

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

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7 - DESCRIPTION

Historic Cemeteries in Port Gibson (Thematic Group)

The historic cemetery theme relates to the historic development of Port Gibson. The founding of the early settlement, organization of religious institutions, and the beginnings of self-determination for blacks after the Civil War are important historic movements reflected in the establishment of the cemeteries. Their major common physical characteristics are rural setting and relative isolation from residential areas.

The group displays striking contrasts in individual physical treatment and in historic and associational significance. Wintergreen is representative in plan and design quality of mid-nineteenth-century romantically inspired funeral landscapes, epitomized by Mount Auburn in Cambridge, Greenwood in Brooklyn, and Laurel Hill in Philadelphia. Wintergreen lacks only the topographical contours of its contemporaries. The contiguous Catholic and Jewish cemeteries share similar settings; however, the compacted plan, elevated monuments, and superior maintenance of the Jewish Cemetery contrast with the partially barren field of its neighbor, which is accentuated by an overgrown crucifix focal point and vandalism to several notable monuments. Golden West Cemetery, with its grassy hillside setting, displays none of the landscape elements of the other three, nor does it have a symmetrical arrangement of plots. Random placement of makeshift cast-concrete monuments and lack of shrubbery or any formal landscape plan impart an appealing pastoral folk-art quality to Golden West.

This cemetery survey of the Port Gibson multiple resource area was conducted by Jack A. Gold, architectural historian with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Of the five extant cemeteries in Port Gibson, Scott Memorial Cemetery was the only one omitted from the thematic group. It was not included because it lacks historic or landscape significance.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

HISTORIC RESOURCES OF PORT GIBSON  
[Miss.]

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 60

8 - SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Cemeteries in Port Gibson (Thematic Group)

Each of the four cemeteries included in the thematic group relates to the historic development of Port Gibson as described in the individual survey forms. A fifth cemetery, Scott Memorial, is not included because of its recent establishment and lack of historic or landscape significance. The historic significance of Wintergreen as the burial ground for Samuel Gibson, an early Port Gibson settler, is enhanced by the application of mid-nineteenth-century principles of landscape planning in the United States. In the context of Mississippi, the thematic cemetery group is notable as a significant aggregation of small-town cemeteries supported by private associations (Wintergreen and Golden West), and religious congregations (Catholic and Jewish).



ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Golden West Cemetery is situated on a rolling hill rising to the west along the outskirts of Port Gibson. The eastern border of the cemetery is on the city's western boundary. Measuring approximately three acres, the cemetery is largely overgrown, unkempt, and inaccessible. An entranceway from Rodney Road runs north along the eastern flank of the property. Carved stone monuments used during the early part of this century have been succeeded by cast-concrete slabs with hand-etched inscriptions.

ALTERATIONS:

OUTBUILDINGS:

LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Golden West Cemetery property was appropriated to local blacks for use as a burying ground around the turn of the century. Known locally as Port Gibson Negro Cemetery until the 1970s, the property was renamed by Agnes Quigless of the Golden West Cemetery Association. After 1970 a second black cemetery was established in a lot east of Golden West, and named Scott Memorial Cemetery. Though lacking significant landscape features, Golden West displays an evocative rural quality and a primitive expression of folk art in its makeshift monuments.

NAME: Golden West Cemetery

STREET NO: Rodney Road

TOWN/VIC: Port Gibson

COUNTY: Claiborne

BLOCK/LOT:

PRESENT OWNER: Golden West Cemetery Association  
 ADDRESS c/o Blanche Upton, 602 Greenwood Street

PRESENT USE: Port Gibson, Mississippi 39150  
 Cemetery

FORMER USE:

DATE: ca. 1900

STYLE:

ARCH/BUILDER:

SOURCE OF DATE:

ENVIRONMENT: residential

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

NEIGHBORHOOD

LOCAL X

STATE

NATIONAL

PHOTOS

NEG. #

PHYSICAL CONDITION:

Overgrown

THREATS:

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Refer to cemetery boundaries as outlined on U.S.G.S. map.

CREAGE: 3 acres

UTM REF:

A	15	689800	3537280
	ZONE EASTING		NORTHING
C			
B			
	ZONE EASTING		NORTHING
D			

FORM PREPARED BY:

DATE

Jack A. Gold

February, 1979

MOTHER

LOUISA WELCH WHITING

BORN OCT 15 1879

DIED NOV 30 1958

SAVED AT REST

SLEEP ON

*Port Gibson Multiple Resource Area*

HISTORIC CEMETERIES IN PORT GIBSON

(THEMATIC GROUP)

Port Gibson, Mississippi

*Claiborne Co.*

Jack A. Gold

January, 1979

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Golden West Cemetery; view to north

Photo 87 of 125

MAY 30 1979

*DOE*  
JUL 22 1979

ETHEL MASH MCGEE

BORN MARCH 12 1892

DIED MARCH 24 1973

AT REST

*Port Gibson Multiple Resource Area*

HISTORIC CEMETERIES IN PORT GIBSON

(THEMATIC GROUP)

Port Gibson, Mississippi

*Clairborne Co.*

Jack A. Gold

January, 1979

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Golden West Cemetery. View to west.

Photo G02 *110 of 125*

*DOE*

**JUL 22** 1979

MAY 30 1979



W. B. WILLIAM SCOTT  
DIED OCT. 1908.  
LOUISE SCOTT  
DIED 1878.

SCOTT

*Port Gibson Multiple Resource area.*

HISTORIC CEMETERIES IN PORT GIBSON

(THEMATIC GROUP)

Port Gibson, Mississippi.

Jack A. Gold

January, 1979

*Claiborne Co.*

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Golden West Cemetery. View to east.

Photo G01 *111 of 125-*

MAY 30 1979

*DOE*

**JUL 22 1979**