

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

HISTORIC TEXAS CEMETERY MARKERS: 2011 Official Texas Historical Marker Sponsorship Application Form

Valid September 1, 2010 to November 15, 2010 only

This form constitutes a public request for the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to consider approval of an Official Texas Historical Marker for the topic noted in this application. The THC will review the request and make its determination based on rules and procedures of the program. Filing of the application for sponsorship is for the purpose of providing basic information to be used in the evaluation process. The final determination of eligibility and therefore approval for a state marker will be made by the THC. This form is to be used for cemetery marker requests only. Please see separate forms for either Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (building) markers or subject markers.

NOTE: The Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation is a prerequisite for HTC markers. If the cemetery is not yet designated, that process must be completed, and not just in process, before applying for a marker. Information regarding the HTC designation can be found on the THC web site: (<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/cemeteries/cemhtc.html>).

Marker title (must be exactly as listed in the HTC designation): Overton Cemetery

County: Dallas

Town (nearest county town on state highway map): Dallas

Street address of marker site or directions from town noted above: 3229 Overton

NOTE: Historic Texas Cemetery markers must be placed at the cemetery being marked. They cannot be placed on right-of-way maintained by the Texas Department of Transportation.

Historic Texas Cemetery markers

Definition:

Historic Texas Cemetery markers are only for burial grounds previously approved for HTC designation. These markers recognize the historical significance of a cemetery and, with the use of interpretive plaques, provide background on associated communities, families, events and customs. HTC markers must be placed at the cemetery, but since cemeteries are protected under other existing laws, they convey no restrictions on the property.

Criteria:

1. **HTC designation:** All steps of the HTC designation process must be completed by the time of application for the HTC marker.
2. **Historical/cultural significance:** Completion of the HTC designation does not ensure approval for an HTC marker; it is only a prerequisite. The application for an HTC marker with an interpretive plaque must include the same type of detailed history required for other markers. In addition to the Context, Overview, Significance and Documentation sections, it must also include a Description section that provides a detailed overview of the physical site

and includes mention of the cemetery setting and descriptions of significant landscape features or noteworthy burial markers and funereal practices.

Special Considerations for HTC markers:

- HTC medallions can be ordered separately, but only for placement with a previously awarded THC marker that provides interpretation for the cemetery.
- Cemeteries are not eligible for subject markers or Recorded Texas Historic Landmark markers.
- The narrative history component is not required if the sponsorship application is for an HTC medallion or for an HTC medallion with name and date plaque. It is required, however, for all other HTC markers. In all cases, though, a complete, current sponsorship application form is required.
- HTC medallions and interpretive plaques (including name and date plaques) must be displayed together. That is, they must appear as designed, with the medallion immediately above the plaque.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Any individual, group or county historical commission (CHC) may apply to the THC to request an Official Texas Historical Marker for what it deems a worthy topic. Only complete marker applications that contain all the required elements can be accepted or processed by the THC. For HTC markers with interpretive plaques, the required elements are: sponsorship application form; narrative history; and documentation.

- Completed applications must be duly reviewed, verified and approved by the county historical commission (CHC) in the county in which the marker will be placed.
- The sponsorship application form, narrative history and documentation must be submitted as Microsoft Word or Word-compatible documents and sent via email attachments to the THC by no later than November 15, 2010. THC email accepts mail no larger than 10 MB.
- Required font style and type size are a Times variant and 12-point.
- Narrative histories must be typed in a double-spaced (or 1.5-spaced) format and include separate sections on context, overview, significance and documentation.
- The narrative history must include documentation in the form of reference notes, which can be either footnotes or endnotes. Documentation associated with applications should be broad-based and demonstrate a survey of all available resources, both primary and secondary.
- Upon notification of the successful preliminary review of required elements by the THC, a non-refundable application fee of \$100 is required. The fee shall be submitted to the THC within ten working days of application receipt notification.

APPROVAL BY COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The duly appointed marker representative (chair or marker chair) noted below for the county historical commission will be the sole contact to the THC for this marker application. To ensure accuracy, consistency and efficiency, all information from and to the THC relative to the application—and throughout the review and production processes—will be via direct communication with the CHC representative. All other inquiries (calls, emails, letters) to the THC will be referred to the CHC representative for response. By filling out the information below and filing the application with the THC, the CHC representative is providing the THC with notice that the application and documentation have been reviewed and verified by the CHC and that the material meets all current requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker program.

As chair or duly appointed marker chair, I certify the following:

- Representatives of the CHC have met or talked with the potential marker sponsor and discussed the marker program policies as outlined on the THC web site. CHC members have reviewed the history and documentation for accuracy and made corrections or notes as necessary. It is the determination of the CHC that the topic, history and documentation meet criteria for eligibility.

Name of CHC contact (chair or marker chair): Wheelice (Pete) Wilson, Jr.

Mailing address: 214 Samuel Blvd., #3-H **City, Zip:** Coppell, TX 75019

Daytime phone (with area code): 972-741-3894 (cell) **Email address (required):**

wwilsonjr@theatrecoppell.com

CHC comments or concerns about this application, if any: This cemetery is located just off Overton Rd, on Leatherwood, which is an old road that leads, apparently, only to this cemetery. The applicant states that 3229 Overton is the address used on the HTC designation.

PERMISSION OF CEMETERY ADMINISTRATOR FOR MARKER PLACEMENT

Cemetery association representative or property manager (required): Ann Koenig

Address: 2905 Gabriel **City, State, Zip:** , McKinney, Texas 75071 **Phone:** 972-548-1888

NOTE: The cemetery association or surrounding property owners will not receive copies of general correspondence from the THC. All procedural correspondence (notice of receipt, requests for additional information, inscriptions, shipping notices, etc.) — with the exception of payment notices, if applicable — will be sent via email to the CHC representative, who is encouraged to share the information with all interested parties as necessary.

SPONSORSHIP PAYMENT INFORMATION

Prospective sponsors please note the following:

- Payment must be received in full within 45 days of the official approval notice and must be accompanied by the THC payment form. The THC is unable to process partial payments or to delay payment due to processing procedures of the sponsor. Applications not paid in the time frame required may, at the sole discretion of the THC, be cancelled or postponed.
- Payment relates to sponsorship of the marker in partnership with the THC, which provides the match for program costs.
- Payment does not constitute ownership of a marker; Historic Texas Cemetery markers and other Official Texas Historical Markers are the property of the State of Texas.
- If, at any time during the marker process, sponsorship is withdrawn, a refund can be processed, but the THC will retain the application fee of \$100.
- The Official Texas Historical Marker Program provides no means of recognizing sponsors through marker texts, incising or supplemental plaques.

Marker sponsor (may be individual or organization): Ann Koenig

Contact person (if applicable): Frances James

Mailing address: 777 Custer Unit 18-1 City, Zip: Richardson, Texas 75080

Email address (required): fjames@prodigy.net Phone: 214-381-0445

SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS

In order to facilitate delivery of the marker, residence addresses, post office box numbers and rural route numbers are not permitted. To avoid additional shipping charges or delays, use a business street address (open 8 a.m.—5 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Name: Ann Koenig`

Street address: 2905 Gabriel, McKinney, Texas City, Zip: 75071

Daytime phone (required): 972-548-1888 Email (required): akoenig29@gmail.com

TYPE AND SIZE OF HISTORIC TEXAS CEMETERY MARKERS

As part of its review process, the THC will determine the appropriate size marker and provide options, if any, for the approved topic based on its own review criteria, including, but not exclusive of, historical significance, replication of information in other THC markers, relevance to the Statewide Preservation Plan and the amount of available documented information provided in the application narrative. In making its determination, however, the THC will also take into account the preference of the CHC, as noted below.

The sponsor/CHC prefers the following size marker:

- 27" x 42" HTC marker with post (\$1,500)
- 27" X 42" HTC marker without post* (\$1,500)
- 18" x 28" HTC marker with post (\$1,000)
- 18" x 28" HTC marker without post* (\$1,000)
- HTC medallion (only for cemeteries with existing Official Texas Historical Marker) (\$300)
- HTC medallion and name and date plaque, with post (\$650)
- HTC medallion and name and date plaque, without post (\$650)

*For an HTC marker without post, indicate to what surface material it will be mounted:

- wood
- masonry
- metal
- other (specify)

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION (via email required)

When the CHC has determined the application is complete, the history has been verified and the topic meets the requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, the materials should be forwarded to the THC via email at the following address:

markerapplication@thc.state.tx.us.

- The CHC or marker chair should send an email containing the following attachments (see attachment function under file menu or toolbox on your computer):
 - This application form

- The subject history and documentation if the application is for an interpretive marker (no history required for either medallion only or medallion and name and date plaque orders)

RECORDS RETENTION BY CHC: The CHC must retain hard copies of the application as well as an online version, at least for the duration of the marker process. The THC is not responsible for lost applications, for incomplete applications or for applications not properly filed according to the program requirements. For additional information about any aspect of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, visit the Markers page on the THC web site (<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/markerdesigs/madmark.html>).

Texas Historical Commission
History Programs Division
P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276
Phone 512/463-5853
history@thc.state.tx.us



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places selling real stories

Overton Cemetery

I. Context

The Overton Cemetery is a small cemetery located at 3229 Overton at the intersection with Leatherwood, two blocks northeast of the 3200 block of E. Illinois in Dallas County. The site was designated as a Historic Texas Cemetery in January 2004. This application is for a large Texas Historical Marker at the site. It is believed that Aaron Overton and two of his sons were among the first men to come to what is now Dallas County in 1844 and settle on the west side of the Trinity River. Aaron Overton built a grist mill, run by horse power, as he had done in Jackson County, Missouri, his previous community. This mill near Five Mile Creek was one of the earliest mills in the southern section of Dallas County.

II. Overview

The Overton Cemetery was near the home of William Perry Overton built in 1853-4. This land was a portion of the Dugold MacFarland Survey No. 985 of 1280 acres. MacFarland received a patent for Bounty Land from the Republic of Texas for his participation in the War with Mexico.ⁱ As happened many times after this war, the government was encouraging new citizens to come to this undeveloped land and John Nolen was one of the land managers. MacFarland assigned his patent to Nolen. Nolen did not find a buyer for 640 acres of this survey as it was deeded to Aaron Overton by John Nolen in 1851 for the payment of back taxes.ⁱⁱ

North Carolina native Aaron Overton (1784-1860) and two sons, Caswell C. (1816-18?/) and William Perry (1823-1903) came to the Republic of Texas in November 1844 and were among the first to settle on the west side of the Trinity River. All three of the men were issued certificates for Peters Colony land.ⁱⁱⁱ As a single man William patented 320 acres of land near the Trinity River and Turtle Creek. Caswell found 320 acres near what is now the Wilmer/Hutchins area. Aaron's claim was in the Kidd Springs area.^{iv} After the two-month journey from Missouri, as he had done in two other locations, Aaron built a horse grist mill having a capacity of 100 bushels of wheat a day. The mill was the most important industry for the communities springing up on the west side of the Trinity. Settlers came from as far away as 100 miles to have their corn and wheat ground into flour and meal.^v Aaron made a trip back to Missouri each fall until 1847 when he brought the rest of his family to Texas. After purchasing 640 acres of McFarland land in 1851, Aaron erected a water mill and two years later he built what was known as the Honey Springs Mill.^{vi}

Aaron's son, Missouri native William Perry Overton married Martha Ann Newton (1828-1884) also a native of Missouri in 1847. They eventually had seven children. In the spring of 1850 William left Dallas, joining the gold seekers who were traveling with ox teams to haul their supplies. When they got to El Paso Overton traded his oxen for mules and arrived in San Diego in September. He stayed in California for eighteen months before returning to Texas. When he came back to Dallas County in 1853 he traded his head right near Turtle Creek and the Trinity River to his father for the Honey Springs site where the

mill was. 1866 he returned to farming on his land where he concentrated on raising Durham cattle and Berkshire hogs.^{vii} The farm became known as Honey Springs.^{viii}

The first home, erected by Aaron in 1851 was of logs. After William Perry traded land with his father the cabin was later enclosed with lumber in 1852-3. The timber had been hauled from Palestine in Anderson County making it one of the first frame houses in Dallas County. The Overton mill and their homestead were well known by pioneer families. During the Civil War the house served as a hospital for sick or disabled soldiers. The family was host to weary travelers and needy friends passing by. Frank James was said to have stayed in the house for seven weeks recovering from an illness. It was noted that it was one of the oldest houses in Dallas County.^{ix} The feature article in the Dallas Morning News mentioned that literally hundreds of heirlooms and artifacts had been collected by the Overton ancestors from five continents!^x

The first family member buried in the cemetery near the house on William Perry and Martha's land was when their eight year daughter Lizzie E. Overton died in 1870. In 1873 a son, Caswell, died at the age of seventeen. Oscar Alonzo, another son died in 1880 at the age of twenty-six. Martha died in 1884. Of all the grave markers inside the fenced area, most are for Overton family members.^{xi} Others are of friends and people who lived on their land. To the left of the gate to the cemetery the descendants were told that three Confederate Veterans who were being cared for in the Overton's house died and are buried here in unmarked graves.

William Perry Overton married for the second time in 1885 to Mrs. Jessie Davis Price (1849-1928). Jessie had been born in England. Her father, Henry C. Davis (1816-1889) a native of Shirfield Hampshire, England lived with Jessie and William. Davis was killed in an accident on the Missouri Kansas Texas Railroad tracks in 1889.^{xii} His death notice said he owned a large and valuable tract of land and was in independent circumstances. He had brought family heirlooms with them when they came to Texas. He was walking on the railroad track in front of the Overton's house and did not hear the train because at seventy three he was almost totally deaf. The engineer attempted to stop the train, but Mr. Davis was hit and he rolled down the embankment. He is buried inside the fenced area of the family cemetery.^{xiii}

A respected citizen of the community was Dr. Kiaza Tsukahara (1873-1928) a medical doctor who was known as "Dr. Jap" by the black patients that he cared for - as his patients could not pronounce his name. He came to America in 1902 and attended Baylor University medical school graduating in 1906.^{xiv} He, his wife, and their six children lived on Holmes Street and he later had an office in South Dallas. Dr. Tsukahara was buried in the front corner of the fenced portion of the Overton Cemetery. After more than seventy-five years, his descendants who still live in Dallas had his ashes removed from the Overton Cemetery and reburied at Grove Hill Cemetery in Dallas with others of his family in the year 2000.^{xv}

Another non-family member was Ollie Leatherwood (1894-1979). Miss. Leatherwood's family had lived on Overton land and when the rest of her family decided to leave the area Ollie choose to stay in Dallas County and moved into the house with the Overton family. In appreciation for her being there for them, the family gave her four rent houses and the rest of the land now all denoted as a cemetery. She managed the rent property for income. On the property outside the fenced area of the Overton Cemetery the small frame Overton Road Baptist Church was built on Ollie's land. Members of the church were buried in this land behind the church.^{xvi} Ollie attended the church with other neighbors. The church later moved to the northeast corner of Overton Road and Bonnie View Road. The church is now gone.

This generosity has since created a serious problem as the abandoned cemetery behind the church is a high weed, overgrown area, some with markers and some without. The property is all shown as cemetery on the Dallas Central Appraisal List.

The approximately 90 X 90 foot fenced section of the Overton Cemetery is where immediate family members are buried and is maintained by a descendant. She feels no obligation to maintain the entire area.

III. Historical/Cultural Significance

The Overton Cemetery is an important cemetery site as the Overtons were among the earliest settlers to come to the Republic of Texas and settle in the Three Forks Area of

Texas. Members of this family built one of the first grist mills and kept it operating for neighbors near and far. Since 1853 their home on the wagon road was known as a place of comfort. The Overtons shared what they had with weary travelers, in the 1860s it was used as a hospital for sick and disabled soldiers. They welcomed the needy or oppressed. Jessie Davis Price Overton lived in the house until she died at the age of seventy-eight in 1928. It then became the residence of Joseph and Ruby Overton.

The cemetery site was designated as a Historic Texas Cemetery in January 2004. A large marker for all to see will tell the history of this important pioneer Dallas County family.

IV. Documentation

- ⁱ Dallas County Deed records Volume B page 15 dated August 27, 1845.
- ⁱⁱ Dallas County Deed records Volume C pages 79-81 dated December 29, 1851.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Peters Colony of Texas by Seymour V. Conner, published by The Texas State Historical Association Austin, 1959, pages 355-356.
- ^{iv} Ralph H. Barksdale list of Peters Colony families sent to Austin dated December 7, 1844 contains the names of all three of the Overton men.
- ^v Dallas County, by John Cochran, published by Service Publishing Co. in 1928 page 117.
- ^{vi} Memorial and Biographical History of Dallas County published in 1892 by Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago., pages 701-703.
- ^{vii} The Hidden City – Oak Cliff, Texas, published in 1990 by Elmwood Press and Bill Minutaglio and Holly Williams, pages 14, 19, and 20.
- ^{viii} Ibid.
- ^{ix} Oral interview with the late Mrs. Jessie Price Overton Embry Breeding at her home in Dallas in 2000. Mrs. Breeding is the daughter of Roberta and Joseph Price Overton.
- ^x Pictures and article in feature section of the Dallas Morning News dated March 4, 1928.
- ^{xi} Family papers and inventory of stones.

^{xii} Dallas Morning News article dated December 5, 1889.

^{xiii} Memorial and Biographical History of Dallas County, the headstones at the cemetery, death notice in the Dallas Morning News dated December 5, 1889.

^{xiv} Death Notice in the Dallas Morning News, page 3 dated November 23, 1928.

^{xv} Cemetery records and interview with Mrs. Breeding in 2000.

^{xvi} Cemetery records, Dallas City Directory, interview with Mrs. Breeding.