

**HISTORICAL RESEARCH ON DRAFTS  
GRAVEYARD, LEXINGTON COUNTY,  
SOUTH CAROLINA**



**CHICORA RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 474**

# HISTORICAL RESEARCH ON DRAFTS GRAVEYARD, LEXINGTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

Prepared By:  
Michael Trinkley, Ph.D., RPA

Prepared For:  
Mr. Eddie Yandle  
N.B.T. of Columbia, Inc.  
117 Beaver Ridge Dr  
Elgin, SC 29045

## CHICORA RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 474



Chicora Foundation, Inc.  
PO Box 8664  
Columbia, SC 29202-8664  
803/787-6910  
[www.chicora.org](http://www.chicora.org)

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## ABSTRACT

In late June 2007 construction at a proposed development about three miles west of the City of Lexington in Lexington County, South Carolina uncovered human remains. The Lexington County Coroner and Sheriff's Department were notified in order to determine if the remains represented a forensic case. The coroner determined that the remains did not and that they were more likely evidence of a "lost" family graveyard. As a result the developer of the property, N.B.T. of Columbia, Inc. requested that Chicora Foundation become involved to determine the size of the graveyard, the number of individuals that might be present, and provide recommendations.

This report provides background and historical documentation concerning the graveyard, including a detailed examination of property records, period maps, aerial photographs, and other historic documents.

As a result of this study it was determined that the graveyard existed by at least 1927 when it was perhaps a  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre in size. It likely began during the property's ownership by David Drafts, an African American farmer who purchased the property in 1881. Between 1900 and 1905 Drafts died and the property was partitioned to his seven heirs, each receiving  $8\frac{3}{4}$  acres. Each tract was numbered sequentially from east to west, with the graveyard falling on Tract 3.

This study completes the title search, identifies a broad range of probable descendants, and traces many through census and other records. A kinship or lineage charge for three generations has been prepared based on the currently available information. This will assist in the identification of probable descendants.

The study also attempted to identify death certificates linked with the cemetery, which may

have been named Rawls or Strothers/Strathers. Additional names are identified through this process. We have also been provided with a list thought to represent individuals reported to be buried in the cemetery and an effort has been made to link these names with the Drafts family.

Aerial imagery has been examined and it is possible that the cemetery is shown on the 1959 and 1966 photographs. The cemetery, however, is not shown on either the modern or 1946 topographic maps. It is also shown on the 1922 Lexington County soil survey. The absence of the cemetery on these sources, however, is not unusual.

An effort was made to contact family members in the community. Phone calls, however, have not been returned so it has not been possible to include oral history accounts in this study.

The historical evidence provides good evidence of a cemetery, at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre in size, dating from perhaps the 1880s through the late 1950s. Although the cemetery may have suffered some damage from logging in the early 1960s, we have found no evidence of any extensive disturbance prior to the clearing and grubbing associated with the current development activities. This study has identified a range of family names likely associated with the cemetery, including Anderson, Cortman (or Cartman), Crapps (or Crappe, Trappe), Deshade, Drafts, Fields, Gardner, Johnson, Robertson, Sheppard, and Walker. Other possible names include Blackwell, Corley, Isreal, Norris, Rawl, Richardson, Strother, Summers, and Wise.

Additional investigations are on-going, including the use of ground penetrating radar and the metric and non-metric examination of skeletal remains collected by the Lexington County

Coroner and Sheriff.

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## INTRODUCTION

On June 20 construction crews excavating utility lines at the Dawson's Park development about 3 miles west of the City of Lexington uncovered human skeletal remains and notified the Lexington County Coroner and Sheriff's Department. During the day-long investigation by the Sheriff's Department, which included screening the spoil from the primary excavation,

It was at that time that Mr. Yandle requested Chicora Foundation's involvement to examine the property and provide recommendations regarding the size of the cemetery.

Our initial investigation, by Ms. Julie Poppell of the Chicora staff, was conducted on

June 22. The excavations were still open and it was clear where the Sheriff's Department had been screening spoil for the recovery of remains. Arrangements were made for a more careful inspection on June 25.

On Monday, June 25 the author, Dr. Michael Trinkley, visited the site with staff members Nicole Southerland and Julie Poppell. The two burials were identified on the east side of Dawson's Circle, on the west side of the development. Burial 1, which was more

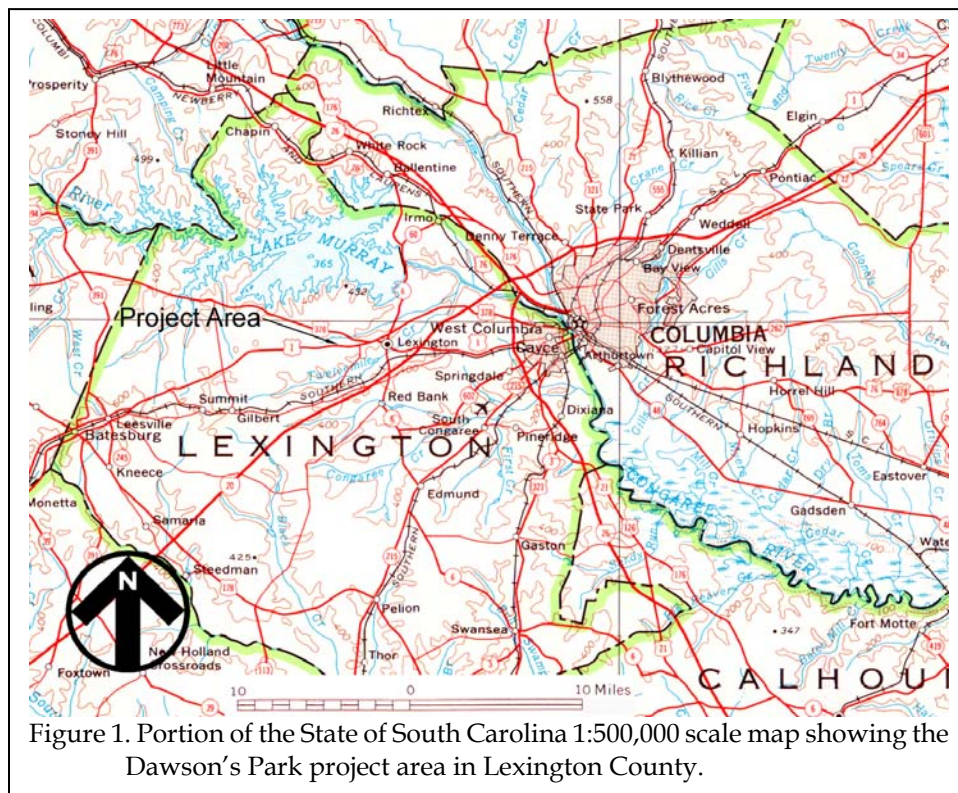


Figure 1. Portion of the State of South Carolina 1:500,000 scale map showing the Dawson's Park project area in Lexington County.

additional remains were found about 100 feet to the south in a second excavation. The coroner, Mr. Harry Harmon, ordered a halt to the work until additional assessment could be performed. The coroner determined that the remains were not forensic, but rather those of a family cemetery, and requested that the developer of the property, Mr. Edward D. Yandle of N.B.T. of Columbia, Inc., oversee the additional work.

complete and had been recovered by the Sheriff's Department from spoil, was apparently between lots 156 and 157, although no evidence of the burial pit was immediately evident. Burial 2, represented by only a partial skull, had been recovered from a different excavation, between lots 153 and 154. No spoil had been screened in this area and at the time of our visit there was no clear evidence of a burial shaft or other remains.

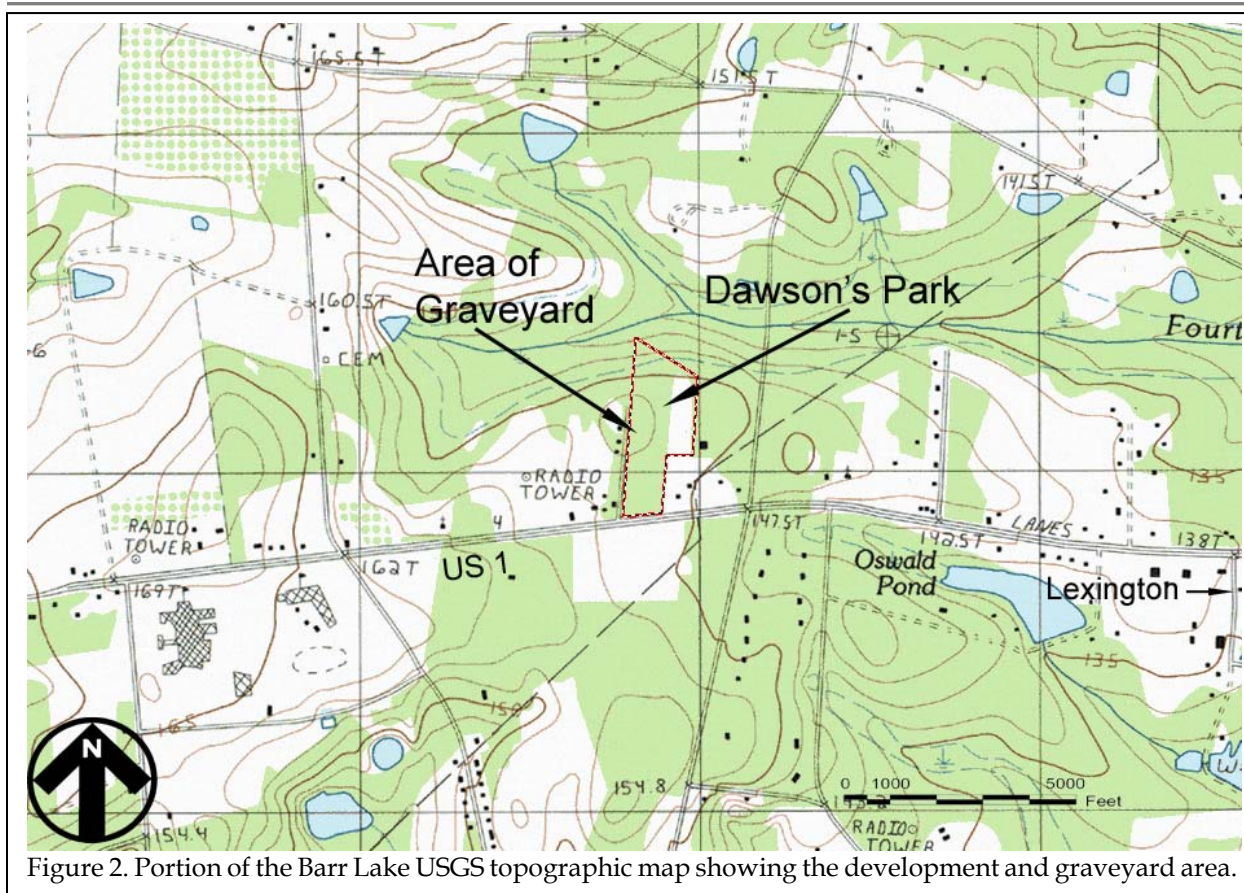


Figure 2. Portion of the Barr Lake USGS topographic map showing the development and graveyard area.

An initial inspection did, however, reveal scattered human remains on the surface from Dawson's Circle eastward for about 150 feet. Remains did not appear to extend northward across Dawson's Drive, but did extend about 300 feet to the south. It appeared, based on this initial survey, that remains were thinly spread over an area of perhaps 200 by 400 feet, or about 1.8 acre. These remains were flagged, numbered, and collected. The locations were plotted by Mr. Yandle's surveyor for future use.

At that time we learned that the property had been cleared and grubbed. This may account for the presence of these remains, as well as their dispersion on the surface. The area west of Dawson's Circle, about 80 feet in width, apparently received placement of spoil. In addition, there was a ca. 40 foot roadway which had been cut down at least 1 foot and had been heavily impacted by construction activities. These areas were not examined at that time.

In an effort to identify additional burials on the property, we initially used a penetrometer. This is a device for measuring the compaction of soil. When natural soil strata are disturbed – whether by large scale construction or by the excavation of a small hole in the ground – the resulting spoil contains a large volume of voids and the compaction of the soil is very low. When this spoil is used as fill, either in the original hole or at another location, it likewise has a large volume of voids and a very low compaction.

In the case of a pit, or a burial, the excavated fill is typically thrown back in the hole not as thin layers that are then compacted before the next layer is added, but in one, relatively quick episode. This prevents the fill from being compacted, or at least as compacted as the surrounding soil.

Penetrometers come in a variety of styles,



## INTRODUCTION

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but all measure compaction as a numerical reading, typically as pounds per square inch (psi). The dickey-John penetrometer consists of a stainless steel rod about 3-feet in length, connected to a T-handle. As the rod is inserted in the soil, the compaction needle rotates within an oil filled (for damping) stainless steel housing, indicating the compaction levels. The rod is also engraved at 3-inch levels, allowing more precise collection of compaction measurements through various soil horizons. Two tips (1/2-inch and 3/4-inch) are provided for different soil types.

Of course, a penetrometer is simply a measuring device. It cannot distinguish soil compacted by natural events from soil artificially compacted. Nor can it distinguish an artificially excavated pit from a tree throw that has been filled in. Nor can it, per se, distinguish between a hole dug as a ditch and a hole dug as a burial pit. What it does, is convert each of these events to psi readings. It is then up to the operator to determine through various techniques the cause of the increased or lowered soil compaction.

For example, soils that have been artificially compacted frequently exhibit compaction levels that are significantly above normal soil readings. And as for distinguishing a burial pit from other, natural events, this is typically done by carefully marking out the size, shape, and orientation of the area of lesser compaction.

While a penetrometer may be only marginally better than a probe in the hands of an exceedingly skilled individual with years of experience, such ideal circumstances are rare. In addition, a penetrometer provides quantitative readings that are replicable and that allow much more accurate documentation of cemeteries. In fact, as will be discussed here, our research in both sandy and clayey soils in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia suggests very consistent graveyard readings.

Like probing, the penetrometer is used at set intervals along grid lines established

perpendicular to the suspected grave orientations. The readings are recorded and used to develop a map of probable grave locations. In addition, it is important to “calibrate” the penetrometer to the specific site where it is being used. Since readings are affected by soil moisture and even to some degree by soil texture, it is important to compare readings taken during a single investigation and ensure that soils are generally similar in composition.

It is also important to compare suspect readings to those from known areas. For example, when searching for graves in a cemetery where both marked and unmarked graves are present, it is usually appropriate to begin by examining known graves to identify the range of compaction present. From work at several graveyards, including the Kings Cemetery (Charleston County, South Carolina) where 28 additional graves were identified, Maple Grove Cemetery (Haywood County, North Carolina) where 319 unmarked graves were identified, and the Walker Family Cemetery (Greenville County, South Carolina) where 78 unmarked graves were identified, we have found that the compaction of graves is typically under 150 psi, usually in the range of 50 to 100 psi, while non-grave areas exhibit compaction that is almost always over 150 PSI, typically 160 to 180 psi (Trinkley and Hacker 1997a, 1997b, 1998; Trinkley and Southerland 2007).

At the project site we had no known graves to examine, but as we ran a north-south line parallel to Dawson’s Circle, we identified five possible graves. Each had compaction readings of 150 to 200 psi, while elsewhere we obtained readings in excess of 250 to 300 psi. Compaction, in fact, tended to increase as we moved eastward into the area that had been cleared and grubbed. Thus, it appears that the development property has received considerable modification by construction resulting in a significant degree of compaction. This makes a penetrometer of limited usefulness in the identification of graves.

As a consequence, Chicora Foundation

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arranged for the firm of GEL Geophysics, LLC from Charleston, SC to conduct a study using ground penetrating radar (GPR).

The Lexington County Sheriff's Department released the remains they recovered to Chicora and these are currently being examined by Debi Hacker with Chicora Foundation for metric and non-metric attributes.

## HISTORICAL RESEARCH

### Title Research

We have traced the title back to 1881 when Levi Smith sold a 55 acre tract to David Drafts (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB CC, pg. 417). The property was described as "adjoining lands of the said Levi Smith, George M. Caughman and lands of the Rawl Old Place and is bounded on the South side by the road leading from Columbia to Augusta, three miles West of Lexington Court House." Drafts paid \$220 for the property (\$4,150 in 2006\$) .

Levi Smith was a white farmer born in 1804. He appears as early as the 1850 census when he was already 46 years old. His wife, Elizabeth (Wingard), was 39 years old and they had four children, Samuel (17), Elizabeth (16), and May C. (12). The census lists his occupation as farmer and indicates that he had real estate valued at \$1,000 (\$25,000 in 2006\$), which appears to be slightly on the low side, but still respectable. He does not appear in the 1860 census, but is again shown in the 1870 census, by that time 66 years old, but still listed as a farmer. His real estate value had fallen to \$250 (\$3,700 in 2006\$), probably the result of the Civil War. His personal estate was valued at \$200 (\$3,000 in 2006\$). Four children were listed as living with Levi and Elizabeth: Mary C. (30), Sally K. (27), Hannah L. (24), and Ellen R. (17). The 1880 census reveals that Levi, now 76, was still farming. Also in the home were his wife, Elizabeth, and their daughter, Sarah K. (the frequent change in children's names is probably just recordation errors). Levi died in 1891, while his wife did not die until 1902.

Thus, Levi was a small farmer toward the end of his career when he sold property to David Drafts. The transaction itself is not unusual; what is more interesting is that Drafts was an African American. The 1870 census shows David married

to Susan and having three daughters, Mary, Herriet, and Jane. There were two sons at the time, Edwin and Frank. Everyone listed for the family was identified as a farm hand.

Both David and Susan were born slaves, as were at least four of their five children. We have identified a plantation owner in the 1860 slave schedule for Lexington County, Henry J. Drafts, who enumerates both a 30 year old male and a 25 year old female slave - possibly David and Susan. David Drafts 30 years in slavery makes his acquisition of the Smith lands even more remarkable.

By 1880 he is listed as Dave Drafts, a 50-year old farmer born in South Carolina to parents born in Virginia. The 1880 census reveals that he was married to Susie, who was 48 and was "keeping house." Both he and his wife were illiterate - not unusual for rural African Americans of that time period. Children included Martha (26), Frank (18), and Jane (19). At the time of the census in June, Susie was listed as being ill with "fever," possibly malaria. Frank was listed as a farm laborer, probably meaning that he was working on his father's farm, while Jane was listed as a laborer, possibly suggesting off-farm activity. Also in the household were three grandchildren: Aurelia (3), Augusta (5) and Jessie (3).

The next available census is that for 1900 (the 1890 census for South Carolina was destroyed). David Drafts, by that time 70 years old, was still listed as a farmer. Present in his household were Lucy Kinard (a 65 year old widow) listed as a boarder, Gracy Kinard (10), and Gary Hampton (16). Confusing matters, David Drafts is shown as being married for 8 years, suggesting that perhaps he was now married to Lucy Kinard.

Frank Drafts is shown as having established his own household, being married to Lilla, for the past 16 years. Children included Belton (9), Drilton (6), and Lessus (5). Also in the household was his daughter, Berley Caughman (16), who had married Green Caughman (22). At the time of the census Berley had just two weeks prior given birth to their first child (still unnamed). Unfortunately both Frank Drafts and Green Caughman can not be found in the 1910 or 1920 census.

Sometime prior to 1905 David Drafts died intestate (since no will can be found in Lexington County). His property went through a lengthy process of division between his heirs, resulting in the survey of the parcel (the plat was not recorded and is assumed lost) and the division of the 55 acres into seven parcels (which are discussed below in parcel order).

Tract 1 was apparently given to Frank H. Drafts since in 1929 he sold it to the Home National Bank of Lexington, SC for \$100. The property description reveals that, like all of the other parcels, it contained  $8\frac{3}{4}$  acres and fronted on US Highway No. 1. To the east were the Rawl estate lands and to the west was property of Martha Walker (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 4L, pg. 420).

Tract 2 was deeded by Frank H. Drafts, Edward Drafts, Jane Walker, and Susie Sheppard, "heirs of the estate of David Drafts" to Martha Walker on August 6, 1910 (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 3O, pg. 264). The location is bounded to the east by "Tract No. 1 in like manner conveyed to F.H. Drafts," and to the west by "Tract No. 3 in like manner conveyed to Ellen Crapps, Green Cartman and Peroilla [sic] Gardner children of Harriet Cartman, Deceased."

Tract 3 was given to Percilla Gardner, Ellen Crappe, and Green Cortman by F.H. Drafts, Martha Walker, Edward Drafts, Jane Walker, and Susie Sheppard. To the east was Tract 2 and to the west were "the heirs of Amelia Robertson, viz. Jesse Johnson, Melvin Anderson, Jane Anderson,

Mary Anderson, Viola Robertson, Susie Robertson, and David Robertson (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 3Q, pg. 573).

Tract 4 was deeded on August 6, 1910 by F.H. Drafts, Martha Walker, Edward Drafts, June Walker, and Susie Sheppard to Jessie Johnson, Melvin Anderson, Jane Anderson, Mary Anderson, Viola Robertson, Susie Robertson, and David Robertson, "children of Amelia Robertson, deceased" (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 3L, pg.10). To the west was Tract 5, conveyed to Edward Drafts.

While Tract 5 is known to have been conveyed to Edward Drafts, the deed has not been identified in this research. Nevertheless, we know that on January 3, 1905 Edward Drafts obtained a loan of \$14.59 at 8% interest from D.E. Ballentine, using his  $\frac{1}{7}$  interest in the David Drafts estate as collateral (Lexington County Mortgage Book V, pg. 115). The following year, on August 7, he obtained a second loan for \$25 from the firm of Graham and Sturkie using the same tract again as collateral. While the purpose is not stated, they were likely living and planting loans, typical of the period as small farmers or tenants attempted to survive from year to year. However, by 1911 neither loan had been repaid and Ballentine filed suit for the recovery of his monies (with Graham and Sturkie joining with him). The matter came before the Lexington County Circuit Court in 1911 (Case 2458) and the property was ordered sold.

Tract 5 was then sold in May 1911 by the Lexington County Sheriff to Frank Drafts for \$112 (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 3B, pg. 340). Frank Drafts held the tract until 1914 when he sold it for \$150 to S.R. Drafts (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 3Q, pg. 168).

Tract 6 was conveyed by Frank Drafts, Mathra Walker, Edmund Drafts, and Jane Walker to Louisa Fields, Susie Sheppard, Carry Gardner, Julius Deshade, and Sammy Deshade (Lexington County Register of Deeds 3H, pg. 90).

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The final parcel, Tract 7, was sold on August 6, 1910 by Frank Drafts, Martha Walker, Edward Drafts, and Susie Sheppard to Jane Walker (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 3H, pg. 54). To the west of this final tract was the property of W.P. Roof.

The division of the 55 acres into seven 8¾ acre parcels is typical of heirs property divisions. What might have been a profitable subsistence farm, through repeated divisions, becomes so small that it can no longer be profitably farmed. This may have happened with David Drafts' estate. Of course, it is possible for families to band together and operate communally, although experience suggests that even this strains resources. Unfortunately we have no agricultural census records from that time period to help us understand how the property might have been used.

The ultimate fate of the seven parcels was not researched since only two are of concern to this project.

The property next appears in 1927 when Tract 3 was sold to Andrew Gates by Green Cortman, Ellen Trapp, and Siller Gardner for \$170

(\$1,980 in 2006\$) (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 4Y, pg. 200). The deed reveals that the property had been inherited by their mother, Harriet Cortman from her father, David Drafts.

Harriet Cortman is found in 1880 census, married to Green Cortman and enumerated in the Boiling Springs Township of Lexington County. She was 22 years old and her husband was 29. Both are listed as "domestic laborer" and they have three children: Sharlot (9), Elen (4), and Green A. (1).

The property was described as "being on the Jefferson Davis National Highway, about three miles west of the County [sic] of Lexington . . . containing eight and three-fourth (8¾) acres, more or less, and bounded on the north by lands of Martha Walker; on the east by Jefferson Davis Highway; on the south by lot of Sim Drafts, and on the west by lands of the Estate of D.B. Rawl, deceased."

The deed, however, specifies that the sellers, "reserve the cemetery situated on said tract of land and the right of egress and ingress to said cemetery, the lines of said cemetery to be agreed upon and established by the parties to this deed and when the said lines have been established they shall remain as the permanent lines and boundaries of said cemetery, provided the total area of said cemetery plot shall not exceed one quarter of an acre." While not specified, it seems likely that the reserved cemetery was that of the Drafts family and would have been in use for perhaps 46 years by this time.

Andrew Gates is found in the 1920 census as a 26 year old black farmer

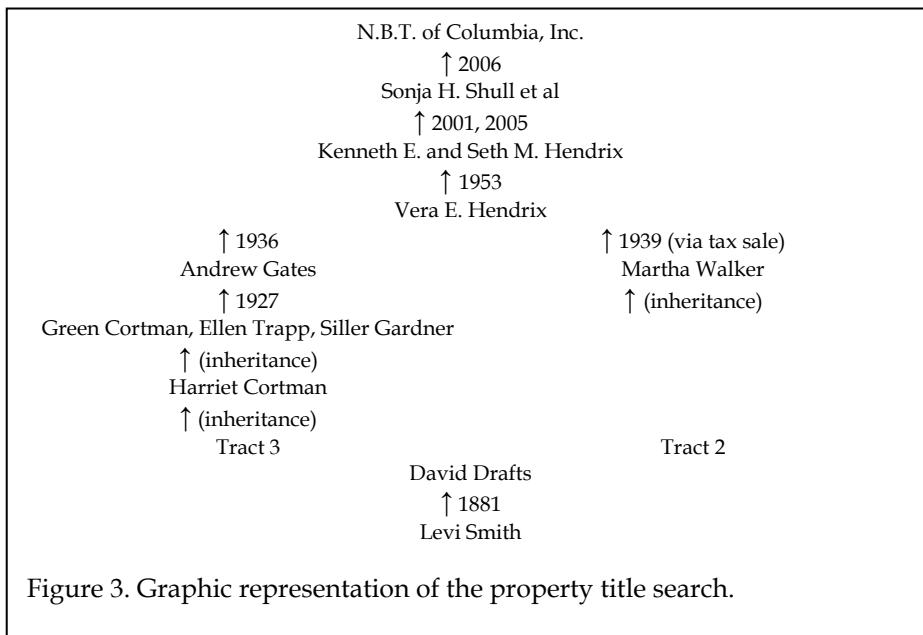


Figure 3. Graphic representation of the property title search.

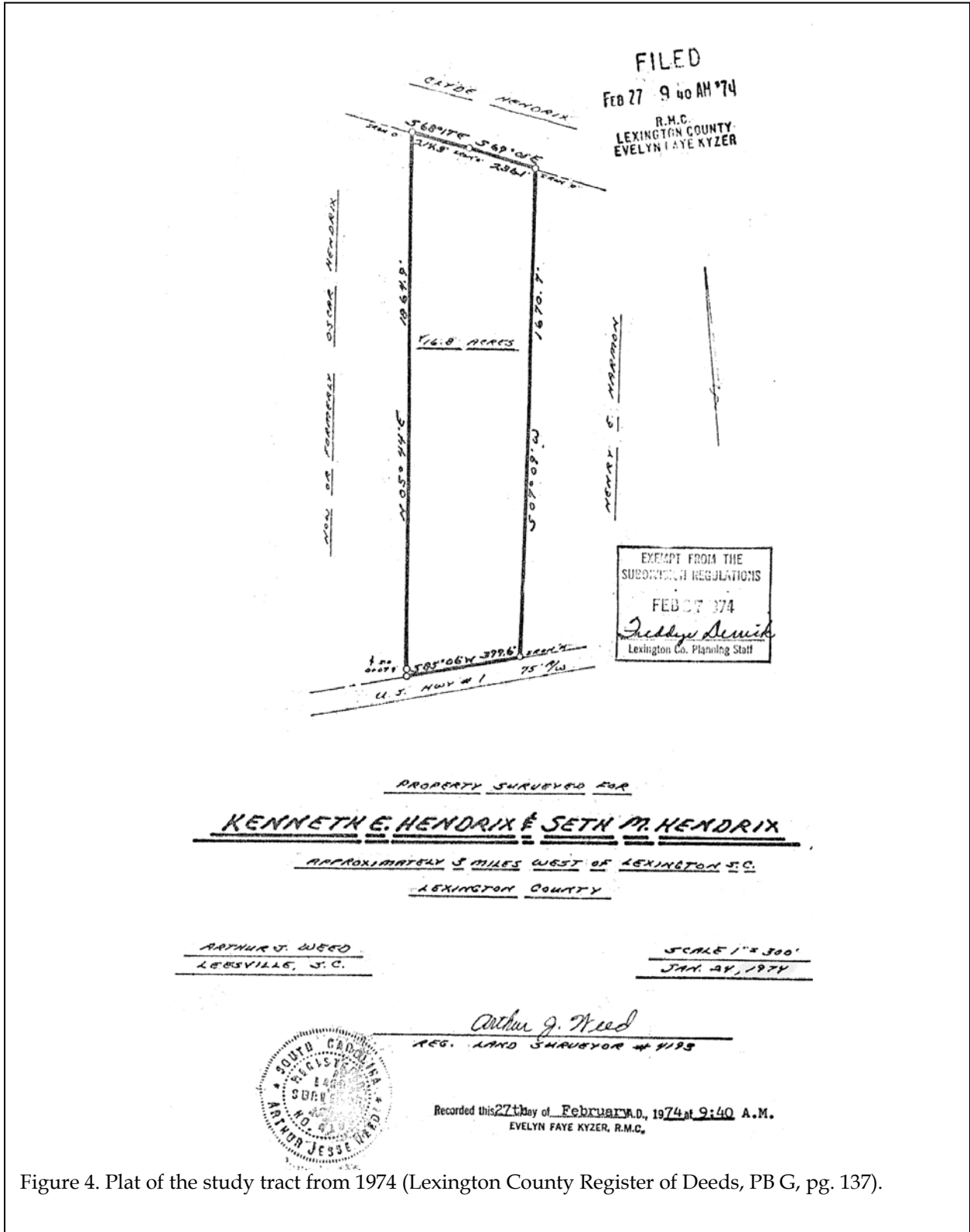
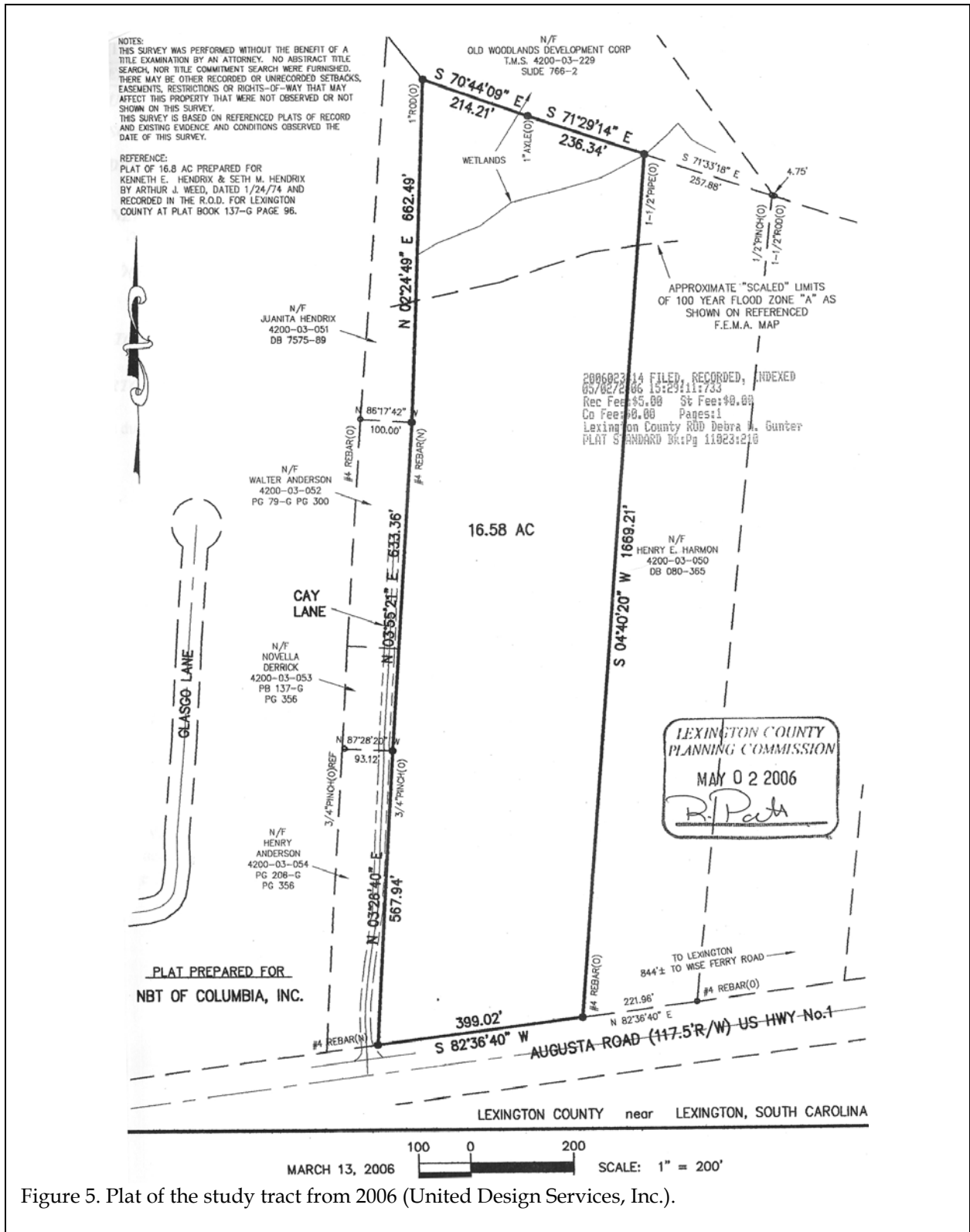


Figure 4. Plat of the study tract from 1974 (Lexington County Register of Deeds, PB G, pg. 137).



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who was renting his residence (and probably his farm land) in the Hollow Creek township. His family consisted only of his wife, Georgie, and their 10 year old adopted daughter, Ella Summers.

Gates held the property until 1936 when he sold it for \$175 to Vera E. Hendrix (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 4Z, pg. 198). No mention was made of the cemetery. For the first time since the property was sold in 1881 the tract left black ownership. Vera Hendrix was the wife of Lexington farmer, Wilber B. Hendrix. Two sons, Kenneth (12) and Seth (10) are listed in the 1930 census.

In 1953 Vera E. Hendrix sold the tract to her sons, Kenneth E. and Seth M. Hendrix for \$5 and love and affection, maintaining a life estate (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 7N, pg. 268).

This deed also included a second  $8\frac{3}{4}$  parcel described as bounded "North by lands of Clyde Hendrix; East by lands of Hoyt Weed; South by Highway No. 1 and on the West by Mrs. Vera Hendrix."

Hendrix had obtained this parcel from the Lexington County Sheriff as a result of the property, owned by Martha Walker (Tract 2), being auctioned for taxes in 1939 (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB 4R, pg. 62). The  $8\frac{3}{4}$  acres was acquired for only \$33.35 (taxes of \$28.29 and interest of \$5.05).

The only Martha Walker we have been able to identify is a 60 year old African American widow listed in the 1910 census from Lexington township. She is listed on the same census page as Frank Drafts and his father, David Drafts, so it is likely the owner of the adjacent property. Her occupation was listed as farm laborer, along with her 40 year old widowed daughter, Jessa. Children living in the household

included Chris (19), working at a sawmill; Ada (12); Cora (7); Neddie (4); and Annie M. (2).

Vera Hendrix died intestate in 1965 (Lexington County Probate Court Bk 813, pg. 122) and the property passed to her sons. From Kenneth and Seth Hendrix the property passed to their children and, in 2006, the parcel, described as 16.58 acres, was sold to N.B.T. of Columbia, Inc. for \$746,100 (Lexington County Register of Deeds, DB R11023, pg. 209).

Thus, the study parcel is composed of two of the seven Drafts tracts (Nos. 2 and 3). The cemetery reservation is listed for Tract 3, which would have been the western half of the existing study tract. Although this does not precisely define the cemetery location, it does provide clear

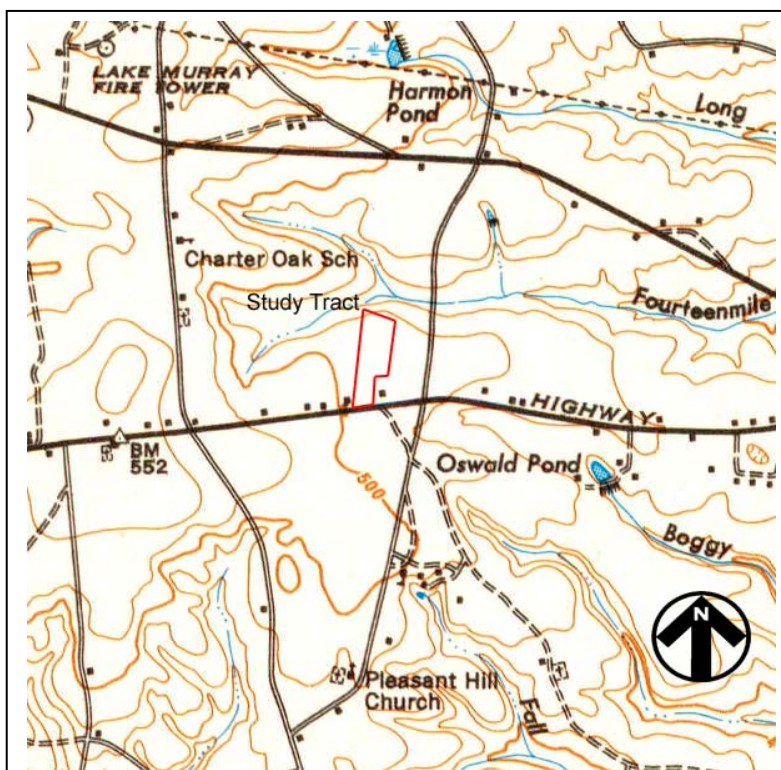


Figure 6. Portion of the 1946 Gilbert 15' topographic map.

evidence of its existence and does limit the search area.

### Identified Plats and Maps

Only two plats have been identified of the study tract. While a plat of the property division was prepared by Luther L. Lown [?], it was not recorded with any of the deeds. Probably retained by a family member, most likely Frank Drafts, it is likely lost.

The first plat dates from 1974 and is associated with the property's ownership by

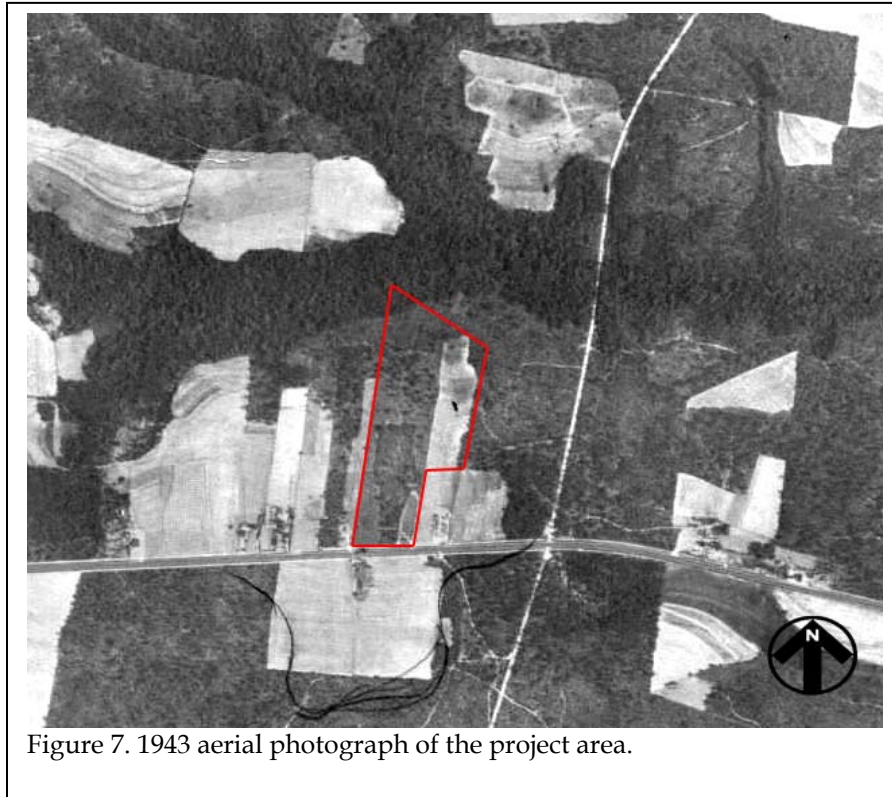


Figure 7. 1943 aerial photograph of the project area.

Kenneth E. and Seth M. Hendrix (Figure 4) . This shows the 16.8 acre parcel bounded by US 1 to the south, Oscar Hendrix to the west, Clyde Hendrix to the north, and Henry E. Harmon to the east. No other features are identified on the plat.

The second plat, from the sale of the property to N.B.T. of Columbia, Inc., provides more detail. US 1 (Augusta Road) bounds the tract to the south; to the west are lots of Henry Anderson, Novella Derrick, Walter Anderson, and Juanita Hendrix. Also running along the west side,

just beyond the property line, is a road identified as Cay Lane (shown as Coy Lane on other maps). To the north is property of Old Woodlands Development Corp. To the east is property still identified as belonging to Henry E. Harmon (Figure 5). The more recent survey identifies the property as 16.58 acres. Other than wetlands and the 100-year flood line, shown at the north end of the parcel, no other features are shown.

Other readily available maps, such as the 1922 USDA Soil Survey map of Lexington County and the 1946 Gilbert 15' topographic map, fail to identify any cemetery on the property. The 1922 soil survey may document a structure on the interior of the property - very possibly one of the structures along the western edge - the later 1946 topographic map shows only structures along Augusta Highway (Figure 6).

The failure to identify African American graveyards on maps of this period, however, is not unusual. In general, black graveyards were ignored until the second half of the twentieth century when USGS and USDA personnel

began to more regularly identify their locations during surveys. The graveyards, however, had to be visible - and identifiable - to the surveyors, so even then many were likely missed.

### Aerial Photographs

The earliest aerial photography of the project area is the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) images from 1938. These, however, are not immediately available. The next images are those from 1943 and they



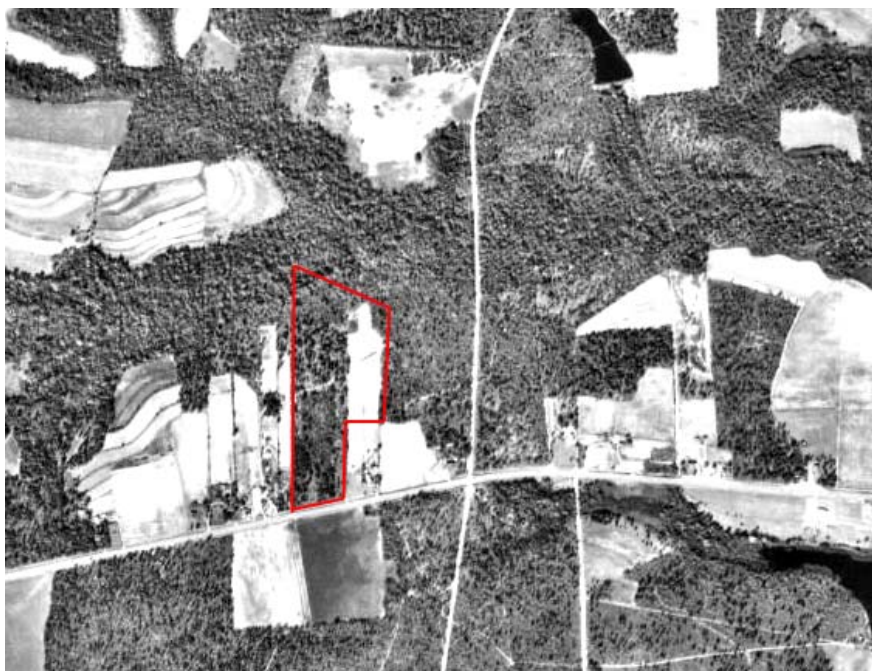


Figure 8. 1959 aerial photograph of the project area.

surrounded by lighter (and probably hardwood) trees. This suggests that the cemetery was located at the edge of the field and a probable location is between the road separating Tracts 3 and 4 and the old field (although the cemetery cannot be identified on the aerial photograph).

The next image available to us is the 1959 ASCS photography (Figure 8). The old field is barely visible, although there does appear to be road cutting across the middle of the two parcels. Otherwise the only substantial difference is

clearly show the project area (Figure 7). All seven tracts of the Drafts estate are identifiable in the image. By 1943 only a third of Tract 1 was under cultivation, all of Tract 2 was farmed, Tract 3 was entirely wooded, about half of Tract 4 was cultivated, and substantial portions of Tracts 5-7 were being cultivated. Of special interest, however, is Tract 3 where the cemetery has been identified from deed research. The imagery reveals that a central field was in different timber (probably pine) than the remainder of the parcel. This old field takes the shape of an upside-down bottle of darker vegetation



Figure 9. 1966 aerial photograph of the project area.



Figure 10. 1977 aerial photograph of the project area.

that Tract 4 has been placed under more intensive cultivation.

In 1966 we see that Tract 3, previously heavily wooded, appears to have been logged. The road cutting across the two parcels is still clearly visible and immediately north of this road, adjacent to the Tract 4 property line there is an area of darker vegetation which may represent an area avoided by logging. This *may* represent the graveyard although it is not especially convincing.

The 1977 aerial (Figure 10) shows relatively little change in the properties, although the darker vegetation on the property line between Tracts 3 and 4 is still visible. The quality of the images, intended for tracking agricultural land use, is not sufficient to allow a more definitive interpretation.

The 1981 aerials are no longer at a scale of 1:20,000, but were taken at a scale of 1:40,000, dramatically reducing their usefulness for this sort of research. The modern aerials, dating from 2006,

fail to identify any distinctive vegetation. They do, however, reveal that the project area had only become more densely wooded since 1970 - otherwise there appear to be no changes. While the road cutting through the property is no longer visible (being obscured by tree cover), its remnants were visible on Tract 2. The clearing and grubbing for development, however, has removed any visible evidence of this road that might be used to approximate the location of the darker vegetation

found on the 1966 and 1977 images.

### Documented Burials

The typical approach used for identifying a cemetery and then researching those buried there involves using existing stones to research death certificates (available after 1914). If certificates can be found, they typically identify the place of burial. Once the cemetery name is known, it is possible to scan death certificates looking for that specific name.

This process, however, was not possible at the Drafts graveyard since there were no marked burials. We were initially told by the sheriff's department that the cemetery name was reported to be Rawls. A day was spent searching for that name without success.

Unable to make any headway using this approach we began by attempting to identify death certificates for individuals which might reasonably be buried in the graveyard, given their



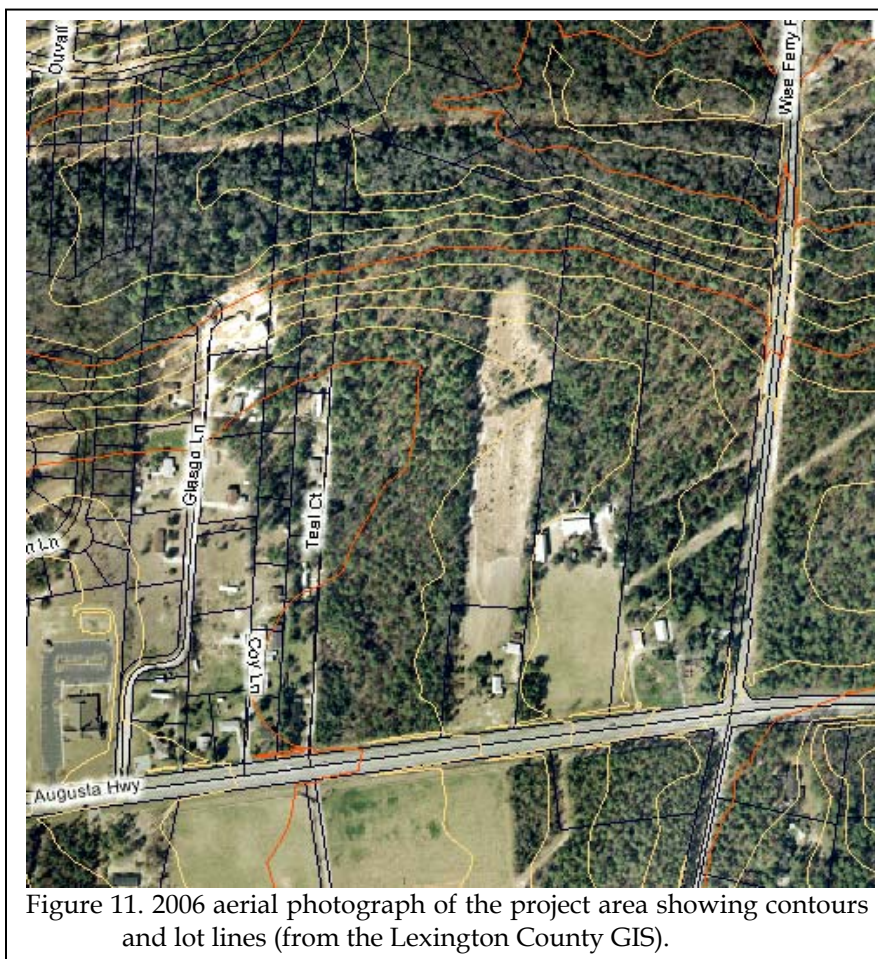


Figure 11. 2006 aerial photograph of the project area showing contours and lot lines (from the Lexington County GIS).

described as west of the Rawl lands. Since the 1880 census reveals a large number of both black and white Rawls in the immediate area, it is entirely plausible that Rawls might be included.

Similarly, we found several African American Strothers living on US 1 or Hendrix Road in the 1930 census - so this family may have chosen to use the cemetery begun by the Drafts.

Lessie B. Wise was identified in the 1930 census as the daughter of Callie and Lucy Wise, farm laborers who lived on US Highway 1, and who rented their house for \$2 a month. Ervin Summers was found in the 1910 census as a farmer living on Ferry Road (probably nearby Wise Ferry Road) who rented his farm. Ilena Richardson is found in the 1920 census as the wife of Mac Richardson, who was

association with the property. We identified that Frank Draft (1872-1933) and his wife Lillie Draft (1880-1939) were buried at Strothers and Rawl respectively. With no certainty that either name is necessarily correct for the graveyard on the study tract, we began scanning death certificates and identified 14 additional individuals associated with Strother (or some variation) . No additional burials were found attributed to Rawl. The identified individuals are shown in Table 1.

renting a farm in the Lexington area. Richard Norris, found in the 1910 census, was a single man renting his home and farming. This may be the same individual who, by 1920, was listed as a servant in the William Quick family living on Main Street in Lexington. Orange Izeral was the young son of Abraham Isreal according to the 1930 census. Abraham was a farm laborer, living on Midway Road in Lexington. Mary Corley may be the wife of Henry Corley, who in 1930 is identified as working for the public works department and living in Lexington.

We do have two members of the Drafts family included. The 1910 census identifies Lillie Drafts as the wife of Sim Drafts, a farmer renting his land in the Hollow Creek area.

Rawl, of course, is associated with an estate from which the Drafts property was carved by Levy Smith and we know that Tract 1 was

This diverse range of individuals is not unexpected at a traditional, rural, African American cemetery that would have been used by the community. Nevertheless, with the available information it is difficult to convincingly argue

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Table 1.  
Burials Identified in the Rawl or Strother Cemetery from Death Certificates

Name	Certificate	Birth	Death	Cemetery
Blackwell, Charlie	19078	1870	5/29/1935	Strathers
Brown, Mattie	9825	1870	6/16/1940	Strothers
Corley, Mary	2258	1906	1/31/1932	Strother
Drafts, Frank	18288	1872	11/1/1933	Strothers
Drafts, Lillie B.	10176	1880	5/1/1939	Rawl
Hall, John Henry	8209	1907	5/11/1940	Strothers
Iseral, Orange	9433	1923	6/5/1935	Strathers
Jackson, Henry	14608	1887	9/4/1940	Strothers
Keisler, Mary A.	19516	1938	12/21/1940	Strothers
Norris, Richard	16205	1858	8/8/1921	Strothers
Parker, Edith	8207	1903	4/21/1940	Strather
Rawl, Martha A.	4351	1911	3/6/1935	Strathers
Rawl, Rose Ella	10105	1932	6/8/1933	Strothers
Richardson, Ilena	18012	1896	12/22/1939	Strather
Richardson, Joe	19314	1902	11/27/1940	Strothers
Strother, James	18010	1939	12/5/1939	Strother
Strother, Lula	13688	1880	7/6/1920	Strother
Strother, Sarah Pearl	6016	1941	5/9/1942	Strother
Strother, Willie C.	11511	1917	5/14/1918	Strother
Summers, Ervin	2312	1863	2/10/1942	Strothers
Wise, Lessie B.	12283	1915	8/4/1935	Strathers
Wise, Monroe	10175	1896	7/17/1939	Strother

recordation in family Bibles, or similar official or period documentation, it is virtually impossible to prove a particular individual is buried in a graveyard. Nevertheless, it is often possible to show sufficient evidence, such as ownership, family connections, or neighborhood connects, to make burial in a particular cemetery likely. This is the case for many of the individuals identified in Table 2.

The Drafts and Walkers are both known to have been African American families

that the graveyard on the study parcel is either the Rawl or Strother cemetery identified from death certificates.

owning the property – so their names are entirely plausible. The Anderson’s own adjacent property which may have derived from the Rawls estate referenced in several of the previous deeds – and

**Reported Burials**

Distinct from burials documented by death certificates, there are a number of reported burials. The list shown as Table 2 was provided by the Lexington County Coroner and we believe it was provided by individuals claiming ancestry to those buried in the graveyard. While oral history is a powerful and important tool, we believe that it requires confirmation and lists such as this are difficult to confirm. Absent death certificates, period obituaries,

Table 2.  
Individuals Reported to be Buried on the Property

Anderson, Av ___ R.	Jones, Carolina
Drafts, Davis & Susie	Jones, Charlie
Drafts, Edwin & Lavinia	Jones, Ida
Drafts, Frank & Lil	Jones, Minnia
Drafts, Fred	Jones, Morris
Drafts, Mary	Jones, Nino
Holmes, Abraham & Lisa Ann	Jones, William & Florence
Holmes, Ada	Kinard, Jessie Holmes
Holmes, Augustina	Perry, Jane Draft
Holmes, Jacob Sr.	Walker, Allen & Mary
Holmes, Joseph	Walker, Elder A.
Holmes, Meshach	Walker, John H.
Holmes, Shad	Walker, Magaline
Holmes, Thurmond	

at least one Anderson is shown on the list of expected burials. The relationship of the Holmes, Jones, and Perry families is not immediately clear. The one Perry burial was obviously a Drafts who married a Perry.

In an effort to better understand those reported to be buried in the graveyard, each name was searched for in census records between 1870 and 1930 (not including 1890, which no longer exists for South Carolina).

Not surprisingly, most of the names could not be identified. This may be the result of transcription errors in the list, individuals going by several names, or family inaccuracies. Nevertheless, several names were identified and these help us better understand the possible use of the graveyard.

### Drafts

The reference to Davis Drafts is likely David or Dave Draft, whose wife was Susie or Susan. He has been previously discussed and was the first owner of the parcel on which a reservation for the cemetery was later made.

Edward Drafts is found as a 20 year old black farm laborer on the 1880 census. He is shown as married to Levinie (not Lavinia), listed as 18 and a laborer. Both were shown as illiterate and having a 1-year old child, Ella.

Brief mention has also been made of Frank Drafts - a son of David Drafts identified in the 1900 census as married to Lilian (not significantly different from the shortened version, Lil, shown in Table 1).

Fred and Mary Drafts have not been identified, so their relationship to the remainder of the family cannot be identified through these records.

### Holmes

Abraham Holmes and his wife Sila Ann

(not Lisa Ann as reported in Table 1) are found in the 1900 census. Abraham was shown as a 51 year old farmer, married 11 years to Sila Ann, 36 years old. He was listed as a farmer who was able to read and write. His wife, listed as a house keeper was not literate. Also in the household were four children: David (19), Izzie (11), Jacob (8), and Nathaniel (6). David, a farm laborer, was unable to read or write, while his younger sister, Izzie, had apparently been able to attend school and was shown as literate.

Abraham is again shown on the 1910 census, living on Georges Mill Road. By this time he was a widower, living with two children, David and Nathan. In 1910, however, Abraham was shown as a cotton mill laborer, as was 18 year old Nathan. Only David was still tied to the land as a farm laborer.

Joseph Holmes is likely the child of Thearon Holmes, listed in the 1900 census (see the Kinard family, below).

Surprisingly, we were unable to positively identify any of the other Holmeses listed in Table 1. We did find a 75 year old Jacob Holmes, Sr. in 1880, although the listing was for Charleston. Abraham also had a child, Jacob; but we have not been able to identify this individual as an adult.

### Jones

We have identified William and Floris Jones in the 1930 census. William was a 60 year old individual living on a farm and paying \$6/month rental for his house. He was also working at a turpentine distillery. His wife, Floris, was 50 years old. Also living in the house were five of their children, including Odell (20), L.F. (19), Ethel L. (18), J.H. (7), and Robert D. (3). Odell and L.F. both worked at a saw mill. Also in the home was Ibabelle Strother, listed as a 14 year old granddaughter.

This is likely the same William Jones found in the 1910 census, married to Florence Jones. At that time William was a farmer; his wife



and several older children were listed as farm labor for the home farm. The children at that time were Bell (16), Elvin (14), Doll (10), Eva (8), Emry (6), Led (5), and Mook (3). Florence is listed as having given birth to 11 children, 9 of whom were still living (indicating that two had already moved away from home or had died).

No other Jones were identified in the census records.

### **Kinard**

The one Kinard identified is Jessie Holmes Kinard, indicating intermarriage with the Homes family. A Jessie Kinard was found in the 1900 census, identified as a 21 year old widow living with her parents, Arthur and Martha Walker. Also in the household their other children, Morijay (15), Clisby (18), and Thearon Holmes (25). Thearon is listed as single, although it appears that she had been married to a Holmes and had given birth to five children, four of whom were still alive: John B. (10), Mattie E. (6), Joseph (3), and Bulah (5) – all listed as the granddaughters and grandsons of Arthur and Martha Walker. Jessie Kinard had two children: Christopher (6) and Edward (2) – they, too, were listed as the grandsons of Arthur and Martha Walker.

This family, more clearly than any of the others, reveals the complex interconnections between – at the very least – the Holmes and Walker families.

### **Walker**

Allen and Mary Walker were identified in the 1880 census. He was a 37 year old farm laborer and Mary E. was his 24 year old wife, whose occupation was listed as “keeping house.” Both were identified as illiterate. His association with the property appears to be through his wife’s family since the census reveals that also living in his household was Hariett Rawls, listed as “Mother.” Children included Lucinda (7), Mattie (4), Magdaline (3), and J. Henry (2). Two of these children – John H. and Magaline [sic] – are

reported to be buried in the graveyard.

The only Walker not immediately identified is Elder A.

### **Oral History**

Oral history can be a valuable tool in cemetery research, although memories fade and locations change dramatically with time. Moreover, memories can be modified through group suggestion or leading questions. We need only to look at the controversy surrounding eyewitness testimony in court cases to fully appreciate the wide range of opinion (see, for example, Ebbesen and Konecni 1997).

While it is critical that oral history be independently confirmed and buttressed, it is always a mistake to discount the reports and memories of the local community.

In this particular case, it is possible that individuals have recollections of the cemetery location or size. It might also be possible for relatives and descendants to unravel the complexity of the various families. Or they may have memories of what the cemetery was called.

Unfortunately, in spite of several calls and requests for interviews, our calls were not returned. In addition, the interviews and data collected by the Lexington County Sheriff’s Department was not available at this time of this report.

As a consequence, we attempted to gather together reports made in the media, as well as items relayed to us by both the offices of the Lexington County Coroner and Lexington County Sheriff. These are reported for the record; while we have made occasional, parenthetical comments, none of the reports can be independently varied by us at this time.

- **Reports of the number of burials range from 32 to 100.** We have no good means of estimating the number of individuals.

A quarter acre could hold upwards of 150 bodies. Traditional African American cemetery densities can exceed or be below that number. These graveyards, however, often have poorly defined boundaries, so limits are frequently difficult to establish.

not, however, spoken with any Hendrix relatives.

- **The cemetery is reported to have begun at a fence along the western property edge and extended eastward for an indeterminate distance.** This is consistent with our observations of the aerial photographs, showing darker vegetation at the western edge of the property.
- **Revious Amaker reported that she knew of the cemetery. She also reported that a previous owner of the property was told to be aware of the cemetery.**
- **Walter Anderson reported that his great-grandmother or great-great-grandmother (on his mother's side) is buried in the graveyard (reported accounts differ).** Our research has identified at least five different Andersons: Melvin, Jane, Mary, Henry, and Walter. This claim is entirely plausible.
- **One report claims that family members lost the land 70 years ago because of unpaid taxes.** While the historic research does indicate that Edward Drafts lost his share of the property for defaulting on loans, the tract was purchased by another family member. Martha Walker, the owner of Tract 2, did lose her property for unpaid taxes in 1939. However, we have found no evidence that the parcel on which the cemetery is located, Tract 3, was ever lost – it was sold by family members to a third party.
- **One individual claimed that graves were tended into the late 1950s, at which time the owners prevented further access.** The owners at that time would have been Kenneth E. and Seth M. Hendrix. We have

## CONCLUSIONS

The historical research reveals that in 1881 an elderly white farmer, Levi Smith, sold David Drafts, a freedman living in the Lexington area, a 55 acre parcel. It is likely that Drafts farmed the land and raised a large family. Upon his death between 1900 and 1905, his property was equally divided among his heirs. For reasons that are not entirely clear, this process was not completed until around 1911 when the property was divided into seven equal tracts, each identified as  $8\frac{3}{4}$  acres (this indicates that the Levi Smith property must have actually been just over 61 acres – an error not uncommon for the period).

These tracts were numbered from west to east and it seems likely that the relatively profitable albeit small Drafts farm was reduced to the status of marginal cultivation. Nevertheless, various descendants, represented by the family names Anderson, Cortman (or Cartman), Crapps (or Crappe, Trappe), Deshade, Drafts, Fields, Gardner, Johnson, Robertson, Sheppard, and Walker continued to live on various tracts. It seems probable that these family names represent the core of those individuals buried in the cemetery.

The study tract includes two of these parcels, numbered Tracts 2 and 3, that had been acquired by Vera Hendrix and passed through her children, eventually being purchased by N.B.T. of Columbia for development.

However, one of the deeds, transferring the property from the heirs of Harriet Cortman to Andrew Gates in 1927, specifically reserved a cemetery. The size was not specifically identified, although by that date the individuals most familiar with the property did not expect it to be greater than  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre. The cemetery boundaries were to be determined and agreed upon between the Cortmans and Gates, but there is no evidence

that this occurred (for example, no plat was filed showing the cemetery). The  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre, however, should be considered the minimal size of the cemetery, accepting the potential that it may have continued to grow. In addition it would be inappropriate to assume that this  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre could be simply platted as a square or rectangle. African American cemeteries are often amorphous.

The next time the property was conveyed, when Gates sold the parcel to Hendrix in 1936 – nine years later – there was no mention made of the cemetery. Occuring over 70 years ago, it is impossible to know the reason for this; it certainly seems implausible that in only nine years Gates would completely forget about the cemetery. Regardless, the last legal mention of the cemetery we have identified is the 1927 deed.

This work has resulted in the compilation of a kinship or lineage chart for the drafts family that, while certainly not complete, begins to assist in better understanding the relationships of at least some individuals thought to be buried in the graveyard.

In addition to the family names identified as descendants of David Drafts, we have also identified a series of names that *may* be associated with the cemetery, based on limited evidence of the cemetery name. These include Blackwell, Corley, Isreal, Norris, Rawl, Richardson, Strother, Summers, and Wise. While these names cannot – at this time – be definitively linked to the cemetery, representatives did live in the immediate area. It would not be uncommon or unheard of for poor, African American tenant farmers to use a nearby cemetery for the burial of their family members.

Still in progress at the time of this research is an effort to identify additional graves using

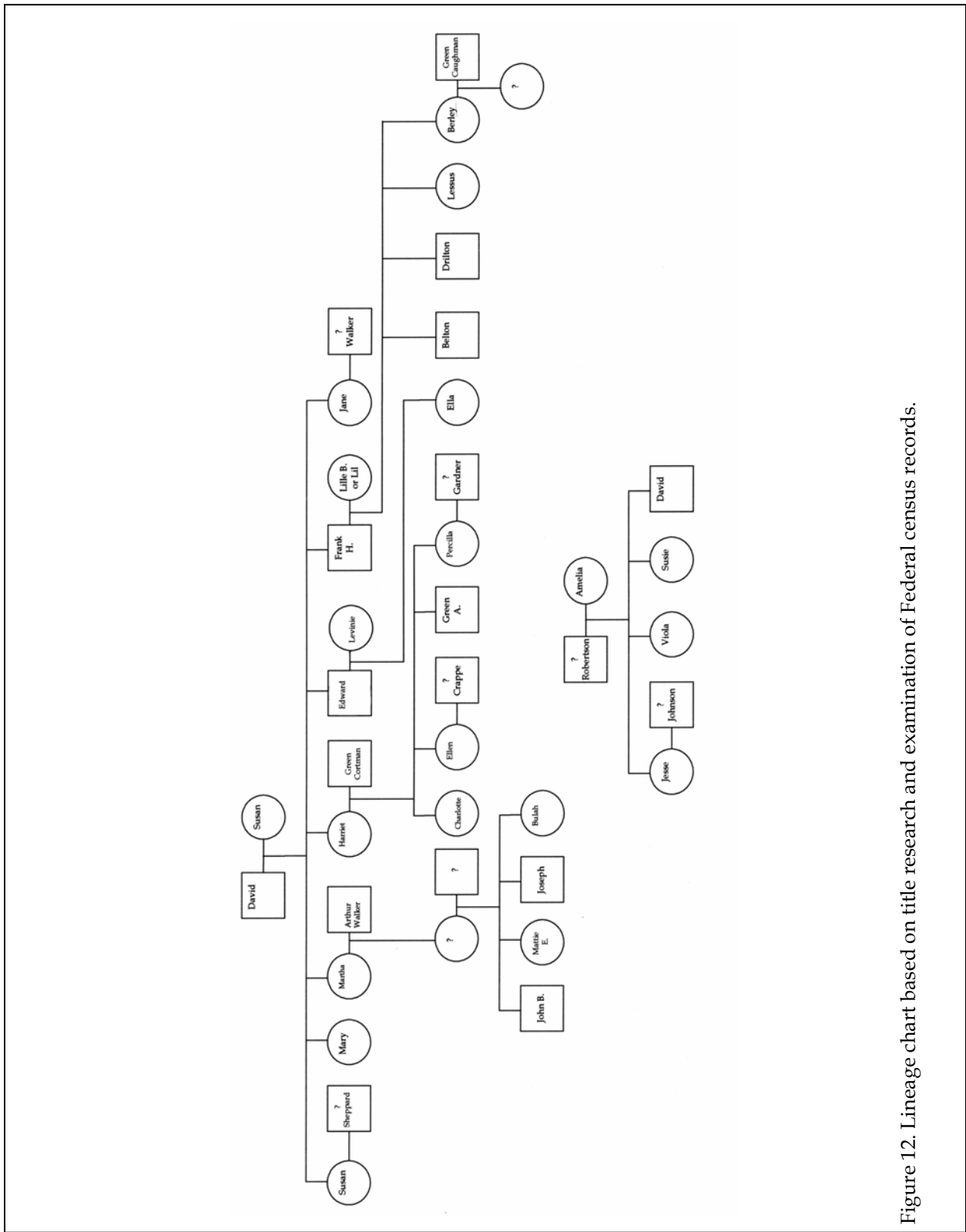


Figure 12. Lineage chart based on title research and examination of Federal census records.

## CONCLUSIONS

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ground penetrating radar, analysis of the existing remains, and an effort to recover more the missing portions of the two skeletons previously recovered by Lexington County. Efforts will continue to make contact with posited family members and solicit their input, although such efforts thus far have not been successful.



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**Chicora Foundation, Inc.**  
PO Box 8664 • 861 Arbutus Drive  
Columbia, SC 29202-8664  
Tel: 803-787-6910  
Fax: 803-787-6910  
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