

VLR-9/19/72 NRHP-4/2/73

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: VIRGINIA	
COUNTY: LYNCHBURG (in city)	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: OLD CITY CEMETERY
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: SEE CONTINUATION SHEET			
CITY OR TOWN: LYNCHBURG (Richard H. Poff, Sixth District Congressman)			
STATE: VIRGINIA	CODE: 51	COUNTY: (in city)	CODE: 680

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>graveyard</u>
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: CITY OF LYNCHBURG			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: LYNCHBURG	STATE: VIRGINIA	CODE: 51	STATE: VIRGINIA

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: LYNCHBURG COURT HOUSE			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: LYNCHBURG	STATE: VIRGINIA	CODE: 52	COUNTY: LYNCHBURG (in city)

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1972	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> State	<input type="checkbox"/> County
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission			
STREET AND NUMBER: Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building			
CITY OR TOWN: Richmond	STATE: Virginia	CODE: 51	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

VIRGINIA

COUNTY:

LYNCHBURG (in city)

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
(Check One)			(Check One)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Altered			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Moved		
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The entrance to the City Cemetery - the old Methodist Cemetery - is situated at the crest of a gentle rise up Taylor Street from Fifth Street, the main thoroughfare. The gates at Taylor Street and Fourth Street are on the axis of Taylor Street. The main avenue within the cemetery is a continuation of Taylor Street. As the entrance is located precisely at the crest, the land within the cemetery falls away to the southwest, the northwest, and to the northeast. By local custom the directions are referred to as south, north, and east, respectively. The ridge is surrounded by small streams feeding into Blackwater Creek which soon empties into the James River.

Placed within one of the most heavily populated and most intensely developed areas of the old city, the open park-like space of the cemetery is a welcome relief. Following the restricted vista imposed by the houses crowding either side of Taylor Street, the panoramic view of the rolling hills of Lynchburg and the Blue Ridge Mountains beyond is breathtaking. Although located near the geographic center of the city, the atmosphere presented by the many vistas from the cemetery is primarily pastoral. It is this sharp contrast with the intensely urban which makes the cemetery all the more appreciated. The cemetery does, in fact, have one of the most commanding sites in the city of Lynchburg. It occupies the western end of a ridge known throughout Lynchburg history as College Hill. The public water works which are on the highest point of the ridge are just two city blocks from the cemetery.

The main avenue of the cemetery as it descends the hill is paved with granite cobblestones. A thin layer of asphalt has been applied to the center lane only. The drive is bordered on either side by regularly spaced, mature American Arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*) upwards of thirty feet tall. Interspersed with the American Arborvitae are Oriental Arborvitae (*Thuja Orientalis*) and Spirea. It is doubtful that many of the large trees which abound on the site date from the founding of the cemetery. The majority, however, must be quite old, for they are mature trees. The maples throughout the cemetery are noteworthy, as are the great variety of evergreens.

So many markers have been lost in the old sections the area on either side of the main drive presents a surprisingly open and park-like appearance. The notable feature of this area is the group of stone walls enclosing family plots. Though few in number, the force and vigor of these walls immediately arrest the eye. Averaging some three feet in height, the walls are of closely fitted large blocks of local granite matching in material and character the stonework of the old Lynchburg Courthouse. The strength of the walls is further accented by the delicate iron fences surmounting them - examples of the iron caster's art at its most elaborate development.

The grave markers in the old sections of the cemetery encompass the full range of memorial art. Markers of marble, granite, soapstone, slate and local greenstone display the imagination of the carvers for the past century. The number of tabletop markers is unusual for this part of Virginia. Two early slab type markers, each with a single scroll at the top, are paired to give the illusion of a scroll pediment. Another pair of markers exhibit low relief carving of classical landscapes with weeping willow trees surrounded with funeral motifs. The cemetery is not without its kneeling angel in chaste white marble.

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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7.

The charm of the older part of the cemetery is greatly heightened by the sentiment of mid-nineteenth century America that all markers in a family group need not be identical. Thus, the massive, native stone walls might surround eight carved tombstones of pristine white marble - each stone of a different size and design as befitted the age, sex, and family relationship of the deceased. The quality common to all this group of memorials is the absolute self-confidence in the material world exhibited in the decade of affluence prior to the War Between the States. These splendid shafts proudly display their makers' marks, such as Struthers, Philadelphia, in letters almost as large as the name of the individual being memorialized.

At the foot of the hill a cross axis to the west leads to the Confederate section. The flagstone path passes between two large spruce trees and under a stone arch dedicated to the memory of the Confederate dead buried here. At either side of the arch the piers are surmounted by highly stylized urns. One is struck immediately by the row upon row of uniform, small, white marble markers. The Confederate section is bounded on the west by a brick wall and on the remaining sides by a tall boxwood hedge. The wall when constructed marked the boundary of the cemetery, but today it separates the Confederate section from the modern section and from potter's field. The wall of mixed bond is approximately eight inches thick and is capped with a half-round brick course. The wall's principal claim to attention is its association with a book of the cemetery records published in 1968 under the title, "Behind the Old Brick Wall." Along Fourth Street the cemetery is enclosed with a chain link fence; but a sign notes that City Council has authorized the reconstruction of a brick wall.

Three features, each quite different from the other, dominate the Confederate section. A stone obelisk on a mound is composed of fourteen individual blocks of stone in graduated sizes. Each block represents a state whose dead are interred in this section. A permanent speaker's rostrum nearby is in the form of a classical temple complete with doric columns and a hemispherical dome. The temple is only large enough for the speaker and the presiding chairman. Facing the rostrum is a reinforced concrete bench, L-shaped in plan. The fluid lines of the bench terminate in a back some four feet high. In style the concrete bench typifies the exuberant assuredness of garden structures located all across the United States and generally erected under the auspices of the Works Project Administration.

R.H.G.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

OLD CITY CEMETERY, LYNCHBURG: From 1806 until 1965, Old City Cemetery served as a burial place for the prominent, but also the obscure; white and black; free as well as slave; native and foreign born. Begun on land donated by John Lynch, it remains a memorial to the history and traditions of the Lynchburg community.

The Old City Cemetery is a reminder that viable personal relationships between black and white have persisted over the generations. During the ante-bellum times, black men and women were buried here: some the respected and loved servants of Lynchburg's white families; others, free Negroes, including one gifted individual, "Blind Billy" Armistead, whose death in 1855 brought mourning to many Lynchburg homes.

For the century following Appomattox --as Virginia passed through reconstruction, redemption, and readjustment -- the Alexanders, the Coxes, the Gladmans and Higginbothams, the Majors, Merrimans, and Prides, the Wilkinsons and Mrs. Virginia Randolph took their places here along with the indigent of their own race and whites of all classes.

Jenny Hicks, a lady of color, "beloved of many Lynchburgers," was but one of those interred here who were, in life, known and respected by members of both races. She had, The News observed in an editorial farewell, "that rare quality called grace in her life." If Old City Cemetery testifies to the bi-racial, multi-national character of Lynchburg's population, it also serves to remind us of the community's Southernness.

Two thousand and more of the Confederate dead were buried here. They came with Phillip's Georgia Legion and the Sumpter Artillery; with the 11th Mississippi and the 44th Alabama; from the Lower and Border South; from as far distant as West Texas and as near as the Maryland Eastern Shore. During "four years of arduous service" with the Army of Northern Virginia, scores of hundreds of soldiers passed through Lynchburg's make-shift hospitals. Those who died from their wounds or illnesses were buried here unless conditions and distances permitted removal to their homes.

In the years immediately following the War, and then again sporadically, Lynchburg observed an annual Decoration Day to honor the fallen soldiers. The entire community might participate one year--as in 1868; and only a few widows and orphans the next. This same tendency--from great interest to sheer neglect and back again--has been evident in the community's attitude towards the general maintenance of the cemetery.

War and peace, surrender and perseverance; lack of concern, dedicated devotion, love and hate; anonymity and identity; the story of a people and region are recorded here in table-top monuments, tiny and crudely-cut stones, and in graves which were left or have become unmarked.

HPP

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Description by Robert H. Garbee, A.I.A., Lynchburg, Virginia  
 L.H.M. Baber & E. L. Moore, Behind the Old Brick Wall: A Cemetery Story,  
 Richmond, Virginia, 1968.  
 Rosters of Burials in the Main Sector (1806-1913), and in the Confederate  
 Section of This Cemetery; Baber & Moore, ibid., Appendices.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE					
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	37 °	25'	01"	79 °	09'	32"				
NE	37 °	25'	01"	79 °	09'	15"				
SE	37 °	24'	47"	79 °	09'	15"				
SW	37 °	24'	47"	79 °	09'	32"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **26 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION STAFF**

ORGANIZATION: **VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION** DATE: **September, 1972**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building**

CITY OR TOWN: **Richmond** STATE: **Virginia** CODE: **51**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name J. R. Fishburne, Director

Title Va. Historic Landmarks Commission

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

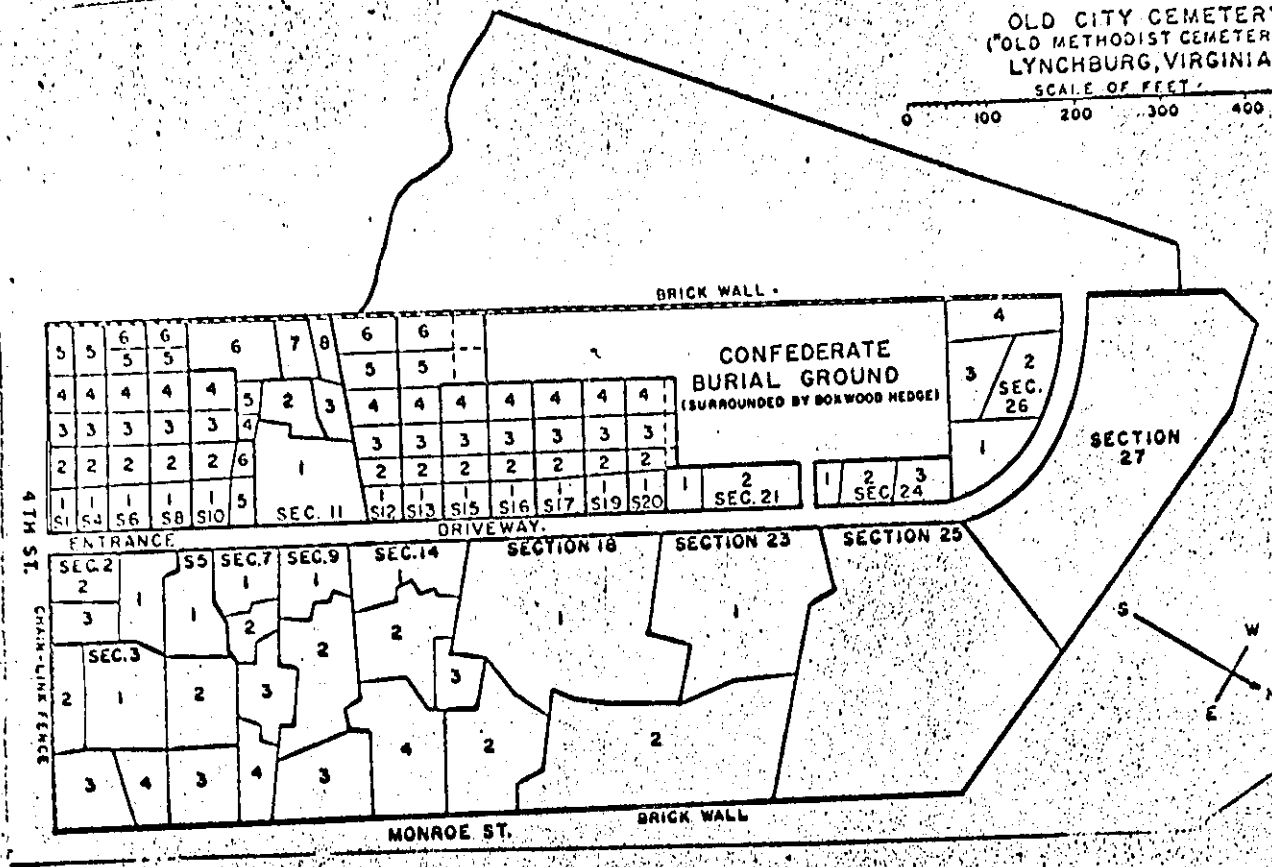
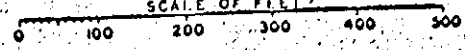
STATE	
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2.

The cemetery boundary on the east lies along Fourth Street from mid block between Floyd and Wise to the corner of Fourth Street and Monroe Street. It then follows Monroe Street northward to First Street. A straight line through the bottom leads to a point where Garland Street terminates at the Southern Railroad. It follows the Southern Railroad boundary to a point near Floyd Street and then follows an irregular line back to Fourth Street.

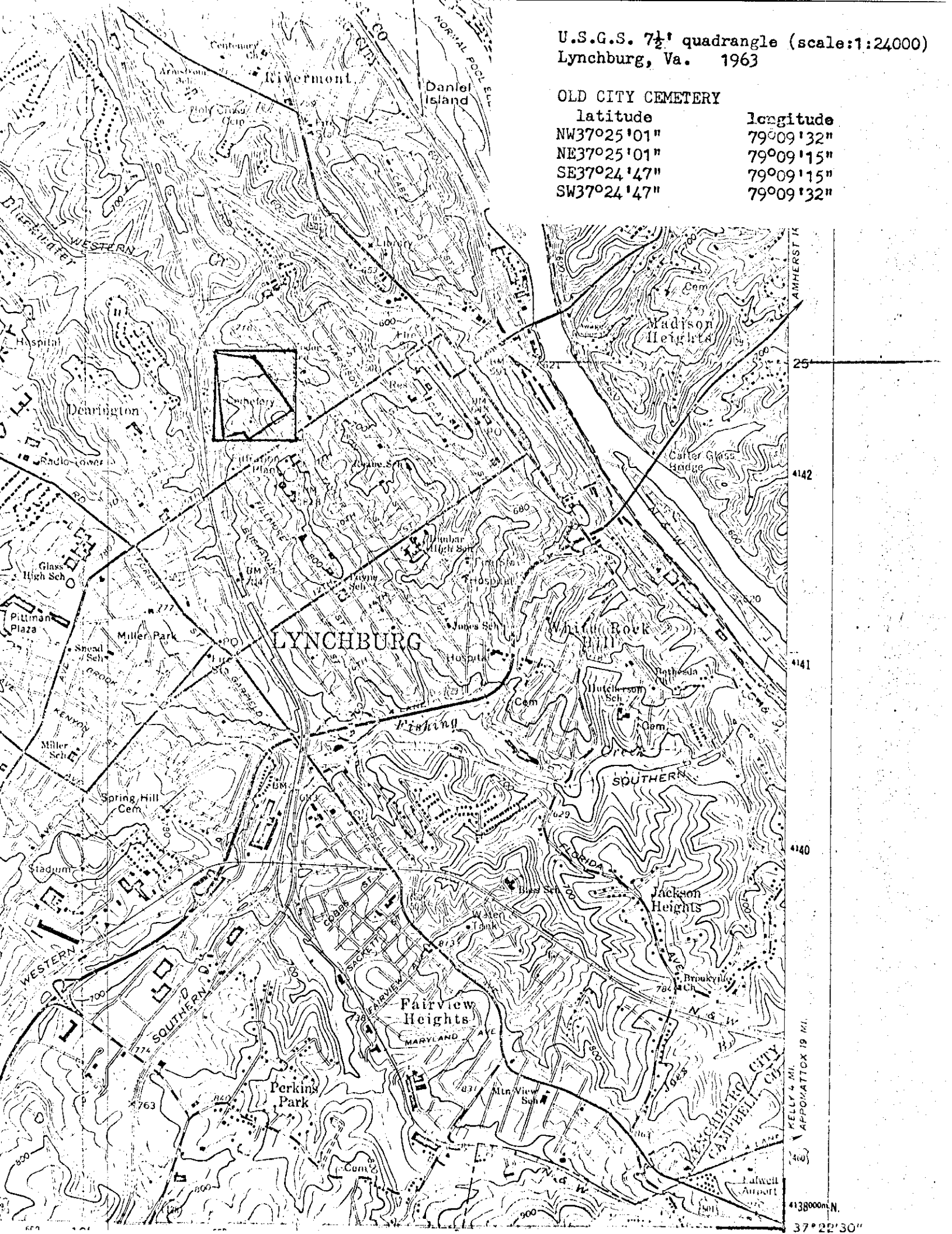
OLD CITY CEMETERY  
 ("OLD METHODIST CEMETERY")  
 LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA



U.S.G.S. 7½' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)  
 Lynchburg, Va. 1963

**OLD CITY CEMETERY**

latitude	longitude
NW37°25'01"	79°09'32"
NE37°25'01"	79°09'15"
SE37°24'47"	79°09'15"
SW37°24'47"	79°09'32"



AMHERST 14  
 25  
 4142  
 4141  
 4140  
 KELY 4 MI.  
 APPROXIMATELY 19 MI.  
 4138000 N.  
 37° 22' 30"