Historically, Rhetoric and Composition has located composing inside the classroom, though more recently we have turned our attention to writing outside the classroom walls, attending especially to everyday writing, including diaries, letters, postcards, and scrapbooks. One site of everyday writing is the cemetery, which hosts multilayered compositions—the composition of the cemetery itself (in its layout, foliage, and so on); tombstones, which are richly multimodal compositions; tombstones-extended, as sites or canvas for improvisational compositions, including flowers, flags, stickers, and children’s toys; and the collective composition of the cemetery itself, the portrait it makes of the community that created it and which it represents. To explore the occasional everyday writing we find in cemeteries, I turn to Emigrant Cemetery in Montana, home to 250 graves, 30 miles north of Yellowstone National Park, founded in 1881 and still active today.

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