

## PONCHA SPRINGS CEMETERY

Poncha Springs Cemetery is located on County Road 206, about one-half mile southwest of the Town of Poncha Springs, west of U.S. Highway 285, on a steep hillside. (Section 16, Township 49 North, Range 8 East, N.M.P.M.)

This cemetery was established in 1882/1883. William H. CHAMP, Jr., who was born and died in 1882, may have been the first burial. It is thought that Helen G. McPHERSON was the second person to be buried in the Poncha Springs Cemetery, according to Dr. Wendell HUTCHINSON of Salida, Colorado. She died in February, 1883.

The cemetery has two separate sections, the Lower or Old Cemetery and the Upper Cemetery. The Lower Section is where all of the old burials occurred during 1882-1883 when the townsfolk gathered together and removed their dead from the surrounding early day cemeteries such as Centerville and Droney Pasture. Finley KANE and the BOON brothers, David and Samuel, were among the first to be reburied here (in Section F) when the new cemetery was established. They had originally been buried in the Droney Pasture Cemetery after having been killed in 1875 in the Lake County War.

The Lower Cemetery has Sections A, B, C, D, E and F. Section F contains the oldest burials; and, unfortunately, many of the graves are unmarked. No new interments are allowed in the lower portion unless there is definite knowledge of burial space.

The Upper Cemetery is reached by following a narrow, winding road to where the hill levels out and overlooks the Lower Cemetery. Apparently the first burial in this section was that of Patrick D. COSTELLO, who died 14 Dec 1966.

The Poncha Springs Town Hall and the HOLMAN families of Poncha Springs have what few records exist. These consist of handwritten notes and hand-drawn maps.

Inscriptions from tombstones existing as of May, 1986, including military markers, have been included. (In some cases bodies were removed to other cemeteries, or a marker was placed in the cemetery with no body under it.) Other pertinent information concerning the sources used for Poncha Springs Cemetery can be found in the following alphabetical listing.

Please refer also to the chapter entitled "Unknown Burial Sites." This particular section deals with probable Chaffee County burials for which no location of interment was given. Perhaps some more Poncha burials are in this section.

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(LOWER SECTIONS)

