OLD CITY CEMETERY

(1881-PRESENT)

Joseph K. Klepper obtained his Peters Colony land grant and designated a portion of the property as a cemetery prior to 1848. Later, Klepper and his wife, Nancy, deeded a portion of their land adjacent to the cemetery to the Methodist Episcopal Church, the earliest Methodist church in Plano, which existed from 1874 until 1894.

After the Methodist church moved, the area in which this cemetery is located evolved into an African American neighborhood, and the African American community has utilized the cemetery since the 1920s.

Unidentified World War I soldier. Burial markers at Old City Cemetery indicate military service by several individuals buried there.

Although some burials have been relocated to other cemeteries, Old City Cemetery still contains approximately 200 burials. Grave markers include both professionally manufactured marble and granite monuments, as well as homemade markers. Rows of unmarked burial depressions are also evident. Concrete or wood curbs distinguish a few family lots. Older European American burials occupy the northeast portion of the cemetery, while the more recent African American burials occupy the northwest and southern sections of the cemetery.

Old City Cemetery was founded by Joseph Klepper on his Peters Colony headright (Republic of Texas Land Grant). This land grant was a major portion of the nucleus of the emerging town of Plano.

Many early Plano pioneers and their descendants are buried in the Old City Cemetery. The earliest death date on gravestones of individuals known to have been interred in the cemetery is 1881. Five Peters Colony settlers are interred here, as are several other early settlers. In addition, black pioneers—including Andy Drake (d.1934), the first free African American to reside in Plano—and several African American community leaders are buried in the cemetery.

Members of the Holiness Church on H Avenue, near Old City Cemetery. The cemetery has been utilized by the local African American community since the 1920s.

Heritage Commission

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