Statistics

Since 1810, the population census mandated by the United States Constitution has been conducted every ten years in Louisiana. The United States decennial census from 1930 to 1990 for Louisiana was used to extract population characteristics for the twenty-four parishes of the study area. Figure 8-1 illustrates the 1990 U.S. census.
Figure 8-1. 1990 Population Distribution and Cemetery Conditions.
enumeration for parishes within the study area. East Baton Rouge and Lafayette had population figures in excess of 150,000 persons while West Baton Rouge, the Felicianas and St. Helena had less than 20,000 persons in 1990. The parish subareas of St. Martin and West Feliciana (SM II and WF II, respectively) are not included in the spatial display of population distribution. These parish subareas are relatively uninhabited, lack cemeteries and thus misrepresent population distribution by smoothing while distorting the data.

Because of the numerous criteria for census enumeration over the years, population characteristics that conformed to the 1990 census were the basis for extraction of historic data with similar criteria. Population statistics for 1930 are used as a baseline for calculating increases and decreases from one decade to the next. For instance, the 1930 baseline population permits calculation of demographic changes present in 1940 census statistics. Analysis of population statistics sets the human stage while revealing changes to an evolving population.

Generally, in the United States a "healthy" rate of natural increase is 10 persons per thousand (1 percent) per annum (deSouza and Stutz 1994:65-71). Many countries have a per annum population growth rate greater than 2 percent (deSouza and Stutz 1994:71). For the purposes of this study, a decennial population increase of 10 percent (1 percent per annum) is used to distinguish healthy population growth from population decline. A negative population increase is indicative of population stress. Population decline is often attributed to out-migration, wide-spread disease (such as plague) or an elderly population death rate which is not replenished by the birth rate. The population
of Louisiana was substantially impacted by the Civil War, World War I and II, floods, hurricanes, and epidemics such as cholera, yellow-fever and influenza. In 1880, the death rate of New Orleans was highest in the country – 29.11 per thousand (Cable 1980:125).

When considering infant mortality, war, natural disasters and epidemics during different time periods, a 10 percent decennial increase may be too modest an estimate for a healthy rate of growth versus population decline. However, most human populations replenish themselves, beyond mortality rates, growing decennially as much as 2.5 percent. Distinguishing decennial population increases from decreases is useful for distinguishing demographic changes within and between parishes of southeastern Louisiana.

B. Rate of Population Growth 1930-1990

As shown in Figure 8-2, a population increase in twenty-four parishes varies radically over a sixty-year period, from as little as 7 percent in Pointe Coupee parish to 457 percent in East Baton Rouge. Given a healthy rate of growth as 60 percent over sixty years, ten of the twenty-four parishes fall below this criterion (Table 8-1). In Table 8-1, negative cell values for population growth are shaded. Also, cell values for “Percent Derelict” that are equal to and greater than 33 percent are shaded. Figure 8-2 shows that in the Wetlands, parishes beyond the Atchafalaya Basin and south of Upland parishes experienced healthy population growth. Except for St. James and Iberville, parishes with healthy growth rates are situated along transportation corridors of US 90 and Interstates 10, 12 and 55.
Figure 8-2. Population Increase 1930 to 1990 and Cemetery Conditions.
Table 8-1. Percent Decennial Population Increase.

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<td>7</td>
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* = partial parish sampled  
shaded = Upland parish

Table 8-1 identifies several parishes that did not experience a decennial population loss from 1930 to 1990. These parishes are located on primary highway and railroad.
corridors: Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberia, Lafayette, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. Martin, Terrebonne and West Baton Rouge. Raw population figures from 1930 to 1990 (Appendix A, Table A-1) indicate population doubling occurred in parishes of minimal population in 1930, such as St. Charles.

Between 1950 and 1980 parishes south of Baton Rouge (Ascension, St. Charles and St. John the Baptist along Interstate 10 and the older US Route 61) experienced radical population increases that leveled off between 1980 and 1990. Although a portion of Interstate 10 traverses St. James, the parish lacks any urban place. St. James remains predominantly rural, such that the parish seat of Covenant was not enumerated in censuses prior to 1990. The recent completion of a new bridge across the Mississippi River increases the likelihood of development in St. James. Although Ascension, St. Charles and St. John the Baptist lack an urban core, new highways have promoted commerce and suburbs that serve and house commuters traveling north and south between Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

Prior to 1940, only Tangipahoa and Livingston have negative population growth (shaded in Table 8-1). From 1940 to 1950, few parishes have a healthy rate of increase while several parishes lost a substantial portion of the population: Assumption, Avoyelles, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, St. James, Vermilion and West Feliciana. During the same time period, parishes with urban centers (Lafayette in Lafayette parish and Baton Rouge in East Baton Rouge parish) show substantial population growth. The 1940 to 1950 population statistics indicate a population shift occurred as people relocated from rural parishes to parishes with urban centers, while at
the same time it is probable that many persons left the state. North of New Orleans and east of Baton Rouge, US Route 190 was supplanted in popularity by Interstate 12 which apparently promoted unprecedented population growth in Livingston parish from 1970 to 1980 (59 percent).

Over a period of sixty years, the parishes of Pointe Coupee and neighboring Avoyelles show consistent population declines. Both of these parishes rely on rural state routes for commerce. St. Helena parish also relies on a rural state route and has a marginal rate of growth. Except for a 5 percent population loss from 1940 to 1950, St. Helena’s population increased decennially 1 percent since 1970. Between 1930 and 1940 both Livingston and Tangipahoa parishes lost 2 percent of the population while St. Helena’s population increased 12 percent. Thus, an internal shift between parishes is apparent between 1930 and 1940, probably as a result of new jurisdictions. In support of a demographic shift between these three parishes, 31 percent of cemeteries in Livingston and Tangipahoa are derelict, whereas St. Helena has maintained cemetery association with only 20 percent derelict.

As shown in Table 8-1 both Livingston and Tangipahoa are parishes with high cemetery densities. These two parishes experienced increasing influxes of population, yet maintained cultural continuity with the past. St. Helena (Uplands) and Assumption (Wetlands) are relatively isolated from major transportation routes. As a result, these parishes experienced minor population fluctuations and minimal impact to cemeteries (20 and 6 percent derelict cemeteries, respectively). To the other extreme, Pointe Coupee has more than 50 percent of cemeteries derelict which may be directly related to
population decline. As expected, the increases in East Baton Rouge’s population resulted in more than half of the surveyed cemeteries in stages of abandonment.

From 1970 to 1990, persons per square mile increased noticeably in the urban parishes of East Baton Rouge and Lafayette. While 56 percent of cemeteries were impacted as a result of East Baton Rouge’s increased population density, Lafayette’s cemeteries were relatively well-preserved – only 13 percent derelict. Other parishes along primary highway corridors also had population increases. Parishes with population density in excess of 100 persons per square mile between 1970 and 1990 are: Ascension, Iberia, Livingston, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, Tangipahoa and West Baton Rouge. Again, these parishes are along newly constructed highways. By 1990, fourteen of the twenty-four parishes exceeded 60 persons per square mile. Parishes that are not traversed by primary highways (including St. Martin which is predominantly Wetlands) maintain a sparsely distributed population, from 20 to 59 persons per square mile.

Parishes with relatively stable populations (such as East Feliciana and Pointe Coupe) have fewer derelict cemeteries whereas populations with substantial increases in population density (such as East Baton Rouge) have a higher percentage of derelict cemeteries. Both St. Charles and St. John the Baptist experienced substantial population increases to a predominantly rural population. To the other extreme, Livingston’s substantial population increase has minimally impacted the numerous small family cemeteries that are illustrative of family ties to traditional cemeteries.
Adverse economics from 1980 to 1990 took their toll on the population of several parishes. The substantial increases in East Baton Rouge’s population from 1930 to 1960 leveled off between 1960 and 1980, and dropped below a healthy rate of growth between 1980 and 1990 (Table 8-1). From 1980 to 1990, several parishes (Avoyelles, Concordia, Pointe Coupee, St. James, St. Landry and St. Mary) have negative rates of growth that are similar to population losses during the 1940s (World War II era).

Population statistics indicate that the 1980s economic crisis had greater impact on the state of Louisiana’s population than either World War II or the Great Depression.

The Great Depression did not encourage the kind of exodus apparent during the 1980s Oil Bust. The impact of the 1980s Oil Bust on local economies is most apparent in the 10 percent population loss in St. Mary parish (Table 8-1). Prior to World War II, people were less likely to relocate; the population was relatively stable in spite of hardships. During the Great Depression, a population shift occurred within parishes as people were attracted to nearby urban places for government assistance and access to modern amenities. Later, the 1960s to 1980s census statistics reveal the facilitating effect of infrastructure improvements upon population mobility.

As shown in Table 8-1, twelve parishes have less than 33 percent derelict cemeteries. However, twelve parishes have between 33 and 56 percent of cemeteries derelict. The percentage of derelict cemeteries and population characteristic similarities between neighboring parishes and geographically-distinct parishes (Uplands and Wetlands) support several scenarios of demographic change. In general, less than 33 percent derelict cemeteries is indicative of cemetery preservation (when the sample size...
is adequate). Parishes with 33 percent and more cemeteries derelict have experienced substantial demographic changes.

C. Socio-Economic Demographic Shifts

1. Rural to Urban Shift

The urban to rural ratio for the state reveals a demographic turnaround - from 60 percent rural in 1930 to 68 percent urban in 1990. Consequently, the number of urban places more than tripled since 1930. Figure 8-3 graphically displays decreases in rural population from 1930 to 1990 with changes in population characteristics. Displayed by parish are histograms that illustrate demographic fluctuation from 1930 to 1990: percentage of population increase, percentage rural decrease and ratio of nonwhite decrease. The extreme cases of four parishes that have a population increase greater than 240 percent (four times a healthy rate of growth over sixty years) also experienced substantial increases in urban growth: East Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Livingston and St. Charles. Apparent in these parish histograms is the substantial rural loss in St. Charles and St. John the Baptist parishes – a rural population loss that is directly related to a noticeable population influx into these parishes.

Shown in Table 8-2 are population density per square mile, population increase, rural population loss, cemetery status and the nonwhite to white race ratio from 1930 to 1990. Both Livingston and Pointe Coupee have the greatest decrease in the nonwhite population over sixty years. Parishes with population increases below 60 percent over a period of sixty years (such as Pointe Coupee) also have a substantial rural population decrease and thus have experienced population loss.
Figure 8-3. Population Increase, Rural Population Loss and Nonwhite Population Decrease from 1930 to 1990.

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* = partial parish sampled
shaded = Upland parish

Both Assumption and St. Landry experienced moderate population increases, yet a shift from rural to urban is evident. Except for Avoyelles and St. James, other
parishes that experienced a 26 to 50 percent rural population loss also show a 100 percent population increase. Thus, an urban population increase may distort relatively stable rural population statistics. As population increases in urban places, the urban to rural ratio may create a false impression of rural population loss when in fact the rural population is stable.

The 100 percent rural population of West Feliciana and St. Helena has remained stable over sixty years. Assumption, Avoyelles, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. James, St. Martin and West Baton Rouge (seven of the twenty-four parishes) changed from 100 percent rural to between 60 and 90 percent rural. Most parishes lost about 30 percent of the rural population to urbanization from 1930 to 1990. From 1930 to 1990, the mean rural population loss for all parishes was 28 percent. Over sixty years most parishes display a slow transition toward urbanization, except for East Baton Rouge which declined from 55 percent to 9 percent rural.

As a result of East Baton Rouge's 457 percent population increase, there was a 46 percent rural population loss. This can be explained by early settlement of Baton Rouge as an urban center and the slow growth of the city's corporate limits as boundaries were extended in successive years. Since the turn of this century, corporate limits, city limits and Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) were enlarged to encompass urban and economic growth areas (refer to Figure 1-2 delineation of MSA 1900, 1950, 1980). Thus, many parts of Baton Rouge that are metropolitan or urban today were rural only a few decades ago and would have been enumerated as such.
East Baton Rouge's population changed from 61 percent rural in 1940 to 14 percent in 1950 (Appendix A, Table A-2). With a 1950 population density of 343 persons per square mile which increased to 834 persons per square mile in 1990, the population of East Baton Rouge parish has become increasingly dense while more widely disbursed throughout the parish. Thus, rural areas in East Baton Rouge have been impacted by substantial population growth within the parish. New suburbs and industries have extended the corporate limits of East Baton Rouge and account for the majority (56 percent) of derelict cemeteries in this parish. By way of contrast, it is likely that a lack of incorporation in increasingly developed Ascension parish explains the predominantly rural population enumerated in the census statistics.

In recent decades, both St. John the Baptist and St. Charles had the greatest increase in urban population. Population in these parishes is concentrated along corridors of new development. The substantial rural population losses in St. John the Baptist and St. Charles are directly related to population increase and urbanization in what is now called “Greater New Orleans.” Both parishes have a minimum number of cemeteries and therefore percentages of cemetery conditions of abandonment are not well-represented. The few historic cemeteries in these parishes present a false impression of cemetery preservation when in fact the lack of cemeteries to represent these burgeoning bedroom communities is conspicuous. The current population is not adequately represented by cemeteries “in use.”

The mean differences in rural population from 1930 to 1990 indicate parishes of relative rural population stability while emphasizing other parishes that were noticeably
impacted by urbanization (Appendix A, Table A-2). On the average from 1930 to 1990, rural population growth was less than a healthy rate of growth, 8 percent. There was a peak in rural population growth of 10 percent from 1940 to 1960 which declined to a zero rate of rural population growth from 1980 to 1990. From 1980 to 1990, the low rate of growth for the state of Louisiana (3 percent) is apparent in the zero average of rural population growth within the study area. East Feliciana is the only parish within the study area that has an increase in the rural population (3 percent) and this is a result of a 77 percent rural population in 1930 that was 60 percent rural in 1960 and 80 percent rural in 1990. The Upland parishes of East Feliciana, West Feliciana, St. Helena, and Tangipahoa have maintained a predominantly rural population over a sixty-year period. As a result of rural population stability, rural Upland parishes have relatively fewer cemeteries in stages of abandonment.

Although Louisiana followed the path of urbanization much later than other states, rural statistics reveal that by 1990 one-third of the parishes within the study area were more than 50 percent urban: East Baton Rouge, Iberia, Lafayette, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. Mary and Terrebonne. Rural parishes surrounding increasingly urban parishes, such as East Baton Rouge, experienced substantial rural population declines, 28 to 97 percent. After 1960, calculation of an urban increase indicates urbanization was impacting all parishes except Assumption, St. Helena, East Feliciana and West Feliciana.

The extreme examples of cemetery dereliction as a result of rural population loss are Pointe Coupee parish (52 percent) in the Wetlands and East Baton Rouge parish (56
percent) in the Uplands. In the neighboring parish of West Baton Rouge, 45 percent of cemeteries were derelict. Both Pointe Coupee and St. James experienced substantial population losses between 1940 and 1950. As shown in Figures 8-2 and 8-3, Pointe Coupee’s cemetery dereliction is likely due to population decline while East Baton Rouge’s cemetery dereliction is due to population agglomeration. On the other hand, St. Helena’s relatively stable rural population has managed to preserve 80 percent of cemeteries through continued use. In the Wetlands, Assumption parish’s minimal 13 percent rural population decline over sixty years resulted in only 11 percent derelict cemeteries. Cemetery preservation in Assumption is apparent in spite of a 42 percent population increase and probably due to the lack of concentrated urbanization along linear settlements.

Parishes with greater than one-third of derelict cemeteries were impacted by population fluctuation over sixty years. As with population increases, greater than or less than 33 percent of cemeteries derelict is indication for parish-by-parish cemetery preservation or abandonment in relation to rural population changes. By excluding parishes of too few cemeteries (Concordia, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, Vermilion and Terrebonne) a general statement about both population increase and rural population loss in relation to cemetery dereliction can be made. Over a sixty-year period, parishes that experienced population decline (less than 60 percent population increase) or substantial rural population loss (greater than 30 percent) have more than one-third of cemeteries in stages of abandonment: Avoyelles, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Lafourche, Pointe Coupee, St. James, St. Martin, St. Mary, West Baton
Rouge and West Feliciana. Parishes with relative rural population stability (less than 30 percent rural population loss), in spite of substantial population increases have one-third or fewer cemeteries derelict: Ascension, Assumption, Iberia, Iberville, Livingston, St. Helena, St. Landry and Tangipahoa.

Lafayette parish is anomalous in its apparent preservation of historic cemeteries. According to population statistics, neither rural loss nor population increase impacted cemeteries in Lafayette parish. As evident by parishes with more than 33 percent derelict cemeteries, population increase and rural population loss are contributing factors to cemetery abandonment.

2. Nonwhite to White Ratio

The population statistics for race distinguish nonwhite from white for decennial years 1950, 1960 and 1970. In 1970, nonwhite was enumerated as “Negro and other races.” However, the 1980 to 1990 censuses distinguished “Black” from “White” as separate from “Other” races. In general, most parishes enumerated approximately 95 percent of the “nonwhite” population as black (or African-American). For instance, East Baton Rouge’s 1980 nonwhite population was 96 percent black. For purposes of comparison over decades, the 1980 statistics for the black population were calculated with “Other” races to conform to the earlier census categories of “White” as distinguished from “Nonwhite” (Appendix A, Table A-3).

Shown as differences in ratio of nonwhite to white in Table 8-2, there is a noticeable trend in nonwhite population decline from 1930 to 1990. The average nonwhite population within the study area declined from 45 percent in 1930 to 34
percent in 1990 (minimum ratio changes are shaded in Table 8-2). In consideration of a healthy rate of growth (10 percent decennially), the nonwhite population decline over a sixty-year period is substantial. Over a period of sixty years, several parishes enumerated a majority of the population as nonwhite during at least one decennial census: Concordia, East Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana. Except for minimal ratio increases in St. James (0.8) and Vermilion (2.5), there was a nonwhite population loss throughout the study area. Both Avoyelles and St. James have relatively stable nonwhite populations but high rural population losses, 35 percent.

From 1970 to 1980, East Baton Rouge parish had the highest nonwhite population increase within the study area but the nonwhite population increase is negated by earlier losses from 1930 to 1970 (Appendix A, Table A-3). From 1930 to 1980, the nonwhite population within the study area decreased decennially an average of 6 percent. However, in 1990 the nonwhite population increased 3 percent, which incidentally equals the decennial rate of growth for the state. When compared to previous decades of consistent population losses the recent nonwhite population growth is unprecedented.

Over a period of sixty years, few parishes maintained a 50 percent nonwhite population. Although West Feliciana lost 20 percent of its nonwhite population from 1930 to 1990, the parish maintained a nonwhite majority (56 percent in 1990). St. Helena also maintained a nonwhite majority (52 percent in 1990). From 1940 to 1980, nonwhite population losses for most parishes in the study area ranged from 5 to 25
percent with a few extreme cases. As shown in Figure 8-3, it is apparent that a nonwhite population has not contributed to parish population increases.

Population declines in the nonwhite population over sixty years are most remarkable in Livingston parish. From 1970 to 1980, Livingston’s urban population increased 131 percent. Because of the unnaturally high rate of increase, Livingston parish’s urban population influx is likely due to new populations migrating into the parish rather than a redistribution from rural areas within the parish. When compared to other parishes in 1930, Livingston parish did not have a large nonwhite population (23 percent). From 1930 to 1940, Livingston parish lost 35 percent of the nonwhite population and from 1960 to 1970, 25 percent. From 1970 to 1980, Livingston parish again lost 35 percent of the nonwhite population and from 1980 to 1990, 18 percent. In 1990, only 6 percent of Livingston’s population was nonwhite. Over a sixty-year period the nonwhite population in Livingston decreased 17 percent (from 23 to 6 percent), while the population increased 287 percent. Although a large influx to the white population could distort the statistics of a stable nonwhite population, it is more likely that decades of economic pressure and racial turmoil are apparent in the nonwhite to white population ratios.

Although Livingston parish shows a noticeable change in the ratio of nonwhite to white (-16.8), the percentage of cemeteries derelict does not reflect this population fluctuation. Parishes with similar losses to the nonwhite population are East Feliciana (-20.2), Pointe Coupee (-16.7), West Baton Rouge (-26.9) and West Feliciana (-20.3) for which these parishes have 38 to 52 percent of cemeteries in derelict conditions. In
spite of relative population stability over six decades, the ratio of nonwhite to white in East Feliciana and West Feliciana decreased (-20). Thus, the decline in a nonwhite majority is replaced by white population increase. Rural population stability indicates that both East Feliciana and West Feliciana have a large percentage of derelict cemeteries (45 and 38 percent, respectively) as a result of population replacement.

As shown in Figure 8-3, from 1930 to 1990 rural population fluctuations between the Uplands and Wetlands parishes of Livingston and Pointe Coupee appear similar. Although Pointe Coupee only had a 7 percent population increase and Livingston had a 287 percent population increase over a period of sixty years, both parishes were 100 percent rural in 1930 and in 1990 approximately 75 percent rural. Both of these parishes have a 17 percent loss in the ratio of nonwhite to white. However, the nonwhite population in Pointe Coupee represented 58 percent of the parish in 1930 whereas the nonwhite population in Livingston was only 23 percent (Appendix A, Table A-3). Livingston parish had a minority nonwhite population. A nonwhite exodus may have resulted in 31 percent cemetery dereliction in Livingston parish. Similar to Livingston parish, a substantial portion of the nonwhite population appears to have left Pointe Coupee parish but there is a greater percentage of derelict cemeteries (52 percent). Population decline and cemetery abandonment in Pointe Coupee can be attributed in part to substantial losses in the nonwhite population. The large percentage of derelict cemeteries is also a result of successive flood impact.

Over a period of sixty years, parishes with more than one-third of cemeteries in stages of abandonment have population characteristics that indicate population decline
(less than 60 percent growth), substantial rural population loss (greater than 30 percent) and a decrease in the nonwhite to white ratio (less than negative 6) (Table 8-2). In several parishes it appears that a change in the ratio of nonwhite to white may be the sole cause of cemetery abandonment: West Baton Rouge (-26.9), West Feliciana (-20.3), St. Mary (-13.9), Pointe Coupee (-16.7), Livingston (-16.8) and East Feliciana (-20.3). The distribution of derelict cemeteries in accordance with nonwhite to white ratios, reveals that St. Helena has relatively few cemeteries in stages of abandonment as a result of a stable nonwhite population (only negative 2.2 ratio change). In contrast, East Feliciana and West Feliciana have 46 and 38 percent cemeteries derelict which can be attributed, in part, to the negative 20 ratio of nonwhite to white population over sixty years. Because population increases in East Feliciana and West Feliciana are minor, it is apparent that there has been a nonwhite population decline that was superseded or replaced by a white population. As a result of these demographic changes, associations with cemeteries have changed. On the other hand, West Baton Rouge's 45 percent derelict cemeteries is related to the decrease in the ratio of nonwhite to white population (-27), population increase of 100 percent, and rural population loss (35 percent) over sixty years. Thus, in West Baton Rouge a nonwhite population that was formerly the majority was replaced.

The statistically enumerated nonwhite population of earlier decades in Ascension, St. Charles and St. John the Baptist appear to be outnumbered by white population influxes in most recent decades. The redistribution of white population from an urban core to outlying areas is commonly called “White Flight” (Aiken 1990). As a
result of a black exodus out-of-state and migration within the state toward urban cores (such as Baton Rouge and New Orleans), there has been a substantial demographic shift in the racial statistics of nonwhite and white within the study area. However, there is no way to directly correlate a nonwhite population loss to cemetery abandonment. Although several parishes experienced substantial changes to the nonwhite population, they do not show population decline, rural population loss, nonwhite population replacement, or one-third of cemeteries derelict. Thus, population characteristics of race are dependent upon population increase and rural loss when acting as a contributing factor to cemetery abandonment.

3. Poverty

Poverty encourages demographic shifts away from rural areas. The livelihood of a rural population can be illuminated through poverty (or income) statistics. Although it is not possible to derive a rate of out-migration from census statistics, income (and thus, poverty) can be used to infer stimulus for relocation. As a result of cost of living increases over sixty years, definitions of “poverty” have changed. For example, one 1990 criterion for poverty was an income of $12,674 for a family of four, whereas in 1970 a comparable criterion of poverty was a nonfarm family of four with an income less than $3,745. In the 1950s, earning less than $2,000 was considered below the poverty line. Income statistics are lacking for 1930 and 1940 decennial censuses.

In 1950, 64 percent of persons living in the twenty-four parishes fell within the criterion of poverty (Appendix A, Table A-4). The lowest percentage of persons living in poverty was in East Baton Rouge parish, 41 percent. In 1950, parishes with more
than 70 percent of the population living in poverty were: Assumption, Avoyelles, Concordia, East Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, St. James, Tangipahoa and West Feliciana. In 1960, a change in fortunes is evident with an average poverty rate of 18 percent. The parishes which were previously enumerated with more than 70 percent living in poverty decreased to between 20 and 25 percent. In 1970, there was a rise in the average percentage of persons living in poverty (28 percent) which decreased to 22 percent in 1990. In 1990, Livingston had the lowest rate of poverty, 12 percent.

Although the percentage of persons living in poverty decreased considerably since 1950, several rural parishes in the northern portion of the study area maintain relatively high poverty rates: East Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, Tangipahoa and West Feliciana. From 1950 to 1970, East Baton Rouge had the lowest rate of poverty with minimal increases in poverty shown for 1980 and 1990. The decrease in poverty in East Baton Rouge is a result of improved urban economies. The prospect of better livelihoods in urban areas has attracted rural populations to urban economic opportunities in other parishes and states. A decrease in poverty does not necessarily indicate prosperity, but rather may indicate impoverished families seeking economic opportunities elsewhere.

West Baton Rouge and East Feliciana are neighboring parishes to East Baton Rouge that had substantial losses to a nonwhite population and high percentages of cemeteries derelict (46 and 45 percent, respectively). East Feliciana has similar characteristics of cemetery dereliction to East Baton Rouge with 23 percent of surveyed cemeteries “not visible” on the surface. However, cemetery abandonment in East
Feliciana is a result of substantial changes to the nonwhite to white ratio (-20.2) with a rural increase of 3 percent. East Feliciana experienced a population decline over sixty years with only 10 percent population increase. This population decline is apparently related to a demographic shift of nonwhites leaving the parish. Although East Feliciana’s poverty rate is comparable with other parishes today, in 1950 the parish had the highest rate of poverty within the study area (76 percent). With the lowest poverty rate in neighboring East Baton Rouge it is likely that a nonwhite exodus from East Feliciana may have contributed to East Baton Rouge’s unprecedented 1940 to 1950 population increase (79 percent).

St. James parish has 47 percent of cemeteries surveyed as derelict, 27 percent “not visible” and 13 percent “closed.” The nonwhite to white ratio in St. James has been stable over sixty years but a minimum population increase (36 percent) and a rural loss that cannot be attributed to urban growth within the parish (35 percent) indicate a demographic shift has occurred within the parish. This demographic shift is likely due to the introduction of new industries and transportation corridors.

In 1990 several predominantly rural parishes with greater than 20 percent of persons living in poverty also show more than one-third of cemeteries derelict: Avoyelles, East Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, St. James, St. Martin, St. Mary, and West Feliciana. Thus, poverty is an impetus for demographic shifts which in turn results in cemetery abandonment. A high rate of poverty limits the routine and high cost of cemetery maintenance, especially for low-profile cemeteries.
D. Subareas A to F

Table 8-3 displays parish statistics that may have influenced cemetery
dereliction within Subareas A to F (Figure 7-1). The population statistics indicate that
cemetery

Table 8-3. Subareas of Cemetery Dereliction and Parish Demographic Fluctuation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subarea A</td>
<td>457%</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>-6.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subarea B</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-4.4</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subarea C</td>
<td>216%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-14.5</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subarea D</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>-13.9</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subarea E</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>-16.7</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subarea F</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>-26.9</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

dereliction within Subarea A is a result of population attraction to East Baton Rouge
parish for improved livelihoods (minimal poverty rate of 13.6%) and the resultant
population increase (457 percent). A rural decrease (46 percent) with high density of
persons per square mile (834) substantially impacted cemeteries in East Baton Rouge.

Of 91 cemeteries in the parish, 54 were surveyed, 24 were "in use," four "in peril," 12
"closed" and 14 "not visible." Of the total cemeteries in East Baton Rouge, few are
maintained and open to receive burials. East Baton Rouge has the highest percentage of
cemeteries "not visible" (26 percent) with an additional 22 percent that are "closed."

Although Subarea B contains an urban place and primary highway intersection,
it has fewer derelict cemeteries (less than one-third). The population in Tangipahoa is
relatively well dispersed (109 persons per square mile) and has a healthy rate of growth
(85 percent). Although Tangipahoa had a high rate of poverty in 1970 (33.5 percent),
the population is stable (rural decrease was only 5 percent). Thus, ties to traditional
cemeteries have been maintained.

Only 17 percent of cemeteries are derelict within Ascension parish, in spite of
the high population increase (216 percent) and dense population (200 persons per square
mile). A moderate poverty rate in 1970 and minimal rural decrease indicate population
stability. However, Subarea C contains several cemeteries in stages of abandonment.
The development of new industries displaced an earlier agricultural economy that was
based on plantations with associated cemeteries. The race ratio indicates a noticeable
loss to the nonwhite population which was replaced by a white population. Because
there are few urban places in Ascension parish, an incoming white population
maintained the rural population statistics. Upon closer examination of rural statistics for
Ascension parish (Appendix A, Table A-2), a rural to urban shift from 82 percent rural
in 1940 to 67 percent in 1960 was reversed in 1990 when the rural population increased
to 74 percent. In the meantime, a 38 percent nonwhite population in 1930 decreased to
23 percent in 1980 (Appendix A, Table A-3).

Subarea D is located in St. Mary parish which has a healthy rate of population
growth (98 percent) with a moderate population density of 95 persons per square mile.
However, a rural loss of 33 percent and decrease in the nonwhite population ratio (-14)
indicate a rural and racial population loss that may account for the 41 percent of
cemeteries derelict. In St. Mary parish, the industrial activity changed and persons
migrated to urban areas within and outside the parish.
In Pointe Coupee parish, 52 percent of cemeteries are derelict. A substantial population decline (7 percent population increase), rurally dispersed population (40 persons per square mile), rural population loss (24 percent), a nonwhite to white ratio decrease (-36), and a high poverty rate (36 percent) contribute to cemetery abandonment in Pointe Coupee. These demographic changes are contrary to East Baton Rouge statistics. However inverse the population extremes between East Baton Rouge and Pointe Coupee, it is apparent that the result of substantial demographic change is cemetery abandonment. In contrast to East Baton Rouge cemeteries that are encroached by urban expansion, Pointe Coupee parish cemeteries have been abandoned as a result of rural contraction. Subarea E exemplifies rural abandonment of small communities as families sought livelihoods outside the parish. Pointe Coupee has 16 percent of cemeteries “not visible” and 18 percent “closed” which can be attributed to substantial demographic losses.

Subarea F in West Baton Rouge experienced a rural loss (35 percent) similar to Pointe Coupee. However, population increase (100 percent) and population density (102 persons per square mile) indicate a healthy rate of population growth. This healthy growth rate is likely a result of new commerce associated with East Baton Rouge since 1970. However, substantial changes to the nonwhite to white ratio (-26.9) are in concurrence with a rural population decrease. Industrial changes have impacted communities and their associated cemeteries in West Baton Rouge. Thus, West Baton Rouge shares population characteristic changes with both neighboring parishes of
Pointe Coupee and East Baton Rouge and as a result 45 percent of cemeteries are derelict.

E. Summary

From 1970 to 1980, only parishes neighboring the urban centers of Baton Rouge and New Orleans continued to increase in population. The greatest demographic shift has occurred in parishes traversed by Interstate 12 from Baton Rouge to Hammond and Interstate 10 from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. The Wetland topography along Interstate 10 from Lafayette to West Baton Rouge parish has restricted settlement density. Yet, both Lafayette and West Baton Rouge experienced substantial population changes as a result of interstate associated commerce and development.

From 1950 to 1990 there was a substantial increase in East Baton Rouge parish population. Subsequently, population of outlying parishes along primary highway corridors also increased. From 1980 to 1990, a population redistribution occurred within and between parishes, while migration out of state also contributed to changes in population densities. A substantial portion of the population has migrated via railroad and highway to urban areas in Louisiana and beyond.

The rural to urban demographic shifts documented in the 1930 to 1990 decennial census suggest communities evolved away from traditional ties to such sacred places as cemeteries. A recent rural to urban reversal has subsequently encroached upon abandoned cemeteries. Demographic shifts often result in a loss of community that historically bound people to their heritage. Demographic trends from 1960 to 1990 indicate the impact of transportation corridors and urban centers as factors that have
“pulled” population away from traditional settlements. Newly evolving settlement patterns reconfigure earlier settlement infrastructures, such as transportation corridors, and thus impact traditional cemetery landscapes.
CHAPTER 9. TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT

Factor IV: Transportation Development. If the development of new modes of transportation alienated cemeteries that were established in accordance with earlier modes of transportation, then a high percentage of derelict cemeteries are associated with former transportation routes. Similar to the study of transportation development in underdeveloped countries by Taaffe, Morrill and Gould (1963), improvements in infrastructural internal accessibility are dependent upon expanding transportation networks. Transportation development is instrumental in the reconfiguration of settlement patterns.

A lag and lead relationship exists between population growth and transportation development. Transportation development attracts people to new places, away from older communities of traditional activities. This is a sporadic process that is influenced by economic, social and political forces. As new transportation improvements are made, population tends to aggregate along new corridors and intersections of activity.

Like the spokes from the hub of a wheel, the centripetal system of routes and populated places interconnect people and trade by shortening distances and improving access. A primary purpose of transportation development is to economize on time and cost to travel. As a result, new settlements are established at economically strategic locations at the center of intersecting networks. A transportation network is self-perpetuating as access to commerce at intervals along new routes increases. For instance, nodal intersections of route confluences, railroad depots, river ports and bridges are potential places for new settlements of economic prosperity. Thus, older
patterns of centripetal networks are superceded in popularity by more direct routes of newly constructed primary highways.

The historic to present continuity of populated places is evident in the maintenance and upgrade of old transportation routes. On the other hand, abandonment of well-established routes (water, rail or road) reveals changes to earlier settlement patterns and a lack of viability of places. The continued importance of populated places is signified by their inclusion within a modern infrastructure. The connective arrangement of older urban places and routes within a modern infrastructural system is evidence for landscape continuity. Places that are bypassed by new transportation systems, on the other hand, lose their significance as a result of socio-economic change.

Developing economies and technologies in southeastern Louisiana substantially altered transportation routes from 1930 to the present. When settlements are first established, transportation routes are created to connect population centers with other places of economic activity. Then, reciprocally, the demand for transportation is intensified as population increases. Louisiana’s transportation development contributed to population expansion in urban places while a reciprocal contraction occurred in rural areas.

In this section, I will examine changes in transportation within the study area and how these changes are related to the location and abandonment of cemeteries. Historic cemeteries were situated in association with former means of transportation, such as rural roads and intersections, waterways and bridges, and railroads with public depots. The development of new transportation routes, particularly highways, altered the
cultural landscape such that the placement of old cemeteries seems haphazard today. The abandonment of formerly well-traversed routes contributed to the abandonment of older communities and cemeteries. In this chapter, an examination of changes in transportation modes and routes reveals the cultural processes by which many cemeteries were abandoned.

A. Methods

Railroads and paved highways were digitized from Department of Transportation and Development (DoTD) maps for the twenty-four parishes in my study area. The DoTD map upgrades dating circa 1937, 1967 and 1995 represent the conditions of transportation corresponding to bi-decennial time breaks of 1950, 1970, and 1990 for which I have census and other data. These maps display land use as well as transportation routes.

Problems were encountered in collecting road and railway information because the USGS and DoTD maps were of different scales and did not consistently record all routes. Only paved roads were considered for this study since they indicate maintenance for community use and a degree of permanence beyond the family level. Unfortunately, cartographic discrepancies in paved routes were found, especially when comparing LOSCO CD paved secondary highways (U.S. Census) with USGS (7.5-minute quadrangles) and DoTD (parish) maps of secondary and primary highways. Most notably, roads were sometimes indicated as paved on USGS maps and not paved on DoTD maps. With the railways, there were more abandoned and dismantled railroads represented on USGS quadrangles than DoTD parish maps.
The TM raster image of Louisiana (LOSCO CD-Rom) was used as a background for digitizing transportation routes and levees in the Atchafalaya Basin and along the Mississippi River. Major waterways were also digitized from the raster image. These include the Mississippi River, Atchafalaya River and Amite River, streams east of the Mississippi River and bayous west of the Mississippi River. The many smaller waterways were omitted since they were not main transportation routes and would have obscured the display of other cultural features.

The USGS/GNIS cemeteries were tabulated as Upland or Wetland in accordance with conditions of cemetery dereliction (Table 9-1). Table 9-1 displays the distribution of surveyed cemeteries by ranked conditions of dereliction in the Uplands and Wetlands subregions. The following discussions of Tables 9-2 through 9-6 refer to tabulations in Table 9-1 for calculation of percentage of derelict cemetery conditions ("Surveyed" percentage).

### Table 9-1. Upland and Wetland Surveyed Cemeteries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>609</th>
<th>239</th>
<th>370</th>
<th>149</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Cems</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>519</th>
<th>349</th>
<th>170</th>
<th>237</th>
<th>35</th>
<th>35</th>
<th>42</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Cems</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Uplands, 62 percent of cemeteries surveyed were "in use" and 8 to 17 percent were "in peril," "closed," or "not visible" (rank 2, 3 and 4). In the Wetlands, 68
percent of cemeteries surveyed were "in use" and 10 to 12 percent were "in peril," "closed," or "not visible" (rank 2, 3 and 4).

Buffer zones of transportation were created for cemetery occurrence within 100, 300 and 500 meters in the Uplands and Wetlands. A buffer zone of 500 meters (0.31 miles) represents a short pedestrian distance. Commonly, 1000 meters (1 km) is the distance between highway, levee and railroad confluences. A buffer zone of 500 meters around cemeteries often includes several transportation feature confluences. For instance, several cemeteries that were formerly on river plantations currently are located at the "Dead End" of a perpendicular unpaved connecting road between a levee, "River" road and railroad. Many cemeteries are inside 500 meter buffer zones of transportation confluences.

B. Highways

1. History

In 1974, Newton made observations about the complexity of Louisiana's road systems as settlement patterns that can be viewed as artifacts of a social structure. He found that in the Upland South, parish and farm roads are essentially the same routes established by early settlers. The formerly local networks of rural highways are integrated into a regional system (Newton 1971:259). Modifications to centripetal systems of local highways occurred as a result of the rise of industrialization, railroads, interstates, and urbanization (Newton 1974:358). Although the automobile made people less dependent upon the central function of parish seats, the relationships of local
consumers to merchants are still evident in the network of rural routes within some parishes.

In general, local highways are centripetally focused upon parish seats whereas state-oriented highways run north to south and east to west, often bypassing parish seats. The local and regional highway systems coincide in places but serve different purposes. The state highway network serves to connect parts of the state to Baton Rouge, thereby integrating isolated parts of Louisiana with the political and economic structure of the state capital. The interstate highway system (under construction since the 1970s) creates new central places along its route. In the process, older central places associated with local or state roads are bypassed.

During the Great Depression, extensive highway paving projects improved Louisiana’s road conditions. As a result, today’s hard-surface road system connects urban places regionally within the state and nationally with other states. In rural areas, a network of dirt and gravel roads complements the paved road system (Goins and Caldwell 1995). In 1930, the state of Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development maintained 8,145 miles of road. In 1950, there were nearly 15,000 miles of roads maintained by the state. With the construction of interstates and other road improvements, road mileage in the state of Louisiana increased to 16,680 in 1996 (Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development Planning Division 1996).

Appendix B illustrates the increase in state-maintained roads by parish within the study area. The 1978 mileage figures are divided into “state system,” “parish roads,” “incorporated streets,” “total” road and street miles of asphalt (Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development Planning Division 1996).
Department of Transportation and Development Planning Division Road and Street
Mileage 1978). Each parish maintains a local highway system. Paved road conditions
are thus dependent upon parish economy and population demand. In 1978, East Baton
Rouge’s incorporated street mileage was relatively high (707 miles) when compared to
St. Charles and St. John the Baptist which lacked “incorporated” streets.

Despite greater square mile area compared to the Upland parishes, Wetland
parishes have relatively fewer roadways due to impassable areas, such as the
Atchafalaya Basin. Compared with urban areas in 1978, rural parishes have fewer total
miles of paved road and street mileage, ranging from 200 to 600 miles (Louisiana
Department of Transportation and Development Planning Division 1978). For instance,
although Pointe Coupee is a large parish, it has few paved roads which is due in part to
Wetlands topography and rural population distribution. Rural parishes, such as West
and East Feliciana in the Uplands, also have minimal road mileage. However, the rural
parish of Tangipahoa, which is traversed by both Interstates 12 (east-west) and 55
(north-south), has road mileage (1,369 miles) comparable to the urban parishes of East
Baton Rouge (1,652 miles) and St. Landry (1,437 miles) (Louisiana Department of
Transportation and Development Planning Division 1978).

St. Helena is an anomaly among rural parishes. This parish has an intricate
network of rural highways that are 60 percent parish maintained. St. Helena’s rural
roads were established prior to 1978. These roads maintain traditional community ties.
According to Newton (1970; 1974:349), the integrated network of rural roads in St.
Helena neutralized settlement growth along state highways. St. Helena’s roads facilitate travel between local parish settlements rather than through or away from the parish.

Most parishes have relatively stable state-maintained road mileage from 1978 to 1996. The availability of good roads is an important factor in determining the location of new population settlements and cemeteries. During periods of development, road expansion threatens cemeteries.

2. Data and Analysis

The increase in road lengths of primary and secondary highways are shown below. The successive stages of transportation development in Louisiana are illustrated by increased lengths in secondary and primary highways from 1950 to 1990.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Secondary Highways</th>
<th>Primary Highways</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kilometers</td>
<td>Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>745 km</td>
<td>463 mi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>4687</td>
<td>2911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From 1950 to 1970, primary highways increased by 63 percent. Between 1970 and 1990 primary highways increased 57 percent. Secondary highways increased 18 percent from 1950 to 1970. From 1970 to 1990 they increased an unprecedented 434 percent. In 1990, increased highway pavement projects and the designation of former 1970s primary highways as secondary highways substantially increased the measured length of secondary highways. As shown in Figure 9-1, digitized secondary highways for 1950 and 1970 illustrate paved roads: rural, local, and state highways (such as LA 19).
Figure 9-1. Secondary Highways and Cemetery Conditions.
Secondary Highways

Table 9-2 tabulates conditions of USGS/GNIS cemetery occurrence within 100, 300 and 500-meter sampled buffers of secondary highways. The “Surveyed” percent of cemeteries represents the number of cemeteries located within the buffer divided by the total number of cemeteries of same rank in the Uplands or Wetlands (Table 9-1). In the Wetlands, USGS/GNIS cemetery occurrence in association with secondary highways doubles when sample buffers were increased from 100 to 300 meters for 1950, 1970 and 1990. In the Uplands, the number of cemeteries within 100 and 300 meter buffers of secondary highways doubles in 1990. Within a 500-meter buffer in the Wetlands are located 70 percent of cemeteries associated with 1990 secondary highways. Due to the widely scattered location of cemeteries in the Uplands, only 44 percent are within 500 meter buffers of secondary highways.

Cemeteries within 100 meter buffer zones of 1950 and 1970 secondary highways represent 3 to 11 percent of derelict cemeteries in both the Uplands and Wetlands. The percentage of derelict cemeteries increases substantially as sample buffer zones increase from 100 to 500 meters. The number of derelict cemeteries within buffer zones between 500 meters and 1000 meters is considerably less by comparison. In the Uplands, 51 percent of derelict cemeteries are within 500 meters of 1990 secondary highways and 64 percent in the Wetlands. In the Uplands, within buffer zones of 500 meters, 20 to 25 percent of “closed” cemeteries are associated with a 1950 and 1970 secondary highway. In the Wetlands, “closed” cemeteries within 500 meters of
Table 9-2. Secondary Highways and Cemetery Occurrence within 100, 300, 500 and 1000 Meter Buffer Zones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>100m</th>
<th>300m</th>
<th>500m Buffer</th>
<th>1000m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(36)</td>
<td>(46)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>(41)</td>
<td>(52)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>(105)</td>
<td>(201)</td>
<td>(267)</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1950 and 1970 secondary highways only represent 3 to 11 percent of surveyed cemeteries.

In the Uplands, a 500-meter buffer around secondary highways reveals more cemeteries disassociated from community than in the Wetlands. The 500-meter buffer illustrates cemeteries beyond transportation buffers as a result of their isolation in the Uplands. These are scattered family cemeteries. In contrast, in the Wetlands, the increased occurrence of derelict cemeteries within 500 meter buffers is due to their dependence upon land along linear corridors. Subareas A and C (Figure 7-1) illustrate...
the increased development of secondary highways and the impact to cemeteries in the Uplands and Wetlands.

**Primary Highways**

Few cemeteries are located within 100 meters of primary highways. However, within a 300-meter buffer zone cemetery occurrence more than doubles. In the Uplands, the increased length of 1990 primary highways substantially increased the number of cemeteries that were previously associated with 1950 and 1970 primary highways. In the Wetlands, most derelict cemeteries were already associated with 1950 and 1970 primary highways.

As shown in Figure 9-2, minimal portions of 1950 and 1970 primary highways were upgraded (as in paved, rerouted and widened) to 1990 primary highways. New interstates created new corridors that were often parallel to earlier primary highways. Thus, interstates that were established according to earlier networks impacted few cemeteries. By comparing Figure 9-2 with Figure 9-1, several routes that were considered “Primary Highways” in 1950 and 1970, such as US Routes 190, 71 and 61, were designated as “Secondary Highways” in 1990. The transfer of 1950 and 1970 primary highways to secondary highway status in 1990 contributed to increased cemetery occurrence in association with 1990 secondary highways. However, derelict cemeteries in association with 1990 primary highways are minimal when compared to those associated with secondary highways (Table 9-2).

As shown in Table 9-3, cemeteries “not visible” are absent from all buffers of 1990 primary highways in the Uplands. In the Wetlands, derelict cemeteries are
Figure 9-2. Primary Highways and Cemetery Conditions.
Table 9-3. Primary Highways and Cemetery Occurrence within 100, 300, 500 and 1000 Meter Buffer Zones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>100m</th>
<th>300m</th>
<th>500m Buffer</th>
<th>1000m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950 Primary</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970 Primary</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Primary</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>(33)</td>
<td>(48)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

minimally associated with 1990 primary highways, 2 to 14 percent. Cemeteries are impacted within 100 meters of 1990 primary highways with some relation to previous 1950 and 1970 primary highway upgrades to 1990 primary highways. Subarea B illustrates primary highway upgrades from 1950 to 1990 with minimal cemetery impact (refer to Figure 7-1). The few derelict cemeteries associated with primary highways in the Uplands is due to the scattered array of cemeteries along rural routes and route deviation around cemeteries.

The upgrade of earlier primary routes into more direct routes (for instance in the Wetlands along US 90) consumed abandoned cemeteries in their path. The demand for
elevated land as new transportation corridors were developed took precedence over derelict cemetery landscapes. The recently-completed east to west Interstates 10 and 12 (1990 primary highways) deviate from the meandering routes of 1950 and 1970 primary highways. As a result, interstates have minimally impacted nearby cemeteries. On the other hand, south-north Interstates 55, 49 and 10 to New Orleans are within close proximity of earlier primary highways. Thus, new primary highways have impacted cemeteries which were established in accordance with earlier primary highways.

Subarea D (Figure 7-1) illustrates primary highway development through existing cemetery landscapes while bypassing earlier routes. In the prairie region north of Lafayette, several low profile cemeteries have become decontextualized, most notably as churches were abandoned. Whipp Cemetery (site no. 368), located on a bayou near Interstate 49, may have served the crossroad community of Whipp. St. Agnes church was situated on the rural highway within 1000 meters of the cemetery. The church was razed and the cemetery is now part of a private residence. Grave markers are visible in a child’s playground and fenced pasture. The cemetery has been decontextualized. Abandoned churches are razed or adapted for other purposes. One church with a nearby cemetery (site no. 896) was transformed into a discotheque.

C.  Railroads

1.  History

Local railways with numerous feeder tracks were integrated within a network of nationwide rail hubs in southeastern Louisiana (Newton 1987). Consolidation began with holding companies buying individual rail lines, creating regional and national
networks that transported goods and materials city to city, region to region. Railroad centers developed. Towns established at the junctions of railroad lines fared better than those on a single track. Cities with six or more railroad lines, such as Baton Rouge, prospered from railroad commerce.

During times of relative railroad prosperity, churches and cemeteries were established in railroad towns. Towns were established with a central focus upon the railroad depot (such as Hammond). Cemeteries were situated in proximity to depots for receiving human remains and associated burial goods. Railroads competed for river commerce by laying tracks parallel to waterways. By 1915, railroads supplanted river transportation in popularity as a means for moving goods and people (Goins and Caldwell 1995).

After 1915, a decline in the lumber industry contributed to decreased railroad mileage in Louisiana. Many branch lines were eliminated while some rail systems decreased in length. Cheaper trucking, increased government regulations, and increasing rail costs reduced the popularity of trains for commerce. National railroad companies transferred ownership back to local areas. Hundreds of miles of track were abandoned. Railroads had reached maximum growth in 1910, as more successful lines absorbed and minimized the use of less productive miles of track. In 1986, the total number of miles of railroad track in Louisiana was 3,347, which is less than 60 percent of the 5,728 mile peak in 1915 (Goins and Caldwell 1995). By the 1970s, the construction of the interstate highway system enhanced opportunities for cross-country trucking firms, further displacing commercial transport by railroad.
The railroad lost its central role in the economic and cultural life of Louisiana as local and public railroads were supplanted by rival forms of transport. When not completely abandoned, most rail lines discontinued local and public use. In southeastern Louisiana, the public rail system, with its numerous local stops, was minimized to a single passenger line, Amtrak (Goins and Caldwell 1995). This public rail line follows the course of US 90 south from Lafayette and east to New Orleans, bypassing the state capital of Baton Rouge.

The rebirth of barge traffic on the rivers and the intracoastal waterways provided alternatives to commercial and industrial transport by rail in Louisiana. The hundreds of towns whose beginnings were based on the railroad a century ago are now bypassed by freight trains that serve major depots. Overnight settlements of lumbering communities and their associated railroad lines are landscape artifacts of boom and bust periods. The remnants of railroad towns, depots and cemeteries are cartographically connected by dismantled railroad tracks.

2. Data and Analysis

The 7.5-minute USGS quadrangles illustrate on a larger scale, the details of more dismantled and abandoned railroad tracks than the DoTD parish maps. Therefore, in this study, patterns of cemetery abandonment in association with railroad track decline are incomplete. However, the number of cemeteries associated with 1950 railroads is evidence for the decline in active railroad tracks.

The length of railroad tracks has decreased within the study area. Thus, cemeteries once associated with local depots were abandoned as tracks were dismantled.
or local stops discontinued. According to DoTD parish maps, since 1950 there has been no new railroad development within the study area. The lengths of railroad track are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Kilometers</th>
<th>Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>1923 km</td>
<td>1194 mi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1579</td>
<td>981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1209</td>
<td>751</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From 1950 to 1990 railroad track lengths within the study area decreased 37 percent. In 1990, railroad track length is slightly greater than primary highways. In 1970, railroad track length approximated the combined lengths of secondary and primary highways. In 1970, railroad transport was as important as paved highways. In 1950, prior to public use of automobiles and available “all-weather” roads, greater railroad track mileage indicates the primary role railroads had in both public and commercial transportation.

In the Uplands, the number of cemeteries associated with 1950 and 1970 railroads nearly tripled within 100 to 300 meter buffers and nearly quadruples from 100 to 500 meters (Table 9-4). In 1990, fewer cemeteries are associated with railroad tracks than previously. Therefore, fewer derelict cemeteries are represented. Within a 500-meter buffer of 1950 and 1970 railroad tracks 10 to 20 percent of derelict cemeteries are represented in the Uplands.

In the Wetlands, a dependence on railroads for transportation is apparent in the greater percentage of derelict cemeteries associated with earlier railroads. Within 500 meters of 1950 and 1970 railroads are 17 to 43 percent of derelict cemeteries. Within 500 meters of earlier railroads the total number of associated cemeteries triples.
Table 9-4. Railroads and Cemetery Occurrence within 100, 300, 500 and 1000 Meter Buffer Zones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>100m</th>
<th>300m</th>
<th>500m Buffer</th>
<th>1000m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>(38)</td>
<td>(62)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>(31)</td>
<td>(48)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(22)</td>
<td>(39)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>100m</th>
<th>300m</th>
<th>500m Buffer</th>
<th>1000m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>(104)</td>
<td>(151)</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>(47)</td>
<td>(98)</td>
<td>(145)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>(31)</td>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>(112)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of cemeteries within 500 meters of railroads declines from 151 in 1950 to 112 in 1990. The number of cemeteries associated with earlier railroad tracks is likely due to their preferred locations at junctures of active confluences and urban centers in the Wetlands.

St. Helena parish is again unusual in that it lacks railroad tracks. Although the number of cemeteries associated with earlier railroads is not as apparent in the Uplands, an earlier dependence upon railroads that are no longer active has left many cemeteries...
abandoned in the landscape. For instance, shown in Figure 9-3 (north of East Baton Rouge parish in East Feliciana and West Feliciana) are numerous cemeteries which were once associated with 1950 and 1970 railroads. Since 1880, small towns sprung up around railroad depots. The abandonment of railroad tracks is related to the abandonment of towns, schools, churches and cemeteries.

The evidence of landscape abandonment is apparent in relic railroad commuter and market towns, such as Ethel in East Feliciana (Newton 1971:251). Most notably, the dismantled and abandoned tracks that once served the populated places of Clinton, Jackson, St. Francisville and Angola have stranded several cemeteries. A cluster of cemeteries (site nos. 217, 220, 221 and 223) in the township of Jackson was once associated with a 1950 rail line. A few of these historic cemeteries are now inaccessible to the public as they are located within the grounds of the Louisiana State Hospital. A discontinued length of 1970 tracks from Ethel to Clinton also stranded several cemeteries (Figure 9-3).

The discontinued public use of the railroad across the Atchafalaya Basin (north of US 190) contributed to the abandonment of several cemeteries that were consequently stranded in the landscape. A stretch of railroad track from west of the Atchafalaya at Melville through Maringouin, extends south of US 190 and Interstate 10 and beyond Grosse Tete at Interstate 10. East of the Atchafalaya Basin, 11 cemeteries are associated with a 20-kilometer length of track. The distances between isolated and clustered cemeteries range from 2.5 to 3.7 kilometers (1.5 to 2.3 miles). Between cemetery site nos. 418 and 421, a larger gap of 5.6 kilometers disrupts the pattern of
Figure 9-3. Railroad Decline and Cemetery Conditions.
regular cemetery distribution along this stretch of railroad track. Perhaps a cemetery was once located halfway between these two cemeteries, at 2.8 kilometers. The frequency of cemetery occurrence along this track represents public railroad stops that are no longer maintained by modern commercial rail lines.

A similar pattern of cemeteries associated with railroads is evident along US 90 and Interstate 49 but at intervals of six to 11 kilometers (approximately four to seven miles). The regular distribution of cemeteries along railroads is also indicative of railroads intersecting with highways, waterways and populated places. Cemeteries situated in accordance with secondary highways and railroad intersections clearly illustrate the important socio-economic role these junctions played in local communities. Cemeteries were dependent upon railways, as demonstrated by abandoned cemeteries along dismantled tracks and tracks no longer in use by the public.

As railroad track length decreased from 1950 to 1990, the number of derelict cemeteries associated with railroads also decreased. However, many cemeteries remain in the landscape as testimonials to the former importance of cemetery locations associated with railroad depots. For instance, False River Cemetery (site no. 417) is a benevolent cemetery in False River Ward of Pointe Coupee parish. This cemetery is located on “River Depot Road” at the junction of a tributary to the Atchafalaya River, a rural unpaved highway, and an abandoned railroad stop. The railroad is still in use but no longer stops at this crossroad. The low-profile cemetery was not established in association with church or town. The cemetery is now stranded amidst agricultural activities. With the preferred use of US 190 and its causeway across the Atchafalaya,
traffic along River Depot Road is limited to local farmers. The road is experiencing signs of abandonment. False River Cemetery is “in peril” due to a variety of landscape dereliction, including drainage undercuts, agricultural encroachment, household garbage dumping, firing range practice and unsanctioned burials.

D. Waterways

1. History

The Mississippi, Atchafalaya and Amite Rivers were communication and transportation conduits. The construction of bridges within the study area altered networks of human interaction. Historic ferries are still in use as major river crossings. Waterways are important to domestic and international trade. Waterways transport such commodities as petroleum and oil field supplies, grain, industrial chemical, iron and steel products (Calhoun 1995:281).

In southern Louisiana, the Mississippi River is the main artery in a vast network of inland waterways. The Mississippi River provides a vital link in the nation's transportation system. The Gulf Intracoastal Waterway is a navigable toll-free shipping route extending along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico. Commercial barges, fishing and recreational boats travel the numerous navigable waterways of southeastern Louisiana.

A century prior to the Great Flood of 1927, levee systems were locally maintained. The modern levee and flood diversion system dates to the 1920s and 1930s. However, the Atchafalaya flood control system had begun in the 1840s (Kniffen and Hilliard 1988:158). The Mississippi River Commission was formed and submitted its first recommendation for improvements for navigation and flood control in 1880.

There were no comprehensive topographic maps at the time of the Great Flood. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers set out to construct levees in the 1930s, while also mapping the terrain. This mapping enterprise focused on partial coverage of flood control and densely-populated areas. Protecting agricultural lands and inhabitants, were as much the purposes of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control efforts as preserving the course of the Mississippi River. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood solution was to divert the flow capacity of the Lower Mississippi River into the Atchafalaya Basin (Barry 1997:424-5).

In conjunction with river bend cutoffs, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built the Morganza Floodway, Old River Flood Control Structure (Three Rivers area), and Bonnet Carre Spillway. These three flood control features were constructed to provide an outlet for Mississippi River flood stages. All three flood control features for Louisiana are within the study area. The strategy of the flood control system is to inundate under-populated areas in order to protect agricultural land and cities along the lower Mississippi River (Comeaux 1969:43). For instance, the Bonnet Carre Spillway
diverts Mississippi River overflow into Lake Ponchartrain, away from the city of New Orleans (Barry 1997:425).

Guide levees were constructed within the Atchafalaya to confine flood flows. Several communities relocated as a result. A second flood in 1937 tested the new flood control plan with some apparent land alterations. The alterations to the courses of rivers are evident in historic maps, especially near Simmesport (Subarea E). At the northern extent of the Atchafalaya River, and south of the Three Rivers flood control, river course changes are most noticeable. Since the construction of the present levee system, there have been record stages of high water. However, flood controls have thus far prevented the kind of devastation that occurred in 1927. With few additions, the length and engineered layout of the levee system remains the same today as it was in the 1940s.

2. Data and Analysis

Figure 9-4 displays cemetery occurrence in proximity to waterways and cemetery conditions within buffer zones sampled at 100, 300 and 500 meters (Table 9-5). The lengths of waterways and levees within the study area are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Waterway Feature</th>
<th>Kilometers</th>
<th>Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi River</td>
<td>419 km</td>
<td>260 mi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levees</td>
<td>1061</td>
<td>659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amite River</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streams (Uplands)</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atchafalaya River</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayous (Wetlands)</td>
<td>2052</td>
<td>1274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both the Atchafalaya and Mississippi Rivers traverse the study area. The numerous meanders of the Mississippi River nearly double its length. Cemetery occurrence is not
Figure 9-4. Waterways, Levees, Flood Controls and Cemetery Conditions.
Table 9-5. Waterways and Cemetery Occurrence within 100, 300, 500 and 1000 Meter Buffer Zones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>100m</th>
<th>300m</th>
<th>500m Buffer</th>
<th>1000m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amite</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streams</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(50)</td>
<td>(85)</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atchafalya</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayous</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>(176)</td>
<td>(217)</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levees</td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>(65)</td>
<td>(90)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adequately represented within buffer zones of 100 to 500 meters of the Mississippi River because of the channel width, meanders, bends and oxbows.

As shown in Figure 9-4, there is a high occurrence of cemeteries along the Mississippi River. However, only two cemeteries are within 500 meters of the river. Within a 1000 meter buffer of the Mississippi River 44 cemeteries are located: 21 "in use," four "in peril," one "closed" and five "not visible." Situated within 2000 meters of the Mississippi River were 109 cemeteries: 49 "in use," eight "in peril," seven "closed" and 10 "not visible." The number of cemeteries "in peril" and "not visible" doubles as the buffer zone doubles.
Compared to the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers, the Amite River has more cemeteries within 500 meter buffers that are in use. When compared to cemetery occurrence within 100 to 500 meter buffers of railroads and highways, cemetery occurrence along the courses of the Mississippi, Atchafalaya and Amite Rivers is minimal. It is likely that earlier cemeteries within 1000 meters of major waterways were erased from the surface prior to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers mapping efforts and levee construction. The highest occurrence of cemeteries within buffer zones of 100, 300 and 500 meters of all transportation features is associated with Wetlands bayous.

The prevalence of cemeteries associated with waterways in the Wetlands is apparent in Figure 9-4. Only 90 cemeteries are within 500 meters of levees. However, 40 percent of cemeteries “closed” are within 500 meters of levees. Within 300 meters of levees are located 15 percent of cemeteries “in peril” and 24 percent “not visible.” The percentage of derelict cemeteries associated with Wetland bayous is extreme – 38 percent “not visible” and 54 percent “closed.”

Although there are more cemeteries per area in the Uplands than in the Wetlands, fewer cemeteries are associated with streams east of the Mississippi River. In the Uplands, within 500 meters of streams are located 14 percent of cemeteries, whereas in the Wetlands 15 percent of cemeteries are within 100 meters of a bayou. Obviously, the Wetlands consist of a greater area represented by waterways and as a result 42 percent of cemeteries are located within 500 meter buffers of bayous.
In the Wetlands, a large percentage of cemeteries in close proximity to waterways concurs with the tabulated high percentage of cemeteries associated with highways (1990s) and railroads (1950s) (Tables 9-2, 9-3 and 9-4). A dependence on waterways is then apparent in cemetery distribution within the Wetlands whereas Uplands cemeteries are widely scattered except when associated with paved highways. The percentage of derelict cemeteries within 100, 300 and 500 meters of bayous increases with distance, as does the number of cemeteries “in use.” Most notable is the minimal representation of cemeteries “in use” in proximity to bayous. The 27 cemeteries “in use” (11 percent) associated with bayous are similar to “in use” cemetery occurrence within 100 meter buffers of 1970 secondary highways and railroads and 300 meter buffers of 1970 primary highways. As the bayou buffer increases to 300 and 500 meters, the percentage of derelict cemeteries increases and the number of cemeteries “in use” increases noticeably (from 27 to 95 cemeteries). Thus, “in use” cemetery occurrence is illustrative of fewer cemeteries maintaining their context within close proximity of waterways.

3. Subarea E

A sample buffer zone of 3000 meters of streams in the Uplands and bayous in the Wetlands revealed that all cemeteries in the Wetlands, except for those south of Simmesport, were within 3000 meters of a waterway. Several cemeteries in Subarea E were lost during floods and cutoff within the river’s bends when levees redirected channels (Figure 9-5(A)). Cemeteries in Subarea E are commonly associated with churches. However, several churches with their associated cemeteries disappeared from
Figure 9-5. Subarea E (A) and Subarea D (B).
the USGS maps circa 1940. Between 1920 and 1940 there were noticeable changes to the landscape as a result of floods and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood controls.

Several cemeteries south of Simmesport and the flood controls were impacted by river course changes and levee construction. Conspicuously lacking are 1990 primary highways along the Atchafalaya River. Cemeteries in this area were established in proximity to the Atchafalaya waterway as a transportation corridor prior to levee construction. Today, these cemeteries are accessed by secondary highways and railroads. The frequency of cemeteries along the Atchafalaya River south of Simmesport is illustrative of an agricultural community that was limited by means of transportation and adhering to a variety of religious doctrines, mostly Protestant denominations.

In Pointe Coupee parish, Jacoby Chapel and Cemetery (site no. 343) was apparently salvaged by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Mississippi River Commission plans for flood control. The levee was constructed around this cemetery with three right angles that protect the parcel from inundation. However, today the only surface evidence of the cemetery’s existence is a bell tower and cross on a podium that memorialize the cemetery. Conspicuously, to the north and south there are several cemeteries on either side of the river that were sacrificed to levee construction.

South of Jacoby (1.8 kilometers) another community was cut off inside a bend in the Atchafalaya River. Jacoby Church is documented at this location in association with a cemetery but there is no surface evidence of the church structure. The cemetery (site no. 345) was separated from community and church when the new levee and highway
were constructed directly through the river’s bend. However, this cemetery is “in use” and displays post-1940 above-ground burials at the back of the parcel, away from the river and levee. The front section of the cemetery appears empty but the unmistakable 3-by-6 foot roll of the grass turf attests to unmarked in-ground burials. A few old homes are all that remains of the earlier settlement – commercial agriculture and newer homes dominate the landscape.

There is a regular pattern to cemetery distribution that is dependent on waterways. To the south of Union and Royal Oak Cemeteries (site nos. 5 and 6), Bayou Lettsworth was cut off by flood controls and is today an intermittent stream. Pikes Peak Cemetery (site no. 309) is located inside the bayou bend, and is isolated on an abandoned railroad grade. The cemetery appears cartographically stranded and intersected by a four-wheel drive road. In 1956 lawsuits were filed for damages after the two-acre cemetery of Pikes Peak had been bulldozed. Pikes Peak was a black cemetery that was “older than the memory of any living man, having been established long previous to 1892” (State Times 9/2/56). Located in Mississippi River plantation country, the 1600-acre plantation was sold in 1937. Since 1948, families were denied access to the cemetery.

Along Bayou Lettsworth, six cemeteries are distributed at intervals of 1.6 to 2.1 kilometers southward from Pikes Peak Cemetery to Levee Cemetery. A similar distribution of cemeteries (2 to 3 kilometers apart) is also apparent in other areas along levees of the Atchafalaya and Mississippi Rivers. The regularity of cemetery intervals represents distances traveled by pedestrian, boat, horse, and buggy during day-to-day
routines. Where there was once a community, distances between surrounding cemeteries along transportation routes may be used to predict the location of cemeteries that were never map documented.

For instance, "Levee Cemetery" was once located at a high profile location at the convergence of railroad, highway and levee. The remnants of a tree-lined road that perpendicularly connected the railroad, highway and cemetery to levee and bayou is all that remains of the landscape context of this cemetery. Rows of abandoned shacks that formerly housed farm labor are situated along the railroad. The cemetery is unapproachable on private property posted "no trespassing." A portion of the cemetery is maintained by what few relations remain in the area. A few crypts are barely discernable through the overgrowth at the rear of the lot.

E. Transportation Confluences

1. Uplands/Wetlands

Uplands cemeteries are situated along roadways or widely distributed on private property. Cemeteries in the Uplands are located at confluences of transportation features but to a lesser extent than in the Wetlands. In the Uplands, cemeteries are commonly set back a distance from roadway, railroad and waterway, situated atop an elevated knoll. In contrast, cemeteries in the Wetlands are commonly associated with waterways.

Table 9-6 tabulates cemetery occurrence within 500 meter buffers of two or more transportation features (including intersections). In the Uplands, 59 percent of cemeteries are within 500 meters of two or more transportation features. In the
Table 9-6. Cemetery Occurrence within 500 Meters of Transportation Confluences.

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<th>609</th>
<th>358</th>
<th>59%</th>
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<th>50</th>
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<td>Wetlands</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>Surveyed</td>
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Wetlands, 91 percent of cemeteries co-occur with transportation features which further illustrates cemetery dependence upon waterway, railway and highway. While 68 percent of cemeteries "in use" in the Wetlands are within 500 meters of confluences, so are 74 percent of "in peril" cemeteries, 63 percent of "closed" cemeteries and 67 percent of "not visible" cemeteries. Few derelict cemeteries (less than 10 percent), in spite of the square area of the Wetlands, are beyond 500 meters of confluences.

In the Uplands, within 500 meters of confluences, only 34 percent of cemeteries are "in use" whereas three times the number of cemeteries and twice the percentage are "in use" in the Wetlands. In the Uplands, 50 percent of cemeteries "closed" are within 500 meters of confluences whereas only 15 percent were "not visible." Thus in the Uplands, cemetery proximity to confluences is detrimental to continued use but does not appear to influence cemetery destruction. Similar to the previous analysis of cemeteries associated with highways, railroads and waterways, in the Wetlands a preference for transportation feature association is again emphasized by cemetery occurrence within 500 meters of two or more transportation feature confluences (Table 9-6).
2. Subarea D

Figure 9-5(B) is an inset of Subarea D which illustrates the frequency of cemetery occurrence along transportation features and the impact of transportation development. The former bends of the bayou and associated long lots are discernible in the raster image. However, these features are landscape contradictions to modern transportation features. Within one 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle (North Bend 228A) in St. Mary’s parish, four out of five cemeteries (sites no. 1169-1172) are “not visible” on the surface. The frequency of cemetery distribution is difficult to discern due to alterations to the bayou but it appears to be approximately 2.5 to 3 kilometer intervals between cemeteries. Similar to Subarea E, the regular distribution of cemeteries is illustrative of pedestrian distances that would be travelled as part of daily routines. Where the intracoastal waterway (site no. 1168) and US 90 (site no. 1171) have decontextualized cemeteries the regularity of cemetery distribution is disrupted. As shown in Figure 9-5(B), cemeteries were once located at the critical junctures of highways, railroads, and waterways.

Midway Cemetery (outside the study area) is located halfway between Centerville and the Gulf Coast port. The names “Midway” and “Centerville” illustrate the significance of these places as halfway points along railroads (parallel to US 90 and LA 317). Although Midway Cemetery is “in use” and maintained, it attests to the regular distribution of cemeteries in Subarea D along the bayou, railroad and highway. The Maryland Sugar Mill is an old plantation estate located at the end of LA 317, at the Gulf Coast port. The sugar mill has been closed for several decades. Little remains of a
local economy. Rural route LA 317 is lined with abandoned homes that were once part of a thriving sugar cane farming community. Remnants of the North Bend community (site no. 1168) are not evident amidst new industries. A bridge, intracoastal waterway, modernized agriculture, and industrial plants have erased all traces of the former agricultural community.

The five cemeteries in various stages of abandonment were impacted by both the lack of local stops and a population exodus. The recent completion of US 90 cut off well-traveled meandering routes (of secondary highways, waterways and railroads) that led to and through small communities. Development of primary highways bypassed, cut off and partially destroyed cemeteries in this area (such as site no. 1171). Several cemeteries were stranded when settlements and commerce were drawn toward the primary highway.

Although “Graft Cemetery” (site no. 1169) was abandoned more than a century ago, crypts are visible amidst decaying overgrowth of the highway undercut. The cemetery was “not visible” during a summer survey, but upon return during the winter above-ground crypts and grave markers were apparent. Monuments date to about 1860 bearing the family name of “Berwick.” The town of Berwick is located near Morgan City. The proximity of crypts to the undercut easement of LA 317 and the irregular shape of the lot suggests burials were disinterred or remain beneath the highway asphalt. Formerly associated with a plantation, Graft Cemetery and other cemeteries along LA 317 were forgotten by the few local longtime residents still living nearby.
Over sixty years of successive stages in agricultural, industrial and transportation development have altered the rural landscape and impacted cemeteries within Subarea D. The lack of surface evidence of four cemeteries that were once associated with a bayou, railroad and local highway indicates the former importance of these transportation confluences. Transportation changes in Subarea D are a result of changing economies of resource exploitation. As means for making a living were minimized by mechanized agriculture, a rural population depletion resulted in local cemetery abandonment.

F. Summary

Both Subareas D and E illustrate cemetery abandonment as a result of rural exoduses. The regular occurrence of cemeteries at intervals approximating 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) illustrates the frequency of churches, distance traveled by pedestrians day-to-day, and community activities that were predominantly local during the first half of this century. Cemetery distribution along highways is commonly at crossroads (rural routes and railroads) and secondarily distributed along routes between communities. At locations where waterways, highways and levees converge there is a higher occurrence of cemeteries.

The analysis of transportation features within varying buffer zones reveals a preference for cemetery locations in association with first waterways, then railroads, and recently highways. Cemeteries that were established in association with waterway or railroad transport were noticeably impacted when these modes of transportation were altered or abandoned. In most recent decades, long-distance road improvements
impacted cemeteries along secondary highways. Improvements made to secondary highways, as access routes to primary highways, further contributed to both the abandonment and encroachment of cemeteries.

Cemeteries associated with churches that were razed or reappropriated are exposed and susceptible to vandalism. In most instances, the traditional serenity of cemetery landscapes near transportation corridors is disrupted by noise, garbage, unsightliness of new surroundings and a lack of privacy. In spite of rapid transportation development, relatively few cemeteries were impacted by 1990 primary highway development. When compared to cemetery impact as a result of 1950 and 1970 transportation development, the 1990 lack of cemetery destruction is likely a result of recent cultural heritage preservation and burial legislation.
CHAPTER 10. CEMETERY HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Factor V: National Historic Preservation Legislation. Since 1966, historic preservation legislation has created an increase in the number of cemeteries documented as archaeological sites. However, prior to historic preservation legislation, cemeteries in the path of progress were destroyed. If historic cemeteries were established at regular intervals along earlier transportation corridors (such as levee roads), then disruptions in the sequence of cemetery occurrence may be used to predict cemetery locations that were destroyed during stages of modern development predating national historic preservation legislation. Through map research, locations of cemeteries no longer visible on the surface can be identified, thus preventing the happenstance discovery of human burials during construction.

Geographic mobility has loosened ties to place. As settlement patterns evolved in southeastern Louisiana, demographic shifts resulted in cemetery abandonment. Since the 1950s, many cemeteries were disassociated, stranded, abandoned and built over. A shift from rural to urban community has contributed to the disassociation of cemeteries. Cemeteries that were once located on major transportation routes have become derelict. For instance, when a railway station closed. An urban to rural reversal in settlement patterns has further decontextualized abandoned cemeteries.

Contrary to popular controversy, burial places globally share a history of relinquishing space to new land uses (Bell 1994; Ehl et al. 1991; McKillop 1995; Pattison 1955; Poirier and Bellantoni 1997; Schama 1995). For centuries, socio-economic development has decontextualized the historic associations of cemetery
landscapes and old communities. Due to a housing shortage, Cairo’s sprawling
cemetery known as the City of the Dead houses more than a million squatters living in
its tombs (de Blij and Muller 1997:297). Similarly, in China the landscapes of
cemeteries are impacted by population growth and new demands for land (Clad 1984a,
1984b; Knapp 1977). As demands for land increase, overpopulated cities build over the
graves of predecessors. With increased pressures for land the cultural features of earlier
settlement patterns, such as small, local and rural cemeteries, experience landscape
dereliction and destruction.

In spite of land use changes that surround cemeteries, local efforts are made to
preserve the cultural heritage of cemetery landscapes. Legislation summarizes and
codifies custom, and as such cemetery legislation expresses social concerns about burial
places. An examination of the present national preservation tactics and State of
Louisiana statutes that govern cemeteries reveals some recent changes in attitudes
toward burial places.

A. Protective Burial Legislation

Legal and ethical concerns for the permanency of interments and preservation of
burial places are abundant. From the discovery of prehistoric mounds and ancient
catacombs to the removal of historic cemeteries, grave disturbance has been a
controversial topic for centuries. In the United States, the National Historic
Preservation Act of 1966 was enacted to protect American cultural heritage from the
With federal assistance, congressional enactment encouraged local and state agencies to
undertake efforts of cultural-historic preservation. In response to this act, State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) were established and given the responsibility of implementing the National Historic Preservation Act.

In 1971, the Louisiana SHPO was established. The Louisiana Archaeological Treasury Act of 1974 (Revised Statute 41: 1601-1613) created a public policy to protect and preserve archaeological sites. This policy includes abandoned settlements, sunken ships and historic sites of interest to the public and of scientific value (Smith et al. 1983). In 1974, the Division of Archaeology and Historic Preservation was created. The Louisiana Division of Archaeology consists of a state archaeologist, staff and regional archaeologists who are accountable to the SHPO.

Each state’s SHPO has enacted legislation to address their particular cultural-historic preservation concerns. With the 1990 enactment of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (Public Law 101-601), concerns for nonnative burials were also raised. NAGPRA addresses return or “repatriation” of human remains and other cultural items held by federally assisted museums or institutions to members of Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations and Native Alaskan villages. Discussions relating to the enactment of this law emphasized the importance of treating human remains with dignity and respect. In response to NAGPRA, several states have written legislation addressing the disturbance of unmarked burials. State level interests are apparent in protective burial legislation, such as Louisiana’s concerns about grave robbing of Civil War artifacts.
Prior to the Louisiana Cemetery Act Revised Statutes (Section 8:1-905), which established the Louisiana Cemetery Board (Cemetery Board) in 1974, there were few laws regulating cemeteries and burial of human remains. Previously, laws governing cemeteries were enacted in response to social concerns, such as health and welfare.

Since 1974, the increased number of cemetery statutes indicates a collective action to preserve Louisiana's cultural heritage. These local legislative acts were in response to the National Historic Preservation Act (1966) and contemporaneous with the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (Moss-Bennett Bill). Louisiana cemetery statutes are continuously revised and updated to address present concerns (West's Louisiana Statutes Annotated 1993).

As concerns for nonnative burials were raised in Louisiana, legislation was enacted regarding "unmarked burials" which enforces protection for burials outside of designated cemeteries. Chapter 10-A of Title 8 Cemeteries Rules & Regulations of Louisiana Cemetery Board as Amended is governed by the Louisiana Unmarked Burial Sites Committee (State of Louisiana Division of Archaeology). For the purposes of this statute, "human skeletal remains" are defined as any human remains. An "unmarked burial site" is the location of one or more human skeletons found in an area that is not recognized as a cemetery. With the use of this language, Chapter 10-A specifically excludes from protection, human skeletal remains found in a "recognized and maintained municipal, fraternal, religious, or family cemetery or a cemetery authorized by the Louisiana Cemetery Board" (Section 673 Definitions (5) added in 1991). This statute also condones the surface use of cemetery land for such things as grazing, timber
growth and farming, provided there are no excavations. Because Chapter 10-A applies only to “unmarked burials,” there has been no requirement for archaeologists to survey or document cemeteries.

Chapter 10-A is commendable for its lack of differentiation between native and historic graves, but it lacks a preservation plan for cemeteries in peril or abandoned. Similar to recovery and reburial concerns regarding draft regulations to Ontario’s new Cemeteries Act, Louisiana’s Unmarked Burials Act could improve heritage efforts by requiring cemetery owners of registered cemeteries to justify closure and submit site records of burial locations (McKillop 1991:5-6). As part of the State of Louisiana’s Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, an additional “property type” is proposed: "cemeteries, both registered and unregistered (with the State of Louisiana Cemetery Board), including churchyards, municipal cemeteries, private cemeteries, family burial grounds, that reflect a diversity of ethnic and religious traditions throughout the history of Louisiana" (emphasis added) (McKillop 1996).

The inclusion of all cemeteries of human burials, regardless of cemetery type, race, class, status or other associations, improves heritage efforts for site recognition with the Cemetery Board or Division of Archaeology. By promoting cemetery heritage efforts, conditions of cemeteries will improve as fears of retribution are dispelled. Evasive tactics of abandonment and eventual closure of poorly maintained cemeteries will diminish if programs for undifferentiated cemetery preservation are encouraged at the state level.
At the national level, the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and guidelines for nomination to the National Register only consider cemeteries that are of national importance. For example, Baton Rouge’s Magnolia Cemetery is on the National Register as the location of a Civil War battle. In spite of the increasing appreciation of cemeteries and their inherent historic and cultural significance, the most prominent historic status — National Register distinction — is generally not bestowed upon burial grounds. Although listing on the National Register offers little protection against the destruction of a site, it does prevent the encroachment of federally funded projects and aids in efforts to seek funding for research or support for preservation (Strangstad 1995:9). However, only one of New Orleans’ four historic St. Louis cemeteries is on the National Register.

The primary consideration for the National Register of Historic Places, when evaluating any type of property, is the demand for historic integrity. All elements of a cemetery will be considered, but special attention is given to those elements which are beyond fifty years old. Therefore, only a portion of a cemetery (or individual grave) may be considered eligible when additions, expansions or dereliction have altered the landscape. An historic cemetery with interspersed modern and historic graves — where the visual impression becomes that of a modern cemetery — would likely lose its eligibility altogether. Likewise, changes guised as “improvements” can strip a cemetery of its historic integrity, as can the removal of graves.

Stories of cemeteries that have been encroached upon or modified for new land uses are common around the world. In urban settings, cemeteries are in peril due to
vandalism. Although protected by several statutes and concerned coalitions (such as "Save Our Cemeteries" in New Orleans), once a cemetery has lost its dedication, human remains can be ordered removed within forty days after the first publication of a notice to disinter (Section 8:307). It is unlikely that in the past when a cemetery lost its dedication that all remains were disinterred. With a distant past of indigents, lower economic status people, and immigrants, the likelihood of living concern, plot recognition or ability to afford reburial fees for a long-dead relation is minimal. As the previously mentioned statutes indicate, once disinterment has taken place, the property can be developed and the context of the cemetery thus destroyed.

All too frequently cemeteries were buried under decades of subsequent development that erased any evidence of these historic places from surface visibility, and eventually memory. Forgotten cemeteries are often uncovered happenstance during new construction. For instance, construction during the widening of Canal Boulevard at City Park Avenue in New Orleans uncovered hundreds of graves that had once been a part of neighboring cemeteries (Beavers et al. 1985; Times Picayune 7/24/85). Because this project was federally funded, construction was delayed for hasty archaeological reconnaissance and minimal relocation of burials. Today, mass graves reside in situ beneath these boulevards.

B. Division of Archaeology Cemetery Sites

The Division of Archaeology (DoA) regulates and grants clearance for development that will not adversely impact sites of cultural heritage. The State of Louisiana Division of Archaeology is responsible for identifying, managing and
developing archaeological resources for the state. Consequently, documentation of archaeological sites from circa 1900 to the present is submitted to the DoA by a variety of agencies and individuals.

As a result of recent state and federal burial legislation, the number of archaeological sites increased substantially in the last two decades (Figure 10-1). As of June 1997, the DoA site file database contained information on more than 12,000 recorded archaeological sites (represented by the line in Figure 10-1). The recent documentation of cemeteries as archaeological sites is a result of both legislation and compliance by developers (represented by the bar chart in Figure 10-1). Because the SHPO does not require cemeteries to be recorded as archeological sites (unless there is a
likelihood of disturbance to human remains), most cemeteries are recorded during surveys prior to development or for research potential by individuals. As indicated by the histogram in Figure 10-1, only recently have efforts focused on recording cemeteries as archaeological sites. A query of the Division of Archaeology’s site database identified 78 historic cemeteries recorded as archaeological sites within the study area.

Archaeological sites (green asterisks in Figure 10-2) cooccur with USGS/GNIS cemeteries 59 percent of the time. Archaeological sites that do not cooccur with USGS/GNIS cemeteries were often recorded during field surveys prior to development, and sometimes excavated and relocated in compliance with regulations. Often, archaeological sites that cooccur with map documented USGS/GNIS cemeteries are “in use.” In East Feliciana parish, northern East Baton Rouge parish, and along the Amite River, co-occurrence between archaeological sites and USGS/GNIS documented cemeteries is high.

Although legislation does little to encourage documentation of historic cemeteries as archaeological sites, during 1991 and 1992 Susan Wurtzberg (a regional state archaeologist) documented 23 percent of cemetery sites within the study area (one cemetery in Tangipahoa, six cemeteries in East Baton Rouge and 11 cemeteries in East Feliciana). Therefore, in the Uplands, cemeteries have been recorded as archaeological sites in compliance with development and the regional archaeologist’s interests. In general, cemeteries recorded as archaeological sites are more prevalent in areas of development, such as the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Statistical Area (refer to MSA evolution on Fig 1-2).
Figure 10-2. Archaeological Cemetery Sites and Inundated Areas.
Cemeteries recorded as archaeological sites are lacking in Subareas B, D, E and the metropolitan area of Lafayette. Most noticeable in Figure 10-2, is the lack of cemeteries recorded as archaeological sites west of the Mississippi River. This is significant when considering the percentage of cemeteries surveyed as "in peril," "closed" or "not visible" in Wetland parishes. In spite of cemetery density in Pointe Coupee, a lack of development (such as new highways) since historic preservation legislation has left the parish conspicuously barren of cemeteries documented as archaeological sites.

On the border of St. James and St. John the Baptist parishes, new highways, access routes and a bridge across the Mississippi River have altered the surrounding landscape of Woodville Cemetery (site no. 1039). A 1978 archaeological survey indicated that the cemetery (site 16SJB16) would not be impacted by highway construction. However, the cemetery is stranded from its former community on a closed access onramp. Abutted by asphalt and cane fields the dimensions of the parcel are different from the 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle (188C).

The few active cemeteries in the parishes of St. John the Baptist (three "in use" (including one archaeological site 16SJB16) and one "not visible") and St. Charles (two "in use," one "in peril" and two archaeological sites nos. 16SC50 and 16SC51) are indicative of recent demographic changes. The two archaeological sites located in the Bonnet Carre Spillway increase St. Charles parish derelict cemeteries to 60 percent (three out of five cemeteries). In St. John the Baptist and St. Charles parishes, historic
cemeteries are long gone. New cemeteries are needed to accommodate these burgeoning bedroom suburbs of Greater New Orleans.

In accordance with regulations, archaeologists are called upon to document the happenstance discovery of human remains during subsurface construction. Along the course of the Mississippi River meanders and levees there are 18 cemeteries documented as archaeological sites. Concentrated and continuous development have impacted cemeteries along the course of the Mississippi River and to the west. In contrast, along the Atchafalaya River and floodway there is only one archaeological site documented, Bayou Sorrel Mound. The lack of archaeological sites west of the Mississippi River is a result of construction prior to historic preservation legislation in the Atchafalaya Floodway. Many cemeteries in the Atchafalaya Basin were destroyed during earlier flooding. Furthermore, regional archaeologists have not focused their interests upon reconnaissance of cemetery sites within the Wetlands.

C. Areas of Inundation

Shown in Figure 10-2 are shaded areas designated “Inundated Areas.” Digitized from the LOSCO CD raster image, these polygons indicate areas, such as river bends, swamps, marshes and lakes, where cemeteries are in peril from flooding, ongoing subsidence and resultant shoreline changes. Only 22 USGS/GNIS cemeteries were located inside “Inundated Areas,” and two cooccur with archaeological sites. Several cemeteries are situated on shorelines or within levee walls and are likely “in peril,” or “not visible” on the surface. Only six archaeological sites were located inside “Inundated Areas.” Two archaeological sites (16TA90 and 16SJB3) were located on
the shores of Lake Ponchatrain. Archaeological site 16TA90 is now well-below the water line. Of the 22 USGS/GNIS cemeteries inside “Inundated Areas” nine were “not surveyed,” six were “in use,” three were “closed” and four were “not visible.”

Settlements inside the Atchafalaya Basin were greatly damaged during the Great Flood of 1927. The few communities that remained after the flood eventually relocated elsewhere. Communities gradually migrated toward the outer edges of the Atchafalaya Basin. The heart of the Atchafalaya was abandoned by communities, such as Bayou Chene. By 1950, most families had moved beyond the guide levee walls. New communities settled the guide levees where bayous provide easy access into the swamp (Comeaux 1969). With the exception of Krotz Springs and Morgan City, most towns around the floodway are new. New innovations and amenities, such as schools and electricity, attracted people out of the swamp. The outboard motor further facilitated this relocation by making commutes to fishing grounds inside the spillway feasible. Cemeteries within the floodway were inundated and eventually forgotten.

Butte La Rose is the only community that remains within the spillway today. Butte La Rose cemetery was once map documented as located on an Indian Mound on the west bank of the Atchafalaya River (site no. 899). This cemetery appears on 1935 and 1955 map editions as separated from the community and exposed to inundation within the levee walls. Local interviews during a field survey revealed the cemetery had been inundated during 1920 and 1930s flooding, with further destruction after U.S. Army Corps of Engineers channel modifications.
Cemeteries that were never documented inside flood controls have disappeared. Case Cemetery was located on Bloody Bayou near the Atchafalaya River but there is neither historic map nor surface evidence of the cemetery's existence (Riffel and Gates 1996). Within the Atchafalaya Basin, four cemeteries are not accessible without a boat. These cemeteries cartographically appear as cultural feature artifacts from pre-flood map documentation of the Atchafalaya and Morganza floodway. All three cemeteries along the Bayou Chene (Lake Moufoulois 1971 orthophotomap 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle) were inundated (Riffel and Gates 1996). The largest cemetery was associated with a small Methodist Church and all that remains is a sign: "Church Cemetery" (Riffel and Gates 1996).

In most cases, the human remains of abandoned cemeteries lie in situ, hidden beneath a surface of accumulated decay and silt. Prior to USGS mapping efforts, numerous cemeteries were erased from the surface. For example, Knox Plantation Church, School and Cemetery is located inside the Lower Old River Flood Channel (site no. 7). This cemetery is not accessible for survey but can be presumed to no longer exist. As shown in Figure 10-2, four cemeteries (site nos. 7, 16SC50, 16SC51, 16EBR56) were apparently destroyed during inundation and/or flood control construction. Closure of the Bonnet Carre Spillway exposed human remains that had eroded to the surface and two cemeteries were recorded (site nos. 16SC50 and 16SC51, St. Charles Herald 5/1/75).

Of toponymic interest in the Wetlands are physical features associated by name with graveyards, such as "Graveyard Bayou" and "Graveyard Island." These
topographic features lack historic to present map documentation or surface evidence of
cemeteries. As recounted by a long-time resident of Graveyard Island, the cemetery on
the island was in use during an influenza epidemic, the Great Depression, and earlier by
Native Americans (Ivy Alford personal communication, 1997). Graveyard Bayou was
modified by construction of the Atchafalaya Basin Main Channel and Lake Mongoulois
Oil and Gas Field. Graveyard Bayou is now an intermittent stream without cultural
feature associations to a cemetery.

Besides cemeteries discovered during development or sought out by regional
archaeologists, in the Wetlands there are 11 cemeteries in the study area that were
recorded as a result of their co-occurrence with prehistoric mounds. Prehistoric Indian
Mounds that cooccur with cemeteries recorded as archaeological sites are labeled in
Figure 10-2. Indian Mounds are often the highest elevations around, and therefore, were
suitable as locations for burial above the rising water line. Stories of evacuation during
flooding to higher elevation mounds and levees attest to the importance of these
locations. However, an additional bias in cemeteries recorded as archaeological sites is
apparent, in that cemeteries situated atop prehistoric mounds are often described as
incidental to the site or as a prehistoric site disturbance.

Cemeteries that are prone to flooding are displayed on the Bayou Sorrel 7.5-
minute USGS quadrangle in which all three cemeteries within one 15-minute area (Lake
Chicot 1959) are situated. Two of the three cemeteries are archaeological sites – one is
a prehistoric mound and the other is “not visible” on the surface. “Bayou Sorrell
Cemetery” (site no. 16IV4) is also known as “Indian Mound Cemetery” and “Kniffen

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1938.” There have been no burials in this cemetery since the 1960s for lack of space (Comeaux 1969:50). This cemetery is a good example of changes in research focus and perspective over time. C. B. Moore first documented Bayou Sorrel Cemetery in 1913. Kniffen mentioned it during his 1938 survey of mounds in Iberville parish.

Subsequent surveys of Bayou Sorrel Cemetery describe Kniffen’s collection of prehistoric artifacts at this site but show little interest in the cemetery atop the mound. The earliest grave marker is dated 1882. Thus, the cemetery was not historic during Kniffen’s survey. A recent site report mentioned discrepancy in site location on Division of Archaeology maps, as well as site damage due to grave digging and flood erosion (Manning et al. 1987). The prehistoric mound and historic cemetery are protected within flood walls but changes in the bayou’s course have altered the landscape. Cemeteries to the north and south of Bayou Sorrel Mound were destroyed during flooding.

Another cemetery associated with a mound and also called “Indian Mound” (site no. 953) was solely documented by the GNIS. This cemetery was map transferred without interpretation onto a photogramatic 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle (184A) south of Butte La Rose Cemetery and does not appear visible in the image. Although this cemetery is inaccessible for a survey there are probably no surface remains. Except for Evelyn Bond Mound (archaeological site 16LV79), most cemeteries situated atop mounds are within “Inundated Areas” or near shorelines. Evelyn Bond Mound, located in Livingston parish, is uniquely situated north of the cultural blur line designated as Nance 1998 (Figure 10-2).
The preferred locations of nineteenth century Southern cemeteries had been rural settings, beyond city limits. In Louisiana, the preferred locations for cemeteries were along transportation routes available at the time, such as a river or railroad. With the advent of the automobile and highways these cemeteries were isolated, except by railroad stops (Pattison 1955). Today, the empty expanses of land between cemeteries and urban centers are no longer vacant. Older cemeteries are now subsumed by major transportation conduits or industrial development. Subsequent to the establishment of historic cemeteries, zoning and transportation routes have altered the surrounding landscape.

In Subarea F, several historic cemeteries were map documented along the old levee road of the Mississippi River in West Baton Rouge parish (Figure 10-3(A)). The old levee road is now a relic tree-lined and tractor-rutted road. In use by local farmers, the road is impassable in many places due to the obstruction of agricultural buildings posted “no trespassing.” The newer paved highway along the Mississippi River levee disrupted the infrastructure of an older community’s activities. Several cemeteries on the old levee road were once integrally associated with church, community and plantation.

The small communities (and cemeteries) of “Glennon” (site no. 438) and “Alford” (site no. 458) bear the names of prominent families with a plantation heritage in this subarea. Today, there is very little left of the agricultural community. Both cemeteries are “in peril.” In the landscape surrounding Alford Cemetery are the
Figure 10-3. Subarea C (A) and Subarea F (B).
remains of a tree-lined road that once linked this cemetery situated midway between church and community along the levee. To the south, "BM Graveyard" (site no. 457) was map documented on a 1939 edition and portrayed on recent maps as transected by the new levee road. This cemetery is "not visible" today.

The landscape remains of three cemeteries (site nos. 459, 460 and 461) were "not visible" during a summer survey. However, the old levee road that connected cemeteries to communities and church was apparent in recent West Baton Rouge parish aerial photographs (1992). By comparing recent aerial photographs with USGS topographic maps, cemetery locations that were "not visible" on the horizon were apparent amidst new landscape contexts. These cemeteries were resurveyed during the winter. Two were ranked as "in peril" as a result of agricultural encroachment, overgrowth and new surrounding activities. The third cemetery (site no. 461) is "closed" as it is neither distinguishable as a cemetery nor accessible inside a mass of overgrowth that is encroached by agricultural activities.

Price-Williams Cemetery (16WBR40) was documented archaeologically as it is situated inside a bend in the Mississippi River. This cemetery was not identified on historic to present maps. The 1993 archaeological site record indicates grave erosion and removal (Hahn 1994). The cemetery is described as:

. . . part of a small black community during late 19th and early 20th centuries associated with the ownership of Theophile Mahier and the Price-Williams families. Probably abandoned in 1930s.
The cemetery was buried under recent alluvium and intended for removal during construction of an “articulated concrete mat construction” as part of a levee revetment. Of interest to this study is Price-Williams Cemetery concurrence with cemetery distances to the north of 2.9 to 3.9 kilometers (site no. 438, 457 and 458). Price Williams Cemetery completes a sequence of 3 to 3.5 kilometers between cemeteries.

The abandonment of the old levee road contributed to low visibility and lack of access to cemeteries in Subarea F. Research of land transaction records at the parish assessor’s office revealed that cemeteries in Subarea F share the names of families with land holdings predating this century. In the early 1930s, several properties were seized, liquidated and sold at sheriffs’ auctions. Rarely do land transaction records specifically mention cemeteries as excluded from property transference or as part of the property description.

Most land transaction records, reserve mineral rights (for instance, oil leases), but few documents specifically mention rights of access to cemeteries or exclusion of a cemetery from land transference. One provision was made for continued burial and maintenance of site no. 459 when the Devall sisters donated land (formerly a part of Ashland Plantation) to St. Marks Baptist Church. The cemetery was donated as a community burial ground with provisions that “grounds are kept in order and grass and weeds cut twice a year.” Similar to other cemeteries in the immediate vicinity, this cemetery is now decontextualized by its low visibility behind a new home, away from the main thoroughfare, and obscured by seasonal overgrowth.
To the south of Subarea F along the Mississippi River, is a cemetery (site no. 852) that has been preserved and restored by a petrochemical industry. As a concession to the community, this cemetery was restored by the nearby industry and is still "in use." In 1923 the Mount Olive Relief Association, a benevolent organization "formed for taking care of the sick and burying the dead," received a one acre donation of the northeast corner of the Eliza Plantation.

In Subarea C, Burnside Cemetery (site no. 1005) is a large overgrown lot amidst grazing pastures leased by IT Corporation (Figure 10-3(B)). This cemetery is situated behind the Burnside (petrochemical) Terminal, but was formerly located at the apex of three plantations: Old Riverton, Donaldson and Clark. Burnside Cemetery may have served the surrounding community. South of Burnside Cemetery (north of the Sunshine Bridge), two other cemeteries (site nos. 1011 and 1012) were associated with plantations but are now located within petrochemical industries: DuPont, Exxon and Star Enterprise.

Both Burnside Cemetery (site no. 1005) and Monroe Plantation Cemetery (site no. 1012) were recorded archaeologically (site nos. 16AN28 and 16AN31). Burnside Cemetery was recorded as part of surveys for a proposed hazardous waste management facility in 1980 and gas pipeline in 1987. Monroe Plantation Cemetery was also surveyed as a part of the 1987 proposed gas pipeline but the site report does not mention cemetery accessibility or condition. The UTMs from the archaeological survey for Monroe Cemetery and GNIS digitized UTM deviate from the USGS map by

220
approximately 600 and 1400 meters, respectively. Thus, Monroe Cemetery is an example of problems with site location.

A gap in cemetery sequence along this stretch of the Mississippi River is apparent between site nos. 1012 (north of the Sunshine Bridge) and 1029 (south of the Sunshine Bridge in St. James parish). An industrial complex has consumed the landscape south of the Sunshine Bridge. South and west of the Mississippi River three large red dots mark locations where cemeteries would be expected based upon distances between surrounding cemeteries on either side of the Mississippi River. Two cemeteries would be situated inside industrial complexes, and one associated with Point Houmas Plantation. Distances between cemeteries in Subarea C range from 1.5 to 2.5 kilometers. Therefore, distances in excess of 3.5 kilometers, when considered in conjunction with human alterations to the land to water relationship, are suspect. The only cemetery within the study area that was within 500 meters of the Mississippi River is located within Subarea C (site no. 1022).

Ascension parish conveyance records indicate numerous sheriffs’ sales during the 1880s. The ultimate undoing of plantations is apparent in the series of parcel subdivisions by family members during the Great Depression and into the 1940s. Land holdings were commonly leased for oil rights (such as Standard Oil) in the 1920s, sold or private local partnerships were formed for mineral resource exploitation. Although Ascension parish land records are geographically referenced to 1994 Tobin maps, research of property transactions is complicated by the numerous oil conveyances and leases.
The petroleum industry encouraged the establishment of settlements along railroad routes, waterways and pipelines. The technological order of oil exploitation eradicated the remnants of plantation land holdings, especially along the Mississippi River corridor between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Within Subarea C, “in use” cemeteries are often associated with a church. Cemeteries “in peril” in Subarea C are a result of minimal funds for cemetery maintenance. As long-time residents and elderly are buried in small church yards, congregations diminish in size and funds. For example, south of the Sunshine Bridge (in St. James parish) there are four cemeteries (site nos. 1024, 1025, 1027 and 1029) of which three are at the end of local roads that terminate at railroad tracks (“Dead Ends”). Two of these cemeteries are “in peril” and two are “in use.” The one cemetery located on a main route is well-maintained and associated with a historic church, St. Mary’s chapel established 1857.

E. Summary

Cemeteries in Louisiana have been in particular danger from new land uses of oil drilling projects, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land modifications, recent urban and suburban development, and flooding (Advocate 7/30/95; St. Charles Herald 5/1/75; State Times 5/6/49, 9/2/56; 6/19/87; Times Picayune 4/10/84, 11/2/84, 8/14/85). Many of southeastern Louisiana’s old, rural and small cemeteries have been enveloped by swamps and bayous, taken over by development, subsumed by progress, or paved over with asphalt. The recounted stories of floating coffins along the bayous and rivers attest to the fragile state of Louisiana’s cemeteries. Without cleanup projects (such as governor-sponsored youth programs) or the efforts of coalitions (such as New Orleans’
“Save Our Cemeteries”), cemeteries that lack perpetual care plans or loving care of living relations become blights in the landscape.

The percentage of cemeteries that were solely documented for archaeological purposes indicates the potential number of burial sites that are within the study area but were never map documented. For instance, "New Site" is a cemetery that was first surveyed as an archaeological site in 1978 (access by boat). This cemetery was resurveyed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on September 6, 1994 (16SMY53). The cemetery lacks either USGS or GNIS map documentation. Located at the southernmost extent of the study area (south of Morgan City), this abandoned cemetery is estimated to have a cultural-historic nineteenth to twentieth century association. The small family cemetery of crypts is located on a natural levee and consequently has undergone “severe” erosional disturbance during Atchafalaya River flood stages. The high occurrence of undifferentiated, private, small, local, and rural cemeteries in southeastern Louisiana – and the lack of encouraged documentation – leads to speculation as to the number of cemeteries that have never been map documented or officially recorded in any way (Advocate 7/11/93).

Because there are few maps predating the 1927 flood, there are numerous cemeteries in the Wetlands that probably were never documented. For example, several cemeteries in the Wetlands were likely inundated within levee walls or inside flood control channels during successive flood stages. Many cemeteries that were formerly protected by old levees have been built over. For instance, Mission Church of the Nativity and Cemetery (site no. 16EBR56) was documented on Louisiana Department
of Public Works map prior to levee construction. Popular belief holds that the church
and cemetery were removed prior to construction. If not, the cemetery is now a part of
the levee.

At the southernmost extent of the study, area a mid-nineteenth to early twentieth
century family cemetery (site no. 16AS47) was relocated in preparation for US 90
construction (1991). However, the cemetery context had been destroyed previously
during underground utility disturbance. This cemetery is an example of the impact of
development prior to legislative protection of burial sites. Construction predating
historic preservation legislation may have destroyed many cemeteries which would
account for the few cemeteries associated with 1990 primary highways when compared
to the numerous cemeteries that were encroached by upgrades to 1950 and 1970
secondary highways. Many cemeteries probably were buried beneath the asphalt of
highways prior to legislative requirements for archaeological reconnaissance.

Commercial, political and private initiatives are involved in the construction of
levees, railways and roads. During the construction of levees, landscape sacrifices must
be made as to which features to salvage, protect or cutoff (Boone 1997). Communities
have been destroyed during the construction of, for example, the Atchafalaya Floodway
(Comeaux 1969). Prior to any legislative protection, the levee system contributed to the
destruction of cemeteries situated within the Atchafalaya Basin and Morganza
Floodway. Outside of the study area, along the gulf coast are cemeteries situated on the
inundated sides of levee walls. At the recent request of the U.S. Army Corps of
Engineers, cemeteries that were previously destroyed during levee and floodway
Many cemeteries in the state of Louisiana are not accounted for due to lack of visibility, official recognition or map documentation. Often during development (for instance, suburb expansion in Lafayette), an historic cemetery is unwittingly uncovered (Advocate 12/8/94; Betty Roberts personal communication, 1997). Undocumented burial sites are frequently “discovered” during land surveys for other purposes (such as pipeline construction) at which time these cemeteries are designated as archaeological sites.

Because cemeteries are not recognized as significant by national preservation legislation, concentrated efforts on the part of professional archaeologists are deterred when they have many other obligations in compliance with SHPO requirements. Thus, the documentation of cemeteries is largely left to individual family interests or local interests of avocationalists, such as genealogy societies. Of course, nonprofessional interests have their own purpose, agenda and priorities in documenting cemeteries. For example, avocationalists may focus on one plot, one section, one cemetery or all of the cemeteries within one parish. Intentions for cemetery documentation vary from tracing one family's history to documenting cemeteries as segregated: “Cemeteries, Catholic,” Cemeteries, Non-Catholic White” and “Cemeteries, Non-Catholic Negro” (Works Progress Administration records archived at Louisiana State Library).
CHAPTER 11. CEMETERY BOARD REGISTERED CEMETERIES

Factor VI: State Cemetery Regulations. Recent regulations may have been the demise of cemeteries that were already experiencing weakened community ties. A misinterpretation of Louisiana’s Cemetery Board regulations may have encouraged closure and eventual abandonment of cemeteries that were unable to comply. If a misinterpretation of state cemetery regulations inadvertently caused the closure of cemeteries that were unable to comply, then the unwarranted registration of nonprofit cemeteries confirms a regulation misinterpretation. Also, if traditional cemetery settings in southeastern Louisiana are abandoned as a result of preference for public cemeteries, then a decline in burial volume of “exempt” cemeteries can be related to burial volume increases in “nonexempt” cemeteries.

Although unintentional, Cemetery Board revised statutes encouraged the abandonment of cemeteries that were already suffering the consequences of evolving community, demographic shifts and transportation development. Since 1974, Cemetery Board regulations apply to cemeteries that charge in excess of twenty-five dollars for burial. Cemetery Board regulations required burial records or plat maps, as well as imposed penalties for lack of ground maintenance. Thus, cemeteries that charged minimal burial fees were “closed” or simply abandoned due to an inability to comply with new regulations. To the other extreme, cemetery caretakers that were able to comply with new regulations but not required to register, nevertheless registered with the Cemetery Board. Several caretakers of exempt cemeteries have submitted cemetery
descriptions that voice their concerns over new land uses. Thus, the function of the State of Louisiana Cemetery Board as a protective agency has also been misinterpreted.

A. Louisiana Cemetery Regulations

The State of Louisiana Cemetery Board (Cemetery Board) was established in 1974 to regulate cemeteries. A proliferation of commercial cemeteries created a need for taxation and regulation of profit cemeteries in Louisiana. Newly-established cemeteries are required to comply with zoning. Commercial cemeteries are not permitted to hold mortgages, liens and encumbrances. The Cemetery Board licenses cemeteries and regulates perpetual care funds in order to prevent cemeteries from defaulting on such obligations as burial plot maintenance. The Cemetery Board ensures that perpetual care plans are maintained and do not become bankrupt. Although the Cemetery Board has revoked licenses for fault of trust funds and perpetual care, it has never denied an application or license (Betty Roberts personal communication, 1997).

The Cemetery Board regulates a small portion of the state's cemeteries — 1,365 cemeteries located in sixty-four parishes (Louisiana Cemetery Board 1995). Of the cemeteries registered with the Cemetery Board, 930 are exempt from taxation and 435 are non-tax exempt, "nonexempt." The number of cemeteries that charge more than twenty-five dollars for interment (435), and thus are required to register with the Cemetery Board, is alarmingly few considering the number of cemeteries in Louisiana. From 1974 to 1997, cemeteries that sold plots for less than twenty-five dollars were not regulated. A recent provision (House Bill No. 2108(4) 1997) has raised cemetery exempt status:
Includes in the exemption from regulation community cemeteries, state cemeteries, and federal cemeteries that do not sell spaces or the right of use or which charge a maintenance fee per cemetery space in an amount in excess of $300.

This change in regulation means that cemeteries that are not registered will continue to be unrecognized. Furthermore, many cemeteries that are registered as "nonexempt" will become "exempt." Thus, many cemeteries will discontinue registration with the Cemetery Board. Other than those that voluntarily register, an even greater majority of cemeteries in Louisiana will not be recognized.

Louisiana Acts of 1974, Section 1 stated that it was "unlawful for any corporation, firm, trust, association or individual to engage in or transact any of the business of a cemetery within this state except by means of a corporation authorized to operate a cemetery," and that a certificate of authority was necessary. State of Louisiana Title 8, Cemeteries and Rules and Regulations of Louisiana Cemetery Board, in 1974 was retroactive. Cemeteries already in operation were required to comply with new regulations whether registered or not. The Louisiana Cemetery Act Title 8 and Rules and Regulations of Louisiana Cemetery Board includes amendments through 1993. These amendments added Section 203 to the statutes. Section 203 states that cemeteries in existence prior to July 31, 1974:

may continue to operate despite the fact that it may be owned and operated at said time by a corporation, partnership, firm, trust, association or individual (West's Louisiana Statutes Annotated 1993).
I propose that an inability to comply with the earlier statute requiring incorporation, along with Section 662 which requires records of each interment, promoted abandonment of cemeteries prone to dereliction. Furthermore, Section 905 permits local authorities to fine cemetery owners or shareholders for lack of upkeep, and thus encourages disassociation by responsible parties of cemeteries in need of maintenance. Fines for inadequate upkeep are enforced by local municipalities with up to five hundred dollars, six months imprisonment, or both. In Louisiana recurrent flooding, seasonal overgrowth and above-ground obstacles to machinery incur high costs to cemetery landscape maintenance.

New regulations require documentation of interments and plat maps. Many cemeteries had no records or only minimal information (Section 8:662). A lack of documentation for interments is a prevalent problem at all scales of cemeteries (family to commercial). Until recently, few cemeteries maintained records of interments. When I inquired of local longtime residents and funeral directors as to who was responsible for specific cemeteries that had been abandoned, the response was often "unknown" or persons no longer living in the area. In many cases, concerned citizens who lack sentimental ties to abandoned cemeteries will form clean up coalitions. For instance, Nickwax Cemetery was voluntarily cleaned by a local police chief (posted on gate 1997). Recent volunteer efforts sponsored by the governor's office cleaned Sweet Olive Cemetery in Baton Rouge (posted on street 1997).

In order to maintain cemeteries, Section 112 (1974) stated that if there was no longer in existence any living person associated with a cemetery and it was not being
used or maintained, the Cemetery Board could acquire it, make it public and maintain it. Although the Cemetery Board legally can expropriate abandoned cemeteries, it has yet to do so. Section 112 “Expropriation of abandoned private cemeteries” permits a governing authority of any municipal corporation or parish to expropriate abandoned private cemetery for public use. This provision would prevent a cemetery from being removed. West’s Louisiana Statutes Annotated 1993 Amendments makes no other provisions for abandoned cemeteries.

As with cemetery statutes elsewhere, once a cemetery is abandoned, it can be reclaimed by county or city and rededicated as grounds for parks, schools and so forth. Through city annexation, the City of New Orleans has acquired several historic cemeteries that were privately owned. The City of New Orleans is currently debating the economic viability of managing these cemeteries (Calvit 1996).

**B. Regulations of Cemetery Abandonment**

Since 1936, Louisiana statutes have addressed the permanency of property dedicated as cemetery and the removal of human remains (Section 4811 and 4812 of Revised Statutes 33). According to this statute, a lack of documentation of sale or record of ownership-transfer with the parish assessor’s office sanctions the removal of remains from land that was dedicated for burial purposes. Tax exempt, nonprofit cemeteries (such as family burial grounds) are not identified on the assessor’s roles. Thus, tax exempt cemeteries are neither recognized nor protected by statutes. In support of removing derelict cemeteries, revised Louisiana statutes present case examples of abandoned cemeteries in ruins.
An example of cemetery abandonment and new land needs is cited in Revised Statute 8:307 (1974), Touro Synagogue v. Goodwill Industries of New Orleans Area, Inc., 1957:

Where there had been no interment in the Touro Synagogue cemetery since 1872, its condition of disintegration was such as to render it unfit for burial purposes, public and survivors or others interested in its use as cemetery failed to keep and preserve it as resting place for dead, and nothing remained to stir emotions or sentiments of relatives of dead, cemetery was abandoned for burial purposes and owner had right to sell property conditioned upon disinterment and reinterment of remains of dead in another cemetery.

From this statute it is apparent that a case for disinterment based upon lack of preservation, perpetual care or sentiments of living memory is legally sanctioned.

In response to urban and industrial development in areas of earlier economic growth, the statutes of other states addressed similar issues of cemetery abandonment and new land uses during the 1930s. Louisiana's lag in following the national trend for urbanization has only recently raised concerns for cemetery abandonment. As a result of earlier and more intense urban development, California statutes specifically addressing cemetery abandonment (1939) were written thirty-five years earlier than Louisiana's cemetery statutes (1974). Louisiana's Cemetery Act Title 8 consists of 905 sections whereas there are more than 5,000 sections in the California Health and Safety Code addressing cemetery regulation — both human and pet burials (West's Annotated California Codes 1970). Chapters 7 and 12 of the California Health and Safety Code, address in their entirety public and private cemetery abandonment and the conditions
and measures necessary for reappropriation of land designated for cemetery use.

California’s cemetery abandonment regulations were created in response to the need for cemetery maintenance and reappropriation of cemeteries due to extreme land use pressures.

In contrast to Louisiana, Memorial Parks were first established in California in the early decades of the twentieth century. On the average, cemeteries in California are no older than one hundred years and are larger (maximum limit five acres) than cemeteries in Louisiana. In California, local municipalities (cities or counties) are assigned as cemetery districts that govern the use, maintenance and appropriation of cemeteries. The determination of a condition of cemetery “abandonment” is based on various criteria, such as population within the municipality, cemetery size, and lack of use for five, fifteen and twenty years (approximately one generation) (California Health and Safety Code Sections 7700, 8825, and 9201).

In California, municipalities can restrict use and cause removal of “nuisance” cemeteries (California Health and Safety Code Section 7700). Population density is related to the number of cemeteries necessary to serve as a functioning part of the local infrastructure. Population size within a municipality determines the control given to a governing body, city or county. In this manner, the management of cemeteries at the local level is most appropriate for addressing issues of health and safety. After the removal of human remains, a municipality may manage, control, reuse, sell or rededicate the property for other purposes. For instance, the property may be rededicated as a “pioneer Memorial Park.” Several California statutes address the
expropriation of designated cemetery property when the land is needed for other purposes, such as an interstate highway (California Health and Safety Code Article 12 Section 8000).

Unlike California statutes, Louisiana does not limit the size of cemeteries nor the number of new cemeteries established within a region. Regarding California cemeteries, in 1963 Mitford stated:

In recent hearings on a cemetery application in Los Angeles, there was testimony from numerous sources that there already existed sufficient cemetery facilities to handle all burials in the Los Angeles area for the next hundred years (Mitford 1963:147).

However, as a result of cemetery removal and the establishment of large Memorial Parks outside city limits, California has fewer cemeteries than Louisiana (Zelinsky 1994:33). When considering the population growth per area over a century, California should have considerably more cemeteries than most other states. Prior to 1930s statutes, many cemeteries in California were likely erased from the surface during earlier decades of development.

In Louisiana only two out of sixty-four parishes (Grant and Terrebonne) have established local cemetery districts. Otherwise, the State of Louisiana Cemetery Board acts as a statewide governing agency, with little local control or funds for local preservation efforts. Few governing boards have successfully received funds for countywide projects of cemetery maintenance or preservation.

Other states have provisions that take the burden of cemetery abandonment away from owners and caretakers. In California, local municipalities are granted control over...
maintenance, reclamation or removal of burials. In this manner, penalties that encourage cemetery abandonment in Louisiana are avoided in other states. Jurisdiction over cemeteries at the level of districts or local municipalities is most appropriate for effective management of cemeteries under land use pressures. The management of cemetery landscapes is a local issue. Initiatives for funds and incentives for volunteer coalitions originate from concerns over the visible blight of cemetery dereliction.

C. Registered Cemetery Location

The Cemetery Board maintains records for cemeteries that voluntarily register ("exempt") and those that are required to register ("nonexempt"). From 1982 to 1995 Cemetery Board records were standardized. Although lacking coordinated locations, Cemetery Board records were most useful to this study. In 1995, certificates of registration on a three-year basis were issued and became due in 1998. From 1992 to 1995, 458 cemeteries in the study area were registered and 449 locations were identified (Figure 11-1). Although the study area encompasses approximately one-fifth of the state of Louisiana, one-third of registered cemeteries are located within the southeast portion of the state. The distribution of registered cemeteries is remarkable when considering approximately one-third of the study area is Wetlands.

Due to the lack of location documentation, most Cemetery Board registered cemetery locations were determined by USGS/GNIS co-occurrence (by common names) or estimated by location descriptions. Co-occurrences were confirmed by searching cemetery names in the USGS/GNIS database or by descriptions of each cemetery at various scales — from parish, town to highway directions. Differences between
Figure 11-1. Exempt and Nonexempt Registered Cemeteries.
USGS/GNIS cemetery names and those given for Cemetery Board registration were often changes in spelling, increased length in names or abbreviations (such as acronyms). Frequently, different names were given for the survey response than the name on the Cemetery Board’s registration records. Further complicating a search and match by name, were the numerous undifferentiated cemeteries with common names of “Saints,” “Mounts” and “Zion” with “New” and “Old.”

In the Cemetery Board database names of “Saints” were the most common (24 percent) with eight cemeteries named “St. Joseph” and numerous variations on “St. John.” In contrast, cemeteries named for “Saints” only account for 9 percent of GNIS cemeteries. The only distinction between cemeteries named after “Saints” in the Cemetery Board records is often the parish in which the cemetery is located. The increased percentage of “Saints” registered with the Cemetery Board is explained by required registration of profit (“nonexempt”) cemeteries – 65 percent of cemeteries named after “Saints” are nonexempt.

As shown in Figure 11-1, the lack of co-occurrence between USGS/GNIS, Division of Archaeology and Cemetery Board cemeteries increased cemetery occurrence within the study area. The increased cemetery occurrence by Cemetery Board registration, implies the potential number of low-profile and undifferentiated cemeteries that were never map documented or archaeologically surveyed.

1. Exempt and Nonexempt Cemetery Distribution

   Since 1982, the registration of exempt cemeteries (nonprofit) outnumbers nonexempt cemeteries – those required to register. In spite of the fact that the drive for
compliance with Cemetery Board regulations was withdrawn, the number of exempt cemeteries registering increased from 168 to 244 over 14 years. As shown in Table 11-1, within the study area 63 percent of registered cemeteries are exempt and 37 percent nonexempt. A majority of exempt cemeteries are located in the Uplands and the majority of nonexempt cemeteries are located in the Wetlands. Registered cemetery occurrence is thus contradictory to the USGS/GNIS cemeteries which are more heavily distributed in the Uplands.

Table 11-1. Upland and Wetland Cemetery Distribution by Source.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Upland</th>
<th>Wetland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>609</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>239</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>112</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>154</td>
<td>127</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>135</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Uplands, St. Helena, East Feliciana and West Feliciana have only one nonexempt cemetery — located in each parish seat. Surrounding the urban areas of Hammond in Tangipahoa (Subarea B) and north of Baton Rouge in East Baton Rouge (Subarea A) there is an increased occurrence in nonexempt cemeteries. Therefore, in the Upland parishes nonexempt cemeteries are associated with urban places. As a result of local efforts to document and register heritage cemeteries with the Cemetery Board, Upland parishes have disproportionately more exempt cemeteries registered than nonexempt.
A higher occurrence of registered cemeteries (58 percent) in the Wetlands than in the Uplands is attributed to nonexempt cemeteries in the predominantly Catholic portion of the study area. In the southern half of the study area (two-thirds of the Wetlands), a French-Catholic influence is apparent with more nonexempt (for-profit) cemeteries registered. In Table 11-2 parishes that have a higher percentage of exempt cemeteries in the Wetlands (Ascension, Avoyelles, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, and St. Landry) indicate a cultural preference for nonprofit burial. Parishes north of Interstate 10 in the Wetlands, however, have more exempt than nonexempt cemeteries.

A substantial number of nonexempt cemeteries are located in southeastern Louisiana as a result of cultural and topographic influences in the Wetlands. While cultural influences determine the distribution of exempt or nonexempt cemeteries within a region, required registration of cemeteries charging in excess of twenty-five dollars is also responsible for recognition of nonexempt cemetery occurrence in inundated areas. Both the cost for Catholic burial and protection from inundation have promoted nonexempt cemetery occurrence in the Wetlands. However, according to 1997 provisions, many nonexempt cemeteries will acquire exempt status by 1998. The change in registration status excluding cemeteries that charge less than three hundred dollars will probably reduce the number of cemeteries registered as nonexempt, especially in the Wetlands.

2. Exempt Cemetery Registration

Although the Cemetery Board maintains that there was no closure of cemeteries due to the 1974 regulations, responses to a survey questionnaire indicate otherwise. Of
Table 11-2. Cemetery Distribution, Population, Burial Volume and New Cemeteries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ascension</td>
<td>216%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>2406</td>
<td>1:2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumption</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2139</td>
<td>1:33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoyelles*</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concordia*</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Baton Rouge</td>
<td>457%</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>24315</td>
<td>1:12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Feliciana</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>1:9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iberia*</td>
<td>142%</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>4688</td>
<td>1:7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iberville</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>2749</td>
<td>1:3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafayette*</td>
<td>324%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>9148</td>
<td>1:11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafourche*</td>
<td>165%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>2664</td>
<td>1:8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>287%</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>71</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>2284</td>
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(Cont'd.)
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<th>3</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>332</th>
<th>0</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Helena</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>2.7:1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2305</td>
<td>1:16.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2242</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>St. Martin</td>
<td>102%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>3604</td>
<td>1:5.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>St. Mary*</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>4010</td>
<td>1:12.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>168</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1522</td>
<td>3724</td>
<td>2.4:1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terrebonne*</td>
<td>225%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>3.8:1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermilion*</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Baton Rouge</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Feliciana</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>2.2:1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = partial parish shaded
shaded = Upland parish
146 survey responses, 53 survey respondents (36 percent) indicated they were required
to register when in fact the Cemetery Board identifies these cemeteries as exempt. Only
3 percent of exempt survey respondents indicated they were not required to register and
11 percent did not respond to the question. Thus, 50 percent of survey respondents were
exempt from Cemetery Board registration yet felt compelled to comply. The ratio of
exempt cemetery survey responses to nonexempt indicates a sense of obligation on the
part of caretakers.

Caretakers of exempt cemeteries express concerns for their particular cemetery
by voluntarily registering with the Cemetery Board. Often, the sole purpose of exempt
cemetery registration is acknowledgment with an official entity. Several exempt
cemeteries are no longer in use and are disassociated from family members. In many
cases, family cemeteries are now located on someone else’s property. In one case, a
cemetery owner was being sued for his property and registered the family cemetery in
hopes that it would be excluded from legal transaction. The voluntary registration of
exempt cemeteries indicates a false impression that with Cemetery Board registration
there is legal recourse for protection.

As shown in Table 11-2, Livingston and Tangipahoa parishes have the highest
occurrence of exempt cemeteries. This indicates parish-wide concerns for preservation.
For instance, St. Martin parish only has 20 cemeteries documented by USGS/GNIS and
19 are registered with the Cemetery Board. To the other extreme, in spite of 102
cemeteries identified by the USGS/GNIS in St. Helena parish only 10 cemeteries are
registered as exempt and one as nonexempt.
The high occurrence of exempt cemeteries in Livingston and Tangipahoa exemplifies the Uplands distribution of early British settlement patterns with family cemeteries and nonprofit church associated cemeteries. These two parishes also intimate concerns for historic continuity and preservation. One-third of cemetery contacts (64 registered cemeteries) within Livingston parish responded even though 91 percent of cemeteries registered (58 out of 64) are exempt from registration. Livingston is the only parish in which road signs consistently indicate cemetery access routes with family names posted.

Although the number of derelict cemeteries and cemeteries recently impacted by development (archaeological sites) may have encouraged Cemetery Board registration of exempt cemeteries this is difficult to assess at the parish level. In spite of the predominantly urban population in East Baton Rouge, exempt cemeteries outnumber nonexempt. West Baton Rouge parish, however, shows a lack of concern for cemetery preservation. In West Baton Rouge, nine out of 27 USGS/GNIS cemeteries are derelict with an additional two cemeteries that are solely documented as archaeological sites. In spite of cemetery destruction, voluntary registration with the Cemetery Board is conspicuously absent in West Baton Rouge. As with St. Charles and St. John the Baptist parish, a recent preference for nonexempt cemeteries is apparent in West Baton Rouge parish.

Table 11-3 illustrates the relationship between Cemetery Board registered cemeteries and transportation confluences. A majority of registered cemeteries are within 500 meters of 1990 secondary highways and 24 to 39 percent are within 500
meters of 1950 railroads. In the Wetlands, 41 to 47 percent of registered cemeteries are within 500 meters of a waterway. As with other cemetery sources, registered cemeteries are minimally associated with 1990 primary highways. Similar to this study’s findings in Chapter 9(E), Cemetery Board registered cemeteries in the Uplands are not dependent on transportation confluences.

Table 11-3. Exempt and Nonexempt Cemeteries within 500 Meter Buffers of Transportation Features.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990 Primary</th>
<th>1990 Secondary</th>
<th>1950 Railroads</th>
<th>Waterways</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Uplands 24 percent of exempt cemeteries (44 percent of Uplands exempt cemeteries) are within 500 meter buffer zones of transportation confluences. Fourteen percent of nonexempt cemeteries (70 percent of Uplands nonexempt cemeteries) are within 500 meter buffer zones of transportation confluences. In the Wetlands, 28 percent of exempt cemeteries (62 percent of Wetlands exempt cemeteries) are within 500 meter buffer zones of transportation confluences. Sixty percent of nonexempt cemeteries (75 percent of Wetlands nonexempt cemeteries) are within 500 meter buffer zones of transportation confluences.
In general, a majority of Uplands exempt cemeteries are situated more than 500 meters beyond transportation confluences whereas in the Wetlands a majority of exempt cemeteries are within 500 meters of transportation confluences. Nonexempt cemeteries in both the Wetlands and Uplands are most commonly associated with transportation confluences. For the most part, the occurrence of generalized registered cemetery locations concurs with sampled buffers of USGS/GNIS cemeteries with more cemeteries in the Wetlands associated with transportation features of waterways, levees, railroads, and highways.

D. Burial Volume

As a part of registering with the Cemetery Board, cemeteries itemize the number of burials received the previous year. The burial volume in exempt and nonexempt cemeteries was calculated from these statistics. The calculation of burial volume for cemeteries that charge in excess of twenty-five dollars (nonexempt) is accurate. Because exempt cemeteries are not required to register, the calculation of burial volume is only a representative sample.

From 1982 to 1995, the number of burials recorded by exempt cemeteries ranges from zero to 95 with a mean range of 3.7 to 4.5 burials per annum. In 1982 the mean number of exempt burials was 4.2 and 3.7 in 1989. Since 1991 there has been a steady decline in the average number of burials in exempt cemeteries from 4.3 to 3.8 in 1995. Nonexempt cemeteries, however, have shown a steady increase in the average number of burials per annum from 31.9 in 1982 to 32.9 in 1989, with subsequent increases from 34.9 in 1991 to 36.8 in 1995. Besides the larger number of burials recorded by
nonexempt cemeteries, the steady increase in nonexempt burials since 1990 indicates a preference for burial in nonexempt cemeteries. This preference is further enhanced by the decline in exempt burials.

Of 169 nonexempt cemeteries 16 received 100 or more burials in one year. Nonexempt cemeteries with large burial volume are located in metropolitan areas of Lafayette and Baton Rouge, and densely populated urban places on primary highways. Furthermore, nonexempt cemeteries with a large burial volume are exclusively located in parishes with greater than 75 percent population growth over 60 years. An arbitrary criterion for “large” cemeteries that are nonexempt was chosen as 100 or more burials and 10 or more burials for exempt cemeteries, in any registration year (Table 11-1). Cemeteries that meet these criteria in burial volume are distinguished as “Large Exempt” cemeteries and “Large Nonexempt” cemeteries in Figure 11-1.

From 1982 to 1995 the Upland parishes show a greater burial volume in exempt cemeteries than nonexempt (Table 11-2). As a sample, the burial volume calculated in Table 11-2 establishes a relationship for comparison of nonexempt and exempt preference. Upland parishes show relatively fewer nonexempt burials with ratios of nonexempt to exempt that indicate preference for burial in exempt cemeteries.

Several Upland parish exempt cemeteries outnumber nonexempt in burial volume (Table 11-2). This is especially true in rural population parishes of St. Helena, East Feliciana, and West Feliciana which lack interstates or urban places with a substantial population. Although Livingston parish has the most registered cemeteries and new cemeteries, the ratio of exempt to nonexempt burials is one to one. In contrast,
nonexempt burials in the Wetlands outnumber exempt burials, especially in parishes with a high occurrence of nonexempt cemeteries. For instance, Assumption parish has 2.5 nonexempt burials for every exempt burial.

In 1990, the parish of St. John the Baptist was 97 percent urban. The nonexempt burial volume in St. John the Baptist parish represents one cemetery established in 1993 which receives an average of 448 burials per year. Similarly, the tabulation of exempt to nonexempt burial ratio in West Baton Rouge parish is not comparable because there is no representation for burial volume in exempt cemeteries. In general, exempt cemeteries that received 10 burials in any year (Large Exempt cemeteries) are situated on primary highways at urban places with regular intervals between cemeteries of twenty miles, more or less (Figure 11-1).

Visually apparent in Figure 11-1 is the relative isolation and greater dispersal of derelict USGS/GNIS cemeteries when compared to registered cemeteries (exempt or nonexempt) that have a large burial volume. Likewise, cemeteries that receive few burials are more widely dispersed and relatively isolated from urban nodes and primary corridors of activity. The numerous Large Exempt cemeteries in Livingston and the minimal burial volume are indicative of local family and small cemeteries. The unique distribution of Large Exempt cemeteries along the southern cultural blur boundary designated as Nance 1998 indicates a preference in burial place – north of the rising shore line but south of the Uplands. Large Exempt cemeteries south of the cultural blur line are not associated with church or family names but appear to be community cemeteries that receive between four to 23 burials in a year. Thus, in conjunction with
Evelyn Bond Mound (archaeological site no. 16LV79), the cultural blur line of Nance 1998 could be moved northward based on cemetery distribution in relation to inundation.

E. Subareas A and B

The ratios of nonexempt to exempt burial volumes insinuate a preference for burial in cemeteries that charge more than twenty-five dollars, especially within urban areas. The metropolitan areas of East Baton Rouge and Lafayette have similar burial ratios of 1:12 and 1:11, exempt to nonexempt (Table 11-2). Shown in Figure 11-2 are subareas of metropolitan concentration and transportation confluences inside Subarea A (A), Subarea B (B), and Lafayette (C) (Figure 7-1).

Although the ratio of nonexempt to exempt burials within East Baton Rouge parish is 12.4 to one, it is apparent that burial in exempt cemeteries is still popular in East Baton Rouge (Figure 11-2(A)). Both Large Exempt cemeteries and Large Nonexempt cemeteries are distributed north of Baton Rouge along the northern corridors of primary highway LA 67. Large cemeteries coincide with relatively recent population growth and suburban development. Apparent are the numerous archaeological sites that have been surveyed as both industries and suburbs encroached upon the numerous inactive cemeteries. Low profile cemeteries are in various stages of abandonment as high volume burial sites near Baker, Zachary and Slaughter are preferred.

Formerly associated with a township or crossroads, five map documented cemeteries along LA 19 from Baton Rouge to Ethel are "not visible" on the surface.
Figure 11-2.  Subarea A (A), Subarea B (B) and Lafayette (C).
Azalea Rest (site no. 469) is a nonexempt cemetery that appears segregated. Recently, ownership was transferred. A portion of the cemetery is recorded as an historic archaeological site. Another portion is receiving an average number of nonexempt burials, approximately 35 burials per year. Abutting the highway intersection are burials in need of maintenance. Other cemeteries have similar distinctions based on race with claims that black cemeteries are not as well-maintained by the city (Times Picayune 6/13/90).

In Subarea A, visual cartographic interpretation reveals that new cemeteries are supplanting older derelict cemeteries. Similarly, newly paved roads are replacing the older routes, as new suburbs infiltrate this formerly rural area. Cemeteries surrounding LA 19 that are “closed” and “not visible” are mirrored in distribution by Large Exempt cemeteries and Large Nonexempt cemeteries situated along parallel primary highway LA 67. Southern Memorial (site no. 503) is located north of US 190, between LA 19 and LA 67 and has received 156 to 234 burials in a year. Hillcrest Memorial Park (site no. 509) near Baker is also a Large Nonexempt cemetery that has displaced small exempt cemeteries, receiving 68 to 113 burials per year.

As can be seen in Figure 11-2(A) several cemeteries are set back a distance from rural highways. These cemeteries bear family names, such as Barnes Cemetery (site no. 499). Barnes Cemetery appeared isolated on historic maps but has been engulfed by new suburbs and thus, is “not visible.” Several family cemeteries were consumed by new suburbs. Most notably, “Stanford,” “Shaffer,” and “Johnson” (sites nos. 470-472) were all once located within a few hundred meters of one another on a bayou, near...
Zachary. All three of these family cemeteries are "not visible" as new middle-class suburbs dominate the landscape. Young Cemetery (site no. 467) is an archaeological site, registered with the Cemetery Board although exempt and receiving burials.

In the case of Nickwax Cemetery (site no. 500), situated at the northern most corporate limits of Baton Rouge, the closure of a cemetery insures its abandonment. Nickwax presently lacks any known affiliation with a community, church or funeral parlor. This cemetery has been closed since the 1980s and is in dire need of conservation. At one time a rural cemetery, Nickwax was encroached upon by every kind of development imaginable – Baton Rouge Harbor, petrochemical industry and oil tank farm, police firing range, highway and railroad easements, landfill, above-ground utility lines, underground pipelines and cables — and parking is prohibited. Entrance into the cemetery is hazardous due to fallen trees and open graves. Many of the graves are open, eroding and inundated with standing water. Several graves that were located within easements were disinterred. These empty plots are evidence of a decreasing cemetery perimeter. As a result of abandonment, encroachment and industrial activities, Nickwax is barely discernable on the surface as a cemetery (Nance 1996). North of Nickwax a cemetery formerly known as Water Tank Cemetery (site no. 495) is no longer recognized and access to the area is obstructed by a guarded gate at the industrial complex entrance.

Several cemeteries in Subarea B were associated with the railroad and historic downtown Hammond (Figure 11-2(B)). Across from the historic downtown railroad depot is a cemetery (site no. 691) associated with a high-profile church that is still "in
use.” To the east of the depot, is an old cemetery (site no. 692) that is “closed” – partially subsumed under suburbs and decontextualized by new commercial activities. This cemetery was map documented as “Cems.” However, only a small portion of one historic cemetery in ruins is visible on the surface. West of the downtown area, along the east-west railroad tracks, is a cemetery (site no. 688) that is encroached and likely partially built over by suburbs. Two large community cemeteries (sites nos. 686 and 687) are located at the former town limits along US 51 and divided by Cemetery Road.

Near the Tangipahoa/Livingston border Bankston Cemetery (site no. 630) and the Nazarene church cemetery (site no. 632) are “not visible” on the surface, while the nearby Mt. Bethel church cemetery is still “in use.” Along rural route 43 in Livingston parish (parallel to the Tangipahoa border) are several cemeteries still “in use,” including the Hungarian Settlement cemetery (site no. 743).

Subarea B is remarkable for pride in heritage, as cultural continuity is evident in cemetery preservation. Of the 33 cemeteries in Subarea B, 20 were surveyed, and 75 percent are still “in use.” Three cemeteries were “closed,” two cemeteries were “not visible” and no cemeteries were “in peril.” The few cemeteries in stages of abandonment are located at the center of town or remotely situated away from roadways.

In Subarea B, traditional ties to small exempt and nonexempt cemeteries are indicative of cultural continuity. Large Exempt cemeteries in Subarea B receive marginally more than 10 burials in a year. One of several exempt cemeteries in Hammond, Jerusalem Baptist Church cemetery receives four to 19 burials in a year.
whereas nonexempt Green Lawn Cemetery (on Cemetery Road site no. 687) has received 20 to 46 burials in a year. Nonexempt cemeteries in Subarea B receiving fewer than 100 burials are Greenfield Baptist Church with eight to 57 burials and Rose Memorial, 22 to 48 burials. There are no Large Nonexempt cemeteries in Subarea B.

As shown in the subarea map of Lafayette (Figure 11-2(C)) there are several Large Exempt cemeteries and Large Nonexempt cemeteries along the corridors of newly constructed highways. Similar to Baton Rouge, population increase in Lafayette has promoted the number of burials in both exempt and nonexempt cemeteries (Table 11-2). The co-occurrence of Large Exempt cemeteries and Large Nonexempt cemeteries at the junctures of highways and railroads are apparent. Large Nonexempt cemeteries are on the periphery of historic Lafayette: Lafayette Memorial receives 38 to 141 burials in a year and Calvary Cemetery 123 to 209 burials in a year. In this subarea, nonexempt cemeteries outnumber exempt 16 to five.

To the east of Lafayette, St. Martin parish has few active cemeteries. However, the co-occurrence of Large Nonexempt cemetery St. Bernard No. 2 which has increased burials since 1982 from 26 to 111 and Large Exempt cemetery St. Bernard No. 1 (six to 85 burials with a peak of 95 in 1992) is remarkable. These two cemeteries are located in Breaux Bridge south of Interstate 10, north of the parish seat. The burial volume of these two cemeteries indicates a preference for cemeteries near highways, urban areas, and away from Wetlands.

The remnants of family cemeteries that are now engulfed by new activities attest to the abandonment of traditional cemetery landscapes surrounding Lafayette. Several
Broussard cemeteries are located south of Lafayette and outside the study area to the southwest. One Broussard cemetery (site no. 926) is maintained and protected by a fence while nearby Broussard cemetery (site no. 925) is undercut by a stream, overgrown and engulfed by new suburbs.

Both Hammond and Lafayette lack cemeteries documented as archaeological sites whereas Baton Rouge (Subarea A) has several cemeteries documented as archaeological sites. In Subarea B, the lack of archaeological sites is a result of minimal suburban development and lack of concentrated efforts by archaeologists in the Hammond area. Recent development and population increases in Lafayette apparently have not impacted cemeteries in a manner requiring archaeological survey. However, a newspaper article expresses fear of plot encroachment by family members of a cemetery south of Lafayette (Advocate 12/8/94). A California developer’s plans to expand upon Frenchman’s Creek Subdivision were thwarted until the dimensions of this 117-year old cemetery containing approximately 500 graves could be determined. The cemetery was built over during the 1980s, and only one family plot remains visible on the surface. Although the article attributes cemetery destruction to lack of documentation, neither cemetery name nor map reference are given.

F. Summary

Similar to cemeteries recorded with the Division of Archaeology, a substantial number of cemeteries registered with the Cemetery Board were not documented by the USGS or GNIS. Considering the likelihood that many nonprofit cemeteries (exempt from Cemetery Board registration) will never register and were not map documented,
comprehensive studies of cemeteries in Louisiana are difficult. A lack of cemetery
documentation is the eventual demise of historic cemeteries as grave markers weather
and vandalism takes its toll.

Of concern to preservationists and archaeologists is that many cemeteries have
never been officially acknowledged as existing, and most older cemeteries lack plot
identification of interments or survey map documentation of boundaries. A lack of
cemetery recognition means a lack of known location. Without a known location, low
profile and undifferentiated cemeteries are vulnerable to landscape changes. The above-
concerns have been submitted to the Cemetery Board by the voluntary registration of
exempt cemeteries that were able to comply with regulations. Those caretakers who
were unable to comply with Cemetery Board regulations “closed” their cemeteries to
burial and abandoned their once sacred places.

The encroachment of new development, and lapses in living memory, have been
the ultimate undoing of many cemeteries. Old cemeteries are places that belong to
another era. The cost to maintain an old cemetery is burdensome, especially for a
dwindling community or geographically dispersed family. In Louisiana, cemeteries that
charged minimally more than twenty-five dollars per burial, may have found themselves
in a very poor business indeed when it came to the high cost of landscape maintenance.
During the inflationary cycle of the 1960s and 1970s, many old cemeteries were
financially devastated (Sloane 1991:239-240). In many cases, only newer portions of
cemeteries are maintained while older sections fall into ruins. Many old cemeteries
receive little more than minimal care, as the concerns of living associations with a
cemetery fade.

Funeral directors may refuse services to cemeteries in need of repair or incapable
of accommodating machinery. As a result of landscape overgrowth and dereliction, few
persons voluntarily acknowledge association with poorly maintained cemeteries for fear
of imposed penalties (Louisiana Cemetery Board Regulations, Section 905). Along
with social pressures to maintain cemeteries, the final undoing of many cemeteries is
compounded by the declining status of noncommercial cemeteries.

Descendants of families that were disassociated from their family cemetery
during previous generations, today voice their concerns over the misuse of land
designated as cemetery. The exempt family cemeteries of Dyson and Bankston (in
northern Tangipahoa parish) were registered with hopes for protection or intervention by
the Cemetery Board. The caretakers of these family cemeteries fear that hogs or
lumbering activities will destroy these cemeteries which are now located on someone
else's property (Bonnie and Clayton Mahaffey personal communication, 1997).

In cases where permission to pass onto private property is granted, several
disassociated cemeteries are maintained by family members. How long verbal
arrangements between property owners and family cemetery caretakers will last is
questionable. In most cases, disassociated family cemeteries are "closed" or there is no
surface evidence of their existence.

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CHAPTER 12. URBAN PREFERENCE

As a consequence of transportation development and population shifts, cemeteries established according to early settlement patterns were abandoned in the rural landscape. A rural contraction that abandoned cemeteries was counterbalanced by urban expansion which encroached rural cemeteries. The establishment of new urban places and urban growth created a change in cemetery location preference. The purchase of established cemeteries that are situated along interstates and near urban places is indicative of potential profits to be made through consolidation by funeral corporations (Mitford 1963).

The establishment of new nonexempt cemeteries along interstates and near urban places further indicates a change in cemetery preference to optimize potential profits. The popularity of nonexempt urban cemeteries associated with interstates is evident in their acreage and burial volume. Cemetery dereliction within and beyond sampled buffers of populated places is indicative of rural contraction and urban expansion. A sampling of the distribution of new, recently purchased and Large Nonexempt cemeteries indicates a change in preferred locations.

A. Rural Contraction/Urban Expansion

Many cemeteries were once associated with a popular rural crossroad, frequented by a small rural community. Rural crossroads have fallen into disuse as cars and super highways became more popular. New highways that parallel old rural routes, waterways and railroads (with depots) alienated cemeteries that were once significant. Although associated with historic monuments of plantations and churches, few
cemeteries are maintained as historic monuments. The abandonment of small towns, local railways and lumbering activities has stranded many cemeteries. In the meantime, new development of pipelines and interstates with associated access routes, suburbs and commercial activities have exposed, encroached and destroyed forgotten cemeteries.

New technologies, the subdivisions of lots through land sales and inheritance, new corridors of utilities and highways, and so forth, resulted in a population shift away from the old levee and river roads. The placement of new landscape features, such as suburban homes and Memorial Parks, near urban centers and interstate accesses, defies the logic for continued use of older networks. For instance, privately owned corner stores established at rural crossroads were situated in accordance with a metes and bound survey system. Similar to cemeteries, many corner stores were abandoned for faster, more direct modern routes with chain stores.

In recent decades, development of interstate transportation has created a new settlement pattern that is based on access to interstate highways. Interstate highways overcome distance and time, while broadening consumer choices. The potential for commercial and employment opportunities along the courses of new transportation networks has created new population centers that are no longer based on parish seats or cadastral systems.

Historic to present changes in internal accessibility have altered old landscapes that were established in accordance with cadastral surveys. Railroads were instrumental in transforming a dispersed agricultural economy into a commercial central place economy. Prior to railroads, towns associated with waterways were at an economic
advantage. As a result of changing economic systems many popular places, such as the parish seat of Springfield, have been abandoned for commercially strategic places along newer transportation routes. In this same manner, the preference for cemeteries along railroad tracks has shifted to locations near interstates.

Formerly, places of daily communion were established according to pedestrian distances. In the Wetlands, cemeteries were established according to available land mass, transportation routes and population settlement along waterways. In the Uplands, early settlement patterns were locally established by family farms and plantations, as were cemeteries. In both the Uplands and Wetlands regions, modern cemeteries are established according to new transportation and burgeoning populations. Today, a traveling distance of 30 miles (48 kilometers) or crossing major rivers (such as the Mississippi) is no longer an obstacle to consumers. Distance is no longer an obstacle to consumers' desires to access urban amenities. Thus, the promise of perpetual care and other practices of mortuary consumption offered by urban associated Memorial Parks have created new patterns in cemetery locations (Gabel et al. 1996; Sloane 1991).

The rural population of southeastern Louisiana has experienced contraction and will continue to expand along modern networks. With population shifts, distinctions between urban and rural become blurred and make it increasingly difficult to distinguish to what extent urban culture penetrates the rural countryside. The population of Louisiana has been drawn away from traditional settlement patterns that were based upon topography. The population is now attracted by easy access to urban areas. A modern mobile population has little attachment to regional traditions. Urban
commuters from rural areas may select urban associated cemeteries, over traditional cemeteries near their new rural homes.

B. Urban Places

Few parishes in Louisiana have urban places that could be considered cities by west or east coast standards, yet they serve similar purposes. Urban population increases in Louisiana were substantial when new towns developed during boom periods. On the other hand, several urban places lost substantial numbers of their populations during economic lulls, such as the 1980s oil bust. In 1990, 390 urban places were enumerated within the state. One hundred and seven urban places were enumerated within the study area.

The table in Appendix C shows urban place enumerations and population increase from 1930 to 1990. Raw population figures for urban places were tabulated from 1930 to 1990 decennial censuses. As shown in Appendix C, the average decennial population growth within the study area for urban places was 23 percent from 1930 to 1940, 30 percent from 1940 to 1950, 42 percent from 1950 to 1960, 22 percent from 1960 to 1970, 20 percent from 1970 to 1980, and zero (0.002) growth from 1980 to 1990. From 1930 to 1960 populations within many urban places increased by 50 percent. Several urban places were newly-established. Thus, the steady growth of urban places since the Great Depression peaked between 1950 and 1960 and subsequently declined from 1970 to 1990. Recent statistics show a continuing decline in Louisiana’s urban population from 1990 to 1997.
Some urban places, such as Simmesport, have maintained populations below 2,500 persons while experiencing population growth greater than 120 percent. The most noticeable population increases have been in parishes that have become increasingly urban. For example, the town of Walker in Livingston parish more than doubled in population from 1970 to 1990 (1,363 to 3,727 persons) while the rural population of the parish decreased 26 percent. During the same time period, the parish seat of Livingston decreased in population from 1,398 in 1970 to 999 persons in 1990. Walker is located on Interstate 12 whereas the parish seat is located two miles to the north. Likewise, Denham Springs which is located between Walker and Baton Rouge, had a substantial increase in population from 1,002 in 1930 to 8,381 persons in 1990. The new interstate has promoted population growth in several communities that were historically small towns, villages and even hamlets.

On the other hand, several hamlets, villages and towns experienced substantial population depletion, such that the community no longer exists. One such place was the railroad town of Wagram on the west shore of Lake Ponchatrain USGS/GNIS cemetery and archaeological site no. 16SJB3. Once a lumber town, all that remains today are abandoned logging tracks and a cemetery stranded on the shoreline. There are many abandoned towns in Louisiana. These places are remnants of thriving communities that no longer exist.

Buffer zones were sampled with various radii from urban places to tabulate the occurrence of cemeteries as recorded by USGS/GNIS, map documentation and field survey, Division of Archaeology sites and Cemetery Board registration (Table 12-1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&lt;10,000 persons</th>
<th>10,000-50,000 persons</th>
<th>Baton Rouge 219,531 persons</th>
<th>Subtotal/Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(3000m)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>67</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>92</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduated rings were necessary to represent urban places of significant influence.

Urban places with less than 10,000 persons were buffered at 3000 meters. Urban places with 10,000 to 50,000 persons were buffered 6000 meters. Metropolitan areas of Baton Rouge and Lafayette were buffered 12000 meters. Apparent in Figure 12-1 is the agglomeration of urban places of moderate size (populations of 10,000 to 50,000) surrounding the urban center of Baton Rouge. In the Wetlands, urban places of

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Figure 12-1. Cemetery Occurrence within Urban Place and Parish Seat Buffer Zones.
moderate size are distributed along the southern portion of the study area, from Thibodaux to Opelousas along US 90.

As shown in Table 12-1, in the Uplands there are more cemeteries (from all sources) within 3000 meters of urban places with a population less than 10,000. In the Uplands, 26 percent of USGS/GNIS cemeteries are within 3000 meter urban buffers and in the Wetlands, 53 percent. This finding concurs with previous analysis of widely scattered rural cemeteries in the Uplands and cemeteries associated with transportation features in the Wetlands.

In the Uplands, 64 percent of derelict cemeteries are beyond 3000 meter urban buffers. In the Wetlands, 63 percent of derelict cemeteries are similarly distributed beyond 3000 meter urban buffers. The distribution of derelict cemeteries beyond urban buffers is significant because 84 percent of derelict cemeteries were associated with transportation features in the Wetlands. Thus, in the Wetlands there are a higher percentage of derelict cemeteries located along transportation corridors but in between enumerated urban places. Regardless of topographic or cultural differences, in both the Uplands and Wetlands the majority of derelict cemeteries are beyond urban buffers. In the Uplands and Wetlands, 27 to 28 percent of archaeological sites are within urban buffers. A majority of cemeteries documented as having potential archaeological significance are beyond urban buffers.

Whereas most exempt cemeteries in the Uplands are within 3000 meters of urban places of less than 10,000 persons, in the Wetlands most exempt cemeteries are within 6000 meters of urban places with populations of 10,000 to 50,000 (Table 12-1)
and Figure 12-1). In the Uplands, 60 percent of exempt cemeteries are within urban buffers and in the Wetlands, 73 percent. In the Wetlands, cemeteries registered with the Cemetery Board are most often associated with urban places greater than 10,000 persons. A greater percentage of exempt cemeteries are associated with urban places. When compared with the Uplands, the greater percentage of exempt cemeteries associated with urban places in the Wetlands is biased by the minimal representation of exempt cemeteries in the Wetlands. To the other extreme, the minimal representations of nonexempt cemeteries in the Uplands are all within urban buffers and in the Wetlands, 82 percent.

Newly registered exempt cemeteries often are historic cemeteries. New cemeteries are those documented by the Cemetery Board as ownership-transferred (sold) or newly-established from 1982 to 1995. A majority of new cemeteries, both exempt and nonexempt, are within urban buffers. Only those cemeteries required to register (nonexempt) truly represent newly-established cemeteries, as exempt cemeteries are voluntarily and erratically registered. Within Lafayette’s 12000 meter buffer five new cemeteries are nonexempt.

A majority of cemeteries registered with the Cemetery Board are within urban buffers, whereas derelict cemeteries tend to be beyond urban buffers, in rural areas. Based upon the analysis in previous chapters, the percentage of cemeteries associated with urban places was expected to be greatest in the Wetlands. Apparent in the Wetlands, are cemeteries associated with transportation features and confluences but not
associated with an “urban place.” Shown in Figure 12-1, the majority of cemeteries not registered with the Cemetery Board are situated in rural areas.

1. **Places Not Enumerated**

Abandoned cemeteries frequently appear associated with communities, hamlets or crossroads that were never enumerated due to census standards of population size. In most cases, the census only considers “urban places” with a population greater than 2,500. This population parameter means that many urban places in Louisiana were not enumerated. In 1950, the definition of “urban” varied for that decennial census. Several urban places that were enumerated in 1940 were not enumerated in 1950 but were subsequently enumerated in 1960. Therefore, it is not possible to calculate urban population increases from 1950 to 1960.

In Louisiana, the designation of “urban” is context and perception specific. At the lower limit of the U.S. census designation for “urban places” are those places outside wider urban areas that are populated places (nonrural) but not enumerated. Prior to 1990, several places recognized as urban today were not enumerated. Many urban places were first enumerated in 1990, such as Gardere with a population of 7,209 (south of Baton Rouge on Interstate 10). Figure 12-1 shows that several parishes have few “urban places” and minimum urban population, such as St. Helena.

Many communities situated at crossroads, hamlets, villages and towns were never enumerated by the census. Evident in the cluster of cemeteries within a 3000-meter radius of several nodes with place names, these communal places were once significant for many persons now deceased. The cartographic documentation of place
names and lack of census enumeration is evidence for a rural population retreat as fortunes changed. A rural population contraction away from local crossroads, hamlets and villages contributed to cemetery abandonment.

For instance, the crossroad town of Lebeau is now a central place of activities as a result of primary highway access and amenities. Although Lebeau was never enumerated as a populated place, the nearby town of Palmetto was once a thriving community as evident by cemetery concentration. Palmetto’s population has declined from 408 in 1930 to 229 in 1990 as a result of rural contraction. Nearby, the crossroads town of Bayou Current was never enumerated but similar to Ethel has a high occurrence of cemeteries. Bayou Current, was once a pivotal point at the northernmost extent of the Atchafalaya Basin. Most cemeteries within a 3000-meter buffer of Bayou Current (along the Atchafalaya River) are derelict. Rural highway 360 was once a dry highway around the Atchafalaya flood basin. This former primary route connected agricultural communities north and west of the floodway to Palmetto, the railroad and places beyond.

2. Parish Seats

The central-place function of parish seats created settlement patterns of small and locally autonomous communities. Spatial patterns of parish seats illustrate central-place community functions of the past. Parish seats served as primary locations for churches, cemeteries and schools. However, not all parish seats have a population worthy of enumeration. For instance, Hahnville (St. Charles parish seat) was
enumerated with a population of 300 in 1940, lacks enumeration in 1950, but had a population of 1,297 in 1960 (Appendix C).

Although the two parish seats of Napoleonville (Assumption parish, Wetlands) and Livingston (Livingston parish, Uplands) show population declines, cemeteries are not abandoned. Cemetery preservation and cultural continuity are exceptional within the parishes of Assumption and Livingston. In rural St. James parish, Convent is the parish seat but was never enumerated during a census. However, the number of cemeteries "in use" within a 6000-meter buffer of Convent is greater than that of urban LaPlace. Several urban places and parish seats with minimal urban population growth experienced minimal cemetery impact due to a lack of urban growth and development.

3. Uplands

Urban places in the Uplands, which are not along interstate corridors, have relatively stable populations (Appendix C). As shown in Figure 12-1, few urban places in the Uplands have populations greater than 2,500 (including parish seats). In most instances, rural parishes have relatively stable urban place populations. In contrast, urban places along interstates have nearly doubled in population size from 1950 to 1990. For instance, Hammond’s population increased from 8,010 in 1950 to 15,871 in 1990. Except for Denham Springs on the East Baton Rouge and Livingston parish boundary, Hammond is the largest town east of the state capital urban core. However, within Subarea B (Hammond) the doubling of the urban population did not promote the establishment of new, large or nonexempt cemeteries. The one Large Nonexempt cemetery in Hammond receives fewer burials than surrounding exempt cemeteries.
Towns such as Ethel (East Feliciana parish), formerly located at significant crossroads, were never enumerated by the U.S. census. Yet, within a 3000-meter buffer of Ethel are six USGS/GNIS cemeteries. Ethel’s cemetery distribution is similar to a 3000-meter buffer of the historic city limits of Baton Rouge. Ethel was once a thriving oil, railroad and crossroads town, along once popular LA 19.

Many eighteenth century cemeteries along the natural levees of the Mississippi River were constructed over previous to map documentation (1940s) or historic preservation legislation (1970s). For instance, a portion of the Louisiana State Capital grounds in Baton Rouge was formerly the site of the Old Protestant Cemetery (archaeological site no. 16EBR79, Morning Advocate 5/16/90). Although Baton Rouge’s population increased substantially from 1930 to 1990 (614 percent), this growth was gradual. East Baton Rouge’s population growth did not have the impact that recent population growth in Baker and Zachary had on local cemeteries.

Within Subarea A, the population of Baker increased from 150 persons in 1940 to 13,233 persons in 1990 (872 percent). Increased suburbanization and improved highways concur with the transferred ownership of Hillcrest Memorial (72 acres) near Baker and the profit sale of historic Azalea Rest (11 acres) near Zachary. Both Baker and Zachary’s noticeable demographic shift resulted in the displacement of low-profile cemeteries. Surrounding low-profile community and family cemeteries are engulfed by industry and suburbs. A preference for large profit cemeteries is evident north of Baton Rouge as both Hillcrest and Southern Memorial exceed 100 burials annually. These Memorial Parks far exceed the five-acre limit imposed on California’s cemeteries.
4. Wetlands

Within the Atchafalaya Basin, to the south and west of the Mississippi River, several urban places show dwindling population statistics. Within Subarea C, Donaldsonville is a parish seat with a stable population from 1980 to 1990 (7,901 to 7,949 persons) and less than 10,000 persons. Similar to other urban places within and surrounding the Atchafalaya Basin, from 1980 to 1990 urban population losses are apparent (Appendix C).

LaPlace is a strategic node located at the southern intersection of Interstates 10 and 55 in Greater New Orleans. First enumerated as an urban place in 1950, LaPlace had a population of 2,352 (Appendix C). LaPlace’s population increased by 929 percent to 24,194 persons in 1990. The high population growth in LaPlace is attributed to demographic change within the parish, from predominantly rural to nearly 100 percent urban. From 1980 to 1990, the population increase in St. John the Baptist parish (8,072 persons) is related to a population increase in the city of LaPlace (8,082 persons). However, there are few cemeteries serving this population today. There are two archaeological sites buried beneath the silt of the Bonnet Carre Spillway and a cemetery registered with the Cemetery Board that were not documented by the USGS/GNIS. The one nonexempt cemetery is situated near the nodal intersection of interstates and was recently purchased. The few active cemeteries in both St. John the Baptist and St. Charles parishes are evidence for transport of deceased persons to Memorial Parks and high profile cemeteries of Metairie and New Orleans.
Along US 90 from Morgan City to Franklin, clusters of cemeteries that were not registered with the Cemetery Board are apparent in between urban places (Figure 12-1). Although at one time a significant place, Centerville (Subarea D) was never enumerated by the census. Unlike the Uplands, nonexempt cemeteries in the Wetlands are strategically situated within parish seats near primary highways. Derelict cemeteries are situated in between enumerated urban places. Many cemeteries were stranded as populations migrated away from such places as Centerville, toward urban places with economic potential, such as Lafayette.

A few urban places showed losses in population greater than 50 percent. For instance, the population of Broadmoor (located southwest of Lafayette) decreased from 7,051 persons in 1980 to 3,218 persons in 1990, a 54 percent population loss. In the meantime, completion of highway construction in Lafayette contributed to a steady increase in urban population within the metropolitan area. Unlike population statistics of other urban places within the study area, Lafayette's metropolitan population increased 15 percent from 1980 to 94,440 persons in 1990. However, few cemeteries appear to have been impacted by development in Lafayette. Within a 12000-meter radius of Lafayette, the absence of cemeteries surveyed archaeologically is conspicuous. During field survey, several low-profile family cemeteries were found to be engulfed by new suburbs and appear anachronistic within new surroundings. Similar to formerly rural cemeteries surrounding Baton Rouge, these cemeteries are "in peril."

Since the construction of interstate highways the older primary highway intersections of US 190 and US 167 declined in use while the urban population of
Opelousas also declined. Once situated at popular crossroads, several older communities were bypassed by primary highways. In Subarea E, the urban population of Simmesport was 2,092 persons in 1990. The surrounding area is predominantly rural. Cemetery Board registered cemeteries are only located at main crossroads at highly visible locations while a large percentage of derelict USGS/GNIS cemeteries are rurally distributed. In the Wetlands, cemeteries that are registered with the Cemetery Board (both exempt and nonexempt) are for the most part associated with populated places whereas derelict cemeteries are predominantly rural.

C. Newly-established and Ownership-transferred Nonexempt Cemeteries

Cemetery Board records document cemeteries that were newly registered (Table 12-1). Prior to 1982, 321 cemeteries were registered. Subsequently 126 cemeteries were newly registered. These newly registered cemeteries represent both newly-established cemeteries and caretaker concerns for exempt cemetery recognition. Exempt cemeteries registered since 1982 were often a result of documentation and preservation efforts. Nonexempt cemeteries that were newly-established or ownership-transferred represent 20 percent of cemeteries registered since 1982.

Most notably, Livingston and Tangipahoa parishes have an unusually high number of exempt cemeteries recently registered. In Livingston parish, 56 cemeteries are registered as exempt. Thirty-eight of these were newly registered. Only two cemeteries are nonexempt. In Tangipahoa parish, 58 exempt cemeteries are registered, including 20 registered recently, whereas there are no new nonexempt cemeteries. As shown in Table 12-1, there is a noticeable absence of new cemeteries in rural parishes.
(exempt or nonexempt). The distribution of newly registered cemeteries is illustrated in Figure 12-2. Fully 126 are exempt (58 in Livingston and Tangipahoa) and 26 are nonexempt. A majority of exempt and nonexempt new cemeteries are within urban buffers. All but one new nonexempt cemetery are within urban buffers.

As shown in Figure 12-2, where primary highways are lacking, nonexempt newly-established and ownership-transferred cemeteries are also absent. Recently registered, newly-established cemeteries and purchased cemeteries are distributed at regular intervals along US 90. In accordance with parish seats, the location preference for newly-established nonexempt cemeteries along US 90 is clearly visible in Figure 12-2. Continuous growth in Lafayette has promoted the establishment of five new nonexempt cemeteries and the purchase of older cemeteries.

The urban parishes of East Baton Rouge and Lafayette have the highest percentage of newly-established nonexempt cemeteries. In East Baton Rouge, six of eight newly registered cemeteries are nonexempt. In spite of increasing urbanization, West Baton Rouge parish has no newly-registered exempt or nonexempt cemeteries.

As shown in Figure 12-2, all newly-established and ownership-transferred nonexempt cemeteries are within buffer zones of urban places or situated along 1990 primary highways. From 1982 to 1995, 12 cemeteries were ownership-transferred with 2.1 to 72 acres. Fifteen new nonexempt cemeteries were established with 0.5 to 15.5 acres. Thus, ownership-transferred cemeteries tend to be larger in acreage.

False River Memorial Park is the only commercial cemetery not associated with an interstate. This cemetery (7.5 acres) was sold three times between 1982 and 1995,
Figure 12-2. Newly-established and Ownership-transferred Nonexempt Cemeteries.
during which time burial volume increased from 24 to 45 annually. False River Memorial Park is strategically located at the intersection of US 71 and US 190, as well as railroad and waterway confluences on the edge of the Morganza Floodway and Atchafalaya Basin. It is located in the town of Krotz Springs in Pointe Coupee which was never enumerated. False River Memorial Park competes with surrounding rural cemeteries that were associated with former transportation routes, such as the railroad. Nearby, rural cemeteries are in various stages of abandonment.

At the other extreme, St. Martin parish has insufficient cemeteries to serve the population. In 1950, this Wetland parish had seven cemeteries per 3,765 persons and in 1970 twelve cemeteries per 2,704 persons. However, by 1990 only five cemeteries were displayed on maps with a corresponding population of 8,796 persons per cemetery. Newly-established cemeteries in St. Martin parish are situated in Breaux Bridge near Interstate 10 and metropolitan Lafayette. Newly registered St. Bernard No. 1 is a Large Exempt cemetery that receives six to 85 burials annually. Neighboring St. Bernard No. 2 (4.0 acres) is a Large Nonexempt cemetery that receives 26 to 111 burials annually.

Annually, the number of burials in ownership-transferred nonexempt cemeteries ranges from a minimum of 10 to as many as 666 burials. The extreme range in acreage and number of burials is the difference between community cemeteries and Memorial Parks. For instance, historic Azalea Rest (11 acres) north of Baton Rouge near Zachary (between LA 19 and US 61) averages 25 burials per annum. At the other extreme, the Large Nonexempt cemetery of Green Oaks Memorial (52 acres) in Baton Rouge

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received 666 burials in 1993. Ownership of Green Oaks Memorial was transferred twice between 1982 and 1995.

All 26 newly-established and ownership-transferred nonexempt cemeteries are located within 500 meter buffers of transportation confluences. As shown in Figure 12-2, newly-established cemeteries deviate from earlier cemetery association with waterways and railroads. New profit cemeteries are established in association with an existing network of secondary and primary highways at the hub of urban places. Although associated with airports as part of metropolitan and densely populated areas, the locations of newly-established cemeteries are not dependent upon airports (Figure 12-2).

Cemeteries near airports do reap the benefits of optimum location. Older cemeteries near airports are reappropriated to capitalize on air transport of deceased persons and mourners. However, the transportation of human remains over great distances by air does not limit burial to cemetery locations nearest airports. Earlier railroad depot cemeteries relied on pall bearers, horse and carts to transport remains to nearby cemeteries. Today, human remains are easily transported by air and then by interstate to distant locations.

In contrast to newly-established cemeteries, the distribution of USGS/GNIS cemeteries reveals that cemeteries were more widely dispersed in the past. Nearly half of the cemeteries registered with the Cemetery Board and more than half of USGS/GNIS cemeteries are beyond urban buffers. In spite of the increased recognition of urban places by 1990, previously established settlement patterns influenced the
distribution of rural cemeteries. The majority of derelict cemeteries are in between urban places and are widely scattered in rural areas. With 58 percent of newly-registered cemeteries (both exempt and nonexempt) located within 1000 meters of an urban place, a preference for urban association is apparent. Furthermore, the frequency of large cemeteries (both exempt and nonexempt) near urban places indicates a preference for nonrural cemeteries.

Although newly-established nonexempt cemeteries have yet to receive substantial burials, the concurrence of newly-established nonexempt cemeteries with urban places and primary highways further supports a change in location preference. The distance between the frequency of nonexempt newly-established cemeteries, recently-purchased cemeteries and cemeteries receiving substantial burials indicates a new strategy for burial locations. Agglomeration of large and nonexempt cemeteries in the metropolitan areas of Lafayette and Baton Rouge clearly indicates a preference for urban associated burials.

D. Urban Associated and Memorial Park Location Preference

A 30 to 40-kilometer interval between large, nonexempt cemeteries and Memorial Parks along primary corridors indicates a change in location preference (Figure 12-2). Large Nonexempt, newly-established and ownership-transferred cemeteries are situated along primary corridors emanating from Lafayette, New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Disruption to a regular pattern of nonexempt cemetery distribution is apparent in the Atchafalaya Basin. Furthermore, people in rural areas who adhere to
tradition have not adopted commercial cemeteries. Thus, Memorial Parks are absent in the Uplands where traditional cemetery settings are preferred.

In the Uplands, the popularity of large and nonexempt cemeteries beyond the urban core of Baton Rouge is not apparent. Evergreen Memorial Park in Denham Springs (Livingston parish) was newly-established in 1994 but did not record any burials in 1995. Nearby, Beech Ridge in Denham Springs was newly-established in 1983, subsequently sold in 1993 (5.4 acres), and had a maximum of 26 burials in 1995. In Livingston parish, a preference for exempt cemeteries is apparent in burial volume. Although a preference for burial in local and exempt cemeteries is apparent in Livingston and Tangipahoa parishes, the strategic location of cemeteries along interstates may promote a preference for commercial cemeteries. Presently, Evergreen Memorial Park is competing with cultural continuity and local preference for traditional cemetery settings. Memorial Parks in Livingston parish are not as prosperous as those in East Baton Rouge parish, yet.

The agglomeration of nonexempt cemeteries in the state capital and at regular intervals along primary highways indicates that human remains are transported greater distances for final interment at preferred urban-associated locations. For instance, Amy Comeaux (a popular local musician) was killed in an automobile accident on Interstate 55 in Tangipahoa (Winter 1997). The body was transported to a Baton Rouge hospital (and coroner). The memorial service was in Brusly, West Baton Rouge parish. The burial was in Grace Memorial Park, Iberville parish. Grace Memorial Park near Plaquemine is between two cemeteries that were lost during floods and two low-profile
cemeteries that are marginally maintained. Thus, for those who can afford commercial burial, Grace Memorial Park is supplanting low-profile cemeteries in popularity.

Apparent in Figure 12-2 is the absence of large or newly-established cemeteries in West Baton Rouge. In consideration of the rural cemeteries in stages of abandonment and the lack of newly-established cemeteries, it is likely that human remains are transported across bridges to high-profile and urban-associated cemeteries in other parishes. From 1980 to 1990 East Baton Rouge experienced zero percent population growth, yet from 1982 to 1995, two new nonexempt cemeteries were established. In 1985, Winnifield Cemetery was newly-established in Baton Rouge. Winnifield Cemetery receives as many as 200 burials per year. Nearby, ownership-transferred cemeteries receive from 100 to 600 burials annually.

A lack of population increase within Baton Rouge and the increase in nonexempt cemetery popularity is indicative of changing location preference. Human remains are transported from surrounding rural areas and suburbs along primary highways to Memorial Parks. Parishes that have high population increases, but relatively few burials annually, must be transporting bodies to cemeteries in urban centers of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Lafayette.

As a result of Baton Rouge’s history as a populated place of increasing density and expanding corporate limits (Figure 1-2, Table 12-1 and Appendix C), within 6000 meters are located 11 cemeteries, and within 12000 meters 40 cemeteries. While Lafayette also has 11 cemeteries within 6000 meters, cemeteries are under-represented within 12000 meters. When compared to surrounding places that have never been
enumerated and the number of low-profile cemeteries near Lafayette that are encroached by new activities, an inadequate representation of cemeteries is apparent. Recently, Lafayette experienced substantial commercial growth and development. Although most of Lafayette’s development was subsequent to historic preservation legislation, few cemeteries were documented by USGS/GNIS or as archaeological sites. Several cemeteries near Lafayette, which were map documented by the USGS/GNIS, are “in peril.”

Furthermore, too few cemeteries were impacted by Baton Rouge’s urban growth prior to historic preservation legislation. When considering the distribution of cemeteries surrounding Ethel and “urban places” in the vicinity, the few historic cemeteries in Baton Rouge is suspect. Historic cemeteries, such as Highland Cemetery in Baton Rouge, were significant places that were forgotten, abandoned, and built over. Many years after residential development, a portion of Highland Cemetery was reclaimed for preservation (Heather McKillop personal communication, 1996; Morning Advocate 5/12/79). The number of cemeteries never documented or reclaimed is inestimable. A few historic cemeteries are reappropriated and expanded upon for modern burials (such as Azalea Rest (11 acres) near Zachary) but many more were destroyed during urban growth phases.

In West Baton Rouge, cemetery abandonment is apparent in the case of Silvery Cemetery. Silvery Cemetery was once associated with a historic plantation. Today, Silvery Cemetery is spoken of as a “black” cemetery (West Baton Rouge parish assessor’s personal communication, 1997). This cemetery is surrounded by agricultural
fields. The parcel is overgrown by exotic plants. Inside the mass of overgrowth are iron
crosses, crypts, and exposed and eroding graves. Although Port Allen’s population has
increased 312 percent, a redistribution within the population has occurred. The
attraction of commerce near the bridges over the Mississippi River, intersecting primary
highways and interstates, and an agricultural shift from plantation and tenant farming to
corporately owned and mechanized agriculture contributed to the abandonment of
Silvery Cemetery.

E. Summary

The Louisiana State Cemetery Board regulates nonexempt cemeteries and thus
has taken preventive measures to protect cemeteries from bankruptcy or perpetual care
fraud. However, the Cemetery Board has no control over changes in preferred cemetery
location or encroachment by new development. Therefore, as cemetery location
preference continues to migrate along interstates to urban and interstate-associated
cemeteries, rural cemeteries will continue to be abandoned.

As nonexempt cemeteries near urban areas and primary highways receive
increasing numbers of burials, low-profile cemeteries fall into disuse and eventually are
abandoned. A preference for evenly-spaced, orderly and easily accessed high-profile,
Large Nonexempt cemeteries is clearly apparent within the study area. For those who
can afford the high-profile status of urban-associated Memorial Parks, the rural settings
of traditional cemeteries are perceived as less desirable. Although it is not possible to
calculate the number of deceased persons transported along interstates to burial in
urban-associated Memorial Parks, the size, burial volume and regular interval between
nonexempt cemetery locations is indicative of strategic supply and demand relationships. To the contrary, rural portions of the Uplands are maintaining cultural continuity through traditional ties to cemetery settings.

The biggest difference, for the purposes of this study, between nonexempt (such as Memorial Parks) and exempt (such as benevolent society) cemeteries is longevity or continuity in use. The money-making aspect of cemeteries is new to this century. Mitford (1963:123-147) attacks the ethics of cemetery profits and the commercial value of 3-x-6 foot burial plots as high profit real estate.

... a close look discloses that the profits that are now routinely extracted by the promoters of “nonprofit” cemeteries are spectacular beyond the dreams of the most avaricious real estate subdivider (Mitford 1963:125).

Funeral industry mergers and incorporation of cemeteries create a lack of competitive pricing. In Houston, 75 percent of funeral homes have been consolidated.

Prior to the 1970s, most cemeteries in Louisiana were independently operated. However, during the 1980s cemetery consolidation infiltrated the Southern funeral industry as corporations were formed. In 1986, Service Corporation International (SCI) was the nation’s largest funeral home and cemetery holding company (Sloane 1991:235). Today, three corporations dominate the mortuary market: Service Corporation International, Loewen Group International and Stewart Enterprises. The Loewen Group proclaims on its web page that it is the “... second largest and fastest-growing publicly held funeral service and cemetery corporation in North America in terms of revenues and assets” (Loewen Group Web Site Home Page 1998). Loewen
currently owns 500 cemeteries and 50 crematoria in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. In Monterey County (California) nine out of 25 funeral homes are owned by Loewen Group.

In Louisiana’s metropolitan areas of Shreveport, Baton Rouge, Pineville, Bosier, Lake Charles, and Metairie, Service Corporation International and Loewen Group own several Memorial Parks. Within the study area, only Baton Rouge has corporately-owned cemeteries. Service Corporation International owns Green Oaks Memorial Park (53 acres/665 burials in 1995). Loewen Group owns both Southern Memorial Garden (14 acres/211 burials in 1995) and Resthaven Memorial Garden (56 acres/374 burials in 1995). Stewart Enterprises has not entered the state of Louisiana, yet.

Roselawn Memorial Park (67 acres) in Baton Rouge has the third largest burial volume within the study area (342 in 1995). Roselawn Memorial Park has not transferred ownership but likely has received recent offers from funeral corporations. Cemetery corporations do not buy cemeteries in moderately populated urban places (less than 50,000 persons). They are, however, competing in metropolitan areas against one another (Betty Roberts personal communication, 1997).

Cemetery corporations are intent on taking over funeral homes and public cemeteries throughout the nation. As some predict, Memorial Parks will eventually all be owned and operated by a few corporations (Kent Mathewson personal communication, 1997). As cemetery corporations take over independently owned and operated cemeteries in densely populated areas, rural cemeteries will continue to decline.
in use. Land ownership-transfers and the demand for new land uses will continue to impact traditional cemeteries that are located at a distance from urban activities. The continued decontextualization of traditional cemetery settings by new land uses promotes a preference for the land security of corporately-owned cemeteries. Conversely, preference for corporately-owned and urban-associated Memorial Parks with perpetual care plans promotes abandonment of traditional cemetery settings.
CHAPTER 13. CONCLUSIONS

The landscape conditions and distribution of traditional cemeteries in southeastern Louisiana illustrates historic cultural and physiographic distinctions between Uplands and Wetlands in southeastern Louisiana. The locations of newly-established and corporate owned Memorial Parks indicate Louisiana’s participation in a national preference for burial places that lack cultural or geographic distinctions. Globally, a change in perceived environments has affected spatial preferences in cemetery locations.

Strategies of land use, commercial access, capital gains, supply and demand are now factors in the selection of optimum locations for corporately-owned Memorial Parks in America. In southeastern Louisiana, the mental map that guided the decision-making process for establishing cemetery locations has changed. Ultimately, the traditional scheme of things in the landscape is altered when perceptions and values change (Gregory 1994; Jackson 1989). In conjunction with several contributing factors over the past six decades, the visible dereliction of traditional rural cemetery landscapes in southeastern Louisiana promotes a preference for nontraditional urban-associated Memorial Parks.

Historic and local cemeteries were regularly distributed according to pedestrian distances and rail stops. Formerly dependent upon waterways and railways, many cemeteries were situated an average of 3 kilometers apart along these transportation corridors. The introduction of private automobiles and paved highways created a new
spatial distribution to cemeteries that were established in accordance with crossroads and highway access.

Memorial Parks are displacing the traditional local settings of cemeteries and thus disrupting the frequency in cemetery occurrence. Population nucleation in urban places along primary highways has promoted the popularity of Memorial Parks. In the past two decades, Memorial Parks in southeastern Louisiana have been established at distances approximating 30 to 40 kilometers from one another. The distance between Memorial Parks is dependent upon interstate access, urban association and competitive marketing tactics.

Changing settlement patterns have adversely impacted traditional cemeteries in southeastern Louisiana. As communities evolve and people relocate, traditional landscapes are increasingly abandoned around the world:

The story of the dying of small rural communities in every part of the world has become familiar to us all over the last century and a half. It is most impressive, most regrettable when it tells of the decay of a well-known and well-loved landscape . . . but the moral of the story is in almost every case the same: existence for people in the country became more and more difficult, more and more joyless and without reward. Low pay, monotonous work, a sense of being isolated and forgotten, a sense of diminishing hope for the future afflicted one village, one farmstead after another. For more than a century, here in America, we have seen it happening, so perhaps it is not too early for us to look elsewhere in the countryside to become aware of the new communities. If much of the migration from that landscape has found its way to large cities, much of it, perhaps most of it, has swelled the population of small towns and even created entirely new types of settlement - still rural in location but essentially industrial or commercial in economy, dependent not on a
stream or river or a climate of familiar seasons but on a
highway, a dam, a mine, a tourist attraction (Jackson

The cultural landscapes of cemeteries are temporal reminders of our common past and
future. Within specific contexts, cultural landscapes are visibly interpretable amidst
contemporaneous cultural features. However, the dereliction and juxtaposition of
traditional cemeteries amidst new landscapes are indicative of changing socio-cultural
attitudes toward these once sacred places. The recent preference for urban-associated
Memorial Parks is indicative of changing attitudes toward a proper place for burial in
accordance with new settlement patterns.

The once serene and contemplative environments of cemeteries were historically
situated within meaningful contexts. Decontextualized cemeteries that were once fields
of care and remembrance are today in conflict with new surroundings. As rural
populations dwindle and crops require less human labor, the landscape and rural life
become ominously disjoined (Lowenthal 1997:182):

Landscapes get removed from social reality - they are less
visibly distinctive where tillage is intensive . . . As
landscape is sundered from rural life, habitual rustic and
pastoral folkways disappear. Benefit of social meaning,
landscapes become vacant, vacuous, void of context.

Similar to other historic landscapes, historic cemeteries reveal “traditional values,
religious tenets, legal regulation, economic and social status, and even natural
environment” (Kniffen 1967). As geographic political and commercial boundaries
change to accommodate new development, abandoned cemeteries are more likely to fall
prey to new land modifications, such as levees, interstates, and commercial
development.

The longevity of a cemetery landscape seems to be as enduring as the last living
memory of the most recent interment. Formerly an integral cultural focus of rural
communities and local church congregations, the indelible mark of the individual to
"forget me not" is erased from the landscape when a cemetery's context is destroyed. In
most recent decades, the "forgetting rate" of cemetery association has accelerated from
two to one generation (Hannon 1990). In urban places of land use pressures and
population mobility, the forgetting rate is as few as five years (California Cemetery
Abandonment Regulations Sections 7700, 8825, and 9201).

A. Syntheses and Implications of Cemetery Abandonment

The abandonment of rural lifestyles in southeastern Louisiana and the increase in
urbanization are related phenomena of rural contraction and urban expansion. In
Chapters 6 through 12, rural contraction and urban expansion are shown to adversely
impact cemeteries. Population depletion has left cemeteries abandoned in the rural
landscape (rural contraction) while population aggregation at urban centers and
transportation nodes has adversely impacted cemeteries through encroachment (urban
expansion).

Formerly on the outskirts of town, urban cemeteries are engulfed by population
growth, such as suburbs. On the other hand, rural cemeteries are abandoned with
changes in transportation routes, demographic shifts and changes in church associations.
Similarly, family and plantation cemeteries were abandoned when private land holdings transferred to new owners, such as industrial corporations.

Historic map research revealed the abandonment of earlier settlement patterns. The USGS maps (and maps for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) provided consistent identification through time and were thus most appropriate for identifying cemeteries and their lost cultural affiliations. The cartographic analysis in Chapter 6 reveals that circa 1960, cemeteries became disassociated from rural cultural features, such as crossroads, churches, family and small communities. As rural cultural features were generalized on maps, mapping errors also contributed to interpretations of cemetery disassociation. Cartographic deletion of cemeteries and feature disassociation are revealing of temporal changes in documentation. A change about 1980 in cultural feature identification is again apparent with historic preservation concerns for name recovery. As communities evolved, the severing of traditional community ties is cartographically portrayed.

However, potential cemetery abandonment through map deletion, misnomers and generic identifiers is not an accurate representation of field conditions. In Chapter 7, field survey of cemetery conditions from “in use” to “not visible” on the surface revealed a variety of factors altered the landscape. Often, surface conditions were different from those anticipated through cartographic interpretation. However, a substantial percentage (34 percent) of cemeteries surveyed within the study area are in stages of abandonment (“in peril,” “closed” or “not visible”). Although there are many
causes for cemetery dereliction, clusters of derelict cemeteries are indicative of particular cultural-historic changes.

During field survey, patterns of cemetery distribution and dereliction were apparent in the regionally distinct Uplands and Wetlands areas. Most notably, flood disasters and prevention altered the landscape of the Mississippi River basin. A post-flood and Great Depression cultural change from an agrarian-plantation dependent economy to an industrial-commercial system further impacted local demographics.

Parish-by-parish scenarios of demographic change are illustrated in Chapter 8. In several parishes, more than 33 percent of cemeteries are derelict. Cemetery dereliction is related to population fluctuations in several parishes. Most notably, both population depletion in rural parishes and high population increases in urban parishes result in cemetery abandonment. Rural to urban demographic shifts contribute to cemetery abandonment whereas rural population stability has minimal impact upon cemeteries.

Cemetery abandonment is related to a socio-economic out-migration. Parishes with high poverty rates from 1930 to 1990 experienced out migration of ethnic minorities and persons of lower economic class. A black exodus, altered the racial composition of many parishes within the study area. New population influxes (exurbanization) in a few parishes replenished the population but the incoming population exhibits different demographic characteristics. From 1950 through 1980, adverse socio-cultural economics resulted in relocation to more prosperous urban areas – in Louisiana and elsewhere.
Population increases are not reciprocally represented by an increased number of cemeteries. More than one-third of East Baton Rouge’s map documented cemeteries (97 cemeteries) were in stages of abandonment: “in peril,” “closed” or “not visible.” Thus, as East Baton Rouge’s population increased the number of cemeteries actively receiving burials declined.

By rerouting local transportation corridors within the study area, transportation development contributed to the abandonment of cemeteries through alienation. In Chapter 9, I explored conditions of cemeteries within graduated buffers of 100 to 500 meters of waterways, railways, and highways. The highest occurrence of cemeteries was within sampled buffers of waterways – a primary mode of transportation in earlier decades. Cemeteries associated with waterways are most commonly derelict due to flood stages.

The decline in popularity and public use of the railroad further alienated cemeteries that were once associated with local stops and depots. As modes of transportation evolved to private automobiles, paved highways displaced waterways and railroads as popular means of transportation. Sampled buffers of 1950 and 1970 secondary and primary highways indicate that several cemeteries were impacted as highways and utility corridors cut through cemeteries. As former routes of transportation were abandoned in favor of primary highways, cemeteries were abandoned. Similar to historic towns, cemeteries that were once vital links within a regional network were abandoned when new roads bypassed them.

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Earlier settlement patterns were disrupted by new transportation and flood control systems. As a result, there are regularities to historic cemetery distribution that are based on, for instance, river plantation and long-lot settlement patterns. In the Wetlands, the majority of cemeteries are associated with transportation features. A large percentage of derelict cemeteries within 500 meters of waterways are also associated with railways and highways. At the other extreme, cemeteries in the Uplands emulate agricultural settlement patterns and are widely scattered. More than half of the cemeteries in the Uplands are beyond 500 meter buffers of transportation features.

Historic cemeteries that were abandoned or destroyed prior to 1940s mapping efforts often lack any documentation of their existence. Several historic cemeteries have been uncovered during recent construction. Plantation cemeteries were donated, abandoned or destroyed as traditional agrarian communities gave way to mechanized agriculture and petrochemical industries. In Chapter 10, the disruption to earlier settlement patterns is illustrated in the documentation of cemeteries as archaeological sites. With the addition of archaeological sites to the distribution of USGS/GNIS cemeteries, cemeteries appear regularly dispersed according to contemporaneous means of transportation.

Cemeteries documented as archaeological sites frequently occur along waterways. Intervals between combined USGS/GNIS cemeteries and cemeteries identified as archaeological sites are illustrative of feasible distances for pedestrian visitations. Within a regular sequence of cemeteries, gaps in cemetery distribution are conspicuous. Places where there is a conspicuous gap in cemetery sequence, such as the
location of an industrial complex, can be used to infer probable cemetery destruction and potential in-situ human remains. Prior to map documentation or historic preservation legislation, many cemeteries were erased from the surface.

In Chapter 11, the greater percentage of cemeteries that are exempt from registration with the Cemetery Board indicates a misinterpretation of 1974 regulations. As a result of regulation misinterpretation, many cemeteries were abandoned to avoid incurring penalties for lack of compliance. Consequently, the closure, abandonment and dereliction of old cemeteries have promoted a preference for Memorial Parks with perpetual care plans. The annual burial volume in Memorial Parks attests to an increased preference for commercial burials. Voluntary registration with the Cemetery Board by caretakers of exempt cemeteries indicates concerns for cemetery preservation.

Caretakers of exempt cemeteries register their cemeteries with the Cemetery Board with false hope that official cemetery recognition will offer protection. Locally, recognition by cemetery districts would improve location accuracy, material culture survey, and preservation efforts. Cemetery districts are appropriate for identifying cemeteries that are not acknowledged at the state level of the Cemetery Board. At the local level (cities or counties), cemetery districts would be capable of regulating and protecting cemeteries and thus, preventing cemetery abandonment.

A modern location preference for cemeteries associated with urban places is presented in Chapter 12. Although urban cemeteries were encroached or decontextualized by new surroundings, cemetery integrity was often preserved if only in part. On the other hand, rural cemeteries were often abandoned. Optimum locations for
commercially-operated and corporately-owned Memorial Parks are strategically selected based on metropolitan population and interstate access. The distribution of newly-established and ownership-transferred cemeteries is indicative of new perceptions of distance in southeastern Louisiana.

The locations of historic cemeteries were dependent upon topography, whereas newly-established nonexempt cemeteries are dependent upon urban centers. Over a period of sixty years, a rural contraction and urban expansion within the study area have resulted in the abandonment of rural cemeteries. Along with rural population depletion, preference for the security of perpetual care and the high-profile status of nonexempt cemeteries is contributing to the abandonment of rural cemeteries.

The abandonment of rural cemeteries is counterbalanced by increased burials in newly-established Memorial Parks in urban areas. An increase in population over several decades should promote establishment of new cemeteries, parish-by-parish. A decrease in the number of cemeteries as the population increases indicates that large cemeteries are absorbing more burials as small cemeteries are abandoned. The greater number of small, local and rural cemeteries in earlier decades indicates an evolving preference for large cemeteries that are fewer in number and most often in urban areas.

Similar to a lag and lead relationship between population and transportation in developing countries, transportation development in southeastern Louisiana is a determining factor in the strategic location of new nonexempt cemeteries. Regardless of whether an urban place is a parish seat or was previously enumerated by the United States census, new transportation corridors of interstates ensure the potential
commercial prosperity of Memorial Parks. However, in parishes that maintain ties to family cemeteries, such as Livingston parish, the profits of nonexempt cemeteries are vulnerable to traditional values.

The cultural division of the study area into Uplands and Wetlands subregions proved to be consistent with other interpretations. Earlier settlement patterns were geographically limited to waterways and agriculture. Historic cemetery locations were historically restricted to transportation corridors of waterways, railroads, highways and their confluences. Several historic cemeteries are associated with prehistoric mounds, and are commonly documented as archaeological sites. In recent decades, dependence upon high elevations for cemeteries has been alleviated by modern flood control features.

Today, elevated land masses or proximity to a waterway is no longer a primary consideration in cemetery location. Proximity to primary highways and metropolitan areas takes precedence in the establishment of new cemeteries. Thus, the cultural division evident in cemeteries in the Uplands and Wetlands is becoming less distinctive in southeastern Louisiana. However, a provincial separation between Uplands and Wetlands marginally survives in cemetery distribution and maintenance in rural areas, especially in Assumption and St. Helena parishes. Furthermore, the prevalence of widely-scattered exempt rural family cemeteries in the Uplands and linear settlement, nonexempt cemeteries in the southwest portion of the Wetlands is evidence for subregional cultural maintenance of traditional cemetery landscapes.
Since the 1970s, cultural characteristics in Louisiana have become increasingly blurred with modern mobility and the development of new settlement patterns. However, Louisiana’s Wetlands play a distinct role in differentiating north from south. Increasingly, the north-to-south cultural blur is disrupted by federal and state-maintained highway systems. In remote areas of the Uplands, local roads reinforce continuity of interpersonal contacts for which traditional culture persistence depends.

Although traditional ties to family burials are maintained in Livingston parish, a preference for locations near urban areas and interstates is apparent in the establishment of new cemeteries. In the Wetlands, the primary transportation route of waterways has given way to primary highway corridors. New transportation corridors and modes of transportation accommodate increased speed while disrupting earlier spatial patterns that were limited by distance traveled. Cemeteries were once established in accordance with plantations, railway depots and river ports. Today, preferred locations for Memorial Parks are near an interstate in a metropolitan area.

Over the past two decades in Louisiana, settlement patterns have changed. An increased occurrence of corporate-owned and urban-associated Memorial Parks is evidence for a change in attitudes toward traditional cemeteries. As communities continue to shift to urban areas in southeastern Louisiana, rural cemeteries will become increasingly abandoned. Rural cemeteries fall into disuse and disrepair as burial preference continues to shift away from traditional cemetery settings of older transportation confluences (waterway, railroad and rural highway) toward modern Memorial Parks associated with primary highways and metropolitan areas.
In a society that is rapidly adapting modern economies, preference for burial in Memorial Parks is taking precedence over tradition. Memorial Parks are strategically located near metropolitan areas and increasingly consume the business of local and nonprofit cemeteries. However, parishes that are predominantly rural or have a relatively stable population are maintaining ties to traditional cemetery landscapes. Overall, the changing scheme of cemetery locations in the landscape is evidence for our changing attitude toward burial places.

B. Changing Attitudes Toward Burial Place

The way people dispose themselves across the landscape is spatially revealing of cultural attitudes toward a proper burial place in the environment.

   Culturally sponsored traits such as disposal of the dead may become spatially universal and so, like animal needs, parts of the universal occupance pattern (Kniffen 1974:255).

During the twentieth century, trends in cemetery landscape types and locations reflect changing perceptions of death. Jackson suggested in 1967 that the cemetery had lost its meaning, as the individual and community changed its way of accepting loss.

   The worlds that man constructs are forever threatened by the forces of chaos, finally by the inevitable fact of death. . . every human order is a community in the face of death (Berger 1990:80).

Few modern cemeteries are established as highly visible places for communing with the dead.

   Traditional cemeteries served as a bridge between the dead and living, to anyone who happened to pass by. In contrast, most Memorial Parks minimize the presence of
death. For instance, hours for grave visitations and types of grave adornment are
restricted. Individual displays of sentiment toward the individual are neutralized
through conformation to regulations.

If the colonial graveyard functioned as a place for body
disposal and as a warning to the living, the memorial park
provided a socially inconspicuous location where the dead
could be made to disappear from the world of the living, a
very different matter. Significantly, Blaney (1917)
oberves that in the new cemetery there was no need for
stones because exact location of burial would be
established in well-kept records, corruptible - if anyone
wishes to find it. The popularity of such sites offers
graphic commentary on the changing relationship of death
to life in the present century (Jackson 1977:147, emphasis
added).

Roland Warren (1973) indicated that socio-economic factors have disrupted
“locality-relevant functions,” such as cemeteries. Traditional values and institutions
have been fragmented. As a result, cemeteries are no longer an integral part of the
landscape we inhabit.

Our post-modern secular culture has lost touch with older
conceptions of the cemetery as “sacred space,” second
only to the church as a physical manifestation of the
community’s attitude toward the ultimate questions of life
and death. And yet we perpetuate burial forms and
customs from that earlier time, even though they have lost
most of their meaning (Howett 1976:9).

Earlier settlement patterns that integrated places for the dead with daily activities
of the living have changed. In most recent decades, American society has evolved away
from community-based involvement with death of the individual to a private mourning
(Gabel et al. 1996; Newman 1997).
The privatization of death in modern American society suggests that death may no longer be as meaningful as it once was and a rich familial and communal meaning now exists as an isolated phenomenon (Mellor and Shilling 1993) (Gabel et al. 1996:362).

Earlier efforts to maintain relationships with the dead were abandoned toward the end of the nineteenth century (Jackson 1977:395). Death has become a private experience, rather than an aspect of our universal and shared common humanity.

The depersonalization of burial plots by the Memorial Park movement during the 1920s contributed to alienation of grave site visits with graves barely visible. Mortuary practices have changed, such that vertical headstones commemorating the deceased are rare. The refashioning of historic cemeteries for modern gardening equipment involves the replacement of upright headstones with uniform horizontal plaques that lack individuality and restrict expressions of sentiment. Modern epitaphs minimally convey information of major biographical events: name of deceased, date of birth and date of death. With urban development, public symbols lose their status as places and formerly-revered symbols are viewed as cluttering space (Tuan 1975). Today, the untidiness of death is effaced in the uniform and pricey landscapes of commercial Memorial Parks.

As distance is no longer an obstacle, choices in place of worship have been liberated from transportation limitations. In the South, multi-denominational churches are attracting large numbers of members from the numerous Baptist congregations and Catholic churches of parish seats. Multi-denominational churches are not affiliated with cemeteries. Thus, a preference for Memorial Parks is further promoted.
Until recently, cemeteries associated with a church shared a long continuous history as an integral part of Louisiana’s settlement pattern. Recently, Louisiana is adapting California’s model of urban development with cemeteries separate from churches. In this model, when church property is transferred, cemetery ownership is not a concern. However, Louisiana already has a long history of church-associated cemeteries. A preference for urban and interstate associated Memorial Parks is adversely impacting cemeteries that were bound to the community by church association. As Louisiana participates in a modern preference for newly-established large Memorial Parks, rural community cemeteries will continue to be abandoned.

Memorial Parks serve the purposes of a transient society that may not return to visit a grave. In an industrial society, Memorial Parks offer convenient and expeditious disposal of human remains. In Sopher’s (1979:136) description of the Rom gypsies as a homeless culture he states: “they do not have the cult of cemeteries; once a burial is finished, the place of burial is practically forgotten.” Similar to the Rom gypsies, the mobility of our society makes it difficult to maintain associations with one burial place. In recent generations, family members are commonly buried in different cemeteries. The decay of the cultural matrix, of earlier settlement patterns from which cemeteries were created, poses a threat to these sacred places.

C. Times They Are A Changin’

Over sixty years of evolving communities – from local and agricultural to industrial and commercial economies – attitudes toward traditional cemetery landscapes have changed. Churches have been razed. Trains no longer make local
stops. As a result, cemeteries have become disassociated, abandoned and often encroached by new transportation and industries.

Earnest Gaines’ novel *A Lesson Before Dying* (1993) was written from the perspective of rural and southern black culture in Louisiana. A plantation cemetery located along a railroad of boxcars laden with sugarcane is contextually described as follows:

> Left of the weighing scales and the derrick was the plantation cemetery, where my ancestors had been buried for the past century. The cemetery had lots of trees in it, pecans and oaks, and it was weedy too, and since there were so few gravestones, it was pretty hard to see many graves from the road... I told her that my people had worked these fields ever since slavery, and many of them were buried in the cemetery (*in unmarked graves*)...

(Gaines 1993:107, emphasis added).

Similar to the above-described cemetery, many low-profile rural cemeteries in Louisiana are barely visible amidst new landscape activities.

Popular Southern tales by such authors as Flannery O’Connor, William Faulkner and Mark Twain, emphasize the impact of death upon families and the integral role that graveyards had in family and community. In the popular medium of film, the abandonment of a Southern graveyard is portrayed in Robert Aldrich’s film “Hush, Hush Sweet Charlotte” (1966). In this movie, Betty Davis plays the role of a forlorn debutante defending the plantation from bridge construction over the Mississippi River (north of Baton Rouge). Similar to Blanche in “A Street Car Named Desire” (1940s), two “hysteric” Southern Belles attempt to defend the heritage of their ancestors which...
includes the family cemetery. In the 1940s Christmas classic “It’s A Wonderful Life,”
the affordable suburb of “Bailey Park” was constructed over the historic town cemetery.

Cemetery destruction is commonly used in today’s popular fiction to evoke an
emotional moment or emphasize a climatic event. The remnants of an old church and
cemetery emphasize landscape inundation and isolation in Wes Craven’s “Swamp
Thing” (1980s). Similarly, Steven King’s “Graveyard Shift” (1990s) plays with our
church and cemetery are refurbished by a modern-day itinerant preacher in rural
Louisiana. And recently, “Hard Rain” (1998) presents the impermanence of graves as
coffins float down river during a flood.

A song that is still popular today “See that My Grave is Kept Clean” has little
meaning today as grave maintenance is relegated to strangers. Since Blind Lemon
Jefferson’s original 1930s version of this song, renditions by Bob Dylan (1960s),
Diamanda Gala (1990s) and other popular artists perpetuate the sentiments associated
with a permanent place of rest and personal grave maintenance.

Popular ideas about permanency in death are invoked by today’s youth who wish
to be memorialized by epitaphs. The desire for memorials on epitaphs is contrary to
Memorial Park restrictions and the potential of cemetery relocation for future
development. While funeral insurance salesmen promote traditional sentiments of
death, a place for death in our modern society is questionable. Funeral enterprises
capitalize on sentiments of perpetuity which are juxtaposed to the impermanency of
burial places.
A schizophrenia of sorts exists between what we believe and the reality of a permanent place of rest — a place eternally dedicated in remembrance to an individual.

The necessity of death and the necessity, rooted in our Puritan past, of the remembrance of death and its attendant spiritual anxieties is now in conflict with our desire to sanitize death (and life), to limit its intrusive and disruptive power. At once we are attracted and repelled, fascinated and terrified; we limit and deny in the very act of commemoration... It would seem that Western funerary practice has long been attended by a sort of cultural schizophrenia (Voller 1991:8).

D. Space, Time and Distance: An Existential Schism

A change in cemetery landscape preference is evidence for our evolving perceptions of space, time and distance. In America and globally, the annihilation of space by time has created new spatial relationships.

Speed is the triumph of effect over cause, the triumph of instantaneity over time as depth, the triumph of the surface and pure objectality over the profundity of desire. Speed creates a space of initiation, which may be lethal; its only rule is to leave no trace behind. Triumph of forgetting over memory, an uncultivated, amnesic intoxication (Baudrillard 1986:6-7).

Spatial relationships that were formerly established by rail or water, and the social practices built around these time-space systems are eroding. Travel by airlines and primary highways have introduced a radical reorganization to space and time relationships and, consequently, cemetery landscape perceptions. The new dynamics of spatial relationships are apparent in the contexts of modern cemetery landscapes.

Cemeteries were situated at locations that were inherently a part of daily routines. Near churches, crossroads and waterways, cemeteries were established within
the audible range of bells which harkened warnings and beckoned for a community to gather. The calamitous clanging of church bells rang for joyous occasions and they rang the death toll in sorrow. From church bells to train whistles, the audible meters of daily community activities have receded. Time was once marked by the rhythm of seasons, church gatherings, daily routines, births and deaths. The spatial distribution of historic cemeteries was in accordance with rhythms that are barely discernible today. Similar to old church bells that lay mute on the ground, traditional cemeteries are receding from the landscape.

Prior to this century, time was not regulated by the industrial engine nor was friction of distance measured by primary highways. Distances were perceived according to means of travel by pedestrian, horse and boat, and the range of communications emanating from ports, depots and crossroads. The dereliction of cemeteries is evidence for abandonment of local communities and traditional life ways. As the ways of living changed with modern progress, preferred locations for living, worshiping and dying also changed.

The former contexts of historic cemetery landscapes were illustrations of time’s progression and everyone’s ultimate demise. Epitaphs were designed to remind us of a common destiny. The modern preference for Memorial Parks, located a distance from the core of community activities, creates a different spatial relationship with burial place. Peirce Lewis’ first axiom of landscape as clue to culture states:

The man-made landscape - the ordinary run-of-the-mill things that humans have created and put upon the earth - provides strong evidence of the kind of people we are, and
were, and are in process of becoming (Lewis 1979:15, emphasis added).

Culture is unintentionally expressed in the landscape. Places that were formerly a traditional and integral part of the community (such as cemeteries) reinforced norms and ideals. In 1971, Jackson proposed:

We should ask ourselves whether the modern cemetery is in fact the equivalent of the traditional graveyard or whether it is not a totally different kind of space (Jackson 1968:22, reprinted 1997).

In regards to the “other spaces” of heterotopias, Foucault (1986:22) describes the past as obsessed with temporal accumulation. The present post-modern era is concerned with spatial relationships.

We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network of points and intersects with its own skein. One could perhaps say that certain ideological conflicts animating present-day polemics oppose the pious descendants of time and the determined inhabitants of space (Foucault 1986:22).

The integrity of cemetery landscapes as places of accumulation over time is threatened by new concepts of space and changing land use needs.

Post-modern philosophies suggest that a schizophrenia of our knowledge exists when mediums of popular culture misrepresent reality (Deleuze and Guattari 1983; Lyotard 1979; Soja 1989). A schism exists between the individual’s desire to be remembered and Memorial Park restrictions on individual expression in grave decoration. The portrayal of historic cemetery landscapes in popular culture is contrary
to the individual’s likely interment in the ubiquitous Memorial Parks. Thus, a confusion
of the desired and the attainable is set into play.

Our “objective” social identity is anticipated through the “subjective” epitaph.

There are many ambiguous links between symbolism and death (Baudrillard 1993;
Zizek 1993). Through the assumption of a symbolic identity we anticipate the
inevitable, our death.

Claude Levi-Strauss conceived the symbolic order as an
asubjective structure, an objective field in which every
individual occupies, fills in, his or her preordained place;
what Lacan invokes is the “genesis” of this objective
socio-symbolic identity: if we simply wait for a symbolic
place to be allotted to us, we will never live to see it. That
is, in the case of a symbolic mandate, we never simply
ascertain what we are; we “become what we are” by
means of a precipitous subjective gesture (Zizek 1993:76).

Thus, a subjective anticipation of a permanent resting place with an epitaph proclaiming
our accomplishments is an objective identity that is not prevalent today. Memorial
Parks effectively erase visible signs of death and the symbols used to commemorate
individuals.

By assuming a symbolic identity with an epitaph we attempt to exist beyond
death. According to Zizek (1993:76), the anticipation of a symbolic identity beyond
death is also designed to forestall death: “... to assure my posthumous life in the
symbolic tradition which will outlive my death.” In regards to the commemoration of
battlefields as monuments to death, Zizek (1993:194) states:

... by dedicating ourselves to the task of successfully
bringing to an end the work of those who sacrificed their
lives, we will make sure that their sacrifice was not in
vain, that they will continue to live in our memory; in this way, we will effectively commemorate them; if we do not accomplish this task of ours, they will be forgotten, they will have died in vain. So, by dedicating the place to their memory, what we actually do is dedicate, legitimize ourselves as the continuators of their work — we legitimize our own role. This gesture of self-legitimization through the other is ideology in its purest: the dead are our redeemers, and by dedicating ourselves to continuing their work we redeem the redeemers.

The abandonment of traditional cemetery landscapes denies the legitimate role that individuals played in society. With efforts to reestablish the lost balance between the real and perceived, we attempt to “(re)construct society as a harmonious, organic, nonantagonistic edifice” (Zizek 1993:97). In this way, Memorial Parks are a corporate endeavor by society to assert order by denying the chaos of a heterogenous past.

A schism exists between the real and desired, of conveyed messages and the reality of the cemetery’s place in today’s culture. As cemeteries are abandoned over time, forgotten and erased from the surface, they become an idealized space rather than a place.

It is not that we have subdued or even cheapened death, but rather that we no longer possess the conceptual resources for giving believable or acceptable meaning to it (Stannard 1977:193).

As cemeteries are relegated to the mythological realm of popular fiction, humanity is extracted from the essence of its existence: life and death.

Keeping death out of mind cuts people off from an important fact of their physical, mental, and spiritual existence. If knowing that we will die is part of what makes us human, then forgetting that we will die threatens our humanity. In the same way, the denial of death in
American society also cuts people off from our common humanity . . . (Farrell 1980:221, emphasis added).

The removal of cemeteries for other land uses further contributes to a schizophrenia in attitudes about burial place. Similar to the Kantian theme of the sublime, the aesthetic historic cemetery landscape is valued over the real and sets into conflict the subject with the knowledge of a lack of its existence. A surrealism then becomes our perceived reality in regards to death's place in the landscape. Through popular culture our perception of traditional cemetery landscapes and their contextual persistence is juxtaposed to a reality of abandonment. During the second half of the twentieth century traditional cemeteries were increasingly abandoned. Abandoned cemeteries have evolved from depots and landfills to parking lots, commercial centers, and suburbs. Today, cemeteries are evolving to the space-economic, compartmentalized columbarium.

I conclude this study with several quandaries. Is cremation a cost expedient means of disposal that further serves to distance us from a burial place? Is compartmentalized disposal of human remains, such as cremation, a more efficient use of space, over time? Are historic ties to burial place a romantic notion that is impractical in the reality of today's mobile society? Are long-term personal attachment to a burial place fancies of the past? When historic cemeteries and reverence for such cemeteries are neglected, what does this tell us about the meaning attached to a place of death and our sense of belonging? Does death have a place in a futuristic and global society? As Memorial Parks are established in accordance with new settlement patterns.
and traditional cemeteries continue to be abandoned, will the adage “Out of Sight, Out of Mind” apply to burial places?
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APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA


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Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Table A-4. Percent of Population Living in Poverty from 1950 to 1990.

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APPENDIX B: TRANSPORTATION DATA

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* = partial parish sampled  shaded = Upland parish
### APPENDIX C: URBAN PLACE

Table C-1. Urban Place Enumeration 1930 to 1990.

* = parish seats
shaded = Upland urban places
0 = not enumerated

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VITA

Cindy Ann Nance is a native of California. Her scholastic career began in 1980 at Cabrillo and Fullerton Community Colleges in California. In 1983, she completed her undergraduate degree at University of California, Berkeley. Cindy received the bachelor of arts in letters and sciences for which her studies focused on anthropology with emphasis in archaeology.

For approximately eight years Cindy was self-employed as a free-lance legal assistant in the San Francisco Financial District. In 1992, she resumed her academic pursuits at Northern Arizona University. In 1995, she received her master of arts degree in anthropology, again emphasizing archaeology. Cindy Ann Nance was admitted to Louisiana State University’s Department of Geography and Anthropology fall 1995.

Cindy is a member of the Association of American Geographers and has presented papers at national and regional conferences. In 1997, she presented the paper “Geographic Information Systems Implementation of Site Location Data Accumulated Over a Century” at the national conference in Dallas. She has presented two papers at the Southwest Association of American Geographers conferences: “Global Positioning systems and Geographic Information Systems Reconnaissance of Louisiana’s Historic Cemetery Sites” (1997) and “A Geographic Information System Study of Changes in Cemetery Locations in Southeastern Louisiana from an Archaeological and Geographical Perspective, 1930-1997” (1999).

Presently, Cindy Ann Nance is employed as adjunct faculty at Riverside Community College and part-time instructor at University of California, Riverside.

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Extension in California. She teaches introductory courses on Computer Information Systems, Geographic Information Systems, Spatial Analysis and Cartography. As a graduate student at Louisiana State University, she participated on the Louisiana Oil Spill Commission project for data acquisition and compilation of Gulf Coast environmental features in a Geographic Information Systems for emergency response and assessment. She was also employed by the State of Louisiana Division of Archaeology where she assisted in the compilation of archaeological site information into a Geographic Information System. As a research assistant with the Bilby Research Center at Northern Arizona University, Cindy implemented a pilot study for data compilation of the Coconino National Forest’s archaeological records into a Geographic Information System format.

As a professor of both geography and archaeology, Cindy’s career goals are to instruct students in Geographic Information Sciences while pursuing research interests in archaeology. As a student of landscape archaeology, she will continue to travel abroad and explore the cultural-historic changes taking place.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Cindy Ann Nance

Major Field: Geography


Approved:

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:

October 15, 1999