

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Old Bayview Cemetery
Other name/site number: City Cemetery; Bay View Cemetery
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: Ramirez Street at Padre Street
City or town: Corpus Christi State: Texas County: Nueces
Not for publication: [ ] Vicinity: [ ]

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
[ ] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
[ ] national [ ] statewide [ ] local

Applicable National Register Criteria: [ ] A [ ] B [ ] C [ ] D

Signature of certifying official / Title: Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 9/4/2020
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[ ] entered in the National Register
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** FUNERARY/cemetery

**Current Functions:** FUNERARY/cemetery

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** N/A

**Principal Exterior Materials:** N/A

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 7 through 18)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria:** A - Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

**Criteria Considerations:** D - Cemeteries

**Areas of Significance:** EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT; MILITARY

**Period of Significance:** 1845–1957

**Significant Dates:** 1845

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked): NA

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked): NA

**Architect/Builder:** N/A

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 19 through 34)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheet 35 through 39)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. Part 1 approved on (date)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** approximately 3.49 acres

### Coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

1. 27.801173° -97.399412°

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The site is roughly bounded by West Broadway Street to the northeast, Waco Street to the northwest, Ramirez Street to the southwest, and the abandoned right-of-way for Topo Street to the southeast. The nominated parcel is identified by the Nueces County Central Appraisal District (Nueces CAD) by Parcel Number 190378, Geo Identification Number:0486-0000-0050, and the legal description (BAY VIEW CEMETERY OLD 360' X 422.5').

**Boundary Justification:** The boundary has remained essentially unchanged since the cemetery's establishment, is clearly shown on maps from 1887 through the present, and contains all property historically associated with the cemetery (see Map 9, page 47).

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Steph McDougal and Christina Osborn, consultants, with assistance from Kelly Little, Madeline Clites, and John Falavolito

Organization: McDoux Preservation LLC

Street & number: 18214 Upper Bay Road #58114

City or Town: Houston

State: Texas

Zip Code: 77058

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Telephone: 833-623-7737 ext. 1

Date: February 6, 2020

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheets 40 through 50)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets 51 through 57)

**Photographs** (see continuation sheets 58 through 69)

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**Photograph Log**

All photos share the same information except as noted.

Old Bayview Cemetery  
Corpus Christi, Nueces County, Texas  
Photographer: Steph McDougal  
Date Photographed: January 16, 2020

Photo 1

View of cemetery from main entrance, camera facing northwest

Photo 2

View of cemetery from main entrance, camera facing northeast

Photo 3

View of cemetery from main entrance, camera facing southeast

Photo 4

Retaining wall at south corner along Ramirez Street, camera facing southeast

Photo 5

Primary entrance to Old Bayview Cemetery, at south corner along Ramirez Street, camera facing northeast

Photo 6

Markers (possible family plot) with retaining wall on three sides projecting past rest of perimeter fence, camera facing north

Photo 7

View including all wooden markers, camera facing northwest

Photo 8

Elizabeth Ada Welch marker, cast zinc ("white bronze") base No. 221 as shown in The Monumental Bronze Co. October 1882 catalog, pages 84 (with statue) and 86 (with obelisk), including cast-in-place bas relief emblems No. 8-10 Flower Wreathed Cross and angel, missing statue or obelisk, possibly displaced or damaged by encroachment from tree, camera facing southeast

Photo 9

Weymouth family plot with obelisk and decorative iron fence, camera facing northwest

Photo 10

Rogers family plot with grave markers, obelisks, and decorative iron fence, camera facing northwest

Photo 11

Displaced curbing and toppled markers, camera facing northeast

Photo 12

Metal boundary fence along Ramirez Street, camera facing northeast

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Photo 13

View of southeast fence line where the chain link fence jogs, camera facing southeast

Photo 14

View of chain-link perimeter fence and maintenance vehicle gate at east corner, camera facing east

Photo 15

Small marker at former location of old honey mesquite tree, camera facing northeast

Photo 16

Modern cenotaph markers for military victims of the *Dayton* explosion (actual burial locations unknown), camera facing northeast

Photo 17

Monument to Confederate dead “interred in this and adjacent cemeteries”, August 6, 1906, camera facing northwest

Photo 18

Monument to the U.S. Veterans of the Army of Occupation (1845–1846), “buried in Old Bayview Cemetery but whose exact burial locations are unknown,” camera facing northwest

Photo 19

Curbing around individual grave, plus Benjamin Neal monument, camera facing northwest

Photo 20

South corner of cemetery, showing the “Old Bayview Cemetery” and “Explosion of the Steamship Dayton” state historical markers, camera facing south

Photo 21

Old Bayview Cemetery sign and sidewalk along Ramirez Street, camera facing southeast

Photo 22

Shaeffer family plot with grave markers and curbing, also utility box, camera facing west

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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## Description

Old Bayview Cemetery is located atop a bluff in the central portion of Corpus Christi on the Gulf Coast of Texas, overlooking Corpus Christ Bay to the east and Nueces Bay to the north (see Map 1 through Map 3). Only three-quarters of a mile from the Harbor Bridge crossing the Corpus Christi Ship Channel, the 3.49-acre<sup>1</sup> site is approximately square and oriented northwest-southeast, following the edge of the bluff. It is bounded by Ramirez Street to the southwest, Waco Street to the northwest, West Broadway Street to the northeast, and Padre Street and the I-37 access road to the southeast. Never formally laid out, tombstones within the cemetery are arranged somewhat haphazardly, though most grave sites are aligned northwest-southeast, conforming to the grid pattern of the surrounding city streets. Several family plots are surrounded by low curbing or decorative plot fencing. Mesquite and other small trees shade a variety of grave markers in designs ranging from modest tablets to multi-part constructions; materials include marble, granite, concrete, wood, and zinc (also called “white bronze”).<sup>2</sup> The site sits slightly above the adjacent streets and is bounded by a metal picket fence on three sides, with a chain-link fence along the southeast portion of the cemetery.

The cemetery was established in 1845 when ten of General Zachary Taylor's troops, who had been encamped at Corpus Christi on the eve of the Mexican War, were killed in a boiler explosion on the steamer *Dayton* en route to St. Joseph's Island.<sup>3</sup> Old Bayview subsequently became a community burying ground and was closed near the turn of the twentieth century, except to those who already owned plots. The last burials took place in the 1980s. One of the oldest cemeteries in South Texas,<sup>4</sup> Old Bayview Cemetery has been designated a Historic Cultural Landmark by the City of Corpus Christi, as well as a Historic Texas Cemetery and a State Archeological Landmark by the Texas Historical Commission, and it contains several Texas Historical Markers, one of which denotes the Historic Texas Cemetery designation received in 2002.<sup>5</sup> Today, the cemetery is maintained by the City of Corpus Christi Parks and Recreation Department. The cemetery retains a high degree of integrity; with the numerous extant headstones dating to the mid- to late 1800s and early 1900s, their somewhat haphazard orientation, the presence of mature mesquite trees over mowed grass, and the enclosing fence, the cemetery clearly conveys the feeling of an early pioneer burial ground. Old Bayview Cemetery is nominated as a single site, rather than as a district.

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## Clarifications

Cemetery Acreage: The nominated parcel is the legal parcel identified in the Nueces Central Appraisal District records, with official acreage of 3.49 acres, according to the metes and bounds survey and as recorded in Volume 122, Page 249, and Volume 156, Page 193 of the Deed Records of Nueces County. This boundary does not include the portion of the former Padre Street right-of-way, where there are no known burials. The cemetery acreage is recorded by other sources as being slightly larger, for reasons that are not clear: the 2018 remote sensing survey recorded the acreage as 3.7 acres, while the City of Corpus Christi parcels shapefile gives the acreage as 3.6543 acres. The adjacent parcel that holds the former Padre Street right-of-way (listed as .2824 acres, according to the parcels shapefile) is enclosed by the cemetery fence and is also owned by the City of Corpus Christi but is not and has never been officially part of the cemetery.

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<sup>1</sup> Rosa G. Gonzalez, Nueces County Historical Commission, “Exhibit 1” and “Exhibit 7”, application for Historic Texas Cemetery Designation, Old Bayview Cemetery. Texas Historical Commission, December 21, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Gonzalez, “Additional information.”

<sup>3</sup> Gonzalez, “Exhibit 5.”

<sup>4</sup> Gonzalez, “Exhibit 5.”

<sup>5</sup> McGloin and Howell, “General Information.”

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Cemetery Status: Although noted in many locations as the oldest federal military cemetery in Texas, Old Bayview Cemetery is neither a national cemetery nor a state veteran cemetery; the United States' national cemetery program was not established until after the Civil War, and today it is administrated by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Some states manage their own veterans cemeteries.

Cemetery Names: Prior to receiving an official name, the cemetery was referred to as "the City Cemetery," "the Old Military Cemetery," or simply "the Graveyard." The name of the cemetery was originally two words, as two bays could be viewed from the site. Once the "new" cemetery was established the cemetery was referred to as "the old Bay View cemetery" for many years. The names "Old Bay View" and "Old Bayview" appear somewhat interchangeably in newspaper articles throughout the twentieth century, but by the 1980s the cemetery was almost invariably referred to as Old Bayview. Today, both the City of Corpus Christi and the Friends of Old Bayview Cemetery Association use the spelling "Bayview" in reference to the cemetery; for consistency, that spelling is used throughout this document.

Number of Original Burials: The number of deaths resulting from the explosion of the *Dayton* is listed on the Texas Historical Marker "Explosion of the Steamship Dayton" as eight, and only eight lawn-type markers now commemorate the victims. However, according to contemporaneous accounts of the accident, ten men killed as a result of the explosion are buried at the cemetery (see Section 8, Military Presence and the Explosion of the *Dayton*), including the African American man simply identified in news reports as a "colored deck hand."

Capitalization of City: In this nomination, when referring to the municipal entity, "City" is capitalized. In reference to the geographical location, "city" remains lowercase.

### **Summary of Establishment and Management**

The oldest federal military cemetery in Texas, Old Bayview Cemetery was established in 1845 to bury eight of Zachary Taylor's men and two crew of the steamer *Dayton*, who were killed in an explosion.<sup>6</sup> General Taylor's troops had been encamped on the beach at Corpus Christi on the eve of the Mexican War. On September 12, 1845, the steamer *Dayton* was transporting troops when both boilers exploded in quick succession and the ship sank. Eight men were killed immediately and two more died the next day. City founder H.L. Kinney donated a plot of land on the bluff for a burial ground, and the men were buried the following day.

After Taylor's troops left the encampment in 1846, the cemetery was turned over to the town, which became the City of Corpus Christi upon its incorporation in 1852. The cemetery became a community burial ground for the growing population. Numerous victims of yellow fever epidemics in 1854 and 1867 were laid to rest there, as were many early settlers. Since it was the only established cemetery in Corpus Christi until the late 1860s, people of all races and religions were buried on the site.

The City government did little to maintain or organize the cemetery after taking it over; it was never laid out into lots and no official entity was responsible for directing the burials. Any improvements were undertaken by families or, in some cases, by small groups, after taking up public subscriptions. The city continued to grow, and by the 1880s, the cemetery was surrounded by residences, many of them occupied by African American citizens.

In 1896, a group of local women formed the Bay View Cemetery Association. The group, in agreement with City Council, made the decision to close the cemetery to new burials, except to those who already had relatives interred

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<sup>6</sup> Marker text, "Explosion of the Steamship Dayton," Texas Historical Marker; grave marker at Old Bayview Cemetery.

## Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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there.<sup>7</sup> The Association also established New Bayview Cemetery about a mile northwest of the original cemetery (which thereafter became known as Old Bayview) in 1897, and supervised and recorded continued burials at Old Bayview until 1913.<sup>8</sup> In the early 1900s, many burials in Old Bayview were transferred to other cemeteries, including New Bayview and Rose Hill, also nearby, which opened in 1914.<sup>9</sup> After railroad tracks were constructed along West Broadway Street in 1915 and the Port of Corpus Christi opened in 1926, the lands north of the cemetery became more industrialized.

In 1935 and 1936, in preparation for celebration of the Texas Centennial, historical monuments commemorating important early citizens buried at Old Bayview were erected by the State and the City of Corpus Christi. Although the markers were placed in association with the Centennial, they are not official Texas Centennial Markers; two Centennial markers are located in Nueces County, but neither is located at Old Bayview Cemetery. Several state historical subject markers have been erected since that program was launched in the 1960s.

The Old Bay View Cemetery Association was revived in 1940. By that time, the cemetery was surrounded by an industrial district and segregated housing neighborhoods. The “new” Association intended to “reclaim” the cemetery as a historic landmark of Corpus Christi.<sup>10</sup> However, in 1958, the construction of IH-37 cut off the cemetery and surrounding residential neighborhood from the rest of the city, isolating it along with the expanding industrial and port area to the north. By the late 1970s, much of the residential fabric on the southwest and northwest sides of the cemetery had disappeared.

The final burial in Old Bayview Cemetery took place in 1989. A publication of county-wide cemetery data in 1990 identified records of 660 burials within the cemetery. A preservation push in the early 2000s resulted in the site’s designation as a Historic Texas Cemetery, as well as plans for cemetery restoration by the Nueces County Historical Commission and the creation of a cemetery website by the Corpus Christi Public Library. Additionally, in 2003, Monument Conservation Collaborative LLC, a Massachusetts company, prepared a monument conservation plan which identified 354 extant markers and made recommendations for their preservation, although those recommendations were not implemented at that time. A remote sensing survey using ground penetrating radar (GPR), conducted in 2018, identified only about 150 extant markers and located an additional 92 potential unmarked burials. Today, the cemetery is managed by the City of Corpus Christi Parks and Recreation Department, with assistance from the Friends of Old Bayview Cemetery Association.

### Geographical Setting

#### Cemetery Boundaries

When Old Bayview Cemetery was founded in 1845, it stood nearly alone at the top of the bluff above Corpus Christi Bay and Nueces Bay. Early accounts do not indicate a shape or extent of the burial ground, but as the city grew up around it, it took on an approximately square shape; whether the surrounding streets conformed to the existing boundary of the cemetery or vice versa is unknown. An 1887 bird’s-eye-view map of the town showed the cemetery

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<sup>7</sup> E. T. Merriman, “Shadows of Historic Pioneer Days in Corpus Christi Hover about Old Bay View Cemetery,” *Corpus Christi Caller*, May 18, 1924.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Charles A. Ward and Brooks Noel, *Cemetery Data of Nueces County, Texas*, (Corpus Christi, TX: Coastal Bend Genealogical Society, 1990), 214.

<sup>9</sup> McGloin and Howell, “General Information.”

<sup>10</sup> “Bayview Cemetery Association Clings to Hope of Reclaiming Old Landmark Which Overlooks Bay,” *Corpus Christi Caller*, 1941.

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bounded by streets on two sides: by Ramirez Street to the southwest, approximately parallel to the bluff, and by Topo Street (renamed Waco Street in the 1930s) to the northwest, extending toward the edge of the bluff (see Figure 2 and Figure 3). The cemetery property was larger than the adjacent blocks, so both streets jogged around the edges of the cemetery. By 1900, the cemetery was further bounded by extensions of existing streets: Padre Street to the southeast and North (later West) Broadway Street to the northeast (see Map 4). It is unclear if the construction of these two streets constricted the cemetery boundary; the cemetery may have formerly extended down the bluff before West Broadway Street was established. In 1915, the San Antonio, Uvalde, & Gulf Railroad was constructed along the edge of West Broadway Street opposite the cemetery; this later became the Missouri Pacific Railroad, and the line is still in use today by Union Pacific Railroad (see Map 5). Padre Street was closed by City Ordinance #8431 in 1957, in preparation for the construction of the IH-37 expressway the following year.<sup>11</sup> While an unpaved track appears to have existed along the closed right-of-way until at least the 1990s, at some point the cemetery fence was expanded to encompass a portion of the former Padre Street alignment.

Today the official cemetery boundaries are described as extending 360 feet along Waco Street, 422.50 feet along West Broadway Street, 360 feet along the westerly line of the right-of-way for the former Padre Street, and 422.50 feet along Ramirez Street, forming a square encompassing 3.49 acres.<sup>12</sup> A powder-coated steel picket fence surrounds three sides of the cemetery, and a chain-link fence extends along the fourth side, along the approximate line of the abandoned Padre Street right-of-way. The official boundary differs from the area enclosed by the cemetery fence; the portion of the former Padre Street right-of-way enclosed by the fence is not part of the official 3.49 acres but is also owned by the City of Corpus Christi.

### Description of the Surrounding Area

The neighborhood that grew up around Old Bayview Cemetery in the late 1800s was, at first, mainly residential to the south, west, and east. The cemetery is located at the eastern edges of the Washington-Coles neighborhood, which was home to many of the city's African American residents and was the site of the first black church and first public school for black children. To the north of the cemetery, the city's industrial area cropped up around the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad, constructed in that area in 1886. With the construction of the railroad across Broadway Street in 1914 and the shipping channel in the 1920s, the area to the north and east of the cemetery became more and more industrialized (see Map 6). By 1941, the cemetery was described as being "almost obliterated from view by warehouses and nearby storage buildings"<sup>13</sup> (see Map 7). The construction of IH-37 and Harbor Bridge in the late 1950s cut the cemetery and the Washington-Coles neighborhood off from the rest of the city. By the mid-1970s, the residential fabric that formerly surrounded the cemetery had almost disappeared (see Map 8); by 1990, only a few residences were left across Waco Street from the cemetery near its intersection with Ramirez Street, and the last of these was demolished in 2015.

Land uses surrounding the cemetery today are public use, commercial, and light industrial. A large parking lot, constructed in 2008 and associated with Solomon M. Coles High School, is located across Ramirez Street from the cemetery. A church outbuilding and gravel parking lot are visible from the cemetery at the corner of Ramirez and Waco Streets. A fenced public utility yard faces the cemetery along Waco Street at its intersection with West Broadway Street. The railroad and commercial structures bound the site to the north, and a church stands in a

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<sup>11</sup> Gonzalez, "Exhibit 7."

<sup>12</sup> Gonzalez, "Exhibit 1."

<sup>13</sup> "Bayview Cemetery Association Clings to Hope of Reclaiming Old Landmark Which Overlooks Bay," *Corpus Christi Caller*, 1941.

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repurposed warehouse to the northeast. Visible to the east and southeast from the south corner of the cemetery is the IH-37 corridor and the Uptown area of Corpus Christi.

## Description of the Cemetery

### Topography

Corpus Christi is located about midway along the Coastal Bend of Texas, an almost uniform curve on the western coast of the Gulf of Mexico. This portion of Texas' coastal plain is characterized by a 50- to 90-mile-wide, nearly level plain of heavy blackland soils and prairie grasslands.<sup>14</sup> The city is situated near the mouth of the Nueces River, which empties into Nueces Bay, which then opens into Corpus Christi Bay. Both bays are naturally fairly shallow; Corpus Christi Bay, the deeper of the two, is only 10 to 13 feet deep in most places, although a 45-foot-deep manmade shipping channel crosses the bay. Both city and bays are sheltered from the Gulf behind Mustang Island, a barrier island about five miles wide and only ten feet in elevation. The city hugs the shoreline along the two bays, with Corpus Christi Bay to the west and Nueces Bay to the north; it was settled on a chalk bluff that rises upward from the bays about 40 feet and drops to a sandy beach at its foot.<sup>15</sup> A sandy peninsula extends northward between the two bays to Rincon Point. Like most southern folk cemeteries, Old Bayview Cemetery was sited on the highest hill in the vicinity and laid out near the crest of the bluff where it begins to fall toward the sandy peninsula (see Map 1 through Map 3). At the time of its establishment, the bluff was characterized by mesquite trees and other native shrubs and grasses, where livestock often grazed.<sup>16</sup>

The high point of the cemetery stands at 39.93 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) near the center of the southwestern edge along Ramirez Street (see Map 10). The land slopes very gently to the northeast until about the midpoint of the cemetery (see Photos 1, 2, and 3). From there, the land slopes more steeply toward West Broadway Street, with a low point of 22.79 feet AMSL at the eastern corner of the site. The cemetery itself stands between one and five feet above the surrounding streets. Generally, it is about one foot above Ramirez Street, two to three feet above Waco Street, and between three and five feet above West Broadway Street.<sup>17</sup>

Due to the difference in height between the cemetery and the surrounding streets, retaining walls stand along several places at the edges of the cemetery to support the adjacent soil. A large retaining wall (see Photo 4) near the intersection of Ramirez Street and Padre Street/IH-37 access road extends about 50 feet along Ramirez and 70 feet along the former Padre Street. A set of concrete steps (Photo 5) next to the end of the wall allow pedestrian access to the cemetery from Ramirez Street. Two additional retaining walls, one surrounding several marked burial plots (Photo 6), stand along West Broadway Street.

### Layout of Graves

For the first nearly 50 years of its existence, no entity was responsible for directing burials within Old Bayview Cemetery. Like many traditional southern folk cemeteries,<sup>18</sup> the site was never laid into regular sections, rows, or lots. Plots were established in no set order, and the burials therefore tended to be somewhat haphazard and disorganized,

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<sup>14</sup> Glenn Griffith, et al. *Ecoregions of Texas*, Report to Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, December 2007.

<sup>15</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, *Soil Conservation Service. Soil Survey, Nueces County, Texas*. June 1965.

<sup>16</sup> Mary Morrow, "Bay View Cemetery," 1965.

<sup>17</sup> Spot elevations referenced from map of Bayview Cemetery, City of Corpus Christi, Texas Department of Engineering Services, Survey Division, drawn by O. Nesmith and J.A., dated February 16, 2000, Project No. 3179A.

<sup>18</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *Texas Graveyards: A Cultural Legacy*, (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982), 30.

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with little groups of rows and clusters of graves seemingly strewn about the site at random. Although the grave layout seems chaotic, most graves in Old Bayview Cemetery are aligned in an orderly fashion on a more-or-less east-west axis, with “feet to the east” as is common in many Christian cemeteries, although the graves are not strictly aligned with this traditional axis. Most are laid on a more northwest-southeast axis, with feet and headstone inscription to the southeast, while a few are angled to nearly east-west, with feet and inscription facing approximately east-southeast.

The burials at Old Bayview are also representative of the diversity found in early settlers of Corpus Christi. As the only burying ground in the growing city for many years, all people who died were buried here, regardless of their race or religion; as a result, this cemetery was integrated throughout its existence. It is not clear at this time, however, whether individual graves were segregated into specific areas within Old Bayview Cemetery.

The total number of burials within Old Bayview Cemetery is unknown. Burials prior to 1896 were not well-recorded (or records have been lost), and digging a new grave without interfering with an existing burial seems to have relied largely on the memory of the grave digger.<sup>19</sup> During yellow fever epidemics, multiple bodies were apparently interred in single graves.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, many bodies were later exhumed and grave markers removed and relocated to other cemeteries. Newspaper articles from the 1920s and 1930s claimed that thousands of people might be buried in the cemetery.<sup>21,22</sup> By 1940, news accounts reported “hundreds” of marked graves.<sup>23</sup> In 1990, researchers were able to determine the names of approximately 660 people potentially buried in the cemetery; however, more than 60 of these burials had been transferred to other cemeteries.<sup>24</sup> The 2001 application to list the site as a Historic Texas Cemetery estimated the number of burials at 540<sup>25</sup>, while the 2003 Monument Conservation Plan located a total of 354 markers (see Map 11).<sup>26</sup> A GPR study performed in 2018 located only about 150 extant markers and 92 possible unmarked burials (see Map 12).<sup>27</sup>

### Grave Marker Types and Materials

Although many have been lost, stolen, or destroyed over the years, interesting grave markers remain in Old Bayview Cemetery. The larger portion of extant markers are composed of marble or granite. The 2003 Monument Conservation Plan found more than 200 marble markers, around 120 granite markers, nine wooden markers (see Photo 7), four concrete, and two zinc (“white bronze”, see Photo 8) markers within the cemetery.<sup>28</sup> Most markers dating to the 1800s are marble, while granite markers tend to date to the late 1800s or early and mid-1900s. It is possible that some of the granite markers with dates in the late 1800s and early 1900s are replacements for earlier wooden or marble markers. Marker types are quite varied; while many are tablet or block headstones, there are also tall ornate monuments and

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<sup>19</sup> “The City Cemetery,” *Corpus Christi Caller*, August 15, 1886.

<sup>20</sup> “Our Cemetery,” *Nueces Valley*, April 25, 1874.

<sup>21</sup>E.T. Merriman, “Merriman Addresses Plea for Preservation of Burying Plot Where Rest City’s Honored Dead,” *Corpus Christi Caller*, June 22, 1924. “The people buried in this cemetery are of many denominations and nationalities; white and black, possibly two thousand, including soldiers of the north and soldiers of the south; many veterans of the Mexican war.”

<sup>22</sup> Edna May Tubbs and Vivian Louis Johnson, “Pioneer Heroes of Corpus Christi Are Buried in Old Military Cemetery,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, July 1931. “There is little doubt that there are hundreds, perhaps thousands of unmarked graves there today. Many bodies have been moved to other cemeteries.”

<sup>23</sup> “Movement Started to Make This a National Shrine,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, Sunday, May 3, 1940.

<sup>24</sup> Ward and Noel, *Cemetery Data of Nueces County, Texas*, 214.

<sup>25</sup> Gonzalez, “Additional Information.”

<sup>26</sup> Monument Conservation Collaborative LLC, “Master Conservation Plan for Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Texas,” November 2003.

<sup>27</sup> Walker, “Geophysical Survey at the Old Bayview Cemetery.”

<sup>28</sup> Monument Conservation Collaborative LLC, “Master Conservation Plan.”

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obelisks, several Gothic headstones, tiny initialed footstones, flat lawn-type markers, pulpit and scroll gravestones, and casket, cradle, and ledger tombs. Architectural styles represented in the cemetery include Egyptian Revival (obelisks), Classical Revival, and Gothic Revival styles. Grave markers with no clear stylistic characteristics are also present. Symbols inscribed on grave markers include doves, lambs, hands with fingers pointed heavenward, hands breaking earthly chains, clasped hands or handshakes, the Masonic square and compass, Woodmen of the World emblems, flags, arches, open books, drapery, crosses, roses and other flowers, wreathes, leaves, and weeping willows. Veterans of the War of 1812, Civil War, Mexican-American War, and the Texas Revolution are known to be buried in the cemetery, as are several Texas Rangers.<sup>29</sup>

### Plot Curbing and Fencing

Prior to the construction of boundary fences, families sometimes installed plot fencing around individual or groups of burials not only to protect them from wandering livestock, but also to prevent the plot from being dug up by accident. Plot fences erected prior to 1860 were noted as falling down in a newspaper article from that year, which decried the “wretched condition” of the cemetery.<sup>30</sup> Conditions apparently did not improve by 1881, when another newspaper article condemned “the tumble-down conditions of the fences supposed to protect the graves.”<sup>31</sup> In 1896, after the formation of the original Bay View Cemetery Association, the city ordered all the old fences in the cemetery be removed; it is unclear if original plot fences were removed, repaired, or reinstalled during this beautification effort.

Plot fencing and curbing are still present throughout the cemetery, although curbing is more common. Eight family plots and several individual graves are enclosed by stone or concrete curbing, while two family plots are enclosed by decorative iron fencing (see Photos 9 and 10). It is unknown if the decorative iron fencing post-dates the 1896 fence removals. The decorative fencing is in poor condition; the fences are significantly rusted, with leaning and displaced segments, bent pickets, and missing finials. The fence surrounding the Rogers family plot is missing its gate. The condition of the plot curbing varies widely. Some of the curbing is fairly intact, with only slight issues of settling or material loss and displacement; however, several plots have missing or significantly displaced stones, exposed rebar, and cracked segments (Photo 11).

### Boundary Fence and Entry Gates

The first perimeter fence erected around Old Bayview Cemetery was reportedly installed in the early 1870s to “keep the Longhorn cattle out” with funds raised by public subscription.<sup>32</sup> The material and extent of that fence is unknown. Only ten years later, however, the fence was already in disrepair, with portions of it described as “prostrate” and public calls for a subscription for “properly enclosing the cemetery grounds.”<sup>33</sup> After the formation of the Bay View Cemetery Association in 1896, the city ordered all the old fences to be removed so the grounds could be cleaned up; it is unclear if this included family plot fences as well as the boundary fence. According to E.T Merriman, the Association soon had a white picket fence installed to enclose the perimeter. Articles from the early 1940s, however, describe an “old iron fence” separating the cemetery from the surrounding neighborhood, with a wooden arch over its entrance gate.<sup>34</sup> Whatever its material, this fence stood until the 1930s, although it was extensively repaired or replaced

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<sup>29</sup> Gonzalez, “Additional Information.”

<sup>30</sup> “Our Cemetery,” *Corpus Christi Ranchero*, February 25, 1860.

<sup>31</sup> “A Public Disgrace,” *Semi-Weekly Ledger*, Wednesday, April 27, 1881.

<sup>32</sup> Morrow; Merriman, “Merriman Addresses Plea for Preservation.”

<sup>33</sup> “A Public Disgrace,” *Semi-Weekly Ledger*, Wednesday, April 27, 1881.

<sup>34</sup> “Bayview Cemetery Is Historic Burial Ground,” *Corpus Christi Caller*, 1940s; “Old Bayview, Established 96 Years Ago, Is The Oldest Military Cemetery in All Texas,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, 1940s.

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in kind following hurricane damage in 1916 and 1919.<sup>35</sup> Around 1942, the reorganized association worked with the city to construct a new fence as part of a National Youth Administration project.<sup>36</sup> Photographs taken in 1955 (near the end of the period of significance) and the 1960s show a simple metal chain-link fence enclosing the cemetery. Two mortared stone piers formed an entrance gate which apparently allowed vehicular access to the grounds.

Today, the cemetery is enclosed on three sides by fencing installed by the City in 1998, with more recent fencing on the fourth side.<sup>37</sup> An approximately six-foot-tall powder-coated steel picket fence with concrete footers (see Photo 12) extends along the sides of the cemetery bordered by West Broadway Street, Waco Street, and Ramirez Street. At the corner of Ramirez Street and the IH-37 access road, a section of the metal picket fence extends northeast about 70 feet before turning and stepping down the hill, where it continues across the former Padre Street right-of-way. Along the fourth side of the cemetery is a metal chain-link fence (see Photo 13); a double-hung chain-link gate (see Photo 14) stands at the east corner of the cemetery to allow maintenance access to the property from West Broadway Street. The gate is stepped about 20 feet back from the metal picket fence along West Broadway Street so access to a fire hydrant is not impeded. The metal picket fence has several pedestrian gates that match the style of the boundary fence, one along Waco Street and two along Ramirez Street. The gate allowing access from Waco Street is a single-hung gate which stands at the north corner of the fence near the intersection of Waco and West Broadway streets. Along Ramirez Street, a second single-hung gate stands about 30 feet from the west corner of the boundary fence, while a double-hung gate stands about 50 feet from its south corner. The double-hung gate stands between two mortared stone piers on concrete bases (see Photo 5), and a concrete stair leads to the gate from the public sidewalk along Ramirez Street; it is unclear if the stone piers are the same as the ones photographed in 1955, but if so, they have been moved to be closer together. Attached to the fence near each of the four gates is a small sign noting the hours during which the cemetery is closed to the public.

### Circulation

Since its earliest days, Old Bayview Cemetery has had no formal internal walkways or roads. Unanswered calls to organize cemetery lots in a regular fashion, so that walks could be laid out, appeared in city newspapers in the 1860s and 1870s.<sup>38</sup> Informal pedestrian paths were apparently present during the early 1880s, according to a complaint that weeds were so overgrown that “the paths are lost not to be found.”<sup>39</sup> The location and appearance of the paths is unknown, but they were present until the early 1900s, when a news item reported their being cleaned during a Cemetery Association maintenance effort.<sup>40</sup> It is possible that the paths were surfaced with crushed shells; an 1898 newspaper article about the New Bayview Cemetery reported that the Cemetery Association (which stewarded both Old and New Bayview cemeteries) was expected to “shell (New Bayview’s) walks and drive the next improvement it makes.”<sup>41</sup> It is possible that the same material was used for the paths in Old Bayview, although no evidence of this was found during the 2018 remote-sensing (GPR) survey of the site. The location and number of earlier pedestrian entrance gates is also unknown, but a 1915 article referred to a soldier laying “near this east gate,” implying the presence of more than one gate.<sup>42</sup> The same article reported that concrete walks were planned to be laid out around the block. Vehicular access to the cemetery was similarly informal. In a 1955 photograph showing the stone entrance piers, a

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<sup>35</sup> Tubbs and Johnson.

<sup>36</sup> “Movement Started to Make This a National Shrine,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, Sunday, May 3, 1940; “Old Bayview Association Seeks Funds,” *Corpus Christi Caller*, February 25, 1942.

<sup>37</sup> Allison Ehrlich, “Throwback Thursday: Old Bayview Cemetery, 1975,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, November 5, 2015.

<sup>38</sup> “Our Cemetery,” *Corpus Christi Ranchero*, February 25, 1860.

<sup>39</sup> “Plea to Mayor and Alderman,” ca. 1882, Corpus Christi Public Libraries.

<sup>40</sup> “News Item,” *Corpus Christi Caller*, 24 May 1901.

<sup>41</sup> “As to the New Cemetery,” *Corpus Christi Weekly Caller*, May 20, 1898.

<sup>42</sup> “Old Burial Park Within the City to be Improved,” *Corpus Christi Caller and Daily Herald*, June 30, 1915.

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two-wheel track is clearly visible leading into the cemetery. Until the early 2000s, it was apparently still possible to drive a car through the cemetery, a practice that was stopped with the installation of the metal fence that today encloses the site.<sup>43</sup>

While the cemetery no longer enables vehicular entry by citizens, the gated entrance on West Broadway Street allows mowers and city maintenance vehicles to access the site. Pedestrians can enter the cemetery from concrete public sidewalks along Waco and Ramirez Streets; however, the sidewalk along Waco Street does not extend to the pedestrian gate at the corner of Waco and West Broadway. Steps that formerly stood at an entrance along Waco Street were removed by road improvements by the end of the 1980s.<sup>44</sup> A short concrete sidewalk segment leads from the public sidewalk along Ramirez Street to the pedestrian gate near the west corner of the cemetery, while a set of concrete steps flanked by stone block piers and a concrete landing lead from the same sidewalk to the pedestrian gate near the south corner.

### Vegetation

At the time of Old Bayview Cemetery's establishment, the bluff on which it stands was characterized by mesquite trees and other native shrubs and grasses, where livestock often grazed.<sup>45</sup> A mesquite tree standing near the center of the cemetery was long (although erroneously) believed to have shaded the original burials.<sup>46</sup> It appears that, as for most pioneer cemeteries, a formal landscape plan was never developed; historically, families maintained plots privately, planting flowers and other ornamental plants on the graves of their loved ones. Overall maintenance was lacking, and theft of privately planted flowers was apparently common. Accounts as early as 1860 described weeds and brush growing "with impunity," and several accounts over the late 1800s described "villains" stealing plants and called for City officials to impose severe punishments for such thefts.<sup>47</sup> In the early 1900s, the Cemetery Association took the site in hand, having the grounds cleaned out and weeded thoroughly at least every other year.

The grounds were sodded with Bermuda grass sometime before 1924 and were noted as being kept in as good or better condition than other city parks.<sup>48</sup> In 1931, a newspaper article described the cemetery grounds as being covered with grass and containing native trees, such as mesquite and wild persimmon, and other vegetation such as vines and blooming shrubs. It also noted a group of cedars over the Merriman plot and flowering lantana in several other family plots. Accounts varied when describing the care of the cemetery grounds and vegetation in the 1940s, after the reorganization of the Cemetery Association: one described livestock roaming the grounds and brown, unkempt lawns and shrubs,<sup>49</sup> while another described the grass as "green and clipped" and noted "beds of blue bonnets dotting here and there, shrubs growing and mesquite in springtime splendor."<sup>50</sup> The large honey mesquite tree that was believed to have stood over the site of the original burials, noted by the Texas Forest Service as a Famous Tree of Texas, died in

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<sup>43</sup> Elmon R. Phillips, "Preserving our past: restoration work at Old Bayview Cemetery needs the communities help," *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, September 9, 2001.

<sup>44</sup> Bill Walraven, *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, Community Life and People, Thursday, May 18, 1989, <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/list-of-burials/61-community/248-perry-boone>.

<sup>45</sup> Morrow.

<sup>46</sup> Gretchen Riley and Peter D. Smith. *Famous Trees of Texas: Centennial Edition*. Texas A&M Forest Service, 2015. When the tree died in 1987, tree ring dating revealed that it was not old enough to have been present in 1845.

<sup>47</sup> "Our Cemetery," *Corpus Christi Rancho*, February 25, 1860; "Despoiling Graves," *C. C. Daily Gazette*, April 22, 1876; "A Theft," *Corpus Christi Caller*, May 25, 1892.

<sup>48</sup> Merriman, "Merriman Addresses Plea for Preservation."

<sup>49</sup> "Bayview Cemetery Is Historic Burial Ground," *Corpus Christi Caller*, 1940s.

<sup>50</sup> "Preservation and Beautification of Old Bayview Cemetery is a Duty of the Public," *Corpus Christi Caller Times*, Easter Sunday, April 15, 1942.

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1987 and was removed in the 1990s. A low concrete monument with a bronze plaque (see Photo 15) denotes the former location of the tree and replaced a temporary sign dedicated in 1976. Today, the mowed grass lawn covering Old Bayview Cemetery is dotted by small native trees, including many remaining mesquite trees, as well as live oaks planted in the early 2000s to commemorate the soldiers killed in the *Dayton* explosion.<sup>51</sup> No flower beds and very few shrubs are extant.

Other Features: Significant Monuments, Texas Historical Markers, and Small-scale Features

*Significant Monuments*

Monuments in Old Bayview Cemetery not only mark the graves of some of Corpus Christi's earliest citizens, but also represent major historical events that affected the growing city, honor persons who played important public roles, and provide a glimpse into the early burial practices of Corpus Christi's pioneer days.

Monuments representing major historical events include the markers commemorating the first known interments in the cemetery: eight soldiers killed in the explosion of the steamship *Dayton* in September 1845.<sup>52</sup> Eight flat lawn-type granite markers (see Photo 16) installed at an unknown date honor the soldiers; the wooden boards originally marking those burials have long since been lost. Numerous burials were the result of yellow fever epidemics in 1845 and 1867, which claimed the lives of many early citizens, including Dr. George Robertson, Dr. E. T. Merriman, Rev. Jesse Perham, and Rev. William Mitchell, the first pastor of the Presbyterian Church. It was reported at the time that multiple victims were laid to rest in the same grave. Although hundreds of people died in the epidemics, the locations of only seventeen burials are still known.

Two historical monuments honor groups of veterans buried in the cemetery. The United Daughters of the Confederacy erected a granite cenotaph in 1906 (see Photo 17) to honor all the Confederate soldiers buried in Old Bayview and other area cemeteries. Descendants of Mexican War veterans erected a granite monument in 2004 to honor U.S. Veterans of the Army of Occupation (1845-1846); that memorial (see Photo 18) is "dedicated to the veterans buried in Old Bayview Cemetery but whose exact burial locations are unknown ... and additional veterans known but to God."

Additional historical monuments and gravestones honor early citizens of Corpus Christi, including a granite monument with a bronze plaque erected in 1935 for Benjamin Franklin Neal (see Photo 19), the city's first mayor, who died in 1873; a granite monument erected in 1936 for George Washington Hockley, Inspector General of the Texas Army of the Republic at San Jacinto, and Secretary of War of the Republic of Texas, who died in 1854; a granite gravestone erected by the Royal Arch Masons at an unknown date for Rev. Jesse Perham, who died in the yellow fever epidemic in 1867; a granite monument with a bronze plaque erected in 1967 for Rev. William Mitchell, first Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Corpus Christi, who also died in the 1867 yellow fever epidemic; and a granite column erected in 1971 to honor Rev. Alejo Hernandez, the first native Mexican Methodist Preacher in Corpus Christi, as a replacement for the original headstone, which was destroyed by Hurricane Celia in 1966.<sup>53</sup> Additionally, a small concrete monument with a bronze plaque denotes the former location of the large honey mesquite tree that was believed to have stood over the site of the original burials, which was noted by the Texas Forest Service as a Famous Tree of Texas and was removed in the 1990s.

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<sup>51</sup> Phillips, "Preserving our past."

<sup>52</sup> Although ten men died as a result of the explosion, only eight are listed on the subject marker.

<sup>53</sup> Gonzalez, "Exhibit 11."

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Three monuments in the in the cemetery were carved by Frank Teich, a German-born sculptor and stonecutter considered to be the father of the granite industry in Texas. Tiech first came in Texas in 1883; he initially worked under Gustav Wilke, supervising the cutting and placement of granite on the State Capitol building in Austin. In 1885, Teich opened a marble yard in San Antonio that provided marble headstones and monuments throughout the state.<sup>54</sup> The Teich monuments in Old Bayview include an eight-foot-tall marble obelisk monument erected in 1884 to honor John Woessner, a merchant in Corpus Christi; a seven-foot-tall monument for infant Charles F. Shaeffer in 1885; and a three-foot tall monument to Otto P. Dreyer, a confectioner and Odd Fellow, erected in 1891.

Although many of the original early grave markers were simple wood boards, only nine wooden markers remained in the cemetery as of 2003 and several of those were lost in subsequent years. Six wooden markers remain today, although one is in pieces. Each of the remaining wooden markers has had a concrete base added to help prevent the boards from rotting.

### *Official Texas Historical Markers*

Ten Official Texas Historical Markers are located within Old Bayview Cemetery.<sup>55</sup> While each postdates the period of significance, the markers commemorate important sites, events, and people within the cemetery. Each marker is composed of a cast aluminum plaque with raised letters, which is mounted to an in-ground metal post. The first marker was placed in 1967, only five years after the marker program was established by the Texas Historical Commission. Entitled "Old Bayview Cemetery," the marker text describes the founding of the cemetery and its role as a community burial ground (see Photo 20). A second marker placed in 1983 memorializes Thomas S. Parker, a cattle rancher and friend of Colonel H.L. Kinney who served as the first county sheriff, a Texas Ranger, Confederate soldier, and City Marshal. He died in 1886 and is buried in the cemetery. A marker placed in 1997, entitled "Explosion of Steamship Dayton," commemorates the event which led to the establishment of the cemetery, as well eight of the victims of the accident who were buried at Old Bayview. In addition to the historical markers, a metal medallion identifying Old Bayview as a Historic Texas Cemetery was reported to have been installed in 2002 near the main entrance; however, this medallion is not present in 2020.

Markers placed in recent years memorialize several early citizens of Corpus Christi who were buried at Old Bayview. A marker commemorating Eli Todd Merriman, newspaper publisher and respected civic leader who championed the creation of the deep water port, was approved in 2012. In 2013, a marker was placed honoring John Dix, a veteran of the War of 1812 and the Texas Revolution, sheep rancher, Presidentially appointed port surveyor and inspector, pro-Union activist, and chief justice of Nueces County. A marker placed in 2014 commemorates Louis de Planque, a Prussian-born photographer and local eccentric. In 2015, a marker was installed to honor William DeRyee, remembered as a major scientific leader in Texas history. Markers placed in 2017 commemorate George Owens, a Buffalo Soldier and Civil War veteran, and William Henderson Maltby, publisher of several Corpus Christi newspapers. In late 2019, a marker was dedicated to Matthew Nolan, a veteran of both the Mexican War and Civil War, Texas Ranger, and Nueces County Sheriff. Members of the Nueces County Historical Commission have expressed a goal of placing at least one new marker each year.

### *Small-scale Features*

Few historical accounts mention small-scale features historically present within the cemetery. Underground water lines laid in the early 1900s apparently included several aboveground spigots, so that visitors could water flowers or other

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<sup>54</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, "TEICH, FRANK," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fte05>.

<sup>55</sup> Gonzalez, "Exhibit 4"; USGS Topographic Map, via the Texas Historical Commission Atlas.

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plants in the plots they cared for;<sup>56</sup> these spigots do not appear to be extant. A painted sign with the name of the cemetery, adjacent to the mortared stone columns marking the main entrance, was present in 1955; the sign was hung from a decorative wrought iron arm mounted on a rough wooden post and is also no longer extant. Today, a wooden sign, painted grey with carved letters, stands outside the boundary fence at about the midpoint of the cemetery along Ramirez Street (see Photo 21). Two flagpoles installed circa 2001<sup>57</sup> are located at the south corner of the cemetery, at the intersection of Ramirez Street and the former Padre Street right-of-way. A utility box (see Photo 22) is located within the cemetery, and although it is directly adjacent to several graves, its gray color and low profiles allow it to blend into its surroundings. Several power poles supporting overhead electrical lines are located in the grass median along Ramirez Street.

***Integrity***

Old Bayview Cemetery retains a high degree of integrity. The cemetery's size has remained unchanged since the Padre Street right-of-way was abandoned in 1957 and the cemetery reached its current configuration. No buildings, walkways, or drives have been added following the end of the period of significance, and no additional burials have taken place since 1989. The cemetery retains integrity of location above Nueces and Corpus Christi Bays and integrity of association as it continues to serve the function for which it was created. It also retains integrity of design as the historic spatial organization remains unchanged, with no building or circulation additions, and although many of the monuments have been lost or damaged, the character-defining features of the extant headstones and other monuments have been largely retained. Materials have mostly remained intact, although it is possible that some extant monuments replaced earlier wooden headboards. Workmanship is retained, although some inscriptions and decorative details have deteriorated due to exposure to the elements and several markers have been damaged beyond repair or lost. As is the case for many cemeteries, it is occasionally victim to vandalism, resulting in the damage and destruction of monuments. Grave markers and monuments are repaired and reset when possible. Old Bayview has diminished integrity of setting; the industrial area remains north of the cemetery, but the residential fabric that formerly surrounded the cemetery to the east, south, and west has largely been demolished. However, with the numerous extant headstones dating to the mid- to late 1800s and early 1900s, their somewhat haphazard orientation, the presence of mature mesquite trees over mowed grass, and the enclosing fence, the cemetery retains integrity of feeling of an early pioneer burial ground.

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<sup>56</sup> *Corpus Christi Caller*, 26 May 1899; Merriman, "Merriman Addresses Plea for Preservation."

<sup>57</sup> Phillips, "Preserving our past."

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## Statement of Significance

Old Bayview Cemetery's significance stems from its role as the first U.S. federal military cemetery in Texas and as the final resting place for citizens of Corpus Christi both before the city was incorporated and for more than 100 years afterward. Although no new grave spaces were sold after 1898, interments — especially of members of the city's "pioneer families" — continued for more than 100 years.

Old Bayview Cemetery is nominated to the National Register at the state level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Military, as the first federal military cemetery established in Texas. Known historically simply as "The Graveyard" or as the "Old Military Cemetery," Old Bayview Cemetery was officially established in 1845 as a federal military cemetery after ten U.S. Army officers and members of the crew of the steamship *Dayton* were killed by two nearly simultaneous boiler explosions during a troop transport mission.<sup>58</sup> Old Bayview serves as the final resting place for veterans from multiple eras and wars, including the War of 1812, the Texas Revolution, the Mexican War, the Civil War, and the Spanish American War. Old Bayview Cemetery is also nominated under Criterion A in the area of Exploration/Settlement at the local level for its role as the primary community burial site for Corpus Christi during the city's early development. The only established cemetery in Corpus Christi until the late 1860s, people of all races and religions were buried on the site. Old Bayview was the burial ground for civic leaders from throughout Corpus Christi's history, as well as victims of defining regional events, such as devastating hurricanes and yellow fever epidemics, although many interments were removed to new perpetual care cemeteries after those were established in 1898 and 1914.

Located on a bluff overlooking Nueces and Corpus Christi Bays, just north of downtown Corpus Christi, Old Bayview Cemetery meets Criteria Consideration D (cemetery) because its significance is based on its age, dating from a very early period of the Corpus Christi's history, and its association with important events and the broad patterns of Corpus Christi history. The overall period of significance is from 1845–1957, beginning with the first military burials and ending when the Padre Street right-of-way was abandoned, and the cemetery's current boundaries were established.

This property is nominated as a Site, rather than a District. It contains a multitude of grave markers that are located in a generally random manner throughout the property, without a visible organizational pattern. The Site contains no roadways or walkways, Texas centennial markers, mausoleums, buildings, or distinctive landscape elements, and the extant perimeter fence is relatively recent. It is not being nominated as a collection of grave markers that are artistically or architecturally distinctive. Finally, the flat granite markers commemorating the first military burials are contemporary and do not indicate the exact locations of those burials.

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Corpus Christi is the seat of Nueces County, located along the southern Texas Gulf Coast. Founded in 1839 and incorporated in 1852, the city historically was one of Texas' secondary port cities and had an estimated population of 325,000 people in 2018. Its bay is sheltered behind Mustang Island, one of the barrier islands that line the coast; Aransas Pass separates Mustang Island from St. Joseph's Island to the north and provides entry to Corpus Christi Bay and Nueces Bay.

## Indigenous Habitation and European Exploration

Archeological evidence suggests that humans may have occupied the area around present-day Corpus Christi as much as 6,000–8,000 years ago. Several thousand years later, the nomadic Indigenous people today known as the Aransas

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<sup>58</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Frank Wagner, "DAYTON," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/etd03>.

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Indians lived in the area, probably from around 2000 BCE until sometime around 1200–1300 CE.<sup>59</sup> Several other nomadic bands, including the Karankawa Indians, inhabited the Gulf Coast from Galveston Bay to what is now Corpus Christi, around 1400 CE. Other Indigenous peoples who were known to have lived in the area prior to European settlement include the Coahuiltecons, Lipan Apaches, and Tonkawas.<sup>60</sup>

The date of the first European exploration of the area is unknown. In 1519, Alonzo Alvarez de Pineda may have reached Corpus Christi Bay during a voyage along the coast from Florida to Mexico; however, the records of his expedition have been lost.<sup>61</sup> Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca and a few other surviving members of the ill-fated Narvaez Expedition slowly made their way overland from present-day Folletts Island (the barrier island south of Galveston) to Tampico, Mexico, between 1528 and 1535. Their exact route is unknown, but at least some of the Spaniards lived among the Karankawa during those years.<sup>62</sup> René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, the French explorer, briefly established a settlement in nearby Victoria County in 1685,<sup>63</sup> spurring renewed Spanish interest in the area. Directed by Spanish authorities, Alonso De Leon, an explorer and governor of Coahuila, searched repeatedly for the French settlement, which lay in ruins when he finally located it in 1689; De Leon then returned to Coahuila.<sup>64</sup>

The area was not explored by Europeans again until 1747, when Joaquín de Orobio y Basterra travelled down the Nueces River from La Bahia to Corpus Christi Bay. The Spanish made several attempts to settle the area at the mouth of the Nueces River between 1747 and 1790, and plans for settlements of Germans and formerly enslaved people were made in the 1830s, but none of these were realized.<sup>65</sup> By the 1840s, diseases spread by Europeans, violent conflicts with settlers, and other displacements had dramatically reduced the Indigenous population in the area. The surviving Karankawa people fled to Mexico around the time that the town of Corpus Christi was established.<sup>66</sup>

### Early Mexican and American Settlements

The area where Old Bayview Cemetery is now located was part of several different and competing land grants, and as a result, its ownership was disputed over the years. One of the first land grants was made to Enrique Villareal, a rancher and soldier likely born in what is now Matamoros, Mexico. Villareal was grazing cattle in the area by 1810, when he received a land grant from the king of Spain for a 10-*sitio* (42,840-acre) parcel called *Rincon del Oso* (“The Bear’s Corner”). Unfortunately, records of the land grant were lost in a flood in 1812. Villareal subsequently fought in

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<sup>59</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Christopher Long, "ARANSAS COUNTY,"  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hca04>.

<sup>60</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Carol A. Lipscomb, "KARANKAWA INDIANS,"  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/bmk05>.

<sup>61</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Robert S. Weddle, "ALVAREZ DE PINEDA, ALONSO,"  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fal72>.

<sup>62</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Donald E. Chipman, "CABEZA DE VACA, ÁLVAR NÚÑEZ,"  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fca06>.

<sup>63</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Robert S. Weddle, "LA SALLE'S TEXAS SETTLEMENT,"  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/uel07>.

<sup>64</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Donald E. Chipman, "DE LEON, ALONSO,"  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fde06>.

<sup>65</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Christopher Long, "CORPUS CHRISTI, TX,"  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hdc03>.

<sup>66</sup> Texas Historical Commission, "Karankawa Indians," historic marker text, Atlas Record Number 5355002899,  
<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/>.

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the Battle of Medina (1813) in what was then the Mexican state of Coahuila de T ejas, and as an officer, in the Mexican War for Independence (1810–1821) and in the War of Texas Independence (1835–1836). On November 16, 1831, the Mexican government made Villareal’s ownership official by issuing him a land grant for the *Rincon del Oso*.<sup>67</sup>

Henry L. Kinney was a native of Pennsylvania; by the time he settled near Brownsville, Texas, in 1838, he was calling himself “Colonel” and making the unsubstantiated claim that he had fought against Seminole Indians in Florida.<sup>68</sup> Later that year, Kinney and his business partner William P. Aubrey set up a store on the north side of the Nueces River at Live Oak Point, and subsequently crossed the river into the *Rincon del Oso*, where (without permission from Villareal) they established a trading post. When confronted by Villareal in 1841, Kinney purchased one *sitio* of the land; after Villareal’s death in 1842, Kinney purchased the rest of the *Rincon del Oso*.<sup>69</sup> The Kinney trading post was sufficiently established to merit a post office in 1842; by then, the village was known as Corpus Christi (Spanish for “the body of Christ”). An unsuccessful attempt to incorporate the town in 1846 followed the establishment of Nueces County and the town’s designation as the county seat. Corpus Christi was incorporated for good in 1852. Kinney’s many attempts to promote the town and attract new residents were impeded by yellow fever, a dearth of fresh water, and the lack of a deep-water port, which made shipping in and out of Corpus Christi difficult. Nevertheless, while serving terms in both houses of the Texas legislature, Kinney heavily recruited new people to the area and acted as a developer, selling land to new settlers, especially immigrants.<sup>70</sup>

### **Military Presence and the Explosion of the *Dayton***

During 1845, while the United States Congress was considering and approving the annexation of the Republic of Texas, the administration of President James K. Polk was pressuring Mexico to agree on setting the Republic’s southern boundary at the Rio Grande and to the sale of northern California. Polk named General Zachary Taylor to lead the U.S. Army in Texas and sent troops there from New Orleans in July 1845. By 1846, nearly half of the Army was stationed under Taylor at his camp at Corpus Christi (see Figure 1). When Mexico refused to negotiate with Polk, Taylor was ordered to advance south and establish Fort Brown on the north side of the Rio Grande opposite Matamoros. This began the Mexican War, which went on until 1848.<sup>71</sup>

When Taylor and his troops arrived, Corpus Christi consisted of “some twenty to thirty houses and two bars”;<sup>72</sup> they set up a camp that quickly grew to be nearly two miles long, with “a thousand spotless white tents along the shelly margin of the shore of Corpus Christi Bay.”<sup>73</sup> By October 1845, 3,860 men were stationed there, and they suffered through a cold, wet winter beset with a variety of illnesses and a severe lack of firewood.<sup>74</sup>

The large Army encampment at Corpus Christi was supplied from a depot on St. Joseph’s Island, the barrier island just north of Aransas Pass, about 20 miles away. A sidewheeled steamship, the *Dayton*, was contracted to transport troops

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<sup>67</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Clotilde P. Garc a, "VILLARREAL, ENRIQUE," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fvi21>.

<sup>68</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Amelia W. Williams, "KINNEY, HENRY LAWRENCE," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fki29>.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Long, “CORPUS CHRISTI.”

<sup>71</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, K. Jack Bauer, "MEXICAN WAR," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/qdm02>.

<sup>72</sup> Darwin Payne, “Camp Life in the Army of Occupation: Corpus Christi, July 1845 to March 1846,” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 73, No. 3 (Jan. 1970), 327.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 331.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 335.

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and supplies to and from the depot.<sup>75</sup> Lt. Col. Ethan Allen Hitchcock, of the U.S. Army Engineers and stationed at Corpus Christi, described the *Dayton* as “a small old steamer”;<sup>76</sup> it was 10 years old then, having been constructed in 1835 in Pittsburgh, from which it was used for trade on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers for a few years. In 1840, the *Dayton* was brought to Texas, where its shallow draft was ideally suited for the Gulf of Mexico and the bays sheltered behind the barrier islands that lined the coast.<sup>77</sup> It left Galveston for Corpus Christi on August 6, 1845, “under charter ... to convey troops to the main land.”<sup>78</sup>

On September 12, 1845, the *Dayton* was making her final trip from Corpus Christi to St. Joseph’s Island, where she was scheduled to be replaced by the *White Wing*. She had left camp around 10:00 a.m. with 30–40 passengers, and by noon was passing McGloins Bluff, on the northeast shore of Corpus Christi Bay, near present-day Ingleside. Suddenly, one of the boilers exploded, instantly killing two officers, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Benjamin Berry and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Thaddeus Higgins. As the burning ship sank in the shallow water, the second boiler exploded. A small boat rescued the remaining wounded troops and crew from the bay. A young lieutenant, Ulysses S. Grant, had very nearly been aboard, deciding only at the last minute to stay behind at camp.<sup>79</sup> For weeks afterward, newspapers throughout the United States relayed news of the disaster as reported by the *New Orleans Picayune* on September 18 and 19, 1845.

Lt. Col. Ethan Allen Hitchcock described the incident in his diary on September 13, and the next day noted that “A military funeral took place to-day at the burial-ground which I selected. It is on the brow of the hill northwest of camp, and commands a view of the Nueces and Corpus Christi Bay. It is a beautiful spot. Another body was found afloat and brought in to-day, and two of the injured have died in hospital, making ten deaths from the accident.”<sup>80</sup> Henry Kinney is said to have donated the land for the burial ground.<sup>81</sup>

The October 15, 1845, edition of the *Washington Union* newspaper from Washington, DC, provided an eyewitness account from one of the passengers on the *Dayton* at the time of the explosion, written in a letter dated September 18 by Captain George Hampton Crossman, the Quarter Master:

You will probably have heard, before this letter can reach you, of the terrible and fatal disaster which happened on the 12<sup>th</sup> instant, on board the Steamer *Dayton*, recently employed here in the public service. The boat was to have been discharged that day, on her return from here to the depot at St. Joseph’s Island, where the “*White Wing*” from New Orleans had arrived to take her place.

It happened that several officers, who had been ordered to the depot, upon duties connected with their company property, together with a party of ten or fifteen non-commissioned officers and privates, also took passage with me on board the *Dayton*.

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<sup>75</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Frank Wagner, “DAYTON,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/etd03>.

<sup>76</sup> *Ethan Allen Hitchcock, Fifty Years in Camp and Field: Diary of Major-General Ethan Allen Hitchcock*, (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1909), 201.

<sup>77</sup> Frank Wagner, “DAYTON.”

<sup>78</sup> “Late from Texas,” *Baltimore Daily Commercial* (Baltimore, Maryland), August 19, 1845, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/325590498>.

<sup>79</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Frank Wagner, “DAYTON,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/etd03>; “Late from Corpus Christi — Terrible Steamboat Explosion,” *New Orleans Picayune*, September 19, 1845, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/25593451>; “Interesting from Texas: Disastrous Steamboat Explosion,” *Mobile Daily Advertiser*, Mobile, Alabama, September 22, 1845, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/37980970>.

<sup>80</sup> Ethan Allen Hitchcock, *Fifty Years in Camp and Field: Diary of Major-General Ethan Allen Hitchcock*, (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1909), 201.

<sup>81</sup> Ward and Noel, *Cemetery Data of Nueces County, Texas*, 214.

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We left her about 10 o'clock a.m., and about 12 m.,<sup>82</sup> while the boat was under way, the boilers burst with a tremendous explosion, killing instantly two officers, (Lieutenants Higgins and Berry, of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry,) two sergeants, six of the officers and crew of the boat, and wounding several others, some of whom will yet die of their wounds.

At the moment of the explosion, I was sitting with two officers, (Lieutenants Graham, 4<sup>th</sup>, and Gordon, 3<sup>d</sup> infantry,) on the boiler-deck, near the chimney, and immediately over the forward part of one of the boilers. We were all thrown up high into the air, and fell into the water about eighty yards from the boat. The boat, with nearly all the cabin blown off her, immediately took fire, and very soon sunk, in about two fathoms water, having still on board many of the wounded, the dying, and the dead. The scene that immediately followed, and which I leave you to imagine, was horrible and appalling! Its terrible reality baffles and defies description, and I will not even attempt it. Fortunately, we were not far from the shore — not more than a quarter of a mile; and all who were precipitated into the water, except those who were killed outright, were saved by the small boat, and by clinging to fragments of the shattered wreck and fire-wood, which covered the water in every direction.

Lieutenants Graham and Gordon, as well as myself, escaped with our lives most singularly; for we were, from our position, and the marks still left upon our clothes, which were riddled and torn to pieces as if by grape-shot, in the very vortex of the explosion. The thick, heavy wooden seats of the chairs on which we were sitting, probably alone saved us from destruction.

The whole number of persons killed, and who have since died of their wounds, is eleven; and it is feared, two others, now in the hospital, cannot survive.

The only severe injury I received was from a contusion on the leg; which has kept me confined to my tent until to-day; although I have not yet remitted a day's duty, and have been able to attend to my office duties, &c. I have been on horseback this morning, and in a few days anticipate a completed recovery from my lameness and all my hurts. Lieutenants Graham and Gordon, both of them bruised, and slightly burnt, will also, in a few days, be able to return to duty."

From these contemporaneous accounts, the "Explosion of the Steamship Dayton" Texas Historical Marker, and a survey of the cemetery published in 1990, we conclude that those who died as a result of the *Dayton* explosion and were buried at Old Bayview Cemetery included the following; the first eight are listed on the subject marker.

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Benjamin A. Berry (1817–1845), Company C, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry; a native of South Carolina; died 12 September 1845 at the age of 28.<sup>83</sup>
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Thaddeus Higgins (1817–1845); Company G, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry; born Pennsylvania; died 12 September 1845 at the age of 28.<sup>84</sup>
3. 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Richard Edwards (1808–1845), Company F, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry; born in New York; died 12 September 1845 at the age of 33.<sup>85</sup>
4. Sgt. Daniel McKerns (1818–1845), Company H, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry; born in Chester, Pennsylvania; died 12 September 1845 at the age of 26.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> The use of "12 m." to indicate noon is derived from the Latin *meridies* or mid-day.

<sup>83</sup> Ward and Noel, *Cemetery Data of Nueces County, Texas*, 218.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Marker text, "Explosion of the Steamship Dayton," Texas Historical Marker; grave marker at Old Bayview Cemetery.

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5. Pvt. John Hughes (1823–1845), Company G, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry; born in Chambly, Quebec, Canada; died of his injuries on 15 September 1845.<sup>87</sup>
6. Pvt. James Johnson (1808–1845), Company I, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry; born in Nottingham, England; died of his injuries on 29 September 1845 at age 36.<sup>88</sup>
7. Pvt. James Marshall (1805–1845), Company F, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry; born in Newcastle, Pennsylvania; died of his injuries on 21 September 1845 at age 39.<sup>89</sup>
8. Pvt. Alexander Iwanowski (1805–1845), Co. H, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, age 39, born in Kamienic, Poland.<sup>90</sup>
9. Capt. West, the clerk of the boat, was badly scalded and by October 20 had died of his wounds.<sup>91</sup>
10. An unnamed African American deck hand, died 13 September 1845.<sup>92</sup> This man may have been the “cabin boy” who had died of his injuries, as reported in an October 1845 news account.<sup>93</sup>

Although no complete list of the wounded was reported at the time, others known to have been injured in the disaster included:<sup>94</sup>

1. Capt. George Hampton Crossman, the quarter master.
2. Lieutenant Graham, of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry, was “slightly scalded.”
3. Lieutenant William Gordon of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, was slightly injured.
4. Dr. Crittenden, of the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry, “was thrown down and much bruised by timbers which fell upon him, but he was again about.”
5. “The cook, a lad, was so severely burnt and scalded that it was thought on the 15<sup>th</sup> he could not possibly survive.”
6. “The pilot of the boat had an arm broken.”
7. “Capt. Nicholls, of the Texan sloop Cutter, who was on board the boat, had one of his legs broken.”
8. A “Mr. Graves was also badly burnt and scalded.”

Old Bayview Cemetery became the first federal military cemetery in Texas by virtue of timing; the explosion of the *Dayton* took place just as the annexation of Texas to the United States was being completed by the U.S. Congress.

Following Texas’ successful war of independence against Mexico in 1836, President Martin van Buren refrained from annexing Texas after the Mexicans threatened war. Accordingly, while the United States extended diplomatic recognition to Texas, it took no further action concerning annexation until 1844, when President John Tyler restarted negotiations with the Republic of Texas. His efforts culminated on April 12 in a Treaty of Annexation, an event that caused Mexico to sever diplomatic relations with United States. Tyler, however, lacked the votes in the Senate to ratify the treaty, and it was defeated by a wide margin in June. Shortly before he left office, Tyler tried again, this time through a joint resolution of both houses of Congress.

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<sup>87</sup> Ward and Noel, *Cemetery Data of Nueces County, Texas*, 218; Hughes’ grave marker at Old Bayview Cemetery lists his birth year as 1823, which would have made him 22 or 23 at the time of the explosion, but the Texas Historical Marker “Explosion of the Steamship Dayton” lists his age at the time of his death as 18 years old.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid; grave marker at Old Bayview Cemetery.

<sup>91</sup> “Arrival from Texas,” *Louisville Daily Courier* (Louisville, Kentucky), October 20, 1845, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/118738779>.

<sup>92</sup> “Late from Corpus Christi—Disastrous Steamboat Explosion,” *Louisville Daily Courier* (Louisville, Kentucky), September 30, 1845, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/37982666/>.

<sup>93</sup> “Arrival from Texas,” October 20, 1845.

<sup>94</sup> “Late from Corpus Christi — Disastrous Steamboat Explosion,” *New Orleans Picayune*.

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With the support of President-elect Polk, Tyler managed to get the joint resolution passed on March 1, 1845, and Texas was admitted into the United States on December 29.<sup>95</sup>

The casualties of the *Dayton* explosion were the first deaths attributed the Mexican War, having taken place just before General Zachary Taylor's troops moved south to engage the Mexican army. While three other U.S. federal military bases were established in Texas during the Mexican War, all post-date Old Bayview Cemetery, only one has a cemetery, and the interments in that cemetery began nearly four decades after those at Old Bayview.

- Fort Texas (later known as Fort Brown, near present-day Brownsville) was established on the northern bank of the Rio Grande in March 1846 by General Zachary Taylor, whose men had previously been camped at Corpus Christi.<sup>96</sup> Nothing remains of the Fort Texas site.
- Taylor also established Fort Polk, northeast of Fort Texas near present-day Port Isabel, in March 1846. That land was returned to its previous owners after the post was abandoned in 1850.<sup>97</sup>
- Fort Bliss (El Paso) was established in 1848, and the first interment at Fort Bliss National Cemetery was not made until 1883.<sup>98</sup>

### Development of Corpus Christi

The presence of so many troops accomplished what all of Henry Kinney's glowing advertisements in northern newspapers could not—it brought commerce to Corpus Christi, which continued after the Army had decamped. By January 1846, "four to six vessels daily were arriving via the Gulf of Mexico at Corpus Christi, all of them carrying cargo." The ships brought lumber, food, clothing, household goods, livestock, and cotton.<sup>99</sup> Nearly 200 saloons, as well as theaters, bowling alleys, billiard halls and "gambling establishments" offered entertainment to the troops<sup>100</sup> before the camp closed and the soldiers moved south into Mexico in March 1846.<sup>101</sup> Even without the Army presence, the city had made the transition from sleepy village to bustling port, and it continued to grow steadily through the 1850s.<sup>102</sup>

The city became an important port of trade and a shipping point for the Morgan Steamship Line, which handled nearly all of the trade to Texas before 1860. Corpus Christi's importance to commerce increased during the Civil War, when small boats evaded the blockade of Union gunboats stationed in the Gulf of Mexico to move goods through the bays behind the barrier islands, from the Brazos River to Mexico. The city was bombarded several times and occupied by Union forces during and after the war. The area's economy in the late 1800s was largely based on livestock (first wool, then cattle) with animals and animal products both processed in and shipped from the port of Corpus Christi. A ship

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<sup>95</sup> "The Annexation of Texas, the Mexican War, and the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, 1844–1848," *Milestones in the History of Foreign Relations*, U.S. State Department Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1830-1860/texas-annexation>.

<sup>96</sup> "Fort Texas/Fort Brown," National Park Service, Palo Alto Battlefield website, <https://www.nps.gov/paal/learn/historyculture/siegeofforttexas.htm>.

<sup>97</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Thomas W. Cutrer, rev. by Norman Rozeff, "FORT POLK," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/qcf10>.

<sup>98</sup> "Historical Information," U.S. Veterans Administration, Fort Bliss National Cemetery website, <https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/ftbliss.asp>; *Handbook of Texas Online*, Leon C. Metz, "FORT BLISS," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/qbf03>.

<sup>99</sup> Payne, 336.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 337–338.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 340.

<sup>102</sup> Long, "CORPUS CHRISTI."

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channel was dredged for the first time in 1874 (to a depth of eight feet) and again in the 1920s to create the present deep-water port, accessible to large ships. Railroads also strengthened Corpus Christi's economic position, beginning in the 1870s, by providing access to inland communities; by 1914, four railroads served the city, and it was promoted as a tourist destination. Damaging hurricanes had struck Corpus Christi in the nineteenth century, but the hurricane of 1919 was especially devastating, killing nearly 400 people and destroying much of the central business district and the city's North Beach area. The opening of the deep-water port in 1926 erased any residual economic impacts of the storm and powered the city's growth for the remainder of the twentieth century. Today, Corpus Christi's diverse economy is supported by shipping, petrochemicals, a U.S. Navy airbase, commercial fishing, and tourism.<sup>103</sup>

### Old Bayview Cemetery

For several decades after Zachary Taylor's troops left their encampment in 1846, the cemetery property (still owned by Kinney) was actively used as a community burial site.<sup>104</sup> Although burial records from 1846–1896 have been lost,<sup>105</sup> many people surely would have been interred there, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Corpus Christi and other towns along the Texas Gulf Coast suffered from regular epidemics of yellow fever and cholera between 1836–1867,<sup>106</sup> with two “devastating yellow fever invasions [in] 1854 and 1867 and [an] influenza-pneumonia assault [in] 1919 [which] touched almost every family in the community.”<sup>107</sup> Wooden grave markers still extant in 1967 were said to measure “an unusual” 1½ inches thick, generating speculation that those markers at the graves of members of the First Presbyterian Church who died in the yellow fever epidemic of 1867 may have been made with the lumber imported for the congregation's first church building that same year.<sup>108</sup>

It was several decades before the City of Corpus Christi took ownership of the cemetery. Before the city was incorporated in 1852, a legal battle disputed the ownership of much of the land being developed as Corpus Christi. In 1849, Levi Jones, a physician and land speculator, argued that the title to two leagues of land (about 8,900 acres) that Enrique Villareal was granted in 1831 had been faulty. Jones found the “rightful owners” and purchased the land, later selling it to J. Temple Doswell. Doswell argued for his ownership all the way to the United States Supreme Court, which, after 24 years, upheld Doswell's claim in 1873.<sup>109</sup> The following year, a newspaper article discusses the unclear status of the cemetery:

Who owns it? Who controls it? Who takes care of it? We believe Col. H. L. Kinney gave it for a public burial ground. It is within the city limits. Therefore the City council, so far as the Kinney title is concerned, has the control. We presume the contestant Col. Jones, would never litigate or contest for the Cemetery. All human beings are disposed to leave unmolested the bones of their race. Then it is the City's business to take care of the cemetery, but have they ever done so, or will they? What's every body's business is no bodies and equally true what's everybody's property is nobody's. The care of our cemetery has been no body's business, or everybody's, which amounts to the same thing. All that has ever been done, has been at private expense.

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ward and Noel, *Cemetery Data of Nueces County, Texas*, 215, 222.

<sup>105</sup> Ward and Noel, *Cemetery Data of Nueces County, Texas*, 215.

<sup>106</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Robert Bernstein, "PUBLIC HEALTH," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/smp01>; *Handbook of Texas Online*, Chester R. Burns, "EPIDEMIC DISEASES," accessed October 27, 2019, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/sme01>.

<sup>107</sup> “Early Epidemics Took Heavy Toll,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, August 28, 1966, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/21958899>.

<sup>108</sup> “Growth of First Presbyterian Church, Founded One Hundred Years Ago, Parallels That of City,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, May 7, 1967, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24097327>.

<sup>109</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Frank Wagner, "JONES, LEVI," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fjo58>.

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Sporadic efforts on the part of a few deserving and public-spirited ladies have sometimes, now and then, placed our cemetery in a condition to relieve somewhat the stigma of disgraceful neglect and quiet the reproachful censure of the passing stranger, but there being no continuous care on the part of anybody, what has been done, is suffered to go to decay.<sup>110</sup>

In 1857, City “aldermen Lovenskold, Holbein, and Fisher were appointed by the mayor to investigate into the rights and titles of a cemetery donated to the U.S. government in 1845 by H.L. Kinney and taken over and used as a city cemetery,” but they do not appear to have made any progress as late as 1858.<sup>111</sup>

It appears these land disputes were never fully resolved until the cemetery property was deeded to the City of Corpus Christi in 1884 by the Corpus Christi City & Land Company (which received its interest in the property from Levi Jones<sup>112</sup>) and also sold to the City in 1897 by J.W. Ward and G.R. Scott, who received the land from the Kinney estate.<sup>113</sup> The unclear title to the property may have had something to do with why Old Bayview was never a planned, organized burial ground. There appear to have been no costs or dues for plots and no organization responsible for organizing the burials or undertaking upkeep. Given the lack of oversight at the cemetery, the public quickly became frustrated with the cemetery’s unkempt condition and the unorganized method of burials. Articles from the 1860s through the 1890s decry the fact that the fences were falling down and that the cemetery was overgrown, with comments such as, “Our cemetery is in a wretched condition. The fences are down; what improvements have been made are scarcely visible, and weeds and brush grow with impunity.”<sup>114</sup>

The cemetery was also very full. A news article in 1886 suggested that “a cemetery association [should] be formed in Corpus Christi to select, purchase, enclose and lay off in the proper way a new burying ground. It is a fact, and one which the grave digger, Anthony, will testify, that to make a new grave without interfering with old remains is almost an impossibility, except when one enters some private enclosure or goes down on the hill side, and then it is not certain that he won’t find remains.”<sup>115</sup>

In response, a group of women met at the home of Eli and Elizabeth Merriman to organize an Old Bay View Cemetery Association in November 1896. “At a subsequent meeting, attended by a committee from the city council, upon invitation from the association, it was decided to permit no more burials in this cemetery [Old Bayview], except to those having close relatives interred there, the ground being about all taken up, and it being the wish of every one present that the remains of no old-timer and pioneer be disturbed. The city then ordered all the old dilapidated fences in the enclosed cemetery removed in order that the sacred grounds might be cleaned up and made to look decent and respectable.”<sup>116</sup> The Association also established the “New Bayview Cemetery” and began selling lots in 1898. The “New Cemetery” was located in Hillcrest Park “west of this city, the association having had four acres of its land fronting on Nueces Bay, cleared, plowed, ... and platted. ... The association ... expects to shell its walks and drives

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<sup>110</sup> “Our Cemetery Again!!” *Nueces Valley*. April 25, 1874. <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/history-1/60-help/112-communicated-our-cemetery-again>.

<sup>111</sup> Mrs. Frank DeGarmo, “Pathfinders of Texas,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, May 13, 1936, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/20718371>.

<sup>112</sup> Nueces County property records, deed book Q, page 238.

<sup>113</sup> Ward and Noel, *Cemetery Data of Nueces County, Texas*, 214.

<sup>114</sup> “Our Cemetery.” *Corpus Christi Ranchero*, February 25, 1860, <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/history-1/60-help/109-news-article-1860>.

<sup>115</sup> “The City Cemetery.” *Corpus Christi Caller*. August 15, 1886, <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/history-1/60-help/117-news-item-1886>.

<sup>116</sup> E.T. Merriman, “Shadows of Historic Pioneer Days in Corpus Christi Hover About Old Bayview Cemetery,” *Corpus Christi Caller*. May 18, 1924, <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/history-1/60-help/128-shoadows-of-historic-pioneer-days>

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the next improvement it makes.”<sup>117</sup> Later accounts state that the remains of many people buried at Old Bayview were moved to New Bayview or another new cemetery, Rose Hill Cemetery, established nearby in 1914. However, it does not appear that anyone created or kept a list of removals, and no comprehensive record of these has been developed to date.

In 1912, the Corpus Christi Caller reported that vandals had “ruined a number of tombstones by knocking them over and breaking them.”<sup>118</sup> Just two years later, Rose Hill Cemetery’s large display advertisements asked, “Have you ever witnessed the dilapidated and neglected appearance of the average Cemetery NOT UNDER PERPETUAL CARE? Contrast such a condition with the permanence and perpetuity of Rose Hill Cemetery.” The ad ends with, “We make removals from nearby Cemeteries free of expense to purchasers of lots in Rose Hill.”<sup>119</sup> Since Old Bayview Cemetery was the non-perpetual-care cemetery most “nearby,” one could easily conclude that it was the subject, however obliquely, of this advertising campaign.

As its members aged, the Bay View Cemetery Association became inactive, and the Old Bayview Cemetery once again fell into a state of disrepair, with no entity overseeing its maintenance. Retired newsman Eli T. Merriman maintained the cemetery beginning around 1914, using contributions to keep it in repair. In 1924, Merriman wrote a series of articles in the *Corpus Christi Caller* illustrating the important history of the cemetery and its occupants, seeking to “interest the city council and citizens generally in having these sacred grounds, about three acres, preserved and cared for as they ought to be – parked and beautified with flower beds, shade trees, etc.”<sup>120</sup>

At the request of some of the ladies of the Bay View Cemetery Association, about ten years ago, the writer took charge of the old cemetery, looking after it ever since, keeping a man employed there about one-third of his time, paying him from contributions received from friends of the dead. During this time the writer has had the large fence enclosing the grounds repaired twice – one after the 1916 storm and once after the 1919 storm; the grounds sodded with Bermuda grass and over four hundred feet of water pipe laid through the grounds; purchased lawn mowers, hoes, rakes, etc., and today the grounds look fairly good for the time spent on them, as good or better than some city parks. The people buried in this cemetery are of many denominations and nationalities; white and black, possibly two thousand, including soldiers of the north and soldiers of the south; many veterans of the Mexican war.<sup>121</sup>

Eli T. Merriman (1852–1941) was a Corpus Christi pioneer and one of the city’s most respected civic leaders. A constant promoter of the city’s development, Merriman owned and edited the *Corpus Christi Caller* and was prominent among Texas newspaper professionals. Born near Brownsville, he moved with his family to Corpus Christi in 1865. At age 18, he worked for the *Nueces Valley*, an early Corpus Christi newspaper. He also worked briefly for the *Galveston News* in 1874 but returned to Corpus Christi to be employed by the *Corpus Christi Gazette*. In 1876, Merriman and William H. Maltby established a newspaper called the *Corpus Christi Free Press*. After Maltby’s death in 1880, Merriman purchased his partner’s half of the paper. In 1883, he sold the business to the Caller Publishing Company, which he joined, becoming an editor, manager, and stockholder. After his two partners left three years later, Merriman published the *Caller* alone for 29 years. He sold the paper to Mrs. Henrietta King, widow of Captain

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<sup>117</sup> “As to the New Cemetery.” *Corpus Christi Weekly Caller*. May 20, 1898, <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/history-1/60-help/122-as-to-the-new-cemetery>.

<sup>118</sup> “Vandals desecrated Old Bayview Cemetery,” *Corpus Christi Caller*, January 23, 1913, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/71218778>.

<sup>119</sup> Advertisement, *Corpus Christi Caller*, August 30, 1914, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/70940294>.

<sup>120</sup> Merriman, “Shadows of Historic Pioneer Days.”

<sup>121</sup> Merriman, “Merriman Addresses Plea for Preservation.”

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Richard King, in 1911. Thereafter, Merriman dealt in real estate and insurance. Never losing his interest in the *Caller*, he continued to contribute articles, letters, and advice. He was a charter member of the Texas Press Association and eventually became its president. Merriman fought for nearly 60 years to have a deep-water port for Corpus Christi, which was realized in 1926. He likewise was instrumental in promoting railroad construction to Corpus Christi and waged a campaign to save the old Bayview Cemetery. Upon his death in 1941, Eli Merriman was one of Corpus Christi's most revered citizens.<sup>122</sup>

In 1940, shortly before his death, Merriman helped to reestablish the Bay View Cemetery Association. He served as its vice president; the other officers of the Association were prominent women from "pioneer families," including Lillie Mussett (Mrs. Sam) Rankin, president; Marie M. von Blucher, recording secretary; Mary (Mrs. Hugh R.) Sutherland, corresponding secretary, and Hettie M. Anderson (Mrs. William) Biggio, treasurer.<sup>123</sup> Mary Sutherland's mother-in-law, Mary A. Sutherland, had been one of the founding members of the original Bay View Cemetery Association.<sup>124</sup> A newspaper account at the time stated that Merriman, "one of the few remaining members has served as overseer, without pay, for years (having) turned the \$25 monthly check allowed him over to the caretaker. Hinio Clark has been the caretaker for the last six years."<sup>125</sup> While the article goes on to note that Clark "lives in a small house in one corner of the cemetery," no documentation or evidence beyond this article has been located. Perhaps a small house or structure was located in a corner of the cemetery for use as an office or storage; Clark and his family lived several blocks to the west of the cemetery. His residence is given as 1403 Josephine Street on the 1930 U.S. Census and as 1407 San Pedro Street on both the 1940 U.S. Census and the certificate of his death in 1957, at the age of 72. Clark apparently was an effective groundskeeper. A 1942 article notes that "A visitor will find the grass green and clipped; beds of blue bonnets dotting here and there, shrubs growing and mesquite in springtime splendor, inviting the birds to come and make their sanctuary away from the din and dangers of the growing city."<sup>126</sup>

Once again, the Bay View Cemetery Association members grew older and the organization became inactive; according to the Texas Secretary of State's records of incorporation, the organization's status automatically expired at the 50-year mark in 1947.<sup>127</sup>

In 1955, a rumor circulated around Corpus Christi that Pancho Villa had buried \$1.6 million in gold there. A 79-year-old "spinster," Dolores Vasquez of Brawley, California, said that the gold had been hidden in the cemetery in 1911 or 1912. Concerned for her own health, she wanted the treasure to go to U.S. veterans, and mentioned the name Manuel Perreda, who she said was a friend of the cemetery caretaker's. The caretaker, Hinio Clark, confirmed that he had known Perreda, who had died two years earlier and never mentioned a treasure cache. Vasquez claimed to have been a colonel in Villa's army and had identification cards bearing that out, as well as scars from bullet wounds, which she said were inflicted by a firing squad, who had then left her for dead. Although she provided detailed information about the location of the graves in which the gold was said to be buried, a former personal servant of Villa's (Manuel Hernandez, at the time working as a school janitor) called the story "pure bunk," saying, "I can't believe that the

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<sup>122</sup> "Eli T. Merriman History Collection." *Texas A&M University- Corpus Christi Special Collections and Archives*, <http://archivesspace.tamucc.edu/repositories/4/resources/133>.

<sup>123</sup> "Movement Started to Make This a National Shrine Burial Ground May Be Made Into Shrine." *Corpus Christi Caller*. May 3, 1940, <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/history-1/60-help/134-movement-started>

<sup>124</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Frank Wagner, "SUTHERLAND, MARY AUGUSTA MCCRAW," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fsu23>.

<sup>125</sup> "Movement Started," *Corpus Christi Caller*.

<sup>126</sup> Bluntzer, Kate Dougherty. "Preservation and Beautification of Old Bayview Cemetery is a Duty of the Public." *Corpus Christi Caller Times*. April 15, 1942, <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/history-1/60-help/142-letter-to-the-editor-and-photograph-1942>.

<sup>127</sup> Texas Secretary of State, business incorporations records, filing number 796801, <https://direct.sos.state.tx.us>.

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treasure has been buried that long without someone getting wind of it by now, especially since the ‘secret’ was being kept by a woman”, although he did confirm that women had served in uniform in Villa’s army.<sup>128</sup> A few months later, Ms. Vasquez had recovered from her illness and visited Corpus Christi, telling a reporter that she had been misquoted and the gold was actually stolen by Villa’s enemies and buried at Holy Cross Cemetery. No gold was found in either graveyard.<sup>129</sup>

By 1957, Old Bayview Cemetery finally reached its current configuration. When it was founded in 1845, it stood nearly alone at the top of the bluff above Corpus Christi and Nueces Bays; by 1887, a bird’s-eye-view map of the town showed the cemetery bounded by streets on two sides: Ramirez Street to the southwest, approximately parallel to the bluff, and Topo Street (renamed Waco Street in the 1930s) to the northwest, extending toward the edge of the bluff. At that time, the cemetery property was larger than the adjacent blocks, so both streets jogged around the edges of the cemetery. By 1900, the extensions of two existing streets —Padre Street to the southeast and North (later West) Broadway Street to the northeast— further bounded the cemetery, which may have extended down the bluff before West Broadway Street was established. In 1915, the San Antonio, Uvalde, & Gulf Railroad was constructed along the edge of West Broadway Street opposite the cemetery; this later became the Missouri Pacific Railroad, then Union Pacific Railroad. Padre Street was closed by city ordinance in 1957, in preparation for the construction of the IH-37 expressway the following year, and the right-of-way was abandoned, although it is still visible in aerial photographs as an unpaved track. Aerial photographs from the 1960s indicate that the cemetery fence enclosed only three sides of the site and was not present along the former Padre Street right-of-way.

Perhaps in part because of that lack of security, or the lack of a caretaker following Hinio Clark’s death in 1957, the cemetery once again fell into disrepair in the 1960s (see Figure 5). The *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, writing in preparation for Memorial Day 1962, noted that:

Grave markers ... have been broken into several pieces, uprooted or otherwise defaced. The weather has battered many so badly that it is impossible to distinguish the words. There is little grass ... and what is there is scrubby and brown. The chalky earth is cut with deep cracks. Trees, shrubs, and flowers need trimming, watering, and other attention. Palm trees are rotting and many dead leaves flap wildly in the wind. Empty liquor bottles are strewn haphazardly on and near graves and it is clearly visible that birds have roosted on almost every headstone. ... At least 30 headstones have either been snapped in two intentionally or blown down by high winds. Someone has stacked some of them in piles. Elsewhere the jagged pieces rest against other smooth, weather-worn markers or are propped against trees. ... Most spots are empty of markers and it is difficult to tell if graves are there or not. There are numerous wooden markers and these are rotting rapidly.”<sup>130</sup>

Three years later, in 1965, the site was still in “a shameful state of neglect,” spurring Sel Graham, a local petroleum engineer and graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, to offer to lead a community fund drive to improve the site.<sup>131</sup> Following the publication of his offer in the newspaper, Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops offered to help, and members

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<sup>128</sup> “Grave May Yield Villa Gold Cache,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, August 6, 1955, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/22001851>; also “Villa Gold Yarn Called Pure Bunk,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, August 8, 1955, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/22002110>.

<sup>129</sup> Kenneth McCaleb, “A Dubious Treasure,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, October 4, 1966, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/31251941>.

<sup>130</sup> Grady Phillips, “Burial Ground of Past’s Heroes Lies Abandoned,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, May 29, 1962, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/27865272>.

<sup>131</sup> “Neglect of Bayview Stirs Citizen’s Ire,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, March 30, 1965, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24212821>.

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of the Bill Roper American Legion Post 364 discussed becoming involved in the clean-up effort.<sup>132</sup> The City administration sent park workers to mow grass and pick up trash several weeks later, leaving it in “respectable condition.” The Park and Recreation Board subsequently recommended utilizing \$12,000 to renovate the cemetery.<sup>133</sup> Later that year, members of the Carroll High School Junior Historians Club reportedly began a project to rebuild a brick “cobblestone” walkway in the cemetery and collect information about the cemetery’s history; the Club’s advisor, Miss Gene North, was a history teacher and the president of the Nueces County Historical Association. It is not clear whether either project was undertaken or completed.<sup>134</sup> In 1967, the Texas Historical Commission placed a state historical marker, titled “Old Bayview Cemetery,” on the site (see Figure 8). A state historic marker commemorating the “Explosion of the Steamship *Dayton*” was erected in 1997.

In 2001–2002, Rosa Gonzales of the Nueces County Historical Commission (NCHC) secured a Historic Texas Cemetery nomination for Old Bayview Cemetery, resulting in the third Texas Historical Commission marker to be placed there. This began another period of activity for supporters of the cemetery—in this case, the Nueces County Historical Commission. The NCHC worked with the City of Corpus Christi to obtain a “Master Conservation Plan” produced by Monument Conservation Collaborative LLC of Connecticut. The firm mapped all of the 354 markers extant at that time and noted that 196 required conservation work, which was then detailed in the report, with a condition assessment of each extant marker. Twenty-three markers were identified as “hazardous” at that time; six of those were wooden. Another three wooden markers were in stable condition.<sup>135</sup> It does not appear that any of the recommended conservation work was completed, probably due to a lack of funding.

In 2017, the nonprofit Friends of Old Bayview Cemetery Association was established with members of the Nueces County Historical Commission. The group has been cleaning and resetting grave markers, securing new state historical markers, and leading tours of the cemetery.

### Significant Burials and Monuments

Civic leaders buried at Old Bayview Cemetery include these former mayors of Corpus Christi:<sup>136</sup>

- Benjamin F. Neal (d.1873), the first mayor of Corpus Christi in 1852; a granite monument to Neal was erected by the Corpus Christi Marble & Granite Works and dedicated on April 7, 1935.<sup>137</sup>
- H.W. Berry (1818–1888) was elected three times.
- Reuben Holbein (1826–1888), also served as county clerk for 12 years.
- John Marks Moore (1811–1892), also elected in 1874 to fill the uncompleted term of P. F. Murphy in the Texas Legislature.

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<sup>132</sup> “Plan to Clean Cemetery Gets Some Response,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, April 8, 1965, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24218404>.

<sup>133</sup> “City Workmen Clean Old Bayview Cemetery,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, May 3, 1965, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24232400>.

<sup>134</sup> “Students Take On Cemetery Project,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, October 30, 1965, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24284696>.

<sup>135</sup> “Monument Conservation Collaborative LLC, “Master Conservation Plan.”, 1–4; appendix “Prioritization of Markers,” 1–9.

<sup>136</sup> “List of Burials: Mayors and Aldermen,” La Retama Library, Corpus Christi, Special Collections: “Old Bayview Cemetery,” <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/list-of-burials/63-research/758-mayors-and-alderman>.

<sup>137</sup> “Aid Lauded to Honor First Mayor,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, April 11, 1935, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/22686529>.

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- Dr. George Robertson (d.1867), died of yellow fever; had been the postmaster under the United States and Confederate governments.
- Waymon N. Staples (1825–1893), a former city councilmember and grocer for whom Staples Street is named.

Other prominent Corpus Christi men interred include:

- George Washington Hockley (1802–1854), inspector-general of the Texian army at San Jacinto and secretary of war in 1838.<sup>138</sup>
- Claude Felix Noessel (1840–1887), “first defender of Corpus Christi during the Civil War and the city’s first fire chief.”<sup>139</sup>
- Matthew Nolan (1834–1864), sheriff of Nueces County, shot dead on the night of December 22, 1864. He had been a 12-year-old bugler when he arrived in Corpus Christi with the U.S. 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoons in 1845, along with his 10-year-old brother Tom, also a bugler, and their sister Mary, a hospital matron. Following the end of the Mexican War, in 1849 the Nolan siblings returned to Corpus Christi. The boys (still buglers) joined the Rangers, and Mat Nolan was elected County Sheriff in 1858, at the age of 25. He led Company G of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Texas Cavalry during the Civil War, fighting in Texas and Louisiana, and by the end of the war was a lieutenant colonel. Loaned back to Corpus Christi to keep the peace there, he was killed near his house while talking to a friend, who also died from wounds sustained in the attack. Both he and his brother Tom are buried in Old Bayview.<sup>140</sup>

Prominent women buried in Old Bayview Cemetery included:

- Julia Augusta von Blucher, daughter of Felix A. and Maria von Blucher, was born in Corpus Christi on January 6, 1853, one of the first children to be born in the newly incorporated city. She was educated in Germany and returned to Corpus Christi in 1880. A talented musician, she taught music for many years. She had a great enthusiasm for automobiles; “she purchased each new model as it was produced and was more familiar with its mechanism than the men in her family. ... One of her nephews remarked that ‘it was a source of great grievance to her that those early models would go no faster; she loved speed and enjoyed life’.” Blucher lived with her sister until her sister’s marriage, and died on June 25, 1937, at the age of 84.<sup>141</sup> The children of her brother, Charles Frederick Harvey von Blucher, donated the land for Blucher Park (several blocks from Old Bayview Cemetery) in the family’s memory.
- Annie Uehlinger Johnson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Maxmilian Dreyer and a native of Corpus Christi, was “one of the city’s most prominent business women for many years,” and “at the time of her death owned the Thomas Model Pharmacy building, the K. Wolen Department Store building, and extensive holdings on Water Street.”<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> “Oldest Military Cemetery is Here,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, January 18, 1959, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/31149019>.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid. This grave is now apparently unmarked. The newspaper article appears to be the only record of Noessel being buried at Old Bayview Cemetery. Both of his parents are buried there, and the article describes the condition of his gravestone as “battered.”

<sup>140</sup> “The Century-Old Mystery: Why Was Mat Nolan Killed?” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, July 30, 1961, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/23338734>.

<sup>141</sup> “Julia von Blucher, Native of City, Succumbs at Home,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, June 25, 1937, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/21132613>.

<sup>142</sup> “Funeral Set Tomorrow for Mrs. Johnson,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, September 18, 1950, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/23819567>.

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- Hettie M. Anderson Biggio, a lifelong resident of Corpus Christi, was the great-granddaughter of German immigrants, another pioneer family who were “the ninth white family in the city. Her grandfather operated a salt mill on the present site of the Nueces Hotel.”<sup>143</sup> She was one of the officers of the reconstituted Bay View Cemetery Association in the 1930s.

State historic markers present at Old Bayview Cemetery include those for the Cemetery itself (subject marker and Historic Texas Cemetery marker), the Explosion of the Steamship Dayton, and the following:

- William DeRyee (1825–1903), born William Deryee in Bavaria, photographer who captured portraits of Sam Houston in 1860. He was appointed Texas State Chemist during the Civil War, during which he served as an explosives expert. Later he opened a drugstore, was a prospector and economic geologist, and was one of the incorporators of the Corpus Christi National Bank.<sup>144</sup> Marker erected in 2015.
- John Dix (1796–1869), born in Massachusetts, a veteran of the War of 1812 and the Texas Revolution. At times a sea captain, sheep rancher, surveyor and port inspector, and chief justice of Nueces County, Dix was also a pro-Union activist during the Civil War and indicted for treason against the Confederate States of America. Marker erected 2013.
- William Henderson Maltby (1837–1880), a journalist and newspaper publisher for three Corpus Christi newspapers. During the Civil War Maltby served as a Captain in the Texas Infantry and defended Aransas Pass. He was captured along with his entire battery and imprisoned in Vicksburg, Mississippi. After returning to Corpus Christi after the war, Maltby became publisher of the *Corpus Christi Advertiser*, later establishing the *Corpus Christi Free Press* with Eli T. Merriman. Marker erected in 2017.<sup>145</sup>
- Matthew Nolan (1834–1864). Marker erected in 2019.
- George Owens (d.1879), veteran of the 116<sup>th</sup> Colored Infantry, Union Army, during the Civil War and later joined the 9<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, otherwise known as the “Buffalo Soldiers,” at Fort Davis. He was discharged in the early 1870s and settled in Corpus Christi, where he died on June 4, 1879. “Many soldiers in the 9th Cavalry received the Medal of Honor, making it the most honored African American unit. ... Along with approximately 180,000 other African Americans, George Owens served in the Union Army and fought for his and other enslaved people's freedom. Additionally, his service in the 9th Cavalry highlights African Americans' historical significance in United States military history. Marker erected in 2017.”<sup>146</sup>
- Thomas S. Parker (1817–1886), son of a cattle ranching family, was in business with Henry L. Kinney; served as the first Nueces County Sheriff in 1845, as a Texas Ranger, in the Confederate Army, and as the City Marshal. “Thomas Parker's contributions in commercial activity and law enforcement were vital to the early growth of Corpus Christi. He and his wife Rachel are buried at this site.” Marker erected in 1983.<sup>147</sup>
- Louis de Planque (1842–1898), a Prussian immigrant and photographer who opened studios in Matamoros, Brownsville, Indianola and Corpus Christi. Hurricanes destroyed his southernmost studios in 1867 and the Indianola studio in 1875; he subsequently spent the remainder of his career in Corpus Christi, where he was known for his eccentric costumes and festive personality. Marker erected in 2014.

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<sup>143</sup> “Mrs. Hettie M. Biggio,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, September 16, 1954, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/21957010>.

<sup>144</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Frank Wagner, “DERYEE, WILLIAM,” accessed October 28, 2019, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fde44>

<sup>145</sup> “William Henderson Maltby,” historical marker text, Texas Historical Commission, Atlas number 5507018853, <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/>.

<sup>146</sup> “George Owens,” historical marker text, Texas Historical Commission, Atlas number 5507020157, <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/>.

<sup>147</sup> “Thomas S. Parker,” historical marker text, Texas Historical Commission, Atlas number 5355006328, <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/>.

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A marker for Eli Todd Merriman is also planned to be located at the cemetery, next to the “Old Bayview Cemetery” marker; text was approved in 2012.<sup>148</sup> Other markers have been planned but not yet erected for James Downing, Reuben Holbein, and Tito Rivera<sup>149</sup>.

The last person to be buried at Old Bayview Cemetery was Perry Boone (1885–1989), who died at the age of 104 and was buried with no headstone in his family’s plot. Boone’s parents, Martin and Laura, “drove the Lichtenstein family surrey” to Corpus Christi from Indianola after that city was destroyed by a hurricane in 1874. (The Lichtensteins owned and operated department stores in the city for many years.) Martin and Laura Boone died in 1920 and 1925, respectively. Perry Boone joined the staff of the Nueces Hotel as a waiter when that establishment opened in 1912, served briefly as a deputy sheriff, and was one of the organizers of the Negro Longshoreman’s Union local when the deep-water Port of Corpus Christi opened in 1926.<sup>150</sup>

At least 70 other African Americans are thought to be buried at Old Bayview Cemetery, based on obituary records and death certificates, but as the records prior to 1897 have been lost (or were not kept), there is no way to know an exact number. It is clear, however, that Old Bayview was integrated from its beginning and remained so until the last burial.

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<sup>148</sup> “Eli T. Merriman,” historical marker text, Texas Historical Commission, Atlas number 5507017228, <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/>.

<sup>149</sup> Email communication, Anita Eisenhower to Steph McDougal, 2019.

<sup>150</sup> Bill Walraven, “No Headstone,” *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, May 18, 1989, <http://obc.cclibraries.com/index.php/home/list-of-burials/61-community/248-perry-boone>.

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Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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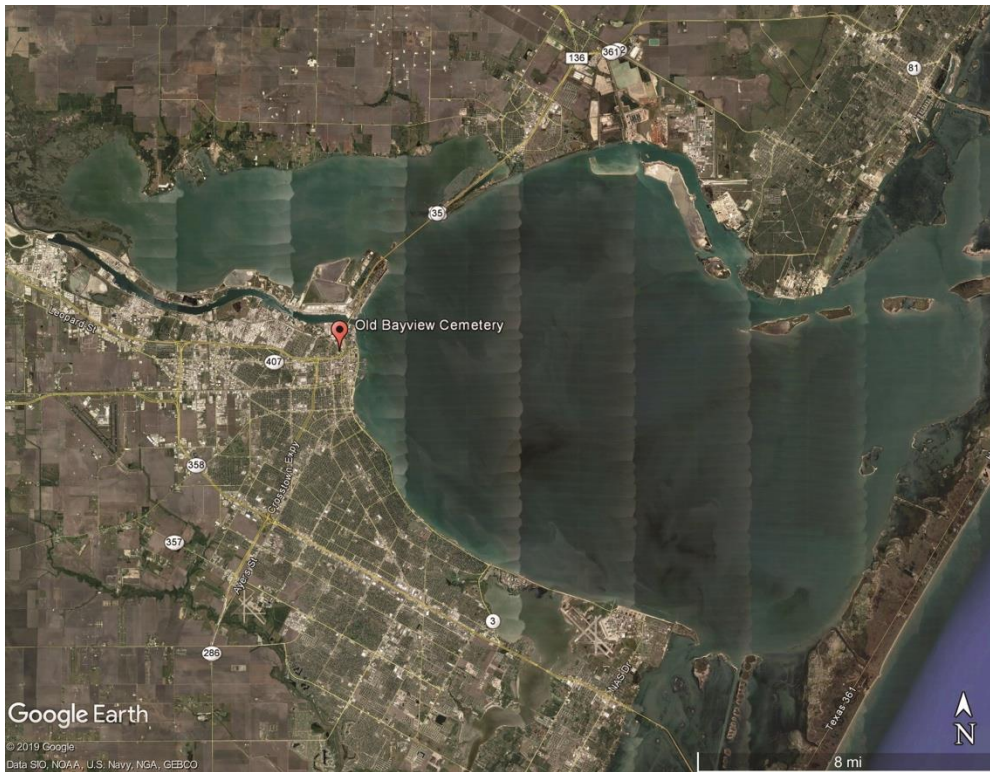
Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces County, Texas

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**MAPS**



Map 1. Nueces County, Texas, highlighted in red. Source: McDoux Preservation, with GIS data from ESRI and TxDOT.



Map 2. Context map for Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces County, Texas. Source: Google Earth Pro, retrieved January 22, 2020.

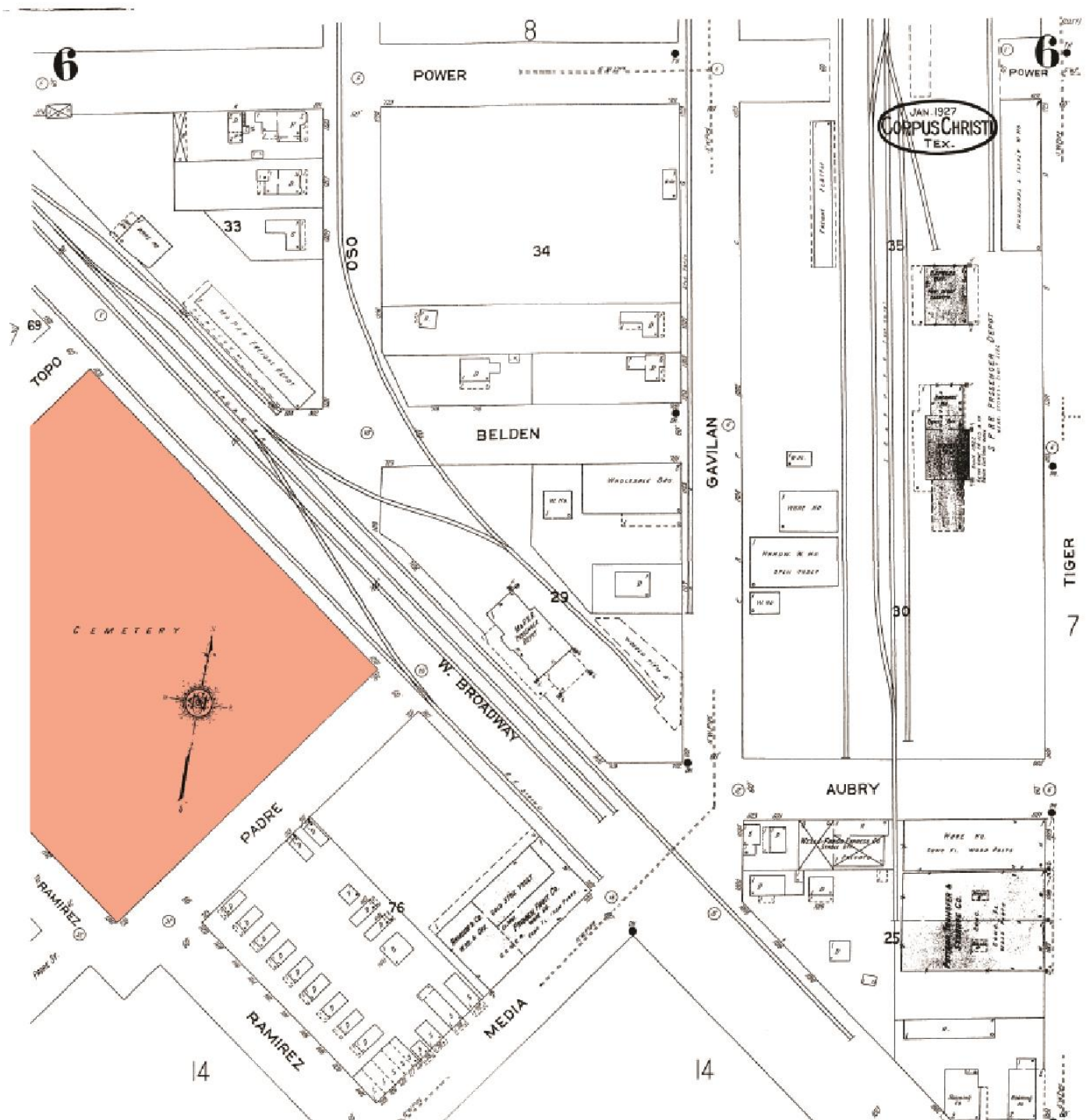
Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas



Map 3. Latitude and longitude coordinate in center of property, Old Bayview Cemetery.  
Source: Google Earth Pro, retrieved August 28, 2020.

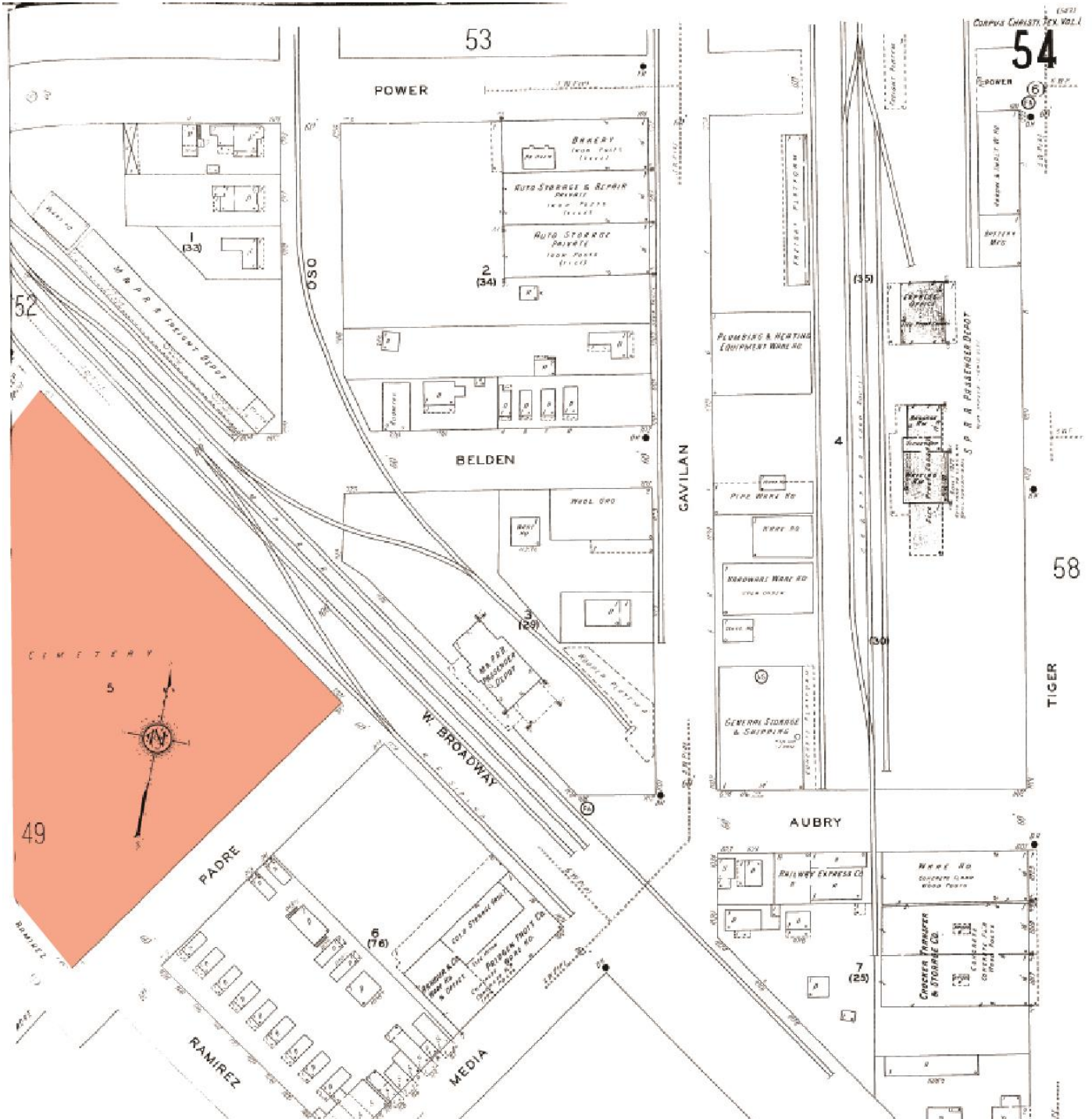


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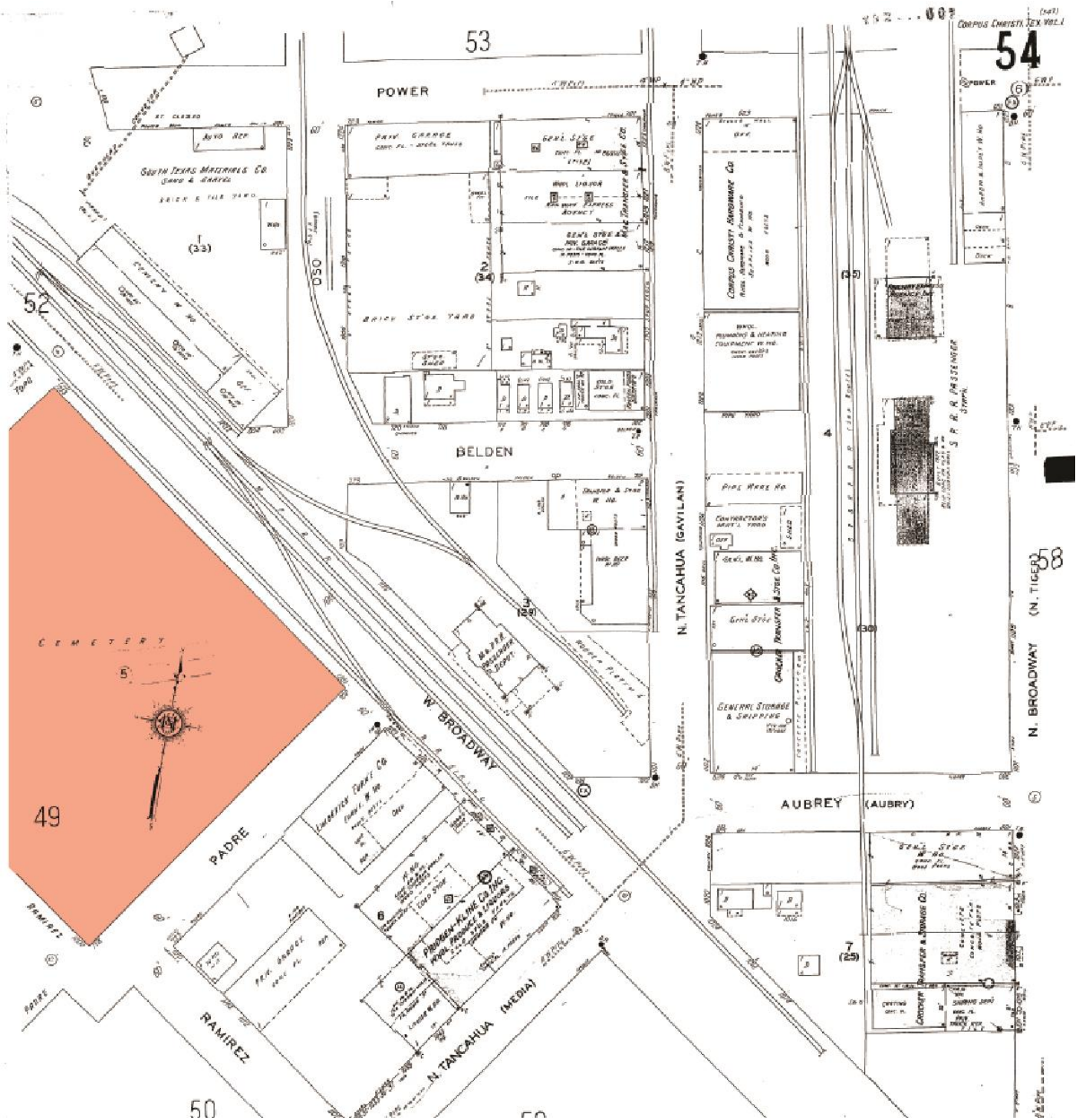
Map 5. By 1927, new railroad lines were constructed along West Broadway adjacent to the cemetery (indicated in red). Source: Sanborn Map Company, Corpus Christi, Texas, January 1927. Sheet 6.

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas



Map 6. In 1931, the Sanborn map shows the growth of the railroad facilities and the increasingly industrial nature of the area surrounding the cemetery (indicated in red). Source: Sanborn Map Company, Corpus Christi, Texas, 1931. Sheet 54.

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Map 7. By 1945, the area surrounding the cemetery (indicated in red) had become nearly entirely industrial. Source: Sanborn Map Company, Corpus Christi, Texas, May 1945. Sheet 54.

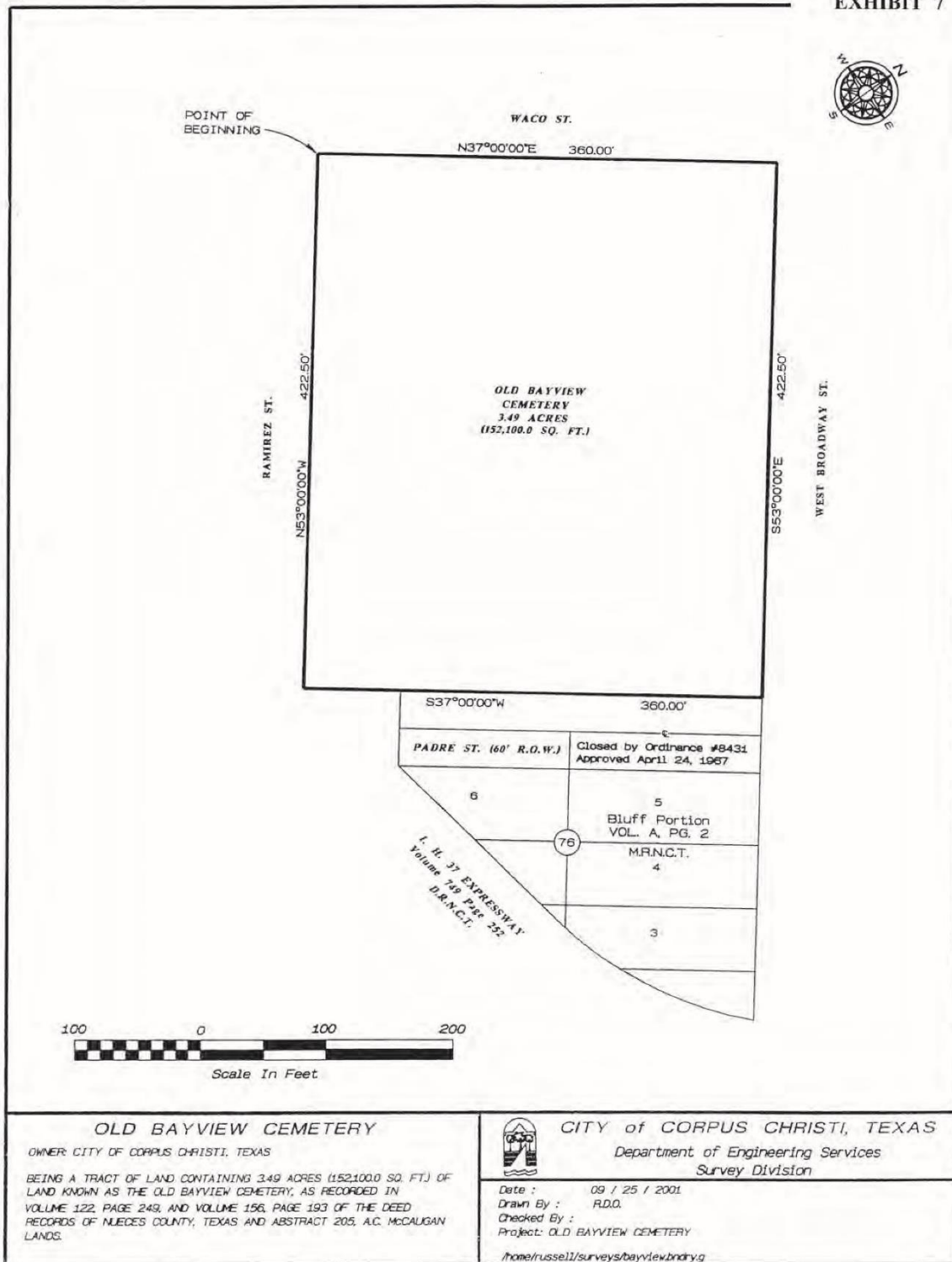
Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas



Map 8. The 1975 USGS map (portion) shows the extent of the industrial development in the area surrounding the cemetery (indicated in yellow; the new Bayview Cemetery can be seen the west). The construction of the Harbor Bridge and IH-37 in the 1950s separated the cemetery and surrounding neighborhood from downtown Corpus Christi. Source: United States Geological Survey, Corpus Christi quadrangle, Texas. Photorevised 1975, 1:24,000, 7.5 Minute Series.

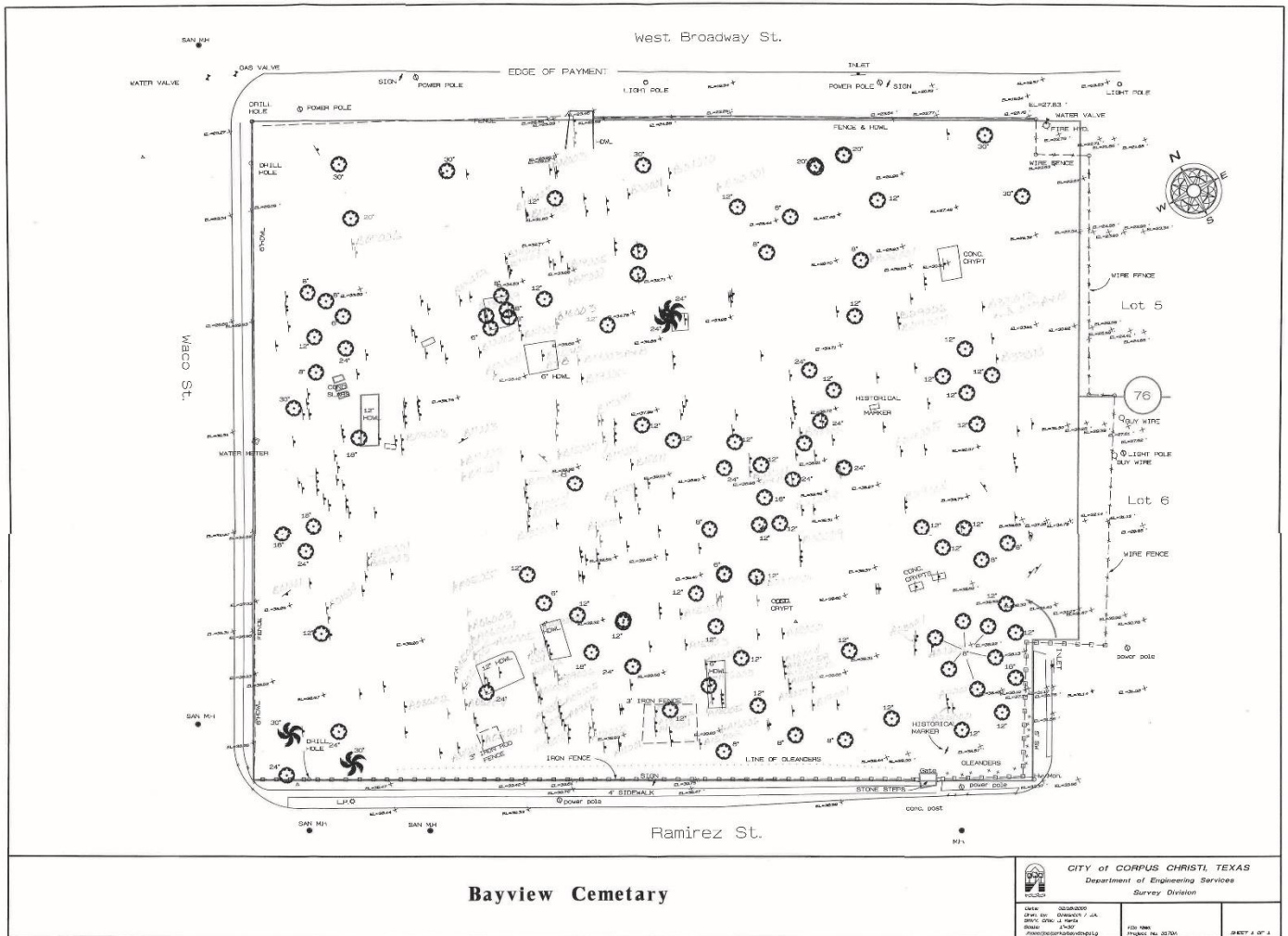
Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

EXHIBIT 7



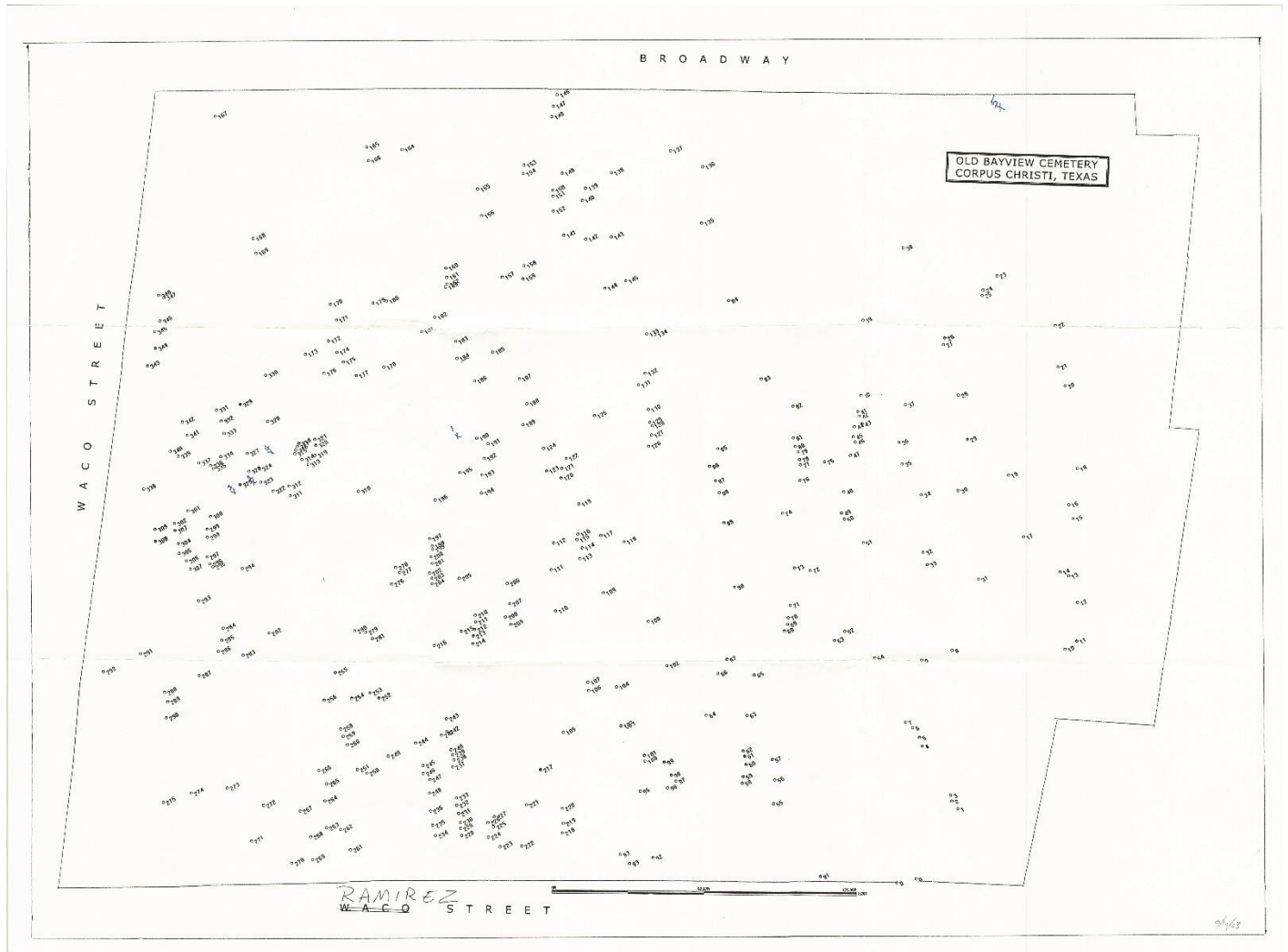
Map 9. Metes and Bounds Survey of Old Bayview Cemetery. Source: City of Corpus Christi Department of Engineering Services Survey Division.

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas



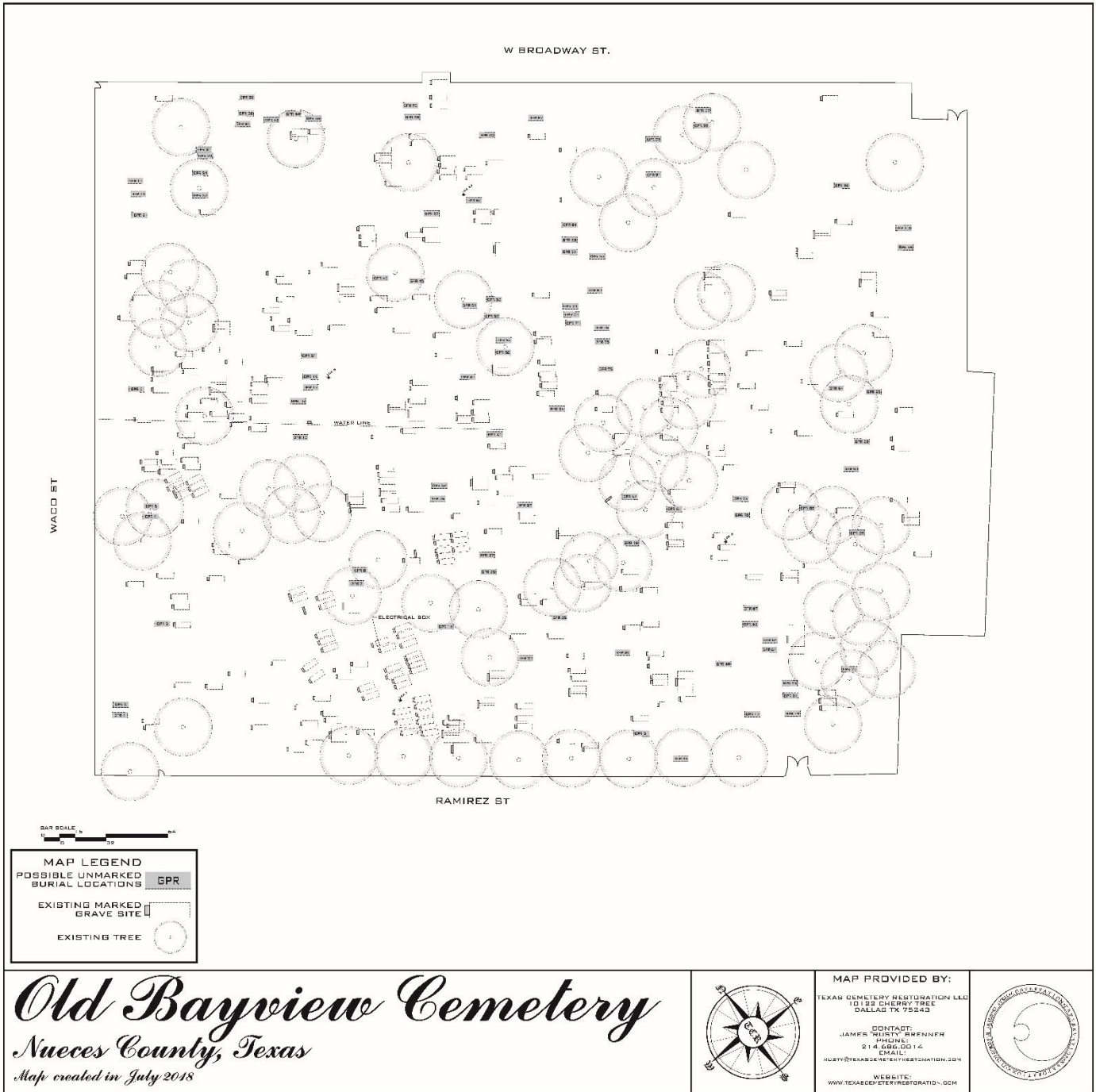
Map 10. Survey of Old Bayview Cemetery, 2000. Source: City of Corpus Christi Department of Engineering Services Survey Division. The irregular boundary to the southeast reflects the construction of a fence beyond the historic cemetery boundary and the boundary of the nominated parcel.

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas



Map 11. Marker key map, from the Master Conservation Plan for Old Bayview Cemetery, 2003. Source: Monument Conservation Collaborative LLC. The irregular boundary to the southeast reflects the construction of a fence beyond the historic cemetery boundary and the boundary of the nominated parcel.

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas



Map 12. Existing grave sites and possible unmarked burial locations, as recorded in 2018. Source: Texas Cemetery Restoration LLC. The irregular boundary to the southeast reflects the construction of a fence beyond the historic cemetery boundary and the boundary of the nominated parcel.

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**FIGURES**

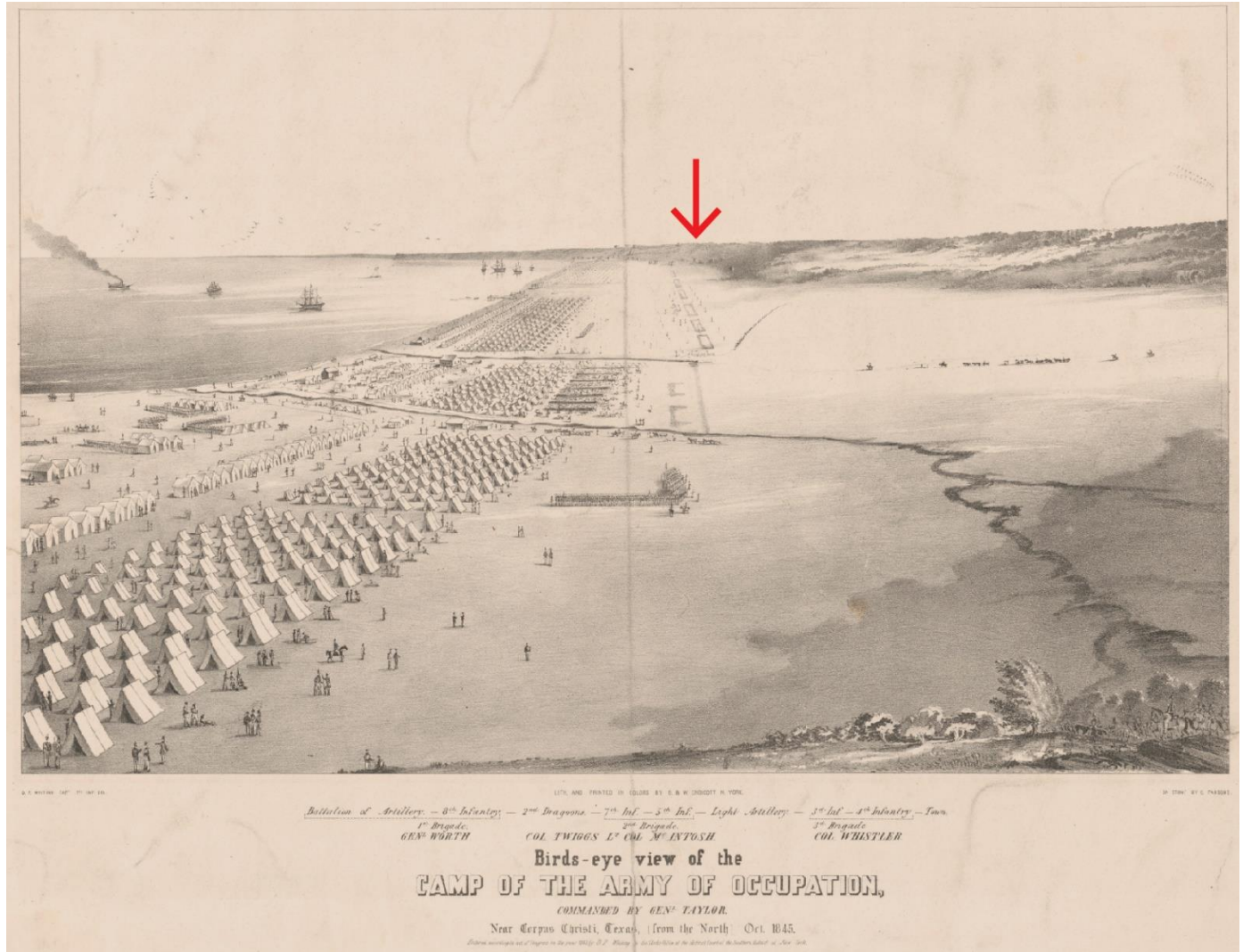


Figure 1. Bird's eye view of the camp of General Taylor's Army of Occupation, near Corpus Christi, Texas, October, 1845. Lithograph created in 1847 by C. Parsons, from a drawing by Captain D.P. Whiting. Old Bayview Cemetery would eventually be sited on the bluff overlooking the bays (approximate location indicated with red arrow). Source: Library of Congress.

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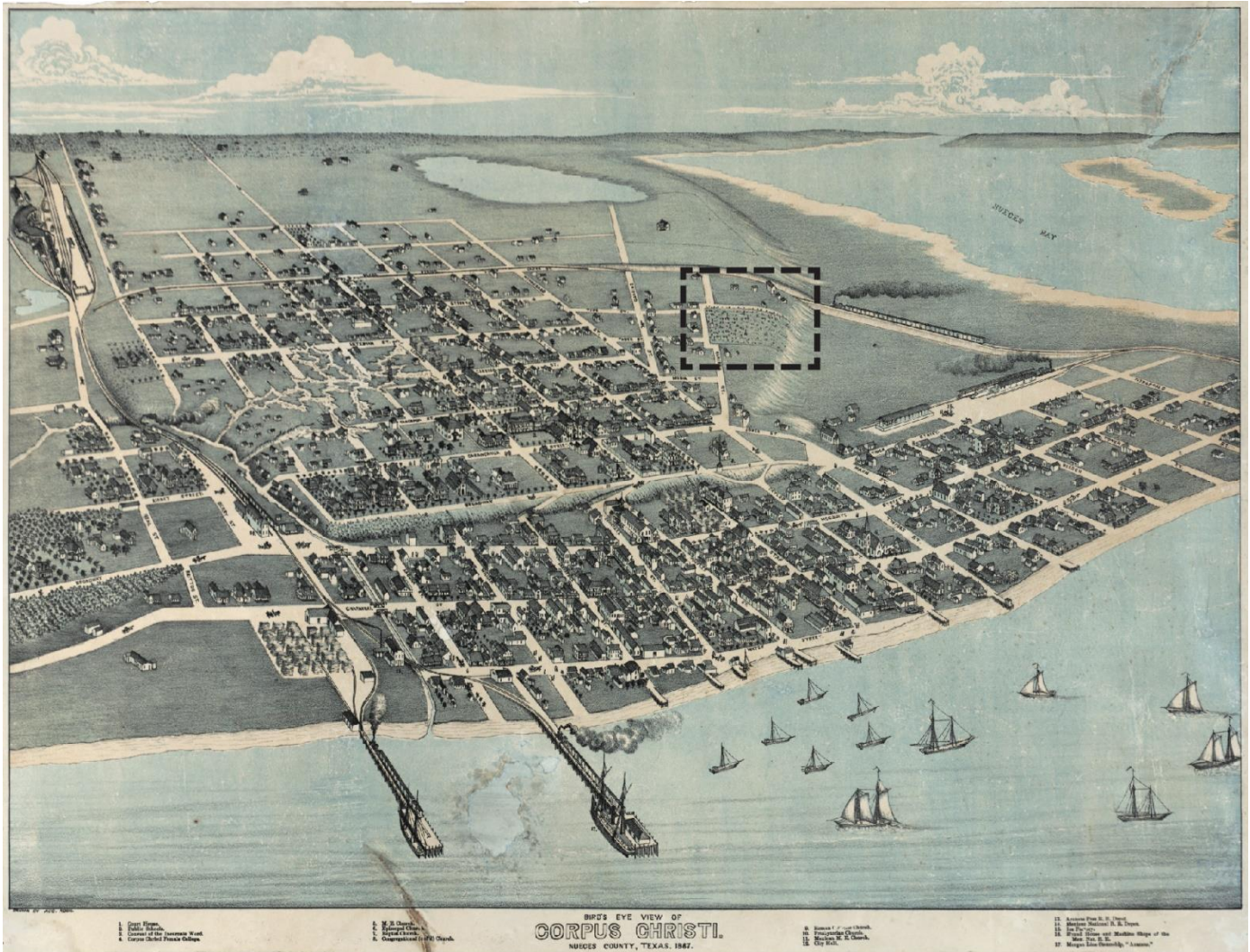


Figure 2. Bird's-eye view of Corpus Christi, drawn by Augustus Koch 1887. Old Bayview Cemetery is indicated in the dashed black box (added by authors). See next figure for detail. Source: Corpus Christi Public Library.

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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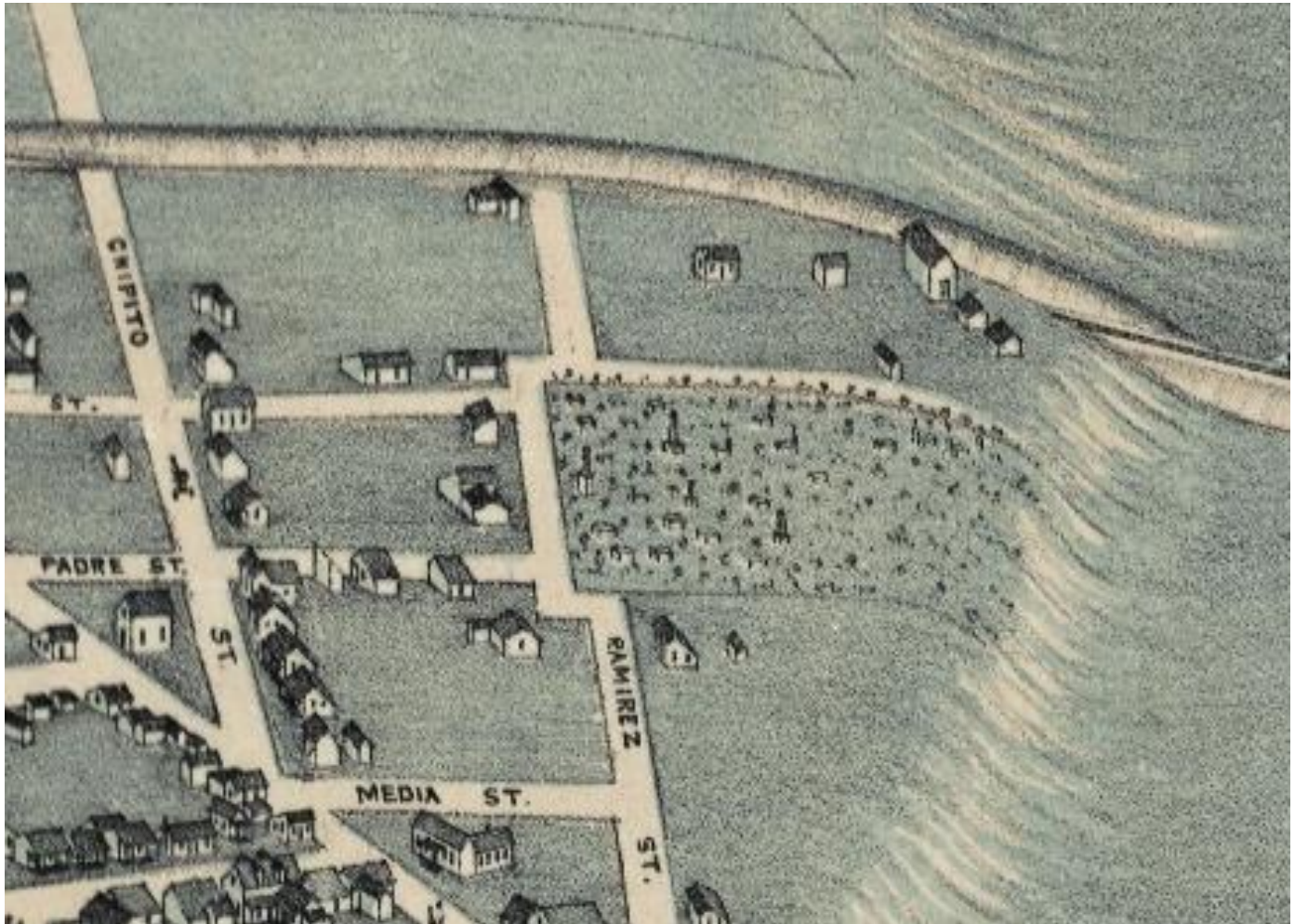


Figure 3. Detail of Old Bayview Cemetery, bird's eye view of Corpus Christi, 1887. Source: Corpus Christi Public Library.

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Figure 4. Stone pillars flanking the entrance to Old Bayview Cemetery, 1955. A sign mounted on a wood post next to the left pillar is no longer extant. Source: Corpus Christi Caller-Times.



Figure 5. A 1962 image shows empty bottles and weeds covering a broken grave. Source: Corpus Christi Caller-Times.

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Figure 6. The Harbor Bridge and IH-37 in the background of Old Bayview Cemetery, 1975. Source: Corpus Christi Caller-Times, photo by Murray Judson.



Figure 7. The uptown area of Corpus Christi, visible beyond Old Bayview Cemetery, 1986. Source: Corpus Christi Caller-Times.

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas



Figure 8. Character of Old Bayview Cemetery, sometime after 1967. Source: *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*.

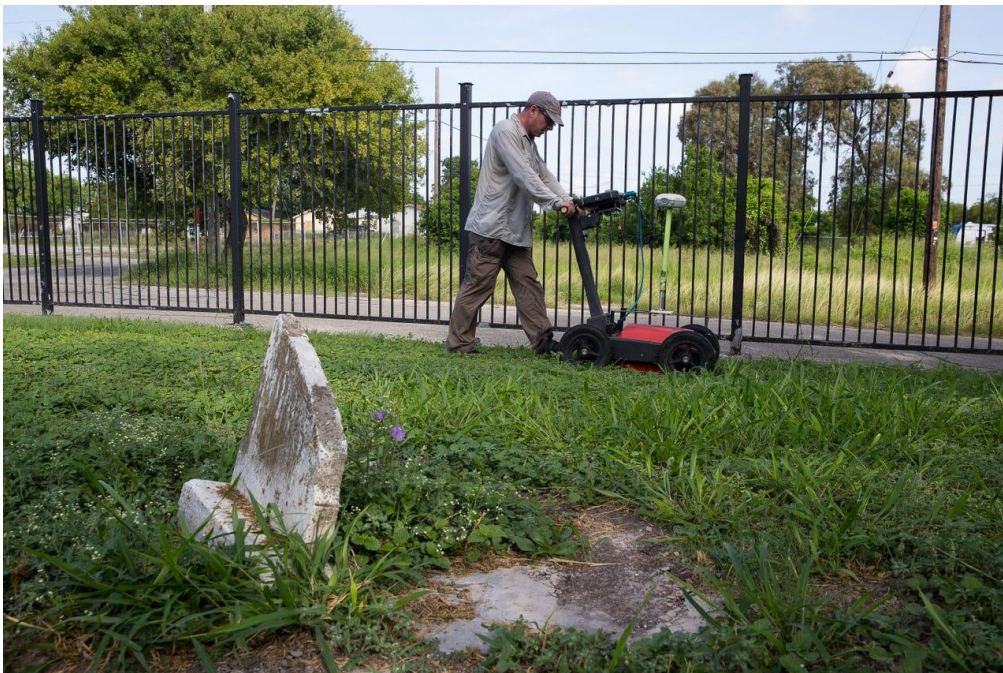


Figure 9. GPR remote sensing survey, 2018. Source: *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*.

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Figure 10. Monumental Bronze Company, October 1882 catalog, page 84.



Figure 11. Monumental Bronze Catalog, October 1882 catalog, page 86.

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*PHOTOS*



Photo 1

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 2



Photo 3

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 4



Photo 5

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 6

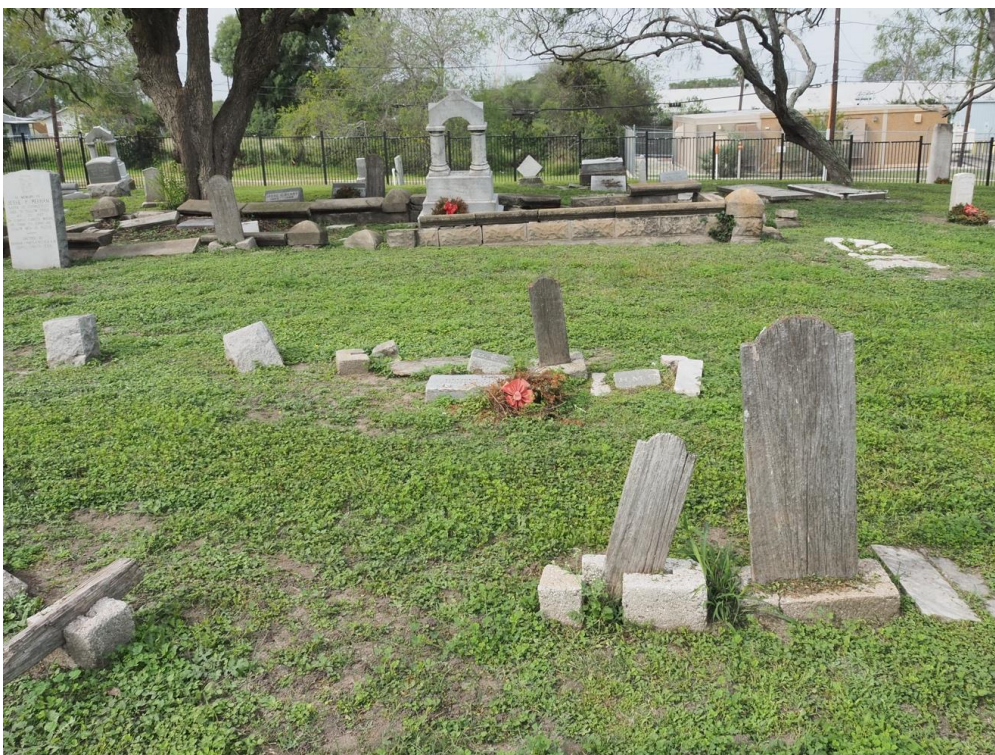


Photo 7

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 8

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 9



Photo 10

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 11

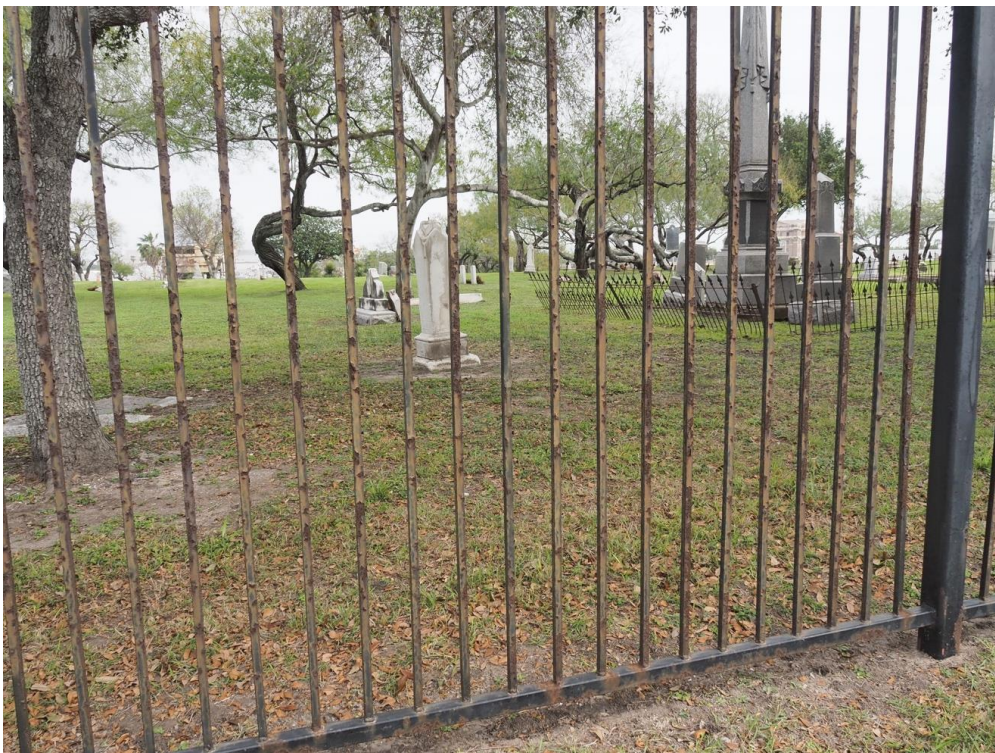


Photo 12

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 13



Photo 14

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 15



Photo 16

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas



Photo 17



Photo 18

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 19



Photo 20

Old Bayview Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas

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Photo 21



Photo 22

- end -