

HISTORICAL NEWS

From the Constitution, Thursday, February 22, 1940...

Atlanta owns a small municipal park which really is cemetery of pioneers: --"few people know tract known as Todd's Graveyard exists"
by Herman Hancock

- Atlanta turned up another oddity yesterday. A city park which in reality is a cemetery, and in which the municipality has agreed to preserve and maintain a monument to Richard C. Todd and his wife Martha, pioneer Atlantans.
- Few citizens know that the ¼ of an acre tract to which the city accepted deed in June 1932 exists. Few residents in the immediate neighborhood realize that Atlanta owns it in fee simple.

Todd's Graveyard

Nestling in a tract just north of Drewry Street, between Barnett Street and Ponce de Leon Place, the little tract was known as Todd's Graveyard in the old days.

In addition to Mr. and Mrs. Todd, about a dozen other persons are reported to have been buried there, and when heirs of the estate decided to divide the several land lots of the Todd estate, and sell portions of it, they decided that some method should be found to preserve the cemetery.

Heirs engaged in a lawsuit over disposition of the gravesites, but the courts concurred in converting the land into a park and on June 6, 1932, city council accepted a deed to the tract, after a resolution accepting the offer of the heirs had been offered by the then Alderman Alvin L. Richards, who resides in that section of the city.

Accidental Discovery

Reporters discovered the cemetery park yesterday in casual conversation with Raymond W. Tocras, engineer-secretary of the city planning commission. Tocras came through with a question as to whether anyone knew that Atlanta had a park which is a cemetery, other than Oakland Cemetery, one of the most historical burying grounds in this section of the south.

That called for a check with Franklin Garrett, Vice President of the Atlanta Historical Society, and recognized authority on local history. He remembered the Todds as one of the old city families and has visited the park.

Several of the graves are still visible, he said, although the society has no record of those

buried there, except Mr. and Mrs. Todd. The Atlanta general manager of parks, said the park was never lost, because we knew we had it all the time and we periodically cut the weeds on it.

Could be a beautiful spot

The mgr. explained it could never be converted into a recreation center unless more land is acquired but that it could be made a beautiful spot if we have a little money to spend on it.

Garrett said the tombstone shows that Richard Todd was born in 1792 and died in 1853. That later year, Garrett says, is possibly an error because Todd's will probated in 1852 in DeKalb county (Fulton county had not then been formed) bears the date of 1852. Mrs. Todd was born in 1802 and died in 1896 according to the marker.

The tract was given to Atlanta by Robert Lee Plyant and Mrs. Emma Mae Todd Liddell, the deed in the files of city comptroller B. Graham West shows.



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