

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

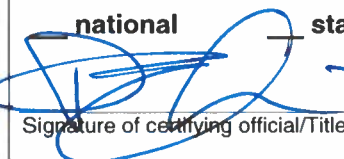
## 1. Name of Property

historic name Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
other names/site number 5OT.1744

## 2. Location

street & number 37980 County Road 20  not for publication  
city or town Rocky Ford  vicinity  
state Colorado county Otero zip code 81067

## 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 level(s) of significance:  
 national  statewide  local  
 Patrick A. Eidman State Historic Preservation Officer 6/18/24  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

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

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
3		buildings
1		sites
3	1	structures
		objects
7	1	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY/Cemetery

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FUNERARY/Cemetery

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Sexton's House:

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals

Garage: No Style

Pumphouse/Storage Building: No Style

	<u>Sexton's House</u>	<u>Garage</u>	<u>Pumphouse</u>
Foundation	<u>CONCRETE</u>	<u>CONCRETE</u>	<u>CONCRETE</u>
Walls	<u>STUCCO</u>	<u>CONCRETE</u>	<u>STUCCO</u>
Roof	<u>ASPHALT</u>	<u>ASPHALT</u>	<u>METAL</u>
Other	<u>WOOD</u>	<u>WOOD</u>	<u>N/A</u>

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### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### **Summary Paragraph**

The Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery sits almost precisely one mile (as the crow flies) southeast of the center of the town of Rocky Ford, at the southeast side of the intersection of County Road EE and County Road 20. Estimated to contain 14,000 to 15,000 graves, it is located on a 40-acre square parcel owned by the City of Rocky Ford. Divided into quarters, the northwest, northeast, and southeast quarters of the cemetery parcel were platted and landscaped from 1887 to about 1950, and these quarters comprise the nominated site. Additional landscaping is underway in the southwest quarter of the parcel to accommodate more recent burials and is outside the NRHP site boundary. The Valley View-Hillcrest is a study in contrasting design, with the earlier portion (the Valley View) comprised of four sets of four-by-seven rectangular blocks set in a grid arrangement. Juxtaposed with this, the Hillcrest cemetery occupies the northwest quarter and is comprised of three overlapping ovals. All graves appear to be set in rigorous north-south rows, even within the Hillcrest's curved blocks. At the northwest corner of the Hillcrest cemetery sits two buildings, one of which, a single-family dwelling, was constructed in the mid-late 1920s. Although altered, it retains sufficient integrity to be contributing. The second building, an office/garage building, was constructed in 1969 and is altered, but retains sufficient integrity to be considered contributing. On the east edge of the Valley View Cemetery, a storage/pump house building faces the main road that runs east-west through the parcel. The date of its construction is not known, but it likely dates to around 1905-1910. A circular platform with a low stone wall and centered flagpole, constructed in 1936, sits at the approximate center of the north sections of the cemetery (i.e., the Hillcrest and the north half of the Valley View). The entirety of the cemetery is landscaped with mature trees, including and especially Locust and Ash trees, as well as Blue Spruce and other conifers. The dominant floral planting is peonies, which bloom with fervor between and among the headstones in mid-spring. The cemetery contains the graves of many of the most influential and recognized citizens of the area, although only one above-ground mausoleum is present. One block (21) on the east side of the Valley View, is dominated by the graves of Japanese and Japanese American residents of the area, and also contains the graves of the victims of the 1957 train-truck collision at Vroman, all of whom were Latino residents of Rocky Ford. While many of the other Latino graves are located at the southeast blocks of the cemetery, they are also found throughout the Valley View-Hillcrest.

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### **Narrative Description**

The Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery occupies a parcel, owned by the City of Rocky Ford, that comprises the Northwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 20, T23S, R56W. The southwest quarter of the parcel is excluded from the NRHP site, as it contains no historic features or burials. The Valley View cemetery comprises the east half of the parcel, and the Hillcrest Cemetery comprises the northwest quarter of the parcel.

#### **The Hillcrest Cemetery (Photographs 8-56; 58; 85)**

The Hillcrest Cemetery is a lawn/park type cemetery that is approximately ten acres in size. In plan, the grounds are defined by simple, symmetrical geometry: It is essentially three overlapping ovals, set within a circle within a square (Figure 1). Gravel roads follow the curved lines of the ovals, defining 16 blocks, with a primary road dividing the north and south halves of the Hillcrest. Unlike most other Lawn/Park cemeteries,

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the grave plots within the blocks are set on a north-south cardinal grid, likely to emulate the logic of the adjacent Valley View Blocks.



**Figure 1. Hillcrest Cemetery geometry. Orthographic photograph, Lex Nichols, September 14, 2022.**

The Hillcrest Cemetery is bounded by County Road EE on the north side, County Road 20 on the west side, the Valley View Cemetery on the east side, and a gravel road that bisects the city-owned parcel on the south. The north and west sides of the cemetery are fenced with a simple, low pipe fence, which is painted white (**Photo 22**). On the west side, the fence is broken by the cemetery's main gate, about 300 feet south of the northwest corner of the parcel. The gate is a double iron gate attached to squared, splayed pillars, and spans a 25-ft opening that leads onto the main road that spans the width of the Hillcrest and Valley View. A sign on the south side of the gate welcomes visitors to the Valley View Hillcrest Cemetery and lists rules and contact information (**Photo 23**). Inside the gate, the main road stretches east, through the Hillcrest and beyond it, terminating at the Valley View's storage/pumphouse building at the east side of the cemetery. As it runs through the Hillcrest, the curved lanes intersect this road, leading north and south, dividing the predominately wedge-shaped blocks (**Photo 24**).

To the northwest is the **Sexton's House (Photos 18-21)**. This is a 1½ -story cottage that was built in the mid-to-late 1920s by the Hill Crest Cemetery Association. Modifications have obscured the architectural style, which may have originally approximated Dutch Colonial. These include a porch addition on the east side and a second porch addition on the west and south sides, although both of these appear to predate 1937.<sup>1</sup> The cross-gabled roof is gambrel on the east end, and hipped on the west end, with a straight gable on the north side and a hipped dormer on the south slope. A gabled wing, which carries a 3-window bay, projects on the south side. The house is clad in white stucco and has two enclosed porch additions on the east and west sides. The roof is clad in brown 3-tab shingle. Most windows are double hung and appear to be original wood windows. On the first floor, most windows are protected by storm windows (enclosed porches notwithstanding). Both entrances face south from the enclosed porch additions and have aluminum screen doors.

<sup>1</sup> The modifications can be discerned on a 1937 aerial photograph.

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To the east of the Sexton's House is **the Garage/Office Building (Photos 14-17)**. This was constructed in 1969 by the City of Rocky Ford, which owned the Hillcrest by that time. It is a rectangular building measuring approximately 60 ft EW by 25 ft NS. It is side-gabled, with vehicle doors on the east and west ends. The west vehicle door appears to be original to the building, and the east vehicle door is a replacement. The office entrance faces south and is located on the west end of the south side. It has a single leaf core door that opens onto a small concrete apron. Windows have brick rowlock sills and have been replaced with metal sliding sash windows. The building has been painted dark red, and the roof is clad in gray 3-tab shingles.

### **The Valley View Cemetery (Photographs 8-7; 57-84; 86-87)**

The Valley View Cemetery follows the grid pattern found in Town/City cemeteries common in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is comprised of four rows of seven rectangular blocks, which measure approximately 70 ft wide (EW) by 300 ft long (NS), although narrow blocks (8A, 9A, 26A, and 27A) are present on the west edge of the Valley View (see Site Map). The north boundary of the cemetery is defined by a low cobblestone wall capped in concrete, which extends the full one-tenth of a mile width of the Valley View (**Photos 1-3**). At the east end, the date of the wall's completion, "Nov 10, 1916," is inscribed in the concrete capping (**Photo 5**). Near the approximate center of the cobblestone wall is the original entrance gate to the Valley View (**Photo 7**), a decorative iron double gate attached to two raised square cobblestone posts capped in concrete. It is no longer used for public access, as the main entrance to the cemetery is now located on the west side of the boundary (**see Photo 23**).

The Main Avenue of the Cemetery bisects the northern half of the Valley View, and a single-story, stuccoed storage/pump house building sits at the east end of the avenue, facing into the cemetery (**Photo 61-63**). The building has a low-sloped, V-crimp metal gabled roof with a stepped parapet on the facade. Fenestration is boarded, and a single-leaf door and a vehicle door are present on the façade. A second single-leaf door is present on a small lean-to addition on the rear of the building.

The east edge of the Valley View contains two sections, each comprised of three adjoining blocks (Block 15-16-17 on the north, and 18-19-20 on the south), which are designated as the Potter's Field, i.e., the part of the cemetery that was historically reserved for people unable to pay for a plot or for burials of unidentified individuals (**Photos 67-68**). These sections are wider than the other blocks of the Valley View, although they appear to be less densely used, with markedly fewer headstones. To the south of Potter's Field is another combined-block section (Blocks 33-34) with similarly wide dimensions, which has fewer trees than the other blocks and appears to be more recent burials, although some date to the period of significance (**Photo 77**). Notably, a majority of headstones in this section exhibit Latino surnames.

At the north tip of Block 9A is a flagpole platform used for ceremonial purposes when veterans groups and other organizations gather to honor their members who rest in the cemetery (**Photo 60**). Constructed in 1936, it is a raised circular concrete platform ringed with a low wall that is lined with cobblestone on the exterior face and smooth concrete on the interior face. A short set of steps is set on the east side, providing easy access to the platform. The steps and wall are capped in red-dyed concrete. The center of the platform has a metal flagpole rising to the tops of the trees.

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## Landscape Plantings

Plantings in the Valley View and the Hillcrest parts of the cemetery are similar and for the most part have been identically regulated for many decades. Shade trees are abundant (Figure 2); ash, elm, and locust trees are generally planted across the entire cemetery, interspersed with conifers and blue spruce (**Photos 11, 81, 83**). Where elm trees are present, they are older, larger trees; a 1970s Elm Beetle infestation claimed many of the elm trees in the Rocky Ford area, and subsequently few elm trees were planted, including in the cemetery.



**Figure 2. (L) A mature ash tree shelters graves in the Valley View; (R) a Locust tree (center) with older elms behind in the Hillcrest. Photographed May 29, 2023, Corbett AHS, Inc.**

Along the south boundary of the Valley View, a line of juniper trees forms a dense hedge (**Photo 79**), shielding the cemetery from dust generated by farming activities on the property to the south. The north boundary of the cemetery is similarly lined with conifers, which are more able to keep the wind at bay in the winter than the bare branches of deciduous trees (**Photo 3**). Where elm trees are present, they are older, larger trees; a 1970s Elm Beetle infestation claimed many of the elm trees in the Rocky Ford area, and subsequently few elm trees were replanted.

Smaller landscape plantings generally include floral shrubs and bulb beds. The Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery is well known for peonies, which are the dominant floral planting at the cemetery (**Photo 39** is a good representation). Cemetery rules have prohibited the planting of shrubs other than peonies since at least 1980 and likely earlier,<sup>2</sup> and these are (by strict regulation) planted in alignment with the headstones, allowing for easier mowing. The peonies are often in peak form for Memorial Day. Iris beds and roses, likely planted prior to the peonies-only restrictions, are more common in the east blocks of the cemetery but are found

<sup>2</sup> West, Volume 5, pp. 85; 107.

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throughout (Figure 4). One particularly established stand of roses is found among the Japanese headstones in Block 21.<sup>3</sup> Like the peonies, the iris and roses are in full bloom around the time of Memorial Day.



Figure 3. Peonies explode between and around headstones. Photographed May 29, 2023. Corbett AHS, Inc.

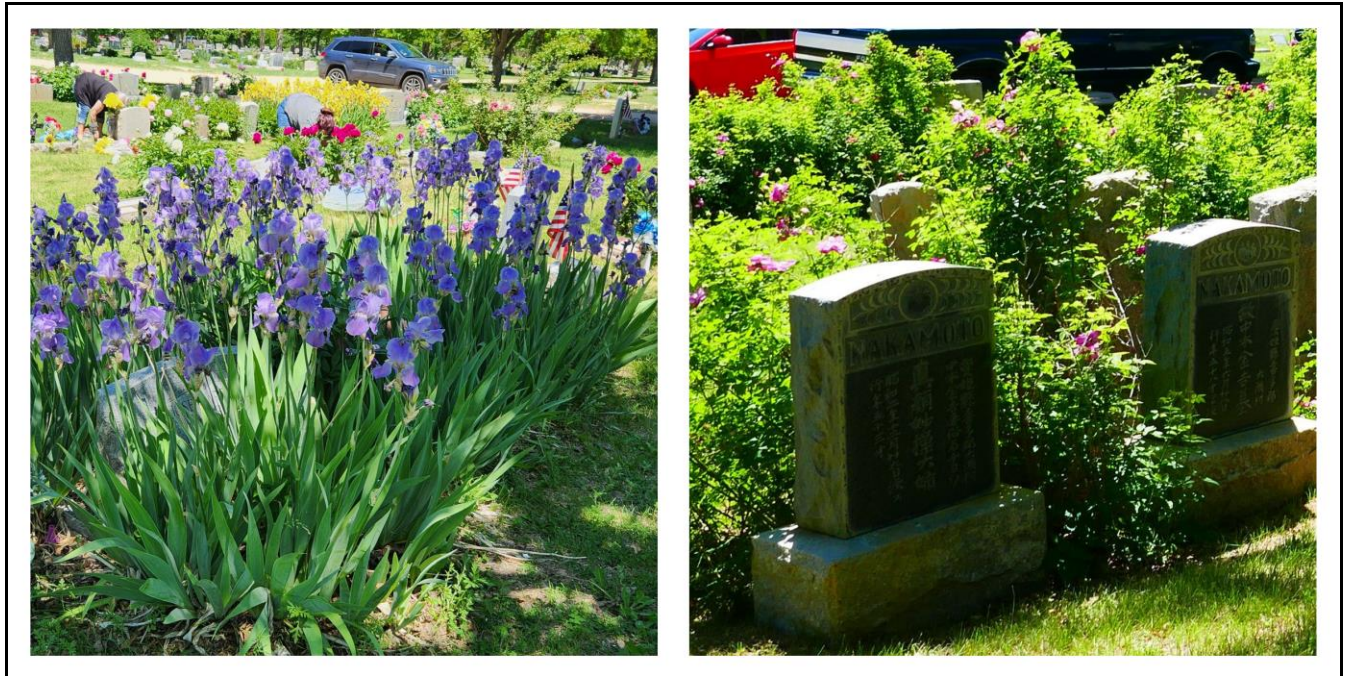


Figure 4. A stand of iris (L) and roses (R) in Block 21 of the Valley View. Photographed May 29, 2023, Corbett AHS, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> These roses appear to be similar to the wild roses found along the Arkansas River and may have been historically transplanted. Recently, the historic transplantation of this variety of rose by Japanese American incarcerated at the Grenada Relocation Center (Amache) was revealed by archaeologists and was the subject of the documentary film, “Amache Rose.” While it is possible that the roses in Block 21, where the largest concentration of Japanese and Japanese American graves in the cemetery are located, were transplanted from the river like those at Amache, research did not reveal a direct connection to the roses found at Amache.

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## Integrity

As a designed landscape, the Valley View-Hillcrest cemetery retains good integrity of location, design, and setting, and it conveys its historic character to a high degree. The simple grid layout of the Valley View has grown since its inception in 1887 but has been unaltered since its last expansion in 1919, which repeated the same grid pattern established in the 1887 design. Likewise, the Hillcrest portion of the cemetery followed the layout defined in its original 1923 plat, which was completed by 1957. This design remains intact today. Both the Valley View and the Hillcrest convey their historic appearance, design, and sense of proportion and scale.

Landscape plantings also convey the historic character of the cemetery. These often date the years prior to the end of the period of significance (1974, or 50 years before the present) and older trees are generally alive and healthy. Consistency with the historic period has largely been maintained in the species and varieties of trees and shrubs planted since 1974, and the cemetery landscape retains a very high degree of integrity of design, setting and feeling. In particular, the selection of peonies as a primary shrub type dates to the period of significance, and these remain an important character defining feature of the cemetery. Notably, the placement of the peonies in alignment with the headstones is consistent with the modes of planting used historically. Overall, the species and locations of the vegetation at the cemetery remains sufficiently stable to represent the design intent associated with the period of significance.

Built features (buildings and structures) found in the cemetery also retain good integrity:

- The Sexton's House in the northwest corner of the Hillcrest cemetery has been altered but alterations appear to be well within the period of significance.
- Alterations to the 1969 garage building are more recent than the period of significance and impact integrity of materials but all other aspects of integrity are intact.
- The pumphouse/storage building has been little altered since the period of significance, although the windows are boarded.
- The flagpole platform retains outstanding integrity in all aspects; it sits as it has since it was constructed, on the border of the Valley View and the Hillcrest, and research did not reveal evidence that it has been altered at all beyond routine maintenance.
- The rock wall, which extends the length of the Valley View on the north side of the cemetery, is intact as built and retains all aspects of integrity, having been maintained but not significantly altered since it was completed in 1916.
- The splayed pier gate supports on the west (main) gate appear to date to the period of significance and retain integrity.

## Non-contributing areas or features

No areas within the NRHP boundary of the historic cemetery were identified as non-contributing. One cemetery block was added in 1998, after the period of significance, but this lies outside the NRHP boundary (see site map). Within the boundary, one structure, a simple metal post and rail fence, was installed in 1991 on the north and west sides of the Hillcrest. It is painted white and is noncontributing.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Exploration and Settlement
- Ethnic Heritage-Asian: Japanese
- Ethnic Heritage-Hispanic
- Landscape Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1887-1974

**Significant Dates**

- 1887
- 1923
- 1957

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

- European American; Hispanic;
- Japanese/Japanese American

**Architect/Builder**

Carl M. and Millicent Ustick

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, areas of significance, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Hillcrest Valley View Cemetery in Rocky Ford meets Criterion A at the local level in the areas of Exploration-Settlement, Ethnic History-Asian: Japanese and Ethnic History-Hispanic, with a period of significance from 1887, when the cemetery was first constructed at this location, to 1974 (fifty years before the current date). Additionally, it meets Criterion C in the area of Landscape Architecture at the local level for its unique juxtaposition of the Valley View's grid with the Hillcrest's intersecting ovals with a period of significance from 1887, when the cemetery was first constructed at this location, to 1974 (fifty years before the current date). Further, it meets Criteria Consideration D as a cemetery that serves as the final resting place of individuals who are strongly associated with the above areas of significance.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Cemeteries are many things to the people who visit them. They are places of memory, in the names of loved ones carved into stone that evoke them in the hearts of those who held them close. They are tributes to the departed through the flowers and shade trees that delight and shelter visitors. Cemeteries are repositories of local history, the resting places of people who, long ago, made such an imprint on a town, region, or culture that, generations hence, people stop to see their graves and remember them.

Walking the rows of headstones, reading names and birth and death dates, visitors wonder about the lives of the ones who lie beneath their feet and what they may have left behind. Did this man born in 1896 carve wooden toys for his grandchildren? Did the woman who died in 1965 make the best green chile in the county? What about the girl who died so young in 1942? What dreams did she never get to realize?

In cemeteries, we can see the connections within communities and the historical events that profoundly affected them, literally written in stone. A block of graves with headstones written partially in Kanji demonstrate the ties between members of the Japanese American community. Another block with a line of grave markers put in place in 1957 attests to a tragic accident that claimed a dozen members of the area's Latino community as they were traveling to work in the melon fields. Military grave markers represent those who gave their due, if not their lives, for their country and all they believed it stands for.

The Valley View-Hillcrest cemetery in Rocky Ford, Colorado, is a focal point for the people of Rocky Ford and the surrounding towns, who take immense pride in the peonies that burst with color among the headstones every spring and who show up to remember and honor those they miss. It reflects, and is an important element of, the history of Otero County and the region, and it meets the following criteria for National Register designation:

**Criterion A** – The Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery is significant under Criterion A at the local level in the area of **Exploration-Settlement**, as the earliest remaining cemetery associated with Rocky Ford's settlement. It contains the graves of the founders of Rocky Ford, George Washington Swink and Asahel Russell, as well as many other notable local citizens. Further, it is significant under Criterion A at the local level in the area of **Ethnic History-Asian: Japanese** for its concentration of graves in Block 21 (Valley View) and nearby blocks that demonstrate early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Japanese immigration and culture in the area, which had a significant effect on

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agriculture and arguably enabled the area around Rocky Ford to become one of the most significant farming regions in the state. Headstones inscribed in the Japanese script, Kanji, attest to the strength of the community and the commitment to the preservation of Japanese culture and lifeways among this important local community. In addition, the cemetery is significant under Criterion A at the local level in the area of **Ethnic History: Hispanic** as the resting place of many of the Rocky Ford area's Latino citizens, some of whom were descendants of the earliest non-indigenous settlers in the Arkansas Valley and Purgatoire River region. It is also significant as the final resting place of the victims of a 1957 train-pickup truck collision, which killed twelve Hispanic farmworkers as they rode to work in the back of a pickup truck. The accident had an enormous impact on the residents of Rocky Ford and was reported in the national press. The period of significance is understood to be 1887 (the year the Valley View Cemetery was constructed) to 1974 (fifty years before the current date).

**Criterion C** – The cemetery is significant under Criterion C in the area of **Landscape Architecture** for its unique combination of the Valley View's Town/City cemetery gridded 1887 plan juxtaposed with the Hillcrest's 1923 overlapping oval plan, which shows the influence of the early Lawn Park cemeteries, a design movement that began in the late nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> Historically, Town/City cemeteries were located on the edges of municipalities and were usually owned by the towns themselves, as opposed to private ownership, which was more typical of Lawn Park cemeteries and was initially true of the Hillcrest. The Town/City cemetery arrangement was most often formal, with a simple grid and/or symmetrical arrangement of space. The Hillcrest's plan steps away from the grid and also from the picturesque "naturalistic" hills and meandering lanes associated with the Rural Cemetery Movement, instead finding expression in a rational and elegant symmetrical form rooted in the geometry of three overlapping ovals. The period of significance is understood to be 1887 (the year the Valley View Cemetery was constructed) to 1974 (fifty years before the current date).

**Criteria Consideration D** – The Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery is eligible under Criteria Consideration D as a cemetery that derives its historic significance from its association with the broad patterns of settlement and development of Rocky Ford and the surrounding area, and the fact that individuals associated with this settlement and development rest in the cemetery. Further, it derives significance from its association with Japanese immigrant settlement in the Rocky Ford area and the impact that population has had on agriculture in Otero County and the Rocky Ford area in particular. The cemetery is also significant for its association with the history of the Latino community in the Rocky Ford area, a history that, while much older than the cemetery itself, includes important contributions by members of that community to the history of the area. It is also significant for its association with the June 11, 1957, train-truck accident that claimed the lives of a dozen Latino farm workers, whose graves are grouped together in the Valley View. In addition, it is significant under Criteria Consideration D as a clear example of two different design aesthetic movements in cemetery planning: the simple grid of the Town/City cemeteries and the curvilinear plans of the Lawn Park cemeteries of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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<sup>4</sup> Sloane, p. 121.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

**The Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery as a Designed Landscape**

The Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery is a somewhat unique example of cemetery design, in that it exhibits two different models of cemetery development, distinct from one another but set side by side (Figure 5). Occupying the east half of the site is the Valley View, with key early periods of development from 1887 until 1919. It is an example of the Town/City cemetery type,<sup>5</sup> which was typical of smaller cemetery layout from the eighteenth century well into the twentieth century. Characterized by similarly sized blocks organized in a gridded geometric pattern, with graves set in straight rows, the Town/City cemeteries are more formally landscaped than burial grounds or church yard cemeteries. These cemeteries are usually owned by the cities, towns, or other municipalities that oversee them.



**Figure 5. Contrasting forms of the two cemeteries. Orthomosaic photograph, Lex Nichols, September 14, 2022.**

Just as, in the nineteenth century, cities and towns were laid out in grids, usually aligned with linear natural or manmade features such as a rail lines or waterways or simply lined up with the cardinal directions dictated by a surveyor's compass, so too were cemeteries. At Rocky Ford, the town grid aligned with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (ATSF) Railroad's path along the Arkansas River and, over time, shifted on the outskirts of the town to follow the cardinal north-south grid dictated by the Public Land Survey System (PLSS). Under the logic

<sup>5</sup> Sloane, p. 4-5.

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of the PLSS, the new roads followed the lines dictated by townships, sections, and quarter sections. It made sense to the builders of the cemetery, then, that Valley View's interior lanes, paths, and burial plots would line up with the roads that bordered it. The Rural Cemetery Movement, which had a powerful impact on cemetery design in the early-mid nineteenth century, had stepped away from the grid in 1831 with the Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mount Auburn and other cemeteries from that movement offered landscapes of burial that were rooted in the picturesque and offered families a place to visit their dear departed in a carefully crafted "natural" setting. The American West, however, was in the late nineteenth century still seeing the efforts of European Americans to embrace what they saw as the civilizing (and perhaps soothing—so much of the natural landscape of the West seemed unpredictable and harsh to these Easterners) regularity that came with imposing an order of squares and rectangles on wild nature. Landscape historian Aaron Wunsch explains the importance of the grid to the settlement of the American West:

To many post-Revolutionary Americans, the grid held out profound, almost mystical promise, embodying as it did a host of disparate ideals. Foremost was a heady combination of Enlightenment rationalism and republican simplicity. Jefferson touched on both when he dreamed of laying out the Western Territory in ten-square-mile townships comprising regions with vaguely classical names such as Metropotamia and Polypotamia. If Congress rejected such eccentricities, it remained no less committed to "a society based on the predictable and orderly movements of independent, equal individuals, each occupying a portion of the infinite, undifferentiated space made visible in the National Land Survey of 1785."<sup>6</sup>

Further, the PLSS sat in opposition to another mode of land settlement, the Mexican Land Grant System, which had dictated much of the settlement patterns to the south of the ATSF line. Under this system, land ownership and use were organized around water and topography, while the PLSS was organized around regimented squares. As the PLSS organized land, it organized thinking: the larger squares were themselves organized into smaller squares and so on, until the grid found its logical and ordered way into the landscapes of burial.<sup>7</sup>

By contrast, the later design of the Hillcrest Cemetery, set in the northwest quarter of the cemetery property, has a more classical plan, with three overlapping ovals that result in curving, intersecting lanes, which offer a wider perspective of views of the monuments and headstones. Privately owned from its platting in 1923 until 1961, when the Hill Crest Cemetery Association sold the parcel to the City of Rocky Ford, it is more typical of the Lawn Park cemetery model, which grew out of the movement away from Victorian ideals around death, as parks replaced cemeteries as places that city dwellers could enjoy an afternoon stroll.<sup>8</sup> Unlike most examples of the Lawn Park type, however, the Hillcrest does not emphasize above-ground mausoleums (there is one, dating to 1931, in Block 7) or flush-ground grave markers, but contains three-dimensional markers, which are set in rigorous north-south rows (as they are in the Valley View part of the cemetery). A 1955 resolution

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<sup>6</sup> Wunsch, p. 44

<sup>7</sup> Wunsch, "Parceling the Picturesque"

<sup>8</sup> Sloane, p. 116-119; 121-124.

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adopted by the Rocky Ford City Council prohibited “fences, railings, cappings, or enclosures” around grave plots, and mandated that grave markers be granite, bronze or marble.<sup>9</sup>

Lawn Park cemeteries are noted to have a relationship with the City Beautiful Movement, which grew out of the neoclassical aesthetic that underpinned the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The Hillcrest’s plan exhibits a rational symmetry that may have been influenced by the City Beautiful, which in the mid-1920s, at time the Hillcrest was designed, was still strongly informing the buildings and landscapes of Denver.

### **Rocky Ford Developmental History**

As with all cemeteries, the Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery is a product of the history of settlement in the region in which it sits. Protohistorically, the Lower Arkansas Valley east of present-day Pueblo was home to the Apache people, who were the first to have contact with the Spanish explorers who entered the area in the 1700s. In the early decades of the eighteenth century, the Apache were pushed out by the Comanche, who were moving into the area from the northern plains and Great Basin. During the early decades of the nineteenth century bands of Arapaho and Cheyenne moved toward the lower Arkansas River, forming alliances with the Comanche.

Following the 1819 Adams-Onis Treaty between the United States and Spain, the Arkansas River became an important part of the boundary between New Spain, to the south, and territory belonging to the United States on the north. New Spain gained its independence from Spain and became Mexico in 1821, a year that also saw the opening of the commercial corridor known as the Santa Fe Trail, which for part of its trajectory followed the Arkansas River, between what is now La Junta, approximately 12 miles east of Rocky Ford, and present-day Great Bend, Kansas.<sup>10</sup> In 1835, merchants Charles Bent and Ceran St. Vrain completed their trading post on the north side of the Arkansas River, twenty miles east of what would be Rocky Ford. The local story goes that a young Kit Carson, working as a fur trader, around this time crossed the Arkansas River at a shallow spot with shale and boulders and declared it the “Rocky Ford Crossing Place.”<sup>11</sup> Freighters and cattle drovers used the “Rocky Ford Crossing Place,” and it became the first location of the town. Asahel Russell opened a small mercantile on the site in 1863, or according to some accounts 1868. In 1870 or 1871, George W. Swink left Illinois and traveled to eastern Colorado. Swink bought an interest in Russell’s store, and the firm became Russell and Swink. The store also served as the post office. The two men named this settlement “Rocky Ford.”<sup>12</sup>

Following completion of the ATSF Railroad to Pueblo in 1877, a railway station was built about three miles southwest of the Russel and Swink store, and the post office was transferred to the railway station. The store was moved near the station and later that year Russell and Swink surveyed and platted six blocks. Along with

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<sup>9</sup> West, Vol. 5, p. 84-85; The 16-volume *History of Rocky Ford* was compiled in the 1990s by local resident and schoolteacher Helen Kimber West (with the assistance, she notes, of many, many others). This work is a collection of newspaper clippings, City Council minutes arranged chronologically within categories, and short historical accounts and essays. Much of the information contained in this section is synthesized from this source.

<sup>10</sup> See History Colorado, Santa Fe Trail Map, for the full route: [Santa Fe Trail map | History Colorado](#)

<sup>11</sup> West, Vol. 1, p.12.

<sup>12</sup> West, Vol. 1, p. 1-7.

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the store they also moved the name, calling their new town Rocky Ford for the gravel ford across the Arkansas River.

The history of Rocky Ford is tied to the development of irrigation and agriculture, both of which were central to George Swink's interests. A 1949 article in *Colorado Magazine* notes that Swink enlisted the aid of neighbors, and in 1874 they dug the Rocky Ford Ditch, the oldest cooperative ditch in the valley.<sup>13</sup> Three large irrigation canals were developed from the Arkansas River in 1890. These were the Highline, Otero, and Bob's Creek. These water systems made the development of agriculture possible.

With the irrigation system in place, George Swink ordered cantaloupe and watermelon seeds from sources in the East. Over several years he experimented with different varieties until he found what he considered the perfect cantaloupe, which is known to this day as the Rocky Ford Cantaloupe. In 1878, Swink raised a good crop of watermelon, and he invited his friends in Rocky Ford and La Junta to share his melons with him. About 25 people traveled by train from La Junta, and they carved the melons at his store near the railroad. This was the beginning of Watermelon Day, which is still a part of the Arkansas Valley Fair, the oldest continuous fair in Colorado. Each year the crowd for watermelon grew, and in 1883 it was moved north to Swink's timber patent on land that became the Arkansas Valley Fairgrounds.

In 1885 Mr. J.H. Crowley, the section foreman for the ATSF, purchased a tract of land, and the following spring he and Mr. Swink began experimenting with grafting fruit trees. On August 19, 1887, Rocky Ford was officially incorporated. George W. Swink served as the first mayor. By 1890, the population of Rocky Ford was 468.

By the 1890s, a number of businesses had developed in Rocky Ford, including a milling and an elevator company, a canning factory, and other agriculture-based businesses. In 1893, George Swink and a group of farmers ordered sugar beet seed from Germany so they could experiment with the crop. Following a disastrous cantaloupe market in 1898, interest in sugar beets increased. The Oxnard brothers had just completed their sugar factory in Grand Island, Nebraska, and formed the American Sugar Beet Company. That year George Swink traveled to a sugar convention in Grand Island to learn if sugar beets could be profitably grown near Rocky Ford and was informed that a minimum of 4,000 acres and adequate water would be necessary.<sup>14</sup>

Interested in expanding to Colorado, the American Sugar Beet Company sent their chief agriculturist, Wilhelm Winterhalter, to Rocky Ford. He met with the beet sugar club and informed them the first requirement to build a factory was a guaranteed water supply and that the company wanted to control the water right of a dependable irrigation ditch. Winterhalter began acquiring land under the Rocky Ford Ditch that fall. The estate of cattle rancher Frank Bingham was the largest landowner under the ditch, and they sold to the Company. Henry Oxnard and a partner came to Rocky Ford, paid for the obligations, and chose a site for the factory. Most of the site belonged to George W. Swink. Following the site selection the merchants of Rocky Ford purchased land for a railroad spur from the site to the main line of the ATSF railway and then presented the plot of land to the Company officials. Construction of the American Sugar Beet Factory in Rocky Ford began in 1900, with 400 men working 12-hour shifts until the factory was completed on October 12, 1901.

<sup>13</sup> Harvey, "Rocky Ford Melons," *Colorado Magazine*, 1949, pp. 26-39.

<sup>14</sup> Information about the Sugar Beet industry in Rocky Ford in this and the following paragraphs has been synthesized from West, Vol. 13, pp. 1-105.

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When the beets were ready for harvest, the growers realized there was not enough labor. Initially, workers were recruited from Sonora, Mexico. In 1902, 162 men were recruited from the Navajo reservation in New Mexico to work in the fields, and the sugar beet growers contracted Harry Hokosano to recruit the first twenty Japanese laborers to farm at Rocky Ford. Russian Germans were also recruited to farm.

The ATSF railroad operations in Rocky Ford grew to accommodate the many agriculturally based industries, including the sugar factory. The sugar beet processing season began around October 1 and usually ran between 90 and 120 days, with over 300 train cars of beets handled daily. Once processing was over, the railroad shipped sugar out of Rocky Ford and received supplies for the next season.

The American Sugar Beet Company was a strong supporter of Rocky Ford. The Arkansas Valley Fair had started in 1878 when George W. Swink had a bumper crop of watermelon and decided to invite people from the surrounding area to partake in his crop. As the event grew the Arkansas Valley Fairground was established on land Swink had acquired through a timber patent. In 1929 when the Fair was struggling financially, the American Sugar Beet Company stepped forward to purchase the property and securities and reorganize the Fair Association to ensure the fair continued. Sugar beet day was added to the festivities. The Company owned the property until 1937 when it was purchased by the Rocky Ford School District who owned the property until the City of Rocky Ford purchased it in the early 1960s.

In addition to melons and sugar beets, a thriving seed industry began in Rocky Ford in 1896. D.V. Burrell purchased several train carloads of cantaloupe so he could harvest the seed. He purchased a vacant lot where he began selling cantaloupe seed and soon erected a building to house the Burrell Seed Company. Burrell's 16 acres of seeds quickly grew to over 1,000 acres, producing fruit, vegetable and flower seeds. Additional seed companies were established including Hollar Seed, Meade Seed and Arkansas Valley Seed. Oliver Manufacturing was established in Rocky Ford to design and produce seed and crop cleaning machines that were shipped around the world.

In the early years of the twentieth century, stock feeding operations were formed around Rocky Ford. These stock feeding operations supported the significant cattle ranching in the region and the livestock auctions. Together these symbiotic businesses helped nearby La Junta become the second largest cattle market in the United States. Farmers also grew lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes and onions. By 1910, the town's population had grown to 3,230. Multiple large produce brokerage companies were established, with Rocky Ford crops being shipped throughout the country.

Rocky Ford continued to grow throughout the first 75 years of the twentieth century. In 1950, the population was 4,087 and the 1960 census showed 4,929 residents. Per capita, Rocky Ford was one of the wealthiest towns in Colorado.

In 1959, American Crystal Sugar in Rocky Ford purchased all properties of the Holly Sugar Corporation. The Holly Sugar factory in Swink was closed and American Crystal assumed the contracts of all farmers in the Arkansas River Basin in Colorado, Kansas, and parts of New Mexico. That year approximately 425,000 tons of sugar beets were processed in Rocky Ford.

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In 1977, the last season before the Rocky Ford American Crystal Sugar Company closed their operation, farmers were paid over \$4.1 million for their sugar beet crops. Closure of the factory resulted in the loss of 80 year-round full-time jobs and 350 seasonal jobs. Many full-time employees transferred to plants in other states. Without the sugar factory the railroad business in Rocky Ford dropped severely, resulting in the depot closing in January 1979. That year, the American Crystal Sugar Company sold their farmland and the factory property to Colorado Land and Water Supply Company from Denver. Much of the irrigation water was separated from the land and transferred to cities on the Front Range, further damaging the economy. In 1999, Colorado Frozen Foods closed resulting in the loss of 85-100 jobs. By the 2020 census the population of Rocky Ford had dropped to 3,824 and the town was identified as one of the poorest in Colorado.

### **The Development of the Valley View Cemetery<sup>15</sup>**

The first burial ground in Rocky Ford was located at what is now 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Swink Avenue, adjacent to and sharing the schoolyard with the White School, a clapboard-clad adobe schoolhouse constructed in 1877. The graves were moved to the present cemetery site in the late 1880s, when the White School was moved, and the first Liberty School was built at that location (as second Liberty School was built at the same location in the 1950s).<sup>16</sup>

It was in 1894 that J. C. Fox purchased the NW Quarter of Section 20, T23S R56W, from the Otero Fruit and Land Company. Research reveals little about Fox aside from that he platted his newly acquired quarter-section into sixteen lots, the land designated as Lot 3 comprising the cemetery. In May of 1897, he deeded the cemetery grounds to the City of Rocky Ford, who took over the management of what was then known as (and sometimes still is) the Rocky Ford Cemetery. The Board of Trustees for the town held to these conditions: that the property be conveyed with fee simple, free of liability, and with a secured right of way from public ground.<sup>17</sup> In essence, this meant the city would own the cemetery with no strings and that it could be accessed from the road that bordered it.

The cemetery at that time had no official name. In obituaries in the *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, it was simply called the cemetery at Rocky Ford, although some newspaper notices referred to it as Riverview Cemetery. Funerals were in the charge of local undertakers and embalmers whose skill and ethics varied, and little regulation governed methods and procedures. An undertaker known as Mr. Thompson was noted in 1895 to have buried the bodies of poor people only 24 inches deep, claiming that the ground at the cemetery was too rocky to do otherwise. Better at his job was undertaker Issac H. Adair, who was repeatedly noted in the paper as efficient and experienced, and who ran the undertaking and embalming department at the Rocky Ford Hardware Company, which also supplied equipment to the American Sugar Beet Company.<sup>18</sup> Although it seems incongruous today, early funeral businesses were often associated with hardware stores, which stocked or could order many of the supplies undertakers needed such as casket hardware or embalming fluid. Mr. Adair

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<sup>15</sup> Volume 5, pages 75-111 of Helen Kimber West's *History of Rocky Ford* contains a chronology of the Valley View-Hillcrest cemetery, and much of the information contained in this section is synthesized from this source.

<sup>16</sup> West, Book 5, page 75; Book 6, page 25. The White School was later moved to the 400 Block of North 12<sup>th</sup> Street, where it stands today.

<sup>17</sup> West, Book 5, page 75.

<sup>18</sup> *The Rocky Ford Enterprise*, March 28, 1895; November 9, 1899.

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worked for the Rocky Ford Hardware Company from 1899 to 1903, when he left Rocky Ford for his health and was replaced by undertaker T. F. Dobbs, who moved to the area from Nebraska.<sup>19</sup>

City Council minutes show that it took a few years for the residents of Rocky Ford to take up beautification efforts at the cemetery. In 1901, Mrs. Lewis Swink donated 500 Ash trees to the Cemetery Association, specifically for planting at the cemetery along the borders and the main avenues. But it was not until the spring of 1904 that the cemetery committee, which had overseen operations at the cemetery, but which had little authority, recommended that the City of Rocky Ford take over the cemetery. The Council minutes read:

May 9, 1904: The report of the cemetery committee was read recommending that the city take charge of the cemetery in accordance with the proposition of the Rocky Ford Cemetery Association.

- (1) The lots in the cemetery hereto sold be and to remain the property of the parties to whom certificates therefore were issued.
- (2) Any lot used for burial purposes not included in the Potter's Field or free ground for which payment has not been made at this time shall be reserved for the proper use, etc.
- (3) That portion of ground therefore used as a Potter's Field to be and remain a free ground.
- (4) The city to maintain and conduct a cemetery upon the premises subject to the restrictions and conditions in the original certificates of dedication granting to the public the perpetual use of streets and avenues shown on the recorded plot under reasonable rules and regulations.
- (5) The Cemetery Association to convey with said tract a full paid water right of ten acres in the canal and also to turn over to the city the sum of \$250 in cash.

Be it resolved: That the city do and hereby does accept deeds subject to the conditions named and that the city immediately assume control and take charge of the said cemetery and take the same accordance with the resolutions and the covenants and agreements.<sup>20</sup>

The following month, the cemetery was officially named Valley View, although it took some time for the name to stick. A brief notice in the *Rocky Ford Enterprise* scolded the community, saying, "Here is a fact not universally known in Rocky Ford: Our cemetery is not Riverview Cemetery, nor city cemetery, nor Rocky Ford Cemetery, but *Valleyview* (sic). The name was officially given the cemetery when it became property of the city. Now don't forget that it is *Valleyview*."<sup>21</sup>

The care of the cemetery was (and still is) in the hands of a sexton, a site manager who oversaw operations at the cemetery when it became the property of the city.<sup>22</sup> In 1905, Uriah S. Ringer was elected by the City

<sup>19</sup> *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, January 2, 1903

<sup>20</sup> West, Book 5, pp. 65-66..

<sup>21</sup> *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, June 16, 1905.

<sup>22</sup> Although the term *sexton* is often used in a religious context, for one who oversees a church and associated graveyard, the term is also secularly applied to caretakers or managers at cemeteries.

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Council to serve as sexton, replacing the prior sexton, J. H. Roe. Ringer, who had been the postmaster, was a far more effective sexton than his predecessor, and within the year the council had funded the construction of an octagonal house in the center of the cemetery to be used for equipment storage and as a residence or sometimes-residence for cemetery staff (little information was found about this structure, but it was likely removed in the 1920s, when Hillcrest was established and the Sexton's House constructed in its northwest corner).<sup>23</sup> He also paid attention to the graves, marking the unmarked graves with wooden markers inscribed with the names of the deceased or, in instances where the records had not been kept, "Unknown." Later articles in the *Enterprise* noted that Ringer worked hard to put the cemetery in order for "Decoration Day" (Memorial Day) and paid particular attention to the graves of Union veterans of the Civil War who had been members of the fraternal organization, the Grand Army of the Republic. He even offered inexpensive earthenware pots to families who had been leaving flowers in tin cans, which Ringer and the cemetery committee deemed untidy.<sup>24</sup>

Ringer only served as sexton until 1912, but these were critical years for Valley View. By 1910, the population of Rocky Ford had increased by nearly 700 percent from 1890 to 1910, which was most of the time the cemetery had been in place. In 1908, the cemetery committee requisitioned a redrawn plat map, in order that the locations of family plots could be better identified (Figure 6). At about the same time, the City Council began to look into expanding Valley View.

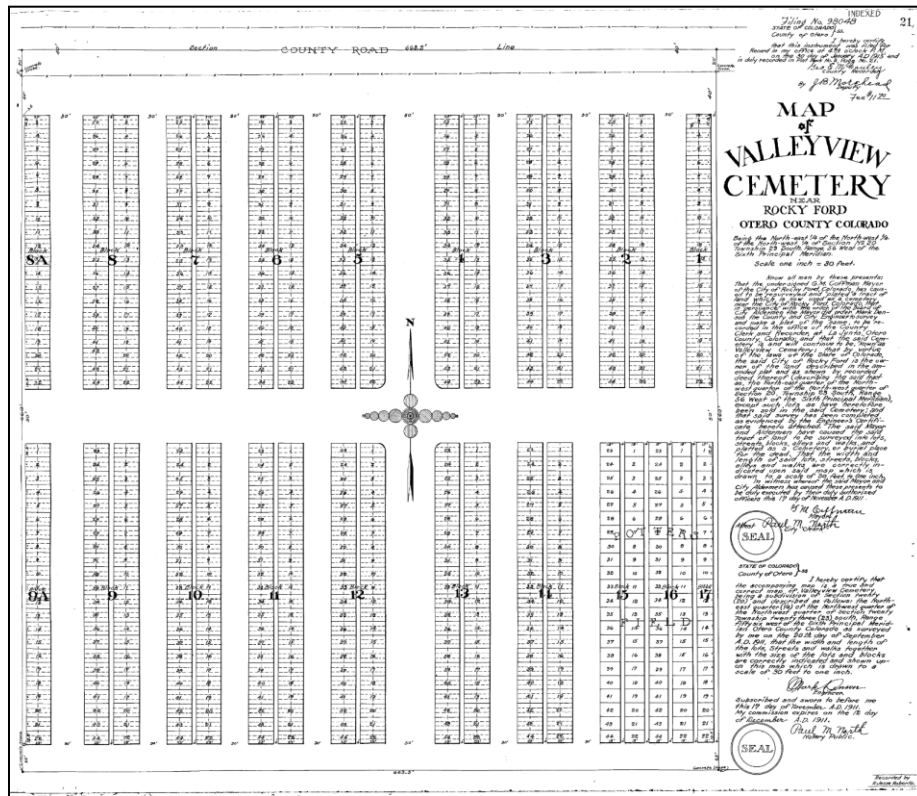


Figure 6: 1908 Plat of the Valley View Cemetery

<sup>23</sup> *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, Volume 19, Number 52, May 25, 1906; West, Vol 5, p. 76.

<sup>24</sup> *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, Volume 22, Number 50, May 14, 1909.

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It was not until 1916 that the City put talk of expansion into action. In February of that year, the City of Rocky Ford purchased from Peter E. Vandenburg five acres on the south border of Valley View (the north half of Lot 6 of the J. C. Fox Addition), expanding the cemetery by exactly one-third with the addition of Blocks 18 through 26A. In addition, they purchased trees for the new blocks, and in October and November of that year, built the cobblestone wall that defines the north boundary of Valley View (**see photos 5-13**). Blocks 18, 19, and 20 were reserved for the expansion of the Potter's Field (now called the Peak View section of the cemetery). Although not officially designated for Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans, Block 21 contains Japanese headstones dating as early as 1918 and was historically understood as the final resting place for many in that community, although early Japanese graves are also present in Block 14 and Block 1. Block 21's importance as a locale for Japanese graves was further reinforced when, in the 1950s, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) purchased a number of plots in order that community members could lie near one another and stay together.<sup>25</sup> Also in Block 21 are graves of many of those killed on June 11, 1957, when an ATSF train hit a pickup truck of farmworkers on their way to work in the fields (see further discussion on page 29).

Valley View expanded further in 1919, with the addition of another five acres on the south end of the cemetery (the south half of Lot 6 of the JC Fox Addition). This parcel was purchased from C. G. Fullmer for \$450 per acre. This expansion added Blocks 27A through 34, with much of the southeastern part of this expansion serving the local Latino community.

### **The Hillcrest Cemetery: Carl M. and Millicent Ustick and the Hill Crest Cemetery Company**

The family with the greatest impact on the Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery was that of Carl M. Sr. and Millicent Ustick, who platted and established the Hillcrest Cemetery in 1923. The couple moved to Rocky Ford in 1913, when Carl Ustick took over the undertaking business from T. F. Dobbs. Changing the name of Dobbs' business to Ustick and Company, Carl and Millicent Ustick first conducted business from the upper floors of a commercial building on Main Street. In 1916 they purchased the house at 305 N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, which would become the home of the Ustick funeral business for three generations, until the family sold the business in 2008 (Figure 7).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Personal Communication, Junichio Gene Hiramata with Rebecca Goodwin, February 25, 2019.

<sup>26</sup> *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, March 24, 1916, p6; Bellwood-Ustick Funeral Home, History: [Our Story \(bellwoodustick.com\)](http://bellwoodustick.com)

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**Figure 7. Millicent and Carl Ustick, and the funeral home at 305 N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Rocky Ford. Dates of photographs unknown. Source: <https://www.bellwoodustick.com/our-story>**

Carl Mitchell Ustick and Millicent Cross had met in Bangor, Michigan, and married there in 1901. They moved to Colorado and settled in Victor, where Carl Ustick worked as a gold mining engineer. There, they had three children, all girls. Carl Ustick learned the undertaking trade when he assisted the local undertaker following a disastrous 1904 explosion at the Independence Mine that killed 15 replacement workers during a mine strike.<sup>27</sup> Although the 1910 Census shows Ustick still working as a mining engineer in Victor, he was increasingly drawn to the funeral business.<sup>28</sup> He and Millicent had visited Rocky Ford as newlyweds, and when the opportunity arose the Usticks chose Rocky Ford as their new home. Ever a team, both Millicent and Carl were licensed funeral directors, and they both devoted time and energy to what was now a family business. One of the early ads the Usticks ran in the Rocky Ford Enterprise in 1913 promoted the fact that the Ustick funeral parlor had a “lady attendant,” doubtless referring to Millicent’s involvement.

<sup>27</sup> *The Rocky Ford Daily Gazette*, September 22, 2010; Jameson, p.215; [Time Machine Tuesday: The Victor Labor War of 1903-04 – Colorado Virtual Library](#)

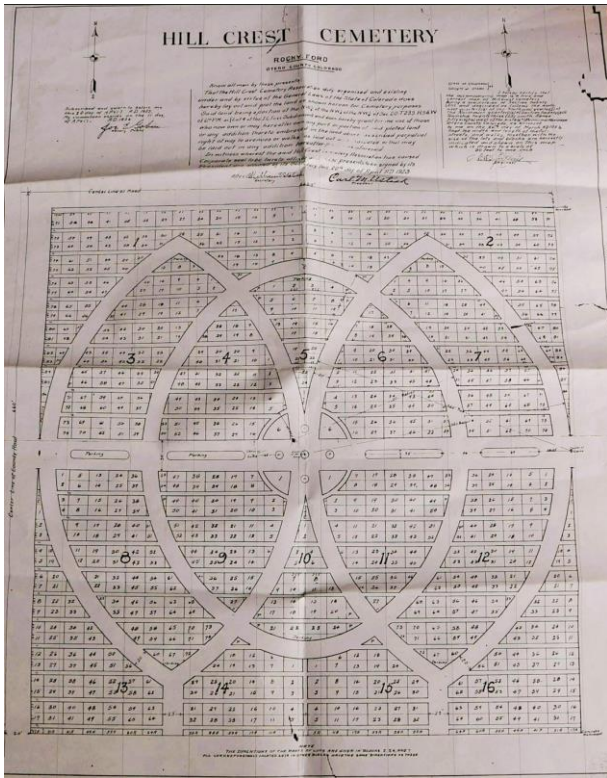
<sup>28</sup> United States Federal Census. Year: 1910; Census Place: Victor Ward 3, Teller, Colorado; Roll: T624\_125; Page: 1a; Enumeration District: 0185; FHL microfilm: 1374138. Source: Ancestry.com

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**Figure 8. Hill Crest Cemetery plat, 1923.**

From their arrival, the Usticks integrated themselves into the town's social life. They donated flowers to town events and even sponsored an oratory and essay contest at the local high school.<sup>29</sup> In 1914, they had their fourth child, Carl Jr., who would go on to inherit his father's business many years later. Notably, their eldest daughter, Dorothy (born in 1902) also attended mortuary school and would go on to found the Green Mortuary in La Junta, with her husband Custis Green, Sr., in 1931.<sup>30</sup>

In May of 1916, the Usticks purchased the home of John Godding at 305 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street. A well-appointed Queen Anne mansion, it would not only be the home of the Ustick family but would serve the funerary needs of Rocky Ford from that time forward (as of 2024, it is still in operation as the Bellwood-Ustick Funeral Home).<sup>31</sup> That same year brought tragedy: The Usticks' middle daughter, Millicent, died of typhoid fever at the young age of thirteen.

In 1922, Carl Ustick purchased Lots 4 and 5 of the J. C. Fox Subdivision, which comprised the remainder of the land in the quarter-quarter section that was not devoted to the

Valley View Cemetery. The following May, the Usticks and business partner E. G. Haffner incorporated as the Hill Crest Cemetery Association, Carl M. Ustick, President and Millicent Ustick, Secretary, and filed the 1923 plat for the Hill Crest Cemetery (Figure 8, above). Although the cemetery plat and the cemetery association were both called Hill Crest, the cemetery is today known as the Hillcrest (one word) cemetery. Research did not reveal when this change took place, but it may have been when the Usticks sold the cemetery to the City of Rocky Ford in 1961.

The Usticks constructed the Sexton's House in the northwest corner of the Hillcrest grounds (research did not reveal a construction year, but the house was likely built in the late 1920s and is visible on a 1937 aerial photograph). Their granddaughter, Millie Donnelson, recalled in a 2010 interview with the Rocky Ford Daily Gazette that the house was the home of a Ustick employee, Joe Amend.<sup>32</sup> In 1946 their son, Carl Jr., took over the family business, allowing his parents to eventually retire. The younger Carl was a licensed pilot and put his skill to good use, flying bodies as necessary to other destinations in the state.

It is notable that, while the cemetery was designed in 1922, it took quite a bit longer for it to take the platted form on the ground. Historic aerial photographs show that it grew carefully southward over the course of a few decades, and by 1957 was entirely constructed (Figure 9).

<sup>29</sup> *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, Vol. 26, Number 51, May 13, 1913; Vol. 28, Number 46, April 16, 1915, p.2.

<sup>30</sup> *The Rocky Ford Daily Gazette*, September 22, 2010.

<sup>31</sup> [Our Story \(bellwoodustick.com\)](http://bellwoodustick.com)

<sup>32</sup> "How Four Generations Ran Local Funeral Home." *Rocky Ford Daily Gazette*, September 22, 2010.

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**Figure 9. The development of the Hillcrest cemetery over two decades, as demonstrated by aerial photographs. Sources: 1936, Soil Conservation Service, 1936-10-28; 1947 and 1957, <https://www.historicaerials.com/>.**

The Hill Crest Cemetery Association continued to operate the cemetery until 1961, when the Usticks sold it to the City of Rocky Ford with the caveat that the city would maintain it as a cemetery in perpetuity.<sup>33</sup> In 1963, Carl and Millicent Ustick passed away within 24 hours of one another. Following a joint funeral at the Presbyterian Church, where they had been members for many decades, they were buried in the Ustick family plot in Block 6 of the Hillcrest Cemetery.

### **Further Development of the Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery**

From the earliest years of the Valley View Cemetery until the present, people have gathered to honor military veterans and others who belonged to fraternal or social organizations that provide important connections to the people of the Rocky Ford area. In 1936, several of these organizations (research did not reveal exactly which ones) petitioned the Rocky Ford City Council to allow them to construct a Memorial structure – a round raised platform lined in stone, with a centered flagpole (**Photo 60**).<sup>34</sup> Given its year of construction, that the platform looks very much like structures constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) is not surprising, and news articles that year show that WPA workers were on hand to help with local harvest; however, research did not reveal a connection between the WPA and the construction of this memorial structure.

At the end of the post-World War II period, as the population of Rocky Ford continued to grow and, along with it, the need for better equipment at the cemetery, the City of Rocky Ford approved the construction of a concrete block garage, which was built in 1969. It also contained an office, which is the current office of the cemetery.

### **Japanese History of Rocky Ford**

<sup>33</sup> West, Book 5, p. 79,

<sup>34</sup> West, Book 5, page 73

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Blocks 15, 20 and 21 of the Valley View Cemetery hold the graves of approximately 225 members of the Japanese American community of Rocky Ford and Otero County. Additional graves are scattered throughout the cemetery, including two children who are buried in Block 1. That these citizens of the area valued their Japanese culture and history is strongly apparent in the Kanji-inscribed headstones (these have been translated and are included as Attachment A). While the Kanji inscriptions are most often accompanied by English names and dates, for many headstones Kanji is the only language represented on the stones.

Although written records indicate the first Japanese immigrants came to Otero County between 1900 and 1907, there are some indications there were a few Japanese immigrants in the area prior to 1900. Following the 1901 completion of the American Crystal Sugar Factory in Rocky Ford, it was discovered there were not enough farm laborers to support the sugar beet campaign. In these years before government employment services existed, it was common for companies and farmers who needed farm laborers to contract with someone to locate workers. In 1902, sugar beet growers at Rocky Ford contracted with Harry Hokasano, who had a business recruiting Japanese people to work in the fields.<sup>35</sup> That year twenty Japanese workers were recruited to help farm sugar beets at Rocky Ford. Railroad operations also were expanding, and some of the first Japanese men to arrive initially worked for the railroad before switching to farming.<sup>36</sup>

Within one year of arriving, the Japanese men proved themselves to be such good farmers that local landowners were willing to rent them as much land as they wanted. In addition to growing sugar beets, they also were extremely successful at growing the cantaloupe and watermelon for which Rocky Ford was already famous. Over time other crops like onions and chilis also became important crops. By 1915, many of the *Issei* (i.e., the Japanese term for “first generation,” meaning people who had emigrated from Japan to countries in North or South America) had established themselves and were running large farm operations, although not all had been able to purchase the farmland.

Early newspaper reports indicate that the Japanese newcomers quickly embraced many of the local traditions. A feature of the 1907 Fourth of July celebration in Rocky Ford were Japanese wrestling matches, with the prize money raised by the *Issei*. The local celebration committee ran an article in the newspaper expressing their appreciation for the contribution to the celebration.<sup>37</sup> Not all embraced this appreciation for the Japanese contributions. In 1908 the *Rocky Ford Enterprise* ran a brief article stating that an article run in the *Denver Post* indicated some Otero County farmers were worried about having Japanese farmers in the vicinity and felt they raised poor quality melons.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> “Japanese Coming to Raise Sugar Beets in Colorado.” *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, March 2, 1903

<sup>36</sup> “Mary Yagami Compiles History of Japanese in Valley.” *Rocky Ford Daily Gazette*, 1986 Community Report, p9.

<sup>37</sup> “Japanese Wrestling Match”. *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, July 4, 1907.

<sup>38</sup> “Don’t Like Japs”. *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, October 8, 1908.

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In 1907 a “gentleman’s agreement” between the United States and Japan severely limited the number of Japanese immigrants to the United States. An exception was made for the wives of Japanese men who were already residents. If a Japanese man who was a U.S. resident married a woman residing in Japan, he could

bring his new wife into the country legally. Matchmakers established a “picture bride” system, in which men could review photographs of single women willing to come to America to wed.<sup>39</sup> In other cases, families from the same region knew each other and helped arrange a marriage. After a bride was chosen, the wedding was held without the groom and recorded with the Japanese government. The majority of Japanese who came to the United States between 1907 and 1924 were picture brides, including many of the first Japanese women in the Rocky Ford area.

As Japanese couples had children, these children attended public schools. In 1915, George Dobashi was the first Japanese American to graduate from the Rocky Ford High School. In an effort to teach the *Nisei* (meaning “second generation,” or the children of the Issei) the language and traditions of their parents, Japanese American summer schools were established. The Japanese also established baseball teams that played against teams from other small communities in Otero County.

Japanese immigrants were among early business owners in Rocky Ford. Sam Nishimura

and his wife Shizu owned a restaurant/pool hall, which is believed to have been the first Japanese-owned business.<sup>40</sup> In 1909, farmer Kichimatsu Taguchi augmented his farm operations with a grocery store, located on 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Rocky Ford. Taguchi was instrumental in the development of shipping Rocky Ford cantaloupe throughout the country. In 1920, International Motor Trucks ran an advertisement in *The Michigan Farmer*,



Figure 10. International Harvester ad featuring Kichimatsu Taguchi, in *The Michigan Farmer*, March 29, 1920, p. 15.

<sup>39</sup> Kelli Nakamura. "Picture brides," *Densho Encyclopedia* <https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Picture%20brides> (accessed Mar 14 2024).

<sup>40</sup> Krasnow et al. 2019.

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featuring an illustration of Kichimatsu Taguchi at the wheel of his truck, labelled “the well-known Cantaloupe King of Rocky Ford, Colo” (Figure 10, above).<sup>41</sup> The Taguchi market was in business until 1969 or 1970.<sup>42</sup>

Also in 1909, K. Takamura opened a restaurant. A store called Ichiban was established on Main Street circa 1915,<sup>43</sup> and M. Murai opened a fresh fish and seafood mercantile. Following the end of WWII, Ted Tanaka left the Granada Relocation Camp and opened a restaurant in Rocky Ford. Later Japanese-owned businesses included Yaso Masuda’s bar called Yaso’s Place; Chic Pree’ Beauty Salon established by Amy and Hank Konishi in 1946, and which served customers until Amy’s death in 2016; and Aki Ushiyama’s Oriental Inn restaurant, which was in business from 1967-1973. A few other Japanese-owned small businesses were established in the nearby towns of Swink and La Junta in the early decades of the twentieth century, but Rocky Ford continued to be the center of the community.

Prior to WWII, Japanese American families tried to maintain their connections to Japanese culture. When a family member died, families often wanted all or part of the headstone engraved with Kanji. According to the great-grandson of Carl Ustick, Sr., who owned the only funeral home in Rocky Ford, a family member would write out what they wanted the headstone to say, which was then sent to a Buddhist priest in Denver for translation into Kanji. This was then sent to a monument firm in Nebraska, which would engrave the headstone and ship it to Rocky Ford. After the Usticks started a monument firm in the 1950s, they would have a Buddhist priest write the Kanji description and then would make a template, which they would use to engrave the headstone. The earliest known Japanese burial at Valley View-Hillcrest is that of Yazawa Sumie, who died in 1915. The headstone has a one-line Kanji inscription (Headstone translations, Part II, headstone #6).

Buddhism and Christianity both played a central role in the lives of the Japanese American families around Rocky Ford. Some Issei and Nisei remained devoted Buddhists, while others “borrowed the best of both worlds,” in the words of one Nisei.<sup>44</sup> In 1924 a woman who had been a missionary in Japan started a Japanese Mission in conjunction with the Rocky Ford Christian Church.<sup>45</sup> She continued to work with the community until she married and moved away in 1932.<sup>46</sup> Her work at the Christian Church was followed by Reverend Eizo Sameshima Sakamoto who arrived in Rocky Ford in 1945 to work with the Japanese community and help them integrate into the Christian Church of their choice.<sup>47</sup> In 1952 when the Issei were finally allowed to be American citizens, Reverend Sakamoto, who was a leader in the Arkansas Valley JAACL, developed a Japanese/English study guide for the citizenship test and held study sessions. Ninety-two of ninety-three Issei in the community successfully took the exam, including Reverend Sakamoto. The son and daughter of Kentaro

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<sup>41</sup> “Where the Going is Hardest”. The Michigan Farmer, March 29, 1920, page 15.

<sup>42</sup> Krasnow et al. 2019.

<sup>43</sup> Monkman. “First Japanese Came to This Area in Early 1900’s”. Rocky Ford Daily Gazette, July 1, 1962.

<sup>44</sup> Personal Communication, Kenji William Takeda with Rebecca Goodwin, September 22, 2022.

<sup>45</sup> “Rocky Ford Churches Date from very Beginning of Town,” *Rocky Ford Daily Gazette*, July 1, 1963.

<sup>46</sup> Hill, Frances M. “Friends Around the World-The Church At Work in the Arkansas Valley”. Junior World, July 3, 1960.

<sup>47</sup> Author Unknown. “Rocky Ford Churches Dates from Very Beginning of Town”. Rocky Ford Daily Gazette, July 1, 1963.

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Takeda remember him coming home from the citizenship ceremony waving a small American flag saying, "Now I can vote!"<sup>48</sup>

A number of Japanese Americans in Rocky Ford and the surrounding areas were actively involved in the Rocky Ford Christian Church. By the early 1950s Nisei members of the community were singing in the choir, teaching Sunday school, and serving on the church finance committee. From the early 1950s until the 1980s, one of the highlights of the year for the community was the chow mein dinner prepared by Japanese American women of the Christian Women's Fellowship. Occasionally, Reverend Sakamoto would hold a Sunday afternoon service for Japanese-speaking community members.<sup>49</sup>

With the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entry into World War II, life changed for Japanese Americans around Rocky Ford. While many have stated they did not feel much prejudice, other felt it was present. Older generations buried or destroyed family items they had brought from Japan, and many traditional cultural activities, like celebration of the Lunar New Year, were scaled back so they were less visible. Junichio (Gene) Hirakata, who was a child at the time, recalled visiting family members or friends at the Granada Relocation Center—now known as the Amache National Historic Site—ninety miles away. He also remembered relatives from the West Coast voluntarily evacuating to Colorado, to live with his family near Rocky Ford and work on their farm during the brief window of time that federal policies allowed Japanese Americans who lived in exclusion zones to leave, provided they had a job at their destination. Because Colorado's governor, Ralph Carr, had openly welcomed these evacuees, a much greater percentage of them chose Colorado as their wartime home.<sup>50</sup>

Many young Japanese Americans from the area served in the US Military in World War II (and many would serve in subsequent wars). To counter prejudice and to reinforce the idea that they were as American as any of their neighbors, in 1950 local Japanese Americans formed the Arkansas Valley chapter of the JACL.<sup>51</sup> The JACL held picnics, showed Japanese movies, had traditional Japanese dance performances, and raised money to support community activities. When Pioneer Memorial Hospital was being built in Rocky Ford and the Mennonites did not have enough money to include a chapel, the JACL raised the money and had the chapel built at the hospital. In 1978 the JACL planted twenty trees at the cemetery in honor of three men and ten women Issei who were present. First generation Japanese asked to shovel dirt around the trees.<sup>52</sup>

There were many Japanese American farms in the area until the late 1970s. The closure of the American Crystal Sugar Factory and the economic hardships of farming in the Valley, particularly as water was being transferred to the Front Range, made farming seem less desirable to younger generations. These generations left for college and other opportunities, and by 2020 only one Japanese American family was still actively farming in the area.

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<sup>48</sup> Personal Communication, Kenji William Takeda with Rebecca Goodwin, September 22, 2022; Personal Communication Sumi Takeda Hiraki with Rebecca Goodwin, October 5, 2022.

<sup>49</sup> Mosely, Louise. "Integration is Working". Bulletin of the United Christian Missionary Society, Disciples of Christ, January 1956.

<sup>50</sup> Personal Communication, Junichio Gene Hirakata with Rebecca Goodwin, February 25, 2019.

<sup>51</sup> "Japanese American Citizens League Plays Important Role in Valley," *Rocky Ford Daily Gazette* Community Report, 1986.

<sup>52</sup> "JACL Honors Area Issei". *Rocky Ford Daily Gazette*, April 18, 1978.

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## Latino History of Rocky Ford

As noted above, much of the southeast corner of the Valley View contains the graves of members of the Latino community of the Rocky Ford area. As with all of southeastern Colorado, the history of Otero County and the Rocky Ford region is closely associated with Latino culture and history, as all areas south of the Arkansas River were historically part of Spain, then Mexico, before becoming part of the United States. Often, the Latino culture in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico is understood to be distinct from other U.S. Latino groups or more recent Mexican immigrants, having been located in the region considerably longer than other groups who descend from nineteenth-century settlers.<sup>53</sup>

The region that we know as southeastern Colorado saw little nonindigenous settlement until well into the nineteenth century, as nomadic tribes, in particular the Comanche, successfully defended their territory. In the seventeenth century, however, the government of New Spain sent settlers north into what is now central New Mexico. After 1821, when New Spain gained its independence from Spain and became Mexico, the unofficial trade corridor that would become known as the Santa Fe Trail became more official. One notable Mexican trader from this period, Miguel Otero, would later be the namesake of Otero County. As Mexico and the United States established a commercial relationship, the Mexican government took increased interest in reinforcing their claim to territory in the region by promoting settlement in the form of land grants. The largest of these, the 1843 Las Animas (Vigil-St. Vrain) Land Grant spanned 4.1 million acres from the Sangre De Cristos to the Arkansas River.

Soon, groups of New Mexican settlers were moving up the Purgatoire and other rivers into the region that includes what is now Otero County, establishing small plaza settlements, usually formed by members of an extended family. Farming was the mainstay of the economies of the plazas, and included beans, melons, pumpkins, and chiles, along with sheep raising. With the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, these settlements were now part of the territory of the United States, and trade along the Santa Fe Trail intensified, drawing even more settlers from New Mexico (as well as an increase in European American settlement) spurred by the Homestead Act of 1862. By the mid-1870s, the ATSF railroad was under construction through the area—merchant Miguel Otero was a key supporter—and reached Rocky Ford in 1876. The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw Latinos from New Mexico homesteading along the Purgatoire River between Trinidad and the area known as Higbee, Colorado. Others established sheep ranching operations north and east of the Purgatoire, below Timpas Creek. Over time, some of these families moved into the lower Arkansas Valley around Rocky Ford. As Rocky Ford grew with the arrival of the railroad and establishment of businesses, not all in the community were supportive of the Latino residents. In 1900 there appears to have been a concerted effort on the part of non-Latino residents to push Mexican laborers out of the city limits.<sup>54</sup>

Around the turn of the twentieth century, as the American Beet Sugar Company factory in Rocky Ford reached the later stages of construction and sugar beet planting was underway, farmers realized they did not have enough field labor to harvest the crop. To help alleviate the shortage, the Company brought in Mexican workers from Sonora, Mexico. Some local men argued that the Mexican workers would take too many jobs,

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<sup>53</sup> Numerous studies of this culture history have been published. See especially Boyle, 1994; Carrillo et al., 2003, Montano, 2001; and Nostrand, 1992.

<sup>54</sup> Untitled Article, *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, June 15, 1900.

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but the Company reported there was enough work for everyone.<sup>55</sup> The starting wage for farm work was \$1.50 a day and the starting wage at the factory was 15 cents per hour. The work was strenuous, often made worse by heat, which led to the death of field workers; in July of 1913, the *Rocky Ford Enterprise* reported that the heat had killed three Mexican farm laborers within a week and sickened many others.<sup>56</sup> Most of the crews stayed after harvesting to work in the factory processing the beets into sugar and helping to train locals to do the jobs. The need for workers was so great for the Rocky Ford factory and others in the vicinity that they began recruiting German speaking people from Russia to come to Otero County and farm. In 1902, 162 Navajo individuals came to Rocky Ford from New Mexico to work in the fields.<sup>57</sup>

Sentiments about Latino workers in the community were varied. In 1903 the *Rocky Ford Enterprise* ran a short article stating that the "Mexican beet thinners" were excellent customers for the clothing stores, and their demand for Sunday and holiday attire outpaced supply.<sup>58</sup> Latino workers were also critical to farm operations near Rocky Ford other than sugar beets. Japanese American farmers hired Latino workers to help in their fields. Nisei members of the Japanese community remember their parents often learned Spanish before they learned English. Amy Nakayama Konishi remembered her petite Issei mother overseeing Latino workers on their farm and speaking fluent Spanish.

To accommodate the Latino workers, the sugar factory built the Alta Vista Camp on a hill on the southwest edge of town. Families who lived there worked the months of the factory's "sugar campaign," the harvest and processing of sugar beets, and then in the fields in the summer. Mr. Francisco Gandara operated a store at Alta Vista and would give credit to families in the winter when they were not working. Dan Jaramillo lived in what was described as a large house at Alta Vista and achieved the position of supervisor at the American Crystal Sugar Company before he passed away in 1948.

In 1910 St. Peter's Catholic Church in Rocky Ford was designated a separate parish. From the founding of the Church until Rev. Patrick Conway arrived in September 1920, very few Latinos attended the Church regularly. Rev. Conway encouraged the Latinos to attend mass and began delivering sermons in Spanish and English. Rev. Conway held catechism classes at Alta Vista and regularly visited parishioners there.<sup>59</sup> By 1970 the parishioners at St. Peter's Catholic Church were 85% Latino.

Many families came from Mexico and worked to establish themselves in Rocky Ford. One such man was Tiborcio Gomez, who came to Rocky Ford in 1917 at the age of 16, from Meoqui, Chihuahua, Mexico. His mother died and his father and siblings returned to Mexico. Tiborcio stayed in Rocky Ford where he worked, married, and became a citizen in 1942. Tiborcio, his wife and five children lived at Alta Vista, and all worked in the fields, hoeing and topping onions and beets, and picking potatoes, tomatoes, melons and other crops. The children would leave school in April, returning in October when fieldwork was over. In the winter, the children went to school, where they were allowed to make up their schoolwork before leaving in the spring or after returning in the fall. All five of Tiborcio Gomez' children graduated from high school, and the four boys served

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<sup>55</sup> "Emphatic Protest Against Mob Rules". *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, May 25, 1900.

<sup>56</sup> "Hard on Hombres". *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, July 18, 1913.

<sup>57</sup> West, Vol. 13, p 2.

<sup>58</sup> "Mexicans as Clothing Store Customers". *Rocky Ford Enterprise*, July 31, 1903.

<sup>59</sup> "Rocky Ford Churches Date from Very Beginning of Town". *Rocky Ford Daily Gazette*, July 1, 1962.

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in the United States Air Force. His daughter, Susie Gomez Padilla, was the high school secretary for twenty-one years.<sup>60</sup> By the 1955, Alta Vista no longer met health standards. American Crystal Sugar demolished Alta Vista, and the land was cleared to make room for the new Rocky Ford High School.<sup>61</sup>

From the earliest years, finding enough field workers for the sugar beet and other crops was a challenge. As agriculture in the area continued to develop and expand, labor contractors became instrumental in meeting the needs. After working in the fields, many young Latino men began contracting labor for farmers and supervising field crews. At the age of 17, Mike Chavez began contracting farm labor for the sugar factory; his first recruits were twelve covered wagon loads of workers and their families from New Mexico. They lived in their wagons, which they moved from field to field. Through these business endeavors Mike Chavez and others raised families and improved their financial situations.<sup>62</sup> <sup>63</sup> After returning from service in WWI Mike and his wife bought a farm and he worked as a contractor for Arkansas Valley Produce.<sup>64</sup>

Many young Latino men served in the military during WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam. World War II selective service records of military discharges between November 23, 1945, and August 9, 1945, list at least 117 Spanish surname men from Rocky Ford. Records of earlier services and military deaths have not been available, but the number of Latino service men buried at Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery is indicative of their service to the country.

The south part of Block 21 contains a group of headstones that carry two things in common: they have Latino surnames and a death date of 1957 or June 11, 1957. These are the markers of most, if not all, of the victims of an early morning event that still lives in the memories of many citizens of Rocky Ford. As a pickup truck carrying seventeen workers to the beet fields turned at Vroman, between Rocky Ford and Manzanola, to cross the railroad tracks and continue south, it was hit by a Santa Fe Railroad freight train traveling approximately 45 mph. News accounts theorized that the driver was unable to see the approaching train because the view was obscured by boxcars parked on the sidetracks. The report of the Interstate Commerce Commission noted that the crossing had no stop sign or other warning device and confirmed that the driver would not have seen the approaching train because of the freight cars parked on the auxiliary track.<sup>65</sup> Twelve of the pickup truck's passengers died at the scene. Five others were taken to area hospitals. At the time, the wreck was the worst vehicular accident in state history. All of the victims were residents of Rocky Ford, and all were working ten-hour days in the fields for seventy-five cents an hour. They ranged in age from 15 to 63, and many were related to one another. Only two people escaped serious injury: Joe Lucero, 23, and Betty Licano, 13, who was the daughter of the truck's driver, Sylvester Licano.<sup>66</sup>

During the mid-twentieth century Latino residents of Rocky Ford founded many of the service businesses in the community. William "Willie" Montoya had a taxi service, barber shop and restaurant; Anastacio "Art" Zavala owned the Pickwick Bar; Cecil H. Zavala owned a shoe store and repair shop from 1951 to 2016 (Figure

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<sup>60</sup> West, Book 13, pages 51-52.

<sup>61</sup> West, Book 13, pages 53-56.

<sup>62</sup> Obituary "Mike J. Chavez Services Wednesday". Rocky Ford Daily Gazette, October 12, 2002.

<sup>63</sup> "Chavez Gets Purple Heart", La Junta Tribune Democrat, 2001.

<sup>64</sup> St. Peters Catholic Church, "A Birthday Tribute in Honor of Stella Chavez's Life". January 26, 2008.

<sup>65</sup> Report No. 3754, The Atchiston Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company, in re Accident at Vroman, Colorado, June 11, 1957, pp. 6-8.

<sup>66</sup> *Denver Post*, June 11, 1957.

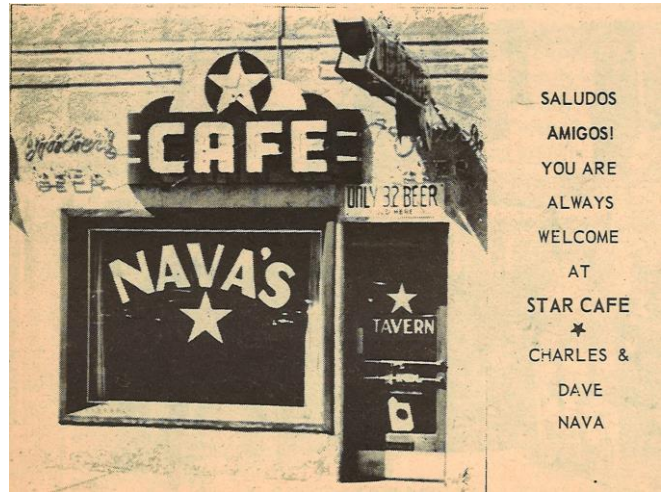
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11); Zakarias Hernandez owned a pool hall and liquor store; Henry and Leo Ortega ran one of the first dry cleaning businesses, and Phil Perez owned a hardware store. Numerous Rocky Ford restaurants were owned and operated by Latinos, including the Escondido Inn, Freddi's Corner, Joe's Restaurant, Aragon's, and the Sunshine Café and the Nava family's Star Café and Bar (Figure 12).



**Figure 11. Cecil H. Zavala, Zavala Shoes. Rocky Ford Daily Gazette, April 24, 1987.**



**Figure 12. Ad for the Nava Family's Star Café and Tavern. Rocky Ford Daily Gazette, June 29, 1962.**

During the late 1960s and 1970s, the Chicano Movement raised awareness of the subtle discrimination and lack of substantive communications between the Anglo and Latino community.<sup>67</sup> On October 8, 1969, the high school walk-out by virtually the entire Latino student body raised awareness and highlighted the need for greater inclusivity. While 48% of the student body had Spanish surnames, students pointed out there were no Latino cheerleaders, only one of 23 pom-pom girls were Latino, and school clubs had very few Latino members. The students felt their situation was representative of the entire town, including businesses, city government and service clubs. Many Latino parents supported the students' efforts, while others expressed reservations. Quite a few Anglo students supported the walk-out and their parents expressed support for their children "doing what was right".

Following the walk-out it was reported that Anglo students and residents were "noticeably moved and hurt" by the incident and a concerted effort to bridge the divide was undertaken. Latino youth were approached and urged to join clubs by students and teachers, and a pep rally and dance that followed were extremely successful and diverse. Community members of all ethnic backgrounds, interviewed following the walk-out, shared a consensus that the walk-out was a good thing and had begun the process of meaningful change.<sup>68</sup> Unfortunately, the ensuing months showed that change would be difficult and would require significant effort.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Note that, although Latino has been used here to maintain consistency with terminology in the rest of this document, at the time of this incident Latino students referred to themselves as Chicano, a term understood during the Chicano Movement to honor the Mexican heritage of people of Mexican descent born in the United States.

<sup>68</sup> Donahue. "Change in Community Attitude is Needed". Page 3.

<sup>69</sup> Snyder. "Prejudice is a Subtle Thing in Rocky Ford". Pages 1-2.

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Positive action was undertaken, although not always successful. A Parent-Teacher-Student Association was organized with the goal of making dialogue more productive and inclusive. Community members Rev. John Jasinki and Lloyd Esquibel were credited with bringing Rev. Joseph Torres to the community for a series of talks to make Anglos and Latinos aware of the background and differences that caused friction. The following years did gradually lead to a shift in attitude and actions.

The work of local Latinos, like Jacoba Duran who was a charter member of the Colorado Civil Rights Commission<sup>70</sup> and Cristobal Lucero who was appointed Chief of Police in 1970, raised awareness for the substantial contributions and talents of the Latino community. School clubs and activities, and civic organizations gradually became more diverse and inclusive. During the 1970s there was a Viva Chicano movement at the Rocky Ford High School, and Spanish language and Mexican American history classes were added to the curriculum.

Latino community members often led the efforts to provide positive recreational activities for youth. Delfido Cruz organized and coached summer girls' softball, Little League and Jr. and Sr. Babe Ruth baseball teams; Cristobal "Chris" Lucero, a former Golden Glove boxing champ, organized and coached a boxing program for youth and coached softball; Joe and Mary Tillie coached softball and were vocal supporters of high school sports.

The closing of the American Crystal Sugar Factory in 1977 had a substantial impact on jobs, as well as ethnic make-up of the community and the area's economy. The factory's closure resulted in major job cuts and transfers, not only for the sugar industry, but also for the railroad and support industries, affecting not only the tax base, but the entire economy and the real estate market of the county, particularly in Rocky Ford. Many of the employees who were transferred to other states were Anglo. Businesses in town closed and many young adults left for college or jobs, never to return.

### **Selected Notable Persons Buried at Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery**

*No list could begin to recognize all the people who have contributed to Rocky Ford and the surrounding area through their involvement with business, community service, civic organizations, military service, politics, education, church and family. The following is a selected list of the many men and women who are buried in Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery and made contributions to the betterment of their community and country.*

**Mary Jane Smith Anderson** (October 8, 1860-1933) Mary Jane Smith Anderson was born in Bethany, Missouri. Following her graduation from the State Normal School she taught school in Missouri until she and her husband moved to New Mexico, and then Rocky Ford in 1889. She was a member of the school board from 1891-1895. In 1897 she was elected Superintendent of Public Instruction for Otero County overseeing all schools in the county, a position she served in for many years. In the late 1920s she served as the Rocky Ford Postmistress. Block 10, Lot 23C Valley View

<sup>70</sup> "Jacobo Duran Last Rights Held". Rocky Ford Daily Gazette, December 1975.

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**George Thornton Babcock** (December 8, 1884-August 1969). George Babcock was the son of Lawrence W. and Mary Ann Babcock. He was born in Trinidad and moved with his family to Rocky Ford in 1896. He married in 1908 and lived in La Junta before returning to Rocky Ford to join his father in Green and Babcock Lumber Company. He served as Mayor for six years, a member of the city council for 14, and on the board of directors for Rocky Ford National Bank, Rocky Ford Savings and Loan Association, and the Highline Canal Company. He was a charter member of the Rocky Ford Lions Club. Block 4, Lot 37 Valley View

**Harry Barnes** (September 14, 1897-1981). Born in Nortonville, Kansas, Harry Barnes and his family moved to Rocky Ford where he graduated high school in 1916. He enlisted in the army, serving a few months during World War I and then attended college in Kansas. He worked in other states before returning to Rocky Ford in 1939 and taking his Colorado engineer license exam. He became the Rocky Ford engineer the same year and served in that capacity until his 1971 retirement. Between 1939 and 1966 he helped increase city water supply from 1.5 to 5 million gallons per day, increased parks from 4 acres to 86 acres, and built the golf course, all while decreasing the city's bonded debt by 73%. In 1939 he designed the original city swimming pool and supervised its construction by the WPA. The park at 9<sup>th</sup> and Walnut was named for him in appreciation for his service to the community. Block 4 Lot 27 Plot D, Valley View

**Willow Royer (W.R.) Bish** (January 9, 1870-September 19, 1962). Born in Maryland, he married in 1895 and came to Rocky Ford in 1906. He purchased a grocery store, followed by the Polar Ice Company and the Union Bottling Company. In 1925 he purchased the Rocky Ford Trading Company, which became Bish Hardware and Furniture. He served on the city council for ten years, and on the school board for eight. He retired in 1936. The Bish family-owned businesses in Rocky Ford for 72 years, until the death of W.R. Bish's grandson. Block 7, Lot 10 Hillcrest

**Frank H. Boraker** (April 5, 1885-January 27, 1968). Frank Boraker was born in Montgomery County, Indiana. Due to an eye injury, he became blind in 1914. He moved his family to Rocky Ford in June 1927, and his wife died the following March leaving him with four children to raise alone. He got permission from the ATSF railroad to open his news/tobacco stand at the northeast corner of Railroad Park. The shop opened on July 28, 1928, and Frank ran it seven days a week for thirty years, closing the door permanently on August 30, 1958. Block 11, Lot 50 Hillcrest

**Dr. B. Franklin Blotz** (December 17, 1889-1959) and **Dr. Byron Bernard Blotz** (Oct 4, 1881-May 6, 1961). The Blotz brothers were born in Colfax County, Nebraska. In 1906 Dr. B.B. Blotz began medical practice in Rocky Ford. His brother, Dr. B. Franklin Blotz, joined him in Rocky Ford in 1914. B. Franklin was a lieutenant and Byron was a captain the U.S. Army Medical Corp during World War I. In 1917, the brothers built Physician Hospital at 808 Maple Avenue in Rocky Ford, which served the community until 1954 when the community hospital was built. Dr. B. Franklin

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served on the State Medical Board for 20 years. B Franklin Blotz, Block 2, Lot 85 Hillcrest; Byron Blotz, Block 2, Lot 84 Hillcrest

**William Browning** (1845-1889). William Browning was born in Indiana. He and his wife Louise came to Rocky Ford in April 1887 in time for the sale of the first town lots. He purchased lots at Main and Railroad Avenue and established a hardware store. When he died in 1889, he was interned at the first Rocky Ford cemetery, and later moved to Valley View. Block 04, Lot 38, Valley View

**Delaven Victor Burrell** (Nov 10, 1874-Sept 30, 1952). Delaven Victor Burrell was born in Boone County, Iowa. Burrell arrived in Rocky Ford in 1896 and began growing cantaloupe, but he soon noticed a shortage of seed. He purchased several train cars of cantaloupe to harvest the seed and began selling seed in a vacant lot. He soon erected a building on that lot, which still houses Burrell Seed Growers, one of multiple seed companies in the Rocky Ford area that became nationally known. His original 16 acres grew to over a thousand acres producing fruit, vegetables and flower seeds. Block 9, Lot 48 Hillcrest

**Michael "Mike" Joe Chavez** (May 20, 1911-October 10, 2002). Mike Chavez was born at El Mora, Colorado to Juan and Onofrio Chavez. He worked in the fields but decided at the age of 17 that he would do better financially if he contracted other people to provide farm labor. He talked the American Crystal Sugary Company into contracting with him to provide labor. He served in World War II, receiving three battle stars for the Normandy, northern France and Rhineland campaigns. He received the Bronze Star, French Jubilee of Victory from the French government for the D-Day Invasion; European, African and Middle Eastern Service medals and the WWII Victory Medal. His service records were lost, but finally in August 2001 he received his long-delayed Purple Heart for injuries sustained during the Battle of the Bulge. Five days after returning from the war he was contracting labor again. Mike and his wife Stella bought their farm, which he loved to work on, and also worked as a contractor for Arkansas Valley Produce.  
<sup>71-72</sup> Hillcrest

**Stella T. Chavez** (January 5, 1914-January 3, 2012). Born in Pueblo, Colorado, Stella graduated from Ordway High School. She married Mike Chavez in 1938. She was a proud homemaker and entrepreneur. She sold insurance and owned and operated the Escondido Inn. She was a co-founder of the Ministerial Alliance and helped migrant families as an interpreter and to help find services. She helped start a thrift store, worked with youth through School Home Social Workers, served as a school liaison between the Rocky Ford School District and families. Stella served as Vice-President of the Rocky Ford Senior Housing Corporation, treasurer of the Senior Citizens Club and as a board member and Secretary of the Credit Committee of the Rocky Ford Federal Credit Union. Hillcrest

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<sup>71</sup> West, Book 13,

<sup>72</sup> Bond, Michael Chavez Receiving Purple Heart after 57 Years". Rocky Ford Daily Gazette, December 2021.

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**Francis Hector Clute** (August 16, 1905-January 3, 1968). Francis Clute was born in Rocky Ford and spent his entire life there. He was an inventor who was granted multiple patents, including the patent for the first foldable stadium chair, a machine for molding plastic substances, extrusion machines for compressed feeds, and a patent for treatment for rubber. With his son Ed he founded Francis Clute & Son Inc., which became EDCO Metal Works and then EDCO Mechanical and Refrigeration. The business ceased operations in 2022. Block 8, Lot 46 Hillcrest

**Father Patrick Conway** (1880-1961). The Rocky Ford Catholic Church had at least six priests between its establishment in 1894 and 1920 when Father Conway was appointed. When Father Conway arrived, there were less than 100 families, with very few Hispanic members. Between 1920 and 1954 the parish tripled its membership and by 1949 the original church could no longer be repaired. Funds were raised and the parish purchased the chapel from the La Junta Air Base and moved it to the site of the old Church. Father Conway and the nuns held Catechism classes at the Alta Vista Camp for farm workers of the American Crystal Sugar Company. Block 12, Lot 68 Hillcrest

**Hon. John H Crowley** – (June 22, 1849-1923) John H Crowley was born in Kentucky. He brought his young family to Nepesta, Colorado, in 1872 and then moved his family to Missouri. Crowley was a section foreman for the ATSF railroad. In 1885 he purchased a small farm south of Rocky Ford and planted fruit trees, on what became the Fair View Fruit Farm. As he built his orchard he had 40 varieties of apples, 14 varieties of plums, 33 varieties of grapes, and 8 varieties of both cherries and pears. He was considered the leading horticulturist of the Arkansas Valley and was one of the strongest early supporters of the Arkansas Valley Fair. Crowley served in the Colorado House of Representatives for six years. When Otero County was divided into two counties in 1911, the new county was named Crowley for John H. Crowley. Block 10, Lot 2 Valley View

**Delfido "Del" Samuel Cruz** (September 27, 1936-February 17, 2020) Delfido was born in Springer, New Mexico, the son of Celestina Lorraine (Amaparan) and Elfido Maximiano Cruz. When he was six the family moved to Rocky Ford where he attended school and graduated. Delfido served in the U.S. Army, attaining the rank of E-5, Sergeant. He was the Transportation Coordinator at Child Development Services from 1966 until his retirement in 1999. He had a passion for softball and baseball. In the 1970s he coached Del's and Dan's women softball for three years and the Teen Center girls' softball team. Later he coached Midget and Little League baseball, moving with his teams to Junior and Senior Babe Ruth. In 1978 he was an assistant coach for the Senior Babe Ruth All-Stars to the State Championship, where the team advanced to the regional playoffs. In 1987, Del and his son Danny coached the Senior Babe Ruth All-Stars Team at the State Tournament in Grand Junction, Colorado. Block 31, Lot 30 Valley View

**Leona Belle Swink Daring** (10 April 1878-25 February 1977). Always called Belle, Leona Belle Swink was the eleventh child of George W and Mary Jane Swink. She married Charles H. Daring

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in 1903. Belle Daring was a pioneering businesswoman, establishing an insurance and realty company. She was a charter member of the Rocky Ford Business and Professional Club, serving as president in 1928 and 1929. She was named Otero County's first Realtor of the Year; and she was elected an honorary member of the Colorado Realtors Association. She served as Secretary of the Highline Canal Company, Treasurer for the City of Rocky Ford Zoning Board, and was a staunch supporter and member of the Otero County Historical Society and Rocky Ford Archaeological Society. In 1929 and again in 1942, Belle led the efforts to ensure there was an Arkansas Valley Fair when it was going to be cancelled due to the Great Depression and WWII. With only 48 hours to work, she pulled together other supporters and funding, resulting in the Arkansas Valley Fair being the longest continuous running fair in the State of Colorado. Block 12, Valley View

**John Merrit Doll** (1901-1985). John Doll was born in Kidder, Missouri and moved to Rocky Ford with his family at the age of two. In 1917 he went to auto mechanics school and then worked as a mechanic for several car dealers in Rocky Ford until 1937 when he opened his own shop. He ran the shop until he retired in 1966. In 1950 he began writing about his memories of growing up and local history. In 1960 he became the keeper of the "morgue" for the Rocky Ford Enterprise newspaper from 1895-1902. He subsequently authored a book on George Swink and another on early Rocky Ford history. Block 08, Lot 3-Hillcrest

**Jacoba Duran** (Dec 2, 1891-March 14, 1975). Jacoba Duran was born in Hoehne, Colorado. He attended Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM and the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, Nebraska. He was the deputy treasurer of San Miguel County in 1937. He was a veteran of World Wars I and II and served as the U.S. representative in Mexico and Costa Rico from 1944 to 1948. In 1958 he moved his family to Rocky Ford. He was a charter member of the Colorado Civil Rights Commission, and a member of the American Legion and the Spanish-American Veterans Club. Block 31, Valley View

**John W. Edgar** (March 23, 1857-July 6, 1928). John Wilson Edgar, his wife Mary, and children moved from Henry County, Iowa to Rocky Ford in 1898, establishing a farm near the Arkansas River. In 1899 John helped recruit and promote the establishment of the American Crystal Sugar Company factory which opened in Rocky Ford in 1901. The family acquired a second farm south of Rocky Ford and John had more sugar beet acreage under contract with American Crystal than any other farmer in the county. In 1910 John helped arrange and led the delegation to the 18<sup>th</sup> National Irrigation Congress. The Hearst Trophy, donated by William Randolph Hearst, was awarded to Otero County for the best general county display and accepted by John W. Edgar. John Edgar was the entrusted with taking the trophy to be displayed at the World's Fair in St. Louis. He helped establish the Otero Agricultural Club and in 1912 served on a committee to develop a display to be placed in the State Capitol. A December 14, 1912, *Rocky Ford Gazette Topic* article described John W. as "one of the best and most successful farmers in the valley." He was selected to travel to Washington DC on multiple occasions to discuss the sugar beet

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industry. The farm he established south of Rocky Ford was recognized as a Colorado Centennial Farm in 2009 and is still owned and run by his descendants. Block 24, Lot 39 Valley View

**George Eichenlaub** (July 18, 1877-January 30, 1962). George Eichenlaub was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. It is not known when he came to Rocky Ford, but by 1912 he was foreman of West Ranch for the American Sugar Beet Company. Block 25, Lot 30 Valley View

**Dr. Ward Elijah Fenton** (1861-Nov 7, 1927). Ward E Fenton was born in Missouri, received his Physicians Certificate from the State of Iowa on January 1, 1887, and came to Rocky Ford shortly after. In 1888 he began promoting the Rocky Ford climate for patients suffering lung illnesses and opened the Rocky Ford Sanitarium in the St. James Hotel which was located at the corner of Main and Walnut. In 1889 an article of his was published in an eastern medical journal extolling the medical benefits of Rocky Ford. Block 08A, Lot 15 Valley View

**Francisco Ramirez "Frank" Gandara** (1887-1965). Francisco Gandara was born in Saucillo, Cuauhtemoc Municipality, Chihuahua, Mexico. He operated a general store at the entrance to the Alta Vista Camp where Hispanic workers of the sugar beet factory lived. These workers worked in the fields during the summer and at the factory during the sugar beet campaign. The Camp was located on the site of the current Jr/Sr High School. Mr. Gandara is remembered for giving credit to workers when they were off work in the winter, and they would repay when work began again in the spring. After the Alta Vista Camp was ordered to be vacated due to poor health standards, Mr. Gandara moved his grocery store to a location on North Main Street. Block 02, Lot 05 Hillcrest

**Begnino Garcia** (February 12, 1905-January 23, 1989). Begnino Garcia worked with Dave Nava and was influential in local agriculture. Block 13, Lot 55 Hillcrest

**William (Will) Brown Gobin** (Feb 16, 1866-Aug 13, 1936). William Brown Gobin was born in Boonville, Copper County, Missouri and arrived in Rocky Ford on April 12, 1887. He established himself as a builder and was the only undertaker for the community. He built the first Washington School, a four-room building, and then studied law, being admitted to the bar in 1894. In October 1900 Gobin's office was the site of promotion for a new \$20,000 hotel. Plans were presented and a committee appointed to solicit subscriptions for building stock. F.J. Capitan, H.I. Maxwell, F.Y. Hauck and Dr. Fenton were on the committee. The hotel was named the El Capitan. In 1907 he built the Gobin Block on Elm Street, where the Rocky Ford Daily Gazette is still housed. Block 6, Lot 32 Valley View

**Henry Goebel** (July 29, 1882-September 8, 1944). Henry Goebel was born in Russia to parents who were German-speaking Russians. They had been hired by Czarist Russia to cultivate Ukrainian fields in the newly established villages on the steppes of Russia. With the peasant uprisings and collapse of Czarist Russia, Henry and many other German-speaking Russian families fled the country for a new life in America. Henry emigrated to the United States in 1902. He farmed for the American Crystal Sugar Company and worked at the factory.

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Subsequent generations of the Goebel family also farmed and worked the sugar campaign at American Crystal Sugar Factory.<sup>73</sup> Block 04, Lot 13, Hillcrest

**George Hammond** (Aug 26, 1852-April 1928). George Hammond was born in Scott, Columbia County, Wisconsin and arrived in Colorado in 1872 where he engaged in mining and other activities in Central City, Georgetown, and Leadville before moving to Ouray. He moved to Salida where he ran a meat business before returning to Delta to start a grain business. He arrived in Rocky Ford in 1887 and in 1889 he built a large warehouse near the railroad siding where he sold alfalfa seed and baled hay. In 1894 a news article stated the Otero Exchange had purchased a Webber gasoline engine that could run anything from a “churn to a thrashing machine.” This was the first news article mentioning gasoline power in Rocky Ford. He started the Rocky Ford Trading Company, was a co-organizer of the Rocky Ford Mill and Elevator Company and built a house at 410 South 10<sup>th</sup>. Block 24, Lot 3, Space D Valley View

**Sadakichi Harada** (February 12, 1889-September 4, 1962). Sadakichi Harada was born in Tanabe, Wakayama Prefecture, Japan. He emigrated to the United States in 1905, arriving in San Francisco. He contracted as a farm hand to the American Sugar Beet Company, first working in Las Animas before coming to Rocky Ford. With a partner, he leased land from American Sugar at Center Ranch and began building his farm operation which eventually included over 1700 acres. Sadakichi was a devote Buddhist and a leader in the Japanese American community. He helped find farms, housing and jobs, and assisted with legal proceedings and loans. In 1952 Sadakichi and the other Issei in the area were finally able to become naturalized citizens of the United States. Block 21, Lot 37, Valley View

**Frank Y. Hauck** (1858-1949). Born in Pennsylvania, Frank Hauck came to Rocky Ford in 1880. On February 14, 1891, a town meeting voted to purchase a fire cart, and selected F.Y. Hauck as the Fire Chief. He organized a volunteer fire company that was known as the F. Y. Hauck E. #1. In 1893 he married Annie Lowe, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Lowe. The Lowes were one of four families that came to Rocky Ford with George W. Swink. Frank Hauck owned a blacksmith shop, established Ellingwood-Hauck Hardware Company and later Hauck-McKelve real estate and insurance. He organized the First National Bank in 1908 and served as president until 1925. Block 04, Lot 20, Plot F, Valley View

**Raul “Fats” Fierro Hernandez** (January 19, 1918-November 8, 1969). Raul Hernandez was born in El Paso to Zacarias and Vincenta Fierro Hernandez who were both originally from Chihuahua, Mexico. Raul served in World War II as a Pfc for 1770 AVC Comd. Unit. Following his military service, he ran a pool hall on Main Street in Rocky Ford. Block 21, Lot 46 Valley View

**Tatsunosuke Hirakata** (June 3, 1870-1947). Tatsunosuke Hirakata was born in Fukushima, Japan. In the early 1900s Tatsunosuke immigrated to the United States, arriving at Seattle. He worked on railroads until arriving in Rocky Ford where he started farming in 1915. He sent for his son

<sup>73</sup> West, Book 13, pages 59-63

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Keiji, and the two built Hiramata Farms, surviving the Great Depression, Dust Bowl and World War II. The farm passed through the generations from Keiji's sons to his grandsons. Hiramata Farms became a leader in food safety and technology, and in 2022 they were recognized as a Colorado Centennial Farm Family. Block 21, Lot 36, Valley View

**Carl Duncan Holder** (1893-1980). Carl Holder was born in Lincoln County, Oklahoma. Mr. Holder served as President of the Hospital Corporation established to construct and furnish Pioneer Memorial Hospital. Block 8, Lot 70, Hillcrest

**Daniel Jaramillo Sr.** (February 3, 1892-November 13, 1948). Daniel Jaramillo lived at the Alta Vista Camp. He was a Supervisor at American Crystal Sugar, circa 1940s. Block 2, Lot 24, Hillcrest

**Arlyn Samuel Kitch** (November 3, 1876-1962). "Sam" Kitch was born in Shelbyville, Illinois. He established a large cattle ranch near the Purgatoire River Canyon and one of the largest cattle feedlots in Otero County. Block 3, Valley View

**Colonel Suiko Kumagai** (January 23, 1920-December 2017). Suiko Kumagai was born in McClave, Colorado, the youngest of nine children. By the time she was four years old, both her parents had died, and she was taken in by a neighboring family. Following the marriage of her older sister to Keiji Hiramata she came to live with them south of Rocky Ford. She started nursing school shortly before Pearl Harbor and overcame racism to become a nurse and then joined the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps. She served as a civilian with the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission Field Agency in Japan and returned to active duty with the Army in 1952. She then served in the Korean War, the Vietnam War and retired with the rank of Colonel following 28 years of service. She was the recipient of a Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal and Army Commendation Medal. Hillcrest

**Mayme Lacy** (January 3, 1872-1960). Born in Pennsylvania to Mr. and Mrs. Gabriel Etzel, as a small child Mayme and her parents moved to the Wet Mountain Valley. On Christmas Day 1888 she married John Lacy and in 1906 they moved to Rocky Ford and purchased the weekly *Rocky Ford Gazette* newspaper. Working together, John and Mayme built the Gazette into a daily newspaper. Mayme worked at the newspaper with John and following his death in 1940, she continued to run the newspaper until her retirement. Their daughter Eleanor followed her, working as a reporter for the *Pueblo Chieftain*. Following her death in 1960, Mayme was remembered in the pages of the *Rocky Ford Daily Gazette* as a pioneer and prominent newspaper woman. Block 12, Lot 44, Valley View

**Christobal Eloy "Chief" Lucero** (July 20, 1938-November 28, 2022). Christobal Lucero was born to Antonio and Fidelia Lucero in Anton Chico, New Mexico, the sixth of fourteen children. At a young age the family moved to Rocky Ford where he attended school and graduated in 1958. Chris worked at Robertson Dairy, farmed and worked at the Stauffer Packing Plant, and then in 1968 entered law enforcement. He was a Deputy for the Otero County Sheriff's Office, a Rocky

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Ford Police Officer and then was appointed the Rocky Ford Police Chief in 1970, the first Hispanic to serve in that position. He served as Chief for 24 years and was widely respected. Upon his retirement messages from the President of the United States and Governor of Colorado. He was inducted into the National Police Hall of Fame in 1985. Following his retirement from law enforcement he was an interpreter for the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial District. A former Golden Glove boxer Chris started and coached a boxing program for youth and coached baseball for many years. He was a member of the RF Lion's Club, Christian Men's Breakfast Club and the RF Chamber of Commerce. Block 16, Lot 39, Hillcrest

**Felipe "Phil" Madrid, Jr.** (July 30, 1927-January 5, 2000). Felipe Madrid was born in Duran, Tarrant County, New Mexico. He established his roots in Rocky Ford following his honorable discharge from the Army in 1953. He built a distinguished career; starting as a cement truck driver for Valley Concrete, he rose through the ranks to the role of General Manager of the Concrete division at the newly named Valco Inc. His career spanned nearly 40 years. Phil contributed over two decades of service to the Lion's Club and was a board member at St. Peters Catholic Church and the local Housing Authority. He supported his children and other youth through extracurricular activities including the local Boy Scout Troop. Phil and his wife Jennie were recognized as "Mr. and Mrs. Meloneer" in 1977 by Rocky Ford High School. Block 15, Lot 19 Valley View

**Toribio Madrid** (1884-1963). Toribio and Cipriana Madrid were the owners of Sunshine Café. Block 28, Valley View

**William Matthews** (May 18, 1837-Aug 25, 1919). William Matthews and James Lowe started the Rocky Ford ditch in 1873 as a joint stock company of homesteaders/farmers whose land lay along the ditch. Matthews died in Los Angeles County, California and was returned to Rocky Ford for burial at Valley View. Block 06 Valley View

**Harry Barton Mendenhall, Sr.** (Feb 23, 1888-Sept 12, 1965). Harry Barton Mendenhall was born in Jefferson County Nebraska. He came to Rocky Ford in 1908 and went to work as a cashier for the Rocky Ford National Bank. Elected president of the bank in 1930, he continued to hold the position until 1964. Mendenhall served as President of the Colorado Bankers' Association and Vice-President of the American Bankers Association. He was chairperson of the selective service board in WWII, a 45-year member of the library board and was the chief negotiator and advisor for the Governor of Colorado in the development of the Arkansas River Compact between Colorado and Kansas. He was a director for the Southern Colorado Power Company, Elks, Scottish Rites Masons, Shriners, Royal Arch Masons, Knights-Templar and Blue Lodge. He is remembered by the local Japanese American community as one of their strongest supporters and friends. Block 08A, Hillcrest

**David Sanchez Nava** (1912-1984). David Sanchez Nava was born in Mexico and moved to the Arkansas Valley with his parents as a child. Dave and his wife Laura owned several businesses,

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including Star Bar and the first car wash in Rocky Ford. Dave and his sons Dave, Ronnie, and Charlie ran a produce farming and harvesting business for over twenty years, employing hundreds of workers to harvest produce. He was a long-time community booster and served on the Community Hospital Building board, as president of the Rocky Ford Federal Credit Union, board of directors and president of the Rocky Ford Rotary Club and the driving force behind the original Rocky Ford Housing Authority. In 1985 a naming contest was held for the new 30-unit senior housing project and Nava Manor was selected as the name for the new facility in memory of his contributions to the community. Block 13, Lot 64 Hillcrest

**Andrew Nichols** (1844-1921). Andrew Nichols was from Illinois and arrived at the "old ford," near what became Rocky Ford, in 1873. He and John Swift, a blacksmith, built a large float of cottonwood logs attached to a cable to ferry wagons and teams across the Arkansas River during high water. Nichols also built a boarding house. Block 4 Valley View

**Sam Nishimura** (1868-1934). Born in Japan, Sam Nishimura emigrated to the United States shortly after 1900. He and his wife Shizu, who came in 1906 as a picture bride, owned and operated a restaurant and pool hall, which is believed to have been the first Japanese owned business in Rocky Ford. Block 21, Valley View

**Joseph Luciano "Louie" Pequete** (June 5, 1923-January 4, 2019). Joseph Pequete was born in La Junta to Andres and Matilde (Whatley) Pequete. He served in the European Theatre during WWII and was the recipient of the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal. He was an active member of St. Peter's Catholic Church and Our lady of Guadalupe/St Patrick Catholic Church. He farmed near Rocky Ford for many years. Block 31, Valley View

**Filemon "Phil" Perez** (1926-2004). Filemon Perez was born in La Junta, Colorado. He owned Phil's Hardware on Main Street in Rocky Ford and later worked as a radio announcer for KAVI, the Rocky Ford radio station, and was the first Hispanic to serve on the Rocky Ford City Council. Block 2, Lot 28 Hillcrest

**Dr. Robert Martin Pollock** (April 1, 1858-March 21, 1921). Robert Pollock was born in the Enron Valley of Lawrence County, Pennsylvania. After receiving his Doctor's Certificate in 1894 he returned to Rocky Ford and worked as a pharmacist for about ten years. He served as Mayor of Rocky Ford for three terms from 1903-1908 and dreamt of a recreational area on the hill south of town. As Mayor he had a Pueblo engineer plot a winding road around the hill and the road was built and landscaping undertaken establishing Play Park Hill. He was responsible for the elm trees at Library Park, and he collaborated with the Woman's Club to see that the Carnegie Library was built in Rocky Ford. Dr. Pollock organized the Rocky Ford Hospital Association to build the first hospital in 1907. It was located in the alley behind the El Capitan Hotel and was called Pollock's Hospital and served the town until the Blotz Hospital was built in the 1920s. Block 08A Valley View

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**Armando Gomez Reyes** (November 16, 1921-September 20, 2004). Armando Reyes was born in El Paso, Texas to John L. and Romona Reyes. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II. Upon returning he worked for the city of Rocky Ford from 1948-1983, retiring as the supervisor of the street department. Block 33, Valley View

**Clement Valdingham (Clem) Ryan** (April 9, 1871-January 4, 1934) and **James Barnes Ryan** (May 26, 1872-Jul 6, 1849). were born in Hamilton County Ohio. Clem moved his family to Rocky Ford in 1903 and his brother James followed soon after. Clem and James farmed south of Rocky Ford and then in 1904 started Ryan Brothers Seed Growers. In 1909 the brothers founded the Rocky Ford Cantaloupe Seed Breeders Association. Clem and his sons did the general farming, and James and his son Millard ran the seed company. James bought a farm on the south side of the river and planted fruit trees and berry bushes which became a haven for birds. The brothers built Ryan ponds, which are still favored recreational spots for locals. James served as state senator four times and was President Pro-tem of the Senate in 1948. He served on the State Board of Agriculture for 19 years. Clement Ryan, Block 9 Valley View; James Ryan, Hillcrest.

**Dr. Raymond Thomas Shima** (November 13, 1907-December 21, 1977). Dr. Shima was born in Minnesota to John and Rose Shima. He graduated from the University of Minnesota with Bachelor of Science in Science and a Bachelor of Medicine in 1932. He and his wife Mary moved to Rocky Ford where he opened his medical practice in 1947. In addition to his private practice Dr. Shima collaborated with the Otero County Historical Department to serve as the clinician for a monthly immunization clinic for nearly twenty years. Block 11, Lot 43, Hillcrest

**Benjamin Frederick Stauffer** (October 12, 1883-1978). Benjamin Stauffer was born in Rice County, Kansas. At the age of eleven he moved to Rocky Ford with his parents, Oliver and Rachel Stauffer. They farmed and delivered produce to local stores; and later Ben delivered groceries for a store where his father was a meat cutter. In 1902 Oliver and Ben purchased a meat market and established a slaughterhouse. In 1914 they started producing sausage and cured meats. Ben continued providing wholesale meat to southeastern Colorado and ran the retail grocery store until he retired in 1972 and sold the store. In addition to being highly active in the local community Benjamin was one of the organizers of the Associated Grocers of Colorado and a director for the National Independent Meat Packers Association. Block 8, Hillcrest

**Amy Kofler Steele** (1868-1937). Amy Steele was the wife of prominent early citizen W.C. Steele. She received piano training from the Leschetizky in Europe and instructed many piano students, including Marie Lacy who subsequently trained in the East. Mrs. Steele performed with the Pueblo Symphony Orchestra, led the Presbyterian choir and helped start the Music Club, later the Etude Club. Block 10 Valley View

**Clyde Francis Summers** (March 25, 1891-July 1953) and **Martel William Lueker** (1905-1953). Clyde Summers was born in Missouri and Martel Lueker was originally from Arkansas. Summers began working for the Rocky Ford Fire Department in 1919, rising to the rank of Chief, and

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served as city clerk. He held both positions at the time of his death. Lueker owned a garage, worked with the "Courtesy Patrol" and served with the Rocky Ford Fire Department. Both men drowned on July 12, 1953 while attempting a rescue as members of the Fire Department. Clyde Summers, Block 08A Valley View; Martel Lueker, Block 4, Lot 32 Hillcrest

**George W. Swink** (30 June 1836-24 Sept 1910). George W Swink was born in Breckenridge County, Kentucky. He first came to the area along the Arkansas River known as the "rocky fording" which was used by freighters and cattle drovers to cross the river during high water. He bought a partnership in the small trading post established by Asahel Russell in 1863. George Swink dreamed of an agricultural community and began surveying and laying out routes for irrigation canals. He imported watermelon and cantaloupe seeds developing the melon industry for which the area is still known. In 1878 Swink had such a successful crop of watermelons that he invited friends and neighbors to a watermelon feast at his store. This was the beginning of Watermelon Day, a feature of the Arkansas Valley Fair that continues to this day. In 1892 a meeting was held to organize a fair for the Arkansas Valley. Since Watermelon Day had been held in Rocky Ford for fourteen years it was voted that the fairgrounds should be located there. A portion of Swink's timber patent was purchased for the fairgrounds site. George W. Swink was the first mayor of Rocky ford and was selected to the Colorado State Senate in 1892 and served two terms. Block 12, Valley View

**Joe Abel Talmich Sr. and Mary Tillie Roybal Talmich** (Joe, November 1, 1925-July 21, 2011; Tillie, June 2, 1929-November 24, 2008). Joe was born in Walsenburg, Colorado and Tillie was born in Rocky Ford. They married on 12 August 1944 in Rocky Ford. Joe served as a long-time custodian for the Rocky Ford School. Joe and Tillie are remembered for the involvement with St. Peter's Catholic Church, as foster parents and mentors, Boy Scout leaders, and as long-time coaches for Tillie's Brats women's softball team. Tillie was the founder of the Rocky Ford Wrestler's Mothers' Club and Joe was a member of the Rocky Ford Wrestling Federation and a Commissioner for Governor Love. Block 02 Hillcrest

**Carl Ustick, Sr.** (1876-1963). In 1901 Carl Ustick, Sr. and Millicent Cross were married in Bangor, Michigan. They traveled to Rocky Ford for a wedding trip before setting up a home in Victor where Carl worked as an engineer in the mines and part-time for an undertaker. Carl helped the undertaker following a disaster at the Independence Mine in which fifteen men were killed during the Victor Labor War of 1903-1904. The couple and their children stayed in Victor, until Carl purchased Dobbs Undertaking in Rocky Ford. Carl and his wife Millicent established Ustick Funeral Home in 1913. In 1915 they moved the funeral home to its present location at 8<sup>th</sup> and Elm. Carl and his wife established Hillcrest Cemetery and introduced the planting of peonies for which Valley View-Hillcrest is well known. Carl and Millicent's daughter Dorothy became a licensed funeral director in 1920 or 1921 and worked with her parents. In 1931 Dorothy and her husband Custis Green moved to La Junta and started Green Funeral Home. Block 6, Lot 6 Hillcrest

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**Millicent Cross Ustick** (15 July 1876-1963). Millicent Cross was born to John and Alice Cross in Bangor, Michigan. Following her marriage to Carl Ustick, Sr. they moved to Colorado, first settling in Victor before moving to Rocky Ford and starting Ustick Funeral Home in Rocky Ford. Millicent was a licensed funeral director, an officer in the Hill Crest Company, and an invaluable contributor to the business's success. She was active in the Rocky Ford Women's Club, the Carnegie Library and was a recipient of the Chamber of Commerce Community Service Award. Block 6, Lot 6 Hillcrest

**Sgt. John Ben Valdez** (Feb 8, 1948-August 13, 1969). Sgt Valdez was born in Pueblo, Colorado but was raised in a modest adobe/stucco house in the Grand Valley area outside of Rocky Ford. Following his graduation from Rocky Ford High School in 1966 he enlisted in the Marines. He served in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Marines, India Company in the Vietnam War. During his first tour he received the Silver Star for Gallantry and the Purple Heart. Sgt. Valdez was killed in Quang Nam, Vietnam on 13 August 1969. While on patrol his platoon was ambushed, and another Marine was seriously injured and lying inside the enemy camp. Sgt. Valdez ran into the camp, picked up the wounded man and carried him to safety, but Valdez was gravely wounded. The President of the United States presented the Silver Star Medal posthumously for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving with Company I. Block 31, Valley View

**Tamasaburo Yagami** (March 1884-August 1, 1964) and **Matsuo Yagami** (December 20, 1891-September 1977). Tamasaburo (Tam) was born in Nagoya, Japan and emigrated in 1906. He and four other young man sailed to Mexico and then spent 21 days walking to Nogales, Arizona where they got on a train to La Junta. Tam went to work for the railroad and then began farming near Swink in 1912. Matsuo was a picture bride, and she and Tam were paired by their parents and married in Japan in 1917 without ever meeting. The Yagami's built a productive farm and eventually a farm stand which was ran by their daughter Mary Yagami for many years. Believing in the power of education, the Yagami's helped establish a Japanese American school on their property where Mrs. Yagami taught summers from 1926-1940. Block 21, Valley View

**Anatascio (Hernandez) Zavala** (1917-1996). Anatascio was the owner of the Pickwick Night Club. Block 1, Lot 1 Hillcrest

**Cecil H. Zavala** (November 21, 1921-February 17, 2018). Cecil was a World War II veteran and owned a shoe store and show repair business in Rocky Ford for over 60 years. He taught Spanish through BOCES and served on many boards and committees in Rocky Ford. Block 17, Valley View

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State

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- Previous documentation on file (NPS):**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
  - 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 # \_\_\_\_\_
  - recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

- Primary location of additional data:**
- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State

**Acreage of Property** 30  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

Datum:

**NAD 1927** \_\_\_\_\_ or **NAD 1983** X

(Insert additional UTM references as needed.)

1 13S 613117 4211094  
Zone Easting Northing

4 13S 613311 4210696  
Zone Easting Northing

2 13S 613517 4211094  
Zone Easting Northing

5 13S 613311 4210895  
Zone Easting Northing

3 13S 613518 4210704  
Zone Easting Northing

6 13S 613124 4210895  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.) The boundary begins at the NW corner of Section 20 and continues along the north section line (County Road EE) for one-quarter of a mile. It then turns south for .25 mi., following the east edge of the NW quarter of the NW quarter of Section 20. The boundary then turns east, following the south edge of the cemetery and coincident with the south quarter-quarter section line, for .125 mi. At this point it turns north .125 mi. to the midpoint of the quarter-quarter section, then turns west for .125 mi., meeting the west edge of Section 20.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.) The boundary encompasses the sections of the Hillcrest and Valley View cemeteries that contain burials older than 50 years. It excludes the southwest quarter of the city-owned cemetery parcel, which was not used for funerary purposes during the 1887-1974 period of significance.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Kathleen Corbett (Corbett AHS, Inc.) and Rebecca Goodwin

organization Corbett AHS, Inc. date June 17, 2024

street & number 4659 East Amherst Avenue telephone (925) 351-7417

city or town Denver state CO zip code 80222

e-mail kcorb58@gmail.com; rgoodwin@preserveourhistory.us

**Additional Documentation**

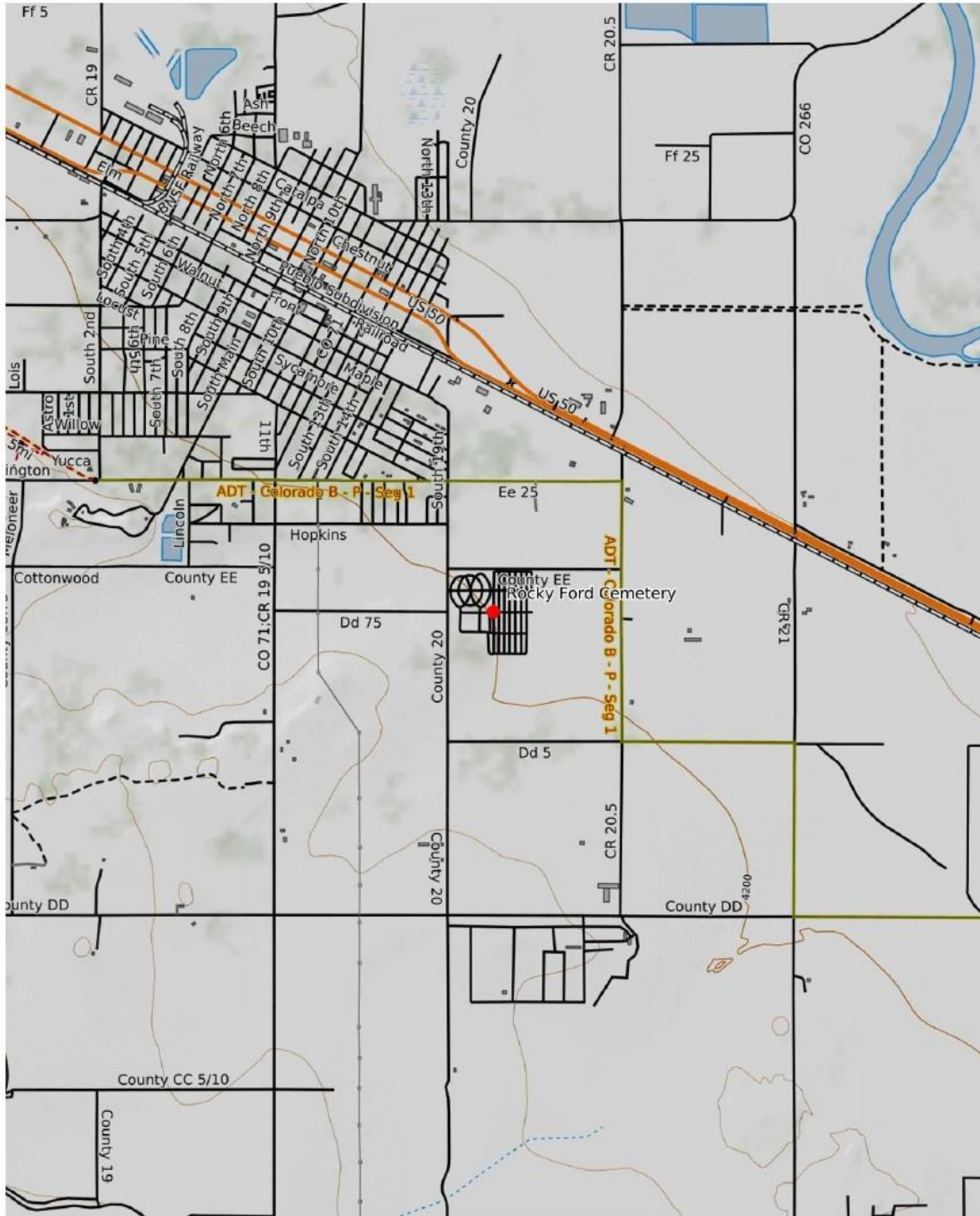
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) or **Google Earth** map indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

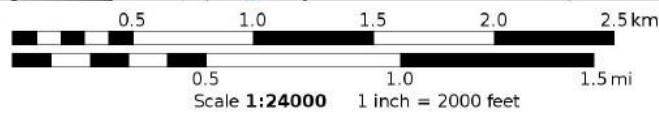
Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State

# Topographic Map

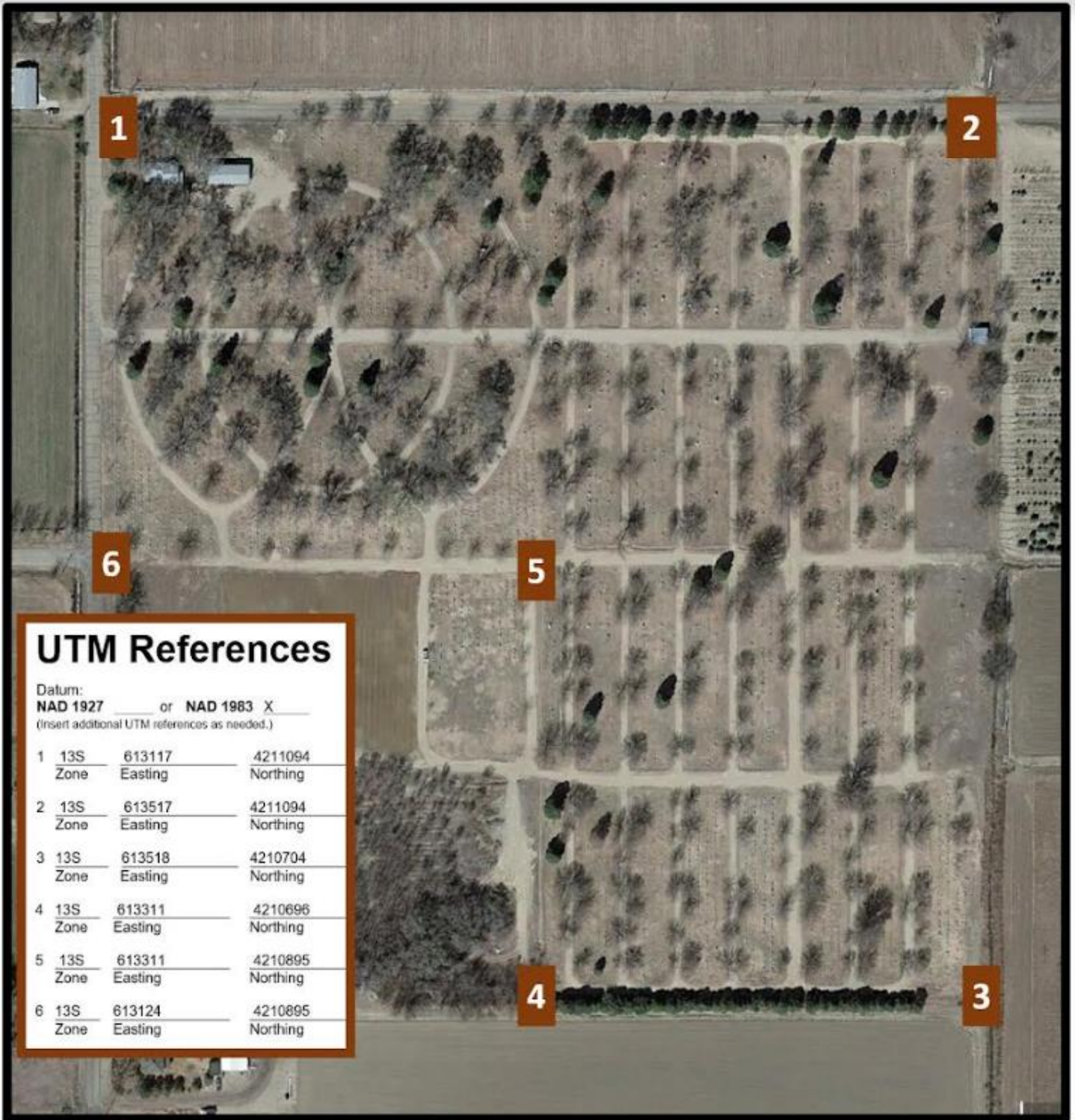


Rocky Ford Cemetery  
NAD27 Conus  
USNG Zone 13SFC



Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State

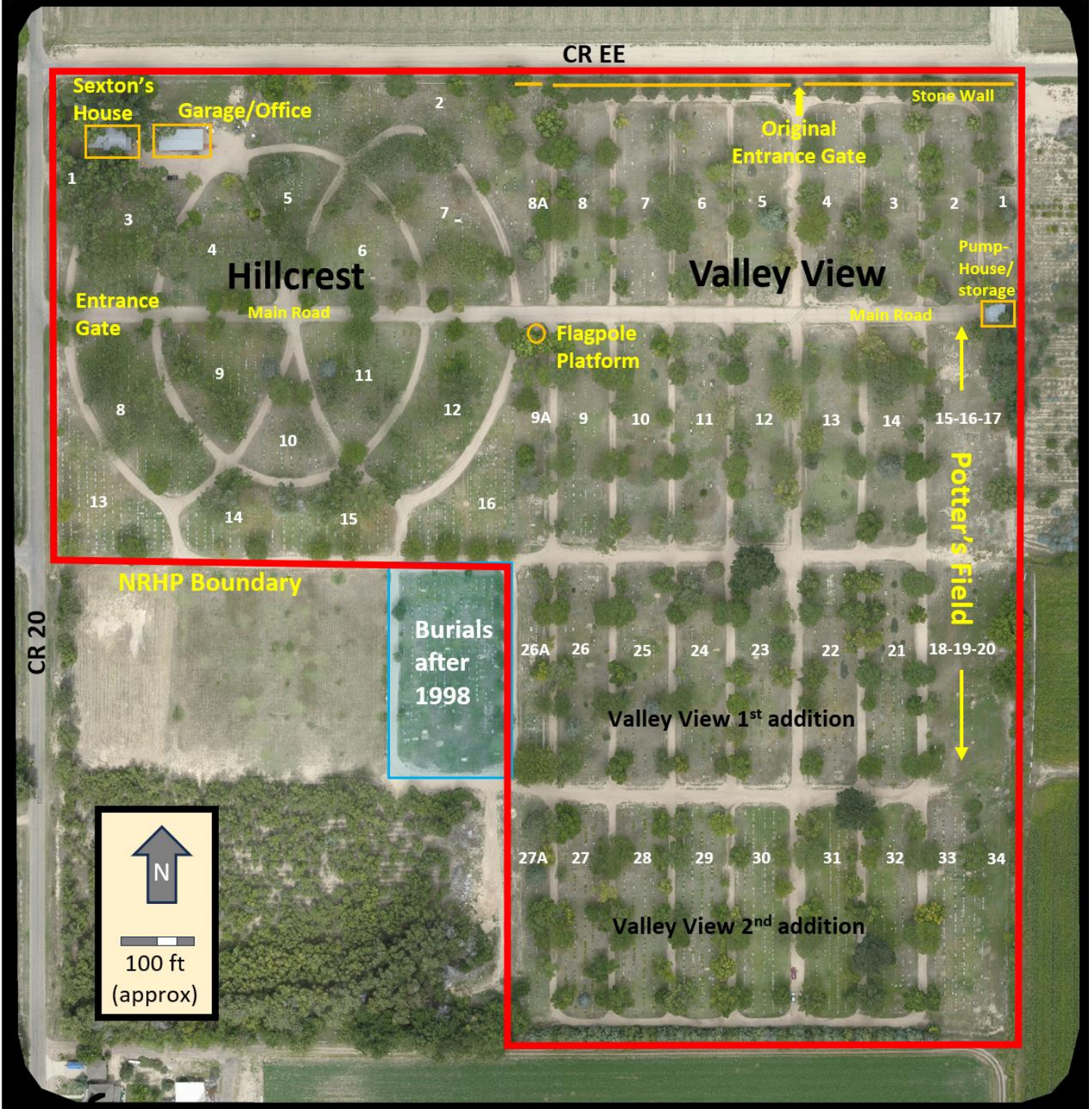


Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State

# Site map

## Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery, Rocky Ford, Colorado

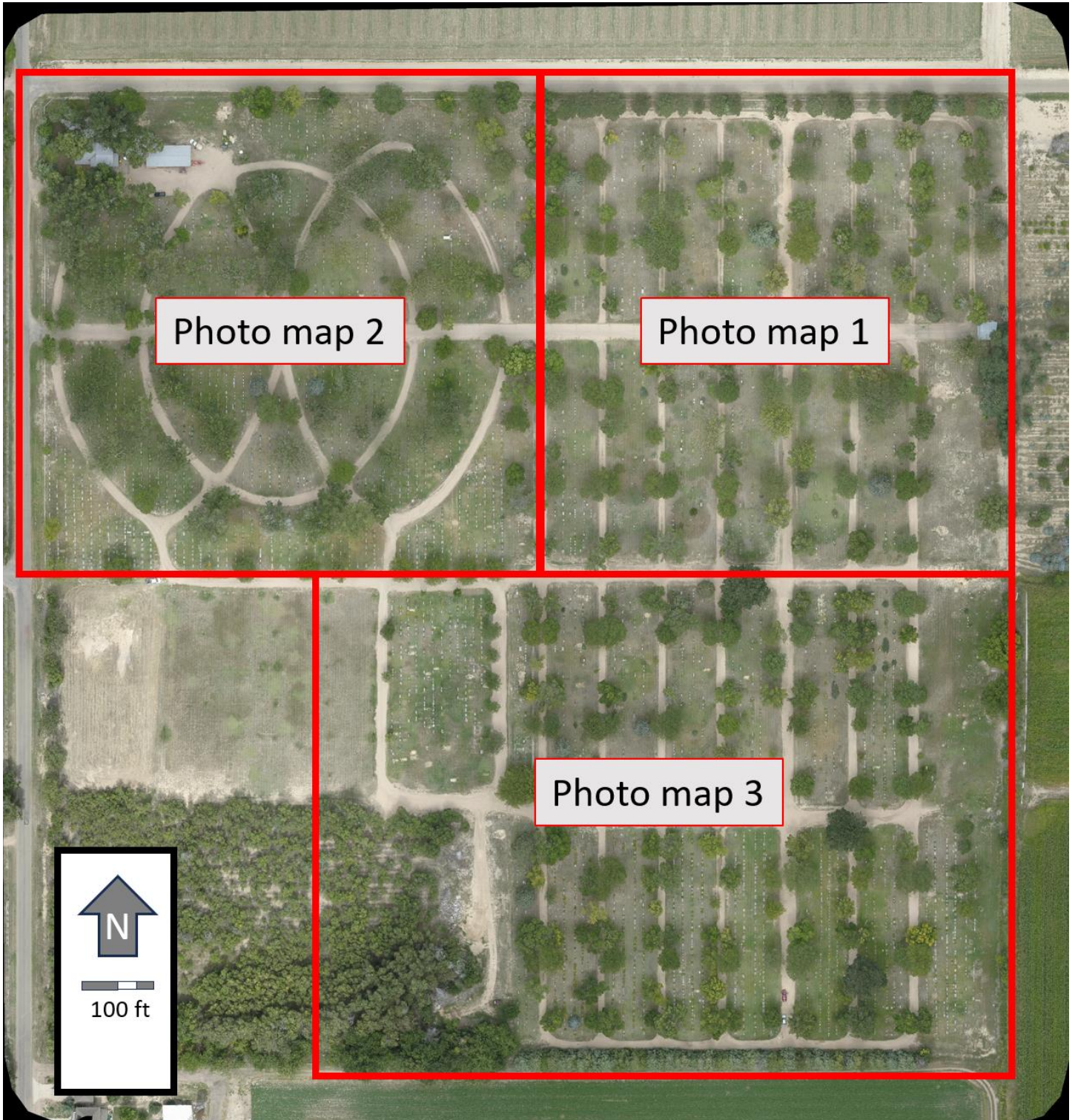


Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State

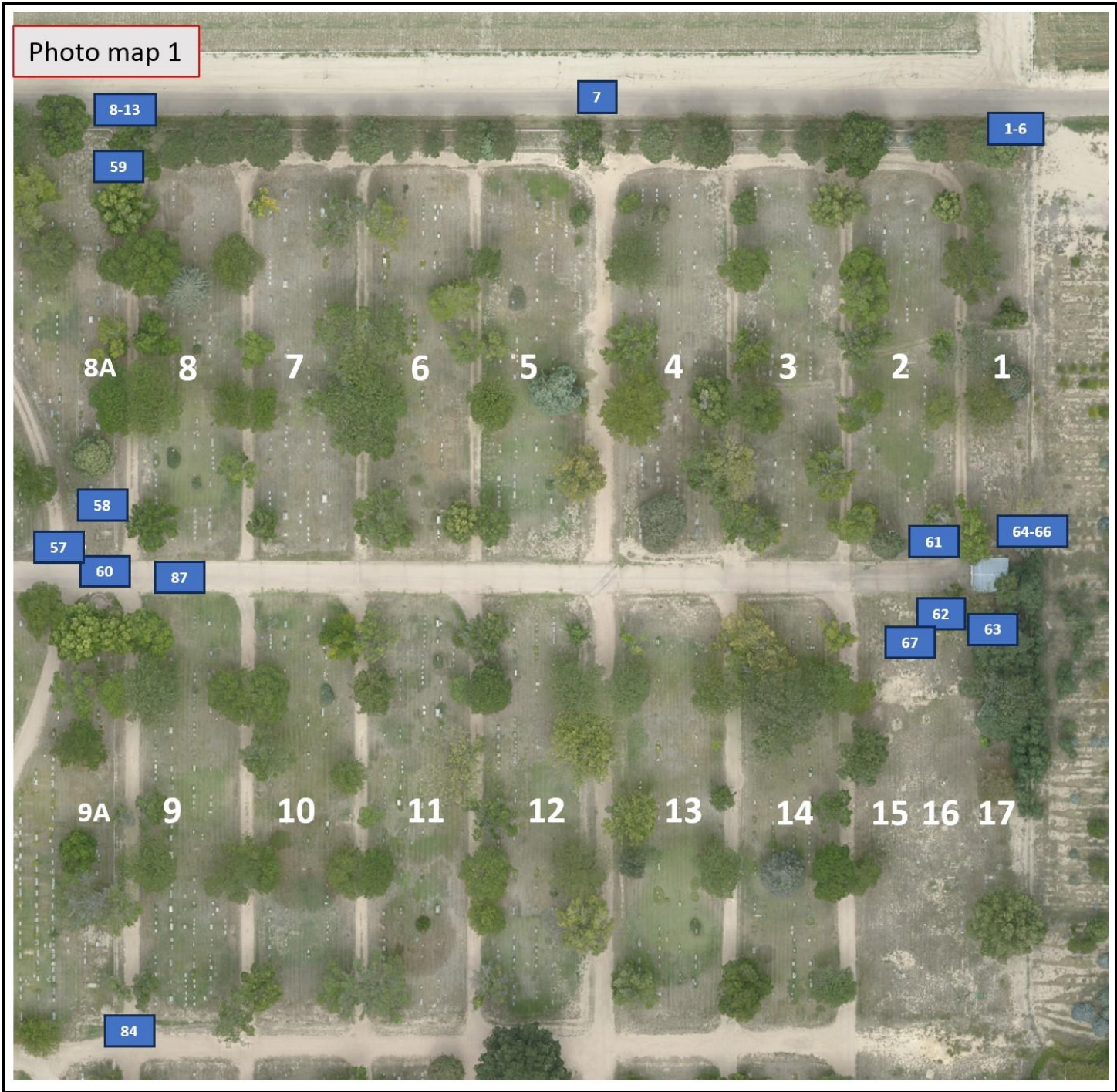
**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.



Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State



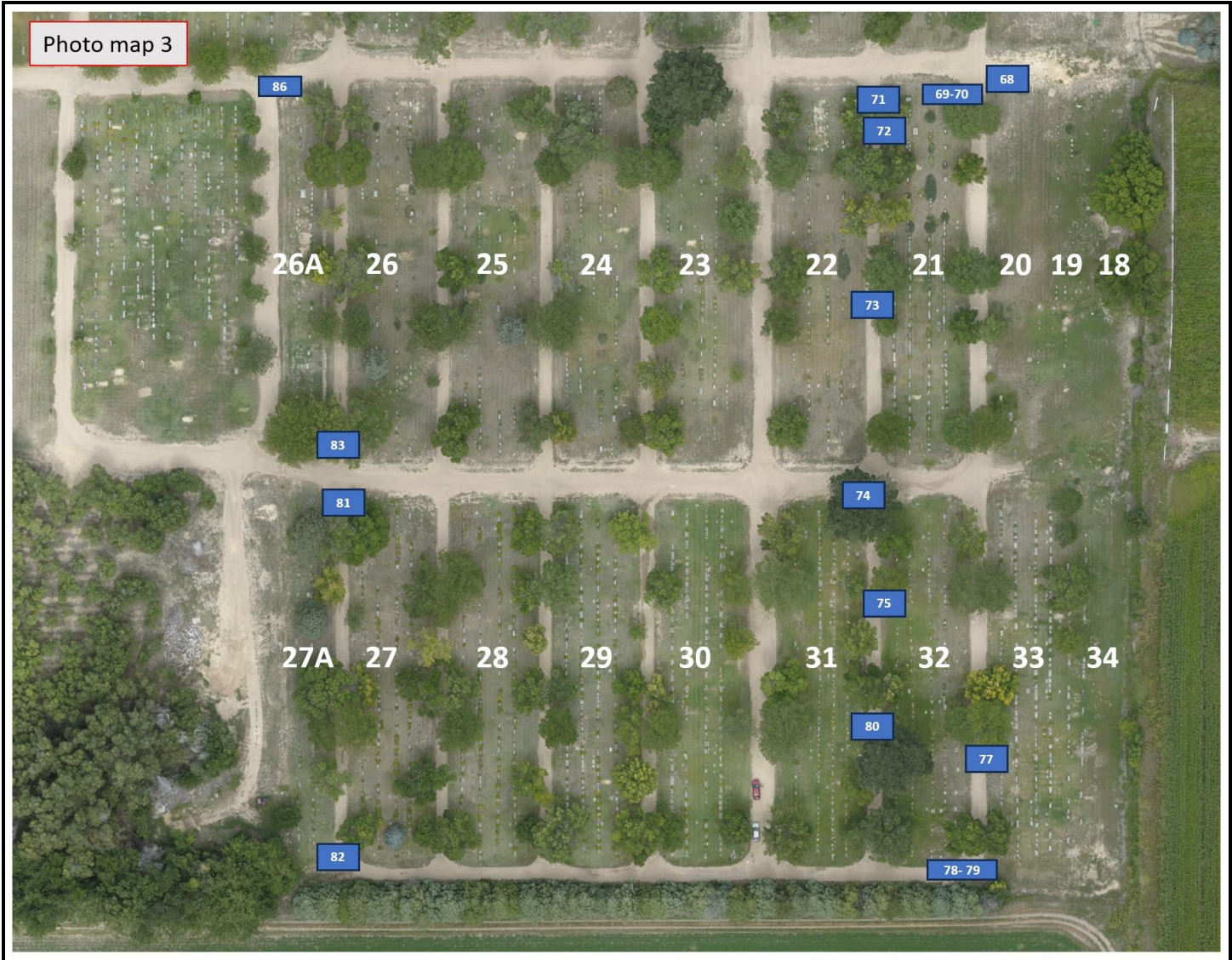
Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State



Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State



Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State

Name of Property: **Hillcrest / Valley View Cemetery**  
City or Vicinity: **Rocky Ford**  
County: **Otero** State: **Colorado**  
Photographer: **Kathleen Corbett / Rebecca Goodwin**  
Date Photographed: **29 May 2023**

**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

No.	Map No.	Date	Hillcrest / Valley View	Facing	Description
1	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	SW	Overview from NE corner
2	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	NW	South side of cobble wall
3	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	W	North border: road, curb, and tree alignment
4	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	S	East border: Irrigation ditch and berm
5	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	n/a	Date inscription on concrete cap of wall
6	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	WSW	North side of cobble wall, north border
7	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	S	North gate (btwn blks 4 & 5) –location of original entrance to Valley View cemetery
8	1	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	S	North road, Hillcrest/Valley View border, end of stone wall
9	1	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	S	Hillcrest/Valley View border
10	1	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	North border, west end of stone wall
11	1	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SE	North border, stone wall
12	1	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	Stone wall, detail
13	1	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	Stone wall, detail
14	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NW	Cemetery Office and Garage
15	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	Cemetery Office and Garage
16	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SE	Cemetery Office and Garage
17	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NE	Cemetery Office and Garage
18	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NW	Sexton's House
19	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	Sexton's House
20	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SE	Sexton's House
21	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NE	Sexton's House
22	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SE	Sexton's driveway, facing southeast into cemetery
23	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	E	West (Main) Gate from CR 20
24	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NE	Into cemetery from West Gate/CR 20
25	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SE	Into cemetery from West Gate/CR 20
26	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SSE	Curve, west edge of Block 8
27	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	Overview, Block 13
28	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	W	Overview, Block 13
29	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	N	Block 8
30	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	ESE	Block 14
31	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	N	Block 9
32	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	WNW	Block 9
33	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NE	Block 10

Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
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No.	Map No.	Date	Hillcrest / Valley View	Facing	Description
34	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NW	Block 16
35	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	W	Block 15
36	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	N	Block 12
37	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	E	Block 16
38	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	W	Block 12
39	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	Block 12
40	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	Block 11
41	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SE	From center of Hillcrest on main road- Block 11
42	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	S	From center of Hillcrest on main road- Block 10
43	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	From center of Hillcrest on main road- Block 9
44	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NW	From center of Hillcrest on main road- Block 4
45	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	N	From center of Hillcrest on main road- Block 5
46	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NE	From center of Hillcrest on main road- Block 6
47	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NW	Block 3
48	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NW	Block 7
49	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	N	Block 2 and east edge of Hillcrest
50	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	ESE	Block 7
51	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	S	Block 6
52	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SSW	Block 5
53	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NE	Block 2
54	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NW	Block 2
55	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	S	Block 4
56	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	SW	Block 3
57	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	NE	Valley View – Block 8A & Block 8
58	1	05-29-2023	Hillcrest/Valley View	N	Hillcrest/Valley View west border – stone alignment
59	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	SSE	Overview into Valley View from NW corner
60	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	SSW	Memorial platform and flagpole
61	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	SE	Shop / well house
62	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	NE	Shop / well house
63	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	N	Shop / well house
64	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	E	Japanese children’s headstones, damaged
65	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	E	Masaji Kanetomo, 1916-1918
66	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	E	Masaji Kanetomo, 1916-1918
67	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	S	Blocks 15-16-17, Potter’s Field north section
68	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	SE	Blocks 18-19-20, Potter’s Field south section
69	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	SSE	Block 21, Japanese section, Isoshima stones
70	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	W	Block 21, Ota stone, backing onto Maruyama
71	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	SE	Block 21, Japanese area, Maruyama family stone
72	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	SE	Block 21, Japanese area, Yanagi family stone
73	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	ESE	Block 21, Japanese area
74	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	SW	Block 31, Latino area
75	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	ESE	Block 32, with 33 and 34 beyond
76	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	SW	Block 32, Baby LeBlanc stone with peonies

Valley View-Hillcrest Cemetery  
Name of Property

Otero County, Colorado  
County and State

No.	Map No.	Date	Hillcrest / Valley View	Facing	Description
77	3	05-29-2023	Valley View		Blocks 33 & 34, Latino area, more recent burials
78	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	NW	Block 32, Latino area
79	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	W	South road (southern border of Valley View)
80	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	W	Block 31, Latino headstones
81	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	SE	Block 27, Ash tree
82	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	NE	Block 27, Overview of Valley View from SW corner
83	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	NE	Block 26, Overview of First Addition to Valley View from SW corner
84	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	NE	Block 9, Overview of the north half of Valley View from the center road
85	2	05-29-2023	Hillcrest	NW	Block 16, Overview of Hillcrest from the SE corner
86	3	05-29-2023	Valley View	SE	Block 26A, Overview of First Addition to Valley View from NW corner
87	1	05-29-2023	Valley View	E	View east on Main Road through cemetery

**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 18 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.