United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Prop	perty			
historic name other names/site	Mound Cemetery numberSite #DE0002			
2. Location				
street & number city or town stateArkansas	5 miles North of Arkansas City on C Arkansas City ; code <u>AR</u> county	ounty Road 351	net for pu ⊠ vi 041 zip code	
3. State/Federa	Agency Certification			
In my opinion, t	d authority under the National Historic Preservation mination of eligibility meets the documentation sta is the procedural and professional requirements set if e National Register criteria. I recommend that this statewide locally. (See continuation sheet the Mistoric Preservation Program al agency and bureau he property meets does not meet the National content of the statewide local set in the statewide the property meets does not meet the National content of the statewide local set in the statewide content of the statewide local set in the set in the statewide local set in the s	ndards for registering properties in the Nat for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the p property be considered significant for additional comments.) 10/31/07 Date	ional Register of Historiz property 🛛 meets 🔲	
Signature of c	entifying official/Title	Date		
	al agency and bureau k Service Certification			
I hereby certify that entered in 11 Sec determined National F Sec determined National F	the property is: the National Register to continuation sheet eligible for the Register to continuation sheet not eligible for the Register the National	Signature of the Keeper		Date of Action

Mound Cemetery		Desha County, Arkansas County and State		
5. Classification				
Ownership of PropertyCategory of Property(Check as many boxes as apply)(Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in count.)			
private Duilding(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing		
District District				
Dublic-State Site	0	0	_ buildings	
public-Federal structure	1	0	sites	
🗌 object	0	0	_ structure	
	0	0	- objects	
	1	0	_ Total	
Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)	Number of Contribution in the National Registe		/ listed	
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)			
FUNERARY: Cemetery	FUNERARY: Cemetery	,		
	-			
7. Description				
Architectural Classification	Materials			
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	(Enter categories from instruc	rtions)		
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)		ntions)		
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	(Enter categories from instruc foundation <u>N/A</u> walls <u>N/A</u>	stions)		
	(Enter categories from instruction N/A	stions)		

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

Mound Cemetery

Name of Property

#### 8. Statement of Significance

#### pplicable National Register Criteria

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### **Criteria Considerations**

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

#### Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B.** removed from its original location.

- C. birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- D a cemetery.

**E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

**F** a commemorative property

**G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) SEE CONTINUATION SHEET Desha County, Arkansas County and State

Levels of Significance (local, state, national) LOCAL

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

**Period of Significance** 1866-1958

### **Significant Dates**

1866-1958

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder N/A

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Mound Cemetery	Desha County, Arkansas
Name of Property County and State	
9. Major Bibliographical References	
<b>Bibliography</b> (Cite the bocks, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on o	one or more continuation sheets.)
<ul> <li>Previous documentation on file (NPS):</li> <li>preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested</li> <li>previously listed in the National Register</li> <li>Previously determined eligible by the National Register</li> <li>designated a National Historic Landmark</li> <li>recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey</li> </ul>	Primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office Other State Agency Federal Agency Local Government University Other Name of repository:
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # SEE CONTINUATION SHEET	
10. Geographical Data	
d Acreage of Property Less than one acre UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)	
1         15         666903         3721302           2           Northing           2             Verbal Boundary Description	Zone Easting Northing 4 See continuation sheet
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 11. Form Prepared By	
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program street & number 323 Center Street Suite 1500	Coordinator & Sydney Yeager, National Registry /Survey Intern       date     February 7, 2007       telephone     501-324-9787
city or town Little Rock	state AR zip code 72201

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form

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#### **Continuation Sheets**

#### Maps

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

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

### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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#### Mound Cemetery

Name of Property

#### Additional items

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

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street & number telephone	
state	zip code
	state

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

Mound Cemetery
Name of Property

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### SUMMARY

The Mound Cemetery is located in the southeast part of the Arkansas Delta. It is located one-half mile outside of Arkansas City in Desha County. This site was originally a Native American earthen mound estimated to have been built during the Mississippian period.<sup>1</sup> Beginning in the late 1860s, settlers buried people on the mound because it was the only high ground that would remain dry during the many floods that the area experienced.<sup>2</sup> After floods ceased in the area, people began to be buried around the mound as well. The oldest historic grave was that of Rachel Horton who died on March 15, 1866. This cemetery is important for its associations with the time period of Arkansas City's early settlement.

## **ELABORATION**

Mound Cemetery represents a site of both historic and prehistoric value. The mound in Mound Cemetery is one of few mounds in the state which has not been completely erased by the new settlers farming and construction damage which has destroyed most of Arkansas's estimated 1,100 sites.<sup>3</sup> Mound Cemetery was chosen as a cemetery site in the 1860s because of its elevation. The first people that were buried in the cemetery were buried on top of the mound as this was the only dry place during the numerous floods the area experienced. Mound Cemetery is half a mile outside of Arkansas City on County Road 351. It is about 3 miles from the Mississippi River. It was common for Native Americans to build their mounds near rivers, but this meant that it was in an area of flooding before good levees were built. The oldest part of the cemetery was high up on the earthen mound, and it was this that saved it from the devastation of floods.<sup>4</sup>

The Native American mound is located in the East side of the cemetery. It is a Mississippian Mound likely built between 1200 and 1600 AD the latest period of mound building in the area.<sup>5</sup> Mound Cemetery is located in the Boeuf Basin very near the Mississippi River. Mound construction most likely occurred over years of building it up a little at a time. The Mississippian people would build up the earth and raise a building of importance. After the building burned either as an accident or an intentional burn as part of a cleansing ceremony, the people would bring basket loads of soil to cover the mound. Often these cleansing burns would take place after a leader or well-to-do member of the community died and so the person would be buried in the mound.<sup>6</sup> According to a 19<sup>th</sup> century visitor to Desha County, Edward Palmer, people discovered human bones, pottery, and building materials while digging graves on top of the mound.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Early, Ann, Email to Sydney Yeager Intern of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Registry, February 12, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Desha County, Arkansas Cemetery Record, (McGehee, Arkansas: Mrs. Joesph Hillard Sroud and Marion Mckinney Stroud, 1983), 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "The Moundbuilders," NPS Archeology Program: Ancient Architects of the Mississippi,

<sup>&</sup>lt;http://www.cr.nps.gov/archeologv/feature/builder.htm> (Maich 7, 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Cemetery Records, 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Early, Ann, Email to Sydney Yeager, February 12, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Rolingson, Central Mississippi Valley, 541. and "The Moundbuilders."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Early, Ann, Email to Sydney Yeager, February 12, 2007.

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Mound Cemetery consists of 121 graves of which 78 are historic. Burial continues here to this day. There are iron fences around the older graves and around the cemetery itself.<sup>8</sup> The oldest grave is that of Rachel Horton who died on March 15, 1866. Within an iron fence on top of the mound is the grave of Oscar Bowles, who drowned March 30, 1874, in the major flood that spring.<sup>9</sup> It was due to local flooding of the Mississippi that led the people of Arkansas City to first dig graves on top of the mound. The mound was the only piece of land high enough so that the peoples' grave would not get washed out. After the flood of 1927, the levees were built up and in much better condition. Since there was no longer any flooding people began to be buried on the lower ground surrounding the mound. One gentleman of interest which was buried here was Robert Walker Smith. He served in the Confederate Army from Texas. After his move to Arkansas City, he became a charter member of the Arkansas City Masonic Lodge and the Methodist Church.

This is a breakdown of the burials by decade of the 105 clearly marked graves. The other 16 graves were broken or sunk too deep to read the date of death.

1860s~ 1 1870s~ 5 1880s~ 4 1890s~ 2 1900s~ 1 1910s~ 28 1920s~ 15 1930s~ 0 1940s~ 7 1950s~ 8 1960s~ 34

Most of the tombstones are made of marble with a few of the more recent stones being made of concrete and granite. The most common type of tombstone in the Mound Cemetery is a tablet. There are a few pedestals on base stones. Also there is one marker for a member of Woodmen of the World, which is shaped like a tree stump. Some of the tombstones have markers for other such organizations such as the Mosaic Templars, Knights and Daughters of Tabor, and Royal Circle of Friends as well as stones honoring WWI and WWII veterans.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Cemetery Records, 32 to 40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Cemetery Records, 32 and 33.

Mound Cemetery	
Name of Property	

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### INTEGRITY

This site still maintains its 19<sup>th</sup> century purpose as an American cemetery. Its connection to the past of Arkansas City and Desha County is still very strong. Also the mound inside the cemetery is in much better shape than most of mounds of its kind in Arkansas. Only two graves have sunken headstones that are unreadable.<sup>10</sup> Many headstones can still be clearly read to see that there were Mosaic Templars, Knights and Daughters of Tabor, and Royal Circle of Friends buried in this cemetery with the appropriate symbols marking their graves.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Cemetery Records., 36 and 37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Early, Ann, Email to Sydney Yeager, February 12, 2007.

Mound	Cemetery
Name of	Property

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### SUMMARY

The Mound Cemetery is located in the Arkansas City vicinity of Desha County, Arkansas. With its burials dating back to the 1860s and containing the remains of some of the early settlers and prominent families of the Arkansas City area, the Mound Cemetery is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A with local significance for its associations with the period of exploration and settlement in the Arkansas City area. This cemetery is also being nominated under Criteria Consideration D: cemetery.

### **ELABORATION**

The history of the Mound Cemetery began with the Native Americans who lived in the area. Mississippian Mound building has been recognized in the Central Mississippi Valley region which encompasses the alluvial plain of the Mississippi River.<sup>1</sup> The mound fits the criteria for a Late Mississippian mound built somewhere between 1200 and 1600 AD.<sup>2</sup>

Mound construction usually occurred over several generations. People would haul in dirt and build up the ground before placing a building of some importance on top, such as the chief's house or a temple. When the structure burned or when someone of importance died the building would be taken down.<sup>3</sup> The ashes and debris possibly along with the body of the important person would be covered over with basket loads of dirt.<sup>4</sup>

The Mississippian Mound Builders built their mounds near rivers and other bodies of water. The mound in the Mound Cemetery was built very near the location where the Arkansas River meets the Mississippi River in the Boeuf Basin.<sup>5</sup> This location is key to its later use as a place of refuge and burial.

No systematic archeological study has been done of the mound, but it does have the potential to yield archeological information on the Mississippian culture, which is a key part of Arkansas's past. Of the nearly 1,100 mound sites which have been documented in Arkansas very few remain in good condition. Most have been plowed under, used to level ground elsewhere, vandalized, or eroded away by the bodies of water they were located near.<sup>6</sup> It is Mound Cemetery's unique history in the past two centuries that has preserved it.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rolingson, Martha Ann, Prehistory of Central Mississippi Valley and Ozarks after 500 B.C., 534.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Early, Ann, Email to Sydney Yeager Intern of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Registry, February 12, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Moundbuilders," NPS Archeology Program: Ancient Architects of the Mississippi,

<sup>&</sup>lt;<u>http://www.cr.nps.gov/archeologv/feature/builder.htm</u>> (Match 7, 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Rolingson, Central Mississippi Valley, 541.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Rolingson, Central Mississippi Valley, 536.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The Moundbuilders," and Early, Ann M., "Indian Mounds- Encyclopedia of Arkansas," *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History* and Culture, (January 17, 2007), <<u>http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=573</u>> (March 7, 2007).

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Desha County is made up of rich, flat, delta land so the mound itself would have been noticed as being out of place. The conditions of the land in Desha County made it prime land for farming with only one problem, flooding. The Mississippi, Arkansas, and White rivers converge in Desha County a few miles North of Arkansas City and the Mound Cemetery.

Somewhere between 1835 and 1836, Mr. and Mrs. John R Campbell and their sons moved to Desha County along with Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Bowles and their son William Wesley. Mr. Campbell purchased the area surrounding the steamboat landing which later became Desha County for 25 cents an acre.<sup>7</sup> J. R. Campbell established his plantation in the area that became Arkansas City on December 12, 1838.<sup>8</sup>

Oscar Bowles brought John R. Campbell's slaves and took the job of overseer on Mr. Campbell's plantation for the next 17 years. Mr. Bowles cleared the land and got the fist farm in the area up and running for Mr. Campbell. After leaving the employment of John R. Campbell, Oscar Bowles and Charles Campbell set off and purchased land from a Mr. Johnson who had settled in the area previously.<sup>9</sup> The mound, of Mound Cemetery, was located on this plantation. Oscar Bowles continued his pursuits in agriculture until the drowning in the flood of 1874.<sup>10</sup>

The Arkansas City area of Desha County has had a long history of flooding. Until the government came in and built levees in 1927, the flooding was so bad that one newspaper article claimed "There is not a thousand acres of dry soil left in Desha County."<sup>11</sup> It was the height of the mound on otherwise flat ground that attracted the settlers in the area to take refuge on top of the mound during flooding. With the mound being the only area which remained dry during the floods it was the natural choice for burying the plantation owners and their slaves.<sup>12</sup> The slaves were buried below and custom claims that Mr. Campbell was buried on top of the mound, although there are no remaining markers from this period.<sup>13</sup> The oldest marked grave is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Bowden, Maude Trippe, "Arkansas City Methodist Church Goes and Grows," Arkansas City, Nov 1960, 1. "Desha County," County and Municipal Information & Services.

<sup>&</sup>lt;<u>http://local.arkansas.gov/local.php?agency=Desha%20County</u>> (March 7, 2007), and Chris Eatmon to Dr. Ann M. Early, September 25, 2006, Mound Cemetery Letters, Arkansas History Preservation Programs, Little Rock, AR.

Goodspeed, "Desha County, Arkansas Biographies," in *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*, (Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1890; transcribed into HTML by Louis Reitzammer). Available online <<u>http://www.rootsweb.com/~ardesha/goodspd.htm</u>> (June 6, 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Desha County, Arkansas Cemetery Records, McGehee, Arkansas: Mrs. Joseph Hillard Stroud and Marion McKinney Stroud, 1983, 32 and Goodspeed, "Desha County, Arkansas Biographies," <<u>http://www.rootsweb.com/~ardesha/goodspd.htm</u>> (June 6, 2007).

<sup>&</sup>quot;Flood Looses 1892," (Transcribed by Becky Roberts) Available online: USGenNet, a Nonprofit Idaho Corporation, <<u>http://www.usgennet.org/usa/ar/county/greene/arkansasdisaster1892.htm</u>> (March 7, 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Desha County, Arkansas Cemetery Records, 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Chris Eatmon to Dr. Ann M. Early, September 25, 2006.

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that of Rachel Horton who died on March 15, 1866, followed by the before-mentioned Oscar Bowles who drowned during the 1874 flood. After the disastrous 1927 flood, levees were built up to protect the nearby Arkansas City from flood waters. The land surrounding the mound began to be used for cemetery purposes as well as the mound itself after the land became safe from flood waters.<sup>14</sup>

One such person that was buried here was Oscar's son, William W. Bowles.<sup>15</sup> Goodspeed records that William W. Bowles was the oldest man living in the area while Goodspeed was making his historical account of the region, which was published in 1890. William W. Bowles served as a representative of Desha County. William W. Bowles received a formal education at Washington College in Tennessee, which was a rarity in his time. He served in the Confederate Army in 1861 as a private in Company G. Twenty-third Arkansas. He was temporarily taken prisoner at the siege of Port Hudson, but was released after a few days. He served as justice of the peace and constable for Desha and Chicot counties.<sup>16</sup> William W. Bowles are both buried on top of the mound at the Mound Cemetery with a double marker inside the iron fence.<sup>17</sup>

Around 1850 Arkansas City sprang up just to the south of Mr. Campbell's plantation. Following several flooding disasters the county seat was moved to Arkansas City during its timber boom. The Campbell family died off following the Civil War and they are said to be buried on top of the mound; however there are no markers that substantiate this.<sup>18</sup> Since their deaths the Mound Cemetery has come to be used as the public cemetery for Arkansas City and this has protected the mound in a place where it might otherwise have been destroyed.

Since this time, many up standing members of the community have been buried in the Mound Cemetery such as a founder of the Masonic Lodge and Methodist Church in Arkansas City, Robert Walker Smith. Born in Alabama in 1843, he served in the Confederate Army of Texas. Following the war he moved to Arkansas City. He and his wife and two daughters Hixie and Ina are all buried on the mound.

The cemetery itself is still in use today by the people of Arkansas City. With tombstones marking dates ranging from 1866 into the 1960s, the Mound Cemetery represents a century of Arkansas history. The tombstones are marked by symbols of the Mosaic Templars, Knights and Daughters of Tabor, and Royal Circle of Friends.<sup>19</sup> Also veterans of WWI and WWII are buried in this cemetery. With tombstones

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Desha County, Arkansas Cemetery Records, 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Desha County, Arkansas Cemetery Records, 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Goodspeed, "Desha County, Arkansas Biographies," <<u>http://www.rootsweb.com/~ardesha/goodspd.htm</u>> (June 6, 2007)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Desha County, Arkansas Cemetery Records, 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Bowden, "Arkansas City Methodist Church Goes and Grows," 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Early, Ann. Email to Sydney Yeager Intern of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Registry. April 2, 2007

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claiming over 100 years of heritage and the Mound representing the long-gone Mississippian Mound Builders, Mound Cemetery is a place of both historic and pre-historic significance.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Mound Cemetery is located in the Arkansas City vicinity of Desha County, Arkansas. With its burials dating back to the 1860s and containing the remains of some of the early settlers and prominent families of the Arkansas City area, the Mound Cemetery is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A with local significance for its associations with the period of exploration and settlement in the Arkansas City area. This cemetery is also being nominated under Criteria Consideration D: cemetery.

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Mound Cemetery	ł
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"The Moundbuilders." NPS Archeology Program: Ancient Architects of the Mississippi. <<u>http://www.cr.nps.gov/archeology/feature/builder.htm</u>> (March 7, 2007).

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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The northeast corner starts at 100 yards south of the intersection of County Road 351 and County Road 43 proceeding south 200 yards down County Road 351 also known as White Hill Road. Then proceed to the southwest corner 75 yards west of the southeast corner. Finally proceed north 200 yards to the northwest corner and 75 yards east to the northeast corner.

### **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries contain all of the land historically associated with the Mound Cemetery.





























