

WAKE COUNTY, NC 398  
LAURA M RIDDICK  
REGISTER OF DEEDS  
PRESENTED & RECORDED ON  
12/29/2010 AT 14:58:31

BOOK:014218 PAGE:00476 - 00480

*Ret. Clerk's Office*

**ORDINANCE NO. (2010) 779**

**AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE O'RORKE CATHOLIC CEMETERY IN THE PLANNING JURISDICTION OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, A HISTORIC LANDMARK**

**WHEREAS**, the property located at 1101 Pender Street, Raleigh, NC, is owned by the City of Raleigh; and

**WHEREAS**, the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina authorized the creation of the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission for the City of Raleigh and otherwise provided for the preservation of certain historic sites and buildings by the passage of Part 3C, Chapter 160A, Article 19 of the North Carolina General Statutes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission has made an investigation and recommended the following property be designated a historic landmark; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources has made an analysis and recommendation that the following property be designated a historic landmark; and

**WHEREAS**, on the 20th day of July, 2010, a joint public hearing was held in the Council Chamber of the Avery C. Upchurch Municipal Complex, Raleigh, before the City Council of the City of Raleigh and the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission to determine whether the hereinafter described property should be designated a historic landmark; and

**WHEREAS**, all requirements of Part 3C, Chapter 160A, Article 19 of the North Carolina General Statutes, preceding the adoption of this ordinance, have been complied with.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA THAT:**

**Section 1.** The property designated as O'Rorke Catholic Cemetery, in the planning jurisdiction of the City of Raleigh, North Carolina, be and is declared a Raleigh Historic Landmark. Said property being more particularly described as follows:

The property located at 1101 Pender Street, Raleigh, NC, owned by the City of Raleigh, that property described in Book of Maps 2007, page 2575 recorded in Wake County Registry, comprising approximately .98 acres.

**Section 2.** Those elements of the property that are integral to its historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological and/or cultural significance or any combination thereof are as follows:

The O'Rorke Catholic Cemetery is historically and culturally significant for its association with Catholic history in Raleigh. It celebrates the second half of the nineteenth century's history of Catholicism in Raleigh, when Protestant prejudice often made life difficult for Catholics. The cemetery is also a memorial to O'Rorke himself, one of the most active lay Catholic leaders in North Carolina during the antebellum era. The cemetery operated as Raleigh's Catholic cemetery from 1858 to 1931, the last identified burial. In 1938 Bishop Eugene McGuinness of the Catholic Diocese ceded control of the property to the city to be used for burial of itinerants and the "less fortunate." From 1941 to 1986 the city operated the cemetery as a paupers' cemetery until it became full.

Land for O'Rorke Catholic Cemetery was donated by prominent layman John O'Rorke to the Catholic Diocese in 1858, and is the oldest historic resource associated with Raleigh's Catholic community. The cemetery occupies a .98 acre rectangular site in east Raleigh bounded by E. Lane Street on the north, Tarboro Road on the west, Pender Street on the south, and two single family lots on the east. The cemetery is completely grassed and is enclosed by a chain link fence. Only twelve monuments and plot borders dating from 1865 to about 1931 have survived. These include John and Elizabeth O'Rorke's burial plot fence, with a finely carved granite monogrammed gate, dating from 1865, and the most significant gravestone, a tall marble headstone of Capitol carpenter Michael Prendergast of Ireland, who died in 1875.

A detailed description and inventory of landscape design and funerary monuments and historical background is found in the 2010 Raleigh Historic Landmark designation application and report.

**Section 3.** No portion of the exterior features of any building, site, structure, or object (including walls, fences, light fixtures, steps, pavement, paths, funerary monuments, or any other appurtenant features), trees, nor above ground utility structure located on the hereinbefore described property that is designated in this ordinance may be altered, restored, moved, remodeled, or reconstructed so that a change in design, material or outer appearance occurs unless and until a certificate of appropriateness is obtained from the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission or its successors; provided however that the Raleigh Planning Director or designee may approve certificates of appropriateness for minor works as listed in the Bylaws and Rules of Procedure of the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission.

**Section 4.** No building, site, structure, or object (including walls, fences, light fixtures, steps, pavement, paths, funerary monuments, or any other appurtenant features), trees, nor above ground utility structure located on the hereinbefore described property that is designated in this ordinance may be demolished unless and until either approval of demolition is obtained from the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission or a period of three hundred sixty-five (365) days has elapsed following final review by the Commission of a request for demolition (or any longer period of time required by N.C.G.S. 160A-400.14 as it maybe amended hereafter); provided however, that demolition may be denied by the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission in the event that the State Historic Preservation Officer determines that the building, site, or structure has statewide significance as provided by N.C.G.S. 160A-400.14.

**Section 5.** The Raleigh Historic Districts Commission shall have no jurisdiction over the interior features of the property.

**Section 6.** All owners and occupants of the property hereinabove described, whose identity and addresses can be ascertained by the exercise of due diligence shall be sent by certified mail a copy of this ordinance.

**Section 7.** This ordinance shall be indexed after the property owner's name in the grantor and grantee indexes in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Wake County.

**Section 8.** City administration and the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission are hereby authorized and directed to have erected an appropriate sign on the site hereinabove described setting forth the fact that said site has been designated a historic landmark by action of the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission and the City Council of the City of Raleigh provided, should the owners of the hereinabove described property not consent to the erection of said sign on the described premises, City administration and the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission are hereby authorized and directed to have said sign located on the public right-of-way adjacent to said property.

**Section 9.** In the event any building, site, structure, or object designated by this ordinance is demolished in accordance with the ordinances of the City of Raleigh, this ordinance shall automatically be null and void.

**Section 10.** Any violation of this ordinance shall be unlawful as by law provided.

**Adopted:** September 7, 2010

**Effective:** September 7, 2010

**Distribution:** Department of City Planning  
Inspections Department  
Raleigh Historic Districts Commission  
Wake County Tax Assessor  
Property Owner and Occupant (if not the owner)  
Registrar of Deeds



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA)  
COUNTY OF WAKE)

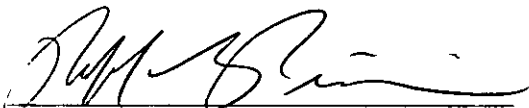
**C E R T I F I C A T I O N**

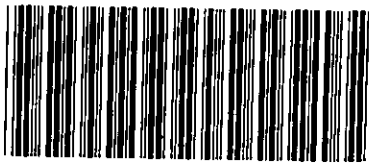
I, Ralph L. Puccini, Assistant Deputy Clerk of the City of Raleigh, North Carolina,  
do hereby certify that the attached is a true and exact copy of City of Raleigh

**Ordinance No. (2010) 779** adopted September 7, 2010.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have unto set my hand and have caused the Seal of  
the City of Raleigh to be affixed this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of December, 2010.

(S E A L)

  
Ralph L. Puccini  
Assistant Deputy Clerk



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Please retain with original document and submit for rerecording.**



**Wake County Register of Deeds  
Laura M. Riddick  
Register of Deeds**

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5

Raleigh Department of City Planning  
One Exchange Plaza  
3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Raleigh, NC 27602  
919-516-2626

[www.raleighnc.gov/planning](http://www.raleighnc.gov/planning)

Fee	_____
Amt Paid	_____
Check #	_____
Rec'd Date:	_____
Rec'd By:	_____
Completion Date:	_____

**(Processing Fee: \$257.00 - valid until June 30, 2010 - Checks payable to the City of Raleigh.)**

## RALEIGH HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION APPLICATION

This application initiates consideration of a property for designation as a Raleigh Historic Landmark by the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission (RHDC) and the Raleigh City Council. It enables evaluation of the resource to determine if it qualifies for designation. The evaluation is made by the Research Committee of the RHDC, which makes its recommendation to the full commission. The historic landmark program was previously administered by the Wake County Historic Preservation Commission but has been transferred back to the city; procedures for administration by the RHDC are outlined in the Raleigh City Code, Section 10-1053.

Please type if possible. Use 8-1/2" x 11" paper for supporting documentation and if additional space is needed. All materials submitted become the property of the RHDC and cannot be returned. Return completed application to the RHDC office at One Exchange Plaza, Suite 300, Raleigh or mail to:

Raleigh Historic Districts Commission  
PO Box 829 Century Station  
Raleigh, NC 27602

**1. Name of Property** (if historic name is unknown, give current name or street address):

Historic Name: Catholic Cemetery, Sacred Heart Cemetery, City Cemetery Annex

Current Name: O'Rorke Cemetery

**2. Location:**

Street 1101 Pender Street

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

NC PIN No.: 1714202008

(Can be obtained from <http://imaps.co.wake.nc.us/imaps/>)

**3. Legal Owner of Property** (If more than one, list primary contact):

Name: City of Raleigh Parks & Recreation--Cemetery Division

Address: 4225 Daly Road

City: Raleigh State: NC Zip: 27604

Telephone No: (919) (831)-(6548) Fax No. ( ) ( ) -( )

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Applicant/Contact Person** (If other than owner):

Name: Wayne Schindler, Parks Superintendent, City of Raleigh Parks & Recreation

Address: PO Box 590

City: Raleigh State: NC Zip: 27602

Telephone No: (919) (996)-(4844) Fax No. ( ) ( ) -( )

E-Mail: Wayne.Schindler@ci.raleigh.nc.us

5. General Data/Site Information:

Date of Construction and major additions/alterations: Established 1858

Number, type, and date of construction of outbuildings: None

Approximate lot size or acreage: .98 acre

Architect, builder, carpenter, and/or mason: N/A

Original Use: Cemetery

Present Use: Cemetery

6. Classification:

## A. Category (check all that apply):

Building(s) ☐ Structure ☒ Object ☒ Site ☒

## B. Ownership

Private ☐Public ☒ Local ☒ State ☐ Federal ☐

## C. Number of contributing and non-contributing resources on the property:

	Contributing	Noncontributing
Buildings	0	0
Structures	1	0
Objects	30	0

## D. Previous field documentation (when and by whom): None known

## E. National Register of Historic Places Status:

Check One:

Entered <input type="checkbox"/> Date:	Nominated <input type="checkbox"/>
Determined Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Date:	Determined Not Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Date:
Nomination Not Requested <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Removed <input type="checkbox"/> Date:

7. Reason for Request: Raleigh City Cemeteries Preservation Inc. (RCCP) wishes to preserve, protect and recognize O'Rorke Cemetery through landmark designation.

RCCP

P O Box 33012

Raleigh, NC 27636

web site rccpreservation.org

8. Is the property income producing? Yes ☐ No ☒

9. Are any interior spaces being included for designation? Yes ☐ No ☒

10. Supporting Documentation (Attach to application on separate sheets. Please type or print):

A. Photographs/Slides:

At least two sets of current exterior archival-grade photographic prints (minimum print size 5"x7") of all facades of the building and at least one photo of all other contributing and non-contributing resources. If interior spaces of the property are being considered for designation, please include two sets of photos for these features. Prints may be created by using archival-grade black and white film photography and processing or digital photography. The minimum standard for a digital print is 5x7 at a resolution of 300 pixels per inch (ppi). This translates into a pixel dimension of 1950 x 1350. Digital images must be printed with an acceptable ink and paper combination as determined by the National Park Service. This list can be found at:

<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/policyexpansion.htm#digital> All photographs must be labeled with the name of the structure, address and date the photograph was taken with pencil or archival-approved photo pen. In addition to prints, all digital images should be submitted on a CD-R in TIF or JPG format. Any additional exterior or interior views and views of other structures on the property (color, black and white, or slides) will be helpful.

B. Map:

Please include a map showing the location of the property. A sketch map is acceptable, but please note street names and number. Any other structures on the property should also be shown. Please include a "North" arrow. Map should be no larger than 11" x 17".

A tax map with boundaries marked is preferred, which can be found at:

<http://imaps.co.wake.nc.us/imaps/>.

C. Architectural Significance:

Describe the property, including exterior architectural features, additions, remodelings, and alterations. Also describe significant outbuildings and landscape features. If the owner is including interior features in the nomination for the purpose of design review protection; describe them in detail and note their locations. Include a statement regarding the architectural significance of the property.

D. Historic Significance:

Note any significant events, people, and/or families associated with the property. Include all major owners. Note if the property has ever been recorded during a historic building survey by the City of Raleigh or by the NC State Historic Preservation Office. If so, who and when? (See application item 6.D.) Please include a bibliography of sources. Information regarding prior designations can be found by contacting the Survey & Planning Branch of the NC State Historic Preservation Office at 919-807-6570, 919-807-6573 or at:

<http://www.hpo.dcr.state.nc.us/spbranch.htm>.



O'Rorke Cemetery  
1101 Pender Street  
Raleigh, N. C. 27610  
Landmark Designation Report



Prepared for Raleigh City Cemeteries Inc.

April 2010  
M. Ruth Little  
Longleaf Historic Resources  
Raleigh, North Carolina

### **Statement of Significance: Raleigh's earliest Catholic Historic Site, 1858-1938**

O'Rorke Cemetery, or the Catholic Cemetery, donated by prominent layman John O'Rorke to the Catholic Diocese in 1858, is the oldest historic resource associated with Raleigh's Catholic community. A few Catholics settled in Raleigh in the early nineteenth century, but their numbers did not reach sufficient density to establish a congregation until 1834, bolstered by Irish Catholic artisans among the skilled construction workers hired from the North and from Britain to erect the new State Capitol from 1833 to 1840. A small core of these artisans remained in Raleigh and contributed to the cultural diversity of the largely Protestant town. The first Catholic church building, St. John the Baptist Catholic Church established in 1834, as well as the second building, on a different site, built in 1860, have been demolished. The present building, Sacred Heart Cathedral on Hillsborough Street, dates from 1924. The cemetery deserves landmark status not so much because of the artistic value of its few monuments but because of its association with Catholic history in Raleigh. Due to vandalism and relocation of stones to other cemeteries, only twelve monuments and plot borders dating from 1865 to about 1931 have survived. John and Elizabeth O'Rorke's burial plot fence, with a finely carved granite monogrammed gate, dates from 1865. The most significant gravestone is the tall marble headstone of capitol carpenter Michael Prendergast of Ireland, who died in 1875. Rich relief carvings of such Catholic symbols as a cross, a flaming heart, an anchor, a large flower, and a row of stars adorn the prominent stone. Skilled marble cutter John Whitelaw of Raleigh carved a marble monument on which a three-dimensional marble lamb lies asleep to commemorate young Edward Doyle, died 1877. O'Rorke Cemetery celebrates the second half of the nineteenth century's history of Catholicism in Raleigh, when Protestant prejudice often made life difficult for Catholics. The cemetery is also a memorial to O'Rorke himself, one of the most active lay Catholic leaders in North Carolina during the antebellum era.

### **Historical Background**

During the antebellum era, North Carolina, like the rest of the South, had a predominantly Protestant population that created a hostile atmosphere for attempts to establish Catholic churches. Not only was there religious hostility, but the prevailing anti-

Irish attitudes of England's upper class, derived from the ancient English-Irish conflict, continued in the colonial and nineteenth-century South. The coastal town of New Bern contained North Carolina's largest early Catholic community in the early nineteenth century. New Bernian lawyer and judge William Gaston was the state's most eminent Catholic. A champion of religious and racial liberty, a United States congressman, and a justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court, Gaston persuaded delegates to the 1835 North Carolina Constitutional Convention to change the Constitution's restriction of political offices to Protestants to include all Christians, thereby allowing Catholics to legally hold office.<sup>1</sup> Small groups of Catholics organized churches in Wilmington, Edenton, Fayetteville, and Raleigh in the antebellum era. Raleigh's Catholic church was established in 1834, sparked by the influx of a large number of Irish Catholic artisans employed from 1832 to 1840 on the construction of the North Carolina State Capitol in Raleigh. The Raleigh Diocese extended west to Burlington and Graham. Raleigh's oldest surviving Catholic church building is Sacred Heart Cathedral, built in 1924. The oldest surviving Catholic historic site in Raleigh is O'Rorke Cemetery, donated in 1858 as a Catholic cemetery by layman John O'Rorke and used by the Catholics until 1931. The cemetery, now owned by the City of Raleigh, has historical significance as the earliest surviving Catholic historic site.

In 1858, carriage maker John O'Rorke gave a one and one-eighth-acre tract of land to Patrick Lynch, the Bishop of Charleston, for five dollars "In trust & confidence nevertheless that the said Lynch & those who may claim with him will permit the Catholic church of the city of Raleigh and its vicinity to use the said land as a Cemetery." The deed stipulates that if the land is unable to be used for such purpose, Bishop Lynch would sell it and apply the proceeds to purchase another cemetery ground. The land is described as situated near the city of Raleigh "beginning at the north west corner adjoining the lands of William Boylan running south along a road called the Tarboro Road 180 feet, thence East 250 feet thence north to William Boylan's line 180 feet thence

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<sup>1</sup>Randall M. Miller and Jon L. Wakelyn, *Catholics in the Old South: Essays on Church and Culture*, 202-223; Rev. Dr. J. J. O'Connell, *Catholicity in the Carolinas and Georgia*; [www.northcarolinahistory.org](http://www.northcarolinahistory.org), accessed Jan. 22, 2010.

west 250 feet to the beginning.”<sup>2</sup> Witnesses to the deed signing were P. Ferrall and John Kane. The new graveyard was a blessing for Raleigh’s small Catholic congregation, “the faithful having been hitherto interred in unconsecrated ground.”<sup>3</sup>

The name O’Rorke Cemetery is a recent appellation, reflecting its benefactor, John O’Rorke. In the early years it was known simply as the Catholic Cemetery, then as St. John the Baptist Cemetery after the then-name of the Catholic Church, and then Sacred Heart Cemetery when the church changed names. When the city acquired it in 1938 it was commonly known as the Pauper Cemetery, but became officially known as the City Cemetery Annex.

John O’Rorke was a prominent early Catholic layman who was born about 1788 in Dublin, Ireland and immigrated to Newark, New Jersey in 1818 and to Raleigh in 1820. He may have been Raleigh’s first Catholic. He married Elizabeth R. Guthrie of Raleigh, a Methodist, in 1821.<sup>4</sup> Raleigh had no Catholic congregation until about 1832, when Reverend Father Peter Whelan celebrated the first mass in Matthew Shaw’s boarding house. In 1834 the Right Reverend John England, Bishop of Charleston, traveled to Raleigh to dedicate the town’s first Catholic church building, named the Church of St. John the Baptist.<sup>5</sup> The \$800 building was built on a small lot owned by John O’Rorke on the west side of Wilmington Street between Davie and Martin streets. This lot became a part of the Hudson-Belk Department Store in the twentieth century and today is the site of The Hudson condominiums.<sup>6</sup> O’Rorke’s carriage shop was located nearby, at the corner of Hargett and Wilmington streets.

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<sup>2</sup> Wake County Deed Book 22, page 384.

<sup>3</sup> O’Connell, *Catholicity in the Carolinas and Georgia*, 412.

<sup>4</sup> John O’Rorke obituary, *Daily Progress*, Raleigh, March 13, 1867, in Elizabeth Reid Murray Collection [hereafter referred to as ERM Collection], Box 344, People #30, Olivia Raney Library, Raleigh.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen C. Worsley, “Catholicism in Antebellum North Carolina,” *North Carolina Historical Review*, Oct. 1983, 426; K. Todd Johnson, *Historic Wake County: The Story of Raleigh & Wake County*, Capital Area Preservation Inc., 2009, 86.

<sup>6</sup>Elizabeth Reid Murray, *Wake Capital County of North Carolina*, Vol. 1, 181, Charlie Blunt research notes, Jan. 15, 2010.

O'Rorke became a man of property and prestige in his adopted town. Deeds recording his acquisition of property in and around Raleigh begin in 1822 and continue to his death in 1867. In 1842 he purchased a four and one-half acre tract for \$175 from Allen Jones located east of Raleigh; bounded by Lane Street on the north and Tarboro Road on the west. The deed was signed in the presence of Supreme Court Judge William Gaston.<sup>7</sup> Seller Allen Jones had two witnesses present at the deed signing as well, but it is interesting that Judge Gaston would have been O'Rorke's witness. One of the most admired statesmen in North Carolina, Gaston was presumably was in town for a court session and probably knew O'Rorke through their shared Catholic faith. The small number and fragile social positions of the state's wealthy Catholics would have encouraged close relationships among them.

O'Rorke proceeded to build a substantial frame Greek Revival-style house at 1111 New Bern Avenue, at the northwest corner of the Tarboro Road intersection. Beginning in the 1840s, O'Rorke purchased numerous Negro slaves who presumably worked on this small plantation.<sup>8</sup> In the early twentieth century the house contained St. Monica's Convent, and later functioned as Catholic Social Services. St Monica's School, at the northwest corner of New Bern Avenue and North Tarboro Road, was a mission of the Catholic Diocese of Raleigh for African Americans from ca. 1929 to 1968. The building is a Raleigh Historic Landmark. The diocese sold the property containing the O'Rorke House in 1981; at this time the house was moved by private individuals to a rural site in order to preserve it.<sup>9</sup>

The impetus for the establishment of a Catholic congregation in Raleigh in 1834 was the influx of a large number of stonecutters and other artisans employed in the construction of the large State Capitol, erected of local granite from 1833 to 1840. Artisans were attracted from the Northeastern United States as well as the British Isles. At the height of construction in the mid-1830s some seventy stonecutters were

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<sup>7</sup> Wake County Deed Book 15, page 171-172.

<sup>8</sup> ERM Collection, Box 526, Vertical Files #9 contains a note regarding bills of sale for slaves purchased by O'Rorke in the John O'Rorke Papers, N. C. Archives and History.

<sup>9</sup> Murray, *Wake Capital County of North Carolina*, Vol. 1, 181 note.

employed.<sup>10</sup> A number of them were Irish Catholics—including Michael Prendergast, John Kane, Patrick McGowan, and James Murray, who remained and served as productive citizens in Raleigh for the rest of their lives. A history of Catholicism in the South estimates that 150 Catholics belonged to the congregation in the 1830s and that only half that number remained after 1840 when the Capitol stood completed and the workmen had dispersed.<sup>11</sup> These numbers seem large for Raleigh, however the Raleigh diocese included a considerable rural territory extending west to Burlington and Graham. These men, along with O'Rorke, composed the nucleus of the new Catholic congregation formed in 1834.

Among the first parishioners were Michael A. Prendergast and his wife and sister, John Kane, Patrick McGowan, and James Murray.<sup>12</sup> Prendergast, a carpenter, worked on the Capitol and remained to practice his trade. The “Know Nothing” party, founded nationally in opposition to foreign immigration and Roman Catholicism, operated in North Carolina during the 1850s, primarily among members of the disintegrated Whig party. In 1854, local priest Rev. Dr. Patrick Ryan was violently threatened on the street in Raleigh by a member of a local “Know-Nothing” lodge and escaped by taking refuge in Prendergast’s house.<sup>13</sup> Prendergast was still listed as a carpenter in *Chataigne’s Raleigh Directory* at the corner of Morgan and Wilmington streets in the year of his death, 1875. His wife operated a millinery shop at their home in that year. His monument at O’Rorke Cemetery stands as the largest and most decorative in the cemetery. The prominently carved cross with a flaming heart and anchor on his stone proclaim his Catholic piety.

Kane, McGowan, and Murray were also active Raleigh citizens. John Kane was a grocer, restaurateur, tavern-keeper and caterer in 1840.<sup>14</sup> Artisan Patrick McGowan had become a postman by 1854, and in 1871 had the position of “keeper of the Capitol.” Yet he continued to practice his trade of stonecutting at his shop on Salisbury Street near

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<sup>10</sup> Little, *Sticks and Stones: Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemarkers*, 194.

<sup>11</sup> O’Connell, *Catholicity in the Carolinas & Georgia*, 409.

<sup>12</sup> Murray, *Wake Capital County of North Carolina*, Vol. 1, 181.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 181, 384; O’Connell, *Catholicity in the Carolinas and Georgia*, 408-410; Lefler and Newsome, *North Carolina: The History of a Southern State*, 364-365; Worsley, “Catholicism in Antebellum North Carolina,” 428.

<sup>14</sup> Murray, *Wake Capital County of North Carolina*, 277.

Martin Street in 1875-1876.<sup>15</sup> James H. Murray had a long distinguished career as a Raleigh policeman from 1830 to 1855. Author Kemp Battle called him Raleigh's "fearless and incorruptible Constable," lamenting his dismissal by the Raleigh Board of Commissioners in 1855 due to the influence of the "Know-Nothings." Murray continued to serve as constable for the Wake County Court in later years.<sup>16</sup>

Patrick Ferrall, apparently the "P. Ferrall" who witnessed the 1858 cemetery deed, was an early Raleigh Catholic as well. Born about 1817 in Ireland, he lived in Smithfield, in nearby Johnston County by 1850. By 1858 he was a merchant in Raleigh, with his Irish-born wife Margaret and three children. The O'Rorkes and Ferralls were intermarried.<sup>17</sup>

O'Rorke provided housing and money as well as counsel and friendship to a series of priests serving Raleigh from the 1830s to his death in 1867. Consequently, he enjoyed more independence and responsibility in Catholic affairs than was typical for a layman in other North Carolina Catholic congregations. O'Rorke's papers, including an account book, church subscription lists, and a number of letters, were once located in the Archives of the Catholic Diocese of Raleigh, but the Archives has been closed and the papers dispersed to an unknown location.<sup>18</sup>

The earliest burials at O'Rorke Cemetery were of children. Two of Patrick Ferrall's children were buried here before 1858, but their death dates are unknown and their markers do not survive.<sup>19</sup> In November 1858, a month before the property was conveyed, Andens Ann Barbee, a seven-year-old, was interred here.<sup>20</sup> The O'Rorkes were interred in their section of the cemetery less than a decade later: Mrs. Elizabeth

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 384, 602; *Chataigne's Raleigh Directory 1875-76*.

<sup>16</sup> Murray, 134, 384-385, 408.

<sup>17</sup> 1850, 1860 Federal Censuses, Ancestry.com, accessed Jan. 20, 2010. Witness to 1858 O'Rorke Cemetery deed, Wake County DB22, 384; ERM Collection, "Raleigh History Walk No. 1, Box 526, Vertical Files #9.

<sup>18</sup> Worsley, "Catholicism in Antebellum North Carolina," 406; note; phone conversation between Charles Blunt and Jerry Lewis, Catholic Diocese of Raleigh, January 2010.

<sup>19</sup> ERM Collection, Box 526, Vertical Files #9, Olivia Raney Library, Raleigh.

<sup>20</sup> Blunt research notes.

O'Rorke died in 1865, her husband followed her in 1867.<sup>21</sup> Both graves lie within the handsome granite and cast-iron fence of the O'Rorke plot, erected in 1865, the year of Elizabeth's death.

Since O'Rorke Cemetery was apparently the only consecrated Catholic cemetery in central North Carolina, burials of Catholics from outside Raleigh also occurred. John Tighe, buried in 1871, was an Irish-born gardener who lived in Graham, but died in Raleigh. James Casey, born in Ireland, was a peddler who died in Burlington in 1891.

O'Rorke Cemetery operated as Raleigh's Catholic cemetery from 1858 to 1931, the last identified burial.<sup>22</sup> During this time the Catholic congregation occupied three buildings. The second Catholic Church was located in an old Baptist Church building at the southeast corner of Capitol Square (Wilmington and Morgan streets), remodeled in 1860 to replace the original Catholic church on Wilmington Street. Stalwart parishioners John O'Rorke, John Kane, Patrick Ferrall, Patrick McGowan, John H. Murray, and Michael Prendergast were among the donors who paid to remodel the church. A large donation came from Michael Ferrall, a wealthy Catholic merchant of the town of Halifax in northeastern North Carolina.<sup>23</sup> The second church functioned until 1875. In 1879 the congregation purchased the Cowper House and property bounded by McDowell, Hillsborough, Hargett and Dawson streets, utilizing the house as the third church, renamed Sacred Heart Catholic Church. In 1924 the impressive stone Sacred Heart Cathedral was dedicated on the property facing Hillsborough Street. This continues to serve the congregation to the present. The Cowper House has been demolished.<sup>24</sup>

Oakwood Cemetery, a picturesque garden cemetery, was established in 1869 a few blocks away from O'Rorke Cemetery on Oakwood Avenue. Some Catholic families

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<sup>21</sup> John O'Rorke's estate administrator was P. Ferrall. Wake County Estates Records, cited in ERM Collection, Box 344, People #30. Patrick Ferrall's son was named John O'Rorke Ferrall, born 1850, died 1916. Elizabeth Norris Collection, Box 5, Catholic Cemetery File.

<sup>22</sup> Blunt transcription of Sacred Heart Cathedral burial records, in research notes.

<sup>23</sup> Ferrall's impressive burial vault, enclosed by an ornate cast-iron fence, built in 1859 on his Halifax town house property, holds three generations of his family. This family cemetery and a later small Gothic Revival Catholic chapel, the Church of the Immaculate Conception, located on Ferrall's property in the town of Halifax, N.C. were listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.

<sup>24</sup> Johnson, *Historic Wake County*, 87; telephone call to Sacred Heart Cathedral office by M. Ruth Little, April 27, 2010.



apparently reinterred their ancestors at Oakwood, which provided perpetual care that was attractive to the families. For example, the graves of Patrick Ferrall, died 1868, and his wife Margaret Fanning, died 1880, were moved in 1890 to Oakwood Cemetery.<sup>25</sup> The popular nearby cemetery with its well-maintained spacious grounds seems to have caused a decline in the usage of O'Rorke Cemetery by the Catholic congregation.

In 1938 Bishop Eugene McGuinness of the Catholic Diocese ceded control of the property to the city to be used for burial of itinerants and the "less fortunate." A 1938 newspaper article contained a photo of the cemetery, enclosed with a picket fence and overgrown with weeds. In the foreground is a family plot with a highly ornate iron fence and a monument with a large cross inside. This plot fence and monument have disappeared.<sup>26</sup> From 1941 to 1986 the city operated the cemetery as a paupers' cemetery until it became full. Along the fence in the southeast corner are a row of infant graves referred to as the "Baby Cemetery."<sup>27</sup> In the 1960s the Catholic Diocese attempted to reclaim the cemetery, but the dispute over ownership was settled in 1970.<sup>28</sup> In 2007 it was surveyed and mapped by the city (Book of Maps 2007 page 2575).

### **Description and Inventory of Landscape Design and Funerary Monuments**

O'Rorke Cemetery, located at 1101 Pender Street, occupies a .98 acre rectangular site in east Raleigh bounded by E. Lane Street on the north, Tarboro Road on the west, Pender Street on the south, and on the east by two single family lots at 1117 Pender Street and 1308 E. Lane Street. Directly north is the Tuttle Community Center Daycare at 310 N. Tarboro Road. Facing the cemetery on all four sides are single-family dwellings in this

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<sup>25</sup> ERM Collection, Box 526, Vertical Files #9; Elizabeth Norris Collection, Box 5, Catholic Cemetery file; Blunt research notes.

<sup>26</sup> "Catholics Donate Cemetery to Raleigh," *Raleigh Times*, April 5, 1938, reference supplied by Charles Blunt, also see newspaper clipping in ERM Collection, Box 526, Vertical Files #9; Deed to City of Raleigh from Bishop Eugene J. McGuinness, Nov. 23, 1938, cited in a cemetery history written by Elizabeth E. Norris, ca. 1979, in Elizabeth Norris Collection, Box 5, Catholic Cemetery File, Olivia Raney Library, Raleigh.

<sup>27</sup> "For paupers, there's no place left in potter's field," *Raleigh Times*, Oct. 22, 1986. Clipping in ERM Collection, Box 526, Vertical Files #9.

<sup>28</sup> "Hotline" in *Raleigh Times*, Oct. 15, 1971. Citation in ERM Collection, notes on Raleigh History Walk No. 1, Box 526, Vertical Files #9.

neighborhood of east Raleigh known as College Park, an African American community situated on the north side of New Bern Avenue in proximity to St. Augustine's College. Owned by the city of Raleigh, the cemetery is completely grassed and is enclosed by a chain link fence.

All graves are oriented east-west. The main entrance is in the center of the south side, at Pender Street, where a paved driveway extends approximately twenty-five feet into the cemetery. There is also a chain link entrance gate on the Lane Street side. Two monuments with bronze plaques erected by the Raleigh Cemeteries Commission stand in the cemetery. To the right of the driveway is a low granite monument with a bronze plaque bearing the inscription:

O'Rorke Cemetery  
established 1858  
maintained by the City of Raleigh  
Catholic Cemetery 1858-1938  
Land for cemetery acquired from John O'Rorke, Catholic church benefactor  
Cemetery given to the city in 1938  
Renamed in 1979  
Placed by Raleigh Cemeteries Commission

At the southwest corner stands a concrete monument with a bronze plaque bearing a similar, shorter inscription.

The cemetery consists of two sections: the western half containing Catholic burials from ca. 1858 to 1938, and the eastern half containing paupers' burials from 1941 to 1986. The exact number of burials in the cemetery is unknown due to lack of records and lack of grave markers, but is approximately 260.

### **Section 1: Catholic Section**

Section 1, the west section, contains the Catholic burials. From 1938 to the present the City of Raleigh has maintained the cemetery. This section has lost a number of monuments during its difficult history and appears at first sight to contain little funerary sculpture of interest. Closer investigation reveals a small number of surviving monuments that display the skill of Raleigh's stonecutters, many of whom were Catholics themselves, as well as commemorate the small beleaguered Catholic congregation of nineteenth century Raleigh. The Catholic resources scattered about this section consist of the iron-fenced plot of John O'Rorke and his wife, as well as eight Victorian-era marble and granite headstones, one family plot border, and two early 1900s granite monuments. All twelve resources in the Catholic section are contributing.

**Contributing Resources in Catholic Section:**

1. John Tighe (1818-1871). Arched marble headstone on granite base.
2. Edward J. Doyle (1867-1877). Marble monument with three-dimensional lamb on top, set on a granite base. Signed "J. Whitelaw."
3. Roselle Worthingham. No date (date in Catholic records of 1920). Thick granite monument.
4. Duffy monument. No date. Low granite family monument.
5. Plot with granite border on three sides. No monuments.
6. M. A. Prendergast (d. 1875). Large ornamental marble headstone with symbol of a cross with a flaming heart and anchor, set on a granite base.
7. Cast-iron fence with "JOR 1865" cast into the gateposts, set on a granite border. Two graves without monuments lie inside the fence, almost certainly those of John O'Rorke (died 1867) and his wife Elizabeth.
8. Marble obelisk for three members of Casey family: James Casey (1834-1891); William Edward Casey (1864-1865); Ellen Casey (1839-1900).
9. Infant Casey boy (d. 1878). Small marble headstone and footstone.
10. Infant Casey boy (d. 1875). Small marble headstone and footstone.
11. Small marble headstone almost buried in the dirt, presumably another Casey child.
12. Mary Louise Plumdore (Oct. 22, 1871-Oct. 25, 1871). Small marble headstone with hand with index finger pointing to Heaven.

The cast iron fence with granite gates of the O'Rorke plot (#7) is located nearly in the center of the western section. The rectangular plot has a low granite border and two large polygonal granite posts at the entrance, facing west. An integral plaque carved into the right post contains the inscription "JOR 1865"; an identical plaque on the left post has a cross carved in relief. A decorative cast-iron fence is set into the granite border. "JOR" stands for John O'Rorke, the Catholic merchant who donated the land for the cemetery. John and his wife are believed to be buried here, but there are no gravestones.

The oldest monuments are for two individuals who died in 1871. A segmental-arched marble headstone marks the grave of John Tighe (#1), born in Ireland and died in Raleigh in 1871, aged fifty-three. A small marble headstone with a relief carving of a hand with the index finger pointing heavenward commemorates an infant, Mary Louise Plumadore (#12), daughter of N. & C. Plumadore, born and died in October 1871. The Plumadore stone has been dislocated from its grave and is propped against the Casey obelisk. An identical headstone for Plumadore infant Mary Gertrude, who died in the 1870s, was located in the cemetery but has been lost.<sup>29</sup>

The largest and most decorative monument, rich with symbolism, commemorates carpenter Michael A. Prendergast (#6), born in 1805 in Trelee, county Kerry, Ireland, and died in Raleigh in 1875. The thick marble headstone with a trefoil-lobed pediment has an arched panel containing the inscription. Below the inscription is a prominent cross carved in relief, flanked on one side by a flaming heart, symbolic of the utmost religious fervor, and the other by an anchor, the Christian symbol for hope and steadfastness. The arched panel has a carved rope border. Above the panel is a large flower carved in relief. Along the lobes of the top trefoil are a row of stars in relief.

The monument of a ten-year-old boy, Edward J. Doyle (#2), who was born in 1867 and died in 1877, has sculptural significance as well. The thick square marble

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<sup>29</sup> List of monuments in Catholic Cemetery recorded by Elizabeth Reid Murray, 1968. Vertical Files #9, ERM Collection, Raney Library.

monument features a three-dimensional lamb lying on the top, a touching symbol of the innocence of a child. On the rear is a relief sculpture of a cross with the "IHS" monogram, the Greek letters symbolizing the name of Jesus. At the lower right corner is the signature "J. Whitelaw." John Whitelaw worked as a marble and stone cutter in Raleigh from the 1860s to the 1880s. Whitelaw advertised his marble yard in business directories of the 1870s-1880s, working at various times with other stonecutters named King, Crowder, and Weir.<sup>30</sup>

Flush against the southern edge of the cemetery of the west section is a rectangular plot for the Casey family (#8-11), outlined with a granite border. Inside is a tall marble obelisk inscribed on three sides for James Casey, his wife Ellen, and their infant son William Edward Casey. James was born in 1834 near Clonmel, county of Tipperary, Ireland and died in 1891 at Burlington, North Carolina. The year-old baby died in 1865 at Graham, North Carolina. Ellen, born 1839 in the county of Mayo, Ireland, died in 1900 at Portsmouth, Virginia. Other Casey children have small headstones beside the obelisk: an infant boy who died in 1875, another infant boy who died in 1878, and a third child whose stone inscription is below ground level. Nearby is another plot outlined with a similar granite border (#5), with a tall tree in the center but with no visible monuments.

Two rusticated granite monuments contain names but no dates. One is a low, thick monument with an oblique top containing the inscription "Roselle Worthingham requiescat in pace" [rest in peace] (#3). According to cemetery records Roselle died in 1920. The other is a low granite family monument with the family name "Duffy" (#4) inscribed on the front. There are no smaller stones around it, but presumably several members of the Duffy family are buried here. Both of these monuments exhibit the low, simple, thick block-like shape common to the early to mid-twentieth century when the production of granite monuments became mechanized and standardized.

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<sup>30</sup> King & Whitelaw, marble cutters, Morgan St., *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory* 1867-8; Whitelaw & Crowder, Morgan cor Blount, marble & stone works, *Chataigne's Raleigh Directory* 1875-6; Weir & Whitelaw's marble & granite works, *Branson's Business Directory*, 1884; M. Ruth Little, *Sticks & Stones: Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemarkers*, 281-282.

## **Section 2: Pauper's Section**

In the eastern section used as a pauper's cemetery from 1941 to 1986, city records record the burial of 232 individuals.<sup>31</sup> Under the ownership of the city, a north-south driveway was laid out through the cemetery. Burials have occurred on both sides of the unpaved, grassy drive. Settling of the earth reveals many of the closely-spaced, unmarked east-west graves. Along the fence in the southeast corner are a row of infant graves referred to as the "Baby Cemetery."<sup>32</sup> Only fifteen of the graves have stone monuments, all of nearly identical design, consisting of a small rectangular marble or granite tablet set flush in the ground, inscribed with the deceased's name, birth and death dates, and rarely an added phrase or simple decoration. These flank the central drive close to the Pender Street driveway and are also scattered in the east section of the cemetery. David Michael Wall, a young man who died in 1983, contains the nickname "Peter Boy" and the epitaph "Always loved and never forgotten." Garland Ferrell, 1918-1983, is memorialized by a pair of praying hands inscribed in one corner of his stone. Juanita Allen, 1923-1985, is personalized by the epitaph "Faithful Hilltop Church Bus Rider." In addition, the eastern section contains four metal funeral home markers in the ground along the east fence dating from the early 1980s. A total of eighteen monuments exist in this section.

### **Non-Contributing Resources in Pauper's Section:**

13. Mary Lee Johnson (1928-1985).
14. Juanita Allen (1923-1985).
15. Jessie Jewel White (1939-1986).
16. Charlie R. Hickman (1923-1986).
17. David Michael Wall (1961-1983).
18. Garland Ferrell (1918-1983).
19. Billy D. Atkins (1937-1973).
20. Mary Kuisis (1901-1977).
21. Wesley Faircloth (1921-1975).

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<sup>31</sup> Charles Blunt research notes, 2009.

<sup>32</sup> "For paupers, there's no place left in potter's field," *Raleigh Times*, Oct. 22, 1986. Newspaper clipping in ERM Collection, Box 526, Vertical Files #9.

22. Matthew Rudisill (1949-1973).
23. Vera N. Caviness (1904-1973).
24. Minnie Myatt (1860-1951).
25. Ruth West Emmerson (1884-1971).
26. Robert E. Frazier (1921-1971).
27. William L. Ross (1872-1962).
28. Eugene Bond Howle (1883-1942). Large granite ledger stone.
29. Molinda Howle (1815-1877). Large, very cracked marble ledger stone.
30. Infant. No inscription. Small very cracked marble ledger.

These three monuments, #28-30, for the Howle family were relocated in 1985 to the cemetery by the North Carolina Highway Commission when it widened Rock Quarry Road in southeast Raleigh and destroyed the family graveyard. These stones are along the east edge of the cemetery, in the center.

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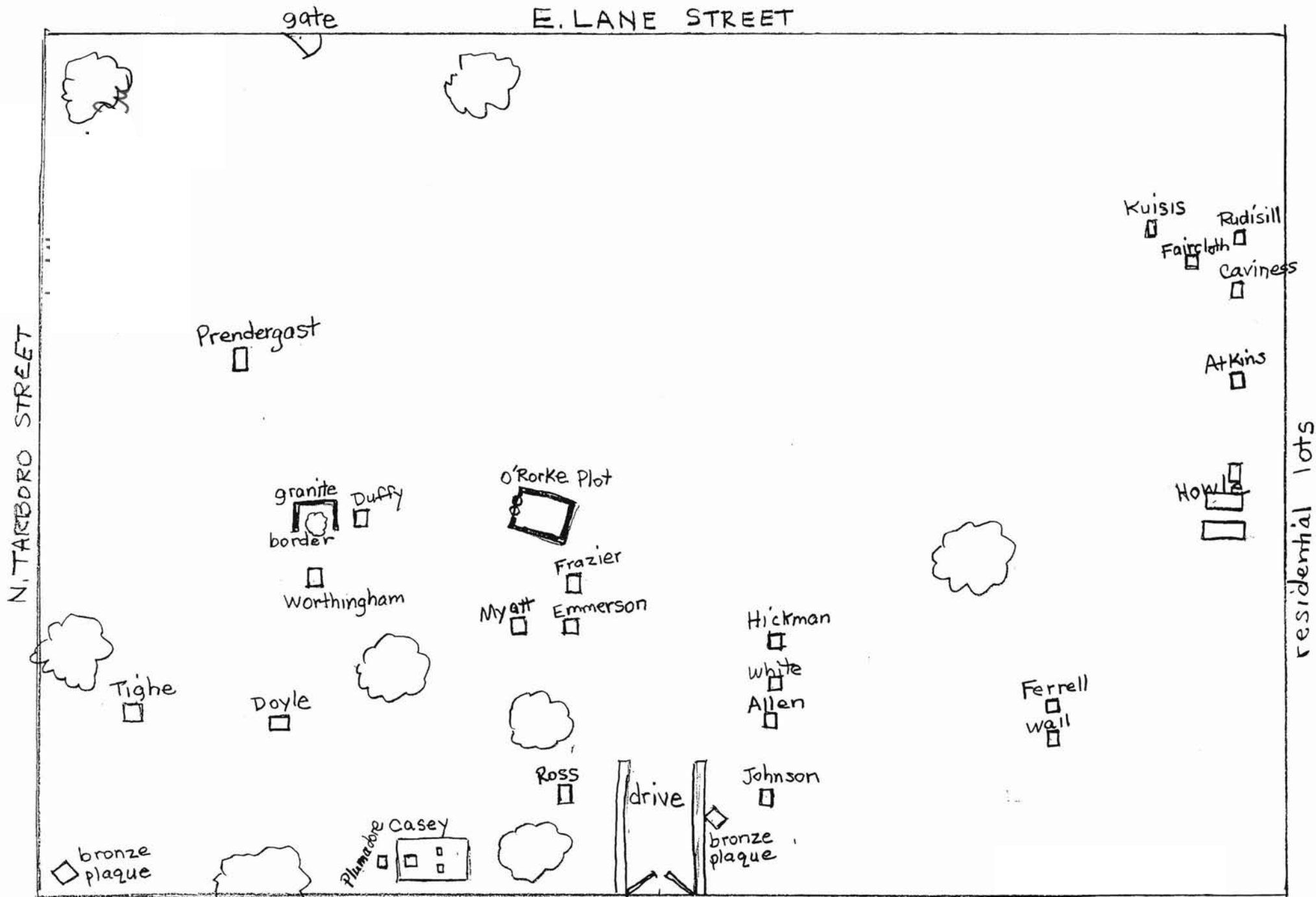
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**Boundary Description and Justification**

The property designated is Parcel No. 1714202008, of .98 acre size, shown in the attached Wake County Tax map, accessed Jan. 26, 2010 and the attached Wake County Book of Maps 2007, page 2575. This is the parcel historically associated with the O'Rorke Cemetery.



Not-to-scale  
Sketch by M. Ruth Little  
Longleaf Historic Resources

PENDER STREET  
O'RORKE CEMETERY  
1101 Pender St.  
Raleigh





#### LEGEND

- Stone Marker
- Metal Plaque
- PG Post, Fence Post Found
- SP Iron Pipe Found
- ◆ RBF Pole Found
- Fm Fence
- BC Back of Curb
- EP Edge of Pavement/Road
- # Inventory Number  
(See Landmark Report for descriptions)

N. TARBORO ST. 28' B-B 45' ROW

E. LANE ST. 27' B-B 45' ROW

PRELIMINARY  
NOT FOR RECORDATION  
CONVEYANCES OR SALES

N/F  
GAIL D. TITUES  
DB 10582 P 0305  
PIN 1714 20 3161

N/F  
IRA D. POE  
DB 4793 P 166  
PIN 1714 20 3063

#### SITE PARCEL INFORMATION:

N/F  
THE CITY OF RALEIGH  
CERTIFIED  
LETTER OF CONVEYANCE FROM BISHOP EUGENE MCGUINNESS  
TO  
THE CITY OF RALEIGH  
NOVEMBER 23, 1938  
42642 SF=0.9789 ACRES  
PIN 1714 20 2008  
1101 PENDER ST.



### O'RORKE CATHOLIC CEMETERY VISIBLE GRAVE LOCATIONS

CITY OF RALEIGH  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
SURVEY SECTION  
222 W. HARGETT ST.  
RALEIGH, NC 27602  
919-996-3030

DATE: 05-2010
SCALE: 1"=10'
PROJECT: 07027_ORORKE
DRAWING: 07026_GRAVES.DGN
REVISIONS:
08/2010 TLT

SHEET  
1 OF 1

- NOTES:
- 1) THE PROPERTY CORNERS ARE THE FENCE POSTS
  - 2) THE FENCE LINE BETWEEN THE FENCE POSTS IS THE PROPERTY LINE



Wm. H. Thompson  
A Native of the State  
of Kentucky  
Born May 15, 1815  
Died Oct 10, 1885

























