



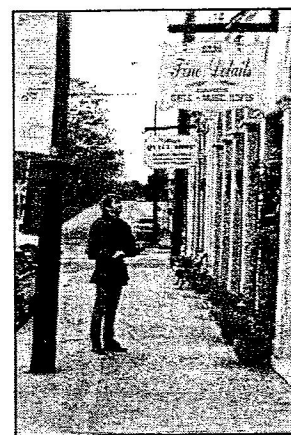
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Determination of Boundaries and Surface Features for the Floyd Family Cemetery off Cochran Mill Road in Fulton County, Georgia.

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BACKGROUND TO THE CURRENT INVESTIGATION

An undocumented cemetery, referred to in this report as the Floyd Family Cemetery, was identified in 7th District, Land Lot 6 in Fulton County, Georgia (UTM: Zone 16 N3713338 E713416). The cemetery is located in an open pasture across the street from 7955 Cochran Mill Road. Mr. Charles Ray, approached New South Associates, Inc. to confirm the cemetery's existence and to determine its boundaries. Two professional archaeologists from New South Associates, Inc., Dr. Hugh B. Matternes and Mr. Bruce Young, conducted a systematic investigation of the property on March 30, 2004 in order to archaeologically verify the extent of the burial area. Mr. Ray wishes to develop the property and wants to avoid impacting any existing mortuary deposits.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AREA

The Floyd Family Cemetery is located approximately 100 feet east of Cochran Mill Road in an open pasture. The pasture is several acres in size. It is situated over the side of an unnamed ridge, whose summit is about a mile north of the cemetery. The cemetery proper is located on a southerly oriented finger ridge. The finger ridge is shared with a domestic structure (immediately north of the cemetery) and overlooks an unnamed stream, to the east. An examination of the USGS Palmetto Quadrangle map failed to find evidence that the cemetery had ever been recorded as a landscape feature.

Soils in the project area were not specifically explored, but some general observations were made. The pasture has lost its original surface soil deposits and was underlain by a dense red-orange clay. This may

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have resulted from past use as an agricultural field or erosional deflation of the exposed landform. In contrast, the cemetery's ground surface was on top of a thick layer of organic plant matter ("duff") that graded down into a relatively undisturbed A Horizon. This organically rich layer of soil radiated outwards raising the entire cemetery area several inches from the surrounding landscape (Figure 1). This raised pattern around the cemetery is commonly observed around burial areas situated in agricultural fields that have been avoided by plow teams for many years.

Prior to this examination, the properties around the cemetery were cleared of all timber and allowed to re-vegetate with more open-surface plants. The vast majority of the pasture was vegetated in grass and young meadow plants. There were several young stands of briars in the pasture and the northern property boundary was overgrown with privet and cottonwood trees. Currently the burial area is vegetated by two mature cedar trees, a dense stand of saw briars and several mature stands of privet. The cemetery's periphery was covered in meadow grasses.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION AND RESULTS

New South Associates, Inc.'s archaeological investigations were broken into two phases. First, the finger ridge and all landforms immediately adjacent to it were examined for surface features identifying where graves were located. These features were recorded and then used to construct an initial boundary for the cemetery. The second phase entailed a systematic subsurface examination of the areas outside of this initial boundary to verify whether other less visible graves were present.

Phase 1 - Surface Examination:

Graves placed in rural environments, such as the original setting found at the Floyd Family Cemetery, are less clearly defined than those found in more urban settings and therefore are frequently more difficult to detect. From the ground surface, potential rural mortuary deposits are identified by any of the following features:

1. Human-sized cigar-shaped depressions or mounds.
2. Presence of formal stone, metal, concrete or wooden grave markers.
3. Presence of dressed or undressed fieldstones arranged as head and/or footstones.
4. Presence of concentrations of mortuary associated ground covers, particularly vinca, narcissus (daffodils), cedar, hemlock, crepe myrtle, gardenia, spirea, roses, lilies, and/or irises.

5. Stone, metal, wood or floral enclosures that restrict land use for other (particularly agricultural) purposes.
6. Oval or rectangular concentrations of stone, glass, wood, metal, seashells or plastic containers, used to outline a potential grave's dimensions.
7. Low oval or rectangular piles of stones.
8. Maintained areas evidenced by removal of vegetation and unwanted debris.
9. Oval or human-sized color/plant differences in mowed areas.

All areas within the project area were examined for these features and subsequently marked with pin flags for additional examination.

Surface examinations of the pasture identified a concentration of mortuary-like indicators defined as 3 separate features (See Figure 1 and below). Once identified, all features were recorded on a sketch map and photos were generated. Mortuary-like features included a collapsed stone aboveground sepulcher, quartzite/marble monument bases, quartzite/marble gravestones and a cast iron grave cover. In addition, the berm mentioned earlier was identified. Three features were identified as probable graves.

Feature 1: Feature 1 consisted of at least 4 large rough-hewn granite slabs (Figure 1: 1A to 1D) originally constructed to form an aboveground sepulcher. The sepulcher has since collapsed. The blocks appeared to have been hand or machine dressed with the interior surfaces left as rough unmodified quarried surfaces. It is unclear exactly where these stones may have originated, however they conform to materials from the local Lithonia Granite and Lithonia Gneiss deposits. Originally, the sepulcher served as a hollow surface feature, covering the location of a subsurface interment. The collapsed sepulcher prevented any subsurface testing to confirm the location of a grave underneath it. Given the orientation of the sepulcher's long surfaces, the grave probably was placed in an east-west alignment. The cover consisted of a single 180"x31"x3.5" granite slab. The western side of the cover was inscribed as shown in Figure 2. These inscriptions were irregularly chiseled, ending at different depths in the stone. This implies that the inscription was done by hand. Of particular interest was the inversion of a '4' in the death date; this mistake implies that the carver did not command enough of the written English language to correctly form this numeral.

Feature 2: Feature 2 encompassed several grave indicators immediately east of a large cedar tree (Figure 1: 2A to 2C). Monument A was a small (>19"x12"x2") quartzite/marble commercially cut and milled

headstone with a curved top¹ (Figure 3). The stone was in excellent condition. The silhouette of a stylized dove had been inset near the top of the stone. The inscription faced west. The smooth sided letters and uniform carving depth were indicators that the inscription had been professionally applied. Towards the eastern side of the feature, a quartzite/marble commercially cut and milled footstone was found loose on the surface. The initials "M.V.F.", corresponding to the name inscribed on the headstone, were carved. High quality quartzite and marbles like those used to construct these movements are not found locally. They are similar to quarried materials from the Georgia and South Carolina Coastal Plains.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Floyd Family Cemetery was the grave cover associated with Feature 2 (Figure 4). There were no less than 7 cast iron components arranged in a rectangle (~37"x17") oriented north-to-south. There were 3 side panels, each cast in the shape of a flowering vine on top of a molded pedestal that raised the cover about 3-4 inches off the ground. Space between each pattern was cut out to form an open lattice. The fourth panel had detached and was found under the surface duff. It depicted a stylized floral arrangement and was at least 6 inches tall. It would have attached to the rest of the pedestal through screw panels. This panel probably originally marked the grave's head. These 4 panels locked together to allow a solid florally decorated cover plate to fit elevated from the ground on an inset panel. This panel was partially broken prior to this investigation. There was a large oval cut out of the center with an inset panel molded around it. A raised oval plate that fit into the inset panels covered this aperture. It depicted an oval object (a coffin or pedestal?) draped with a cloth and bearing a floral arrangement tied with a bow. Finally, this plate was topped with a small cast iron figurine of a child resting on a blanketed surface. Cast iron grave covers of this nature are extremely rare and almost undocumented in the central Georgia area. Their form is in keeping with the late Victorian period; it probably dates at or about the time of the child's death (1872).

Determining the grave's exact position was nearly impossible without damaging some of the existing architecture. Several opportunistic probes in the area identified some soft underlying soil, however no clear identification could be accurately made. Several handmade bricks were observed in the soil around this grave; they may have served as a base for the grave cover or served as additional means of defining the interment's location. They, along with the original headstone's placement, imply that

¹ The bottom of the stone was buried under surface debris and roots. Frequently stones of this nature are 24" long and mounted into a slotted stone base. Without dramatically disturbing the probable burial site, the base form could not be confirmed.

an east-west orientation immediately behind (east) of the headstone is likely. The grave plate is loose on the ground's surface and could easily have been moved in the not-too-distant past. There is more than ample space within this location to inter a 14-month old infant.

Feature 3: Feature 3 consisted of 3 grave monument elements imbedded in a thick stand of mature privet and saw briar (Figure 1: 3A to 3C; Figure 5). None of these monuments were in their original location. Monument A was a commercially cut, milled and polished quartzite/marble monument base with no distinct orientation. The base was unmarked. Monument B was also a commercially cut, milled and polished quartzite/marble base with an unmarked panel etched into at least one side of it. Monument C was an overturned columnar commercially cut, milled and polished quartzite/marble monument with a four-sided gabled top. Only one of the three visible panels was decorated². The smooth sided letters and uniform carving depth were indicators that the inscription had been professionally applied. Stylized oak leaves and detail lines had been acid-etched into top of the inscribed panel. Monument C could easily have originated on either of the two bases, however the fit would have been best with Monument A. No corresponding marker was found for Monument B. A search of the pasture and surrounding wood lines failed to locate a likely monument for this base. None of the monuments were made of local materials. They probably came from the same deposits yielding Feature 2's stone monuments.

Where possible, probes were sunk into the soil surrounding the bases and underneath the privet and saw briar. These probes indicated that at least one soft subsurface feature was present, however it was unclear whether the east-west alignment of this was due to a possible grave shaft orientation or disturbances from the east-west oriented briar and privet patch. The presence of an extra monument base implicates the presence of a fourth grave and we cannot eliminate the possibility that two graves may be located beneath the privet and briars.

Phase 2 - Subsurface Testing:

The second phase of this investigation focused on determining if other, unmarked graves were present in the pasture. A reference grid, oriented to the cardinal directions and large enough to allow at least 50 feet to be tested in every direction from the preliminary cemetery

² Monument C was too heavy for the field crew to safely move; it is not known if the down-facing side was inscribed.

boundaries, was centered on the burial area³. Transects spaced 2 feet apart were superimposed on the landscape. Each transect was systematically tested at 2 foot intervals for the presence of subsurface features. All surface areas within the project area were tested. If unmarked graves had been encountered, the original reference lines would have been expanded outward until the burial area and a 50-foot grave-free buffer around it were defined.

The project area was tested for possible graves by inserting a metal tipped probe into the soil and assessing soil density. Positive probes, indicative of natural or man-made features, filled with comparatively soft deposits, were marked with pink pin flags and plotted on a sketch map of the study area. Typically, the hard clay subsoil was only a few inches underneath the ground surface. Anomalous or positive probes were normally deeper than 9 inches. When a positive probe was encountered several closer interval tests were applied to ascertain the subsurface feature's size and shape. Those approximating the dimensions of adult and subadult sized grave shafts were recorded as potential gravesites. Notable features within the project area were also documented photographically.

No additional mortuary or mortuary architectural features were identified during Phase 2. The field crew noted that soil densities increased dramatically immediately after leaving the cemetery rise. On the ridge immediately north of the cemetery, a variety of shallow in-filled troughs and circular depressions were discovered. None of these approximated grave morphology; they are believed to represent aspects of an old barn or shed and /or tire ruts. No intelligible subsurface features were noted in the rest of the test area.

CONCLUSIONS

Examination by New South Associates, Inc. confirmed that a small family cemetery was located in a pasture off Cochran Mill Road in Fulton County, Georgia. The cemetery is poorly documented, however many of its features are consistent with those found in other rural Georgia cemeteries. We feel that the burial ground most likely contains members of the local rural community. At least two different families are represented in this cemetery. Monument inscriptions indicate that children were born to W.A. and M.F. Floyd and to J.S. and Harriet Floyd. A brief search of internet resources failed to locate any historic references to any of the named individuals.

³ Pin flags were left within the pasture to denote the maximum extent of the subsurface test area.


The project area was also examined for surface indicators of graves. This investigation revealed 3 mortuary feature concentrations in close proximity to each other. The boundaries appear to approximate those visible as a slight rise on top of a naturally formed finger ridge. We feel that the entire rise should be treated as a burial area. The area containing the cemetery was defined by flagging tape and the margins around it were systematically examined for additional unmarked mortuary features. Systematic testing with steel tipped probes yielded no additional mortuary features.

Establishing the true number of subsurface burial features within the cemetery was extremely problematic and could not be ascertained without compromising any of the cemetery's surface features. From the surface representations, we feel that there is adequate evidence for 3 interments, however indirect evidence implies that a fourth is probably also present. We recommend that for future planning purposes, it should be assumed that 4 graves are present in the burial area.

Confirmation that a cemetery is present precludes unrestricted development of this property. The cemetery currently falls under the guidelines of Georgia Code 36-72 (Abandoned Cemeteries Act) and there are procedures in place to allow movement of this facility, should it be deemed necessary. We need to emphasize, however that movement of a cemetery, even of this small size, can be a complicated or costly undertaking. New South Associates is prepared to assist in the relocation, if you decide to pursue this option.

This report was prepared for Charles Ray and is certified to, and made for Mr. Ray's benefit.

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