

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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Cleora Cemetery
other names/site number 5CF.343

2. Location

street & number East U.S. Highway 50 (south side, 1.4 miles east of Salida) N/A not for publication
city or town Salida X vicinity
state Colorado code CO county Chaffee code 015 zip code 81201

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 X local

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation,
History Colorado
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

Cleora Cemetery

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	district
1	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

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

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Cemetery

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: \_\_\_\_\_

walls: \_\_\_\_\_

roof: \_\_\_\_\_

other: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Physical Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources, if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

### Summary

Cleora Cemetery, the ca. 1880 pioneer burial ground in the southern Arkansas Valley of Chaffee County, is associated with the long-vacated railroad-initiated 1878 town of the same name and also served nearby communities such as Salida until they secured cemeteries. The boot hill-type burial ground features randomly sited graves displaying a variety of historic monuments and markers placed during the period of significance, ca. 1880 to 1948; only three memorial markers dedicated to pioneer families are not historic. The cemetery constitutes one contributing site. Grave markers, grave enclosures, and other components are features of the site and are not included separately in the count of resources. The cemetery displays a natural landscape unaltered by construction of buildings or structures or formal landscape architectural design. Its setting conveys its distinction as a place set apart from the activities of everyday life. The cemetery maintains historic integrity conveying its status as a pioneer graveyard despite damage to and deterioration of some of its monuments.

The graveyard is located on the south side of U.S. Highway 50 about 1.4 miles east of Salida, which was founded in 1880. Situated on a hillside at an elevation rising from approximately 7,007' at the north boundary to about 7,080' on the south, the ground has an 8-degree slope. The cemetery is a rectangular (601' north-south x 502' east-west), 4.4-acre tract.<sup>1</sup> A wide, dry gully or wash cuts through the southeast corner and descends along the eastern edge; a smaller gully descends from the south center of the site. The topography of the grounds was not altered in its creation, and the vegetation is native to the area (Photograph 1, see summary of vegetation below). The site sediments are a very fine tan loam with numerous small gravels, cobbles and boulders, especially where exposed on the surface in the drainages and washes in the southern portions of the parcel.

A short gravel road from U.S. Highway 50 leads to a turnout for the cemetery. A wide metal pipe and woven wire gate near the west end of the north boundary permits vehicle access to the cemetery. Just east of the gate and inside the fence is a wood post with a nonhistoric metal sign identifying the cemetery (Photograph 2).<sup>2</sup> An opening in the fence flanked by upright posts at the location of the sign provides pedestrian access to the grounds. The graveyard has no interior roads or formal paths and is enclosed along its boundary with a four-strand barbed wire fence on native wood posts (some posts are now metal and some of the wire is down) (Photograph 3). Fence corners are reinforced with diagonal wood post bracing. All burials appear to be within the current fenced boundary. The elevated site overlooks the historic wagon and rail route between Salida and Cañon City, the Arkansas River valley, the hills to the north, and the mountains of the Continental Divide to the west.

### Elaboration

#### *Cemetery Type, Layout, and Features*

The cemetery is not formally laid out in an arrangement of blocks and grave plots with roads or paths. Instead, there is a mountain landscape with informal social paths radiating from the entrance gate on the north upward to the south through the grounds (Photograph 4). Graves and plots were placed irregularly where there was room and in locations individual families favored. The northernmost section (the lowest part of the site) has relatively few marked burials, perhaps due to drainage issues resulting from the slope of land. Most identifiable graves are found in the higher southern two-thirds of the cemetery.

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<sup>1</sup> The entire assessor parcel that includes the burial ground consists of 6.88 acres. Only the 4.4-acre portion demarcated by the fence has been used as a cemetery and is therefore the portion nominated.

<sup>2</sup> The sign reads "Cleora Cemetery 1885 Chaffee County." The date provided does not accord with recent research into the site's use as a cemetery and its monuments, the earliest of which date to ca. 1880.

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Cleora Cemetery embodies distinctive characteristics of the boot hill-type burial ground, identified by University of Denver Professor Annette Stott in her study of Rocky Mountain pioneer cemeteries as those established in response to rapid growth in population and a lack of traditional facilities and support systems for handling the dead. The designation comes from the “boot hills” of western legend that became the burial place for people who died “suddenly while fully engaged in living” or “with their boots on.”<sup>3</sup> A number of Colorado burial grounds arose through expediency as boot hill sites, but many continued to grow and evolve into more formal cemeteries, were altered, or were abandoned and left no identifiable features on the landscape.

The Cleora Cemetery displays important characteristics of the boot hill burial ground type, including no formal or planned alteration or enhancement of the natural landscape, location on a hill or mountain slope, no formal roads or paths laid out within its boundaries, graves randomly scattered around the site, a preponderance of relatively simple grave markers and often unmarked graves, no introduced plantings or other added enhancements, and no records documenting burials. The boot hill aspect of the cemetery is documented in local newspaper accounts of the burial of people on the same day they died, criminals who met quickly-handed-out justice, and those without any known history or relatives. There is no discernible division of burial sites based on wealth, social status, race and ethnicity, or religion.

As the only cemetery in the area before other formally designed burial places in Salida (Woodlawn in 1889 and Fairview in 1891) diminished its use, Cleora served as the community cemetery, becoming the final resting place of early settlers influential in business, farming and ranching, government, railroading, and mining. As this pioneer generation passed away, many of them and other later settlers continued to be buried at Cleora; some of their monuments reflect evolving tastes in materials and design.

*Graves.* The total number of graves (both occupied and unoccupied) is not known. When 1889 Woodlawn and 1891 Fairview cemeteries opened in Salida they featured the formal layout of blocks and plots, roadways, landscaped settings, and carefully maintained grounds that many people preferred. As a result, the remains of an unknown number of individuals originally buried at Cleora were disinterred and reburied in the newer cemeteries, based on a few newspaper accounts. It is also likely that some burials were not identified with markers or recorded in documents and that some early markers have disappeared due to deterioration.

Chaffee County cemetery historian June Shaputis compiled a list of approximately two hundred burials that are known or likely to have occurred at Cleora using tombstone inscriptions, maps, newspaper articles, census mortality schedules, church and mortuary records, county records, family records, and other materials. Although a few listings indicate later reburial in another cemetery, her work did not include an investigation of these instances. Research for this nomination identified seven additional newspaper reports of burials at Cleora. No inventory of graves or plot of burials at the cemetery exists, which is cited as one reason active burials ceased in 1948.<sup>4</sup> Determining the exact number and date of graves today is further complicated due to deteriorated and vandalized monuments and the presence of many informally designed markers, such as rock cairns.<sup>5</sup>

*Grave Enclosures.* There are twenty-one grave enclosure fences, featuring a variety of materials and styles from simple to elaborate (see Figures 2-4). For a cemetery with a relatively small number of burials, Cleora is notable for the number and variety of grave enclosures extant. The fence materials and designs include: wood pickets (various styles) with wood posts and rails (Photograph 5); wrought iron with decorative posts, pickets, and scrollwork (Photograph 6); wood post and rails with overlapping metal bows (Photograph 7); wrought iron hairpin and picket; woven wire with metal posts and top rail; and wood post and rail with metal bows with top loops. The low iron fence surrounding the 1889 grave of seventeen-year-old Fennie Shocklin (Photograph 8) bears an 1878 patent date and the identifying mark of “J. Kinney.” Jesse Kinney, of London, Canada, developed the concept of including “terminating cups” on the upright posts of a tubular iron fence that could

<sup>3</sup> Annette Stott, *Pioneer Cemeteries: Sculpture Gardens of the Old West* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 10.

<sup>4</sup> Donna Nevens, Salida, Colorado, Telephone Interviews by R. Laurie Simmons, 1 and 2 September 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Locating unmarked graves may be assisted by ground-penetrating radar and forensic canine studies in the future.

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support a flower vase or plant pot, as seen in Shocklin's enclosure.<sup>6</sup> The plot of Samuel B. Scott, who died in 1885, displays an ornate cast iron fence (Photograph 9) manufactured by T.R. Pullis & Sons, an architectural and ornamental iron fabricator described as "one of the pioneer institutions of its kind in the West."<sup>7</sup> The firm operated for nearly sixty years in St. Louis.

### **Marker and Monument Dates, Styles, and Materials**

**Dates.** Chaffee County resident and local historian John Ophus has asserted the first burial on the site of the cemetery occurred in 1875 in association with a violent period in which pioneer farmers and ranchers experienced a well documented episode of vigilante justice known as the 1874-75 Lake County War. The conflict resulted in discord, threats, fear, property destruction, and death, inducing some of the early settlers to leave the area permanently.<sup>8</sup> It is likely that deaths also occurred in the area during its early agricultural, mining, staging, freighting, railroad construction, and town-building days, but no markers remaining in the cemetery today testify to such an event. As early markers commonly consisted of a simple wood tablet or cross, it is likely the earliest examples deteriorated and are no longer present. No newspapers, often the place of record for local deaths, began operation in the area until 1879.

June Shaputis in 1987 reported seeing a broken 1880 Cleora Cemetery marker (no longer present) for Mattie L. Hawkins, the twenty-two-year-old daughter of Judge W.A. Hawkins, who was known to have been one of the most active residents of the town of Cleora during its brief life and who later moved to Salida.<sup>9</sup> Based on newspaper accounts, Shaputis indicated three others were likely buried on the grounds in that year, two infants and a man who was hanged after an attempted robbery. The 1880s through the 1900s were the most active decades for burial at Cleora, with 1889 marking the highest number of documented interments at approximately twenty-four. By the 1910s other established cemeteries in Chaffee County made it less popular as a burial site. As a community cemetery Cleora continued to add a small number of new burials (ranging from one to nine) each year through 1948, resulting in some of its more notable monuments. After that date, due to a lack of records documenting the location of existing graves, the cemetery no longer accommodated new burials. Local sources indicate the last burial occurred in 1948, when Philip Engelbright was laid to rest adjacent to the 1936 grave of his wife, Carrie. In subsequent years, the only additions to the site have been memorial markers dedicated to the memory of multiple members of three families.

**Styles.** The cemetery exhibits a variety of marker and monument styles common in rural cemeteries of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in Colorado. Most are relatively modest in size and ornamentation. Five wood markers, some or all of which date to the 1880s, remain in the cemetery (Photograph 10). Some graves are identified with small metal mortuary markers or plain wood stakes, some of which are replacements for deteriorated or vandalized markers. Several graves are marked by rock cairns or outlines of stones or red bricks (Photographs 11 and 12). About 1942 Muriel Sibell Wolle photographed a large carved wood cross in the cemetery dating to 1889 (see Figure 5). The cross is no longer present.

The most frequent types of fabricated monuments are stone tablets and pedestals. Tablets in the cemetery display both segmental and round arched tops. The monument for Elmer E. Clark, who died in 1900 at age nine months, is an arched-top tablet resting on a rock-faced stone base (Photograph 13). Examples of

<sup>6</sup> J. Kinney, Iron Fences, Patent Number 199651, filed 30 July 1877, patented 29 January 1878, 187-88, *Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office*, vol. 13 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878).

<sup>7</sup> "Thomas R. Pullis," *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis* (New York: Southern History Company, 1899), 1838.

<sup>8</sup> John Ophus, "The Lake County War, 1874-75," *The Colorado Magazine*, 47(1970)2: 128. Ophus examined the Lake County Coroner's inquest into the death of Charles Harding to reach this conclusion. The Lake County War began in 1874 as a boundary dispute between two ranchers and escalated to property destruction, intimidation, killing, and other forms of revenge. A large group of men formed the Committee of Safety with the intent of driving out or otherwise removing those they considered undesirable. Charles Harding was found dead beside a road, with the committee suspected in his killing. The most disturbing incident was the murder of Judge Elias Dyer (son of Colorado's famous snowshoe itinerant, Father John C. Dyer), who was perceived as favoring one side. Newspapers statewide covered the events, which were called "a perfect reign of terrorism." The violence gradually abated with the arrival of the railroads and the Leadville silver boom. *Denver Daily Times*, 3 February 1875 and Ed Quillen, "Father Dyer Lost a Son in the Lake County War," *Colorado Central Magazine*, August 1977, <http://cozine.com/1997>.

<sup>9</sup> June Shaputis, "Cleora Cemetery," *Chaffee County, Colorado, Burials* (Buena Vista, Colorado: June Shaputis, 1987).

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pedestals are the twin monuments with red sandstone bases and white marble second bases at the graves of Cyrus L. and Juliana Hartwell, who both died in 1889 (Photographs 14 and 15). A tapered stone column commemorates Elizabeth Bever, who died in 1887 (Photograph 16). An 1882 obelisk identifies the final resting place of Con S. Hatfield (Photograph 17). One military marker is present at the 1894 grave of Civil War veteran O.P. Tipcombe, sergeant, 2<sup>nd</sup> Illinois Light Artillery (Photograph 18). Newspaper reports announced members of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) held ceremonies and decorated graves of Civil War veterans at the cemetery in 1890s-1900s, indicating more such soldiers are buried here.

*Materials.* Stone predominates among marker materials, including gray and black granite, red and buff sandstone, and white and gray marble. As noted above there are several gravesites with unfinished native stone cairns, including one utilizing large pieces of quartz (Photograph 12), and several with graves outlined in stone (Photograph 11). Some graves appear to be marked by a small pile of large rocks, and several appear to include red brick plot markers (Photograph 19). There are five rare examples of early wood markers (Photograph 10). Two monuments are composed of zinc, which was marketed as “white bronze” (Photograph 20).

*Emblems, Symbols, and Epitaphs.* Some of the gravestones in Cleora Cemetery display emblems representing affiliation with an organization. The 1882 monument of Con S. Hatfield is inscribed with the emblem of the International Order of Odd Fellows, a chain of three links with the letters F, L, and T for the organization’s motto of “Friendship, Love and Truth” (Photograph 17). The 1886 monument for J.W. Barnes displays a Masonic compass and square emblem (Photograph 16). Alfred Smith’s 1923 monument (Photograph 21) incorporates two fraternal emblems: the Knights of Pythias (a shield surmounted by a knight’s helmet and two axes) a fraternal order favoring universal peace that was founded during the Civil War, as well as the emblem of the Elks (a profile of an elk). Mary B. Bailey’s 1909 monument displays that of the Women of Woodcraft, an auxiliary of the Woodmen of the World (Photograph 22). Its circular emblem depicted a dove flying above a fallen log and contained the words “courage, hope, remembrance.”

In the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries people understood a variety of the symbols utilized in gravestone design to convey special meanings. The symbols ranged from those with religious significance to those reflecting the character and accomplishments of the deceased, the manner of death, or the feelings of those left behind. Among the symbols present in Cleora Cemetery are: tree stump (life interrupted), pick and shovel (miner), vines (God), garlands (victory in death), oak leaves (strength), and doves (peace, Holy Spirit). A variety of flowers also conveyed special meanings, such as lilies (purity, innocence). Few monuments include specific religious references, but Berjer Borjeson’s 1888 round top tablet is inscribed with “I.H.S.” a Christian reference (Photograph 7).

*Epitaphs.* Epitaphs or inscriptions on grave markers that identify or commemorate a person are also found in Cleora Cemetery. Some identify attributes of the deceased, such as Alfred Smith’s 1923 “Eminent Engineer” (Photograph 21). William H. Allender’s 1901 marker indicates he was born at Fort Riley, Kansas. John P. McKenna’s 1893 pedestal-style monument is inscribed simply “R I P.” The pre-1969 Dickmann family gravemarker indicates their backward DH brand was the first registered in Colorado. Members of the family died in the 1880s and 1903; the current marker’s date is unknown. Preston L. Dunlap’s pedestal was “erected by his loving wife” in 1886 (Photograph 23). Samuel R. Scott’s 1887 monument includes the popular: “Gone But Not Forgotten” and includes a crossed pick and shovel and a gold panning basin (Photograph 9). Carrie B. Hollenbeck’s 1896 monument contains the names of her parents and husband and notes she was born in Pennsylvania (Photograph 24). Other gravestones are inscribed with quotes, usually on the second base. The deterioration of materials over time has made many second base quotes difficult to read.

*Fabricators and Carvers.* Cleora Cemetery contains a few gravemarkers whose manufacturers or carvers are identified. For example, two zinc/white bronze monuments are present. One for members of the Howard family (Daniel D. Howard died in 1914 and was buried next to his two infant sons) is ornamented with a flying dove and features an inset area, perhaps originally a glass-fronted case (Photograph 20). A second is the Smith’s “Our Babies” marker (presumed to be for the children of Walter G. and Lena K. Smith: Alva Smith, age two weeks, who died in 1900 and Lamar Smith, age two months, who died in 1901). Both bear a WZW mark indicating manufacture by the Warsaw Zinc Works, Warsaw, Missouri. Zinc or “white bronze” monuments were produced from the 1870s until the early-twentieth century. Manufacturers touted their durability, and the blue-

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gray material could be cast into a variety of forms, from statuary to popular gravestone shapes usually executed in stone. Arkansas cemetery historian Abby Burnett described one WZW design with "a decorative panel attached via an invisible hinge that, when lifted, reveals the girl's photograph and funeral program, preserved behind a glass plate."<sup>10</sup> Historian Annette Stott reported that the company "shipped a number of zinc monuments of its own design to the Rocky Mountain states around 1900."<sup>11</sup>

The Pueblo Marble Company executed the 1886 white marble tombstone of Samuel McLeod's wife, Fannie, who died at age nineteen (Photograph 25). The company was started by Donald Harold, who arrived in Pueblo about 1882 and became "the pioneer stonecutter of the city."<sup>12</sup> His son, Donald Harold, Jr., learned the trade from his father, who sent him to Barre, Vermont, for further training, and continued the business after his father's death.<sup>13</sup>

At least one gravestone in the cemetery features the work of Salida granite carver John Earl Herschberger, who produced more than one thousand markers before his retirement in 1969. He executed the gray granite Dickmann marker which features a carving of the family's cattle brand, one of three later monuments added to the cemetery to commemorate several family members (Photograph 26).<sup>14</sup>

### **Vegetation**<sup>15</sup>

Cleora Cemetery is located within the Southern Rocky Mountain physiographic province that bisects Colorado from north to south and dominates its topography.<sup>16</sup> The parcel's vegetation is characteristic of a Sagebrush Steppe/Piñon Woodland plant community.<sup>17</sup> The lower elevation, northern two-thirds of the parcel is very dry and treeless. This area exhibits a variety of low plants including scattered shrubs: rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamus sp.*) and sagebrush (*Artemisia sp.*); low to mid-grasses: Indian ricegrass (*Oryzopsis hymenoides*), foxtail barley (*Hordeum jubatum*), and cheat grass (*Bromus tectorum*); and wildflowers: cut-leaf daisy (*Erigeron sp.*), globemallow (*Sphaeralcea sp.*), salsify (*Tragopogon sp.*), narrow-leaved yucca (*Yucca glauca*), yellow prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia polyacantha*), and Hedgehog cactus (*Pediocactus simpsonii*).

The plant community is more diverse in the southern, higher elevation portions of the parcel. This area exhibits many of the species listed above as well as piñon trees (*Pinus edulis*) with an understory of currant (*Ribes sp.*), mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), locoweed (*Astragalus sp.*), and firecracker penstemon (*Penstemon eatonii*).

No evidence of human-planted non-native vegetation was observed in the graves and enclosures. Due to the very dry conditions of this area, it is likely that non-native species such as iris that were sometimes planted on gravesites would not have survived here.

### **Artifacts**<sup>18</sup>

A sparse scatter of historic and prehistoric artifacts are present within the parcel, including several pieces of groundstone (manos) and a few flakes of red and gold chert (possibly from the Trout Creek chert quarry site, 5CF.84, located approximately twenty miles to the north) near the drainage on the eastern edge of the parcel. Also observed were several rusted church key-opened sanitary tin cans, broken fragments of glass (clear,

<sup>10</sup> Abby Burnett, *Gone to the Grave: Burial Customs of the Arkansas Ozarks, 1850-1950* (Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2014).

<sup>11</sup> Stott, *Pioneer Cemeteries*, 214.

<sup>12</sup> Wilbur Fiske Stone, *History of Colorado*, vol. 3 (Chicago: S.J. Clarke and Company, 1918), 113.

<sup>13</sup> Stott, *Pioneer Cemeteries*, 114.

<sup>14</sup> This appears to be a pre-1969 memorial marker honoring Herman Dickmann and his cattle brand, reportedly the first registered in Colorado. "John Earl Herschberger, the Man Who Carved the Lions," *Colorado Central* (January 1998).

<sup>15</sup> Marilyn A. Martorano, "Cleora Cemetery Vegetation Summary," 5 July 2016, on file at Front Range Research Associates, Inc., Denver, Colorado.

<sup>16</sup> C.F. Mutel and J.C. Emerick, *From Grassland to Glacier – The Natural History of Colorado* (Boulder, Colorado: Johnson Books, 1984), 2.

<sup>17</sup> Linda Kershaw, Andy MacKinnon, and Jim Pojar, *Plants of the Rocky Mountains* (Auburn, Washington: Lone Star Publishing, 1998), 1-2.

<sup>18</sup> Martorano, "Cleora Cemetery Vegetation Summary."

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brown, light green and purple), several square cut nails, and a few fragments of white earthenware throughout the parcel but especially within the southern half.

### Alterations

As noted above, creation of newer cemeteries in Salida led to some removal of remains from Cleora graves during the nineteenth century. The exact number of relocations is unknown. As this process occurred during the period of significance for Cleora, empty gravesites resulting from this movement of remains do not detract from the cemetery's integrity.

A 1975 survey form described the cemetery as being "in a bad state because of neglect and vandalism."<sup>19</sup> Writing in 1987, Chaffee County cemetery historian June Shaputis stated: "The cemetery has suffered much vandalism in recent years. A restoration project was done in 1983/1984, and the wooden markers are being preserved by County officials."<sup>20</sup> Local historian Donna Nevens indicates a resident of the county led an effort to clean up, set monuments upright, and maintain the cemetery at that time. New efforts to maintain the site and mark the graves were noticeable during a survey in 2011. However, Chaffee County Planning Manager Jon Roorda states there is no official maintenance program for the site or monuments.<sup>21</sup> Donna Nevens states that families who have relatives buried in the cemetery clean and continue to maintain graves. Natural deterioration, vandalism, and loss of some of the markers, monuments, and grave enclosures are the principal nonhistoric alterations to the cemetery (Photographs 27 and 28). However, the site meets the National Register requirement of retaining enough marked and intact graves and markers to convey its importance in early settlement of the area and its long role as a community cemetery holding the graves of pioneers.

### Integrity

As National Register standards require, Cleora Cemetery retains "enough of its significant features from the period of significance to make clear its distinction as an important representative . . . of its historic associations."<sup>22</sup> The burial ground displays a high level of integrity of location, continuing to occupy its original site overlooking the former historic townsite of Cleora (0.15 miles to the northwest) despite the fact that the town itself was abandoned more than a century ago. The cemetery's location on a hillside above the floodplain of the Arkansas River and on a piece of land with no value for cultivation continues to reflect its creation as a nineteenth-century burial ground.

The cemetery maintains high integrity of its immediate setting as a result of its undisturbed location on the hillside above the Arkansas River valley, which holds a historic transportation route between Salida and Cañon City (currently part of U.S. Highway 50). Across the highway, the National Register-listed Salida Livestock Commission (NRIS.15000465, listed in 2015) now covers much of the 1878 townsite, which retains none of its original buildings. A few nonhistoric commercial and residential buildings are visible across the highway and river to the north, east of the Livestock Commission complex. Elements of the setting that contribute to the cemetery's integrity include piñon-covered hills surrounding three sides of the site, the hills rising across the valley, the Arkansas River flowing through the valley, and views of the valley and the distant mountains of the Continental Divide to the west.

The cemetery displays integrity of those materials able to withstand the climatic conditions of the site and the passage of time. As with most pioneer burial grounds, most of Cleora's early wood burial markers deteriorated and no longer remain. However, the cemetery importantly possesses five historic wood markers. Some markers and monuments display damage due to vandalism or climatic impacts and some informal grouping of native stones and bricks marking graves have become scattered over time.

The cemetery evidences little to no alteration and still reflects its origins as a boot hill burial ground that evolved as a community cemetery. No roads or formal pathways have been created and the graves are still

<sup>19</sup> Louise Rowe, Cleora Cemetery survey form, 5CF.343, 21 July 1975.

<sup>20</sup> June Shaputis, *Chaffee County, Colorado, Burials* (Buena Vista, Colorado: June Shaputis, 1987), 25.

<sup>21</sup> John Roorda, Chaffee County Planning Manager, Salida, Colorado, Telephone Interview by R. Laurie Simmons, 6 September 2016.

<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth Walton Potter and Beth M. Boland, *National Register Bulletin 41: Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1992), 18.

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irregularly sited. The removal of human remains from some graves after the creation of other cemeteries is part of the site's early history. After the final burial in the cemetery in 1948, three memorial markers for local families were added to the graveyard. Although identifiable as being fabricated after the period of significance, these markers do not overwhelm the historic character of the cemetery and maintain the size, scale, and modest design qualities established by earlier monuments (Photographs 26 and 29). Of note are the surviving grave enclosures that reflect a desire to protect burial sites in the isolated location. Photographs of the cemetery by Muriel Sibell Wolle taken about 1942 (see Figures 2-5) appear to show at least one grave enclosure no longer present.

A moderate level of integrity of workmanship remains within the cemetery, as exhibited in the craftsmanship of purchased markers representing popular funeral styles and symbols, as well as homemade markers assembled by individuals utilizing native materials. Due to vandalism and deterioration over the years, several markers have missing or damaged elements or have fallen over; some of the inscriptions on stone monuments are difficult or impossible to read due to deterioration, and elements of some vernacular stone and brick cairns and plot markers have dispersed within their immediate area.

The cemetery maintains its historic feeling as a place set apart from everyday life; a site for quiet contemplation, spiritual meditation, grieving for departed loved ones; and a location for commemorating those whose lives intersected with the history of this place (Photograph 30). A high level of integrity of association with the pioneer settlements of the area and historic agricultural and mining communities is supported by other aspects of integrity, including its retention of the graves of pioneers from throughout the region, its relatively remote location on a hillside above the abandoned townsite, and its informal layout and natural vegetation.

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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.

**Areas of Significance**

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

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**Period of Significance**

ca. 1880-1948

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**Significant Dates**

N/A

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**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.

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

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**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance for Criterion A is ca. 1880 to 1948 for the cemetery's function as the first cemetery in the Arkansas River Valley in southern Chaffee County and the final resting place of persons involved in the early exploration and settlement of the area. The date ca. 1880 begins the period of significance, as it is tied to the oldest known gravemarker (observed at the site in 1987) and to the ephemeral existence of the railroad town of Cleora. The year 1948 represents the date the last early settler of the area was buried in the cemetery and is the year it ceased accepting interments.

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### Criteria Considerations (justification)

Cleora Cemetery meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration D for eligibility as a cemetery that possesses significance for its historic associations with a community's early period of settlement and it reflects important aspects of community history. It is of sufficient age (approximately 136 years) and scope to significantly represent these patterns of early settlement and associated historic events.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

#### Summary

Cleora Cemetery, established ca. 1880, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Exploration/Settlement for its association with the early settlement of the southern Arkansas River Valley in Chaffee County, including the railroad war that led to the founding of both Cleora and Salida. It was the pioneer graveyard, receiving burials from communities throughout the area before other cemeteries were established, and it is the final resting place of numerous pioneers of the era.

#### Elaboration

##### Criterion A

Cleora Cemetery is a historic site locally significant under Criterion A for its representation of a type of burial ground discussed as potentially significant in *National Register Bulletin No. 41- Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places*: a graveyard "whose survival is a significant or only reminder of an important person, culture, settlement, or event", as well as a burial ground that reflects "early settlement and various aspects of an area's long history" and "whose location, grave markers, landscaping, or other physical attributes tell us something about the people who created them."<sup>23</sup> The cemetery is significant in the area of Exploration/Settlement, as it reflects important aspects of the early settlement of the area during a period when it was part of a frontier being rapidly populated and developed as a result of mining discoveries, agricultural production, stage line operation, and railroad building. Cleora Cemetery served as the pioneer graveyard in the area before Salida and other local settlements developed such facilities, and it became a final resting place for the pioneers of several communities in the vicinity. It is the only remaining significant historic resource associated with the short-lived town of Cleora. The graveyard remains as a place of memorialization of those who came to live in a then remote and isolated area and to the events that drew them to this part of Chaffee County. Its continued existence also speaks to the important role it filled in the lives of those who lived in the surrounding area before other graveyards were established and its ongoing importance to those who value its local history. Approximately 86 percent of its reported burials occurred during the 1880s to 1900s, although it remained an important burial place for pioneers of the area until 1948.<sup>24</sup>

#### The History of Settlement in Chaffee County's Southern Arkansas Valley and Cleora Cemetery

##### Early Beginnings: Bale Stage Station and Tavern

Civil War veteran and early settler Hugh C. Boone described the life of pioneers who settled along the southern (or upper) Arkansas Valley in what would become Chaffee County: "Walled in by the mountains, many miles from a settlement of any consequence, the early settlers of the upper Arkansas Valley lived in a world all their own, uninfluenced by others. The only demand for their products came from the few miners scattered in mining camps, so the ranchers raised only what they needed for their own use. They did trade with the Utes on a small scale, exchanging vegetables, flour, bread, and beef for tanned buckskin and hides, etc. Supplies were

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<sup>23</sup> Potter and Boland, *National Register Bulletin No. 41*, 3.

<sup>24</sup> This figure is based on the listing of burials compiled by June Shaputis.

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bought at Denver, Pueblo, Cañon City, and freighted into the valley.”<sup>25</sup> By 1873 travelers passed through the Arkansas River valley along a road built from Cañon City to reach other parts of the region.

Among the pioneers in this southern part of the county was William Bale, who had mined in California Gulch (Leadville) in 1863, farmed in the Buena Vista area, and served as sheriff of Lake County for two years. Bale established a ranch in the late 1860s on the north side of the river, and with his wife and daughter, Cleora, maintained a stage way station known as “South Arkansas” along the Barlow and Sanderson Stage Road from Cañon City to Leadville and a branch stage line to the Gunnison country. Those riding on the stages spent the night in the Bale house, described as a “big, rambling” log house (see Figure 1) raised with the help of “nearly every white man in the valley.”<sup>26</sup> Also known for its liquid libations, after its closure the station was described as “famous as a resting place for all who were seeking fortune in the wild interior of Colorado.”<sup>27</sup> Due to his role operating the stage stop, which also served as the social center of the valley, Bale became “one of the best known and highly respected citizens of Chaffee County,” which was created in 1879.<sup>28</sup>

An 1876 *Colorado Daily Chieftain* report found Bale offered “good stabling and grass and his place is bound to become a popular resort of pleasure seekers,” due to its location on the river with excellent trout fishing and hunting grounds, as well as “some of the finest scenery in the mountains.”<sup>29</sup> Bale became postmaster when the Cleora post office opened on 5 December 1876. In 1877 the *Saguache Chronicle* described him as “proprietor of the popular stopping place” and indicated “no better accommodations can be found on any routes of travel.”<sup>30</sup> As the *Salida Record* judged in 1910: “From 1878 to 1880, when people were rushing into Leadville from all parts of the nation, the place fairly hummed with business, the house usually being filled to its capacity and often more people camped outside than there were inside. Many of the leading men of America, and most of the leading men of Colorado in that day, were guests of the house at one time or another.”<sup>31</sup>

### ***A Railroad War and the Founding of Cleora***

The decision to locate the route of a major railroad through Chaffee County resulted in profound and lasting impacts on the development of its towns. In the late 1870s the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG) engaged in a fierce competition with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) to reach booming mining camps in the Colorado mountains. After building tracks to Pueblo in 1872 and extending a branch line to Cañon City in 1874, D&RG began surveying a line westward through the Grand Cañon of the Arkansas (now known as the Royal Gorge) after Leadville emerged as the state’s leading silver camp. AT&SF sought this lucrative prize as well, fighting D&RG to determine which railroad would win the right to build through the canyon that was too narrow in places to physically accommodate two sets of railroad tracks. The Rio Grande and the Santa Fe battled on the ground in the canyon and in the courts over the right to extend a line through the canyon of the Arkansas and the Upper Arkansas Valley to Leadville.<sup>32</sup> In 1880 the dispute was resolved with the so-called Treaty of Boston, which gave the Rio Grande possession of the Royal Gorge route in exchange for compensating the Santa Fe for portions of the line it had previously constructed.<sup>33</sup>

Local historian Fay Golson observed that the town of Cleora “was born of high aspirations, none of which came to fruition, linked to the anticipated railroad line along the Arkansas River.”<sup>34</sup> In the summer of 1878 a group described as “Boston capitalists” affiliated with the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe, anticipating that their railroad

<sup>25</sup> Hugh Clark Boone, Interview by Richard Carrol, Civil Works Administration, 1933, Richard Carrol Collection, The Salida Archive, Salida Regional Library.

<sup>26</sup> *Salida Mail*, 9 December 1910.

<sup>27</sup> *Salida Mail*, 5 June 1900, 1.

<sup>28</sup> O.L. Baskin and Nelson Millett, *History of the Arkansas Valley, Colorado* (Chicago: O.L. Baskin & Co., 1881), 504.

<sup>29</sup> *Colorado Daily Chieftain*, 11 July 1876.

<sup>30</sup> In 1910 the *Salida Record* reported the Bale house was being torn down by owner Sterling Jones to build a new residence. *Saguache Chronicle*, 25 August 1877 and *Salida Record*, 9 December 1910.

<sup>31</sup> *Salida Mail*, 9 December 1910.

<sup>32</sup> Robert Athearn, *The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad: Rebel of the Rockies*, reprint ed. (Lincoln, Ne: University of Nebraska Press, 1962), 15, 45, 87-88.

<sup>33</sup> Athearn, *The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad*, 15, 45, 87-88.

<sup>34</sup> *Colorado Central Magazine*, December 2013.

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would successfully build through the Grand Cañon of the Arkansas from Cañon City to the booming silver city of Leadville, acquired land from William Bale and laid out a townsite about a mile below the mouth of the South Arkansas River. The site occupied an excellent location for serving as a division point for the railroad. The *Colorado Weekly Chieftain* in December 1878 observed the site was “surrounded by a well developed farming county” and was a gateway to several mining areas. Plans were to occupy the town by the time of the rush of prospectors to Gunnison County in the spring of 1879. The newspaper reported that the first day the plat was revealed in Cañon City a total of \$3,800 in lots sold.<sup>35</sup> Another account indicated the railroad “... proceeded to sell the lots at good figures to enterprising citizens, who soon began making a town.”<sup>36</sup> The founders designated their town “Cleora” in honor of the daughter of area pioneer William Bale. In the period before Chaffee County was carved from Lake County, residents in the southern part of the county unsuccessfully lobbied the state to have either Poncha Springs or Cleora designated as the seat (an honor initially awarded to Granite).<sup>37</sup>

Fred A. Seelinger arrived in the new town in the spring of 1879 and later remembered: “Cleora, being the end of the rails from November 1879 until Spring 1880, was the ‘metropolis’ of that vicinity. During the short duration of Cleora’s boom quite a number of buildings were erected, which included a general store, hotel, various business shacks, and residences.”<sup>38</sup> Fred W. Brush moved to Cleora in the summer of 1879 and gained employment building partitions in “Old Uncle Billy Bale’s” hotel. Brush recalled the town at that time included five to six hundred people and grew rapidly due to discoveries in mining camps.<sup>39</sup>

Those anticipating a boom with the arrival of the railroad at Cleora included John T. Blake & Company, which became “the pioneer dry goods firm of Chaffee county,” and opened in January 1879 when “there was not a town in Chaffee county except Granite.”<sup>40</sup> Blake & Company later became one of the first businesses in Salida. John T. Blake also served as postmaster of Cleora in 1880. Another early arrival was the George F. Bateman hardware enterprise, the only such business in the southern end of the county. Bateman Hardware moved to Salida in 1881 and continued to do business there for more than a century.<sup>41</sup> Dr. R.S. Hallock, a druggist, announced his presence in the community with a listing in the 1880 state business directory. Three lumber yards operated in Cleora, including in 1879 those owned by Newby & White and Allen & Mack, which later moved to Salida.<sup>42</sup> The *Cleora Journal*, published by Dr. L.C. McKinney, issued its first edition in June 1879.<sup>43</sup>

Salida-area historian Donna Nevens found that on 26 August 1879 residents of the Cleora townsite gathered at the Grand View Hotel and voted for the town’s incorporation.<sup>44</sup> At the first meeting of the board of trustees on 4 October 1879, Mayor W.A. Hawkins, owner of the hotel, and five others appointed a treasurer, marshal, police judge, and corporate attorney. The graves of Mayor Hawkins and several members of his family are present in Cleora Cemetery.

In August 1879 the *Rocky Mountain News* provided a lengthy description of the rapidly changing fate of the town:

It is one day’s journey by stage from Cañon City to the new town of Cleora, which is . . . a railroad town, platted and sold by the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad Company. When

<sup>35</sup> *Colorado Weekly Chieftain*, 12 December 1878.

<sup>36</sup> *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 18 May 1881.

<sup>37</sup> Nevens, Telephone Interviews by Simmons, 1 and 2 September 2016.

<sup>38</sup> Fred A. Seelinger, Interview by Richard Carrol, Civil Works Administration, 1933, Richard Carrol Collection, The Salida Archive, Salida Regional Library.

<sup>39</sup> Fred W. Brush, Interview by Richard Carrol, Civil Works Administration, 1933, Richard Carrol Collection, The Salida Archive, Salida Regional Library.

<sup>40</sup> *Salida Mountain Mail*, 31 December 1881.

<sup>41</sup> *Salida Mountain Mail*, 31 December 1881.

<sup>42</sup> Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming, 1540-1888* (San Francisco, The History Co., 1890), 584..

<sup>43</sup> *Saguache Chronicle*, June 1879.

<sup>44</sup> Donna Nevens, Telephone Interviews by Simmons, 1 and 2 September 2016. Ms. Nevens examined copies of old Chaffee County newspapers for information relating to Cleora’s early history.

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the road was in progress, before its war with the plucky Denver & Rio Grande road, Cleora bid fair to be quite a place of importance, but since all construction on the road towards Leadville is estopped by order of the court, Cleora is doomed for the present to inactivity, and is fast retrograding, its stores and houses are being deserted, property is unsalable and the population migratory. . . . time, discoveries, and knowledge effect wondrous changes in the destiny of western towns, and the prosperity which, under ordinary circumstances, would have issued to Cleora, is destined now to be transferred to a hitherto unknown locality . . . .<sup>45</sup>

On 14 June 1880 U.S. Census enumerators tallied the population at 183 residents, whose occupations included such professions as carpenters (no doubt reflecting anticipated growth of the settlement), civil engineer, miner, printer, laborer, hotelkeeper, stage line superintendent, general merchant, grocer, and store clerk. Residents included single men, couples, and entire families.<sup>46</sup> All arrived on the scene hoping to ride the crest of a wave of prosperity brought by the railroad.

In July 1880 the *Saguache Chronicle* reported: "There is a case pending whereby the AT&SF company claims that when they leased the D&RG property they became possessed of the prior right of that company to the Grand Canyon and the route to Leadville."<sup>47</sup> Settlement of the legal dispute between AT&SF and D&RG over the right to build came in 1880, with Rio Grande securing the route and agreeing to compensate AT&SF for portions of the line it had already constructed. By April 1880, D&RG emerged from the west end of the gorge and proceeded along the north bank of the Arkansas River past Cleora to reach its junction with the South Arkansas River on 1 May 1880.

Naturally, Cleora's populace had supported AT&SF in the canyon rivalry and they suffered when D&RG officers ignored its existence. In 1880 the Rio Grande line filed a plat for a 160-acre townsite about one-and-a-half miles above Cleora and called their creation "South Arkansas" (soon rechristened as "Salida").<sup>48</sup> Within three months, one thousand people lived in Salida, the railroad division point for the area with an extension to Leadville.<sup>49</sup> Reflecting on D&RG's actions, the *Salida Mail* later judged that the railroad, seeking a way of "spoiling a just scheme and profitable venture of their late enemy [the AT&SF]," established its own station and townsite for a line over Marshall Pass to Grand Junction and a branch line to Leadville.<sup>50</sup> Others noted D&RG's custom was to establish towns on property it owned to benefit from lot sales.

To encourage Cleorans to move to the new settlement, Rio Grande official Alexander C. Hunt, the former territorial governor of Colorado, announced a policy that granted everyone (except saloonkeepers) who owned a lot with a house or business in the bypassed town the option of a free lot in Salida if they relocated their house or commercial building.<sup>51</sup> By the spring of 1880 business edifices and dwellings were being moved on rollers from Cleora the one-and-a-half rugged miles to South Arkansas (Salida). The *Mountain Mail*, which led the desertion by relocating its newspaper printing equipment from the older town, reported in its first issue: "The business men of Cleora are all settling with us. They see that South Arkansas is to be the town and are governing themselves accordingly."<sup>52</sup> Storekeepers such as Meyer & Dale, who sold groceries and provisions, transported their stock to the new location, while whole buildings such as the Grand View Hotel also were carted to the fledgling townsite.<sup>53</sup> Cleora's board of trustees met formally for the last time on 27 May 1880.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, 30 August 1879, 5.

<sup>46</sup> "Cleora, Chaffee County, Colorado," U.S. Census, June 1880.

<sup>47</sup> *Saguache Crescent*, July 1880.

<sup>48</sup> Baskin and Millett, *History of the Arkansas Valley*, 496.

<sup>49</sup> Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming*, 584.

<sup>50</sup> *Salida Mail*, 5 June 1900, 1.

<sup>51</sup> Nevens, Telephone Interviews by Simmons, 1 and 2 September 2016.

<sup>52</sup> *Salida Mountain Mail*, 5 June 1880.

<sup>53</sup> *Salida Mountain Mail*, 5 June 1880.

<sup>54</sup> Donna Nevens, "Cleora Once Proposed for Lake County Seat," *Colorado Central Magazine*, July 1997, [www.cozine.com/1997-july](http://www.cozine.com/1997-july).

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For a time, Cleora, with its established buildings and services, continued to have influence in the area. When an inebriated man tried to kill his wife in June 1880, he was taken to Cleora to await trial.<sup>55</sup> A traveling preacher came to the area in the same month and spoke to audiences in both Salida and Cleora.<sup>56</sup> However, the balance of power soon began to favor Salida, with the *Mountain Mail* boasting in August 1880: "Buildings keep coming up here from Cleora. It will not be long until they are all here."<sup>57</sup> By the first day of January 1881, the newspaper indicated: "The old town of Cleora, two miles southeast moved up in a body, and the greater number of our leading business men today are composed of former residents of that town."<sup>58</sup> The defections continued, including J.P. and George A. Smith, who left the older settlement when the railroad was completed to Salida and opened the first dry goods store in the new town. The Cleora post office was discontinued in March 1882.<sup>59</sup> The town of Cleora became known as Cleora Station by 1883. By 1885, George Crofutt reported, "This was once a place of 'great expectations,' but is now almost deserted."<sup>60</sup> In subsequent years, Cleora's status as a railroad facility, as well as mining and agricultural pursuits in the area, continued although the town never revived.

### **Cleora Cemetery**

Cleora Cemetery was the first burial ground established in southern Chaffee County's Arkansas River valley. It appears that local citizens, perhaps in confusion over land boundaries, appropriated an unclaimed piece of land for the purpose. After Salida's founding, the new town had no cemetery of its own until Woodlawn (1889) and Fairview (1891, 5CF.342) cemeteries were created. Instead, its residents continued to be transported to Cleora Cemetery and activities such as Memorial Day were celebrated there. The graveyard served people living in communities in a wide area, including Cleora, Salida, Monarch, and Granite, as well as those living on farms, ranches, and mining sites. Burials were most frequent from ca. 1880 through the first decade of the twentieth century and continued in lesser numbers until 1948.

The exact date of the first burial in Cleora Cemetery is unknown. The cemetery's location on a hillside with little value for agricultural activities and its location overlooking the valley made it a logical place to establish a burial ground. Given the existence of an active local farming and ranching community, the site's location along a longtime important route of travel, the population of the booming town in 1879-80, and the lack of other established graveyards in the area, it is logical to assume deaths and burials took place before newspapers were present to record them. A professional investigation for physical evidence of these early burials has not been undertaken, and, as in other early cemeteries, the wood markers used in pioneer burial grounds may have decayed beyond recognition. However, Salida resident and local historian John Ophus indicated his research on the 1874-75 Lake County War revealed Charles Harding, who was involved in events of that conflict, was buried at the site in 1875 after his body was found in the area. Bale's Stage Station is cited as one of the headquarters of the Committee of Safety, to which Harding expressed opposition.<sup>61</sup>

June Shaputis found that four bodies were likely interred at the cemetery site in 1880, including Matilda L. "Mattie" Hawkins, the twenty-two-year-old daughter of Judge W.A. Hawkins, the first mayor of Cleora. Her September 1880 death and burial are important because in 1987 Shaputis cited a "broken marker" she saw in Cleora Cemetery as evidence of this grave.<sup>62</sup> Two babies also may have been buried in the cemetery in 1880. The earliest burial of the year is believed to have been a man who was captured, tried, and hung for committing an attempted robbery and placed in the cemetery the same day in February.<sup>63</sup> Soon, Cleora was known as an established graveyard. In January 1883 the *Salida Mail* scoffed at another newspaper that

<sup>55</sup> Salida *Mountain Mail*, 19 June 1880.

<sup>56</sup> Salida *Mountain Mail*, 26 June 1880.

<sup>57</sup> Salida *Mountain Mail*, 21 August 1880.

<sup>58</sup> Salida *Mountain Mail*, 1 January 1881.

<sup>59</sup> Salida *Mountain Mail*, 18 March 1882.

<sup>60</sup> George Crofutt, *Crofutt's Grip-Sack Guide of Colorado, 1885 Edition* (Omaha: The Overland Publishing Co., 1885; reprint, Boulder, Colorado: Johnson Books, 1966), 81.

<sup>61</sup> Ophus, "The Lake County War: 1874-75," 128.

<sup>62</sup> Shaputis, "Cleora Cemetery," *Chaffee County, Colorado, Burials*.

<sup>63</sup> *Mountain Mail*, 11 June 1956.

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suggested Salida needed a big cemetery in its vicinity, commenting: "What would be the use of one? People don't seem to die here at any alarming extent."<sup>64</sup>

Land patent records reveal that the cemetery was established on a piece of land mistakenly claimed by early settlers. William Bale had acquired a homestead patent for different land in the same quarter-section in 1874, but no one acquired a patent to burial ground acreage until the 1890s. This fact did not stem the flow of human remains to the burial site, which began as a boot hill-type of cemetery with a haphazard arrangement of graves and no human alteration to the natural landscape or concern for its maintenance.

Cleora Cemetery received criticism for its condition in 1887, with one person suggesting the populace should be "aroused to a sense of their duty toward a fit place to bury our dead" and opining "it's a mockery to call the present burying ground 'a cemetery.'"<sup>65</sup> The movement to create a new cemetery gained momentum in the fall of 1888, when the *Salida Mail* reported a plan for opening a new road to the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to a site where "it is proposed to establish a beautiful cemetery." The writer of the article observed, "The burying ground at Cleora is too far distant for convenience, and as far as natural surroundings are concerned is not well located."<sup>66</sup>

A woman whose family owned land in the area attempted to initiate efforts to provide a more orderly and secure final resting place. A November 1887 the *Salida Mail* article reported "Mrs. E. Hampson, who owns the Cleora cemetery," had platted the ground recently and suggested that all family and friends of those buried there to contribute funds for erection of a fence around the site. The subscription list was placed at a bookstore for those who wished to make a donation.<sup>67</sup> The success of her attempt to improve the grounds is unknown. However, in 1889 ownership of part of the Cleora Cemetery was disputed, moving the *Salida Mail* to advise: "There should be no uncertainty hanging over the title to the ground which contains the remains of the dead." The newspaper suggested a cemetery association be organized to purchase a new burial ground and improve it. The article concluded: "The Cleora cemetery may satisfy the present needs of the town, but the time will soon come when it will be necessary to provide additional facilities."<sup>68</sup>

Homestead land patent records indicate that the cemetery site was not removed from the public domain until James W. White received a Cash Entry homestead patent to an eighty-acre tract of land that included it in January 1894. Burials continued under his ownership without pause. White died two years later, as did two of his children; five members of the family are buried in a fence-enclosed plot in the cemetery that contains a memorial marker.

### ***Commemorative Activities at Cleora Cemetery***

During the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, cemeteries served as locations for public commemoration ceremonies held to remember and honor the dead, especially those who spent time in military service. Cleora Cemetery became the site of organized memorial activities beginning in the late 1880s. In June 1889 the Knights of Pythias held "well attended" services at the cemetery. About fifteen members of the group met at their hall in Salida and then traveled to the graveyard to decorate the graves of two of their brethren with flowers. A formal address was delivered at the site by one of the local leaders of the organization. The event was described as "an occasion which will not be forgotten by members of the fraternity."<sup>69</sup>

With many Civil War veterans still living in the area, the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) sponsored Memorial Day activities for several years. In 1891 the commemorative activity for Salida and vicinity included participation by veterans, a ladies' relief corps, and young lady cadets. After a program at the opera house, participants traveled to Cleora Cemetery for a G.A.R. ritual, followed by decoration of the graves. The

<sup>64</sup> *Salida Mail*, 6 January 1883.

<sup>65</sup> *Salida Mail*, 4 March 1887.

<sup>66</sup> *Salida Mail*, 14 September 1888.

<sup>67</sup> *Salida Mail*, 4 November 1887.

<sup>68</sup> *Salida Mail*, 15 February 1889.

<sup>69</sup> *Salida Mail*, 18 June 1889.

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organizers solicited transportation for two to three hundred persons to the cemetery.<sup>70</sup> In 1894 members of the Salida Wheel Club attended the Decoration Day services of the G.A.R. and proceeded to Cleora Cemetery to assist the old vets in decorating graves.<sup>71</sup> Similar exercises were held by the G.A.R. on each Memorial Day through at least the early 1900s.<sup>72</sup> From about 1909 through about 1915 the Woodmen of the World visited Cleora Cemetery on Memorial Day to commemorate their deceased members.<sup>73</sup>

### **Examples of Pioneers Buried at Cleora**

Cleora Cemetery received the remains of many pioneer settlers and influential early residents of nearby communities. Examples of these notable persons include:

- Joseph E. Gorrell, one of the first settlers in the area, was interred at Cleora in 1892.<sup>74</sup> His obituary in the *Salida Mail* described Gorrell as “an old time miner and ranchman,” who had prospected and mined in California Gulch (Leadville), the San Juan valley, and Del Norte, and owned valuable mining property at Monarch as well as his ranch.<sup>75</sup>
- Judge W.A. Hawkins served as mayor of Cleora before moving to Salida and becoming one of its oldest and “most respected citizens, and ... filled many positions of trust and honor” during his residence. Hawkins was active in local politics and a party leader, the first police magistrate of Salida and the second mayor.<sup>76</sup> In Cleora, Hawkins operated the Grand View Hotel, which Alexander Hunt purchased in 1880 and moved to Salida. In November 1880 the *Rocky Mountain News* reported: “The Hawkins house has finally succumbed and gone with the rest of Cleora up to South Arkansas [Salida]. It was the last building to go.”<sup>77</sup>
- Horace Ennels, an early African-American resident of Salida, was described as “well known” in the area. Born in about 1850 in the border state of Maryland, by 1870 he lived in Philadelphia, working as a servant and later as a laborer. Ennels moved west sometime after 1880 and appeared in the 1900 U.S. Census in Chaffee County, living with his wife, Malinda, and three children. He worked as a teamster with an express wagon and Malinda was a laundress.<sup>78</sup> His obituary in the *Salida Record* in 1902 judged, “Ennels was an old-fashioned negro who was held in the greatest respect by all who knew him. He was of that type which is only to be found in the south today.”<sup>79</sup>
- Dr. Francis W. Hartwell moved to Salida in 1886 for his health and improved in the sunshine and fresh air of the area. He was born in Massachusetts, where he received his education and graduated at an early age to begin the practice of medicine in that state and in Rochester, New York. His devoted sister, Jessie M. Hartwell, who helped him during his illness, was also associated with him in the practice of medicine as a homeopathic physician. Dr. Hartwell was described as “a very highly cultivated and intelligent man” with a strong will and “always faithful in the performance of his duties and built up a good practice here.” His consumption returned and he died at his residence in Salida and was buried at Cleora Cemetery in 1890. In 1891 Dr. Hartwell’s sister “erected a nice monument in Cleora Cemetery where her father [Cyrus], mother [Juliana], and brother are buried.”<sup>80</sup>
- Herman Dickmann came from California Gulch to engage in stock raising. The *Salida Mail* wrote: “He was one of the pioneers of this valley, settling on Bear Creek in the year of 1873, packing in his

<sup>70</sup> *Salida Mail*, 26 May 1891.

<sup>71</sup> *Salida Mail*, 29 May 1894.

<sup>72</sup> *Salida Mail*, 1901-1904.

<sup>73</sup> *Salida Record*, 1909-1915

<sup>74</sup> Nevens, Telephone Interview, 2 September 2016.

<sup>75</sup> *Salida Mail*, 24 May 1892 and 29 June 1893.

<sup>76</sup> *Salida Mail*, 20 March 1888.

<sup>77</sup> *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 10 November 1880.

<sup>78</sup> *Salida Record*, 3 May 1901.

<sup>79</sup> *Salida Record*, 12 September 1902.

<sup>80</sup> *Salida Mail* 3 June 1891.

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provisions, erecting his cabin and opening up one of the best ranches in Chaffee County, in 1882 . . . .” Dickmann and his son built Salida’s first opera house and Herman “did much to aid in building up Chaffee County and Salida.”<sup>81</sup>

- The funeral of City Marshall Baxter Stingley was described as “the largest ever known in the county,” when he was killed in 1883.<sup>82</sup> Stingley met his death at the hands of Frank Reed and was interred in Cleora Cemetery with Knights of Pythias ceremonies, of which he was a prominent member. The murder attracted notice throughout the state.

### ***Causes of Death***

The graves at Cleora represent a cross-section of residents from the southern part of Chaffee County during the cemetery’s active life. About one-third of the documented interments were the remains of children under twenty-one years of age. Among the causes of death leading to burial at Cleora were diseases such as typhoid, diphtheria, rabies, consumption, and meningitis. Wagon, gun, horse, mining, and train accidents resulted in a small number of deaths. Instances of murder, hanging, morphine overdose, and suicide also resulted in burial in the cemetery. A few people who were indigent, unknown, or traveling through the area also found a final resting place at Cleora.

### ***Cemetery Activity in the Early-Twentieth Century***

Peter Veltrie purchased acreage that included the cemetery in 1898. Burials at the site continued during his ownership, although declining in number after the first decade of the twentieth century. On 4 October 1921, Veltrie deeded the land to Chaffee County for \$75, with the provision that the 6.882-acre site continue “for the purpose of being used as a free burial ground.”<sup>83</sup> The cemetery became the final resting place for a few people each year until 1948. In that year the cemetery received its last burial, Phillip Englebright, who was born in Iowa in 1855 and was living with his wife, Carrie, in Chaffee County by the time of the 1885 Colorado State Census. In 1891 Phillip received two homestead patents for lands southeast of Cleora. The Englebrights lived in Salida by the early-twentieth century, and he operated a general merchandise business. Carrie Englebright died in 1936 and was buried at Cleora Cemetery. Phillip passed away in 1948 and became the last person interred there.<sup>84</sup>

As no plat of the cemetery existed and records of the location of graves did not exist, the county decided to cease accepting new burials at the site. Family members of those buried at Cleora cleaned and maintained the cemetery (and some continue to do so); there appears to have been no official county effort to maintain it. Vandals damaged some of the gravestones and wood markers continued to deteriorate, as mentioned by cemetery researchers in reports of 1975, 1982, and 1987. In the early 1980s local resident Dennis Morain, the supervisor of a community work project, with assistance by Wesley Cooper and Scott Glenn, who were described as volunteers, undertook an effort to clean up the site utilizing a crew of convicted drunk drivers. That effort resulted in removal of weeds and sagebrush. The Stewart-Clow mortuary and other donors provided funding for purchase of “lumber, wood-sealer, and aluminum markers to designated unknown graves.”<sup>85</sup> In September 2016 Chaffee County Planning Manager Jon Roorda indicated the county does not

<sup>81</sup> *Salida Mail*, 29 March 1884. The Dickmanns worked on Salida’s first opera house, which later burned and was replaced by what is known today as the Unique Theater.

<sup>82</sup> *Denver Republican*, 1 November 1883.

<sup>83</sup> Deed between Peter Veltrie and the County of Chaffee, 4 October 1921; Arlene Shovald, “History Found in Cleora Cemetery,” *The Mountain Mail*, 30 January 2015, [www.themountainmail.com](http://www.themountainmail.com). As noted above, the entire assessor parcel that includes the burial ground consists of 6.88 acres. Only the 4.4-acre portion demarcated by the fence has been used as a cemetery and is therefore the portion nominated.

<sup>84</sup> Shaputis, “Cleora Cemetery,” *Chaffee County, Colorado, Burials*; Shovald, “History Found in Cleora Cemetery,” U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Government Land Office homestead patent records; Colorado State Census, “Chaffee County,” 1885; U.S. Census, “Chaffee County, 1900; *Salida Record*, 4 February 1916.

<sup>85</sup> Shovald, “History Found in Cleora Cemetery.”

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supply on-going maintenance for the cemetery.<sup>86</sup> Local historian Donna Nevens reports that individual families still care for the graves and the grounds.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Roorda, Telephone interview by Simmons, 6 September 2016.

<sup>87</sup> Nevens, Telephone interview by Simmons, 1 September 2016.

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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: History Colorado

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

5CF.343

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 4.4

**Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.**

(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	38.510044	-106.969276	3	38.508649	-106.967961
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
2	38.510055	-106.967946	4	38.508620	-106.969257
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

**OR**

**UTM References**

       NAD 1927 or  X  NAD 1983

1	13	415492	4262853	3	13	415605	4262697
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	13	415608	4262853	4	13	415492	4262695
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary includes a portion of the larger assessor parcel, following the cemetery fence and more precisely described as follows: beginning at the northeast corner of the fenced area adjacent to a Colorado Department of Transportation right of way marker; thence following the fence line approximately 512' south to the southeast corner of the fenced area; thence following the fence west for approximately 370' west to the southwest corner of the fenced area; thence approximately 519' north to the northwest corner of the fenced area; and thence approximately 380' east to the point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary includes the fenced area of the cemetery within which burials historically occurred. Due to the steepness of the terrain to the south and the presence of a gully to the east the remainder of the parcel was not used for cemetery purposes.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Thomas H. Simmons and R. Laurie Simmons, Historians (for property owner)  
organization Front Range Research Associates, Inc. date 10 November 2016  
street & number 3635 W. 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue telephone 303-477-7597  
city or town Denver state CO zip code 80211  
e-mail frraden@msn.com website www.frhistory.com and

**Property Owner:** (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photograph Log**

Name of Property: Cleora Cemetery  
City or Vicinity: Salida vicinity  
County: Chaffee State: Colorado  
Photographer: Thomas H. Simmons (unless otherwise noted)  
Date Photographed: June 2016

**Number, camera direction, and description of photograph:**

- 1 of 30, view southwest, overview of southwest part of cemetery from near the entrance. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 2 of 30, view west-southwest, entrance and north fence with vehicle gate
- 3 of 30, view east-southeast, north fence east of the entrance
- 4 of 30, view southeast, overview of southeast part of cemetery from near the entrance with informal path extending from lower right corner

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- 5 of 30, view northwest, picket fence grave enclosure near the west boundary with the Salida Livestock Commission in the distance at the upper right
- 6 of 30, view east-southeast, 1924 Robert N. Scott cast iron grave enclosure
- 7 of 30, view northeast, 1888 Berjer Borjeson wood and metal bow grave enclosure. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 8 of 30, view south, 1889 Jennie Schoklin cast iron grave enclosure (J. Kinney patent)
- 9 of 30, view northeast, 1887 Samuel B. Scott grave with cast iron fence manufactured by Pullis of St. Louis
- 10 of 30, view southwest, 1888 wood marker for Maud Daniels
- 11 of 30, view south, grave outlined with rounded native stones
- 12 of 30, view southeast, quartz cairn marking a grave. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 13 of 30, view east, 1900 stone tablet for Elmer E. Clark. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 14 of 30, view east-southeast, overview of marks and grave enclosures in the southeast part of the cemetery
- 15 of 30, view northwest, 1889 pedestal marker for Juliana and Cyrus L. Hartwell
- 16 of 30, view east, 1886 pedestal monument with Masonic symbol for J.W. Barnes and 1887 column marker for Elizabeth Bever
- 17 of 30, view northwest, 1882 Con Hatfield obelisk with Odd Fellows symbol
- 18 of 30, view east, 1894 military marker for O.P. Tipcombe who served in the Civil War. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 19 of 30, view southwest, grave with red brick border near west boundary. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 20 of 30, view south, undated zinc monument produced by the Warsaw Zinc Works for Howard. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 21 of 30, view northeast, 1923 Alfred H. Smith gray granite monument with Knights of Pythias emblem
- 22 of 30, view east, 1909 Mary B. Bailey granite monument showing Women of Woodcraft emblem. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 23 of 30, view west-northwest, 1886 Preston Dunlap pedestal monument
- 24 of 30, view northwest, overview of the northwest section of the cemetery with 1886 monument of Carrie B. Hollenbeck in the foreground
- 25 of 30, view west, 1886 Fannie McLeod column monument
- 26 of 30, view southwest, undated Dickmann gray granite monument with livestock brand
- 27 of 30, view west-southwest, 1885 Walter Johnston marker displaying vandalism. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 28 of 30, view east-northeast, vandalized markers of Frankie (1887) and Helen Irene (1891) Patterson markers. Photographer: R. Laurie Simmons.
- 29 of 30, view south-southwest, more recent memorial marker for members of Heister family
- 30 of 30, view northwest, overview of west-central part of cemetery with wood and metal bow grave enclosure

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### Historic Figure Log

1 of 5. This two-story building was the stage stop operated by William Bale, whose daughter, Cleora, provided the name for the settlement when it gained a post office in 1876. Pre-1910 photograph, courtesy of Wade Hall, "Salida, Colorado: Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Town," W.F. Hutchinson Collection (1992), 9.

2 of 5. Colorado artist and historian Muriel Sibell Wolle captured this view (south-southeast) of grave enclosures ca. 1942 in the upper area of Cleora Cemetery. Courtesy of Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, photograph X-3989.

3 of 5. Several styles of wood grave enclosures at Cleora Cemetery are shown in this east-southeast view, also taken by Muriel Sibell Wolle ca. 1942. Courtesy of Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, photograph X-3988.

4 of 5. This wood grave enclosure featured a post and rail design with wood slats with each side topped by a wood pediment. Courtesy of Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, Muriel Sibell Wolle, photograph X-4699, ca. 1942.

5 of 5. This carved wood cross in Cleora Cemetery marked the passing of a woman named Cora who died in her sixties in February 1889. A railroad water tank and a few buildings in the background comprise remnants of the settlement of Cleora. Courtesy of Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, Muriel Sibell Wolle, photograph X-3990, ca. 1942.

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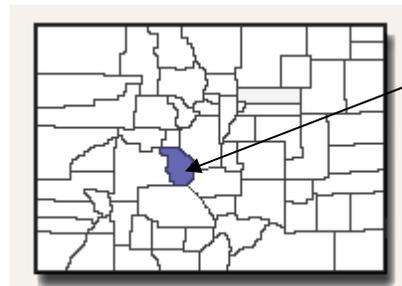
### Figures

#### Location Map from Google Earth



The labeled points are the coordinates of the nominated area. U.S. 50 is in the upper right corner of the aerial.

Point	Latitude	Longitude
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2	38.510055	-106.967946
3	38.508649	-106.967961
4	38.508620	-106.969257

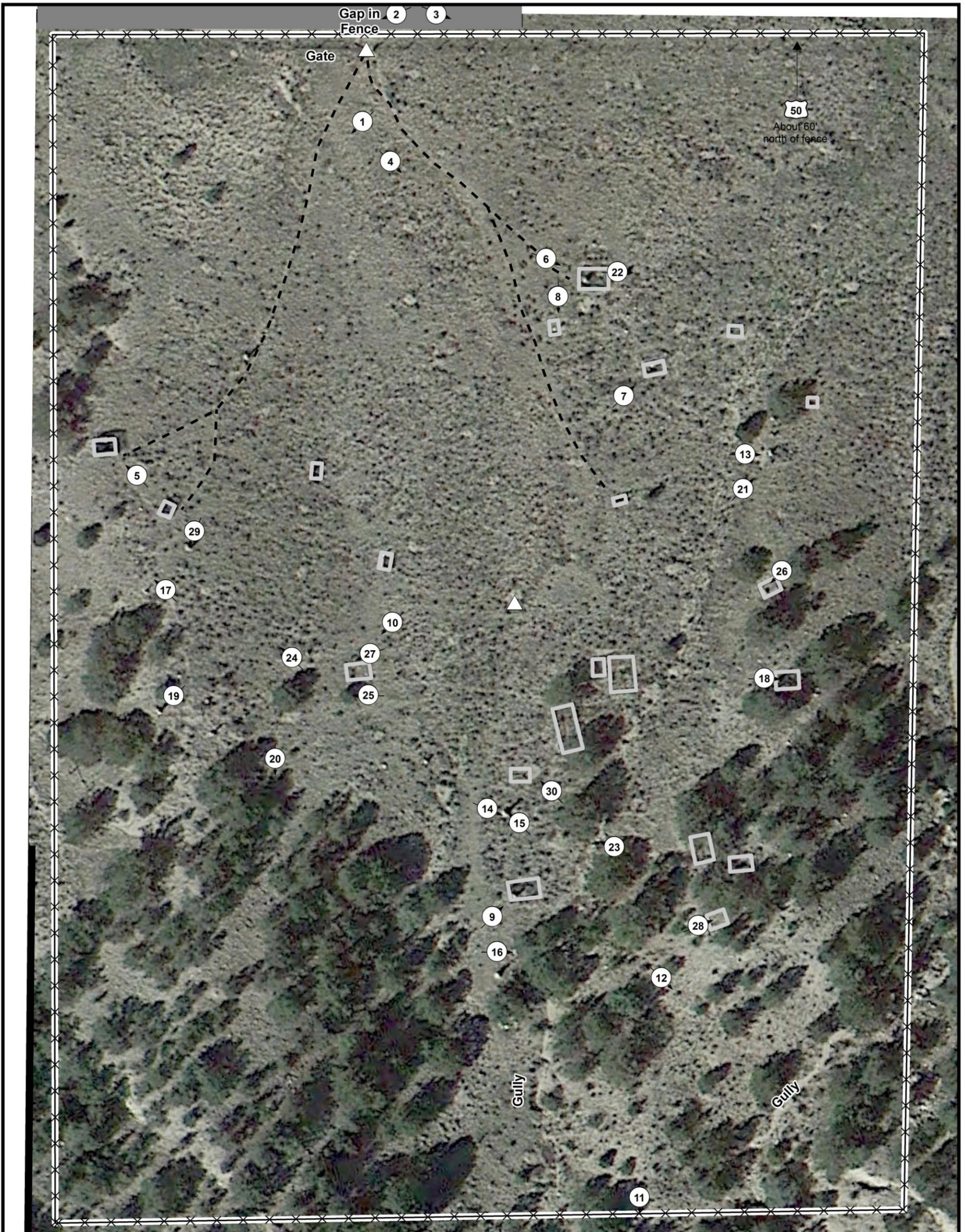


State Perspective:  
Cleora Cemetery

Image Date: 24 September 2013

Cleora Cemetery  
Name of Property

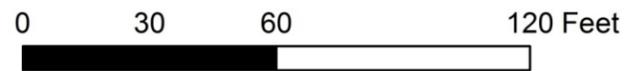
Chaffee, Colorado  
County and State



# CLEORA CEMETERY SKETCH MAP

## Legend

-  Photo Locations
-  Cemetery-Signs
-  Paths
-  Fence/Nominated Area
-  Grave Enclosures



Base Map: Google Earth, 2013



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## Historic Figures



Figure 1. This two-story building was the stage stop operated by William Bale, whose daughter, Cleora, provided the name for the settlement when it gained a post office in 1876. Pre-1910 photograph courtesy of Wade Hall, "Salida, Colorado: Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Town," W.F. Hutchinson Collection (1992), 9.



Figure 2. Colorado artist and historian Muriel Sibell Wolle captured this view (south-southeast) of grave enclosures ca. 1942 in the upper area of Cleora Cemetery. Courtesy of Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, photograph X-3989.

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Figure 3. Several styles of wood grave enclosures at Cleora Cemetery are shown in this east-southeast view, also taken by Muriel Sibell Wolle ca. 1942. Courtesy of Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, photograph X-3988.



Figure 4. This wood grave enclosure featured a post and rail design with wood slats with each side topped by a wood pediment. Courtesy of Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, Muriel Sibell Wolle, photograph X-4699, ca. 1942.

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Figure 5. This carved wood cross in Cleora Cemetery marked the passing of a woman named Cora who died in her sixties in February 1889. A railroad water tank and a few buildings in the background comprise remnants of the settlement of Cleora. Courtesy of Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, Muriel Sibell Wolle, photograph X-3990, ca. 1942.