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THE CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY OF RURAL CEMETERIES: SAUNDERS COUNTY, NEBRASKA

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Geography/Geology

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Gordon M. Riedesel

May, 1979

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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ABSTRACT

Rural cemeteries reflect local culture history. Cultural preferences and attitudes are expressed in the fixtures of cemeteries, tombstones, tombstone arrangement, and cemetery landscaping. The pattern of rural cemeteries can reveal the dynamics of population and settlement, and cultural origins and dispersals.

The rural cemeteries of Saunders County, Nebraska, were studied in the summer of 1978 in order to 1) map the relative location of the cemeteries; 2) determine the pattern of growth and development of the cemeteries; 3) establish a working taxonomic system of cemetery size and character; 4) interpret the cultural phenomena related to rural cemeteries; 5) determine distinctive landscape features of rural cemeteries; and 6) to fill a gap in geographic research.

The result of such intensive study of the geography of rural cemeteries is a better "feel" for the larger cultural landscape in which rural cemeteries are embedded.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Riedesel, who let me see the world, Dr. Joe Wood who showed me how to observe it, and, especially my wife, Pat Fair-Riedesel, who makes living in this world so delightful and whose encouragement, understanding, support, and editorial judgement are invaluable.

A special thanks goes to my patient typist, Peggy Downey of Richfield, Minnesota. The information provided by Mrs. Marge Rezak of the Saunders County Historical society, Mrs. E.H. Mares of Fremont, Nebraska, Mr. Carl Nygren of rural Ashland, Mr. Elmer Norris of rural Ceresco, Mrs. Pauline E. Bennet of Burlington, Iowa, and Evelyn Knox and Nancy Porter of the Saunders County School Superintendent's Office have been most helpful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I. NECROGEOGRAPHY 1

What Necrogeography Is
Cemetery Classification
The Problem of Ethnicity

II. THE SETTLEMENT OF SAUNDERS COUNTY 14

Early Settlement
Land Aquisition Policies and Railroad Land
Culture Group Settlement

III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SAUNDERS COUNTY CEMETERIES . . 28

Periods of Cemetery Development
Population/Cemetery Ratios
External Relations

IV. THE CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY OF RURAL CEMETERIES 52

Reading Rural Cemeteries
Paired Cemeteries

V. THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF RURAL CEMETERIES 74

Vegetation as a Cultural Element
Tombstones and Culture
Tombstone Use and Arrangement
Inscriptions, Epitaphs, and Motifs
Conclusion

. . . . . .

APPENDIX 109

REFERENCES 127

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure		
1.1	Cemeteries of Saunders County	8
2.1	Physiography of Saunders County	16
2.2	Settlement by Precinct	17
2.3	Areas of Culture Group Settlement	19
2.4	Railroad Lands in Saunders County	21
2.5	Railroads in Saunders County	23
2.6	German Cemeteries	27
3.1	Saunders County Cemeteries and Population Density (1859-1869)	29
3.2	Percentage of Active Cemeteries by Type and Decade	31
3.3	New Cemeteries: 1870-1875	34
3.4	New Cemeteries: 1876-1880	35
3.5	New Cemeteries: 1881-1885	37
3.6	New Cemeteries: 1886-1899	39
3.7	New Cemeteries: 1900-present	40
3.8	Population and Cemetery Growth	42
3.9	Abandoned Cemeteries (as of 1940)	45
3.10	Average Number of Burials in Rural Cemeteries	49
4.1	Activity by Decade and Culture Group Willow Creek Cemetery	55
4.2	Znojmesky Cemetery Layout	57

Figure

4.3	Activity by Decade: Little Flower	60
5.1	Slab Tombstones	83
5.2	South-Facing Cemeteries	88
5.3	Czech Cemeteries	100
5.4	Swedish Cemeteries	102
5.5	Mixed and American Culture Group Cemeteries	106

Chapter 1

NECROGEOGRAPHY

The rituals of death are conservative elements of culture. Intimately tied to complex human relationships, rural cemeteries illustrate those elements of culture associated with death. Rural cemeteries, their character and patterns, are landscapes created by culture. This particular study was designed to examine the significance of cemeteries in cultural geography. The area studied was Saunders County, Nebraska, located thirty miles west of Omaha. Draped against the background of the nineteenth-century Middle West, rural cemeteries evolved as significant elements of the cultural landscape.

Necrogeography is the study of cultural and spatial features of cemeteries. The geographic inquiry of cemeteries is relatively new. Until the late 1960s, the cemetery as a primary historical and geographic source had received little attention. The cultural and spatial considerations of necrogeography encompass the historical geography of an area, cemetery landscapes, cultural expressions and attitudes toward death, tombstone style, and settlement characteristics.

The bulk of the available geographical literature on cemeteries has dealt with cemetery architecture, tombstone style, and chronological development of tombstones in both space and time.[1] Cemetery layout has been a popular topic both inside and outside of geographical circles.[2] Cemeteries have been studied in terms of changing attitudes toward death.[3] The close relationship between settlement and cemetery evolution has been suggested by a handful of geographers.[4] Some emphasis on the cultural geography of cemeteries has been incorporated in regional approaches to folk cemeteries of the Upland South and in the analysis of ceme-

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[1]See Edwin Dethlefsen and James Deetz, "Death's Heads, Cherubs, and Willow Trees: Experimental Archeology in Colonial Cemeteries," American Antiquity 31 (1966): 502-510; Larry W. Price, "Some Results and Implications of a Cemetery Study," The Professional Geographer 42 (July, 1966): 201-207; Thomas J. Hannon, Jr., "Nineteenth Century Cemeteries in Central-West Pennsylvania," Pioneer America Society Proceedings 2 (1973): 23-38; Richard V. Francaviglia, "The Cemetery as an Evolving Cultural Landscape," Annals, Association of American Geographers 61 (September, 1973): 501-509.

[2]Frank W. Young, "Graveyards and Social Structure," Rural Sociology 25 (1960): 446-450; J.B. Jackson, "The Vanishing Epitaph: From Monument to Place," Landscape 12 (Winter, 1967-68): 22-26; Francaviglia, pp. 501-509.

[3]An excellent overview of the evolution of the graveyard is found in John R. Stilgoe, "Folklore and Graveyard Design," Landscape 22 (Summer, 1978): 22-28. See also Jackson, pp. 22-26.

[4]Price, p. 201; Francaviglia, pp. 501-509.

teries in two southern Illinois counties.[5] To date, however, no published cemetery studies have systematically studied the cultural geography of cemeteries in terms of the settlement process, ethnic groups associated with them, or the effect of social and technological changes on the use of cemeteries.

The absence of extensive bibliographies in necrogeography is due, in part, to the relative newness of the subject. Further work in necrogeography will likely show that the cultural geography of cemeteries cannot only facilitate research in historical geography, but that necrogeography is an excellent historical and geographic resource for folklorists, historians, and students of cultural landscapes.

Cemetery Classification

The first step in cemetery analysis is classification. The taxonomy framework must distinguish between rural and urban locations of cemeteries, the cultural composition of cemeteries, and cemetery size.

Rural cemeteries in Saunders County range in size from one burial to over four hundred. The oldest cemetery was established in 1859 and the newest in 1914. Saunders County has forty-three rural cemeteries and nineteen population-

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[5]Donald G. Jeane, "The Traditional Upland South Cemetery," Landscape 13 (Spring-Summer, 1969): 39-41; Price, pp. 201-207.

center cemeteries. Although rural cemeteries make up nearly seventy percent of all cemeteries in the county, only thirty percent of the buried population is interred there. Because of their relatively small populations and large numbers, the rural cemeteries have maintained much of their original character, which was so strongly influenced by religion and the cultural baggage of the groups that settled there.

The first published cemetery classification system was advanced by Larry D. Price for two counties in southern Illinois.[6] Price proposed a comprehensive scheme which considered the size of cemeteries, their age, and period of greatest activity of cemeteries. Four categories were established: i) Undifferentiated, ii) Small Family Plots, iii) Rural-Activity Focus, and iv) Population-Center.

Undifferentiated Cemeteries were established during early exploration and continued until about 1860. A single grave or as many as ten graves clustered together may indicate an undifferentiated cemetery. The undifferentiated cemetery is often poorly marked if it is marked at all. In fact, the term "cemetery" is an overstatement for many undifferentiated burials. Since graveyards of this type are begun quite early in the settlement of an area, they are often found along migration routes, such as the Ohio River in southern Illinois. The markers for graves, when

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[6]Price, pp. 201-207.

present, are made either of wood or of crudely marked local stones. Undifferentiated burials occasionally occured after the earliest stages of settlement but such cases are uncommon. Once an area was settled, many undifferentiated cemeteries became church, community, family, or culture group cemeteries.

Small Family Plots of no more than twenty graves traditionally were started somewhere on the family farmstead. In southern Illinois, small family plots were most commonly established between 1860 and 1880 and today comprise the largest type of cemetery in the area. The sites of the small family cemeteries are usually on a hill or in the corner of a field. During early stages of settlement, cemeteries and the location of other social and economic activities were usually some distance from the farmstead. Transporting a body to a town cemetery or to a larger rural cemetery by wagon was neither practical nor desirable. Having a family cemetery was often necessary, especially in light of high infant and child mortality rates. The cultural tradition of having a family cemetery is another contributing factor in the creation of the small family plot. Sparse settlement and lack of social ties may account for the abundance of small family plots in southern Illinois. The presence of only a few family plots in Saunders County, Nebraska, suggests that settlement was denser and social ties stronger in Nebraska than in southern Illinois when cemeteries were

being developed. Most small family plots fell into disuse as local cemeteries grew and as land changed ownership. In some instances, family plots were converted into rural community cemeteries, especially if they were located along a road or near a church or school.

The Rural-Activity Focus cemetery was most active between 1880 and 1900 in the two counties of southern Illinois that Price studied. Anywhere from one hundred to two hundred and fifty graves are found in a rural-activity cemetery. The rural-activity cemetery is a focal point of a rural area and is often associated with a church, school, or crossroads. The rural-activity cemetery differs from the family plot in that it continues to be active and larger. In Price's study area, rural-activity cemeteries have been receiving fewer burials than before. The decline is attributed to general out-migration from rural areas, the growing proportion of the population living in rural areas, and the increasing tendency for local burials to be at the more active population-center cemetery in town.

The Population-Center cemetery is usually associated with a town or village. Population-center cemeteries are, as their name implies, more a function of concentrated population than of churches or schools, as are the rural-activity cemeteries. Population-center cemeteries became the most active of all cemeteries after the turn of the century, and

have continued to grow larger and faster than any other type of cemetery.[7]

The Classification Scheme

Variations of any cemetery classification system are inevitable. The classification system used should clarify the subject and provide a foundation for understanding the cultural geography of rural areas.

Price's system dealt with cemetery size. His scheme has been modified for the purposes of this study in order to meet the special characteristics of Saunders County cemeteries. The time and nature of settlement in Saunders County and the sizes of rural cemeteries are different. I am also concerned with culture groups and religion. Present size and religious and culture group affiliation are the primary determinants of classification.

Sixty-two cemeteries dot the landscape of Saunders County (Fig. 1.1). Nineteen are town cemeteries that fall into the population-center category, even though in some the number of burials is less than two hundred and fifty. Since thirty percent of the county's cemeteries are associated with a population cluster, these must be considered population-center cemeteries regardless of the size of the cemetery.

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[7]Price, p. 204, noted that the population-center cemeteries today receive eighty percent of all burials in the southern Illinois study area.

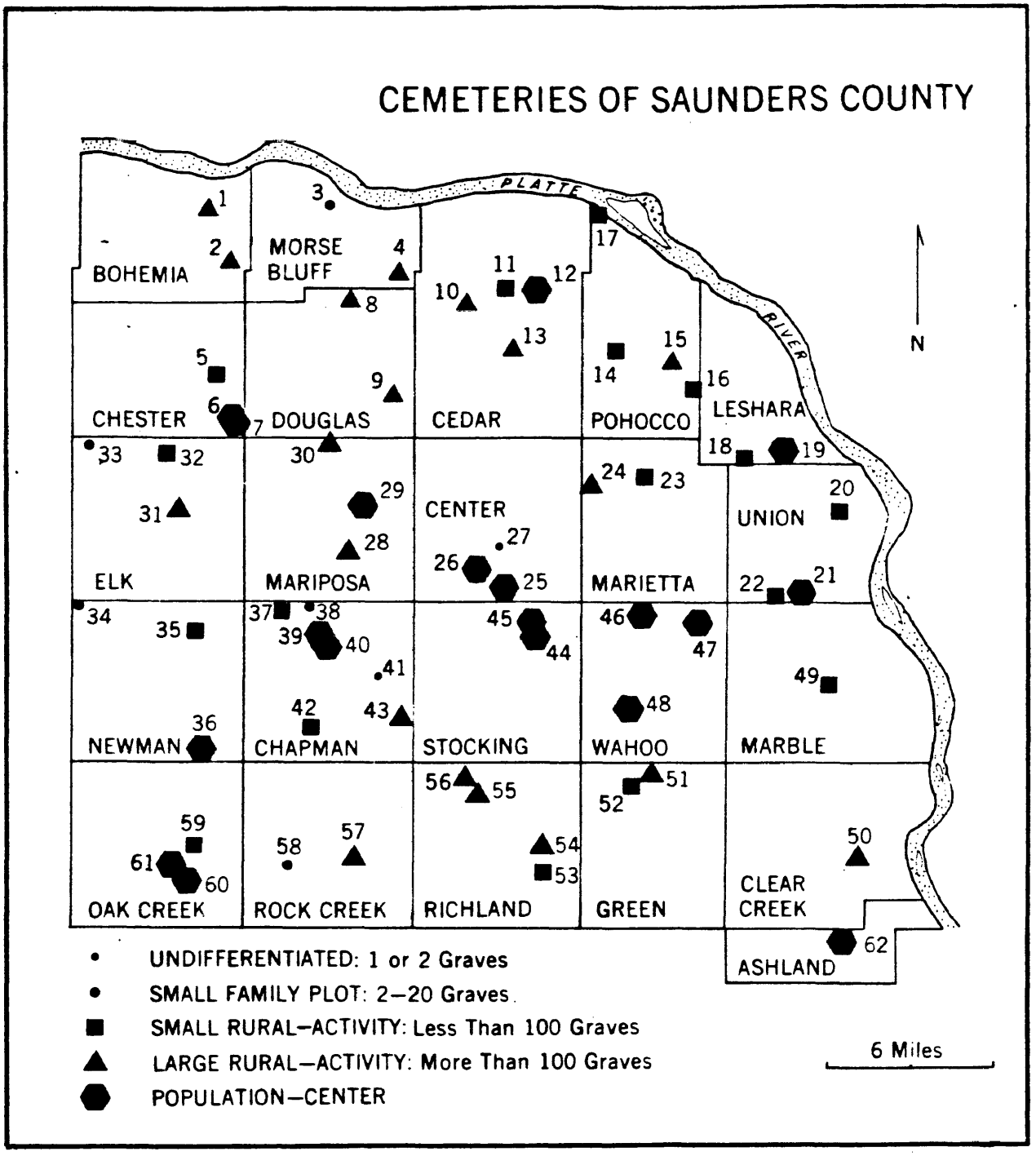

Figure 1.1.-- Sixty-two cemeteries dot the landscape of Saunders County. Forty-three are rural cemeteries ranging from one burial to over 450.

Although this study is specifically examining rural cemeteries, a few of the small town cemeteries located in areas of distinct culture group settlement, such as Weston (#39) and Bethesda (#29), were investigated for comparison with rural cemeteries in regard to layout, internal geography, and culture-group features.

Small family plots are distinguished from the undifferentiated burial in that they are larger and often were begun at a later date. In Saunders County, settlement proceeded at a rapid pace, which limited the development of large numbers of undifferentiated burials and family plots. There are only five family plots and two undifferentiated burials that are known of in Saunders County. These represent twelve percent of the total number of cemeteries and contain less than one percent of all rural burials.

The rural cemeteries of Saunders County are approximately equally divided between those over one hundred burials and those under one hundred. While most of the larger cemeteries are still actively used, several of the smaller one are inactive. For the purposes of this study, rural cemeteries having less than one hundred burials will be classified as small rural-activity cemeteries and large rural-activity cemeteries will be those having more than one hundred burials.

The small rural-activity cemeteries of Saunders County

were begun between 1866 and 1914. Most small rural-activity cemeteries are under one acre but others such as Willow Creek (#5) and Estina (#18) are two or more acres. Although all rural cemeteries have many things in common, the small rural-activity cemetery differs from the large rural-activity cemetery not only in size but in its cultural geography. This difference is critical to this study.

Culture groups and religious organizations were responsible for beginning a large proportion of the early rural cemeteries of Saunders County. Under the classification system used here, though, culture groups and religion are recognized for the impression which they have left on the cultural landscape of the county, the landscape that the county's settlers have created.

The Problem of Ethnicity

Ethnicity is an ambiguous notion in the United States. On one hand, there is an American culture whose ideas and perceptions, are held by most Americans, regardless of origin. On the other hand, America is no melting pot, but rather what has been called a "lumpy stew" with pockets of national and regional cultures.[8] Acculturation and mixing of culture groups inevitably occurs with immigration, but culture-group enclaves also develop. Strong, persistent ethnic settlements

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[8]Wilbur Zelinsky, The Cultural Geography of the United States Foundation of Cultural Geography Series (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), pp. 109-140.

in the United States include those of the Amish, who formed settlements from Pennsylvania to Iowa, Italian and Armenian settlements in parts of California's central valley, areas heavily occupied by Germans in the central Texas Hill Country, concentrations of southern and central Europeans in the Iron Ranges of northern Minnesota, as well as the multitude of small homogenous groups of Scandinavians, Germans, Poles, and Czechs in the Middle West and Great Plains. Cities, too, exhibit persistent residential cores of immigrants and their descendents. Examples include neighborhoods of Puerto Ricans in New York, Chinese in Los Angeles and San Francisco, Czechs in Omaha, or blacks in any major city.

While persistence of immigrant cultures has characterized several areas for many years in the United States, it has long been unpopular to flaunt one's national character. Now, however, displays of ethnicity are gaining popularity. Nevertheless, because of the acculturation of immigrants and their offspring, who have been raised as Americans and increasingly share and American culture, ethnicity, like the term "folk music", has become inherently vague. Ethnicity implies an adherance to certain values and modes of behavior by an individual or group and are based on that group's lifestyle. Newly arrived immigrants constituted an ethnic group, but the process of immigration and acculturation replaced a certain degree of ethnicity with prevailing

norms. Second, third, and fourth generations may persist in the same area that their ancestors settled, but it is almost certain that they perceive themselves to be first of all Nebraskans, Californians, or New Englanders, and only secondarily as Germans, Swedes, or Czechs.[9]

To speak of an ethnic group today, therefore, means something different than it meant one hundred years ago. The strong national character of immigrants is not always handed down to children. An epitaph in a German cemetery in Mariposa Precinct in Saunders County is a good example of the weakening of ethnicity between generations. The epitaph found on the tombstone of a woman who likely immigrated from the German States is in German, but it is written in poor form. Apparently this woman's family wished to show their respect for her ethnicity, yet their inability to use correct German suggests a diminuation of ethnic character between first generation immigrants and their offspring.

While a modified or clarified definition of the concept of ethnicity may allow the historical geographer to correctly discuss cultural phenomena, a more functional and

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[9]In 1928, for example, fifty years after the end of the major settlement period in Saunders County, Nebraska, the annual school census was expanded to include questions of the family's nationality and ability to read English. The overwhelming majority of the second and third generations of European immigrants considered themselves Americans. Current examples of growing cultural awareness can be found among culture groups in major U.S. cities, among Cajuns in southern Louisiana, and American Indians throughout the country.

realistic term, "culture group", has been suggested by John G. Rice.[10] Instead of using the term "ethnic group" professor Rice suggests using the term "culture group". The concept of a culture group is less restrictive than ethnic group. Belonging to a culture group implies living in traditional sets of social structures and behaviors but does not rigidly define them. The term is useful for the historical geographer because it allows for the acculturation of immigrant groups and their offspring. The term culture group preserves the idea of ethnicity, yet it more realistically deals with people and cultures as variable. In the study of cemeteries, culture, not simply ethnicity is formative.

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[10]John G. Rice, University of Minnesota, personal conversation August 27, 1978. See also John G. Rice, "The Role of Culture and Community in Frontier Prairie Farming," Journal of Historical Geography 3,2 (1977): 155-175.

Chapter 2

THE SETTLEMENT OF SAUNDERS COUNTY, NEBRASKA

Settlement began in Saunders County, Nebraska in the southeastern portion in 1857. Saunders County was a part of Cass County before it was organized as Calhoun County in 1856. In 1862 the name was changed to Saunders County when Ashland Precinct was added. The first town was known as Saline Ford because of its location on the only rock-bottomed ford on Salt Creek. Saline Ford and separately platted Flora City evolved into the present town of Ashland in the 1860s. Saline Ford served as a supply point on the Government Trail to western Army posts.[1]

The original settlers came to Saunders County from the Middle West and Pennsylvania in the late 1850s.[2] Migration from the eastern United States and immigration from Europe to the western reaches of the Middle West and the Great Plains during the 1860s and 1870s was stimulated by an abundance of land and federal land policies. The Pre-Emption Act of 1841, the Homestead Act of 1862, the Timber Culture

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[1]The Government Trail began in Nebraska City, proceeded north to Plattsmouth, then west *via* Fort Kearny, Fort Laramie, and Fort Bridger. Charles Perky, *ed.*, *Past and Present of Saunders County, Nebraska, Vol. 1* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915) p. 33.

[2]*Ibid.*; U.S. Census, 9th Report, 1870, Manuscript Schedules.

Act of 1873, and the land-promotion activities of the railroads all induced settlement. Immigration between 1860 and 1880 was popular due to extensive areas of drought in northern Europe, encouraging reports from earlier immigrants, and vast amounts of land in the United States and its territories. Land was available for homesteading in the 1860s and 1870s in the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Nebraska.

Saunders County was desirable for it had thousands of acres of prime farmland, especially along the Platte River bottomlands and the Todd Valley. The physical geography of Saunders County is divided into three areas. In the northeast are the Pohocco Headlands, a band of rolling hills along the inner bend of the Platte River. Running northwest-southeast is the Todd Valley, a broad flat valley where the Platte River once flowed. In the western portion of the county is hilly land, gently sloping toward the east (Fig. 2.1). Although the Todd Valley has some of the best farmland locally, the earliest farmsteads were scattered about the county. By 1864, relatively early in the county's settlement, families had settled in Pohocco, Morse Bluff, Douglas, Newman, Rock Creek, and Wahoo Precincts (Fig. 2.2).

Three European culture groups, Czechs (Bohemians and Moravians), Swedes, and Germans, were to dominate immigration in Saunders County. Eight Swedish families from Minnesota

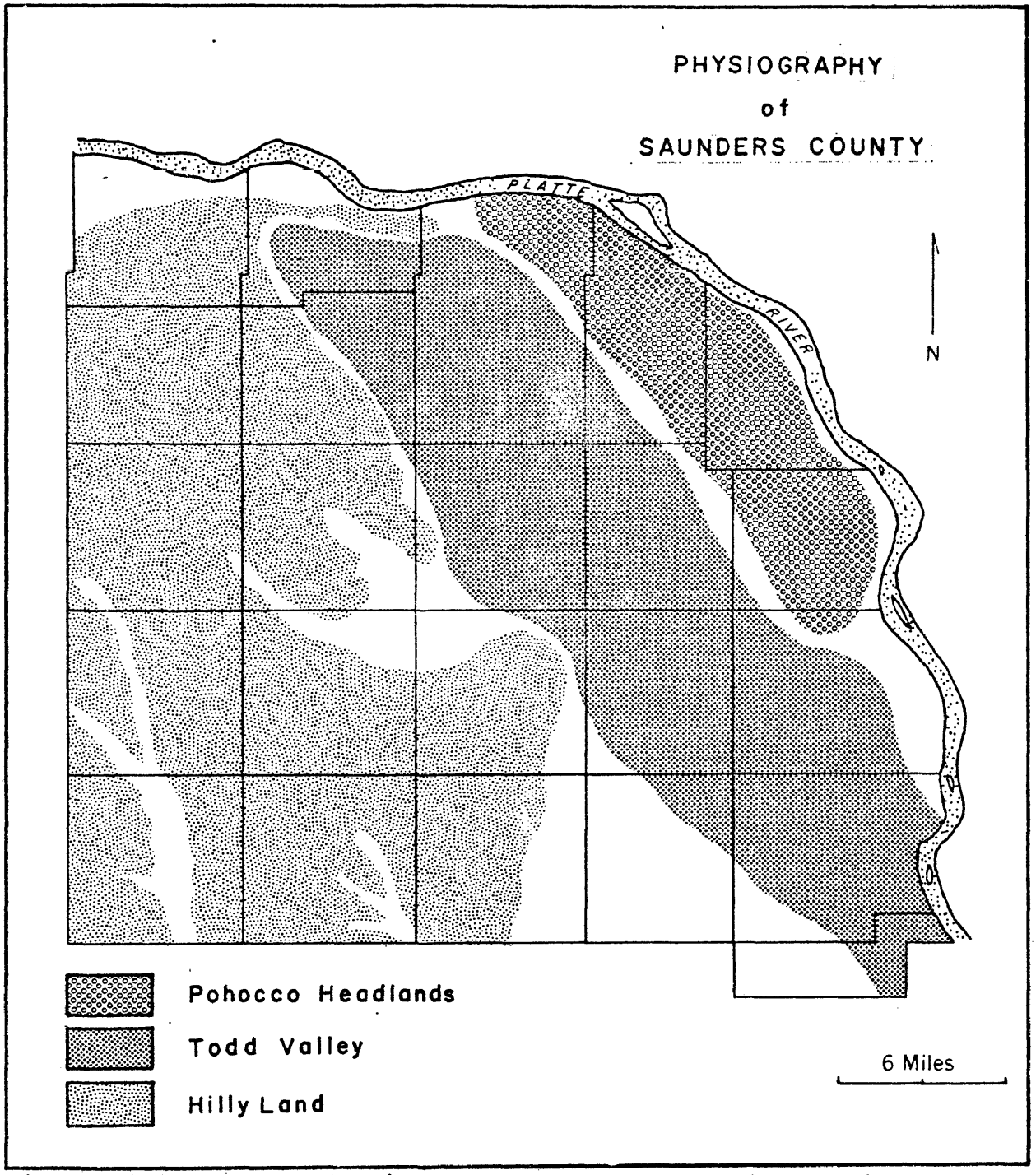

Figure 2.1.-- The physiography of Saunders County is divided into three areas, the Pohocco Headlands, the Todd Valley, and the hilly lands in the west.

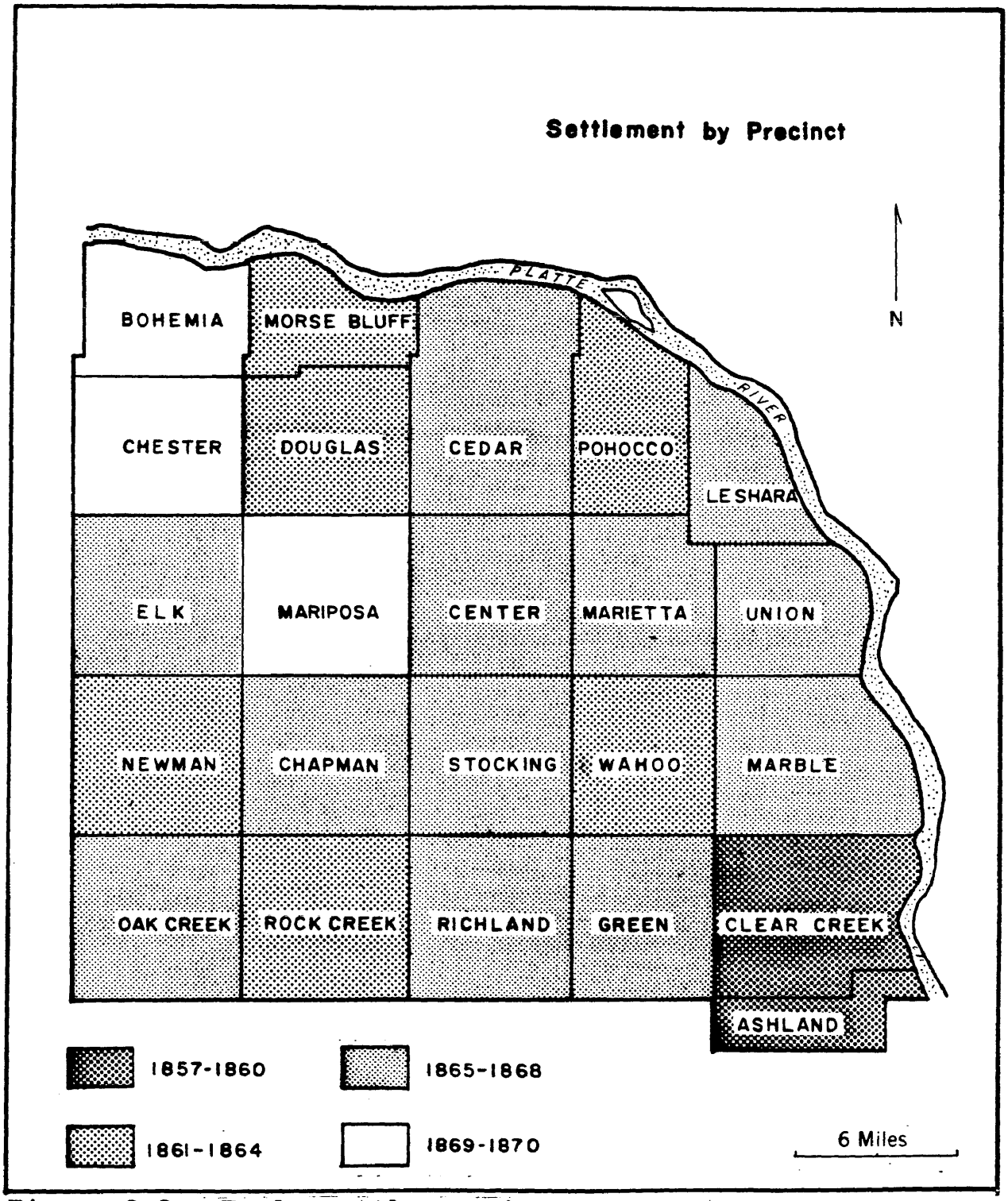

Figure 2.2-- Early settlement in Saunders County was scattered.

and Moline, Illinois came to Saunders County in 1867.[3] That year also marked the beginning of major Czech settlement in eastern Nebraska.[4] German settlers came to Saunders County later and in fewer numbers that the Czechs or Swedes. All three groups, however, tended to settle particular areas (Fig. 2.3). American-born settlers outnumbered European settlers but were already integrated into American life and could move to any area in the country and easily adjust to that area's lifestyle. European settlers, on the other hand, maintained culture-group ties in the slow process of acculturation and, therefore, lived in relatively culturally homogenous areas.

Land Aquisition Policies and Railroad Land

Culture groups from Europe and America aquired land in the Middle West and Great Plains by the same methods. A settler either entered a homestead agreement with the federal government under the Pre-Emption Act of 1841, the Homestead Act of 1862, or purchased land from the railroad. Under the Pre-Emption Act, settlers could purchase up to 160 acres at $1.25 per acre. The Homestead Act eliminated the payment for the land if a homesteader would contin-

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[3]Allan Kastrup, The Swedish Heritage in America (St. Paul: Swedish Council of America, North Central Publishing Company, 1975), p. 445.

[4]Rose Rosicky, A History of Czechs (Bohemians) in Nebraska (Omaha: Czech Historical Society of Nebraska, National Printing Company, 1929), p. 26.

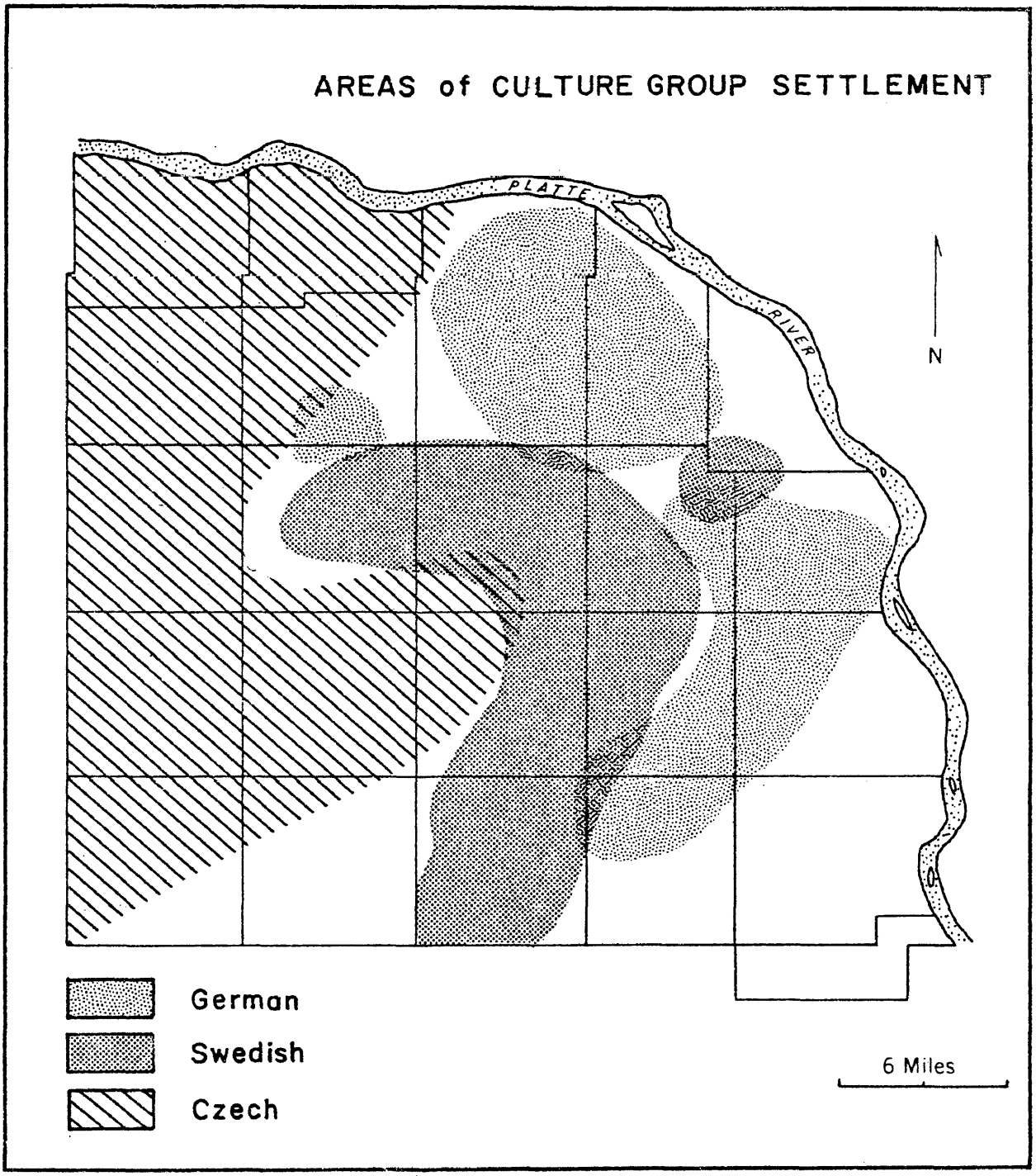

Figure 2.3.-- Culture groups in Saunders County settled in distinct areas.

uously reside there for five years. There was a filing fee of $26.00 however. If wealthy enough, homesteaders could gain title after only six months of residence if they improved at least one acre of land and paid $1.25 per acre.[5]

The government and the railroads were in competition to divest themselves of their land. The Republican-dominated government wanted to settle the western lands. The railroad land grants of odd-numbered sections were made to provide market routes and encourage settlement (Fig. 2.4). The railroads wanted capital from land sales to build their rail systems and populate their service areas. The Union Pacific Railroad and the Burlington & Missouri had large holdings of land in Saunders County. The original railroad land grants extended only ten miles on either side of the track but were increased to twenty miles in 1864. Because the Burlington & Missouri Railroad crossed through the southeastern corner of Saunders County and the main line of the Union Pacific Railroad lay along the north shore of the Platte River from Leshara Precinct west, most of Saunders County laid within the railroad grant lands (Fig. 2.4).

Railroad land was expensive and limited. Within railroad lands, settlers could only homestead eighty acres and had to pay at least double the regular commutation fee of $1.25 per acre and often paid much more. In Nebraska, Union Pacific

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[5]Roy M. Robbins, Our Landed Heritage (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1942), p. 207.

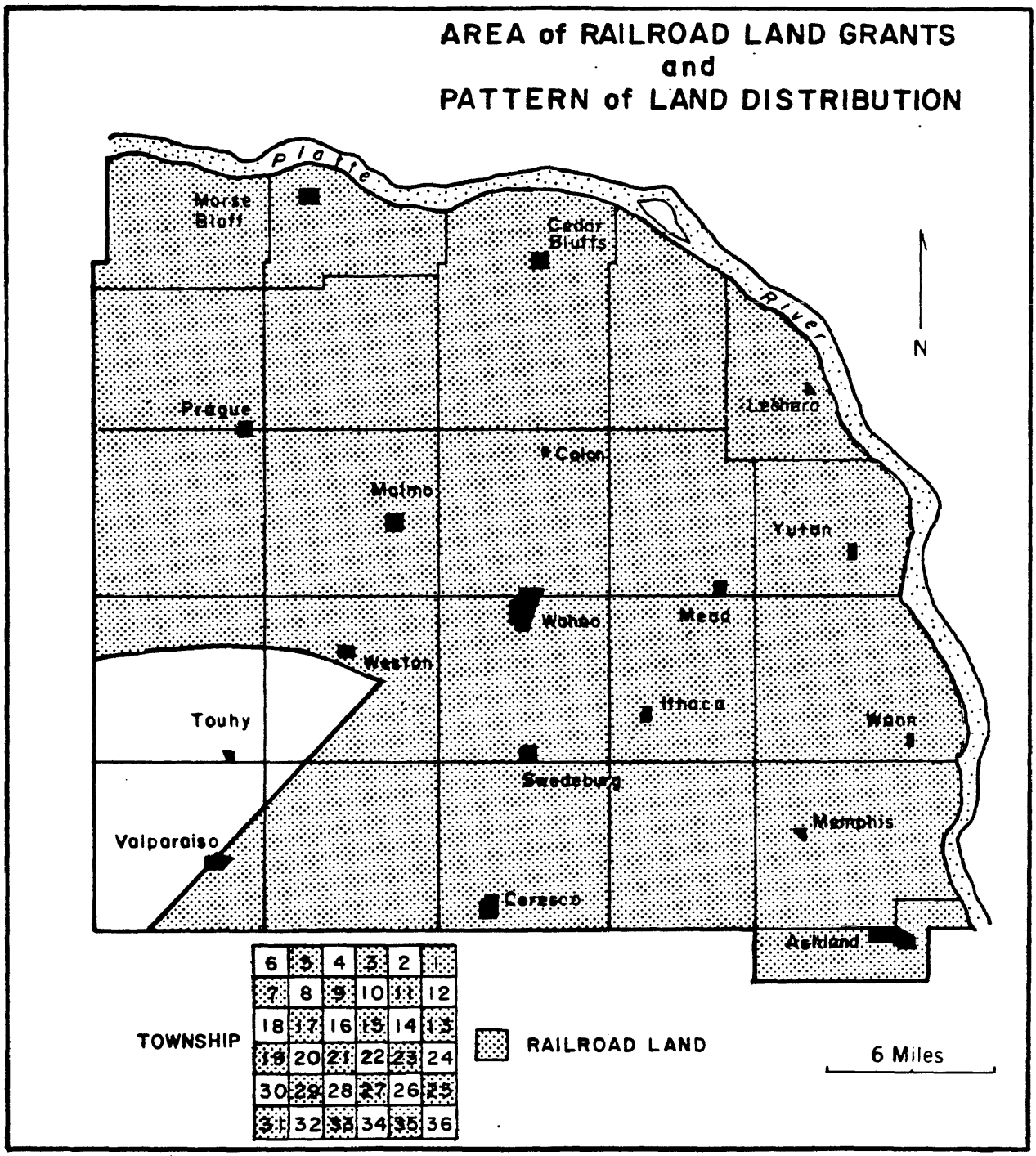

Figure 2.4.-- The area of railroad land grants covered a substantial portion of Saunders County in odd numbered sections.

lands sold on the average at $4.27 an acre, and Burlington and Missouri lands sold at an average price of $6.05 per acre.[7] Still, settlers were encouraged by railroad immigration agents throughout Europe to purchase railroad land. The railroads provided cheap transportation and long-term financing to buyers of their land.

All Saunders County towns are located along railroads (Fig. 2.5). A Union Pacific branch line, built through Saunders County in 1876, was responsible, in part, for the development of several towns, including Yutan, Mead, Weston, and Touhy. Prior to the Union Pacific, however, Yutan had been platted and developed on private land. The town's growth was enhanced by traffic on the Union Pacific line and the Sioux City branch of the Burlington and Missouri in 1888. Mead and Touhy were water-stop towns for the Union Pacific although Touhy was not settled until 1892. The Burlington & Missouri branch line did not come through Saunders County until 1888, however, it stimulated growth of the villages of Memphis, Malmo, and Prague. Another major line in Saunders County is the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad, constructed in 1886. Colon, Cedar Bluffs, Morse Bluff, and Ceresco were settled before the line went through. The presence of the railroad encouraged growth. The importance of the railroad was such that Ceresco was moved one half mile south in 1886

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[7]James C. Olson, History of Nebraska (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), p. 164.

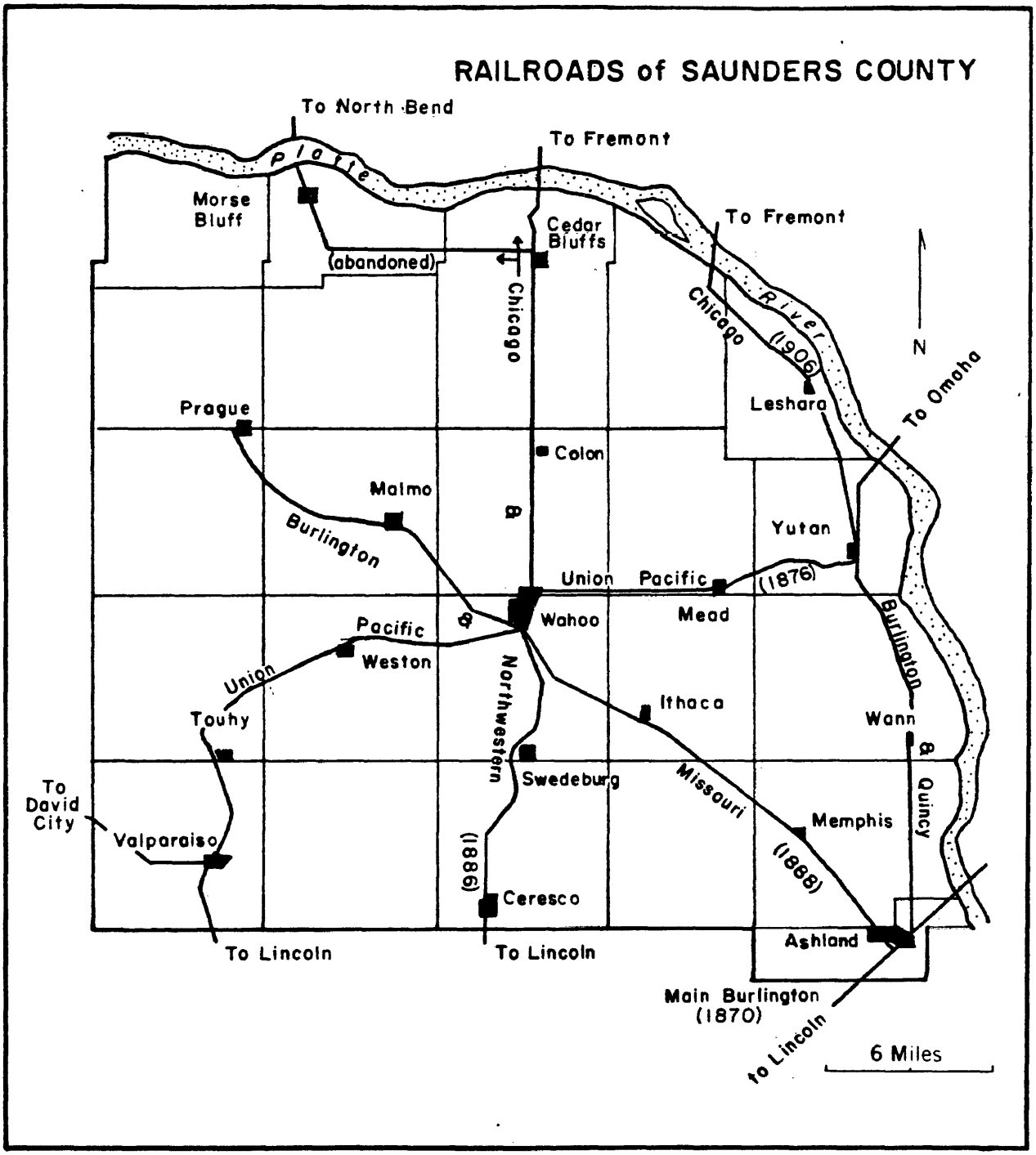

Figure 2.5.-- All towns in Saunders County are located along railroads.

to be on the Chicago and Northwestern route. The newest town in the county, Leshara, was established in 1917 where the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy now runs.

Culture Group Settlement in Saunders County

The settlement pattern of the European culture groups has largely persisted (Fig. 2.3).[8] The Czech population is located in the western portion of Saunders County and in the eastern part of adjoining Butler County. Many persons of Swedish descent still live in the central portions of Saunders County, especially around Swedeburg and Malmo. Descendents of German settlers are found in the eastern part of the county. Yutan and Cedar Bluffs have large numbers of people of German descent. The southeast has families whose ancestors came from the eastern United States and Middle West.

Czech settlement in Saunders County was relatively early, occuring in 1867. Counties that had Czech settlement before Saunders were Cuming (1864), Richardson (1865), and Saline (1865).[9] The majority of Saunders County Czechs came from the western Czechoslovakian province of Bohemia, but some from Moravia settled in the north central portion of

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[8]U.S. Census, 9th and 10th Reports, 1870 and 1880, Manuscript Schedules; Saunders County School Census records for 1885, 1896, 1906, and 1928.

[9]Rosicky, pp. 47-97.

the county. Prague, with over ninety percent of its population having Czech names, is the Czech capital of Saunders County.

Swedish settlement was the most organized of any in Saunders County. In 1867 a small group of Swedish Baptists founded a colony as Estina, which was located five miles north of Mead. These settlers came from Horja in central Sweden. The small Estina colony died out after the turn of the century, leaving only a small cemetery as evidence of their presence.[10] Just over 130 families from the southern Swedish provinces of Skåne and Småland came to Saunders County between 1869 and 1870.[11] These families started the towns of Malmo and Swedeburg, which today, though small, remain populated by persons of Swedish extraction. The cemeteries in these Swedish enclaves reflect the persistence and success of Swedes in Saunders County.

The facts of German settlement in Saunders County are more sketchy than those of the Swedes and Czechs. Most Germans settled in the eastern portion of the county.[12] A small group of German Lutherans also lived in the northern portion of Mariposa Precinct where they laid out the St.

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[10]The emigration of Baptists from Sweden did not become large scale until the late 1860s and early 1870s. John G. Rice, interview held August 31, 1978, University of Minnesota.

[11]Kastrup, p. 451.

[12]U.S. Census, 9th and 10th Reports, 1870 and 1880, Manuscript Schedules.

Johns cemetery (#30). Indeed, German settlement areas are best seen in the location of their cemeteries (Fig. 2.6). From the census records and cemetery evidence, the Germans were the smallest and least homogenous of the European culture groups that settled in Saunders County. Ironically, German formed the largest culture group in Nebraska.[13]

Settlement by Europeans was not limited to the Czechs, Swedes, or Germans. French, Irish, English, Norwegians, Scotish, Austrians, Canadians, and even a Mexican are known to have settled.[14] American-born settlers came to Saunders County mostly from north of the Mason-Dixon line. Veterans of the Civil War buried in the rural cemeteries of Saunders County fought for Union divisions from Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa not Virginia, Georgia, or Mississippi. These early settlement patterns were distinct and have persisted. The impact of culture group concentration on the landscape is highly evident in the rural cemeteries of Saunders County.

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[13]Olson, p. 173.

[14]U.S. Census, 9th and 10th Reports, 1870 and 1880, Manuscript Schedules.

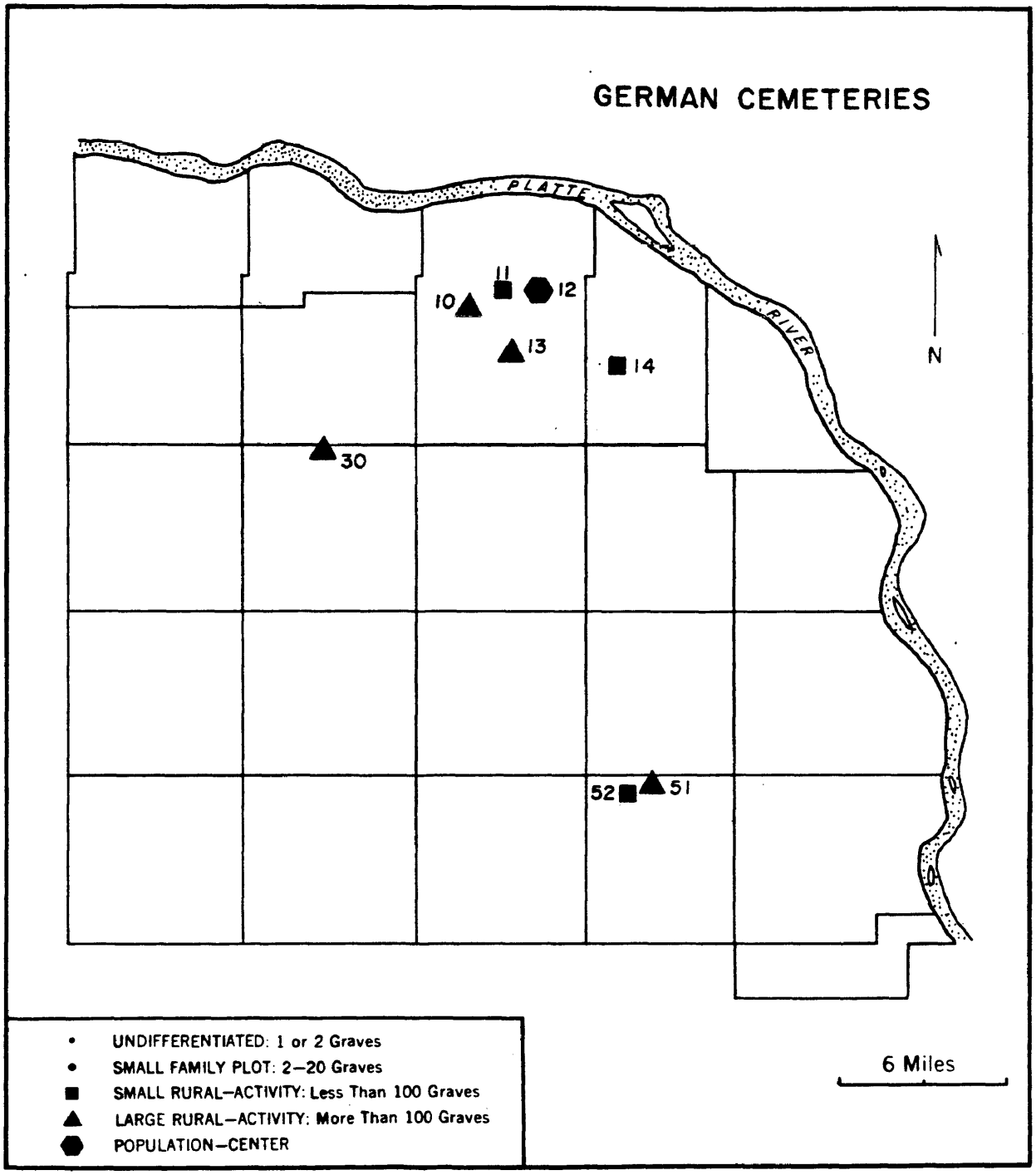

Figure 2.6.-- The location of German cemeteries reflects German settlement areas.

Chapter 3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SAUNDERS COUNTY CEMETERIES

Rural cemeteries are characteristic parts of the cultural landscape. Each cemetery is a record of its supporting group's culture, size, history, and persistence. The history of cemeteries in a given area can enlighten one about that area and reveal cultural and geographical relationships between cemeteries and society.

The development of rural cemeteries in Saunders County reflects the pattern of settlement and the diversity of culture within the county. The first cemetery in Saunders County was established in 1859 at a site just north of Ashland. By 1870 eight more cemeteries were started to serve the county's four thousand inhabitants. The cemeteries were scattered about the county in areas of both high and low population density (Fig. 3.1). The tremendous increase in population in Saunders County following the Civil War stimulated the growth of economic and social institutions, including cemeteries. As the population increased so did the number of cemeteries. Between 1870 and 1875 alone, during the years of greatest population increase, twenty-eight new cemeteries were established in Saunders County, quadrupling the number of cemeteries of the previous decade.

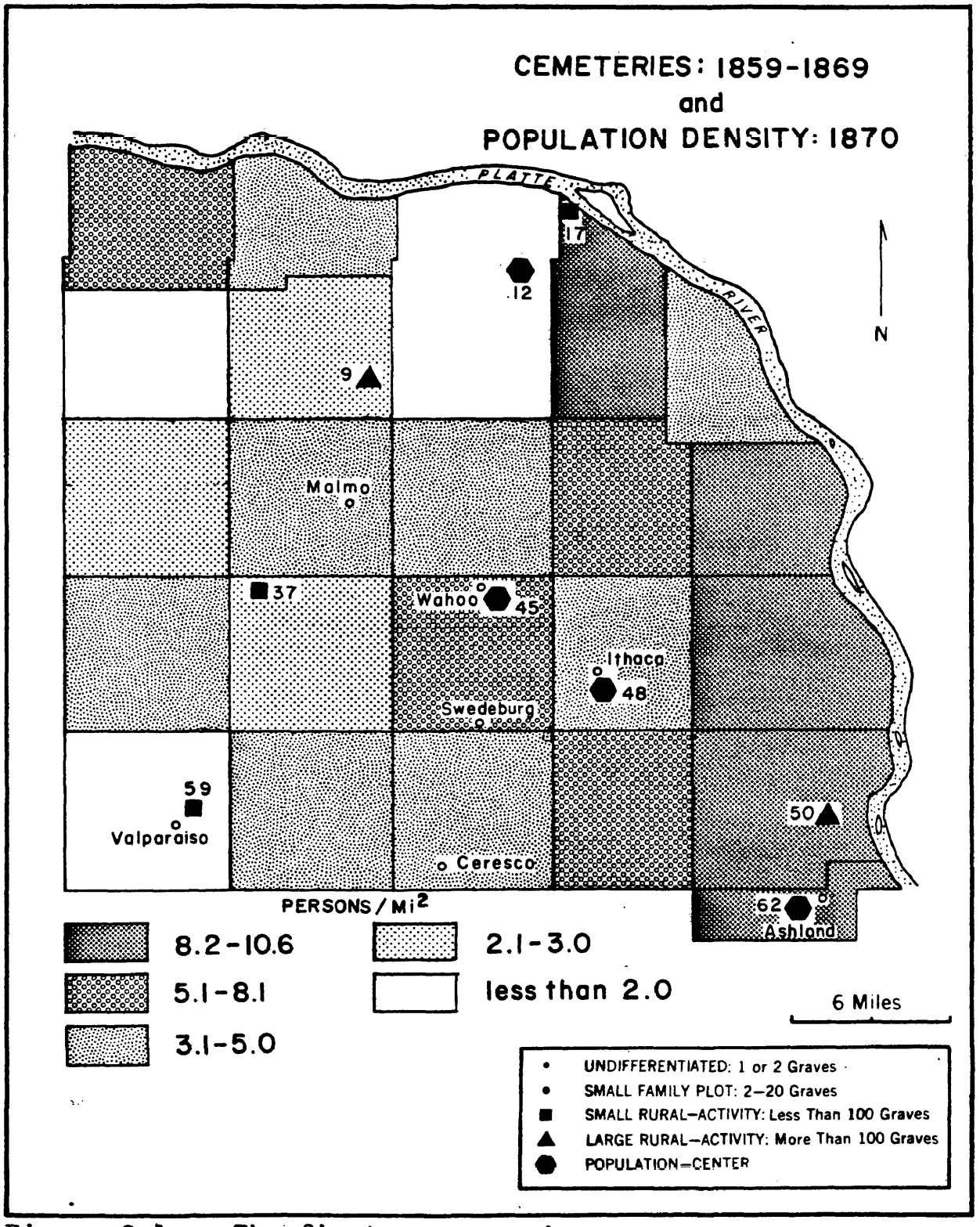

Figure 3.1.-- The first cemetery in Saunders County was established in 1859 north of Ashland. Within a decade, eight more cemeteries were started to serve the county's four thousand inhabitants.

In the first twenty-three years of settlement to 1880, as Saunders County reached seventy percent of its greatest population, over seventy percent of all the cemeteries in Saunders County were established. After that, rural cemeteries declined. Today, few of Saunders County small rural cemeteries remain very active.

Periods of Cemetery Development

The development of Saunders County cemeteries can be divided into several unique slices of time. The early periods are characterized by rapid expansion of all types of cemeteries: secular, religious, and culture group. The middle periods are characterized by the growth of undifferentiated cemeteries and small family plot cemeteries, and the later periods by lowered usage and abandonment of small rural cemeteries (Fig. 3.2).

1859-1869

Six out of nine cemeteries established during the first decade of settlement in Saunders County, from 1859 to 1869, were located relatively close to centers of population (Fig. 3.1). While five cemeteries were located near town sites, not all developed into that community's primary cemetery. Located on the outskirts of towns, Jensen (#59) and Clear Creek (#50) remained in use after establishment of new town cemeteries, though activity in the older cemeteries declined.

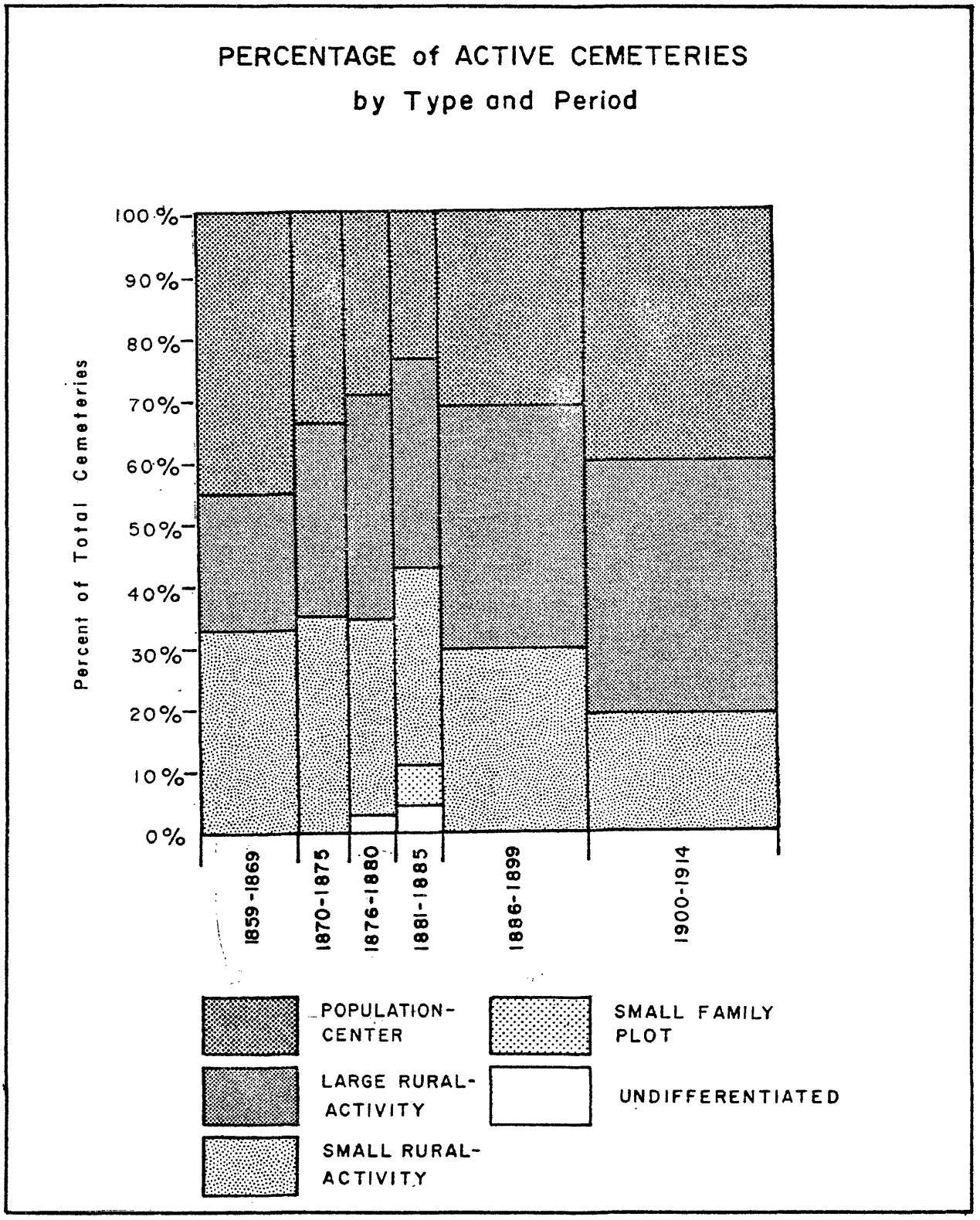

Figure 3.2.-- The type of active cemetery varied over time.

The oldest cemeteries are all located on relatively high ground overlooking valleys. High ground provided good drainage and a good view as well as being poor agricultural land. Since land was abundant in the early years, choice cemetery locations were available. Later developing cemeteries had to be located where land was convenient regardless of its lower desirability.

Evidence from early cemeteries in Saunders County suggests the absence of church influence on location but the presence of strong family ties. Although family plots are difficult to find, it appears that the older rural-activity cemeteries evolved from family plots. Jensen (#59), Critten (#17), Holy Rosary (#9), and Bethel (#37) likely originated as family cemeteries. Included in the landscapes of the older rural cemeteries is a core of the first burials made up of members of a single family. Occasionally different surnames can be found within the old family core, but careful observation often shows that the odd surname became part of the family through marriage. Family sections of cemeteries are not an exclusive feature of the oldest cemeteries, but family sections are the most common features of these cemeteries.

1870-1875

The period 1870 to 1875 was the most active in terms of cemetery establishment in Saunders County. The opening

of the Nebraska Territory and the end of the Civil War encouraged rapid and extensive settlement of Saunders County. The effect on county population and number of cemeteries was considerable. Between 1870 and 1875 the population swelled from four thousand to eleven thousand. The number of population-center cemeteries doubled, while the number of rural cemeteries increased six times, from four to twenty-four (Figs. 3.1, 3.3).

The cemeteries that evolved during this period were varied in type and included large and small rural-activity cemeteries, population-center cemeteries, and in all likelihood, family plots which are no longer in evidence. Most rural cemeteries established during this period were located in the northern portion of the county where new settlement was greater, and were established mainly by Czechs, Swedes, and Germans, the newest settlers. Population-center cemeteries were established in the towns along the Union Pacific branch line as the town populations increased.

1876-1880

A comparatively small number of cemeteries were established between 1876 and 1880 (Fig. 3.4). The major lineaments of settlement had been laid down, population centers had been established, and a sufficient number of cemeteries had been started for the first generation of settlers. Eight of the nine cemeteries that were started

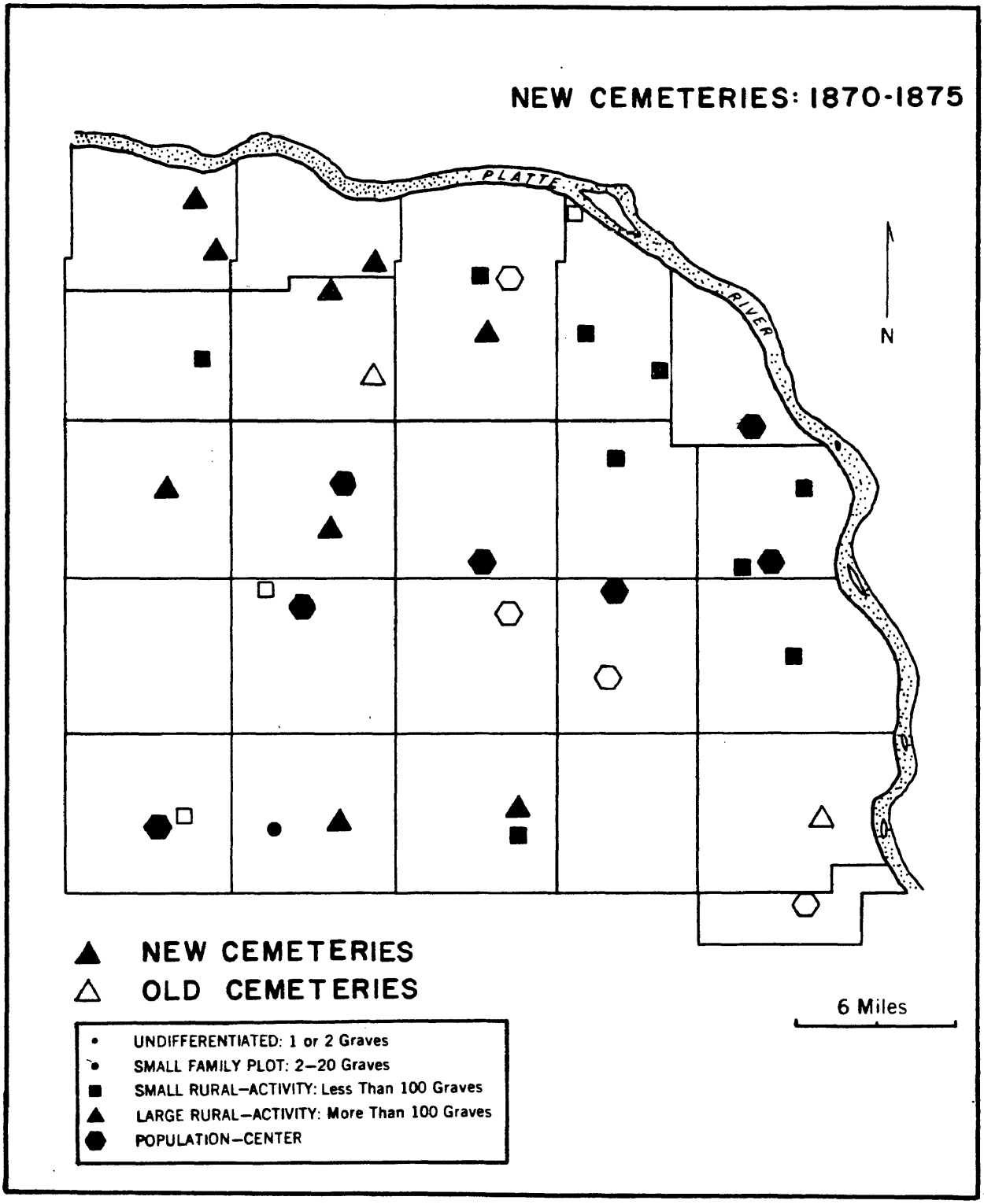

Figure 3.3.-- New cemeteries were rapidly being established between 1870 and 1875. This was the most active period of new cemetery development in the history of Saunders County.

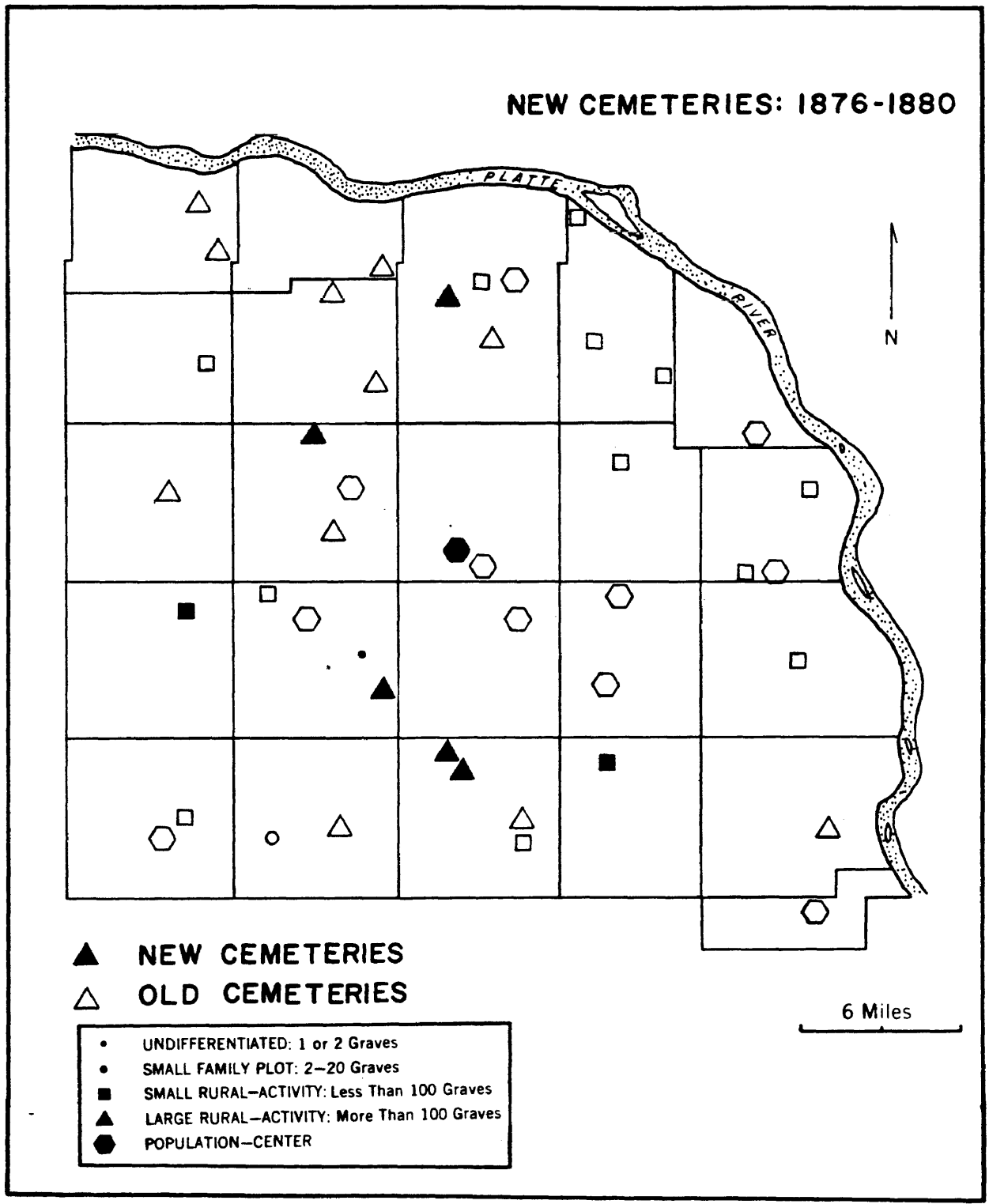

Figure 3.4.-- The number of new cemeteries declined after 1875. Those established between 1876 and 1880 were located in the western half of the county.

in the late 1870s were rural cemeteries, indicating that a process of filling in of the settlement landscape was taking place. Located primarily in the western half of the county, all the cemeteries that originated during the late 1870s were culture-group cemeteries started by emigrant groups coming after initial settlement of the county. By 1880, three-fourths of the rural cemeteries in Saunders County had been established.

1881-1885

The pattern of cemeteries that developed between 1881 and 1885 was clustered (Fig. 3.5). Most of the new cemeteries were located in the western portion of the county. Church and culture group cemeteries composed the largest proportion of the multi-family cemeteries of this period. It was also during this period, however, that the five small family plots known of today were established. Contagious diseases like smallpox, typhoid fever, and dyptheria were killing entire families in the early 1880s. Numerous deaths of children in 1882, 1884, and 1885, indicated by tombstones throughout the county, suggest that the likelihood of the establishment of a family plot was greatest during this period.

1886-1899

The period from 1886 to 1899 was characterized by the establishment of population-center cemeteries. Three of the

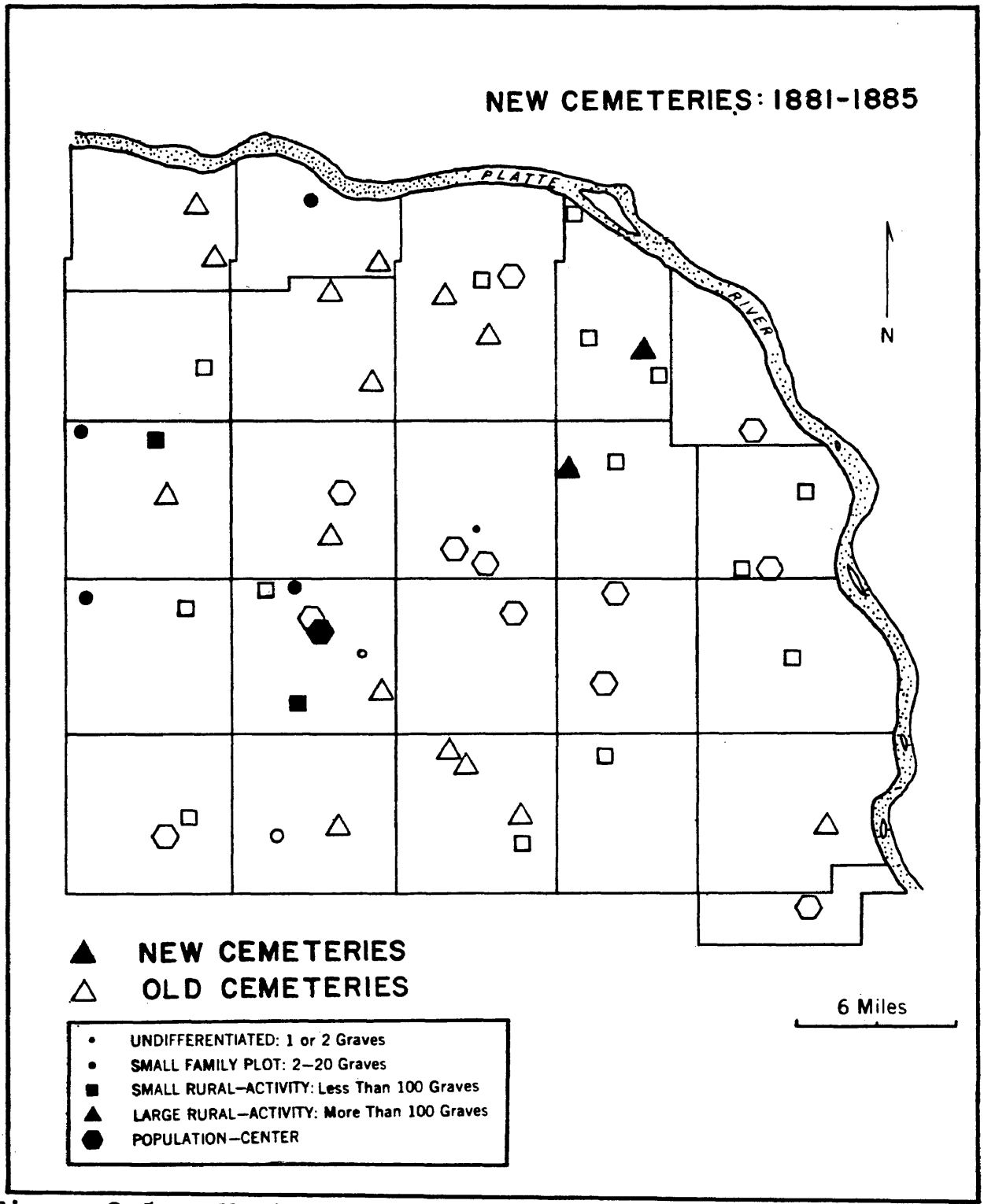

Figure 3.5.-- Most new cemeteries established between 1881 and 1885 were clustered in the western third of the county. The only known family plots were established in this period.

four new cemeteries established during this time were population-center cemeteries located in Prague, Wahoo, and Mead (Fig. 3.6). The only rural cemetery of this period was Zion Lutheran (#51), a German cemetery in Green Precinct. The design of settlement was virtually complete. Few new cemeteries were needed. By 1899, two cemeteries had been abandoned (#17 and #59), and many small rural cemeteries were in decline. Larger cemeteries, such as Swedish Covenant Mission (#56) and Fleming (#8), however, continued to grow and prosper as the settled population aged.

1900s

After the turn of the century, Catholic cemeteries were the single largest type of new cemetery to be established. Catholic cemeteries spread from the north, starting in Prague (1901), then moving southward to Touhy (1903) and Valparaiso (1917). There was only one rural cemetery, Estina (#18), believed to have been established after 1900 (Fig. 3.7). The oldest inscription found in the Estina cemetery (#18) was dated 1914. There is some doubt as to the date of origin of the Estina cemetery, however, because a colony of Swedish Baptists is known to have settled in the area in the early 1870s. The cemetery is overgrown with weeds and plum trees and has been vandalized. Many of the markers are no longer present.[1]

[1]Estina is a place where local youths have beer parties. According to the caretaker at the Leshara cemetery two miles to the east, past revelries at the cemetery have seen the mysterious appearance of tombstones at the school house nearby.

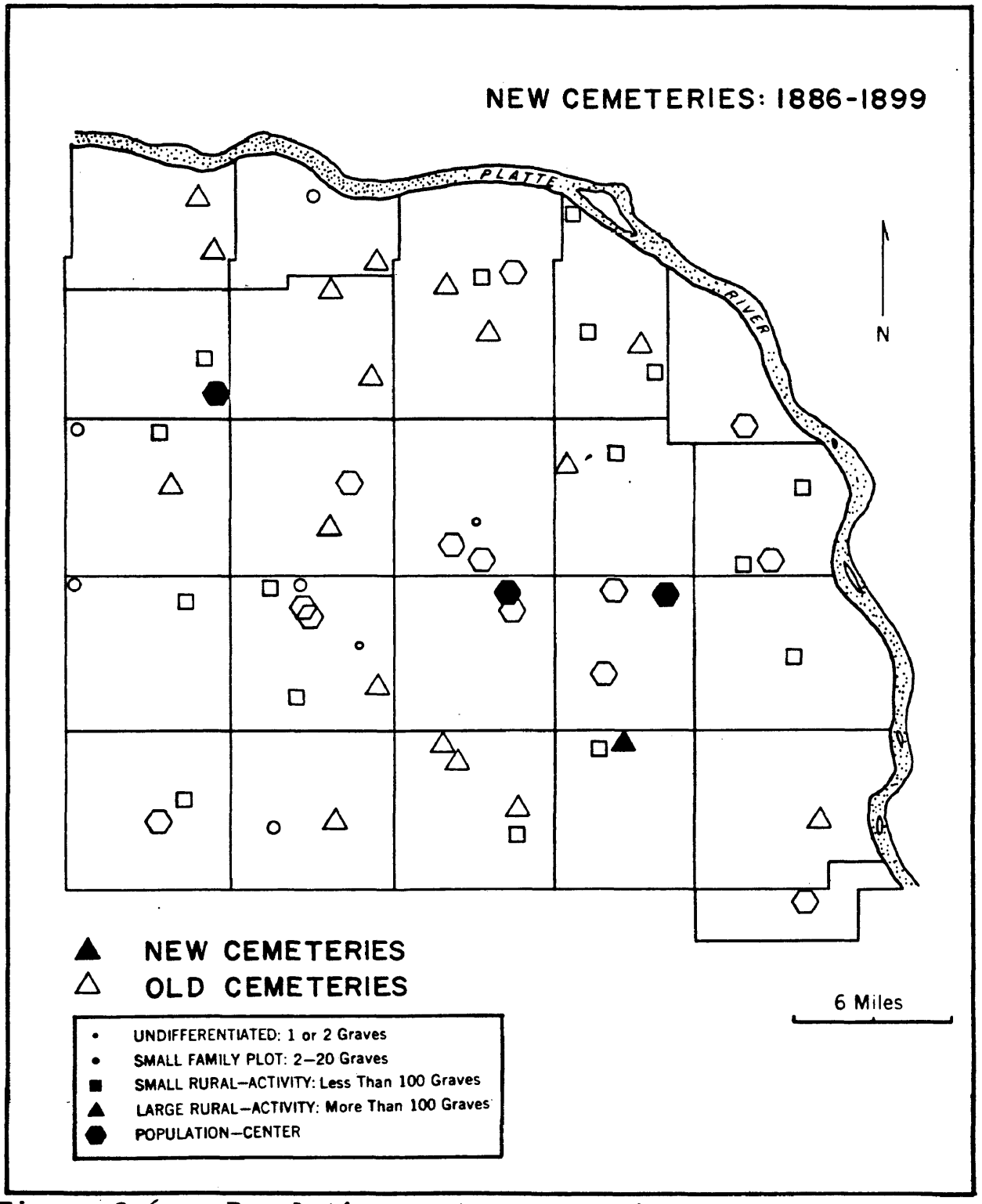

Figure 3.6.-- Population-center cemeteries accounted for three of the four new cemeteries between 1886 and 1899. The only rural cemetery begun in this period was Zion Lutheran, a German cemetery.

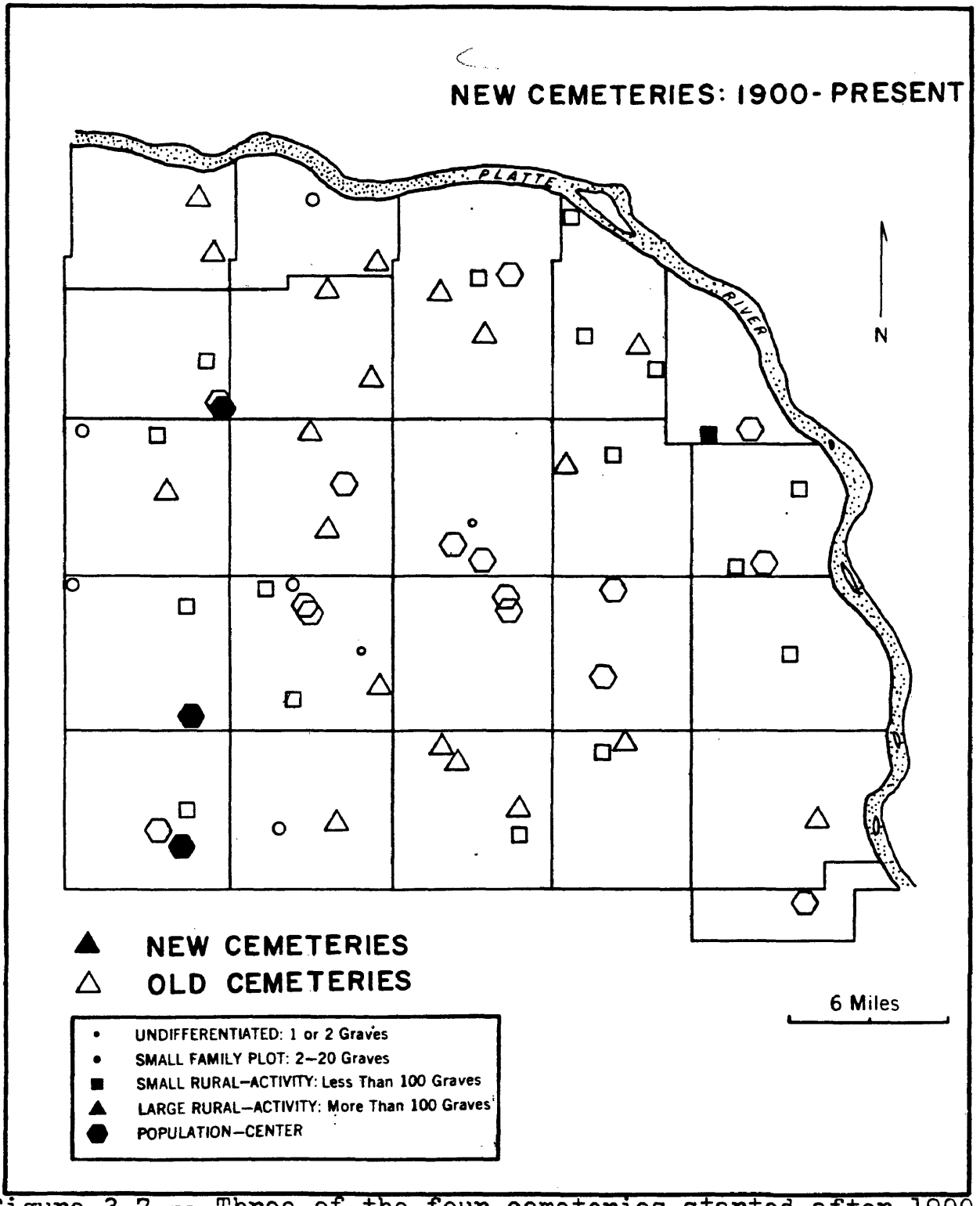

Figure 3.7.-- Three of the four cemeteries started after 1900 were Catholic population-center cemeteries. The only rural cemetery started in this period, Estina, was active only from 1914 to 1931.

The External Relations of Rural Cemeteries

The cultural landscape of Saunders County was developed over a long period of time. The cemeteries of Saunders County, their relative location, their cultural manifestations, and time of activity, reflect this development. The combination of quick settlement and the cultural concentration of population has helped to create a characteristic cultural landscape. Cemeteries, intimately tied to settlement patterns and culture groups, are also good measures of population growth and decline, population concentrations and dispersal, changing patterns of interaction, and changing cultural preferences. All of these factors, that are here called the external relations of rural cemeteries, influence the look of rural cemeteries today.[2]

Population

As the population of Saunders County swelled in the 1870s and 1880s, an equally rapid increase in the number and activity of cemeteries occured (Fig. 3.8a). After the county reached its peak population of 22,000 in 1900, the use of

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[2]The term, "external relations" was first used by Allen Pred in "The External Relations of Cities During 'Industrial Revolution' with a case study of Goteborg, Sweden - 1868-1890," University of Chicago, Department of Geography Research Paper #76, Chicago, 1962. External relations of cities "refers soley to primary (agricultural) and secondary (industrial) commodity flows and immigration population movements." Here, it is meant to mean those dynamic factors that affect cemetery size and activity.

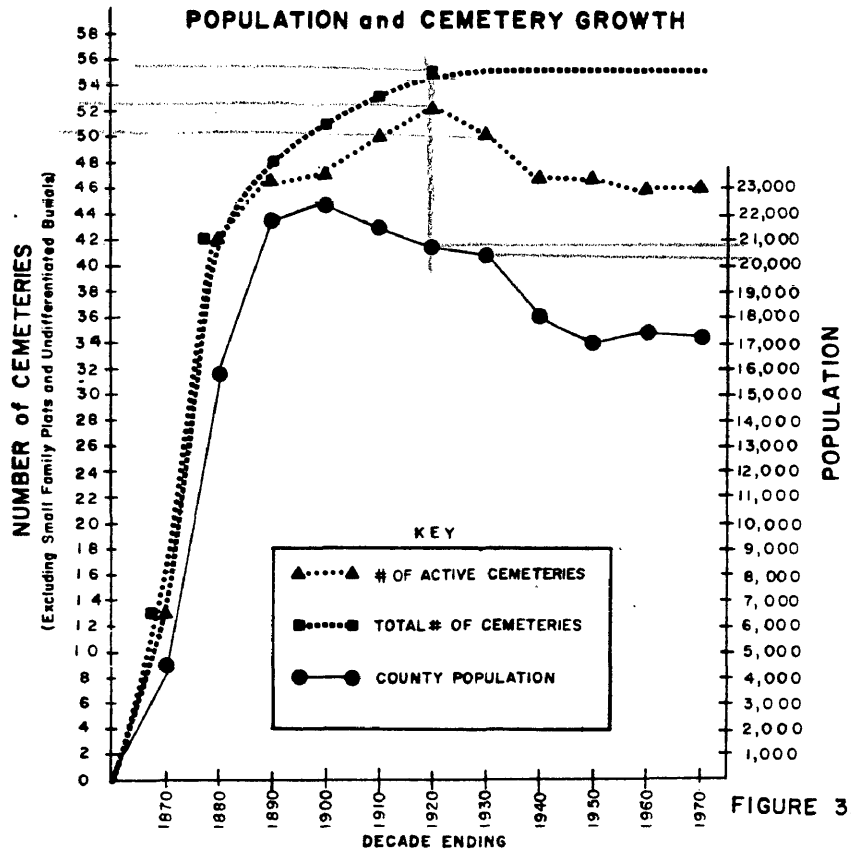

FIGURE 3.8a

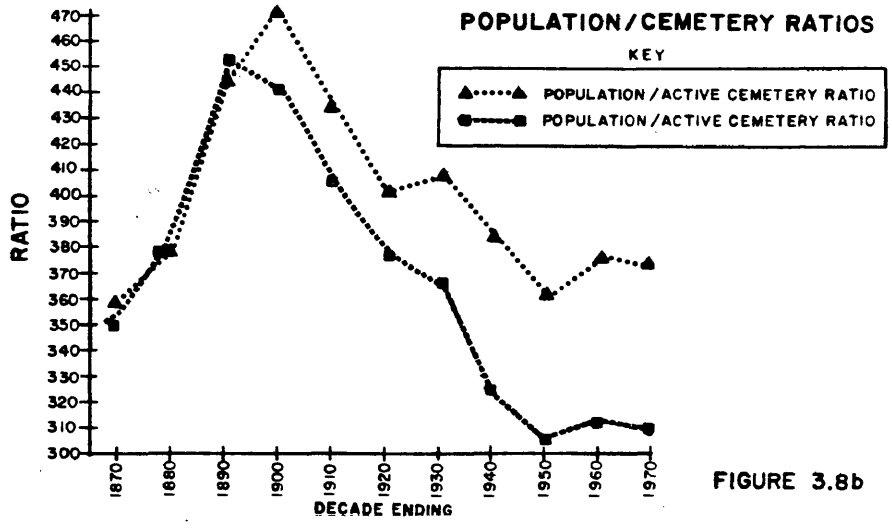

FIGURE 3.8b

Figure 3.8.-- There is a relationship between population and the number of active cemeteries.

several rural cemeteries declined. Most of the cemeteries not in active use after the turn of the century had less than one hundred burials. Culture group cemeteries, many of which have over 250 burials, continued to be active, and the overall activity of rural cemeteries continued to increase until 1920. Since 1920, however, the use of most rural cemeteries in Saunders County has declined.

The relationship between the number of people and the number of cemeteries can be expressed by a population/cemetery ratio. Two ratios may be calculated, one for the number of cemeteries each year, and one for the number of active cemeteries each year. The second ratio gives a better measure of cemetery use, and comparing the ratios give insight into the dynamics between population and cemeteries (Fig. 3.8b).

In Saunders County in 1870 the number of people per cemetery was 350. The ratio increased to 376 in 1880 and, by 1890, there were 450 people per cemetery in spite of the exponential growth of new cemeteries between 1870 and 1890. The abandonment of Jensen cemetery (#59) in 1890 and Critten cemetery (#17) in 1898 added a new dimension to the relationship between population and cemeteries. The change is apparent in the difference between the population/cemetery ratios for all cemeteries and for active cemeteries.

Between 1890 and 1900 both the population and the number of cemeteries increased, but there were fewer people per

cemetery in 1900 than in 1890. The number of cemeteries in active use had declined, and each cemetery had to serve more people in 1900 than in 1890.

In the decade following 1900 there were decreases in population and in the number of active cemeteries. The Depression and Dust Bowl years took a special toll on the rural population, and, consequently, several rural cemeteries became inactive. At the end of the 1930s, eight cemeteries stood abandoned, all of them small rural activity cemeteries (Fig. 3.9). Between 1920 and 1940 the population and the number of active cemeteries both decreased almost fifteen percent. Only following World War II did population and the number of active cemeteries become stabilized.

Transportation and Rural Cemeteries

Although population decline affected the number of cemeteries, other factors, primarily technological, changed the way of life. Changing transportation systems, the growing importance of towns and the decline of villages as economic centers, and changing trends in cemetery use also affected the levels of activity of rural cemeteries.

Townships and sections were surveyed in Saunders County by 1856 and this grid has been the framework for most active corridors of movement developed since. Railroads followed section lines if grade permitted. Towns, farmsteads, homes, churches, schools and cemeteries, all were located in relation

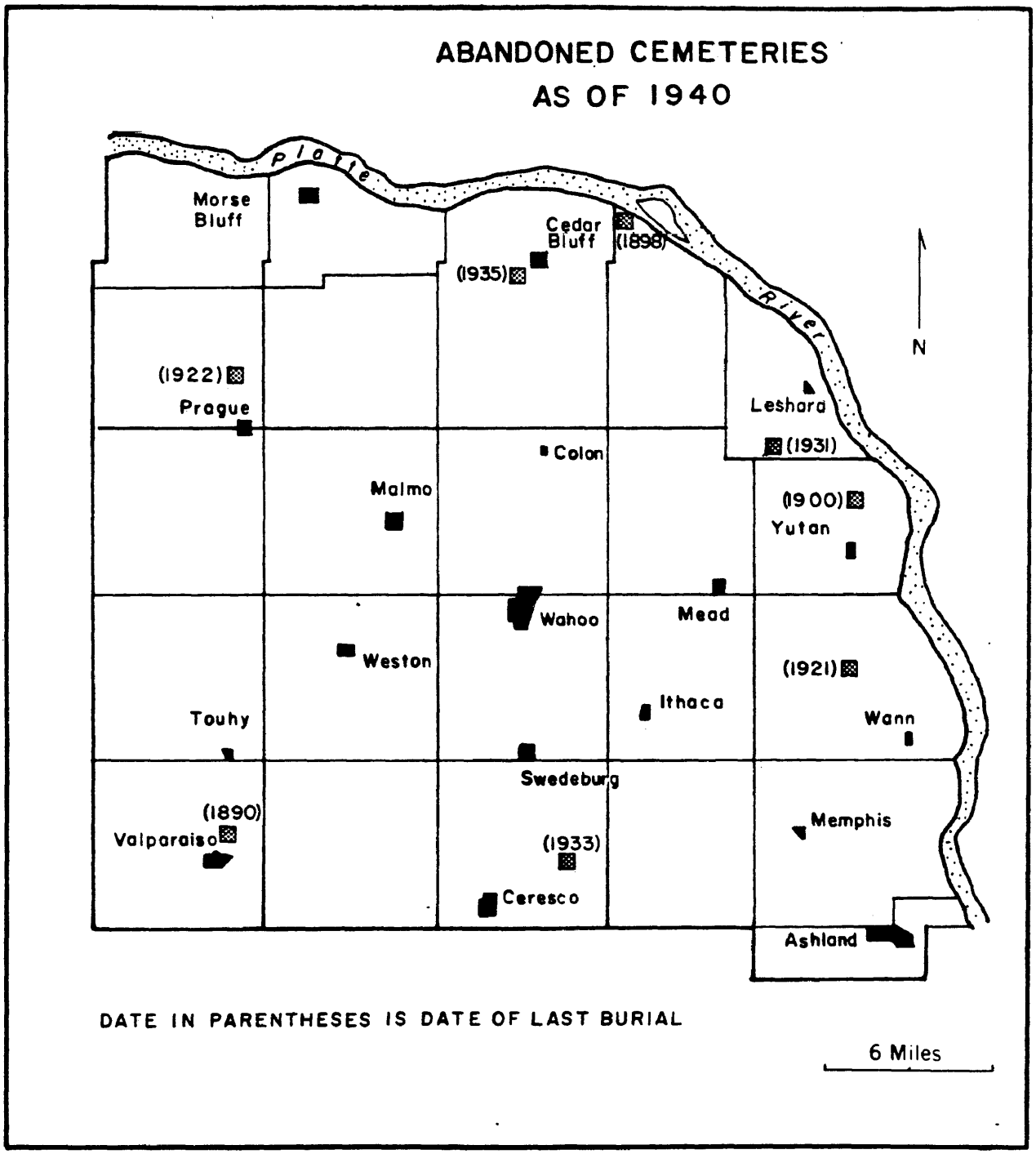

Figure 3.9.-- All the rural cemeteries abandoned by 1940 were small rural-activity cemeteries.

to the survey pattern. With increasing movement to central locations, peripheral roads, towns, churches, schools, and cemeteries have declined in use or been abandoned. Those more centrally located have become more important.

The failure of Critten cemetery (#17) to persist is due to its off-the-road location. Even though Pohocco Precinct, where Critten is located, had a relatively dense population of 8.2 persons per square mile as early as 1870, the Critten cemetery had only twenty-six burials. The site is pleasant enough. Critten cemetery sits overlooking the Platte River valley from a point on the bluffs of the Pohocco Headlands. The old oaks and evergreens of the naturally wooded hillsides create an atmosphere which has traditionally been desired in a cemetery. In spite of the cemetery's amenities, however, it is located near the middle of a section far from any road. The Platte River effectively cuts in half the hinterland of Critten. Although the Platte is usually shallow, seasonal flooding and limited fording points have restricted access to the opposite shore.[3]

Another example of the impact that transportation routes have on rural cemeteries is the abandoned Ingram cemetery in Rock Creek Precinct. Ingram (#58), like Critten, is located

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[3]Critten cemetery is now a part of Camp Eagle, a summer camp for the Boy Scouts of America. The tall grasses and crooked oaks make it a delightful place for older scouts to initiate young neophytes, especially on moonless nights.

in the middle of a section some distance from a road. It was established in a heavily wooded area along an intermittent stream. Although little is known about this cemetery, except that a few bodies were moved to the Rock Creek cemetery (#57) three miles to the east, it certainly did not benefit from an accessible location. Those cemeteries that evolved from small family plots into larger rural cemeteries, such as Bethel (#37) and Holy Rosary (#9), were located along a section road. The failure of Ingram and Critten cemeteries can to a large degree be attributed to their inaccessible locations. The location of a cemetery along a section road does not necessarily guaranty its continued use, but it helps.

The Impact of Town Growth on Rural Cemeteries

The development of the automobile greatly affected rural cemeteries. The automobile increased the geographical scale of everyday life while focusing activity on towns. The town or village has always been a focal point of rural life, but early settlers made trips to town much less frequently that today. Hamlets and villages provided for their immediate needs. Numerous accounts, actual and fictional tell of the life of the early homesteader and the excitement of going to town. Today, however, towns and the services available in them, have become increasingly accessible. The rural dweller in Saunders County is no more than fifteen minutes from the

nearest town and no more than twenty-five minutes from the county seat in Wahoo. Because of the automobile and truck, towns in rural areas have taken over the activities of villages and hamlets, like, grocery stores, hardware stores, schools, and the local post office. Although hamlets and small villages persist, good roads and automobiles attract trade away from these smaller communities and focus it on towns.[4]

As economic and social activities migrated to towns, town cemeteries received an increasing proportion of burials. Town cemeteries were not specifically studied here. However, from information available, the large number of interments in the town cemeteries, (over five thousand in the Ashland cemetery (#62) and over three thousand in the Sunrise cemetery (#44) in Wahoo, and proportionally larger numbers in other population-center cemeteries) indicates that burials that once would have occured in rural cemeteries are now taking place in town cemeteries. The decline in the use of rural cemeteries is dramatic (Fig. 3.10 and Appendix 2).

Convenience has also had an effect on the decline of rural cemeteries. The shift toward a greater use of town cemeteries has been enhanced by the perpetual care given town cemeteries. Rural cemetery associations often cannot

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[4]Glenn T. Trewartha, "The Unicorporated Hamlet: One Element of American Settlement Fabric," Annals Association of American Geographers 33 (1943): 32-81, studied this process in southeastern Nebraska.

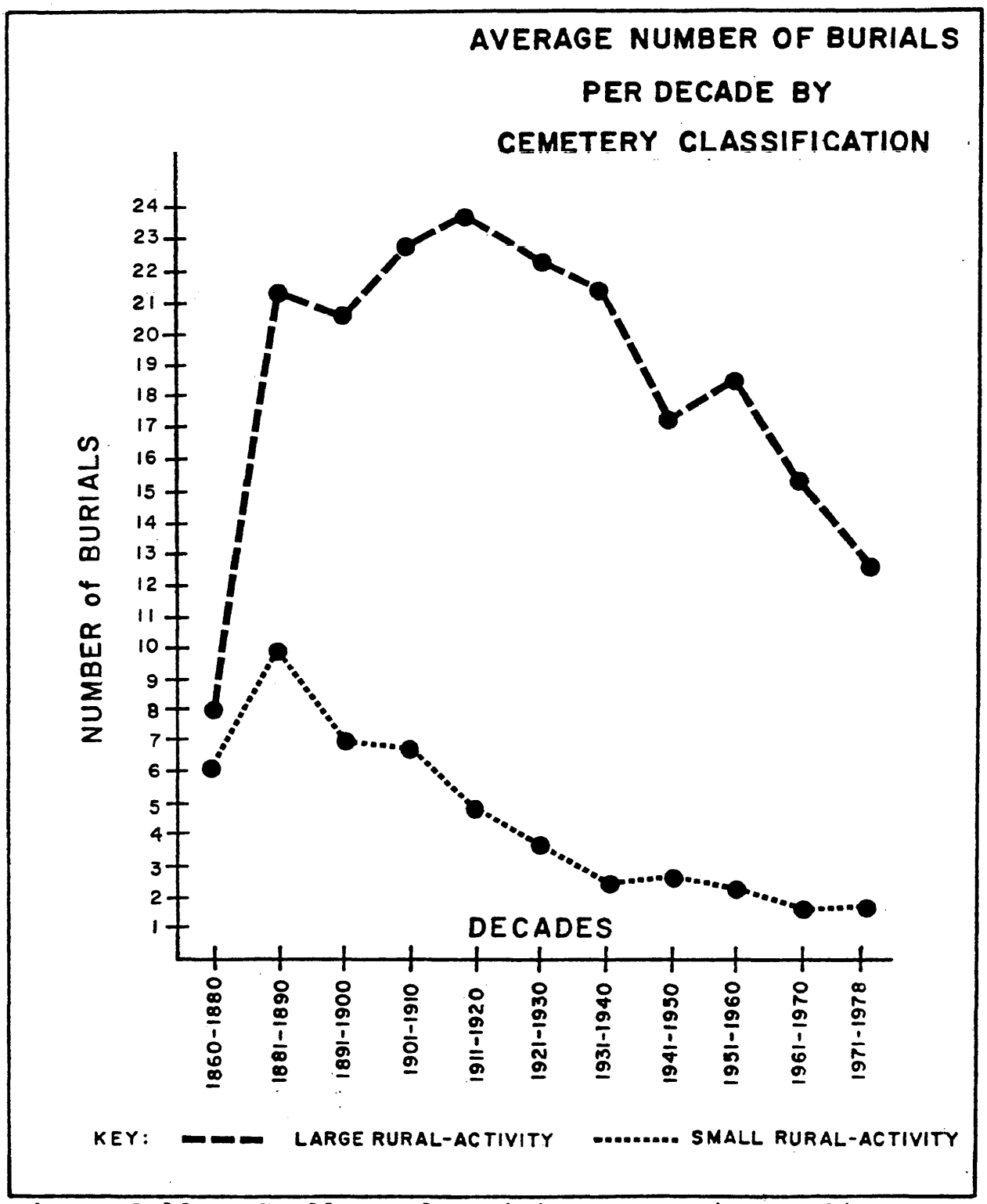

Figure 3.10.-- Small rural-activity cemeteries declined after 1890. Large rural-activity cemeteries continued to grow until 1920 and have since substantially declined in number of burials.

afford to mow, weed, and maintain grave markers in cemeteries. Undertakers, too, prefer town cemeteries over more inaccessible and often muddy rural cemeteries. People simply want to be buried in town. Indeed, the relative desirability of being buried in town is so great that bodies have been moved from a rural cemetery to a town cemetery.[5]

Summary

The external relations of cemeteries are complex. Settlement and the establishment of cemeteries was only the beginning of the present cultural landscape. As technology has improved and the focus of everyday life has shifted from small economic centers to larger ones, the cultural landscape of Saunders County has been affected. Rural cemeteries continue to be used by congregations and culture groups, yet several of the smaller cemeteries, whether homogenous in nationality or not, have essentially been abandoned. The occasional burial in many of the small rural cemeteries is often one of the last members of a family to be buried in the family plot. Now, even the large rural-activity cemetery is facing decline. While the success and persistence of a supporting group of a cemetery has the greatest effect on the

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[5]The Clear Creek Cemetery Association, The Clear Creek Cemetery, Ashland, Nebraska, 1963 notes several instances of bodies moved from the Clear Creek Cemetery to the Ashland Cemetery. Bodies have also been transferred from the Parmenter Cemetery (#49) to the Hollst Lawn Cemetery (#21) which serves Yutan. The Parmenter Cemetery, May, 1971, Yutan, Nebraska.

cemetery, external relations such as population, transportation, and location also play an important role in the use and activity of rural cemeteries.

Chapter 4

THE CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY OF RURAL CEMETERIES

Reading the landscape of rural cemeteries is a tool that cultural geographers use to learn about places. To read the landscape of rural cemeteries requires some initial knowledge of the settlement history, it requires observation of tombstone styles and cemetery vegetation, and an ability to synthesize these observations with census records, historical records, and culture. Rural cemeteries have particular layouts, periods of activity, cultural and religious associations, and external relations, all of which must be considered in interpreting the cultural geography of rural cemeteries.

Reading Rural Cemeteries

The interpretation of a rural cemetery begins by searching for the origin of the cemetery. The Swedish Covenant Mission Cemetery (#56) is a large rural cemetery located adjacent to the Swedish Covenant Mission Church, nearly two miles from Swedeburg. Here the tombstones have typical Scandinavian names and many of the inscriptions are in Swedish. Further investigation of the older markers indicate it has been Swedish from the start, and that it has always been associated with the church. Origins are not

always as clear as this. The abandoned and small rural cemetery that has no sign or name offers less information. Bender Cemetery (#20) provides such an example. Bender is located approximately one quarter mile south of a section road north of Yutan. The cemetery is surrounded by cornfields on three sides and is bordered on the west by the tracks of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad. No fence surrounds this cemetery. Names on the broken and weathered tombstones do not reflect a particular culture group. The archaic style of headstones and the dates inscribed on them help establish the period the cemetery was active. But Bender yields little additional information. Nevertheless, any information a cemetery yields, tells the discriminating landscape reader something of the place.

Willow Creek. Willow Creek Cemetery (#5) is an abandoned cemetery that sits high on a hillside near the site of an old postal station two miles north of Prague. Nestled in the heart of one of the most distinctively Czech areas in eastern Nebraska, the Willow Creek Cemetery is an anomaly in the settlement pattern of Saunders County. Willow Creek Cemetery represents a small packet of English settlers who came to the area in the early 1870s. These British were Methodists. Their congregation was served by Methodist cicuit riders who traveled throughout Saunders

County as early as 1875.[1] The British character of Willow Creek is illustrated by two inscriptions which read, "Born in England." British names, such as Wakelin, Auten, Williams, Trively, Twombly, Hall, Wilcox, and Wilson are frequent. When surnames are used to distinguish country of origin, thirty-five British people, four Germans, and one Czech were intered at Willow Creek.[2]

The Willow Creek settlers did not persist. Willow Creek was established in 1874, and was most active between 1881 and 1890 (Fig. 4.1). Only eight burials occured after 1900 and most of these were before 1922. The last person buried, in 1942, was the daughter of one of the first settlers. The original settlers who started Willow Creek Cemetery left no organization after they moved, were assimilated into the larger Czech population, or died. The cemetery today is mowed once a year around Memorial Day. At other times it is heavily overgrown with many tombstones hidden by thick vegetation. There are many choice sites within the cemetery and no central core about which

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[1]The presence of English settlers in the Willow Creek area has been confirmed by Mrs. Marge Rezac of the Saunders County Historical Society. The Willow Creek Cemetery was the cemetery used by English settlers in the area.

[2]The categories of nationality were determined by representative names and spellings. Some of the English names have been mentioned above. German names include, Schroeder, Schrader, and Frosser. The Czech name was Dgle.

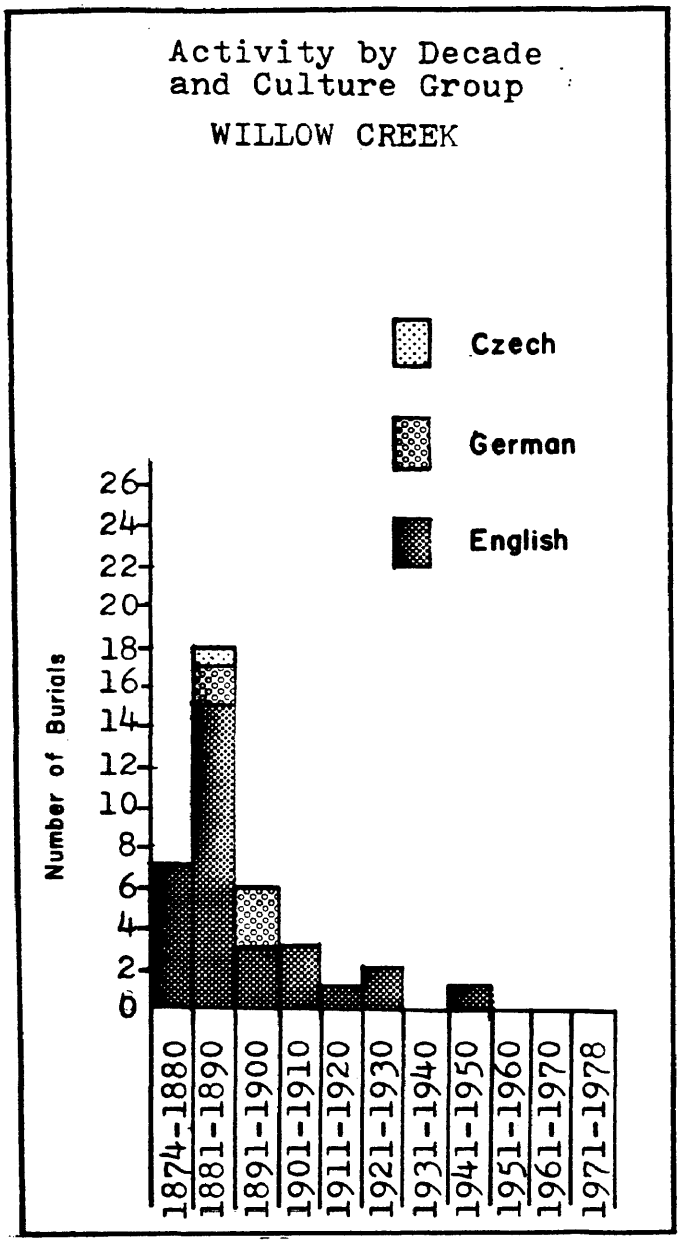

Figure 4.1.--Willow Creek Cemetery was most active between 1881 and 1890 and served a small congregation of English Methodists.

new graves were added. The result is a scattering of family plots on the higher elevations of the cemetery. Even though there have been no burials since 1942 and little upkeep, the cemetery, by its conservative nature, still has a small part of the area's history etched in its landscape.

Znojmesky. Many small rural-activity cemeteries declined after 1890 (Fig. 3.10). Znojmesky, or Znami, a small rural cemetery with only seventy-three burials since 1884, is another fine example. Znojmesky is a Czech Catholic cemetery located along the Ox Bow Trail three miles south of Weston. Internal layout of Znojmesky is unusual. Graves are located very close together in the western portion of the large lot (Fig. 4.2).

In the early 1880s, a Catholic congregation purchased forty acres at the corner of the section where the cemetery now stands. A church was to be built on the southwest corner of the parcel. In anticipation of construction of the church, the graveyard was placed at the west end of the church yard. Burials were placed very close together in order to accomodate the church building and future burials. Even though the cemetery was quite active between 1891 and 1929, the church was never built. The persistence of Znojmesky cemetery can be explained in part by the continued use of the cemetery by families who have plots there. The landscape of Znojmesky thus reflects the optimistic

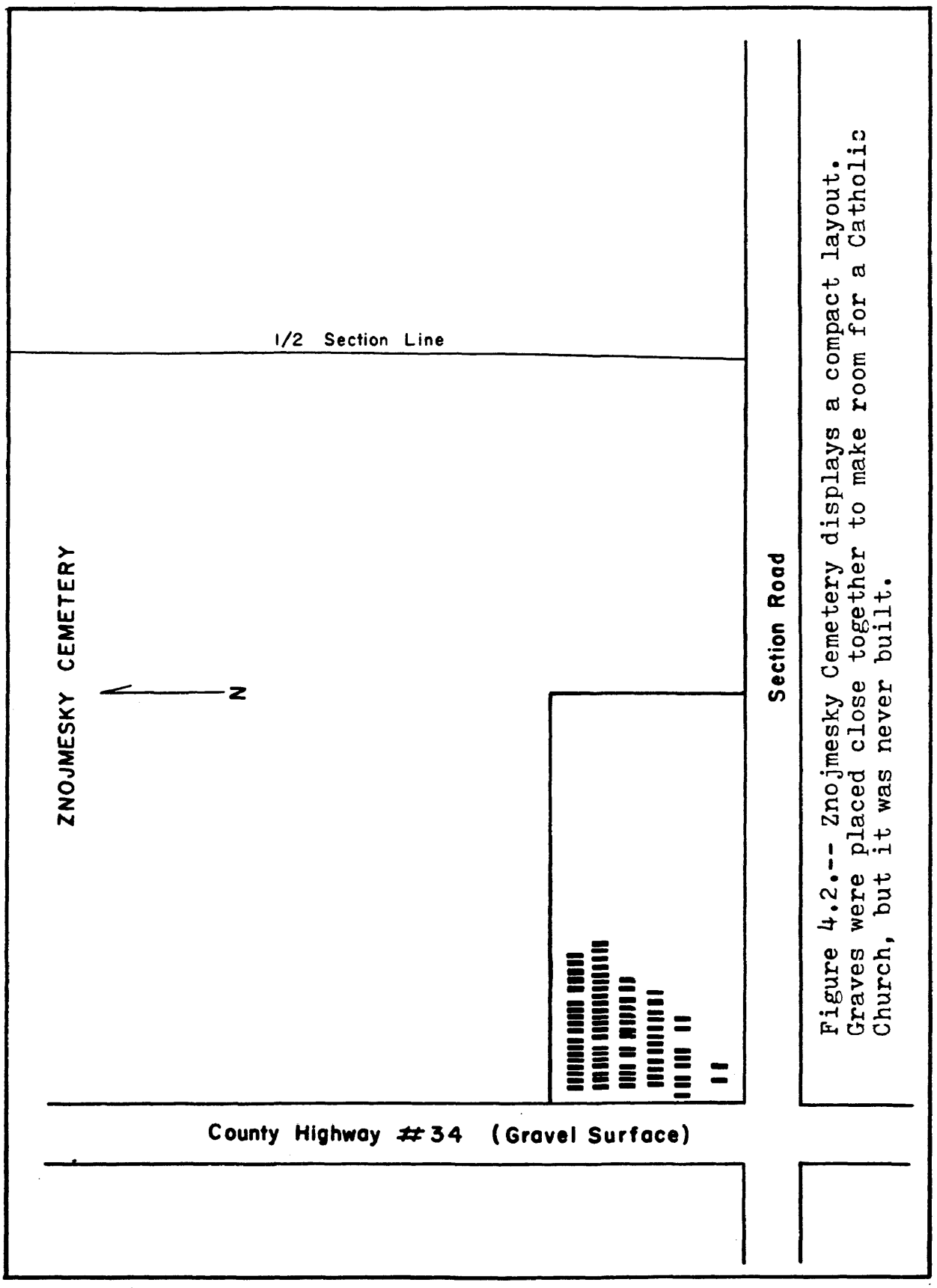

Figure 4.2.-- Znojmesky Cemetery displays a compact layout. Graves were placed close together to make room for a Catholic Church, but it was never built.

planning of a congregation, but its obvious failure to build a church.

Czech Catholics in the vicinity built St. Johns Catholic Church around 1885 in the town of Weston itself. The church also has a graveyard (#40), which can explain in part the decline of Znojmesky. Indeed, a major change in the population around Weston seems to have occured in the early 1900s. Surnames representative of Middle Western immigrants, such as Thomas, Kester, Mott, Lillibridge, Madigan, Hartley, and Davis, occur on tombstones in the city cemetery prior to 1910. After 1910, Czech names appear in abundance. Kliments, Novaks, Kuceras, Houfeks, Milaceks, and Narozenas were buried in the Weston cemetery after the turn of the century.

Greenmound. The decline of the small religious rural cemeteries such as Willow Creek and Znojmesky was due in part to the absence of a Church. Greenmound Cemetery (#23), started in 1871, has nevertheless declined in use in spite of the presence of an active church. Half a mile north of the cemetery is a Baptist Church whose structure dates from the turn of the century. The church and cemetery are separate because they are located in the Todd Valley, where high water is common. The cemetery and church are located on knolls on an otherwise flat valley bottom. Moreover, Greenmound, unlike Willow Creek and Znojmesky, does not

represent a particular culture group. A variety of names are found in Greenmound including British, German, Scandinavian, and even Italian. Finally, Greenmound has always served only a few families. Among the fifty-one graves, only fifteen different surnames can be found. Most burials occured in the first few years of Greenmound's existence. After 1880, there were less than five burials per decade. Today, there is an occasional burial, usually a family member whose parents and siblings are buried there. Only religion seems to give life to Greenmound. Numerous religious inscriptions and the graves of two Baptist ministers suggests that the persistence of the Baptist church has kept Greenmound from total abandonment, but has not stopped its slow rate of decline.

Little Flower of Jesus. The Little Flower of Jesus Cemetery (#16) provides an example of the beginnings of a small-rural cemetery's decline. Little Flower, formerly Our Lady of Sorrows, is a Catholic cemetery located in the rolling Pohocco Headlands. The cemetery was started in 1873 and served Catholics of northeastern Saunders County. Burials at Little Flower increased almost every decade between 1873 and 1960. In 1960, however, the church was moved to Leshara. Burials have declined since the move, especially in the last few years (Fig. 4.3). If the tendency of rural cemeteries is to decline following the abandonment or removal of their

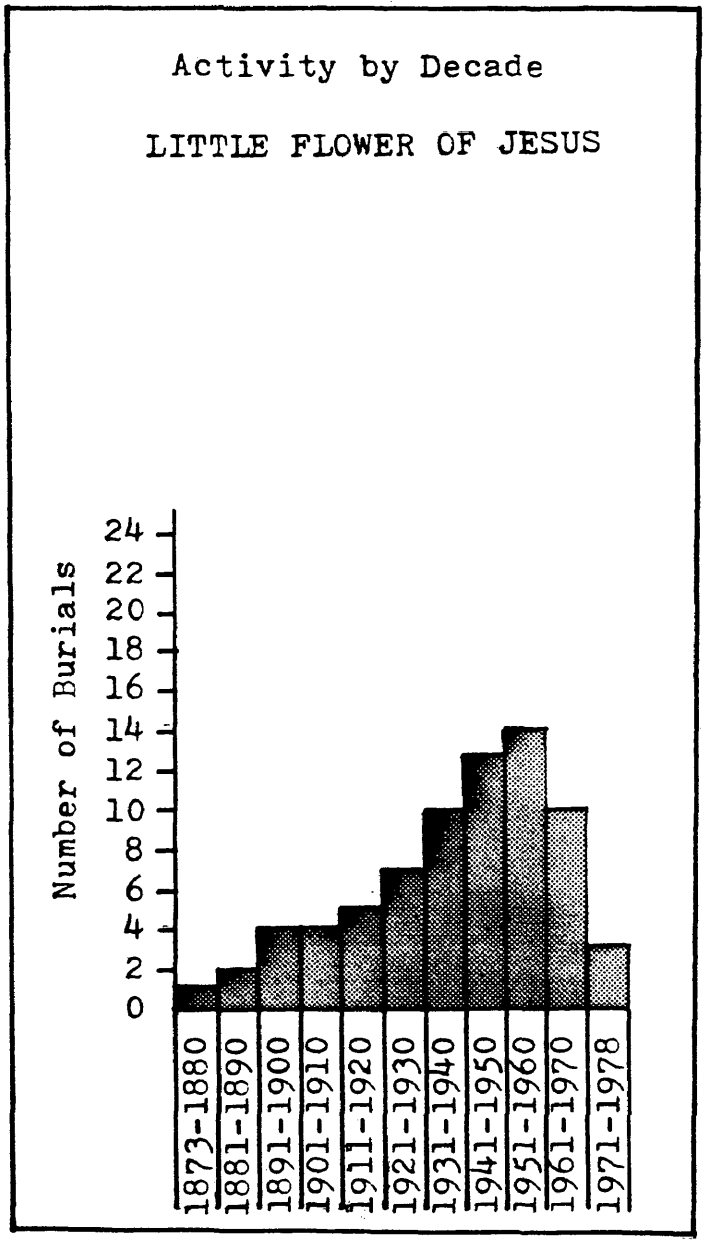

Figure 4.3.--Burials at Little Flower of Jesus Cemetery have declined since 1960 when the church was moved.

church, such as Znojmesky or Willow Creek, then Little Flower can also be expected to decline.

St. Johns. Because larger rural cemeteries have traditionally served larger populations, they are less affected by the dying out of a few families or the moving of a church than the smaller cemetery is. The large rural-activity cemetery is large today because it has continued to have burials in spite of the general decline in the overall use of rural cemeteries. St. Johns Cemetery (#30), located in northern Mariposa Precinct, is a German Lutheran cemetery. Religious inscriptions in German are numerous. Family plots dominate. Mohr, Lubkner, Muller, Frahm, Holtorf, and Schauer are among the names found on grave markers. St. Johns was started in 1872 and has had 153 burials since. The cemetery was most active between 1881 and 1900. The 1880s were years of child-killing diseases and children who died during this period make up over fifty-seven per cent of the burials in St. Johns. Other cemeteries also show an increase in burials at this time, but St. Johns is distinguished by a long row of graves, rather than the common rectangular family plot. The graves in the long row have similar tombstones and are part of the same family. At the southern end is the patriarch's grave, enclosed by a metal fence. The rest of the cemetery is as orderly in its layout as the long family plot. There is no evidence of a church on the lot but the

same families that used St. Johns in the early period of settlement continue to be buried there.

St. Marys. St. Marys Cemetery (#4) was started in 1870 and has been actively used since. Although St. Marys cannot be called a culture-group cemetery, cultural elements prevail. Irish and Czechs are buried there, and some English and Germans. Irish were in the area as indicated by several inscriptions such as "Born in County Kerny, Ireland" and "Native of County Tipperary, Ireland." As with Znojmesky and other Catholic cemeteries, the crosses atop the tombstones clearly identify it as Catholic.[3] The tombstones in St. Marys are also larger than those of other rural cemeteries in Saunders County. Family plots, organized on the grid system, dominate the layout of St. Marys. The growth of the cemetery has been from the west end towards the east. There is little distinction as to nationality and grave location in this cemetery.

The cemetery site is located along county highway 105 midway between Cedar Bluffs and Morse Bluff. It is on relatively flat but well drained land. There are no trees in the cemetery, but there is a heavy wire fence, a bronze plaque with the cemetery's name on the gate, and decorative plants such as peony and iris. St. Marys is well manicured

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[3]Catholicism places a large emphasis on symbolism in both life and death. The crucifix or a plain cross are commonly used motifs on tombstones of Catholics.

and is actively used by Catholics in the north-central part of Saunders County.

Edensburg Lutheran. Edensburg Lutheran (#28) is a Swedish culture-group cemetery, although it is not restricted to Swedes. Swedish inscriptions and names are frequent: Hanson, Amberg, Frostrom, Hansen, Anderson, Bjorn, and Martinson. The layout of the cemetery is based on a grid system with the oldest stones found along the southern and eastern edges. The cemetery is located on the top of a hill and is surrounded on its borders by mature ash, mulberry, and elm trees. The lush vegetation composed of iris, peony, raspberry, and grasses are thickest around the borders and may hide older markers. Edensburg Lutheran is typical of many rural cemeteries in that it is fenced, has particular species of plants such as iris, lilac and yucca, has many aesthetic qualities, a hill-top location, a good view, shade from mature trees, and the cemetery is associated with a church.

Edensburg has been actively used since its inception in 1874, though the average burial rate has fallen to just over thirty-five per decade since 1920. The cemetery is approximately sixty per cent full, which means it can be used at the same rate it has been used for sixty more years. It resembles other large rural cemeteries in that it is well cared for.

Fleming. Fleming Cemetery (#8) is surrounded by cornfields in a flat, center-pivot-irrigated section of the Todd Valley. Fleming Cemetery received its name from the Walter Fleming family who donated the land in 1871. The people buried in Fleming are culturally mixed. The first settlers in the area came from New York, several Middle Western States, Canada, and many western European countries and the names of those buried there reflect this deversity of culture. There are Watsons and Easons, Hartfords and Reicherts, Vavras and Seligmans buried in Fleming. There are several masons and members of the Order of Eastern Star interred there. Fleming is essentially a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant cemetery and displays both a grid system and numerous family plots common to rural cemeteries in Saunders County. Fleming has been less active than other large rural cemeteries in recent years. Its activity has tapered off since 1910, but the level it has dropped to appears relatively stable.

Rock Creek. Rock Creek Cemetery (#57) had its name changed to Mt. Zion Cemetery in 1972, indicating an active interest in the cemetery. The new name is taken from the Methodist church that once stood on the south end of the cemetery. Land for the Rock Creek Cemetery was given to the Mt. Zion congregation in 1879 although there had been burials there since 1872. The church was built in 1886, and

the congregation was organized by Methodist circuit riders. Since Mt. Zion was the only church for several miles in the early settlement period and religion was important, a large number of Mt. Zion's first members were not originally Methodists but Presbyterians or Baptists.[4] The church edifice was torn down in 1930 and not replaced. All that remains of the church is its cemetery.

Rock Creek Cemetery has been active throughout its history, but burials have been declining since 1950. The absence of the church has certainly led in part to the reduced activity, but the size of the cemetery and the persistence of families and their burial plots in Rock Creek have kept it active. The cemetery thus remains well kept. Rock Creek is surrounded on three sides by mature pines, mulberry, and elm trees. Like most Western cemeteries, its tombstones are oriented in an east-west direction.[5]

Paired Cemeteries

Religion and culture have played a significant role in the development of cemeteries in Saunders County. Nearly sixty per cent of all rural cemeteries in the county are

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[4]Mrs. Pauline E. Bennett, personal letter, August 6, 1978. Mrs. Bennett's husband's family gave land for the Rock Creek Cemetery in 1879.

[5]East-west orientation of tombstones is an old practice. A discussion of this tradition follows in Chapter 5.

associated with a church, a culture group, or a combination of the two. Population-center cemeteries on the other hand, are associated with religious or culture groups in only forty five per cent of the cases. Catholic cemeteries represent the largest single group of religious cemeteries. Czech cemeteries represent the largest single group of culture group cemeteries. Religious devisions within a given culture group were also common in Saunders County, and each major sub-group established its own cemeteries. Czechs were divided into three religious groups, each with its own cemeteries: Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, and the Free Thinkers, who established secular Bohemian National Cemeteries. The Swedish population in Saunders County was divided into Lutherans, the Swedish Covenant Mission Church, and Swedish Baptists. The settlers who came to Saunders County from the German States brought as part of their cultural baggage Lutheranism, Presbyterianism, and Catholicism. When culture groups split over religion, paired cemeteries located relatively close to one another and representing the same culture group but distinct as to religion, resulted.

Killian and Sacred Heart. In the northwestern portion of the county, two Czech cemeteries, Killian (#1) and Sacred Heart (#2), lie less than two miles apart. Killian is a Bohemian National Cemetery established in 1870. It, like other Czech National Cemeteries, was organized by the Czecho-

Slovak Protective Society (CSPS) which later became the Western Bohemian Fraternal Association (Zapadni Ceska Bratrska Jednota or ZCBJ) in 1897. These Bohemian fraternal societies were benevolent orders for Czechs of any faith or persuasion.[6] Killian was started one year after the first recorded Czech came to Saunders County. Until 1873, Killian was the only Czech cemetery in the northwestern part of the county. In 1873, the Catholic cemetery, Sacred Heart, was established approximately two miles southeast of Killian. Both cemeteries are still active and quite large. As of June, 1978, there were approximately 450 burials at Killian and 250 at Sacred Heart. Both cemeteries continue to have a very high percentage of Czechs buried in them, which implies the strong persistence of a concentration of Czech families in northwestern Saunders County.[7] A similar pairing between Catholic and National cemeteries occured in Prague a few years later for essentially the same reasons.

Fridhem and Swedish Covenant Mission. Pairing can also be seen in two large Swedish church cemeteries south of Swedeburg. Large-scale Swedish immigration into Saunders County started in 1869, after the split between Swedish

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[6]Rosicky, pp. 356-357, 435-442.

[7]In 1870, seventy-two per cent of the people living in Bohemia Precinct were born in Bohemia. U.S. Census, 9th Report, 1870, Tables I-VII; Manuscript Schedules.

Lutherans and Mission Swedes had begun.[8] Fridhem (#55), the Lutheran cemetery and the Swedish Covenant Mission Cemetery (#56) are located less than one mile apart. Both have grave markers with inscriptions dating from 1876.[9] The Mission Church still has records, but the records were not available to me at the time of this research.[10]

Even though religious differences formed a major division among Swedish immigrants to Saunders County, members of both faiths emmigrated together and settled together. The result was the establishment of two churches and two cemeteries within a mile of each other. As early as 1870, fifty per cent of all people in Richland Precinct and over forty per cent of all people in Wahoo Precinct were born in Sweden. The 1870 Manuscript Census shows that most of the Swedes in the county were young males.[11] Many presumably had families

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[8]Although the formal break by the Covenant Mission from Lutheranism did not take place until 1878, the division between the doctrine-oriented Lutherans and the conversion-oriented Covenant Mission Swedes began in the 1840s with a widespread revival movement. Kastrup, p. 349; John G. Rice, personal interview, August 27, 1978.

[9]Whether or not the church cemeteries were started earlier than 1876 remains a question. Since a large number of Swedes came to the county in 1869 and 1870, it seems likely that there were a few deaths before 1876. However, the cemetery records of Fridhem were lost when a fire consumed them.

[10]During research at the Swedish Covenant Mission Cemetery, the pastor, who serves two other congregations, was absent.

[11]U.S. Census, 9th Report, 1870, Manuscript Schedules.

in Sweden that would soon come to America. Within a few years, these family members would join their husbands, thus increasing the number of Swedes in the south-central portion of Saunders County. The effect of concentrated Swedish settlement on the cultural landscape of the county was similar to that in the Czech area in the northwest, with internal divisions of the culture group becoming manifested in the pairing of cemeteries.

Zion Lutheran and Zion Evangelical. A third pair of culture group cemeteries is located in the northern portion of Green Precinct, where Germans were concentrated. Zion Lutheran (#51) and Zion Evangelical (#52) are located approximately one mile apart and were established fifteen years apart. Zion Evangelical Cemetery, established in 1876, and Zion Lutheran Cemetery established in 1891, are almost entirely German. German names and German inscriptions abound in both cemeteries. In keeping with Calvinistic tradition, the Presbyterian Zion Evangelical Cemetery lacks ornamentation and large markers. There are no trees at this cemetery. Other than the tombstones, the iron fence along the front of the cemetery is the only ornamentation. The cemetery is no longer active.

Zion Lutheran Cemetery is still active and therefore receives better care. Zion Lutheran is also more like other rural cemeteries in that it has large tombstones and the

typical vegetation of rural Middle Western cemeteries, including cedar trees, lilac bushes, and yucca plants. In spite of the differences between Zion Evangelical and Zion Lutheran in terms of internal features, the relative location of these two German cemeteries suggests an early and persistent concentration of Germans in Saunders County.

Maple Grove, Weigand, Union, and Johannes. A clustering of related cemeteries occurs in Cedar Precinct. Cedar Precinct had a large number of German settlers. Four German cemeteries are located within a three mile radius south of Cedar Bluff. The first cemetery to be established was Maple Grove (#12) in 1866. It remains the town cemetery. The three rural cemeteries were started later: Weigand (#11) in 1872, Union (#13) in 1875, and Johannes (#10) in 1876. All have a large proportion of Germans buried in them, for numerous German inscriptions and German names are present. The clustering of the cemeteries in northern Saunders County reflects something of the character of the early settlement period there. Weigand is a small rural-activity cemetery having only twenty-six burials. Johannes and Union, on the other hand, are large rural-activity cemeteries having 160 and 135 burials respectively.

Culturally, Weigand resembles Zion Evangelical (#52) in Green Precinct. Weigand is also known as Weigand Evangelical. Both cemetery landscapes are quite bare and simple,

which are representative features of the Calvinistic philosophy of Presbyterianism. Johannes and Union cemeteries may have been religious cemeteries also, but any edifice is no longer in evidence. The clustering of the four German cemeteries in Cedar Precinct suggests there was a division along religious lines among the German community during early settlement, especially in light of the high proportion of religious rural cemeteries in Saunders County.

Old Pleasant Hill and New Pleasant Hill. Protestantism is known for its tendency to spawn new denominations and sects. An example of this tendency is found in Richland Precinct. Here, Old Pleasant Hill (#53) and New Pleasant Hill (#54) cemeteries are located exactly one mile apart in the same place in different sections. In 1873, Old Pleasant Hill Cemetery was established on land where a Methodist Church was to be built. In the same year, however, New Pleasant Hill was started one mile to the north where the Methodist Church was in fact built. Burials continued until 1933 in Old Pleasant Hill, but there were burials occuring as late as 1970 at New Pleasant Hill. The names, Old and New Pleasant Hill, suggests a smooth transition from the use of one cemetery to the other, yet they were started in the same year and by the same people. Identical surnames appear in both cemeteries. Other similarities include religious epitaphs and motifs on the tombstones. The people who started the ceme-

teries came from the Middle West and New England.[12] Because of the apparently similar backgrounds of the people buried in these two cemeteries, the similar landscapes in the cemeteries, and the short distance between them, it seems likely that a religious division was responsible for the development of Old and New Pleasant Hill cemeteries. On the other hand, the two cemeteries may have been started by two groups who, by coincidence, happened to choose the sites they did. The former explanation seems more plausible considering the nature of the cemetery landscapes of Old and New Pleasant Hill.

The short period of activity of Old Pleasant Hill may have been due to the decline of its supporting population. If the Old Pleasant Hill group reconciled with the New Pleasant Hill group, then the abandonment of the Old Pleasant Hill Cemetery can be explained. The continued use of Old Pleasant Hill until 1933 is likely due to the tradition of the family plot. After the New Pleasant Hill cemetery became the only active cemetery, a few transfers of bodies from the Old Pleasant Hill site may have occured. Evidence for this is scarce because the records from the Old Pleasant Hill cemetery are lost and the transfers not recorded in the cemetery record book of the New Pleasant Hill. The transfer

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[12]Origins of several of those buried in the Old and New Pleasant Hill cemeteries was determined by cross checking the names of those buried there with the 1870 Manuscript Census which lists place of birth.

of bodies from other rural cemeteries in Saunders County is known to have occured, so such an event between Old and New Pleasant Hill cemeteries would not be uncommon.

Conclusion

The cultural geography of a small area can be enhanced by investigation of its rural cemeteries. In areas such as Saunders County, Nebraska, where European and American culture groups mingled, the numerous rural cemeteries provide information on the character of the people, their burial systems, how they related to one another, and how they distributed themselves across the landscape. The rural cemeteries of Saunders County are, as Francaviglia has argued, "microcosms of the real world."[10]

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[10]Francaviglia, p. 501.

Chapter 5

THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF RURAL CEMETERIES

The rural cemetery is a perceptible node in the agricultural environment of the Middle West and Great Plains. Rural cemeteries exhibit a variety of appearances and are all distinct from the land surrounding them. As conservative elements of culture, cemeteries reflect the beliefs and preferences of a culture. Rural cemeteries represent small groups of people and because they are small, many of the cultural traits of their supporting groups can be discerned. Culture manifests itself in rural cemeteries through the use of vegetation, tombstones, their styles, use, and arrangement, inscriptions, epitaphs, and motifs.

Many rural cemeteries, on the treeless prairie, are distinguished by the presence of cedar or pine trees. Within a rural cemetery, decorative, non-native plants like the yucca, iris, lily, and peony, are scattered between tombstones. The tombstones themselves reflect popular tastes in style and use. The care and maintenance a rural cemetery receives distinguishes it not only from the agricultural land, but also from other rural cemeteries. The well-kept rural cemetery is drastically different from the overgrown, abandoned cemetery. Rural cemetery maintenance ranges from one extreme to another.

However, the care many rural cemeteries receive is only a cosmetic mowing once a year before Memorial Day. Cemetery fences, whether plain or fancy, or include an arched entryway, represent not only a physical boundary between land uses but a psychological barrier between two worlds.

Like other land uses in the township and range system, rural cemeteries follow the rectangular grid pattern. The settlers who started cemeteries on the prairies were keenly aware of land division based on the public land survey. It seems quite natural that they would set up cemeteries with the same orientation as their land and homes were. A cemetery's stones may face east-west or north-south, but none vary from the cardinal directions. While small rural cemeteries occasionally have scattered burials and appear to be haphazardly placed, they are, in fact, organized into a rectangular grid system along the cardinal directions.

Vegetation as a Cultural Element of Rural Cemeteries

Horticulture in cemeteries is an old tradition dating to pagan cemeteries of Europe where "yew trees and holly's . . . constant greeness symbolized the resurrection of spring long before Christianity."[1] Flowers and trees became part

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[1]John R. Stilgoe, "Folklore and Graveyard Design," Landscape (Summer, 1978): p. 24.

of the cemetery landscape in the late Middle Ages.

> In some parts of Europe laymen believed that a soul left the corpse only in the spring, as flowers blossomed above. Perhaps for that reasons trees thought to ward off evil spirits, usually evergreens and beeches, were planted among the stones to protect captive spirits during the winter. Plants now customarily associated with Christianity -- lilies, roses, and willows -- arrived later as interlopers in the pagan landscape.[2]

The use of the evergreen as a symbol of life, hope, and constancy is found in rural cemeteries of the Middle West. Because evergreens, like the pine and cedar, are not part of the natural vegetation in areas of the Middle West, their presence in rural cemeteries, as well as other non-native plants, is a cultural phenomenon.

Other common forms of vegetation in rural cemeteries include grasses (both native and introduced), sumac, clover, wild asparagus, bridal wreath, ferns, berries, ash, oak, locust, mulberry, and maple trees, and marijuana which was cultivated in the Middle West as a source of fiber for rope beginning in the 1890s. Rural cemeteries have been havens from the plow. Thus, along borders of rural cemeteries an ecological nook exists for native plant species.

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[2] Ibid.

[3] Minnesota, Legislative House Committee of Investigation on the Production of Flax and Hemp, Hemp, 1891.

The popularity of particular plants in cemeteries varies through time as do popular plants in people's yards.[4] Because the orange-flowered tiger lily is found in cemeteries abandoned early and on graves dating to the nineteenth century, it apparently was one of the popular cemetery plants in the early years of Saunders County. Perennial iris are hardy plants that, like the tiger lily, were popular in the nineteenth century. Lilac bushes and bridal wreath are flowering bushes found in cemeteries dating from the 1880s. Because they are large and fast-growing plants, they were probably popular as landscape plants on the treeless hillside cemeteries in Saunders County.

The next plant which became popular in American cemetery landscape tastes was the peony. Like other flowering plants, the peony can thrive on a minimum of care. Its popularity in cemeteries continues to this date because it flowers around Memorial Day.

Roses are generally restricted to population-center cemeteries. Because they require more care than other flowering plants, they are not common in rural cemeteries. Roses found in rural cemeteries in Saunders county are not the

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[4]An excellent example of changing tastes in American flora is found in Mae Theilgaard Watts, "The Stylish House" or "Fashions as an Ecological Factor," Reading the Landscape of America (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1975): pp. 320-345.

domestic varieties but are wild roses that have found refuge along fence lines.

The yucca plant is an alien species to eastern Nebraska, yet it is found in a large number of rural cemeteries. The species found in rural cemeteries is native to the Sandhills area of Nebraska, and its eastern range is naturally limited to the Great Plains. It is remarkable then, that the yucca plant is found in cemeteries as far east as New England.[5] Like the pine and cedar trees, the yucca is green year around. Yucca plants are found near both old and new tombstones. Though there may only be one or two yucca plants per cemetery, they occur in a large proportion of rural cemeteries in Saunders County.

The presence of other plants varies from cemetery to cemetery. Cemeteries that are no longer cared for have an abundance of plants, unlike the carefully groomed, perpetual care cemetery. At some of the abandoned cemeteries, such as Willow Creek, Old Pleasant Hill, and New Pleasant Hill, lilies, lilacs, iris, clover, wild asparagus, ferns, gooseberries, mulberries, and wild flowers have taken over the grounds. While many plants in rural cemeteries are native to the area, introduced plants are also common parts of rural cemetery landscapes.

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[5]Dr. Joseph S. Wood, Department of Geography/Geology, University of Nebraska at Omaha. Personal communication during Spring Semester, 1978.

Tombstones and Culture

Whereas plants symbolize life and resurrection, tombstones symbolize constancy. For centuries, stones have been used to mark special places and events. Tombstones are no exception. The tombs of Egyptian royalty, and kings and queens of Europe, the monumental Taj Mahal, and the crudely marked stone of a peasant from Europe or America all represent the human search for constancy and recognition.

Research conducted in various parts of the United States shows that the appearance, popularity, and decline of particular tombstone styles has been widespread.[6] The cemeteries from the nineteenth century to the present have been referred to as a place for forgetting, whose "Bland horticultural homogeneity replaced the older, intricately meaningful sectarian symbols that remind the weekly churchgoers of their eventual end."[7] The decoration of cemeteries was "designed to appeal to members of all faiths, and sectarian ornamentation was discarded in favor of neoclassic stones and carvings."[8] The neoclassic stones can be classified into four major groups: the tablet, the obelisk, the block, and the groundstone.

In Saunders County, the tablet was the first style to be used. Made of white marble, the tablet marker is usually

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[6]Francaviglia, pp. 501-509; Price, pp. 201-207; Hannon, pp. 23-38.

[7]Stilgoe, p. 27.

[8]Ibid.

two to four inches thick and stands from eighteen to thirty-six inches high. The white marble tablets were in use from 1859 to around 1880. The marble used is a soft type and the inscriptions and motifs have been weathered away by the chemical action of rain. As with all other tombstones observed, none came from local sources since quarries and outcrops were rare. The white marble tablets were likely imported by wagon and later by train from eastern quarries.

The Victorian obelisk was the next tombstone style to gain popularity. The obelisk is a four-sided monument standing from two to ten feet high. Some obelisks have pyramid tops, others have urns. Obelisks were in use from 1880 to shortly after 1910. Like tablets, obelisks are made of marble, usually gray, and are weathering rapidly. Even on small obelisks, at least four inscriptions could be accomodated. Thus, this style of tombstone was often used in conjunction with small initialed foot tablets that marked each grave. The practice of using a single stone with foot tablets was economical and maintained family unity even in death. The Victorian cemetery and its obelisk, according to Francaviglia, was an attempt by the rich for "immortality by monument."[9] In Saunders County most obelisks are small and unobtrusive, although a few are over ten feet tall.

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[9]Francaviglia, p. 507.

Around 1910 the block style gained popularity in Saunders County. The block replaced the obelisk in both style and material. Most block tombstones are made of granite and are rectangular. The early blocks have the inscriptions of each person in a plot. Around 1930, however, the family name was all that was inscribed on the block and each grave had a footstone or small headstone with the respective given name and vital dates. The sizes of the block tombstone vary considerably. The smaller markers are six by eighteen by eighteen inches. The largest are up to three feet deep, seven feet tall and six feet wide. Some of the smaller ones are in the shape of a double heart. The majority of markers are only three feet high and four to five feet wide. Accompanying the variations of the size of block tombstone is a variety of natural stone colors. Red and gray are the most frequently occuring colors, but brown and green are also found.

The most recent type of tombstone is the groundstone. In the 1930s, when groundstones were used in conjunction with the block, the markers were larger. Later, some people began using small low blocks alone. These stand six to eight inches high and are only twelve to thirty-six inches wide. In the 1940s a stone I call a double groundstone became popular. The double groundstone is cut as two groundstones in one piece of stone and is used by husbands and wives.

Since World War II, the ground-level bronze military plaque has been used for veterans. Ground-level markers have been increasing in popularity in city cemeteries and memorial gardens where grounds maintenance is facilitated by the ground-level markers. These markers are made of granite or of bronze set in a cement base.

Although rural cemetery activity has declined, each type of tombstone is found in the rural cemeteries of Saunders County. There are several tombstone styles that do not fit the four major categories which were found during this study. These include the slab, the iron cross, the gray iron monument, the mortuary marker, and the tree stump.

The slab, a three-foot by six-foot, four-inch thick piece of polished granite that lays directly over the grave, has been in use since about 1920. Slabs come in two styles. One is square cut on all corners, the other is rounded (Fig. 5.1). In Saunders County cemeteries, it is usually the convex style that is made of gray granite. The squarecut slabs are usually a highly polished red granite. Near the head of the slab a bronze or cast aluminum plaque gives the deceased's birth date and death date as well as name. Occasionally a cross is cast into the design of the plaque. The slab tombstone also comes in childrens' sizes, two feet wide and four feet long.

Iron crosses are common markers in Catholic cemeteries.

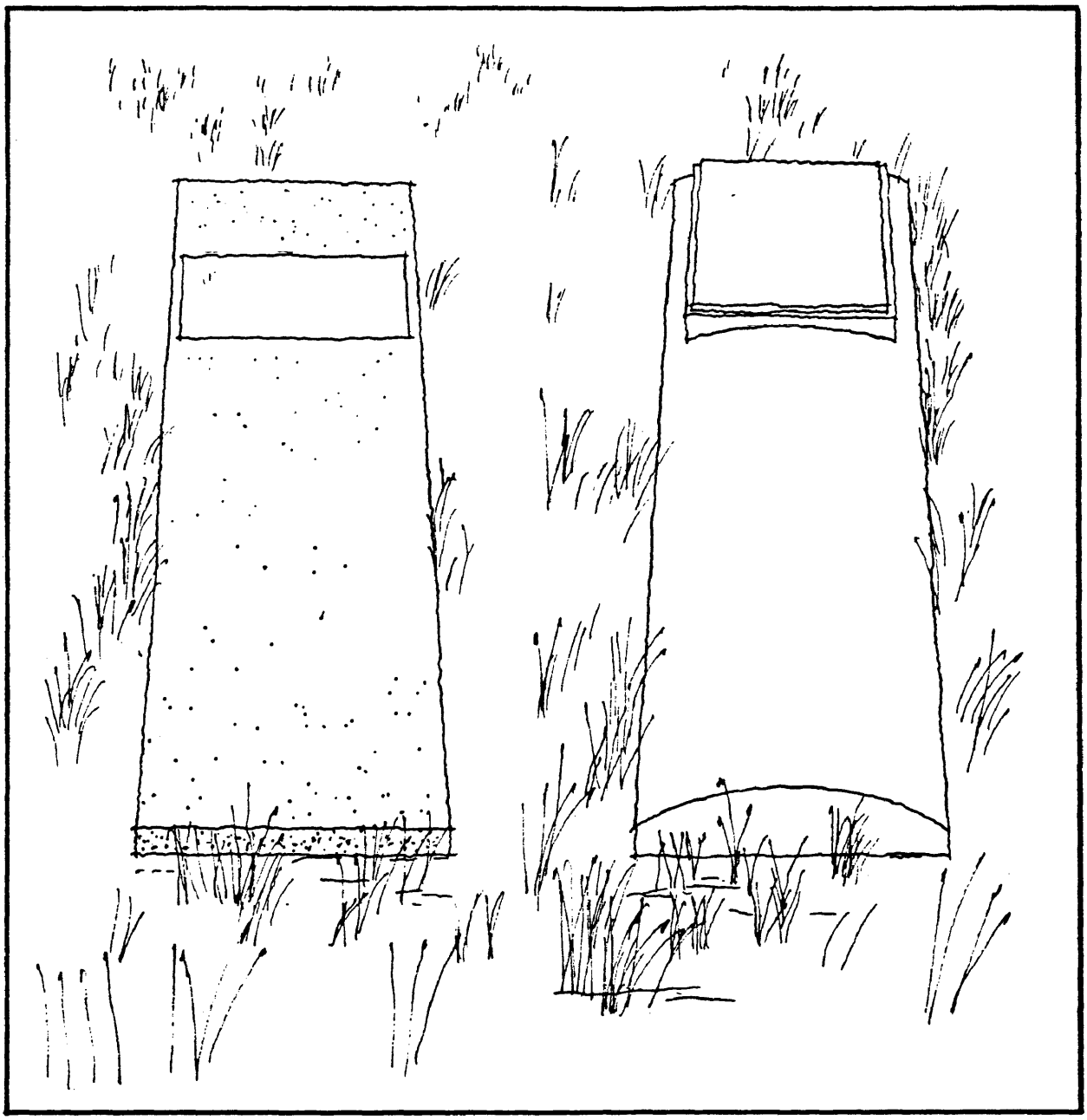

Figure 5.1.-- Slab tombstones come in two styles, square-cut and convex.

They are sometimes homemade but most are manufactured. They stand from three to seven feet high. The majority of dates on the crosses are from 1920 on, but a few were erected earlier in the century.

Mortuary markers are not intended or built to be used as tombstones. They mark each new grave until the stone marker is set in place. Due to financial reasons or lack of relatives, some mortuary plaques were not replaced with tombstones and thereby remain the only markers at a grave.

Mortuary markers appear in two styles. The earliest were made of cement and stood about ten inches high. There is a small indentation in the marker for the person's name and birth and death dates. Even though the information was behind glass, time and weather have erased most trace of it. The cemetery mortuary marker was used as early as 1935 and possibly before. A lack of evidence, however, makes the date of the earliest use hard to ascertain.

The second style of mortuary marker was made of metal and resembled a plaque on a stand. It stood only ten inches high and was six inches wide. The relevant information was put on the plaque with sliding metal letters. The mortuary's name was imprinted on the end of the plaque. Although these markers were meant to be mortuary markers only, numerous markers can be found dating as far back as the 1930s.

Gray iron monuments, though uncommon in Saunders County,

are located in three rural cemeteries.[10] Gray iron oxidizes very slowly and resembles cast aluminum. Markers of gray iron in Saunders County are in the large obelisk style and date from 1890 to 1900. They are bolted together from the inside and then set on a base so that no bolts or seams are visible. An unusual characteristic of gray iron markers is that they are in an old style yet appear new because they are not weathered like marble.

In Saunders County rural cemeteries there are at least two tombstones resembling trees. J. Sterling Morton was the founder of Arbor Day, which celebrates trees. His grave in Nebraska City is marked by a large tombstone in the shape of a tree trunk. This monument to the famous Nebraska horticulturist is garish, but nevertheless, appropriate. Similar tombstones designed in the tree stump motif are therefore not uncommon in rural cemeteries. These tombstones are redish-brown in color, are made of concrete, and stand from four to eight feet high. Inscriptions are cut in the stone on an area left smooth in casting.

Tombstone Use and Arrangement

Not only do tombstones vary in size and style, but in arrangement with respect to one another. Most rural cemeteries grow outward, not from grave to grave, but from family plot to family plot. Some developed from a central core. Others

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[10] Killian (#1), Bohemian National (#35), and St. Vitus (#36)

developed from scattered sites within a cemetery. Tombstone spacing and development patterns of graves suggests various cultural preferences. The pattern of stones that develop in a cemetery, however, is not as important as recognizing that cemeteries do develop in a variety of ways.

Use of Family Tombstones. The use of a cluster of stones about a family monument has long been a part of the cultural landscape of rural cemeteries, though necrogeographers have failed to discuss this. Even with the old white marble tablets, there are small initialed footstones marking individual graves. When the obelisk was in use, the need for a second stone increased, since all burials in a plot were recorded on a single stone. As the block style gained popularity, the footstones became more elaborate. The second stone diminished in use only with the switch to the groundstone alone.

Tombstone Orientation. The practice of burying people along the cardinal directions dates to antiquity. The most popular burial orientation is toward the east, the direction of the rising sun. Christianity inherited the tradition of the east-facing burial and has justified it on resurrection theology.

> Iron age corpses were interred with their feet to the east, facing the first glimmer of light. Christian missionaries countenanced the practice by burying the newly baptized alongside the eastward facing heathen. In time the Second Coming was confused with the dawn. Christ would come again, but from the east with the sun. It

> was easy to conflate the Son of God with the sun because Christian holy days often coincided with older, astrologically determined festivals....At its beginnings then, Christianity was only a veneer, overlying pagan ritual....The dawn, the east, renewed men's souls and ordered churches and burying grounds.[11]

Rural cemeteries in Saunders County were established by people who came from Western cultures that practiced east-facing burial, and they continued to practice it.

There are four cemeteries in Saunders County, however, that do not have east-facing burials. Two Czech Catholic cemeteries and two Bohemian National Cemeteries in Saunders County have south-facing graves (Fig. 5.2). Perhaps the idea of the Parousia, the Second Coming, did not affect graveyard design in Bohemia as it did in Britain, Germany, or Sweden.[12] Czech attitudes towards cemeteries may have also contributed to varied grave orientations. Having over six percent of a county's cemeteries face south rather than east, and having all of them belong to a single culture group is a significant element of the cultural landscape of cemeteries.

Cemetery Cores. The internal growth of cemeteries has been equated to the growth of cities outward from a single core.[13] Francaviglia suggested two patterns of cemetery

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[11]Stilgoe, p. 23.

[12]Hannon reported a Catholic cemetery in central-west Pennsylvania that was south-facing. Hannon, p. 29; Examples of south-facing Czech cemeteries are pictured in Vladimir Kucera, ed., Alfred Novacek, co. ed., Czech Cemeteries in Nebraska (1972, no publisher given).

[13]Francaviglia, p. 506.

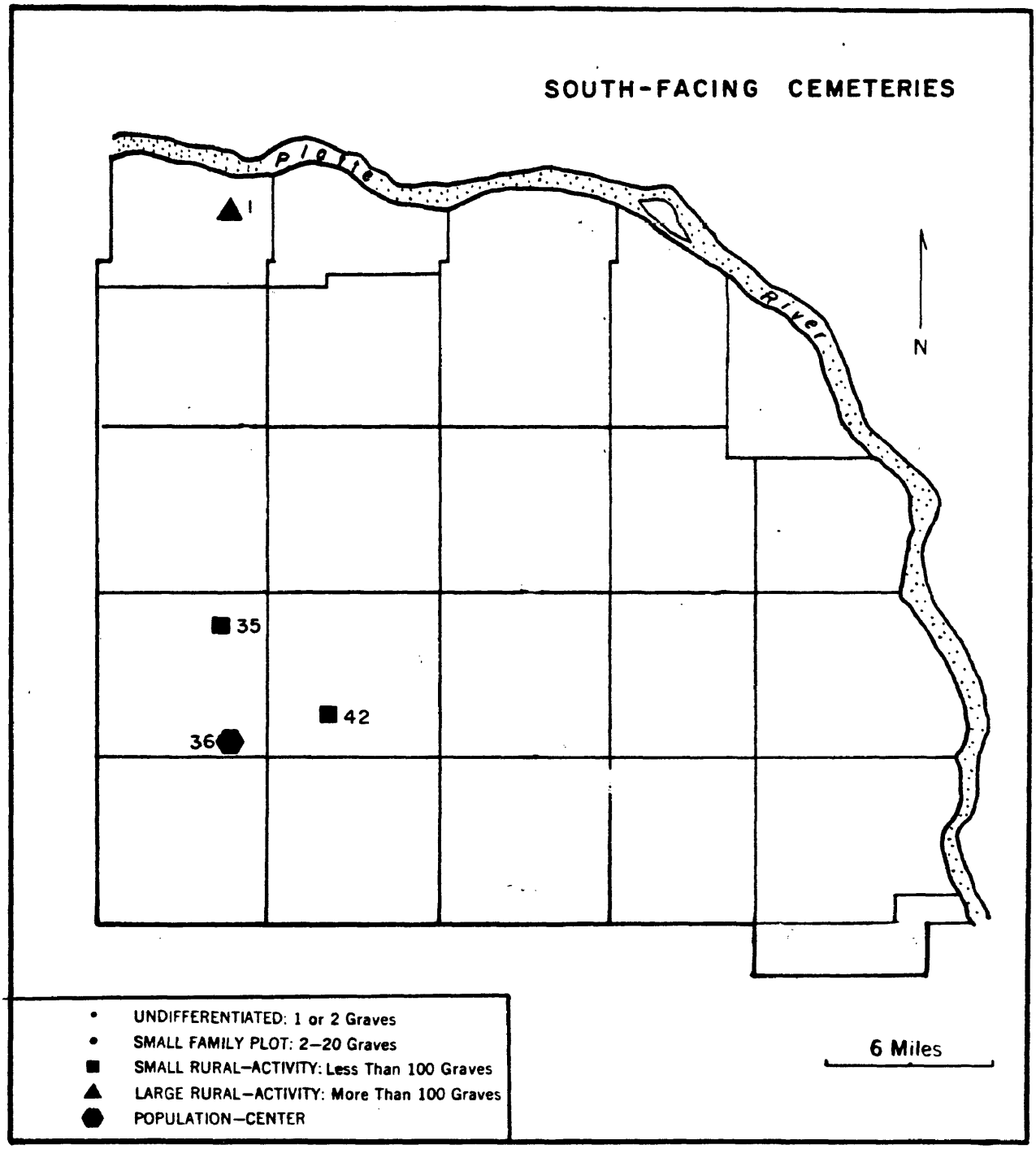

Figure 5.2.-- The south-facing cemeteries in Saunders County are Czech cemeteries.

expansion. One is a concentric evolution pattern where new burials are added in all directions from the core. Since the core is usually located in the most desirable location, such as on the top of a hill, burials occuring after this core was established would take place as near as possible to the core. The second pattern is an asymmetrical one, where cemetery growth is limited on one or more sides by cultural or natural barriers.

One exception noted by Francaviglia is the family plot cemetery where large blocks are reserved for burials of a family, and, hence, no defined pattern exists. Although Francaviglia is unclear in his definition of "family plot cemetery", it is likely that he is referring to any size of cemetery tat is divided into parcels large enough to accomodate a family instead of the small single family plot cemetery found in rural areas.

The idea of a central core can be applied to some rural cemeteries but not all. In fact, over one fourth of all rural cemeteries in Saunders County, Nebraska do not have cores. Since all rural cemeteries in Saunders County are laid out on a grid pattern and cemetery growth was obviously planned in several of them, the pattern of expansion often was linear. New burials were made next to the most recent. Since most cemeteries in the county are composed of family

plots, the linear expansion from a fence line or hill top was by family plots instead of by individual graves. At St. Marys cemetery (#4), for example, the topography is level, and the only major feature in its environment are the fence lines. Most of the older burials are located along the west and north ends. Edensburg Lutheran (#28) also has linear development along the west, south, and east boundaries. At Edensburg, the newer burials could be placed only within the semicircle of older burials. The topography of Edensburg is more rugged than that of St. Marys. This Swedish cemetery is located high on a hill with several choice burial spots, yet the oldest burials occur mostly along the east, south, and west edges of the cemetery.

Scattered sites are found at smaller cemeteries such as Little Flower (#16), Old Pleasant Hill (#53), St. James (#22) and Willow Creek (#5). The cultural character and topography of each cemetery vary considerably, yet all have scattered early burial sites. The grave pattern adheres to the grid system, but the few burials within the cemetery are located throughout the cemetery. Inspection of these cemeteries will show that the sites chosen for the first graves are the most desirable in terms of aesthetic considerations. The scattered site development may also be explained by locating family plots in the desirable sections, to the exclusion of non-relatives.

Inscriptions, Epitaphs, and Motifs

Traditional tombstone motifs, death's heads, cherubs, willows, and urns, show attitudes towards death. Symbols and motifs are "in part a function of religion" in which change can be associated with other events.[14] In fourteenth-century Europe, epitaphs were simple, but pointed. Epitaphs expressing prevailing attitudes, such as Vivat in Deo and Dormi in pace, marked many medieval graves. In colonial New England cemeteries, markers went through three major periods of mitif popularity. The first was the death's head, widely used as a motif between 1680 and 1780 and due largely to the Puritan view of death. The second period was marked by the use of the cherub as tombstone decoration. The cherub represented a change in attitude towards death, for it removed from the tombstone the constant reminder of death as symbolized by the death's head. The cherub was in use in 1829 but was most popular between 1750 and 1800.

The third motif was the urn and willow. The urn and willow replaced the human-like forms of the previous period with a motif that has little indication of death. The urn and willow was popular from 1800 to as late as the 1870s when the use of the urn and willow split into two forms.

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[14] Dethlefsen and Deetz, pp. 502.

These motifs moved westward with settlement in the nineteenth century.

In the rural cemeteries of Saunders Coutny the urn was common and decorated the top of obelisks. The willow, on the other hand, was observed on only one tombstone.[15] The urn and willow designs were depersonalized memorials that established a tradition that has persisted to this day. As with religious motifs, the urn and willow are detached from death.

Urns appear occasionally as side monuments of large twentieth-century monuments. The motifs of the mod-twentieth century, which include a palm frond, a double heart-shaped block with interlocking wedding rings on it, or a teddy bear or lamb for young childrens' stones, are very simple. The commercialization of tombstones in this century has created a group of common styles and motifs that are representative of our own attitudes towards death as something removed from life.

By the 1870s, a variety of motifs were popular in eastern Nebraska cemeteries. As with the willow motif, they were depersonalized markers, but, they symbolized the late nineteenth-century view of the world and embodied prevalent attitudes towards death. They are symbolic of the desirability of Heaven. The Pauline theology of the weakness and depravity of the flesh, as opposed to the wholeness of God,

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[15]St. Johns Cemetery (#30).

is a common late nineteenth-century Christian view, is manifested in the motifs and brief inscriptions of that period.

These religious motifs include a lamb, a hand with an open Bible, a finger pointing towards Heaven, crosses and crucifixes, a handshake, and open gates. The gates, open Bible, finger pointing towards Heaven, and handshake are representative of the late nineteenth century view of death as an event between one life and another. Accompanying epitaphs are simple, including the words, "Gone Home" or "Just Resting", "Called Higher" or the German inscription "Hier Rumt in Gott" (Here in the Glory of God).

Epitaphs. Prevailing cultural attitudes towards death are expressed in epitaphs and motifs. The use of epitaphs was very popular from the seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century. However, the use of epitaphs declined after 1900. Although the epitaph's use has been decreasing over the past eighty years, shortened epitaphs are still used. The major distinction between periods of epitaph use is a shift in the view of death as a natural part of life to the idea that death is only a step between this world and an afterlife.

Many epitaphs inscribed before 1900 clearly state the situation: "this person is dead." One of the more persistent and widespread epitaphs in the United States dates from the seventeenth century. This epitaph varies in how it is

worded but the idea is the same:

> Remember me as you pass by
> As you are now so once was I
> As I am now soon you will be
> Prepare for death and follow me

This admirably expresses the Puritan view of death and is also found over the gate at Znojmeski, a Catholic cemetery in Saunders County, Nebraska. The words over the gate read: "Coste Vy Byly Sme I My a Co Sme My Budette I Vy" which translates:

> As you are now
> So were we
> As we are now
> So you will be[16]

Since the Czechs that settled Saunders County were mostly immigrants and probably did not stroll through New England cemeteries on their way west, this epitaph, found in Czech cemeteries, indicates its popularity and rapid diffusion into the Middle West by migrating New Englanders.

Some epitaphs were very matter-of-fact about death. An 1881 epitaph of a twenty-one year old man in Northern Saunders County bluntly states, "Drown in Platte River". Another matter-of-fact statement is this 1885 epitaph:

> Here lies the remains of Margaret Johnson
> And her infant daughter
> Miss Katie Long. (#54)

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[16]Translated from Czech by Dr. Bruce Garver, Department of History, University of Nebraska at Omaha in a personal interview, June 27, 1978.

An epitaph in northeastern Saunders County dating from 1896 reads:

> A young husband and father dear
> A faithful friend lies buried here. (#19)

The 1912 tombstone of an Irishman buried in St. Marys cemetery (#4) points out not only that death is real but that his family remains nearby. It reads:

> This simple tablet marks a father's bier
> And those he loved in life in death are near. (#4)

A common theme expressed in epitaphs is the perpetuation of a person's memory. "Gone but not Forgotten" was a very popular epitaph in the 1880s, 1890s, and early 1900s.

Although the following epitaph is quite late (1913) for epitaphs emphasizing death as a part of nature, it is quite succinct:

> Heaven smiles
> Nature blooms
> Death reaps all. (#8)

Religion has played a significant role in epitaph content. Since many children died of disease in the late eighteenth century, their tombstones, though often small, have room for epitaphs such as this popular one: "Budded on earth to bloom in Heaven". Another one used for infants was, "The angels took our darling" (1879). "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord" is an 1883 epitaph signifying the importance of religion. An epitaph from a German Lutheran cemetery refers to the afterlife. The epitaph

reads, "Gone to a better land." Another simply says, "Called Higher." An epitaph from Willow Creek cemetery (#5) reflects the transition from the view of death as a natural thing to the concept of death as a temporary state. It places the reality of death within the context of an afterlife:

> Dearest mother thou hast left us,
> here though loss we accepted, but
> 'tis God that has bereft us,
> He can all our sorrows heal. (#5)

Religious ideas of an afterlife, combined with Western culture's rejection of death in the twentieth century, produced simple epitaphs that are quite unlike their realistic predecessors. Death was no longer perceived as the end but as an interim state of being.

After 1900, epitaphs began to reject death and equate it with sleep. Common epitaphs of this nature are: "Just Resting", "Only Sleeping", "Asleep", "At Rest", and "Sweet be thy rest". Such inscriptions continue to be used for children's graves although most adult burials discontinued the use of the epitaph around 1930 as the block tombstone increased in popularity.

After 1930, epitaphs are short, perhaps because granite is more difficult to carve than marble. But, it is more likely that the continued rejection of death, as manifested by the clearly polished and simple family headstone and individual groundstones, is the explanation for the decline in the epitaph. Recent cultural attitudes have rejected

death. Family plots have replaced epitaphs as the key element of a person's burial. The family has always been an important element of the cultural landscape of rural cemeteries, but the recent emphasis has been on the family and less on the need for an epitaph.

Personal accomplishments are recorded on a few tombstones. Epitaphs of this sort appear most often in Saunders County rural cemeteries in the 1930s and 1940s. At the Swedish Covenant Mission Cemetery (#54) the church's name "Mission" is proven true. Two inscriptions on double groundstones read:

Missionaries to China 1908-1927 and Missionaries to India 1905-1924

A Czech Presbyterian minister's epitaph from 1940 simply states:

I fought a good fight,
I have kept the faith. (#43)

While most epitaphs of this nature are for religious personnel, an epitaph at Edensburg Lutheran (#29) is most complimentary of the individual buried there. The stone reads: "The world is better because he lived in it".

As tombstone styles changed from the marble obelisk to the granite block, the epitaph was also phased out. Cemeteries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were places where two purposes were served. First, tombstones were monuments to the dead and second, epitaphs were reminders of moral and

religious ideals. In death, all were equal. The dead were a community that had something to say to the living community.

The nineteenth century was a transitional period for epitaph use and for cemetery character. Family plots became an outstanding feature and epitaphs were used less frequently. The nineteenth-century rural cemetery in Saunders County has continued the family plot concept, and it is its most common feature. Tombstones have changed style and epitaphs have declined, yet the family plot remains. Often plain and sometimes bordered by a small iron fence or marble dividers, the family plot within Saunders County rural cemeteries have been created by landscape tastes and represent our own attitudes towards death.

Culture Group Cemetery Landscapes

Rural cemeteries of European culture groups in Saunders County account for forty-six percent of all rural cemeteries in the county.[17] The cultural landscape varies with each group. Tombstone styles, the number of stones per grave, the size of the stones, stone orientation, and of course inscriptions differ. The remaining rural cemeteries, representing a variety of cultures, display different landscapes.

Czech Cemeteries. Czech cemeteries are the most elaborate and distinct of all rural cemeteries in Saunders

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[17]The number does not include family plots and undifferentiated burials.

County. Because Czech culture places great emphasis on the care, beauty, and maintenance of cemeteries, it is not surprising that Czech cemeteries in Saunders County are well cared for.[18] There are three categories of Czech cemeteries in Saunders County: Catholic, Presbyterian and Bohemian National (Fig. 5.3). The later is open to all Czechs regardless of religion. The Czech national cemeteries were organized by the Czecho-Slovak Protective Society (CSPS) which later became the Western Bohemian Fraternal Association (Zapadni Ceska Bratrska Jednota (ZCBJ) in 1897.[19] These Bohemian fraternal societies were benevolent orders for Czechs of any faith or pursuasion.

Four distinctive characteristics distinguish Czech cemeteries from others. These features are: the extensive use of slab tombstones, the tendency to use three or four markers per grave, a ceramic photo of the deceased on the tombstones, and the tendency to have south-facing tombstones.

The slab tombstone used in Czech cemeteries in Saunders County is overwhelmingly convex and made of gray granite. Photos of cemeteries in two books on Czechs in Nebraska clearly show the widespread use of the slab tombstone.[20]

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[18] See for example, Rosicky, pp. 431-442.

[19] Ibid., pp. 356-357.

[20] Ibid., pp. 434-440; Kucera.

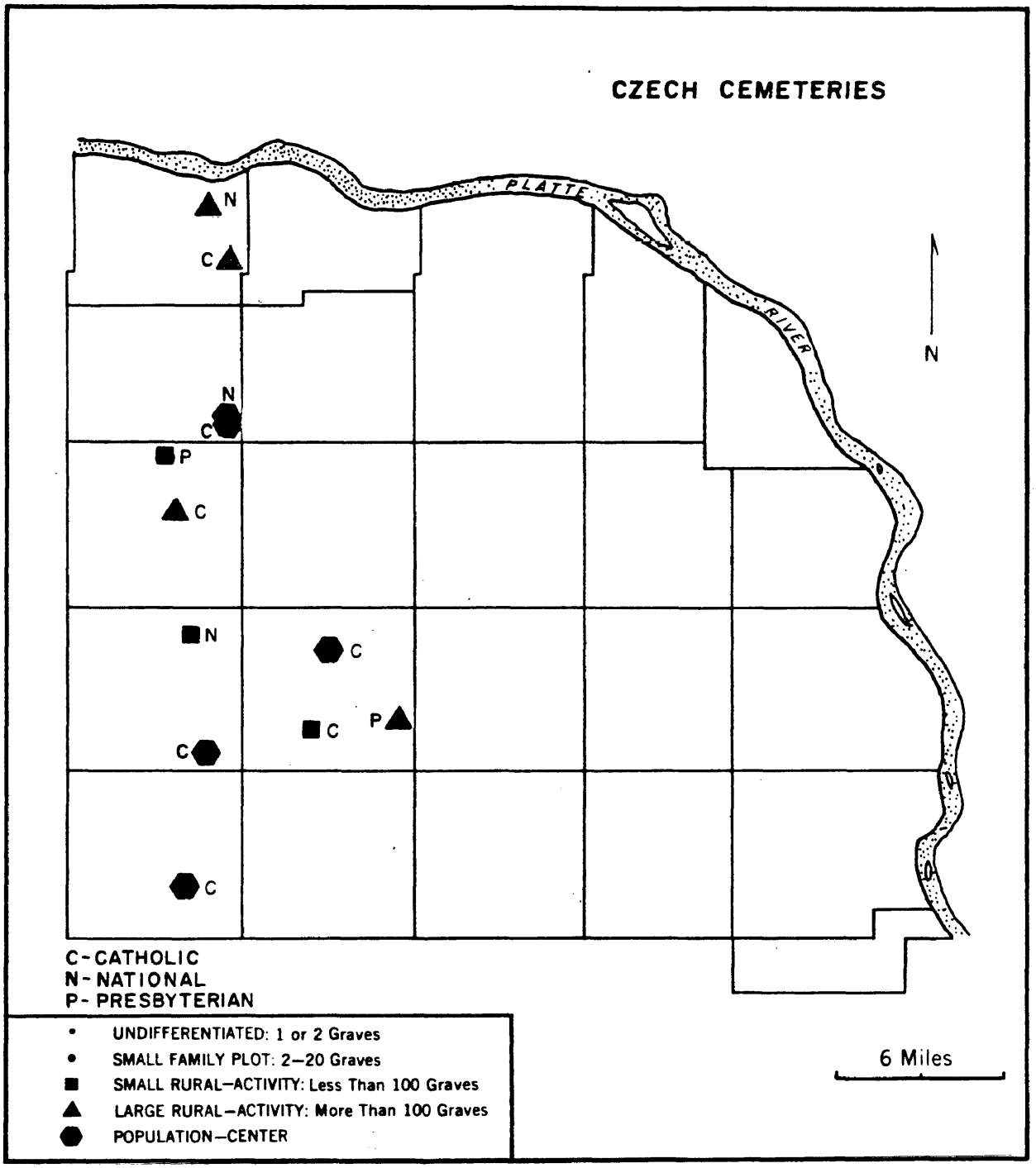


Figure 5.3.-- Czech cemeteries dominate the cemeteries in western Saunders County.

At Killian Cemetery (#1) over twenty percent of the graves have slab tombstones either singly or in combination with other tombstones. It is not uncommon to find a slab, a footstone, a headstone, and the family block tombstone, or even a bronze military plaque marking a grave. The family headstone is often quite large. The smaller groundstones are usually of the same type of stone as the block. Sometimes there is a small two foot high block serving as the individual's headstone. The placement of a photo of the dead on tombstones apparently is not an uncommon practice. Czech cemeteries in South Omaha frequently have this motif on their tombstones. The tombstones carved in the nineteenth century for Czechs are almost entirely in Czech. The four features that distinguished Czech cemeteries, slabs, multiple stones per grave, photos, and south-facing stones, are integral parts of the cultural landscape of rural cemeteries in Saunders County.

Swedish Cemeteries. The four Swedish cemeteries in Saunders County are all church cemeteries (Fig. 5.4). With the notable exception of Estina (#18), the Swedish cemeteries are large. Swedish Covenant Mission Cemetery (#56) has 457 burials, Edensburg Lutheran (#28) has 347, and Fridhem (#55) has 270. Estina, on the other hand, has only five. Ironically, the only Swedish population-center cemetery (#39), at Malmo, has around 130 graves. Swedish settlement in the

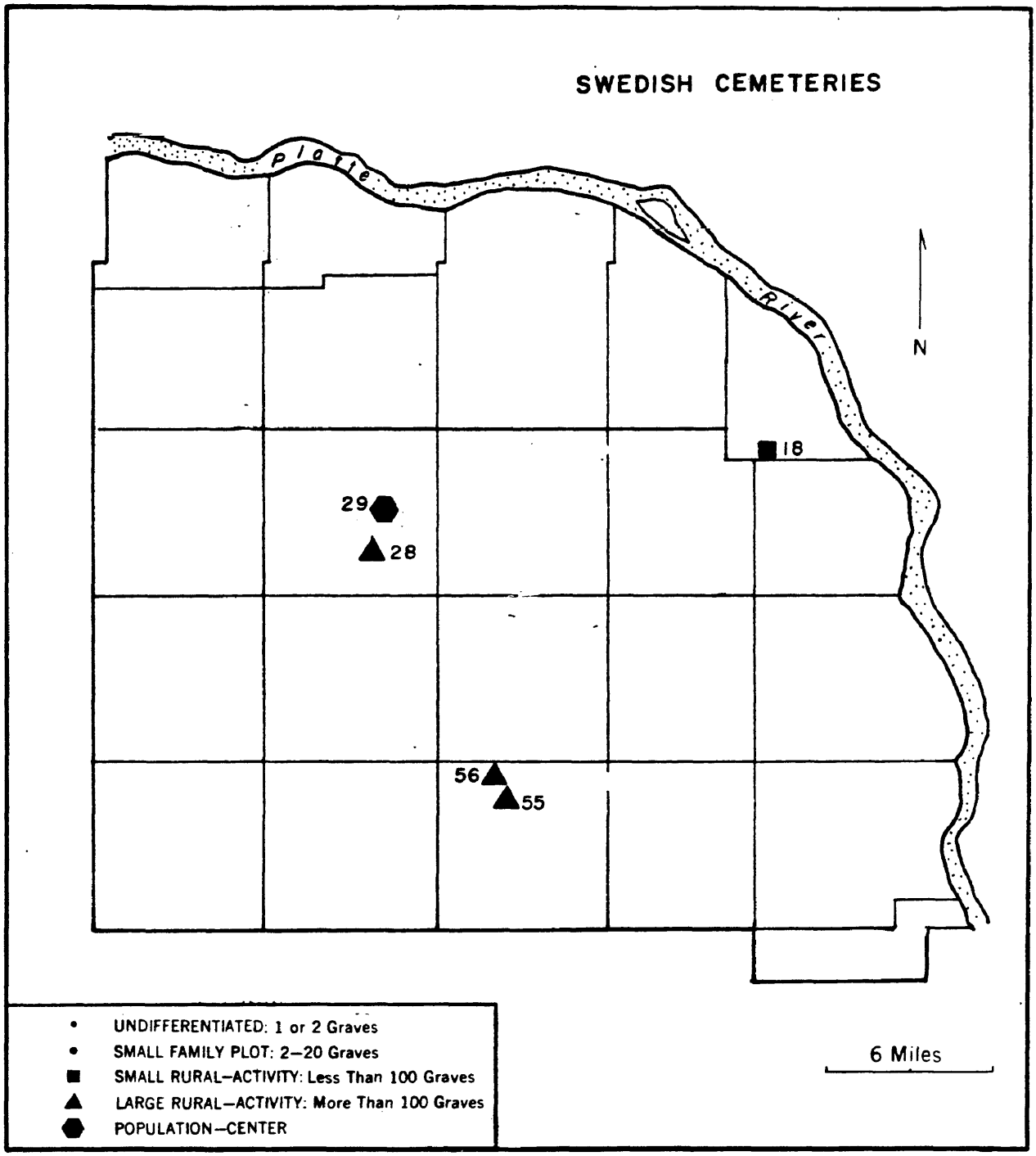


Figure 5.4.-- Swedish cemeteries are located in areas of early Swedish concentration.

county was relatively concentrated in Richland and Mariposa Precincts. This has contributed to the small number of large Swedish cemeteries because of the Swedes' cultural solidarity during the early settlement period.

The cultural landscape of Swedish cemeteries is unobtrusive. The tombstones vary in size but overall, tend to be smaller than in other cemeteries. The double groundstone and small blocks are common with only one or two tombstones marking each grave. Family plots, as in all Saunders County cemeteries, dominate the layout. In some rural cemeteries, the family plot is surrounded by a low fence or marble border. Swedish cemeteries do not have much ornamentation. The most elaborate features used to discriminate the family plot are four, five-inch by five-inch ground level stones at the corners of the plot with the family initial inscribed on them.

Since all the Swedish cemeteries are church cemeteries, religious inscriptions abound. Although a considerable number of the older stones are inscribed in Swedish, a non-reader of Swedish can easily identify commonly used inscriptions, particularly the Bible verses and numbers.

Vegetation at the three large Swedish cemeteries is typical of other rural cemeteries. However, at Estina, the vegetation is heavily overgrown. From the road, the only suggestion that the small wooded lot is a cemetery is a half-hidden iron gate. This cemetery once served a small

Baptist congregation and had the last burial in 1931. Since that time, the vegetation has surrounded the three gravesites. At the Anderson gravesite, a cast iron fence surrounds the now slightly sunken graves. Estina offers little evidence of history except that the burials occured late, between 1914 and 1931, and the inscriptions on markers are in Swedish.

The three large Swedish cemeteries are at least sixty percent full. Swedish Covenant Mission is nearing its capacity with only ten percent of its available space left for burials. Fridhem is less full and has more room since the church building was relocated to Swedeburg after the second fire in the old church. The Edensburg Lutheran church building is no longer present, which will provide room for graves as it is needed in that cemetery.

German Cemeteries. German rural cemeteries are more numerous than Swedish cemeteries, but they are much smaller (Fig. 2.6). All German rural cemeteries in Saunders County have fewer than 160 burials and are at less than forty percent capacity except Weigand (#11).[21] German cemeteries are distinguished most easily by the German inscriptions and names. The tombstones found in these cemeteries tend to be larger than in other rural cemeteries except Czech cemeteries. Borders around family plots and individual graves are more

[21]Weigand has only twenty-six burials but is less than half an acre.

common in German cemeteries than in Swedish cemeteries. Like the Swedish cemeteries, German cemeteries are orderly. It appears that growth in German cemeteries is planned with concentric expansion from the core. In no case is there a single grave located away from the others.

Religion has affected the German cemetery landscape. Weigand (#11) and Zion Evangelical (#52) are unadorned by large markers and large forms of vegetation, which reflect the Presbyterian influence. Neither have trees although Zion Evangelical has an iron fence. The tombstones are smaller than in other German cemeteries. Lutheran cemeteries on the other hand, are more ornamental, having more vegetation and larger stones. Religious inscriptions and motifs are common on the early tombstones. Even on later stones, Bible verses are occasionally inscribed. One tombstone at St. Johns (#30) dating from 1965 has the Last Supper for its motif.

Mixed and American Culture Group Cemeteries. Rural cemeteries that represent mixed cultural heritages are the most numerous of all rural cemeteries in Saunders County (Fig. 5.5). In the northwestern portion of the county are three rural cemeteries started by religious congregations from England, Ireland and Czechoslavakia. The remaining cemeteries have large numbers of Middle Western immigrants buried there. Since American immigration to Saunders County

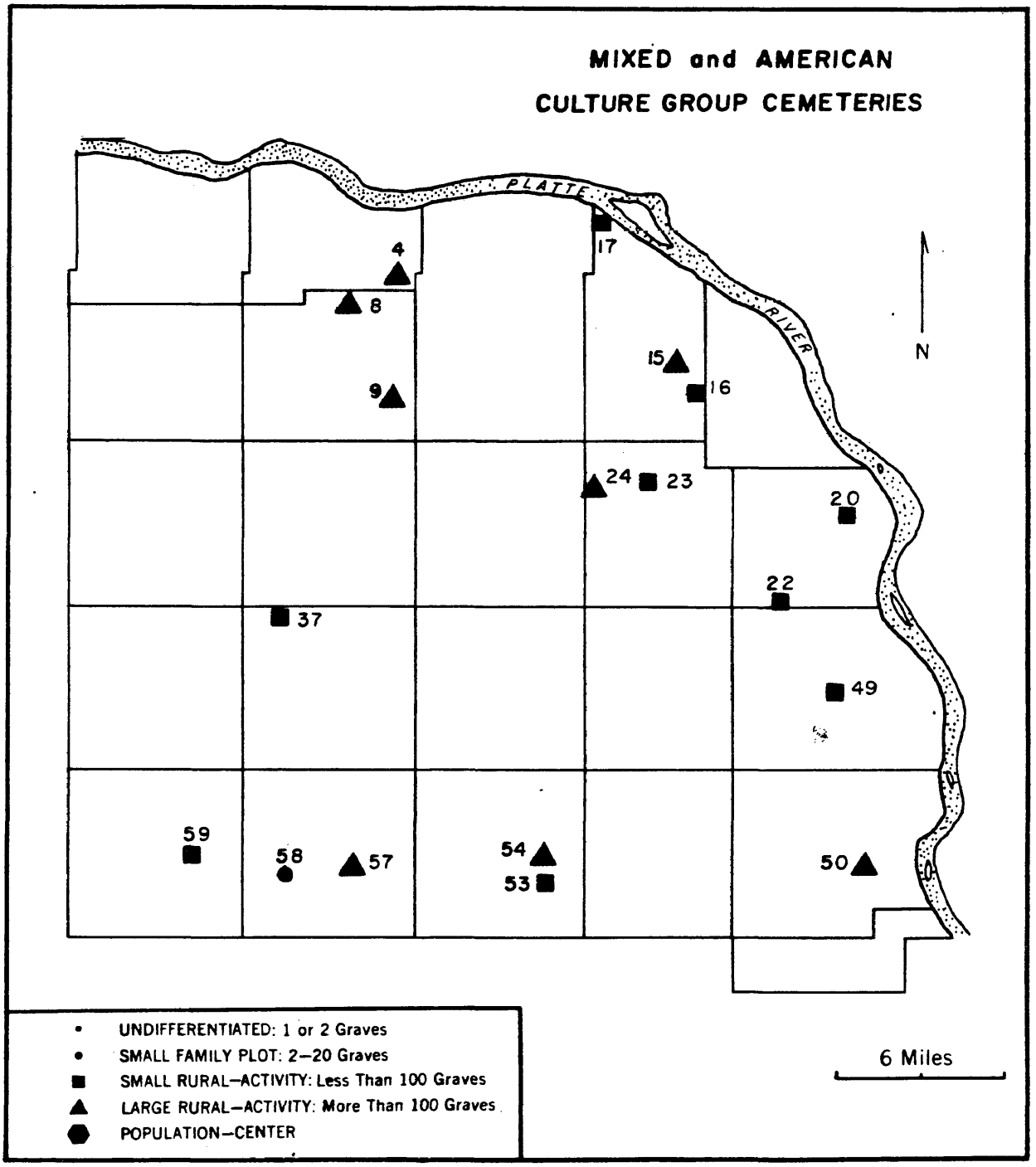


Figure 5.5.-- Mixed and American culture group cemeteries are located throughout the county.

was usually done on the family level, rather than the group level like European immigrants, the cultural landscapes of the American culture group are part of the evolution of cemetery landscapes that date from colonial times.

Tombstones, epitaphs, and vegetation of mixed rural cemeteries follow the trends of cemeteries that are found throughout the United States. Like the European culture group cemeteries, religion distinguishes mixed rural cemeteries, but little else does.

CONCLUSION

Rural cemeteries are significant features on the cultural landscape. Intimately tied to settlement, population, and culture, rural cemeteries can provide a detailed picture of an area's history. If it is true that landscapes are created by landscape tastes, then rural cemeteries are prime examples. Cemetery organization, the use of particular forms of vegetation, changing tombstone styles, and epitaphs are all elements dictated by landscape tastes. The decline of rural cemeteries, too, is indicative of our changing tastes. Necrogeography, then, is a form of archeology in which we can investigate our own culture and history. We seek explanations to culture and form as they relate to space. To this end, we perceive the cultural landscape more clearly and we can know a little more of the world we live in.

APPENDIX

CEMETERY MAP KEY*

PRECINCT Cemetery	Key #	Classification	# of Burials	Age	Legal Description
BOHEMIA					
Killian (Czech National)	1	LRA: Cz	455	1870	S½ Sec. 23 T17N R5E
Sacred Heart Cedar Hill	2	LRA: Cz, Cath	257	1873	SW¼ SW¼ Sec. 36 T17N R5E
MORSE BLUFF					
Odvody Family	3	SFP: Cz	2-5	1880?	(2 miles east of Morse Bluff)
St. Marys	4	LRA: Cz, Ir, Cath	180	1870	NW¼ Sec. 1 T16N R6E
CHESTER					
Willow Creek	5	SRA: Eng, Meth	38	1874	SE¼ SE¼ Sec. 23 T16N R6E
St. Johns	6	PC: Cz, Cath	360	1901	SE¼ Sec. 36 T16N R6E

*Abbreviations: U - Undifferentiated, SFP - Small Family Plot, SRA - Small Rural Activity, LRA - Large Rural Activity, PC - Population-Center; Cz - Czech, Sw - Swedish, Ger - German, Ir - Irish; Cath - Catholic, Pres - Presbyterian, Luth - Lutheran, Meth - Methodist, Bapt - Baptist

Cemetery	Key #	Classification	# of Burials	Age	Legal Description
Bohemian National	7	PC: Cz	250	1888	NE¼ Sec. 36 T16N R6E
DOUGLAS					
Fleming	8	LRA	271	1871	N½ Sec. 10 T16N R6E
Holy Rosary	9	LRA: Cz, Ir, Cath	187	1862	NW¼ Sec. 25 T16N R6E
CEDAR					
Johannes	10	LRA: Ger	160	1876	NE¼ Sec. 8 T16N R7E
Weigand	11	SRA: Ger, Pres	26	1872	SW¼ Sec. 3 T16N R7E
Maple Grove	12	PC: Ger	594	1866	W½ Sec. 2 T16N R7E
Union	13	LRA: Ger	135	1875	S½ Sec. 15 T15N R7E
POHOCCO					
Platteville	14	SRA: Ger	48	1875	SE¼ SE¼ Sec. 17 T16N R8E
Pohocco Lutheran	15	LRA: Luth	100	1884	SE¼ NE¼ Sec. 22 T16N R8E
Little Flower of Jesus	16	SRA: Cath	73	1873	NE¼ NE¼ Sec. 26 T16N R8E
Critten	17	SRA	26	1869	SW¼ Sec. 20 T17N R8E

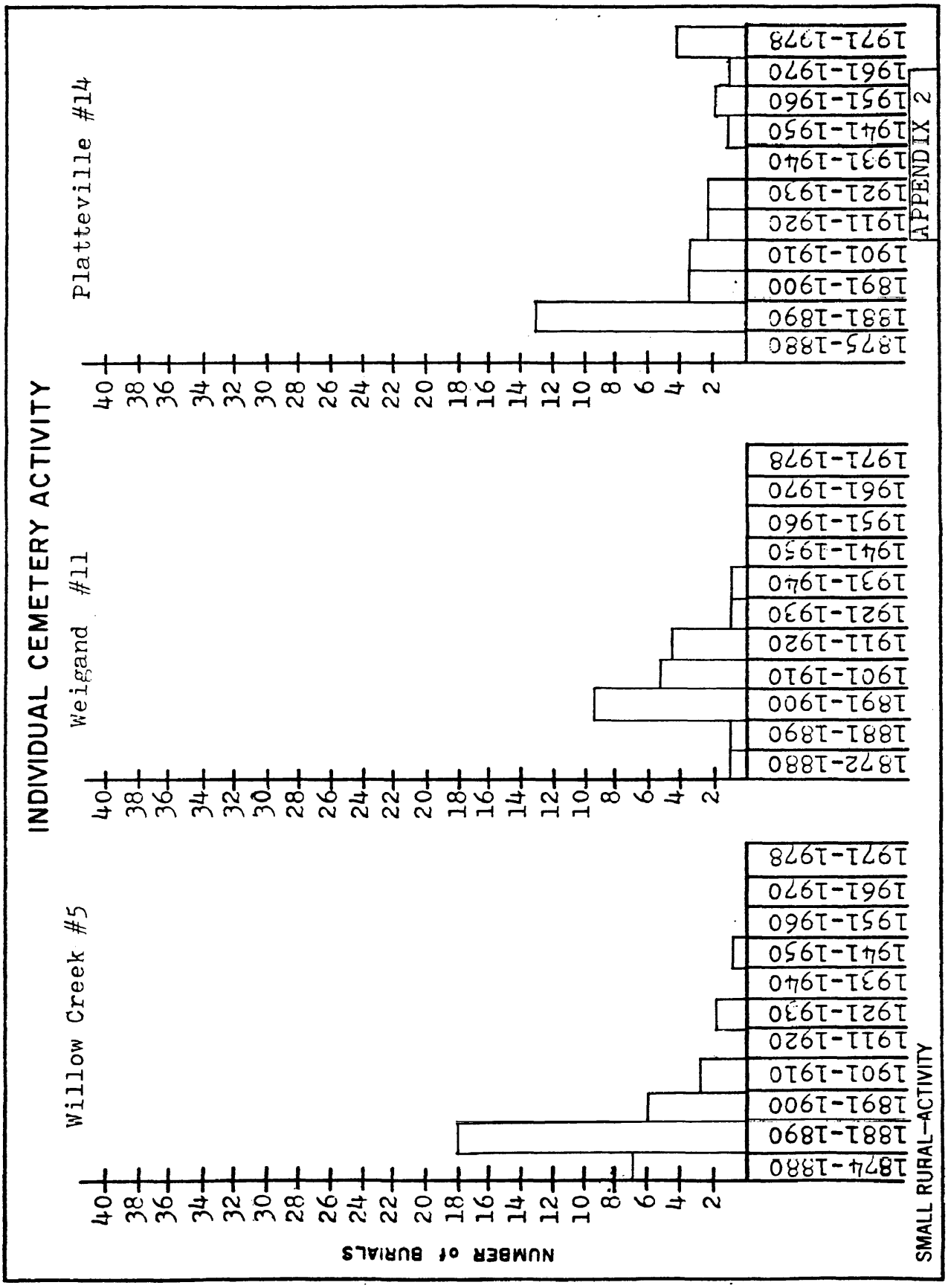
Cemetery	Key #	Classification	# of Burials	Age	Legal Description
LE SHARA					
Estina	18	SRA: Sw, Bapt	5	1914	S¼ Sec. 6 T15N R9E
Pleasant View	19	PC	164	1874	E¼ NW¼ Sec. 5 T15N R9E
UNION					
Bender	20	SRA	27	1871	SW¼ NE¼ Sec. 15 T15N R9E
Hollst Lawn	21	PC	800	1873	SE¼ Sec. 33 T15N R9E
St. James	22	SRA: Cath	65	1871	E¼ Sec. 9 T15N R8E
Marietta Presbyterian	24	LRA: Pres	240	1881	SW¼ SW¼ Sec. 8 T15N R8E
CENTER					
Greenwood	25	PC	307	1870	SW¼ SW¼ Sec. 34 T15N R6E
St. Wenceslaus	26	PC: Cath	179	1879	SW¼ Sec. 28 T15N R7E
Poor Farm	27	U	2-3	?	NW¼ Sec. 27 T15N R7E
MARIPOSA					
Edensburg Lutheran	28	LRA; Sw, Luth	347	1874	N½ Sec. 27 T15N R6E

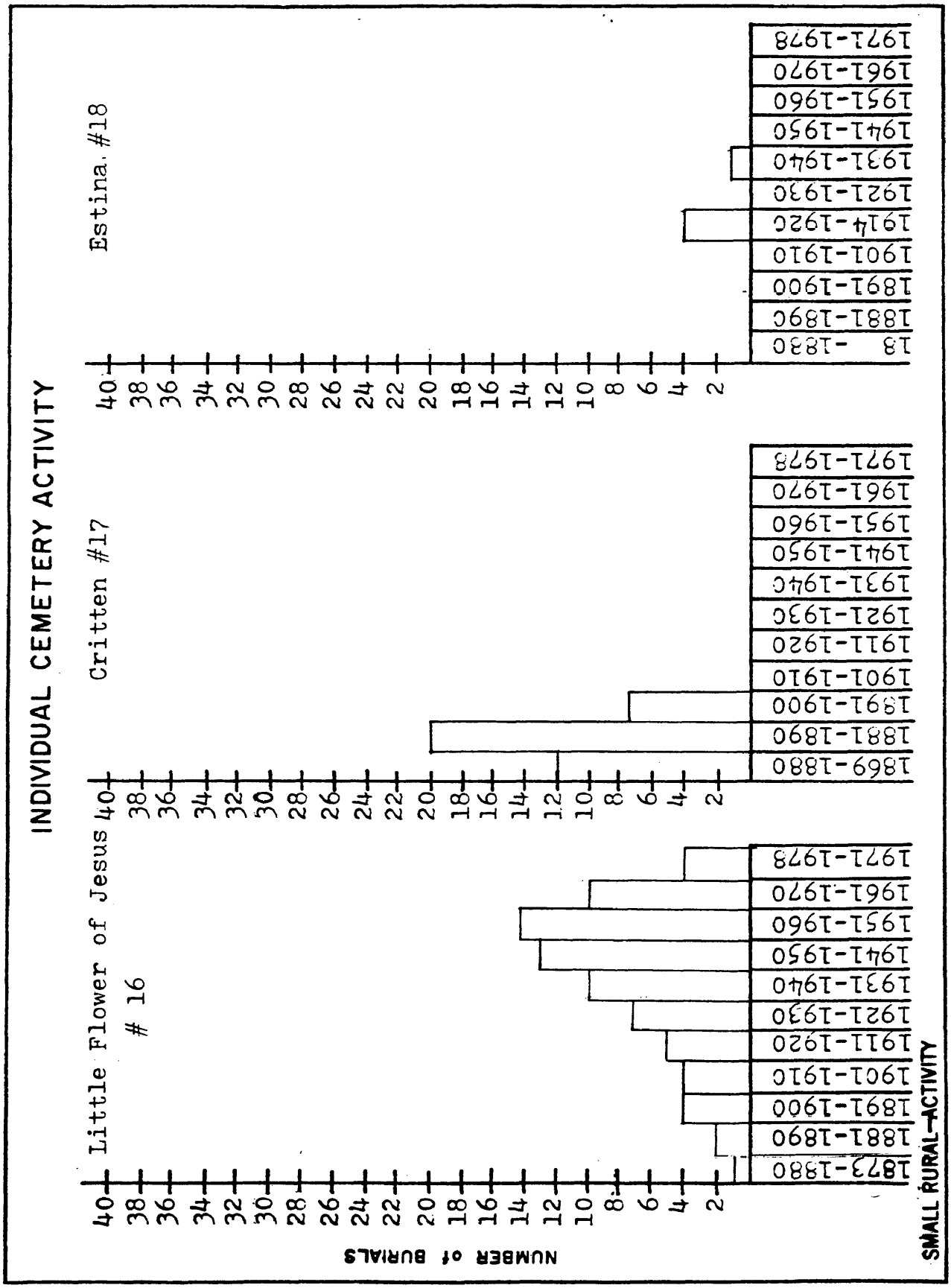
Cemetery	Key #	Classification	# of Burials	Age	Legal Description
Bethesda	29	PC: Sw	130	1872	NW¼ SW¼ Sec. 14 T16N R6E
St. Johns	30	LRA: Ger, Luth	147	1877	NE¼ Sec. 4 T15N R6E
ELK					
Plasi (Cuda)	31	LRA: Cz, Cath	328	1872	SE¼ SW¼ Sec. 15 T15N R5E
Evangelical Presbyterian	32	SRA: Cz, Pres	66	1883	SW¼ SW¼ Sec. 15 T15N R5E
Vavak Family	33	SFP: Cz	2	1883	N½ Sec. 4 T15N R5E
NEWMAN					
Talbot Family	34	SFP	2-4	1882	NW¼ Sec. 6 T14N R5E
Bohemian National	35	SRA: Cz	59	1877	NW¼ NW¼ Sec. 11 T14N R5E
St. Vitus	36	PC: Cz, Cath	236	1903	SE¼ Sec. 35 T14N R5E
CHAPMAN					
Bethel	37	SRA	60	1866	NW¼ Sec. 5 T14N R6E
Ockander Family	38	SFP: Sw	2-6	1880?	SW¼ Sec. 32 T15N R6E
Weston	39	PC	184	1873	NE¼ Sec. 9 T14N R6E
St. Johns	40	PC Cz, Cath	?	1885	SW¼ Sec. 9 T14N R6E

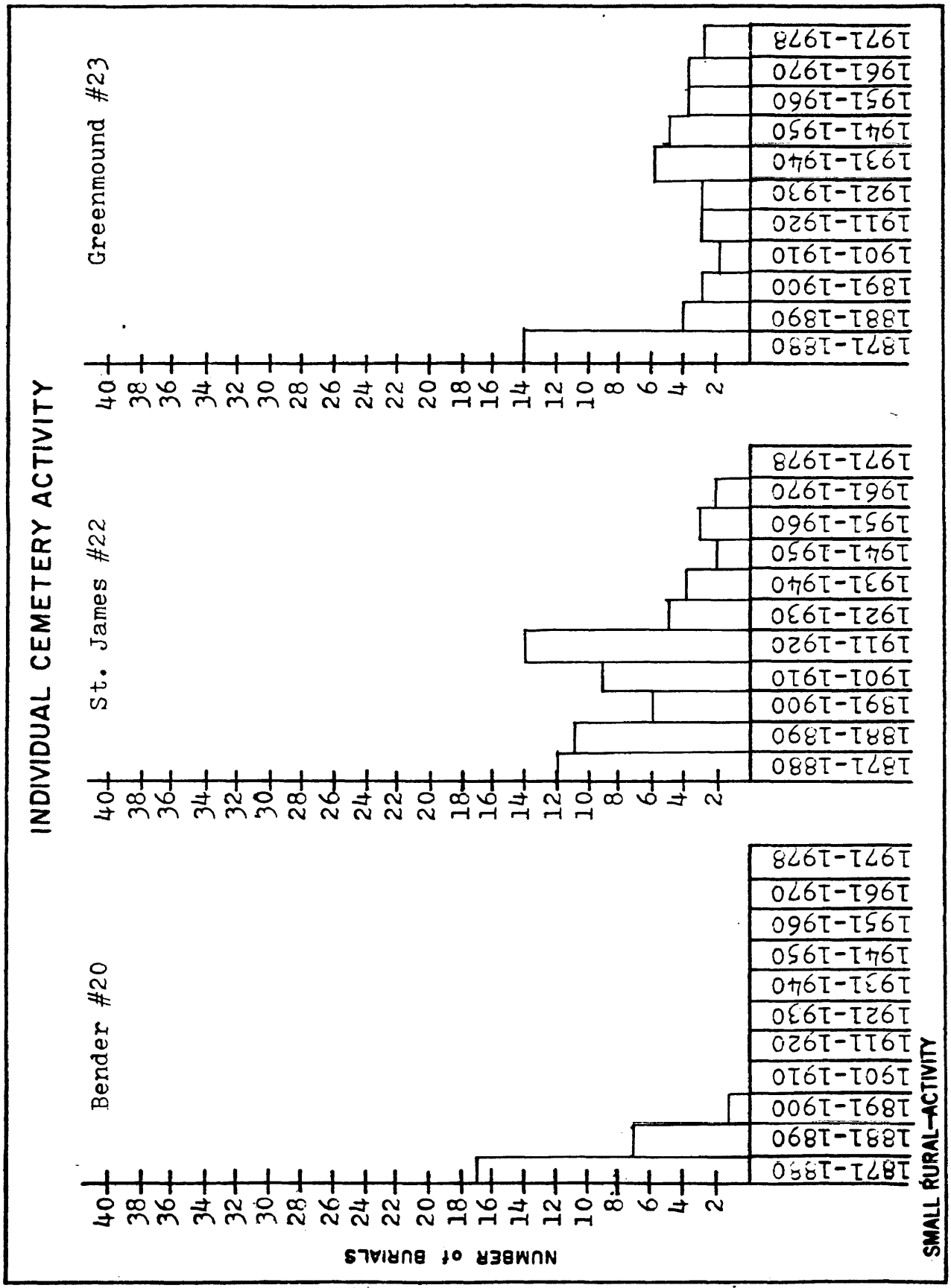
Cemetery	Key #	Classification		# of Burials	Age	Legal Description
Pokorny	41	U	Cz	1	1877	S½ SW¼ Sec. 14 14 T14N R6E
Znojmesky (Znami)	42	SRA:	Cz, Cath	73	1884	SW¼ Sec. 28 T14N R6E
Czech Presbyterian	43	LRA:	Cz, Pres	174	1879	NW¼ Sec. 25 T14N R6E
STOCKING						
St. Francis	44	PC:	Cath	671	1894	NW¼ NW¼ Sec. 11 T14N R9E
Sunrise	45	PC		3233	1860	NW¼ NW¼ Sec. 11 T14N R9E
WAHOO						
Alma Lutheran	46	PC	Luth	240	1870	NE¼ Sec. 4 T14N R8E
Morningside	47	PC		120	1896	NE¼ Sec. 2 T14N R8E
Indian Mound	48	PC		587	1862	N½ NW¼ Sec. 28 T14N R8E
MARBLE						
Parmenter	49	SRA		69	1875	N½ NE¼ Sec. 22 T14N R9E

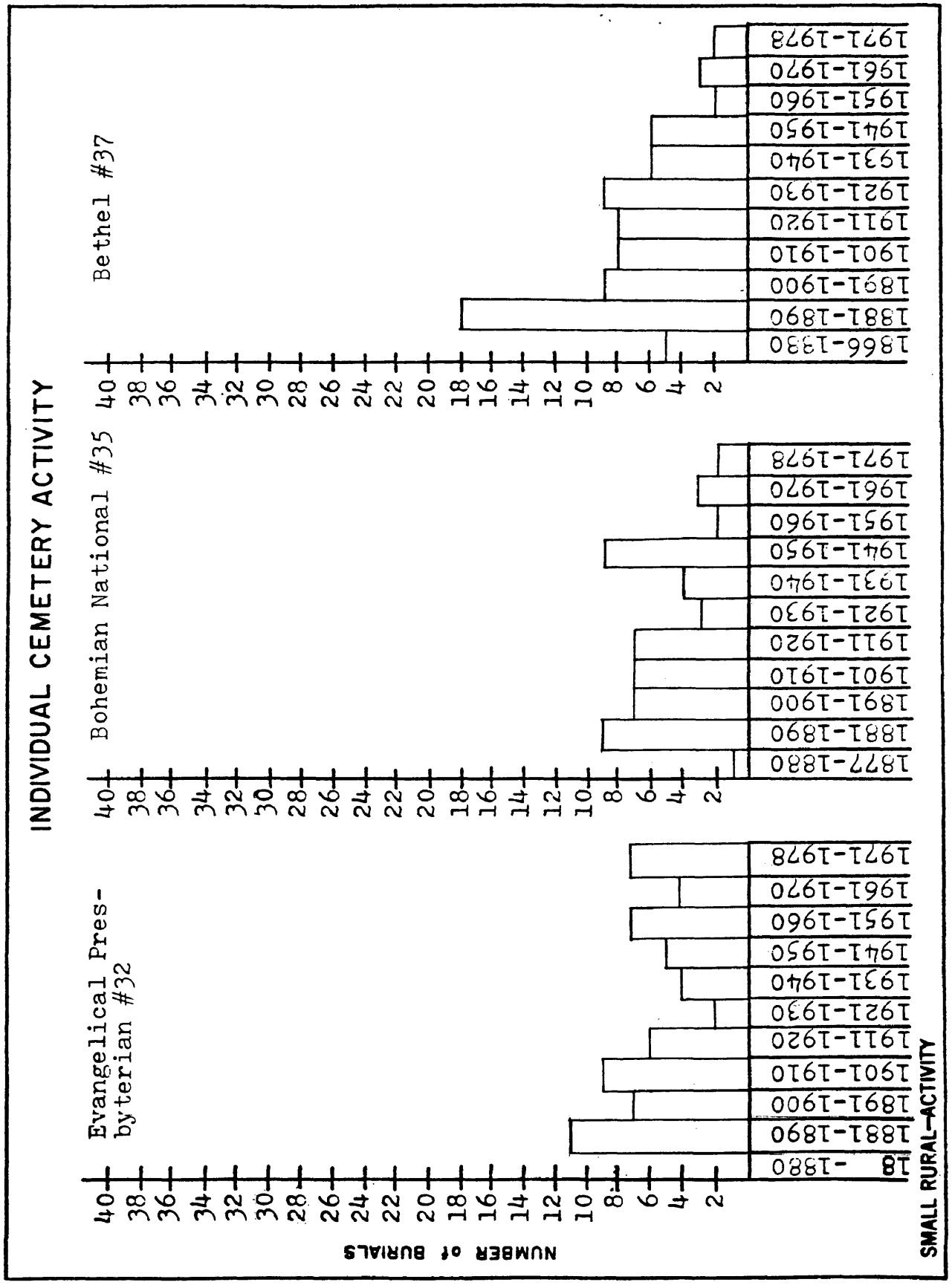
Cemetery	Key #	Classification	# of Burials	Age	Legal Description
CLEAR CREEK					
Clear Creek (Carr)	50	LRA	207	1859	S½ SE¼ Sec. 23 T13N R9E
GREEN					
Zion Lutheran	51	LRA: Ger, Luth	108	1891	W½ SW¼ Sec. 3 T13N R8E
Zion Evangelical	52	SRA: Ger, Pres	84	1876	S½ SW¼ Sec. 4 T13N R8E
RICHLAND					
Old Pleasant Hill	53	SRA: Meth	35	1873	N½ NE¼ Sec. 26 T13N R7E
New Pleasant Hill	54	LRA: Meth	120	1873	N½ NE¼ Sec. 23 T13N R7E
Fridhem	55	LRA: Sw, Luth	270	1873	NW¼ Sec. 9 T13N R7E
Swedish Covenant Mission	56	LRA: Sw, Sw. Cov. Mission	457	1873	SE¼ Sec. 5 T13N R7E
ROCK CREEK					
Rock Creek (Mt. Zion)	57	LRA: Meth	330	1872	E½ NE¼ Sec. 22 T13N R6E
Ingram	58	SFP	15?	1870	S½ Sec. 20 T13N R6E

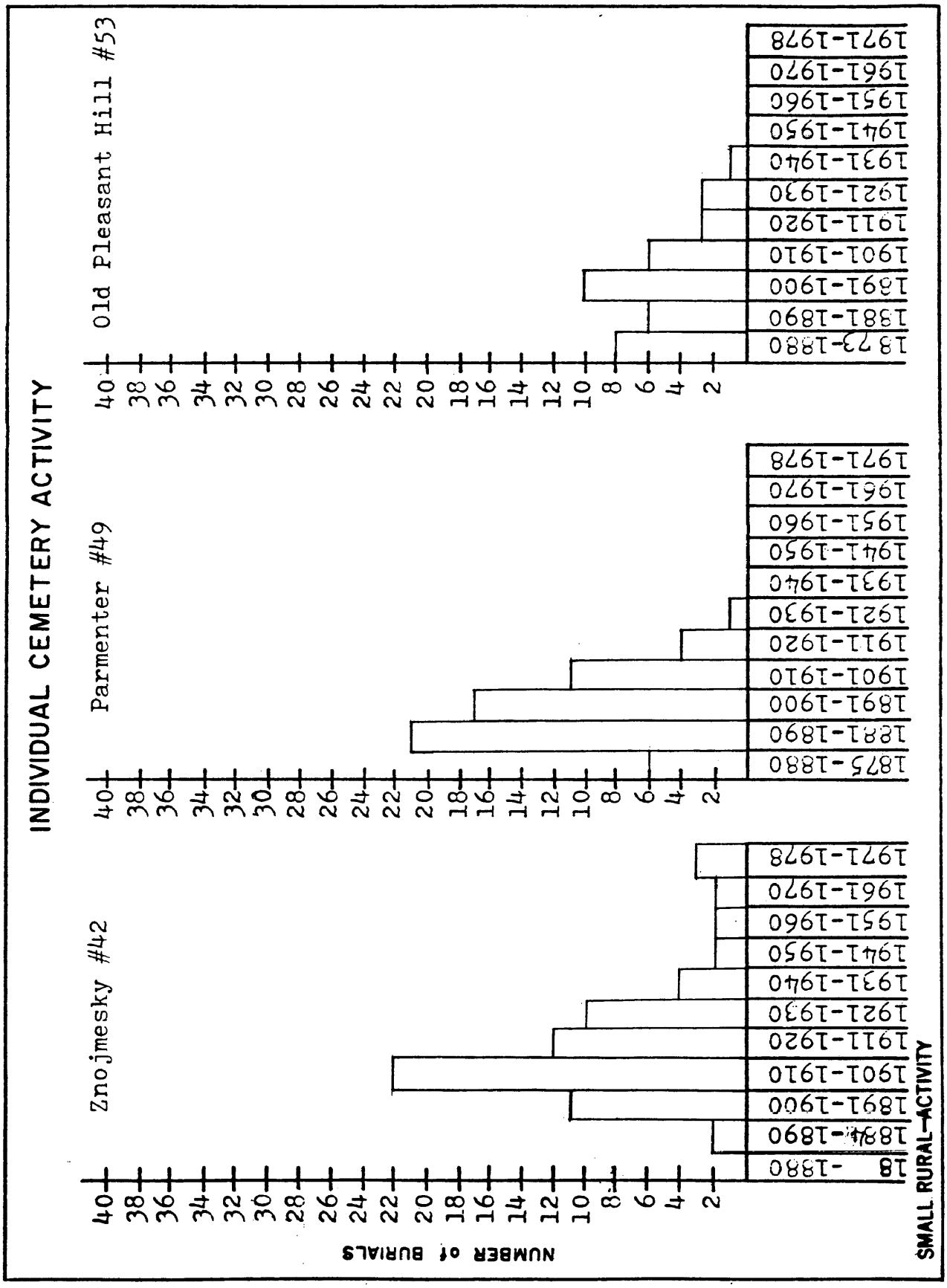
Cemetery	Key #	Classification	# of Burials	Age	Legal Description
OAK CREEK					
Jensen	59	SRA	24	1869	NW¼ Sec. 23 T13N R5E
St. Marys	60	PC: (Cz)	85	1917	E½ Sec. 27 T13N R5E
Valparaiso	61	PC	1100+	1875	SE¼ Sec. 22 T13N R5E
ASHLAND					
Ashland	62	PC	5000+	1865	W½ Sec. 2 T12N R9E

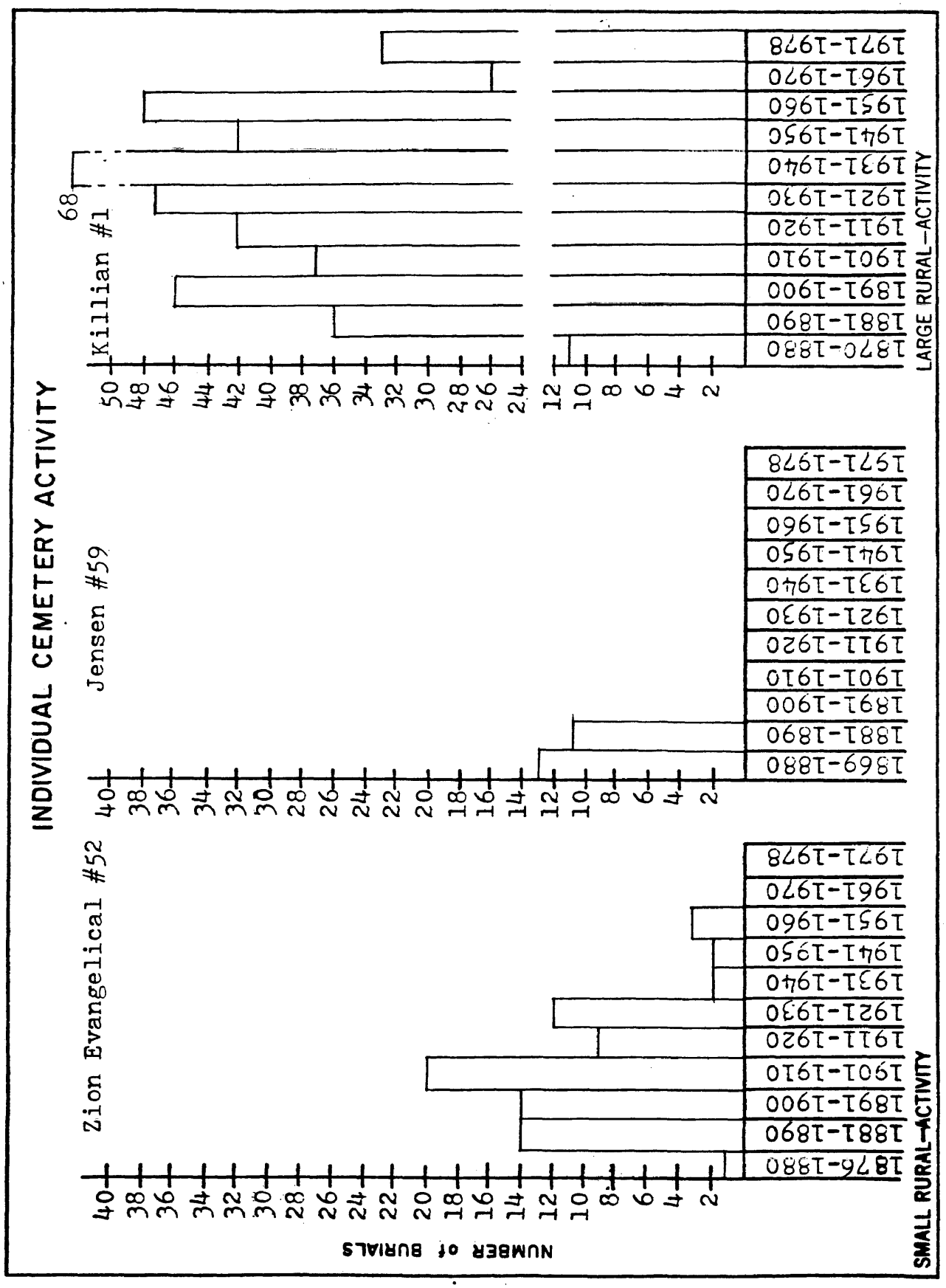

INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
Willow Creek #5
Weigand #11
Plattesville #14
NUMBER of BURIALS
2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40
1874-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978
1872-1880
1875-1880
SMALL RURAL—ACTIVITY
APPENDIX 2

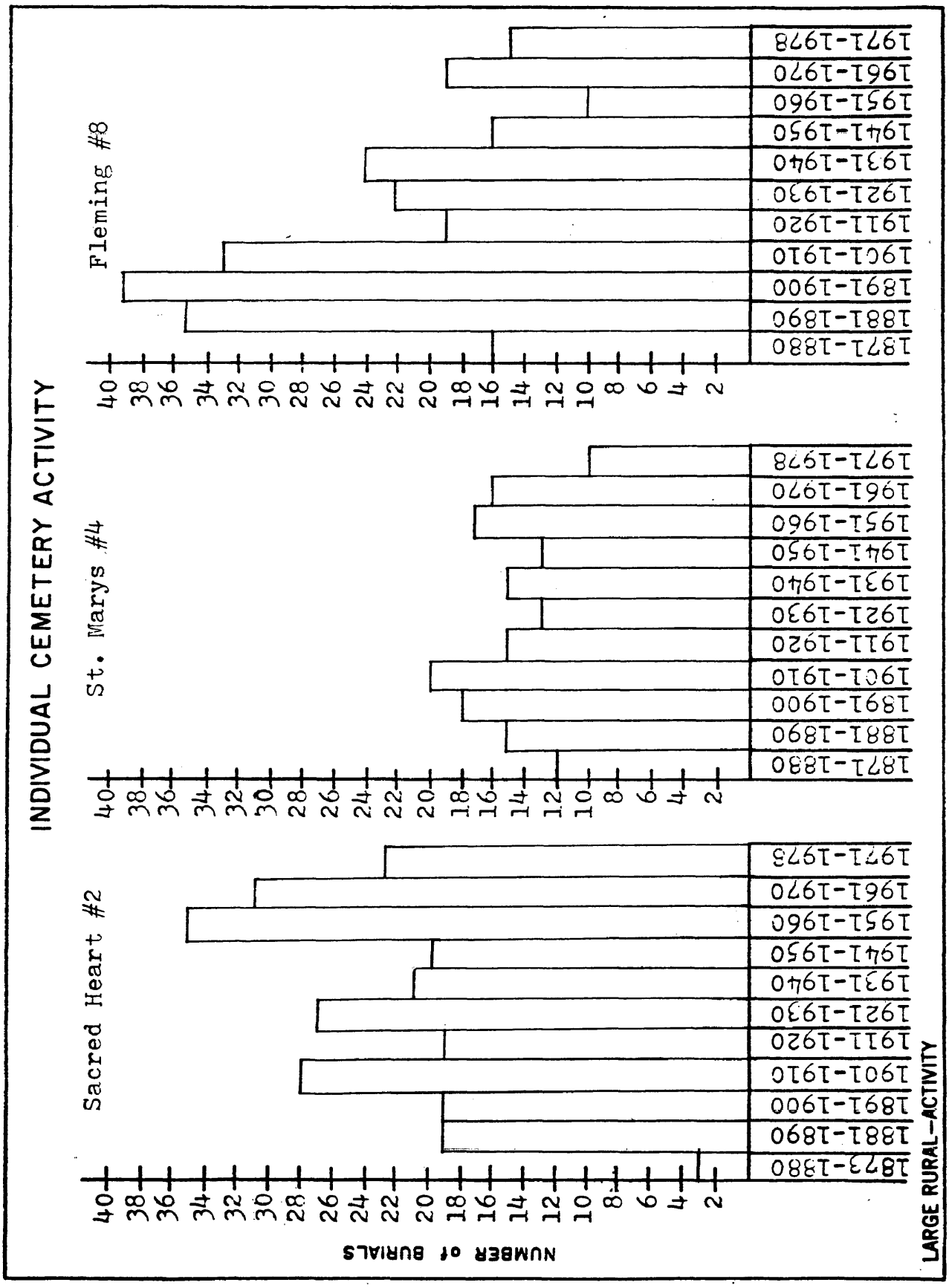

INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
Little Flower of Jesus # 16
Critten #17
Estina #18
NUMBER of BURIALS
SMALL RURAL→ACTIVITY
1873-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978
1869-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978
18 -1830
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978

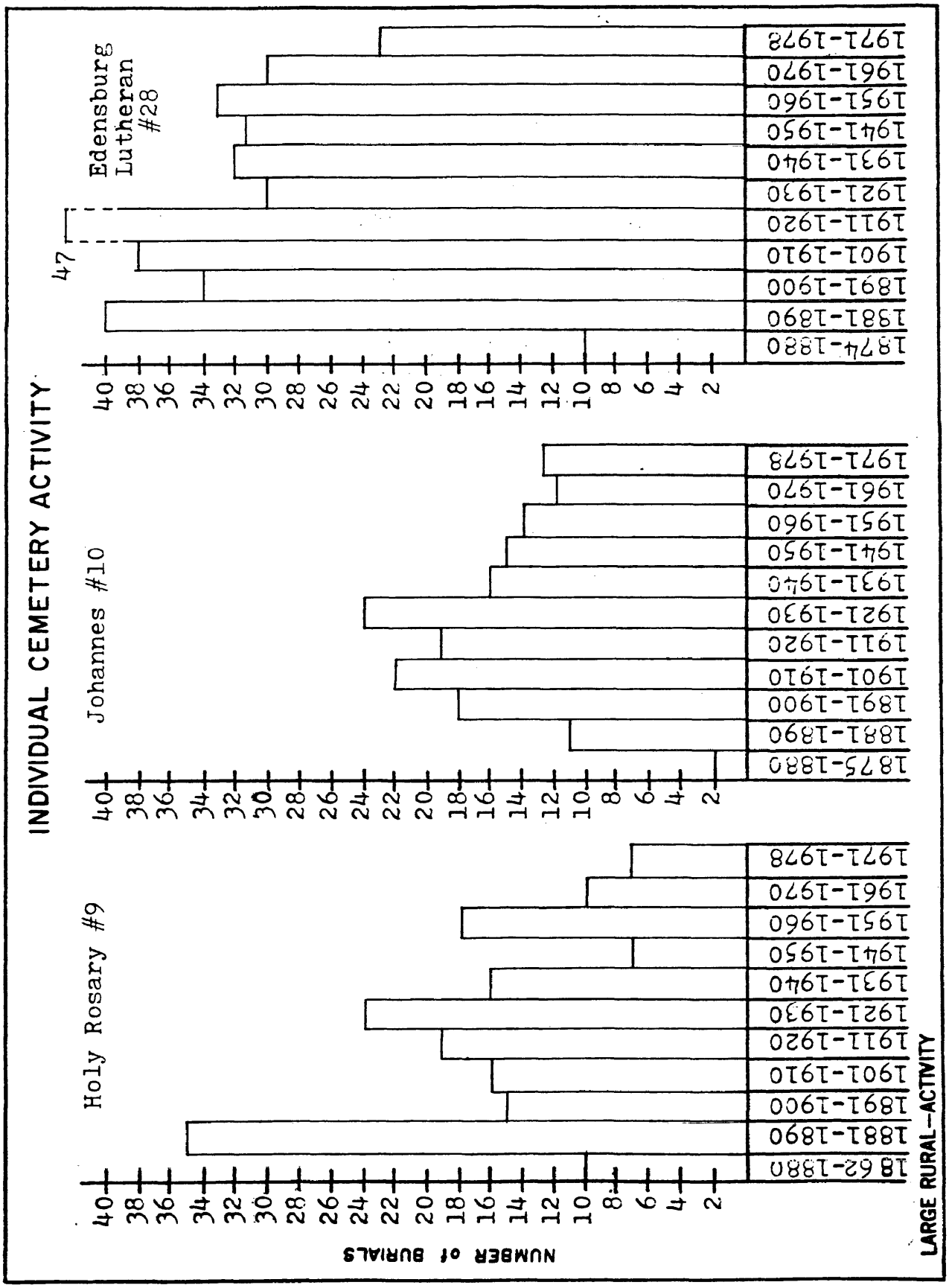

INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
Bender #20
St. James #22
Greenmound #23
NUMBER of BURIALS
2
4
6
8
10
12
14
16
18
20
22
24
26
28
30
32
34
36
38
40
1871-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978
SMALL RURAL→ACTIVITY

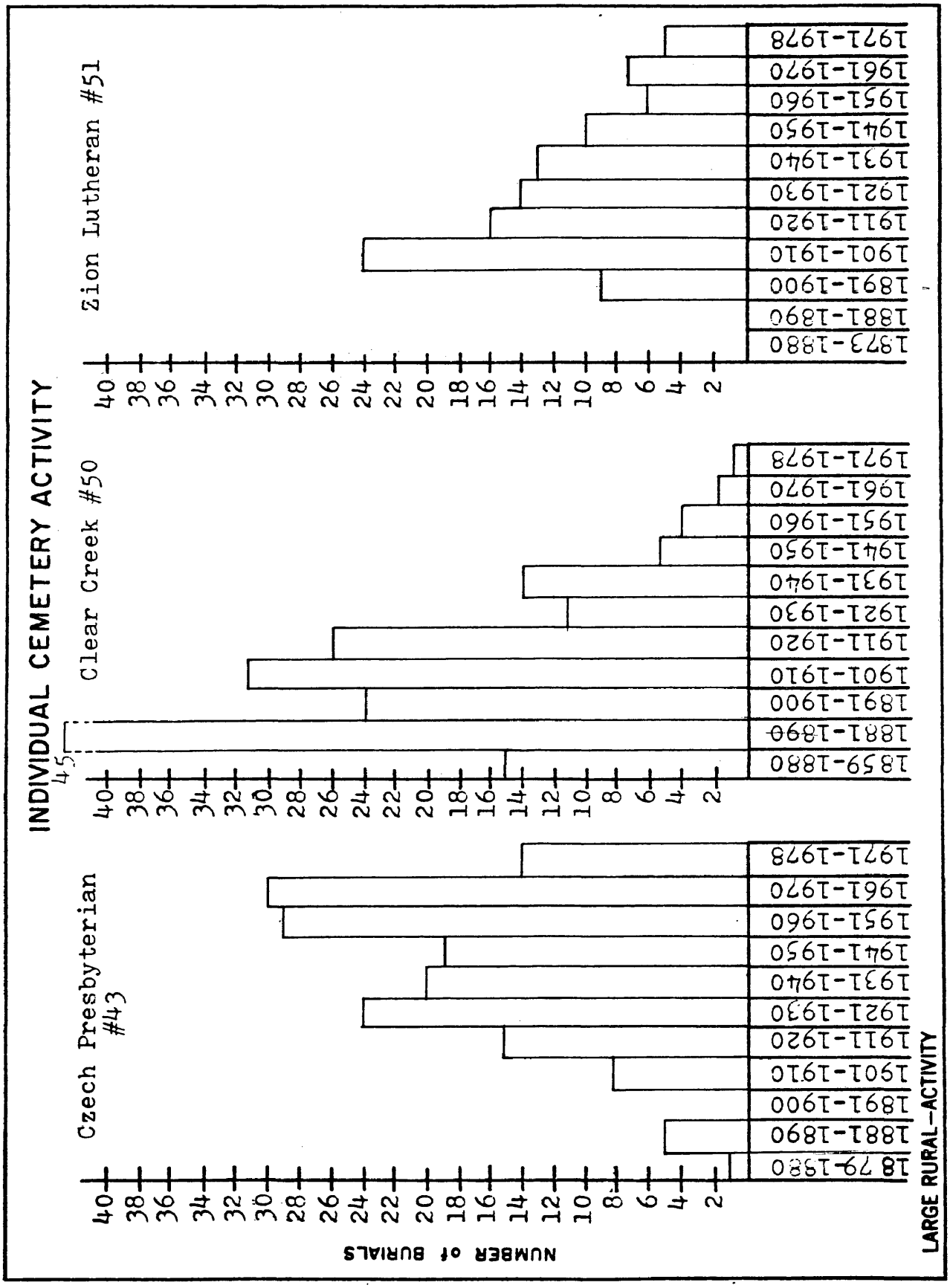

INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
Evangelical Presbyterian #32
Bohemian National #35
Bethel #37
NUMBER of BURIALS
SMALL RURAL—ACTIVITY
1877-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978
1866-1880

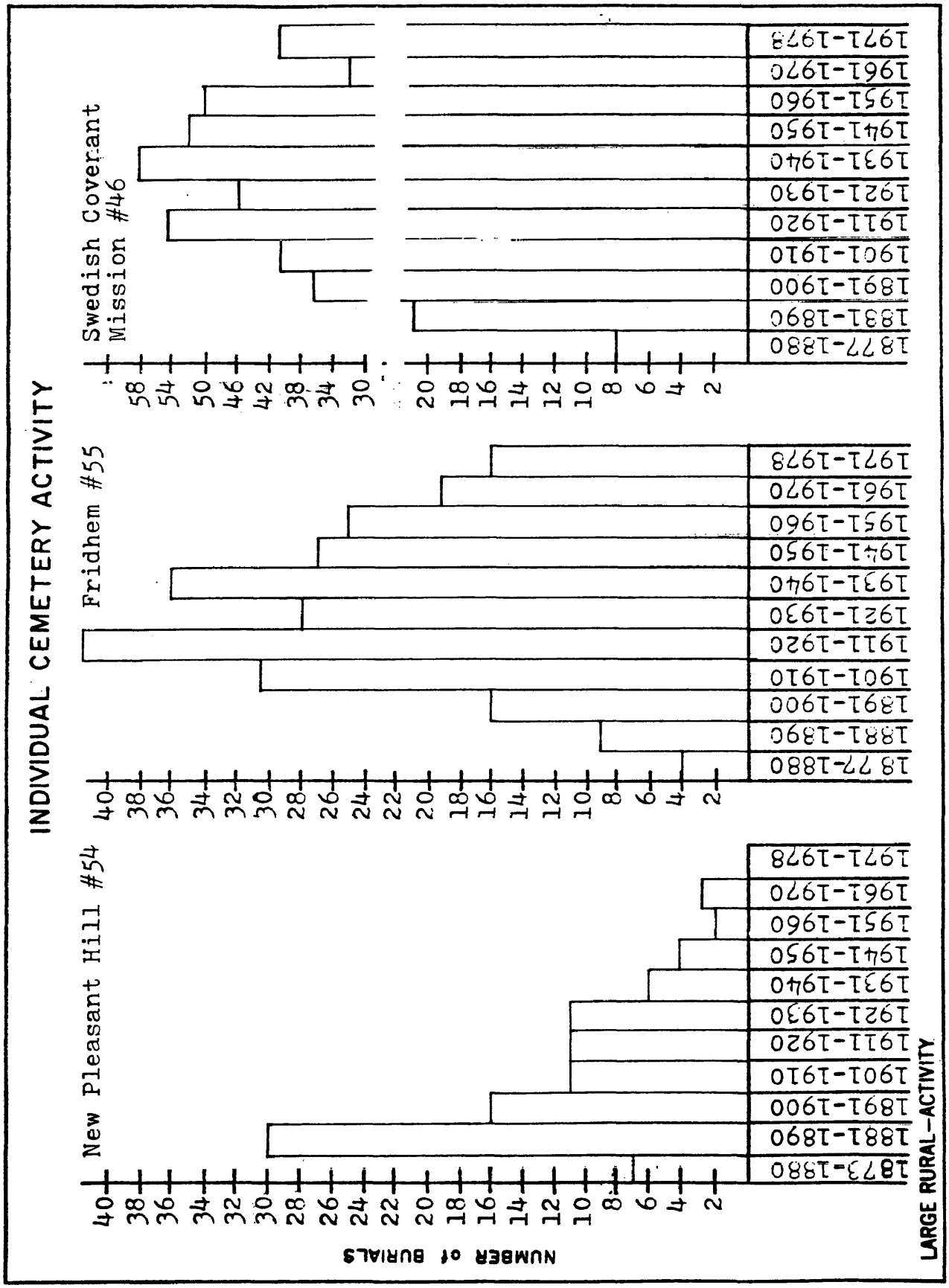

INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
Znojmesky #42
Parmenter #49
Old Pleasant Hill #53
NUMBER of BURIALS
SMALL RURAL—ACTIVITY
1873-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978


INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
Zion Evangelical #52
Jensen #59
Killian #1
68
NUMBER of BURIALS
SMALL RURAL—ACTIVITY
LARGE RURAL—ACTIVITY
1876-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978
1869-1880
1870-1880


INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
Sacred Heart #2
St. Marys #4
Fleming #8
NUMBER of BURIALS
2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40
1873-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978
LARGE RURAL—ACTIVITY


INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
Holy Rosary #9
Johannes #10
Edensburg Lutheran #28
47
NUMBER of BURIALS
2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40
1862-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978
1875-1880
1874-1880
LARGE RURAL—ACTIVITY


INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
Czech Presbyterian #43
Clear Creek #50
Zion Lutheran #51
NUMBER of BURIALS
LARGE RURAL—ACTIVITY
1879-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978


INDIVIDUAL CEMETERY ACTIVITY
New Pleasant Hill #54
Fridhem #55
Swedish Coverant Mission #46
NUMBER of BURIALS
1873-1880
1881-1890
1891-1900
1901-1910
1911-1920
1921-1930
1931-1940
1941-1950
1951-1960
1961-1970
1971-1978
LARGE RURAL-ACTIVITY

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