

Richmond National Cemetery
1701 Williamsburg Road
Richmond, Virginia 23231

Description

The Richmond National Cemetery, established in 1866, is located in Henrico County, Virginia. The site is rectangular in shape and enclosed by a granite and sandstone wall, extending approximately 2,588 lineal feet, constructed circa 1890. The main entrance is located at the center of the north side and is protected by ornamental wrought iron gates supported by ornamental cast-iron posts. Graves are marked with upright marble headstones.



The lodge was constructed in 1870 from a design by Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs and is Second Empire in style. It is an L-shaped brick and stone structure with a slate mansard and tin roof. The main portion is one and one-half stories with dormer windows projecting from the mansard roof. The first floor contains an entry porch, living room, dining room, kitchen and office. The upper story contains two bedrooms and a bath. The lodge also contains a basement, which is divided into two rooms by a masonry wall. A single-story rear addition was constructed circa 1900.



There is a total of 1,501 square feet of living space. The windows on the first story are one-over-one double-hung sash, while the upper-story windows are modern one-over-one sash replacements. The interior is finished with hardwood floors. The old porch was demolished in 1936 and a new larger porch constructed.

A 16-foot octagonal iron gazebo, Chinese Chipendale in style, was constructed circa 1890 in the north-east segment of the cemetery at the intersection of Sections 13-A, 14-A, 21-A, and 22-A. It was built to be used as a rostrum. The gazebo was removed in 1952, leaving only a concrete base and floor.



In 1934, a combination brick and concrete utility building with comfort station, 33 feet, 4 inches, by 22 feet, 3 inches, was constructed to the rear and south of the lodge. The roof is asphalt.

A brick and concrete gasoline storage building, eight feet, five inches by eight feet, with an asphalt roof, was constructed in 1936 between the utility building and the northwest perimeter wall.

Noted Burials

One unknown Confederate soldier was reinterred in the cemetery on April 7, 1978. An employee of a local radio station was relic hunting near the banks of Beaverdam Creek in Hanover County and discovered the remains. There were several Minie balls, and the hunter had presumed that four had struck the soldier. There were buttons and a belt buckle among the items that had triggered the alarm on his metal detector. The remains were found under a foot of dirt roughly 80 feet from the creek. A knife, pewter bayonet scabbard, and canteen were also among items that led to verification by Mr. Les Jensen of the Museum of the Confederacy that the soldier was indeed a Confederate.

Significant Monuments/Memorials

There are four monuments located in the area of the flagpole circle, each seven, feet six inches in height and made of an original cast-iron seacoast artillery tube, secured by a concrete base. The inscription on the cast-bronze plaque affixed to one of the monuments reads as follows:

UNITED STATES
NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERY
RICHMOND
ESTABLISHED SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1866
INTERMENTS 6529
KNOWN 838
UNKNOWN 5691



Civil War Activity in Area

The cemetery is located within the area of fortification lines established for the defense of the capital city of the Confederacy. Reinterments included 3,200 bodies, mostly unknown, removed from Oakwood Cemetery in Richmond, Virginia; 210 (115 known) from the cemetery of the Belle Isle Confederate Prison in Richmond; 12 deceased prisoners of war from a trench at the Rocketts Landing; 388 (all known but 18) from Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond; and remains from the Cold Harbor and Seven Pines battlefields, as well as from locations in Chesterfield and Hanover Counties. Some seventy different locations within a maximum distance of 25 miles of the cemetery site were searched in order that Union dead might be accorded honored burial in a national cemetery.