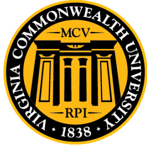

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Death in the Lowcountry: The Material Culture of Burial in Hampton County, South Carolina

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of History at Virginia Commonwealth University

by

Quinn Thomas Terry

Director: Ryan K. Smith

Professor, History Department

Abstract

DEATH IN THE LOWCOUNTRY: THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF BURIAL IN HAMPTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

By Quinn Thomas Terry, M.A.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of History at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2023

Major Director: Ryan K. Smith, Professor of History

This research examines the markers of five burial grounds situated in Hampton County, South Carolina from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These surveys, in tandem with the history of the region, contribute to the burial scholarship of the Southern United States. Hampton County's burial landscape offers extended understandings of the culture of death in the South Carolina Lowcountry and the markers of the region offer a rich and varied burial landscape that further understandings of rural peoples in the South.

Vita

Quinn Thomas Terry (he/they) was born on December 25, 1995, in Augusta, Georgia. He grew up in Williston, South Carolina. They received their Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of South Carolina in 2018. He currently resides in the mountains of North Carolina with their husband.

This work is dedicated to my grandfather.

Spending time with you and watching you learn about your home

with boyish delight was the best gift I could ask for.

Introduction

"Cemeteries are spatial, temporal, and visual expressions of death that may tell us a great deal about not only the people who created them but also those interred."

-Christina Brooks, "Enclosing Their Immortal Souls"

Hampton County boasts small towns baked in the sun in the southwest corner of South Carolina [Map 1]. Part of the South Carolina Lowcountry, Hampton County is bordered on the west by the Savannah River, the Salkehatchie on the east, and split up the middle by the Coosawhatchie [Map 2]. The incorporated towns and unincorporated communities that dot the landscape show the tell-tale signs of once booming railroad and mill towns that have since withered slowly after the completion of I-95 in 1978. In 2020, Hampton County's population of 18,561 constituted .36% of the total population of South Carolina. The median household income was $38,178, while the state median was $54,864.[1] These numbers present a rural and categorically poorer area of the state, a contrast to idyllic views of large oaks with Spanish moss on their limbs arching over old plantation homes. Picturesque versions of the Lowcountry include large plantation homes and wealth, a concept that is heavily romanticized. Charleston and Beaufort dominate our understanding of the region, despite the entirety of the Lowcountry comprising two-thirds of the entire state. Drawing from historian Stephanie McCurry's *Masters of Small Worlds*, I explore the historical erasure of the middle and lower classes in Hampton County's history in tandem with modern understandings of the region as predominantly lower class. [2]

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[1] Figures per U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts for the State of South Carolina and for Hampton County.

[2] Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 30.

This thesis explores how the burial landscape of the Hampton County region changed over the course of the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and what these changes tell us about an entire area of the Lowcountry that has been repeatedly ignored in historiography. To do so, I utilize material culture, oral history, and historiography on equal footing to understand a region of South Carolina that is frequently overlooked. This region stands to further elucidate the Lowcountry and bring a more comprehensive understanding of the common person's world views and values during large historically significant periods of the United States, the history of the American southeast, and the unique region of the Lowcountry. Above all, this thesis engages in an understanding of the burial landscape and its markers as more than objects from the past, informing the researcher of a separate historical reality. Instead, I argue that these burial grounds can and do inform the landscape today. In doing so, this work offers an alternative to the otherwise established narrative of burial in the United States, much as scholars like Diana Combs have widened the scope of grave analysis from New England. The burial grounds of Hampton County, when studied as not individual relics but as parts of a greater cultural whole, can and do elucidate modern understandings of the continued effects of race, power, and hegemony in the South Carolina Lowcountry into the present day.

To accomplish a cohesive understanding of Hampton County, its people, and its place in the history of the South Carolina Lowcountry, I have placed burial markers with little to no information on equal footing with ornate marble markers that offer the viewer a plethora of information. A clear disparity becomes evident in the level of analysis that is possible between these two forms of markers – an inequality that I believe encompasses the struggle of the historian. The wealthy often leave more written information behind than the average person, both in life and in death. This thesis argues that this disparity should be displayed in our research,

working to give all source materials in the burial ground the time and energy they require to allow a deeper understanding of all people in the past. It is my hope that by contextualizing all markers against their fellows, an ornate marker may help answer questions regarding the plain cedar marker, and vice versa. This research works to provide a pathway in burial studies in which every marker is included and analyzed to the best of our ability. In the cases where little can be discovered about a burial, it is imperative that it is still included in our analyses, if only to say that we now have more questions than before.

In parallel to the dangers of our modern political dialogue of rural America, Stephanie McCurry states that "the very presence of a yeomanry, although perfectly evident on the manuscript census, had been long overlooked […] nowhere, then, did the inclusion of a yeomanry promise more dramatic historiographical consequences than in this, the vanguard of the Confederacy."[3] I suggest that Hampton County became increasingly excluded from common conceptions of the South Carolina Lowcountry between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the predominant view of the region became increasingly aligned with a rural lower class. This, I believe, is partly due to the formation of Hampton County in 1878, splitting it from previous historical linkages to Beaufort District (later Beaufort County). The split was due to the county's namesake, Wade Hampton, at the time of his race for the South Carolina governorship in 1876, in which he relied heavily on the Lost Cause rhetoric of the Confederacy. His success in running and subsequent governorship painted the region of Hampton County and its constituents as a predominantly white, conservative region. This understanding persists today, and is further skewed by the region becoming aligned with a low-income majority.[4] This thesis utilizes a

[3] McCurry, *Masters,* vii.
[4] For a broad understanding of Wade Hampton, conservatism in the Hampton County region, and the political demarcation between the upper Lowcountry and the coastal regions, see Scott W. Poole, "Religion, gender, and the

blended method of material culture, oral history, and alternative research methods in parallel with traditional historiography to create a picture of the landscape and the vast majority of those who called it home. In this pursuit, the graves of the region offer much to an attentive and dedicated party.

The burial grounds of Hampton County are useful sources because much of the written record from the antebellum period is missing or destroyed. Most documentation prior to the Civil War is exceedingly hard to find due to most of it being burned during Sherman's march. The documentation that does remain is dominated by the cities of Charleston and Beaufort. Many documents are spread far and wide in various family papers collections at different archival institutions. There are genealogists and scholars that spend decades tracking down all the information pertinent to their interests. The most in depth and applicable scholarly historical works I've found for the early history Beaufort District, prior to the formation of Hampton County in 1878, are Lawrence S. Rowland, Alexander Moore, and George C. Rogers Jr.'s *History of Beaufort County, South Carolina: Volume I.* This study offers useful in-depth knowledge on the colonial beginnings of South Carolina up until 1861. Unfortunately, they rarely concern themselves with the hinterlands of the Lowcountry outside of scant statistics, and only then to explore the lives of elites who only spent part of the year in the area. McCurry's work is an effective antithesis to the elite focus of Rowland et al., detailing the yeomanry of upper St. Peter's Parish in the antebellum period. McCurry takes painstaking effort to detail the lifestyle of small yeoman households through the lens of gender, race, and class.[5] Together, these

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lost cause in South Carolina's 1876 Governer's Race:'Hampton or Hell!'," *The Journal of Southern History* 68, no. 3 (Aug. 2002): 573-598.

[5] Lawrence S. Rowland, Alexander Moore, & George C. Rogers Jr., *History of Beaufort County*, *South Carolina: Volume 1, 1514-1861* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1996); McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds.*

two works offer a thorough starting point for understanding the landscape and its people – which, in turn, informs the current day. These studies, when combined with the material culture of the burial ground, are of the utmost utility to understanding the Hampton County region.

I have found inspiration from a multitude of sources on how to approach this thesis – digging ever deeper as I discovered more in the realms of thanatology, material culture, and necrogeography. The rich foundations upon which I've built my methods come from Diana Williams Combs and M. Ruth Little's work in burial scholarship for South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina, Alan Nash's expansion of Fred Kniffen's concept of necrogeography, and Levi Van Sant's understanding of social power on plantation geography and its effects on the Lowcountry landscape. Through these backgrounds I have found that the gravestone cannot simply be a gravestone. The methodology one utilizes to understand it cannot pull from one field or one school of thought alone. A burial ground and its landscape offer a cultural marker of common beliefs of the period, a remnant of the past we can no longer access, a piece of art history, and, when compared to one another, an indication of social power and access to resources throughout history.[6]

Diana Williams Combs' *Early Gravestone Art in Georgia and South Carolina* offers much on the mortuary art of the Lowcountry and rightly argues that Southern mortuary art became American folk art outside of European or northern imitations. Her focus in South Carolina involves the more recognizable and historic burial grounds of Charleston and Beaufort

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[6] The works from which I am pulling are the following: Diana William Combs, *Early Gravestone Art in Georgia and South Carolina* (Athens, N.C.: University of Georgia Press, 1986); M. Ruth Little *Sticks & Stones: Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemarkers* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Alan Nash, "'That this too, too solid flesh would melt…': Necrogeography, gravestones, cemeteries, and deathscapes," *Progress in Physical Geography* 42, no. 2 (2018) 548-565; and Levi Van Sant, "'Into the Hands of Negroes': Reproducing Plantation Geographies in the South Carolina Lowcountry," *Geoforum* 77 (2016): 196-205, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2016.10.019.

– arguing that the work of stone carvers such as Thomas Walker created a unique Southern culture of mortuary art that is worthy of study and a part of mortuary understandings in the United States as a whole. Her research is a love letter to the iconic stones of Charleston and Beaufort in the eighteenth century. Her work filled a hole in the scholarship of funerary carving traditions in the late 1980s and rightly identifies the stones in her volume as "the key to any future analysis of southern stonecarving."[7] Combs' meticulous study of popular art forms, architectural styles, and the world within which artists lived and experienced the world exemplifies the multidisciplinary nature of burial ground studies.

M. Ruth Little's *Sticks & Stones* offers a more inclusive research methodology in which all gravemarkers – formal iconic stones, wooden markers, and locally made concrete – are included as valuable pieces in the puzzle to understanding North Carolinian death ways and burial grounds. Little also includes commercial gravestones in her analysis, an exciting and important addition for those interested in the burial landscape into the nineteenth century and beyond. Little treats locally formed concrete markers, and their artisans, with as much care as any other marker in her surveys.[8] Through an intensive overview of the immigration patterns of North Carolina; Scottish, German, and African stonecarving traditions in small communities across time; and the location and transport of stone from North Carolinian quarries, Little proves that it pays to invest in all that touches the burial landscape. It is my humble hope to extend the work of Combs and Little chronologically and geographically. Both scholars prove that to understand the cemetery, one must understand the economic realities of the area, the changes in demographics, the landscape itself, and a variety of other pertinent factors in parallel to the

[7] Combs, *Early Gravestone Art.* xi.
[8] Little explores the work of concrete gravemarker artists such as Renial Culbreth and Issiah McEachin, who made markers for their communities in Cumberland County, NC – effectively arguing that burial art does not have to be a large professionalized market to be worthy of study and notice. Little, *Sticks & Stones,* 253-258.

artifacts in question to contextualize them, see their biases and reflections of cultural beliefs, and recognize them as valuable parts of the historical whole.

Alan Nash's expansion of the term necrogeography, as coined by Fred Kniffen, informs the practical elements of burial ground surveying. Kniffen's theory of necrogeography is quietly tucked in a piece published in 1967 and is confoundingly vague. His explanation is short and sweet: the "geographical study of burial practices."[9] Alan Nash takes issue with the broadness of Kniffen's definition, identifying the absolute necessity of interdisciplinary work in the field of mortuary art and burial grounds. For Nash, only a holistic approach will appropriately uncover all the burial ground has to offer – imploring the researcher to "consider all aspects of our world as equal actors in the outcomes that we see – outcomes that since they are socially constructed will be time, place, and culture specific."[10] To this point, this thesis is in wholehearted agreement. In the simplest terms, this thesis is a necrogeographical one. This means that it looks at burial grounds in a specific geographical region, situates them in the historiography of the Lowcountry, and contextualizes the locations of various burial grounds against one another to understand the *why* of the *where* of burial in Hampton County. Location or place is used in variable ways throughout this research. In some instances, the location of markers in relation to one another in the same burial ground is important to understand family dynamics. In others, the location of nearby burial grounds is considered to understand marker choices and the materials used. The placement of burials in the southern United States is of utmost importance in the dynamics of power – in tandem with McCurry's thesis of power interacting with space in the culture of Lowcountry South Carolina, burial spaces *must* be examined in relation to these social

[9] Fred Kniffen, "Geographical Record: Necrogeography in the United States," *Geographical Review* 57, no. 3 (Jul. 1967): 427.
[10] Nash, "Necrogeography," 550.

dynamics. Gender, class, race, and religion all affected the burial space because they affected the individuals who chose, designed, and maintained the burial arena.

Levi Van Sant's "Reproducing Plantation Geographies" is incredibly useful for furthering understandings of the politics of power and control over space. In this study, Van Sant meticulously details the efforts of elite white southerners and the state government to maintain hegemonic control of former plantation lands, and therefore continue controlling the labor of Black and poor white South Carolinians. Van Sant posits that the commercial transitions of the South during and after Reconstruction were not simply "a project of modernizing agriculture but also served to articulate the agricultural improvement in the service of white supremacy."[11] The effects of this reiterated land dispossession marked not only the lived landscape of Hampton County, but the burial landscape through the professionalization of death. This thesis works to marry Van Sant's scholar-activism regarding the Southern landscape and Nash's theory of necrogeography to analyze these stones not only for what they tell us as objects themselves but how they signify the racial legacies and cultural touchstones from the past that manifest in our present.

A brief note on the boundaries selected for this study and terminology is required. Hampton County, as it is known today, has experienced a large amount of boundary changes and varied place names from the colonial period to the present day. As discussed above, the name Hampton County was applied to the area in 1878 and was previously known as Beaufort District or Beaufort County. Until 1868, Beaufort County was known as Beaufort District, and modern-day Hampton County spanned across the upper regions of the parishes of Prince William, St.

[11] Van Sant, "Reproducing Plantation Geographies," 30.

Luke, and St. Peter. Since that time, small pieces of the southern and northern boundaries were taken in 1912 for Jasper County and 1919 for Allendale, respectively. Due to these relatively recent county line changes, some gravesites examined in this thesis are located in what are now the northernmost points of Jasper County and the southernmost points of Allendale County. Throughout this work, I utilize place names for the region as they were applicable for the period under discussion, as upper Beaufort District and the upper regions of the aforementioned parishes include the region now known as Hampton County. When referencing Hampton County and parts of Allendale and/or Jasper County, the term Hampton County region is used. All of these place names reference the same area as denoted in Maps 1, 2, 4, and 6, located in Appendix 1.

In terms of the population of the region, this work utilizes the terms Native American, Afro-American, Euro-American, Black American, and white American when and where they make the most sense for the groups being discussed. Afro-American and Euro-American are used in colonial contexts or where the legacy of these different world views apply, such as inherited African and European cosmologies regarding death and dying. White American, Black American, and Native American are used in all other instances, with the understanding that these delineations do not always match lived realities for many groups that do not fit neatly in separate racial categorizations.

As for the stones and burial grounds themselves, Combs' lexicon utilizes an impressive combination of highly technical terminology from architecture, silversmithing, and furniture making. This lexicon is of utmost importance for a professional who is familiar with the language, but I found myself lost amongst the technical terms. In this sense, Combs' photographs are incomparably important. Reading an overly technical written description of something leaves

the reader possibly more confused on the shape of an object than a simple description. Since the visuals of this study are relegated to Appendix 1, I have adopted a few of Combs' terms, where useful, as well as borrowed headstone shape terminology from modern day memorial businesses. See Fig. 1 for this reference.[12] I have endeavored to make these descriptions as accessible as possible.

Burial ground(s) is used as a generic reference to any location in which multiple burials are present, and the plural as a collective phrase when I am referencing the funerary landscape of the Hampton County region at large. Churchyard is used for burial grounds connected to a place of worship. Cemetery is used for large burial grounds that are run by a private or municipal organization. Rural cemetery refers to a large burial ground, also known as gardens of the dead, and located outside of town limits. The Hampton County region does not boast a true rural cemetery, in my estimation, outside of perhaps Salkehatchie/Ebenezer, which is located at the very bottom of the county and is technically split between Beaufort and Colleton Counties as well. In any case, the large and popular burial grounds are not the innate focus of this research.

This thesis is presented in two chapters. Chapter One details the history of the Hampton County region, exploring the landscape itself from the colonial era and into the early twentieth century. Using this historical foundation, the chapter will then explore the legacy of the Walker/White stonecarving dynasty to contextualize their effect on the markers in Hampton County. Finally, the chapter explores the industrialization of the area and the effects of the rise of the funeral industry in both Black and white populations in the region. Chapter Two is dedicated to an analysis of the grave markers and burial grounds themselves. By analyzing the frequency of

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[12] Terms borrowed from Combs will be referenced as such and will be utilized to link headstones to architectural styles. The only term I utilize for stone shape that departs from the memorial guide is utilizing the term pedimented instead of peon for slabs with a pointed top.

various burial styles, motifs, markers, and burial methods, I present a landscape of not only burial but an exploration of life in the upper regions of the Lowcountry– a region that is ignored in scholarship for the metropolises of Charleston and Beaufort. Ultimately, I argue that modern day Hampton County must be understood through the cultural values and dynamics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I develop this argument through the burial landscape, which I approach in an interdisciplinary manner to fully realize the possibilities of alternative methods of scholarship. Through these methodologies, Hampton County offers a viable addition to the scholarship of burial and the material culture of death in the Lowcountry.

This is a research project born of an intense curiosity in gravesites and memorialization efforts that are at once completely familiar and surprisingly novel. The intense diversity and variable landscape of mortuary art in Hampton County is just as worthy of study and equally as fascinating as the burial spaces of Charleston and Beaufort. This thesis is based on field research in twenty-six burial grounds throughout the Hampton County region, of which five are afforded in-depth analysis, with markers from the remaining burial grounds offering contextualization. The majority of the markers included in this study date from the 1840s to the 1910s, with outliers as early as the 1810s and as late as the 1950s. It is important to note that Confederate memorialization, particularly as a result of the Lost Cause movement, is a topic in which an entire thesis could be written and is not within the scope of the research. Of the twenty-six burial grounds surveyed, Confederate memorialization is present in eleven.[13] My goal here is to understand the material culture of burial across a larger period and within the framework of

[13] In this case, Confederate memorialization includes the presence of an official military marker, a commemorative plaque, or the presence of a metal CSA marker placed on the grave – an example of which can be seen in Fig. 41, Appendix One.

many cultural periods, not just the Civil War and its effects.[14] More of importance to this work is understanding the changes seen in the material culture of Hampton County's burial grounds throughout the professionalization of the funeral industry and the industrialization of burial markers.

Through these surveys, I have discovered a surprising amount of variation and intensely artistic stylized stones – one burial ground may feature hand poured concrete stones with impressed letters, crudely hand carved concrete, wooden markers, fields of blank stones for lost children, and beautifully hand carved marble stones. Likewise, these spaces are characterized by fallen and fragmented stones, vandalism, funereal plaques with long forgotten or missing letters, or the lack of markers at all. This highlights a notable wealth disparity that followed many in Hampton County to the grave. This intensely variated burial landscape indicates a diverse economic overlay to an overlooked part of South Carolina and refutes the notion that only poor folks live in one part of the state, whilst the wealthy lived in elite enclaves.

[14] For more on the Lost Cause movement and its place in the Southern burial ground, see Carolina E. Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations & the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008) and William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

Chapter One: Burial Customs and History of the Region

"The field of my research kept expanding just when I thought I had reached the outer limits, and each time I was pushed further, both backward and forward in time, from my point of departure."

-Phillipe Ariès, The Hour of Our Death

As elucidated above, the Hampton County region has been subject to mutable boundary lines that frequently changed throughout the colonial period and into the early twentieth century. It is necessary to have an outline of the evolution of the region from Native lands-Lords Proprietorship-Royal Colony-Beaufort District-Beaufort County-Hampton County to situate the people that lived there on the landscape, both physically and culturally. A brief overview of English colonial ventures in the region throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the Native peoples who lived there is provided to understand how the culture of what would become South Carolina formed, as well as demonstrate the central role that Atlantic slavery took in the creation of the colony from the very beginning of English contact.

After understanding these early themes, the chapter details stonecarving through the Walker/White family and the professionalization of the funeral industry in context within Reconstruction, the New South, and the industrialization of the area via railroad. The mortuary landscape must be understood in these contexts to understand the effects they had on cultural values of the time and attitudes towards death. I argue that industrialization and commercialization wrought significant changes on the burial landscape of upper Beaufort District due to their affects over a very small amount of time via the development of the railroads. Markers made with alternative materials such as concrete were now readily available and more affordable than they had ever been. This new mode of transportation facilitated the formation of many of the towns that remain in the area and allowed bodies and grave markers to

be transported easily over long distances. The people of the region were able to afford markers for the graves of their loved ones at much higher rates, and the influx is reflected in the mortuary landscape. This period also saw the professionalization of death, a continual removal of death from everyday life, and the development of the funeral industry – an industry that offered opportunity to some and created resistance in others.

The Boundaries of Place, Personage, and Power

From the mid-eighteenth century until 1878, the region now known as Hampton County was a part of the upper regions of Beaufort District. Much like the coast, the geographic boundaries of the region are understood in relation to the waterways that run through it, with the Savannah River constituting the western border, the Salkehatchie River the east, and the Coosawhatchie River splitting the district down the middle. In addition, there are innumerable creeks and swamplands throughout the landscape. Despite the changing boundaries invented by man, these waters have stood the test of time. These waterways were so important to the area that Rowland et al. noted one could stand at the riverbanks at any point of its history and see a "frontier in procession – Indian traders, rice planters, indigo planters, sea island cotton planters, slaves being transported to develop new lands or paddling away to Florida, Confederate and Union forces, yachtsmen, or planters out to shoot boar and deer."[1] These waterways provided a highway system before roads, facilitated the eventual establishment of rice plantations, provided food, and created a landscape that every group throughout the history of the region interpreted and utilized in their own unique ways.[2]

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[1] Lawrence S. Rowland, Alexander Moore, & George C. Rogers Jr., *History of Beaufort County*, *South Carolina: Volume 1, 1514-1861* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 5.

[2] Reliance on Native knowledge of waterways was a point of contention for early European travelers. John Lawson, a surveyor and naturalist visiting the area in 1700, required a Native guide, whom he does not name and identifies as a member of the Sewee nation. He called the waterways "the most difficult way I ever saw, occasioned by reason of

The region that would later become South Carolina was chartered to eight English noblemen, the Lords Proprietors, in 1663. Planters in nearby Barbados and the Bahamas quickly moved their plantation systems and heavy reliance on the labor of enslaved Africans to the mainland, and English and Scottish settlement swelled both regions, sponsored by the Proprietors.[3] The entirety of upper Beaufort District was, by treaty since 1707, recognized by the Crown as "Indian Land." Nearly a century of tense Native relations culminated in the Yamassee War. The fallout of the conflict and discontent on the part of European settlers with the Proprietors' attempts to find a compromise led to South Carolina becoming a royal colony in 1729.

The region now considered by the United States and South Carolina government as Hampton County is on Yamassee[4] and Kusso lands [Map 3]. The Yamassee people are still present in South Carolina but are not recognized at the federal or state level. Fairfax, South Carolina, is home to The Yamassee Indian Reservation, which sits at the top of Hampton County and the bottom of Allendale County.[5] Despite their continued presence in the area, Native existence in the Southern United States is routinely presented as an event of the past. Rowland et al. dismiss Native peoples with simple past-tense statements, citing the conclusion of the

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the multitude of creeks lying along the main, keeping their course thro' the marshes, turning and winding like a labyrinth, having the tide of ebb and flood twenty times in less than three leagues going." John Lawson, "Travel Among the Indians," in *The Travelers' Charleston*, ed. Jennie Holton Fant (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2016), 21. Peter H. Wood also explains that Native people were a requirement for Europeans who wished to travel safely throughout Carolina at this time, in Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975), 38.

[3] Rowland et al., *Beaufort County,* 59-65; Wood, *Black Majority,* 6, 9, 19-20, 24.

[4] This spelling is taken from the Yamassee Nation's own spelling of their people. Their website, yamasseenation.org, lists other names they have been given over the course of colonization: Yemassee, Yimusi, Iguaja, Pocotaligo, Salkcatchers, Hitchiti-Mikisuki, Jamassi, Oconee, Gulare, Americario, Tama, Cusabo, Altamaha, Yuichi, Tomatly, Creek, and Wilson Warriors.

[5] All Native land boundaries were pulled from www.native-land.ca and reflect an alternate view of Hampton County by original inhabitants of the land. I did make attempts to contact the Yamasee headquarters and interview anyone who may be willing to talk about the Native history of the region but was not successful.

Yamassee War in 1728 as marking "the permanent removal of the Indians from the Beaufort District." Larry E. Ivers places their removal later, suggesting that "most Indian groups persevered for another century before they were expelled from the Southeast by the U.S. government." Documents detailing the Indian Removal Act of 1830 on the National Archives website claim that "by the 1840s, nearly all Indian tribes had been driven west, which is exactly what the Indian Removal Act intended to accomplish."[6] Scholars such as Denise E. Bates and Gregory Smithers work to correct the assumed disappearance of Southern Native peoples as a chronic misunderstanding of forced assimilation and Native kinship on the part of white Americans.[7]

Colonists continued to illegally settle in the upper regions of Beaufort District until the land was "legally" granted to them in 1731. The Crown would later fund the foundation of Purrysburg in 1734 at the request of Jean Pierre Purry of Switzerland. Though the town did not last, it was home to "most of the French- and German-speaking families in the southeastern corner of South Carolina." Purrysburg soon proved a poor location for settlement and families moved elsewhere in the state. Some became very wealthy, profiting from the labor of the enslaved, such as the Mongin and Huguenin families. A material example of German immigration to the region and either developing or maintaining wealth is found in the Solomons

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[6] Rowland et al., *Beaufort County,* 111; Larry E. Ivers, *This Torrent of Indians: War on the Southern Frontier, 1715-1728* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2016), 203; "President Andrew Jackson's Message to Congress 'On Indian Removal' (1830)," Milestone Documents, National Archives, last modified May 10, 2022, https://tinyurl.com/53vrm8kn.

[7] Bates coordinated and compiled Native voices from across the American South to tell their stories and experience as "an invisible population." Denise E. Bates, ed., *We Will Always Be Here: Native Peoples on Living and Thriving in the South* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2016), 2. Smithers presides over a compilation of work regarding Indigenous people across the world and highlighting "how indigenous identities after 1492 cannot be reduced to a single racial 'essence'." Gregory Smithers and Brooke Newman, eds., *Native Diasporas: Indigenous Identities and Settler Colonialism in the Americas* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 3-4.

family burial ground and in the Black Swamp Churchyard, both discussed at length in Chapter Two.[8]

Political and religious demarcations formed along the colonial parish system, the lines of which were finalized by 1767 and remained in use until 1868 as election districts.[9] These lines effectively split the upper region of Beaufort District into three vertical chunks – St. Peter's to the west along the Savannah River and the Georgia border, St. Luke's up the middle, and Prince William between the Coosawhatchie and Combahee rivers [Map 4].[10] Memories of the parish lines exist today in Hampton County, as is evident in the name of the Prince Williams (Primitive) Baptist Church, now located between the towns of Brunson and Hampton. Settlement in the upper regions of the parishes was slower than on the coast, in part due to fears of Native aggression to the north along the western border of the state. This was "resolved" with Georgia becoming a royal colony in 1752.[11] This created a buffer for the increasingly wealth-producing rice fields of upper Prince William Parish. A "rapid movement […] of some of South Carolina's wealthiest and most prominent planter families" and their enslaved laborers occurred. Beaufort District became a Black-majority region by 1790, with the enslaved comprising 75% of the population, their numbers rising to 83% by 1830.[12] This places South Carolina apart from every

[8] Rowland et al., *Beaufort County*, 118-121. The Mongins moved to Dafuskie Island and became sea cotton planters, the Huguenins to Coosawhatchie and became the largest rice planters in the region. Saul Solomons' marker in the Solomons burial ground and Cordelia Lawton's stone in the Black Swamp churchyard list their birthplaces as Germany. See Fig. 12 and Fig. 25 in Appendix 1.

[9] While the parish lines demarcated election districts, the courts that held jurisdiction over the entire colony of South Carolina remained in Charleston, requiring individuals from anywhere else in the state to travel for most legal business.

[10] Rowland et al, *Beaufort County,* 111-113.

[11] Georgia was technically established by charter in 1732, but was under the governance of a Board of Trustees for the first twenty years, similar to the Proprietorship for South Carolina. It became a royal colony on the expiration of the charter in 1752. For information on Native-Colonial relationships in eighteenth-century Georgia, see Julie Anne Sweet, *Negotiating for Georgia: British-Creek Relations in the Trustee Era, 1733-1752* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2005) and Clarence L. Verg Steep, *Origins of a Southern Mosaic: Studies of Early Carolina and Georgia* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2021 reissue).

[12] Timothy James Lockley, *Maroon Communities in South Carolina: A Documentary Record* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 3; Wood, *Black Majority*, xii, xiv.

colony that formed before it, all of whom gradually introduced slavery through legal codification.[13] Peter H. Wood and Tim Lockley both argue that the cultural exchange with deeply entrenched plantation economies in the Caribbean from the beginning of its formation effectively caused South Carolina's culture to remain wholly apart from the remainder of the British North American colonies and throughout the formation of the United States. Wood identifies the Black majority as integral to the colonial beginnings of South Carolina and proves that Afro-Americans were "present in the South Carolina colony from the year of its founding […] Negro slaves played a significant and often determinative part in the evolution of the colony." Lockley further claims, "within forty years of the first permanent settlement in 1670 the number of African-born inhabitants was greater than the number of whites […] in these respects South Carolina should perhaps be seen as part of a 'greater West Indies' rather than a part of the North American mainland."[14] These factors laid the cultural foundations that would eventually lead to South Carolina becoming the first to secede and begin the Civil War.

Upper St. Peter's Parish was the last to receive settlers, beginning in earnest in the late eighteenth century once land in the other parishes began to grow scarce. Upper St. Peter's consisted mainly of "high, dry ground west of the pine barrens," which was less suited for agriculture than the upper regions of St. Luke's and Prince William. What little verdant land did exist was near riverbeds and had already been monopolized by planters. Individuals who could not afford or access land in the other parishes moved to St. Peter's and established a place for

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[13] Nikole Hannah-Jones, "The 1619 Project," *New York Times Magazine,* last modified September 14, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html. Hannah-Jones' landmark *1619 Project* in the *New York Times* details the insidious institution of slavery in the United States from the first known enslaved African woman to set foot in Virginia in 1619. Hannah-Jones effectively proves the deeply embedded effects the Atlantic slave trade had and continues to have in the cultural, legal, and economic formation of the United States. The project was later adapted into a book and a television series.
[14] Wood, *Black Majority,* xiv-xvii; Lockley, *Maroon Communities,* 1.

themselves in the wooded areas away from verdant riverbeds. [15] Soon, though, even the woods would be claimed by the elite. These densely wooded regions became prized for their healthful temperament and allowed the wealthier residents of Charleston and Beaufort to build second homes and flee from the malaria and yellow fever seasons along the coast.[16] This led to an epidemic of absentee plantation owners in the upper regions of Beaufort District for significant portions of the year.[17] A topography of power was created in which access to fertile land and the likelihood of agricultural success were at play between wealthy planters and lower-class farmers. This class tension also has roots in the colonial beginnings of the state. As early as 1671, the Proprietors were writing letter to partners in England and elsewhere to ensure that only wealthy estate holders with intentions to start plantations came to settle in Carolina, not poor people.[18] Reliance on agriculture and the work of farming remained of utmost importance throughout the nineteenth century – a rate change for fertilizer was front page news in the *Varnville Enterprise* in 1895, alongside news on Black suffrage and new county size requirements.[19]

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[15] Rachel N. Klein describes the area as "Clusters of settlement, bound by religious, ethnic, and familial ties, dotted the inland terrain" in *Unification of a Slave State: The Rise of the Planter Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760-1808* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1992), 9. Writing in 1843, Edmund Ruffin mentions a "level pine barren" and "the most splendid & extensive forest scenery in the world," in *Agriculture, Geology & Society in Antebellum South Carolina: The Private Diary of Edmund Ruffin, 1843,* ed. by William M. Mathew (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 136 & 141.

[16] Contemporary understandings of place and its effects health and medicine directly influenced these individual's mobility throughout the year: "Southerners of all sorts believed that their bodies were directly influenced by all of the attributes of location: climate, atmosphere, smells. Whites believed that changes in the weather influences a body's susceptibility to disease and that travel could cure it." Marli F. Weiner and Mazie Hough, *Sex, Sickness, and Slavery: Illness in the Antebellum South* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 9. This is proved in the writings of John Davis, an Englishman who traveled extensively throughout the U.S. He visited Beaufort District and Charleston in 1798-1799, spending the winter of 1798 at Thomas Drayton's Ocean Plantation, near Coosawhatchie. They did not return until May of the following year, in which "Mr. Drayton and his family exchanges the savage woods of Coosawhatchie, for the politer residence of their mansion on Ashley River." John Davis, "The Woods of South Carolina," in Jennie Holton Fant, ed., *Traveler's Charleston*, 86.

[17] Africans involuntarily brought from the Gambia River region in West Africa were utilized by absentee investors at the beginning of the colonial efforts for their knowledge in cattle and horse rearing. Wood, *Black Majority*, 30.

[18] Wood, *Black Majority*, 27.

[19] "New Rates for Fertilizers," *Varnville Enterprise,* Vol. III no. 28, October 30, 1895, p. 1, Hampton County Library, microfilm.

In the decades leading up to the Civil War, the social geography and class tension of Beaufort District solidified along the lines of a paternalism rooted in race-based slavery, the importance of land ownership, and increasing class tensions. Stephanie McCurry was undoubtedly writing ahead of her time in 1995, seeking to establish the presence of a yeoman majority St. Peter's Parish in the nineteenth century and challenge the dominant narrative of an overwhelmingly elite Lowcountry. Utilizing census data and scant extant records, McCurry shows that yeoman farmers outnumbered planters in 1850 and 1860. From her findings in St. Peter's Parish, McCurry posits:

> there is little reason to doubt that the same was true of other coastal parishes and of interior lowcountry districts as well. The social formation that prevailed in St. Peter's Parish was not unique, and neither was that of the Low Country. Rather, it was an accentuated version of the characteristic black-belt pattern: a large black majority, a broad-based but highly unequal distribution of real wealth among free household heads, and a white population the majority of which was yeoman farmers.[20]

McCurry envisions an overlay of social power that paralleled the geography of the region. The people of the landscape admitted as much, with the yeomanry explaining class tensions that occurred "within larger 'neighborhoods' […] Two sites recurred in the stories they told: the 'forks' of the swamps and the 'Sand Hills.' These constituted the essential coordinates of the social patterns of yeoman landownership."[21] We must then understand that land holdings followed class patterns, creating what McCurry identifies as extreme social distance in close geographical proximity – the rich lands near waterways that elite planters dominated existed near areas with poorer soil. Therefore, "yeoman and planter households were intermingled on every census tract in every black-belt county, but so, in local variations of the lowcountry landscape,

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[20] Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 54-55.
[21] McCurry, *Masters,* 24.

was fertile and poor soil."[22] Rowland et al. situates the largest plantations of upper St. Peter's in this geography as well, noting that Edmund Martin's Woodstock and Benjamin Bostick's Ingleside "set the standard for the scores of smaller farms and more modest households that surrounded them." In comparison to the glamorous coastal regions of the district, Prince William Parish consisted of "small plantations and modest homesteads" that were "strung out on the high grounds between the Salkehatchie and Coosawhatchie swamps" in which the 1850 census listed 1,683 whites and 5,634 enslaved peoples over the 270 plantations – averaging 20.8 enslaved people per homestead.[23]

For a complete picture of Black life in the region, it is vital to recognize the free Black population. To be Black was not necessarily to be enslaved in upper Beaufort District, despite the strict white-Black dichotomy that informs our modern understandings of slavery in the United States. This narrow view of Black existence in South Carolina, indeed all of the United States, removes a true understanding of the Lowcountry experience for *all* peoples who lived there. To ignore the Black Lowcountry experience outside of the generalizations of enslavement not only serves to undermine the individuality of those that were enslaved but effectively erases entire swathes of people who made the history of modern-day Hampton County. This overgeneralization removes agency from Black Southerners and oversimplifies the rural southern experience and introduces a damaging dichotomy: rich:white::poor:Black. This, in turn, affects modern viewings of the burial landscape, causing the viewer to expect "proper" burial grounds to only hold white bodies, and "overgrown" or "disorganized" spaces to hold Black bodies.

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[22] McCurry, *Masters,* 29.
[23] Rowland et al., *Beaufort County,* 377.

Through a more thorough understanding of the landscape and the realities of the people who lived and died there, we can understand and interpret burial grounds in a more accurate way.

McCurry's social geography of poor planter communities in direct proximity to rich planter ones applies to free Black homesteads.[24] McCurry's social analysis of the removal of the yeoman class from the historical narrative undoubtedly fits the erasure of the free Black population as well. As McCurry elucidates, "this was the social logic of slavery carried to its extreme. There could be no yeomanry there. In the vision of the capitalist vanguard, the essential definition of the region was so configured around the impossibility of such a social class."[25] If a so-called industrious working white man could not fit into this devised Lowcountry, a free Black man most certainly did not either. Nevertheless, Upper St. Peter's Parish, comprising the west side of Beaufort District throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was home to a significant free Black farming community – 134 families are listed in the 1800 census. Their numbers fall to 84 in 1820, which Rowland et al. suggest was due to families migrating westward. By 1840, however, thirty free Black farming families are delineated, the total number of people equaling 147.[26] Yeomans Abner Ginn and Joseph Rosier's deposition records describe the typical demographics of a settlement in the "Coosawhatchie Swamp 'section'" of upper St. Peter's Parish, referencing wealthy planters, yeomans, and free Black farmers all within short distances of one another.[27]

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[24] McCurry, *Masters,* 29.
[25] Ibid., 40-41. McCurry argues that the creation of a completely elite, and therefore "genteel," Lowcountry was due in large part to British and American travel writers who contributed heavily to the romanticization of the region.
[26] 2nd (1800), 4th (1820), and 5th (1830) Census, Beaufort District Population Schedules, South Carolina Department of Archives and History; Rowland et al. also mention the smaller presence of Black artisans in Beaufort and Coosawhatchie. Rowland et al., *Beaufort County*, 305.
[27] McCurry, *Masters,* 24-25. McCurry identifies a free Black settlement called Steepbottom near Ginn and Rosier's own settlement, stating that it was "one of three in Beaufort District that sheltered a community of small landholders, a black yeomanry of sorts." She does not identify the other two settlements by name, or make any additional efforts to explore this "Black yeomanry."

Due to the preponderance of less-desirable land, it is likely that free Black and white individuals alike moved to upper St. Peter's in order to buy land. This scarcity of land was a manufactured issue caused by the elite planters. Already in 1824, 95% of yeoman-owned land was densely wooded pine land worth only $.0.20 per acre. The soil was sandy and some of the poorest in the area, the only good use of which was growing provisions and ranging cattle. [28] The wealth disparities in the Lowcountry were the worst of the entire United States, with elite planters owning 70% of the wealth for the entire region in 1850 – making the Lowcountry the most inegalitarian rural region of the United States at the time.[29] The free Black individuals of upper Beaufort District contended with the double bind of wealth inequality and systemic racism.

Within a population that constituted an enslaved Black majority since the colonial period, elite planters and the yeomanry worked in unhappy tandem, tiptoeing along the lines of a presumed racial superiority to "the enslaved black majority around them." [30] White hegemony outweighed class tensions as all white South Carolinians relied on the labor of the enslaved for their own livelihoods, whether directly or indirectly. Wealthy elites obsessed over "protecting" those they enslaved from the influences of poor white neighbors. The meeting minutes of the Prince Williams Baptist Church in 1838 and 1839 reflect these anxieties and the social repercussions, in which "Br. Prister [was] excommunicated for negro trading" and a Brother

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[28] McCurry, *Masters,* 27. "Yeoman settlements clustered on the poorest land in the parish, bounded by the forks of the swamps and the sandy ridges that rose between them. Not one was to be found on the rivers." Landholdings in swamp regions were difficult to come by and were usually uncleared and extremely difficult to clear for those who did not enslave hundreds. Ginn and Rosier's farms near the Coosawhatchie Swamp were heavily cleared and profitable – they were the exception of the time, not the rule.

[29] McCurry, *Masters,* 93.

[30] Ibid., vii. The paranoia of outside interference with one's enslaved population extended to other "lesser" groups. Frederick Law Olmstead mentions, in rampant antisemitic and infantilizaing prose, the "issue" of Jewish interactions with the enslaved: "A swarm of Jews, within the last ten years, has settled in nearly every Southern town, many of them men of no character […] engaging in an unlawful trade with the simple negroes, which is found very profitable." Frederick Law Olmstead, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States; With Remarks on Their Economy* (New York: Dix and Edwards, 1856), 420. Electronic Edition, accessed via *Documenting the American South*, https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/olmsted/olmsted.html#p418, 440.

Riggans was dismissed from the church temporarily for "vending corn on Mr. Colcocks plantation without his leave."[31] These cases indicate that social indictment was present for white South Carolinians who interacted with Black South Carolinians that were not their property – a tenuous social line that was predicated on ideas of race and class. Soon, racial hegemony would not be enough to hold back class tensions between rich and poor white men.

By the 1850s, "planters turned their formidable police powers on the vulnerable white men of their own communities" even as political tensions grew over the increasingly regional and polarizing issue of slavery.[32] Sam Aleckson, born in Charleston in 1852, identifies this social tension in the personage of his enslaver: "Mr. Ward […] maintained that the supremacy of all white men over the Negro was indisputable, and must be recognized, still there was a class of white men that he would have prevented from ever becoming slaveholders."[33] The enslaved recognized the rich planter's contempt for the poor white population – a perplexing two-sided coin that presented elitism and the invention of white superiority locked in an unhappy marriage.

If the yeomanry (both white and Black) and planters lived near one another, then those they enslaved did as well. Enslaved individuals interacted with and communicated between large plantations and smaller settlements. The lived experience of an enslaved person in upper Beaufort District highly depended upon whom they were enslaved by and what the main purpose of the plantation or homestead was. Differences in "the variety of activities required to produce different crops," yield size, slave population, and "great disparity in the size of the upland

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[31] Prince William Baptist Church Meeting Minutes, Nov. 18, 1838 and May 18, 1839, "Church Minute Book," in Sandra Harrison Samz, ed., *Prince Williams Baptist Church 1812-1840* (Asheville, NC: Sandra Samz, 2021.) 86-89. This church would later break with the Savannah Baptist Association and become the Prince Williams Primitive Baptist Church, the churchyard of which is discussed in Chapter Two.
[32] McCurry, *Masters,* 5.
[33] Sam Aleckson, *Before the War and after the Union: An Autobiography* (Boston, MA: Gold Mind Publishing, 1929) in *I Belong to South Carolina: South Carolina Slave Narratives,* ed. Susanna Ashton, (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010), 248.

plantations" all combined to create a highly diverse experience for those enslaved in the upper regions of Beaufort District.[34] The enslaved experience of the upper regions varied a great deal from that of the coastal regions, where large-scale production of sea island cotton and rice dominated the region. These are the scenes of Lowcountry enslavement in South Carolina – but for the millions of enslaved people in the upper regions of Beaufort District, this was not the reality.

Despite Mr. Ward's wishes against it – many in the upper regions of Beaufort District *were* enslaved by the yeomanry, meaning they were part of an enslaved community of ten or less, and worked the land in tandem with their enslavers to primarily produce subsistence crops. The upper regions of Beaufort District provided most of the food for the coastal regions, where cotton and rice had subsumed all other needs.[35] Even when cotton production consumed the entirety of South Carolina by the nineteenth century, the production of the short-staple variety, known popularly as the "poor man's crop," was dominated by the labor of those enslaved on large plantations and consisted of 80% of its production in the region. Therefore, the labor involved in the production of cotton and rice for profit was a world in which only *some* of South Carolina's enslaved population was involved. The landscape and production statistics in the upper regions of Beaufort District offer an extension to understandings of enslavement in the Lowcountry. The shape of labor, the requirements of the homeplace and the owner's family, and

[34] Rowland et al., *Beaufort County,* 361.
[35] "By 1850, sweet potatoes had outstripped cotton as the largest product." Rowland et al., *Beaufort County,* 308. Wood suggests that not every African taken involuntarily from the West Coast to South Carolina were "drawn from an African rice field, and many, perhaps even a great majority, had never seen a rice plant," but these people were undoubtedly more adept and familiar with the skills needed to succeed in settling South Carolina than the Europeans who bought them were. Wood, *Black Majority*, 59-61.

the size of the enslaved population created high variability in the culture and atmosphere of the enslaved experience from one homeplace to the next.

Where labor and enslaved experience varied from location to location, resistance to enslavement in the Lowcountry offers examples of continuity. Due to the inability of contemporary white South Carolinians to access or understand these communities, they are often forgotten in the history of the state, partially due to higher occurrences in places such as Jamaica and Brazil. Tim Lockley and David Doddington suggest that South Carolina holds more evidence of maroon activity than any other southern state – the contemporaries of the time simply refused to list these individuals and communities as maroons, but rather long-term runaways.[36] The proximity of multitudes of swamplands created a landscape in which the enslaved could escape and maintain some protection from whites, and marronage and short-term runaway attempts were commonplace well into the nineteenth century.[37] Dwelling places for those enslaved on plantations were frequently placed near swamplands as they were areas considered too hard to cultivate by white landowners. This gave enslaved individuals opportunities to engage with "wild" spaces and effectively escape planter control.

Maroons and the enslaved were likely in contact with one another – with runaways augmenting numbers in maroon communities where security was of the utmost importance.[38] The waterways that white South Carolinians of the Lowcountry relied on for crop production and

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[36] The South Carolina legislature drew a line between runaways who were missing for less than three months and those who were missing for more than a year. Tim Lockley and David Doddington, "Maroon and Slave Communities in South Carolina before 1865," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 113, no. 2 (April 2012): 127-129.
[37] Marronage was present from the beginning of European and enslaved African settlement – many fled to Florida or the swamplands surrounding their settlements. Runaways were partially due to harsh conditions and invented social control on the part of white Europeans that all engaged in unfree labor balked at, Wood, *Black Majority*, 50.
[38] "Settlements were constructed far from navigable rivers, and finding them required long treks across difficult terrain." Lockley and Doddington, "Maroon and Slave Communities," 132.

transportation offered avenues of escape and subsistence for maroon communities throughout the nineteenth century. South Carolina's continual import of African born individuals up to the closing of the trade in 1808 and the overwhelming numbers of enslaved to white populations created a perfect storm to encourage marronage. Where Anglo-American views of swamplands were ones of danger and "untameablility," the enslaved saw a landscape in which they could escape bondage and live outside of white influence and control.

Runaways caused significant stress for white southerners; significant effort was spent in preventing the success of long-term runaways. This is evident in the WPA Slave interviews on multiple occasions and in various areas of Hampton County. Solbert Butler mentions frequent whippings at a plantation owned by the Bostick family, his uncle receiving a beating so brutal that he escaped and lived in the woods for months. [39] Sam Polite mentions a similar occurrence on the coast near St. Helena's Island, in which any enslaved person who ran away to the woods was whipped on his back. In such circumstances, finding a maroon community and ensuring its security certainly offered an alternative. Short-term runaways may have wanted to return to their families, were unable to find a community of maroons, or were caught and brought back. Running away and marronage are more accurately understood as assertions of autonomy on the part of the enslaved, as a line from a song related by Polite demonstrates: "But if you treat me bad, I'll sho' to run away."[40] This autonomy is further bolstered by Ann Ferguson's explanation that if overseers treated the enslaved too harshly, then they had to run away.[41] Ann's verbiage

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[39] Interview with Solbert Butler, 162, Federal Writers' Project: Slave Narratives Project, Vol. 14, South Carolina, Part 1, Abrams-Durant, 1936, Manuscript/Mixed Material, Library of Congress.
[40] Interview with Sam Polite, 273-275, Federal Writers' Project: Slave Narratives Project, Vol. 14, South Carolina, Part 3, Jackson-Quattlebaum, 1936, Manuscript/Mixed Material, Library of Congress. Bernard Moitt presents marronage and running away as modes of resistance by the enslaved, along with arson and refusal to work in *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635-1848* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).
[41] Interview with Ann Ferguson, 73, Federal Writers' Project: Slave Narratives Project, Vol. 14, South Carolina, Part 2, Eddington-Hunter, 1936, Manuscript/Mixed Material, Library of Congress.

here insinuates that the enslaved knew that they must remove their bodies, and therefore their working value, from the landscape in which they were required to work. In this way, they facilitated a work stoppage that either required brutal correction, as is seen in Sam Polite's example, or the "master" to seek to correct the overstepping on the part of the poorer white overseer – something that Ben Bostick chose to do, according to Solbert Butler.[42]

The aftermath of the Civil War saw the demise of one form of slavery in the Lowcountry. Levi Van Sant demonstrates through the lens of agriculture that "the cultivation of corporate farmers and willing wage-workers was not just a project of modernizing agriculture but also served to articulate racial and agricultural improvement in the service of white supremacy" where elite white southerners worked to reproduce the plantation economy. What may have been a period of positive social change and a more egalitarian process of land ownership was quickly subsumed by the reiteration of a repackaged antebellum society.[43] The legacy of yeoman/planter disparities formed along similar geographic boundaries, maintained class and racial distinctions, and enforced poverty through inequal land ownership. Hegemonic ownership of large-scale tracts of land and the state-sponsored switch to farmers acting as CEOs of their enterprises created a Lowcountry that has barely changed its land holding geographies from the pre-Civil War era. [44] These effects were still felt in the early twentieth century. In the 1930s and 40s, Hampton County resident Edna Hamilton's father rented small plots of land on which the family

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[42] Solbert recalls a Mr. Aldridge's time as overseer as "so mean that finally ole Master hear about it. And when he did hear about it, he discharged him. He had everything discharged – to the colored driver." Interview with Solbert Butler, Federal Writer's Project, Vol. 1, 162.
[43] Levi Van Sant, "'Into the Hands of Negroes': Reproducing Plantation Geographies in the South Carolina Lowcountry," *Geoforum* 77 (2016): 30.
[44] Attempts were made in the 1920s by the South Carolina Land Settlement Commission and local agricultural extensions to encourage small land-owning white families to permanently settle in the region, recreating the yeomanry of the colonial landscape, but louder voices praising the "glory of the plantation" won out. Van Sant, "Reproducing Plantation Geographies," 25-29.

practiced subsistence farming and small-scale cotton production to sell – Edna stated that they "would take it to wherever they can" to make a profit. Presumably, this income wasn't enough to sustain the family, as her father also "worked in the woods, peeling poles and things like that."[45]

For those who were pushed out of farming, had no interest, or were new to the area, the railroad tracks that became integral to the war effort would present new opportunities for work but similar social issues. Where the parish lines once formed a point of political and social demarcation, the continuation of the railroad boom during Reconstruction laid tracks that continued social separation. The train tracks still run throughout the center of the county – but the trains merely pass through and are far less frequent. For Hamptonians today, a class divide is the main legacy of the railroad tracks.[46] Rail lines had extensive influence shaping the area, with towns such as Varnville and Hampton cropping up around railway stations. Other towns moved to meet rail lines – Allendale moved five miles northeast to meet the Beaufort/Barnwell line in 1872.[47] Many came to the region for work, either in turpentine or on the railroad. Goods were able to be transported at larger quantities and in shorter time frames than ever before, and the piney regions of upper Beaufort District soon became rife with mill towns. By the early twentieth century, Hampton County had been formed, the rail lines were well established, and Varnville had become *the* mill town in addition to a railroad town, with the establishment of the Big Salkehatchie Cypress Company in 1915.[48] For many Black Americans in Hampton County,

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[45] Interview with Edna Hamilton, January 6, 2022.
[46] This cultural line was mentioned by both my grandfather, Thomas Terry, and Betty Crews neé Peeples in interviews with the author on July 9, 2021 and July 14, 2021, respectively. They referred specifically to the "old money" in Estill and Crews mentioned distant family in Estill stating that she was from "the poor Peeples." And my grandfather, Thomas, mentioned a group of wealthy people in Estill who "looked down on everybody. You didn't have money, you didn't have sense."
[47] Rose-Marie Eltzroth Williams, ed., *Varnville, S.C. 1972-1997: The Making of a Low Country Town in the New South* (Varnville, S.C.: Varnville Community Council, 1998), 25.
[48] The mill would fall in the first phases of the Great Depression, in 1929. Williams, *Varnville*, 113, 161.

working in lumber or agriculture did not offer large opportunities for advancement – but some found success in the funeral industry.

Southern Death Ways and the Rise of the New South Funeral Industry

The romanticization of death, the deceased, and the ritual of the burial ground as a place of comfort, or even safety, must be understood as a recent historical phenomenon in Hampton County. Modern understandings of funerals and the funeral industry are relatively new from a cultural standpoint. Observing changes in burial markers and funereal operations provide reflections of intense cultural changes to the human relationship with death. As Philippe Ariès shows in *The Hour of Death*: "it was not until the late eighteenth century that a new sensibility rejected the traditional indifference and that a piety [surrounding death and burial grounds] was invented which became so popular and so widespread in the romantic era that it was *believed to have existed from the beginning of time."*[49] Attitudes towards mortality and the realities of death may not follow the temporal cycles that history, and this thesis, favors, instead often remaining stagnant for multiple generations and outlasting collective memory.[50] Ariés, using a dizzyingly expansive survey of writings from a span of over one thousand years, effectively shows the human relationship to death and dying is not, historically, a static cultural zeitgeist. Ariés' work is undoubtedly important for understanding that attitudes towards death, dying, and burial throughout history are mutable, but his work focuses on European, and by extension, Euro-American views. Alternate burial practices and death views, as found in Afro-American and Native American traditions, are of equal importance.

[49] Phillipe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death,* trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 13. Emphasis added.
[50] Ariès, *The Hour,* 16.

As discussed above, Native South Carolinians did not disappear over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but many were amalgamated into the racial binary of white and Black and systematically erased in the document-based bureaucracy of the new United States.[51] Where markers are not present, or not identifiable, archaeological studies effectively fill the gaps that this thesis presents regarding Native burials. Alexander Sweeney's archaeological study of the Yamassee primary towns of South Carolina suggests that the town of Altamaha holds the first recorded Yamassee burials in the state. Individuals were buried in their homes, and burial practices defy Christianized standards of defined cemetery burials.[52] Nevertheless, there is the distinct possibility that some markers in the burial grounds surveyed for this study mark the burial of a Native person. Native individuals were forced to assimilate to whiteness or fall under the broad category of "free people of color," or were assumed Black, as stated above, in the 1850 Federal Census, and were not counted at all in the Federal Censuses from 1790-1840.[53]

If the politics of power in antebellum Beaufort District manifested itself in the landscape of the living, then it also affected the landscape of the dead. Both McCurry and Rachel N. Klein explore these value systems in exceedingly useful ways. As Klein surmises, "yeoman and rising planters […] shared in the assumption that the family or household, not the individual, was the

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[51]"While being described as Negro or 'black' in countless historical records within centuries, the Yamassee Indian people has struggled to survive […] Once identified as a independent fierce nation, the Yamassee later became known as Seminole, a general term being used for most tribes located in southern Georgia and Florida!" "Yamassee Indian Nation-Brief History," Blog, Yamassee Nation, accessed March 2, 2022. http://yamasseenation.org/index/yamasee-brief/.

[52] Alexander Y. Sweeney, "Cultural Continuity and Change: Archaeological Research at Yamasee Primary Towns in South Carolina," in *The Yamasee Indians: From Florida to South Carolina*, ed. Denise I. Bossy (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2018), 114-116. In some instances, families of the deceased pass down the belief that that deceased was of Native identity. My paternal family maintains that my great-great grandmother, Cynthia Terry, was a Native woman. There seems to be no other information about her, so this is not a certitude. She is buried next to her husband, the Confederate David Terry, in the Smith Cemetery near Varnville, South Carolina.

[53] Rose Buchanan, "Stand Up and Be Counted: Native Americans in the Federal Census," *National Archives News*, April 21, 2022, https://www.archives.gov/news/articles/native-americans-census.

fundamental unit of social order […] That shared sense of family order gave shape to a Christian vision that sanctioned, even celebrated, slavery."[54] In a world where these men saw themselves as masters of their domain and the people on it, both women, children, and enslaved people, they would have no issues attempting to control the resting places of their so-called dependents, with varying success. Suzanne Smith posits that "The African American slave funeral from the colonial era through the antebellum period was one of the most central ways the slave community was able to assert its essential humanity." In response, enslavers frequently worried about late-night funerals as vessels for insurrection, correctly ascertaining that funeral practices were one way in which the enslaved could practice their own beliefs and be partially independent.[55]

Christina Brooks' work comparing colonial burial practices for enslaved groups in Virginia and South Carolina argues that the African funeral practices that were brought with the enslaved and subsequently adapted to life in bondage can be observed through two contexts: the relationship of power to the enslaver in tandem with the relationships between the enslaved themselves, and through a religious context.[56] The funeral practices of the enslaved must be understood as taking place on a landscape in which they were not meant to hold agency, but seized it for themselves in many ways regardless, including in how they cared for their dead.

In the case of South Carolina, the dividing factor in Euro-American views of death and burial and Afro-American views is often one of "order," or "neatness." A lack of markers or organized burial is not always an indicator of wealth or privilege, and the appearance of a burial

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[54] Klein, *Unification,* 5.
[55] Suzanne Smith, *To Serve the Living: Funeral Directors and the African American Way of Death* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 25-27.
[56] Christina Brooks, "Exploring the Material Culture of Death in Enslaved African American Cemeteries in Colonial Virginia and South Carolina," *The African Diaspora Archaeology Network Newsletter* (September 2011): 3.

ground may indicate that for those utilizing the burial ground, the proper transition of a loved one from life to death was more relevant than an elaborate marker.[57] Brooks suggests that utilizing densely wooded areas for burial was an adaptation of the landscape that enslavers likely did not anticipate when granting use of the area. Much as maroon communities used dense and treacherous landscapes to escape bondage and the white reach, so did the enslaved adapt "useless" land to their social purposes of burial.[58] The Forest of Rest, an inactive Black burial ground in a wooded area near Hampton, South Carolina, is an example of these traditions continuing into the mid-twentieth century and is discussed at length in Chapter Two.

The Walker/White stonecarving dynasty of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is responsible for some of the most admirable marble stones and markers in South Carolina to date. The work produced by these families can be found in multiple burial grounds surveyed for this research. Little is known about most stonecarvers, often because one may not know who carved a stone unless it is signed, or if they have no identifiable stylistic themes. Thomas Walker developed a carving style that brought him and later generations success in Charleston and the surrounding areas. Walker was a Scottish stonecarver who trained in architecture in Europe. He arrived in Charleston in the early eighteenth century and is responsible for some of the most ornate and skillful stonecarving in the state of South Carolina. Combs' work in *Early Gravestone Art* explores multiple instances of Walker's work in Charleston burial grounds and identifies Walker as the most popular carver of the late eighteenth century. She also credits him as "one of the major carvers in the evolution of early American sculpture – pushing architectural designs

[57] "It is difficult to determine if the lack of markers is the result of socioeconomic status of the population or reflects cultural patterns of the racial group interred." Christina Brooks, "Enclosing Their Immortal Souls: A Survey of Two African American Cemeteries in Georgetown, South Carolina," *Southeastern Archaeology* 30, no. 1 (Summer 2011): 180.
[58] Brooks, "Material Culture of Death," 6.

and lettering in the Adamesque style into the burial landscape and cultural consciousness of the Southern U.S.[59]

The distinctive Walker/White style is characterized by clean, precise lettering, architectural symmetry and line work, and crisp architectural definition on any ornamentation [Figs. 40 & 25]. Many stones often showcase multiple lettering styles as well [Fig. 16]. These staples are found in the work of J.E. Walker and W.T. White into the late nineteenth century, and despite stonecarvers increasingly pulling from the same pattern books and stylistic configurations from the eighteenth century until the rise of commercialized markers in the nineteenth century, a Walker/White stone catches the eye and proclaims its artistic heritage even without a signature.[60]

When Walker passed his skills, and his business, to his children he also passed on enslaved individuals. After his death in 1838, his will leaves his business on Meeting Street and the six men he enslaved to his six sons, to be split evenly among them. The enslaved men were listed as Moses, Jim, Stepney Charlesy, Old Caesar, Young Caesar, and Billy. None of these names match those of the individuals listed in the bills of sale from years previous – this could either mean they were sold to someone else, had passed, or were renamed by Walker or someone in the family. He also left an enslaved woman, Clarissa, to his daughter. His ties to the White family is also represented – he left ten of his shares in the Union Bank of Charleston to all of the children of his son-in-law, John White.[61] Hampton County's burial grounds show evidence of the

[59] Combs, *Early Gravestone Art*, 79, 2.
[60] M. Ruth Little describes the wildfire spread of neoclassical marker design, brought on by the popular weeping willow motif in the eighteenth century, as an eventual universal standard in the burial ground. Despite this, she clarifies that a "standardized model was not easily produced" without proper training and an apprenticeship, which were not standardized in the United States at the time. Thomas Walker singlehandedly passed on his developed skills to his descendants. Little, *Sticks & Stones*, 188.
[61] Typescript of the Will of Thomas Walker, 26 June, 1838, ST 528, S.C. Will Transcripts (WPA) vol. 41, Charleston County, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC.

Walker/White stonecarving dynasty, with William T. White being the most common signature found in multiple burial grounds. William was prolific in his work and carried the stylistic hallmarks of the Walker style into the nineteenth century. Large examples of his work are found in cemeteries throughout Charleston and his memorial monuments are found in Charleston and Winnsboro.[62] William was still engaged in the family business at the time of his death in 1870. It is likely that the social changes of Reconstruction and the New South made continuing the business for his children difficult. Mail-order stones and the increasingly commercialized funeral industry quickly filled any room that stonecarvers had left in the industry.

Between the years 1800-1833, Thomas Walker is listed on bills of sale for the purchase of fifteen individuals. Auba, Amey, Cuffee, James, John and Peter were valued and sold at three hundred guineas in 1800; Hannah and "her future issue and increase" were valued and sold at $390 in 1813; John was valued and sold for $900 in 1819; Matilda, Deana, Stephen, Hardtimes, and any "future issue and increase" were valued and sold for $1225 in 1820; Flora and "her future increase" were valued and sold for $525 in 1820 in a separate bill of sale; and Sarah and her infant daughter Susan were valued and sold for $410 in 1833.[63] It is likely that the men Walker enslaved worked on gravemarkers, and some may have been stonecarvers themselves. John, who was purchased in 1819 for $900, indicates a level of skill worth the price.

Today, stones carved by the Walker or White families are enough to get cemeteries like Upper Long Cane in Abbeville, SC on the National Register of Historic Places "for its

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[62] Ralph Bailey, "William T. White (1823-1870): A Monumental Southern Stonecutter," *Markers* 38 (2022): 104-110.

[63] John Readimer to Thomas Walker, 8 May 1800, ST 323, Box 3-P; Sarah DeleMotte to Thomas Walker, 3 Dec. 1813, ST 325, Book 4-F; James Evans to Thomas Walker, 27 Aug. 1819, ST 327, Book 4-S; Horace Walpole to Thomas Walker, 24 Feb. 1820, ST 327, Book 4-S; Seth Prior to Thomas Walker, 25 Sept. 1820, ST 327, Book 4-S; and Trustee of Elizabeth Mills to Thomas Walker, 26 Sept. 1833, ST 331, Book 5-O, Secretary of State Bills of Sale, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC, microfilm.

concentration of outstanding gravestone art by master Charleston, South Carolina, stonecarvers William T. White (active ca. 1850-ca.1870), Robert D. White (active ca. 1855-ca.1875), and Edwin R. White (active ca. 1860-ca.1882), skilled artisans who were a part of a three-generation lineage of outstanding sculptors […] belonging to the Walker and White families."[64] The work done by these craftsmen was supported by the labor of the enslaved, whether in the shop or at home. The stones that remain from this dynasty, taken in tandem with the lives and cultures of those that made them, create a useful picture of the state of American funereal craftsmanship throughout the nineteenth century before the advent of commercialization.

Gary Laderman's *Rest in Peace*, working in part to undermine Jessica Mitford's *American Way of Death* and her double-down reprint, *American Way of Death Revisited*, presents a professionalized funeral industry in which morticians and funeral directors offer a necessary and in demand service for the American public. Identifying the "mortality revolution" of the early twentieth century in which interacting with the dead became taboo for most, the book details the changing face of mortuary management and increasingly ambivalent attitudes towards funeral rites in the American social consciousness.[65] Laderman's study is useful in a surface level understanding of funerary transitions in the United States, but his study leans to an amalgamated American society in which the only denominations are urban and rural, or North and South. This removes the lived realities and funerary traditions of any groups in the U.S. that do not conform to the Anglo-American hegemonic value system rooted in Protestant traditions. It

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[64] Brian Scott, "Long Cane Cemetery," Historical Marker Database, last modified on October 12, 2020, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=50740.

[65] Gary Laderman, *Rest in Peace: A Cultural History of Death and the Funeral Home in Twentieth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1.

also ignores the continued financial burdens that the funeral industry requires of mourners, placing the continuation of profit for the funeral industry squarely at the feet of the public.

Laderman's argument does not analyze, as Mitford's does, the manufactured importance of hygienic burials that funeral directors pushed on their would-be-clientele. The exacerbated importance of embalming techniques and a purposeful skewing of legal requirements for embalming (of which almost no states have requirements) created a mortuary culture in which mourners felt they had no choice but turn their loved ones over to the professionals.[66] In the case of South Carolina, embalming, and burial vaults are not required by the state. Neither are bodies required to be buried in an established cemetery in rural areas. Still, funeral homes are frequently sought out and my grandfather and Betty Crews insisted that embalming became required in their lifetime, reiterating Mitford's argument for the finance-driven misappropriation of facts on the part of the funeral industry.[67] While both authors make good points, they are engaging in an argument that primarily dealt with white American views of death across both sides of the line – professional and consumer. Black funeral directors, at the time of Mitford's publishing in 1963, were more concerned with the Civil Rights Movement. As Suzanne Smith explains, "the racially and economically marginalized status of black funeral directors in the national funeral industry left them somewhat removed from the main thrust of Mitford's charges of corruption."[68]

The professionalization of burial and death in the South did not happen overnight, particularly in South Carolina. Death certificates were not formalized or required by law until

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[66] Laderman, *Rest in Peace,* 46; Jessica Mitford, *The American Way of Death Revisited* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1998), 26-27.
[67] Interview with Betty Crews nee Peeples, July 9, 2022; interview with Thomas Terry, July 14, 2022.
[68] Smith, *To Serve the Living,* 159.

1915.[69] There was likely some resistance to the professionalization of death, predominantly for those who could not afford services, or wanted to keep the work of death centered around the home. Others found opportunity in the growing funeral industry, particularly Black southerners who were navigating the advent of Jim Crow. New and modern funeral practices like embalming offered new skill sets in a growing field that offered advancement in a segregated world.[70] Charles R. Wilson argues that the New South saw the development of an intensely regional and uniquely Southern funeral industry. He identifies the stereotypical American funeral as including an embalmed and beautified corpse, ornate caskets, permanent funeral homes, and a professional funeral director to manage the funeral itself. This categorization is, to Wilson's view, a Northern invention that was slower to bloom in the South, and would be eventually coopted to a uniquely Southern flavor by Southern funeral directors. Hallmarks of the Southern way of death include open casket services, singing hymns at the graveside, and evangelical sermons, all unique twists to the "stereotypical" American funeral.[71]

Black and white funeral directors in the South both relied on learning embalming techniques to legitimize their businesses. Southern states, urged by funeral director associations, were the first to pass laws for regulating licensed funeral directors and embalming education. Special embalming formulations were created for the muggy and hot climate. By the advent of World War I, Southern funeral directors had already been hard at work serving their local

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[69] "Obtaining Death Records," Genealogy Resources at the State Library: Vital Records, South Carolina State Library Guides and Resources, last modified July 21, 2023, https://guides.statelibrary.sc.gov/genealogy.
[70] Smith, *To Serve the Living,* 18.
[71] Charles R. Wilson, "The Southern Funeral Director: Managing Death in the New South," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (Spring 1983): 50-51.

populations, driving ambulances, introducing motorized hearses, and creating a fully legitimate field in which to handle the dead in the South.[72]

Eugene Peeples is an excellent example of the changing face of burial in the South and the rise of the professional funeral director in small towns and communities. Peeples was Betty Crews' father and the first licensed coroner for Hampton County. He began his work with the Peeples Funeral Service in the 1920s. He served the Black and white community in the area, as confirmed by Edna Hamilton.[73] His career follows at a leisurely pace behind the timeline laid out by Wilson. His first hearse was a mule drawn wagon, and he would later run the area's only ambulance – a service important enough to avoid the gas restrictions placed on others during rationing for WWII, far past when Wilson lists these ambulances as fashionable for funeral directors.[74] Peeples organized at home viewings for his clients, and even dug graves himself for clients who could not afford a professional. His was one of the first official funeral homes in the area, and one of the last homes in the state to stop pouring their own cement burial vaults in favor of the county.[75] Peeples worked to keep the cost of dying down for his community, following national patterns of lower funereal costs in the South. Where Wilson identifies the cheaper funerals in Southern states as an indicator of the "South's poverty and the resulting limited supply of available funeral services," I believe this was an effort by local funeral directors to serve their communities more effectively.[76] Peeples was not interested in gouging his clients, people he knew and lived by, but rather in giving them an honorable send off within their

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[72] Wilson, "Southern Funeral Director," 57-63.
[73] "Yeah, he'd bury Black and white. He buried most of my family." Interview with Edna Hamilton, January 6, 2022.
[74] Interview with Betty Crews nee Peeples, July 9, 2022; Wilson, "Southern Funeral Director," 60.
[75] Much of this information is provided either by Betty Crews or the Peeples-Rhoden Funeral Homes Website, https://www.peeplesrhodenfuneralhome.com/history. A photograph of Eugene Peeples sitting on the mule drawn hearse is available on the page as well.
[76] Wilson, "Southern Funeral Director," 65.

means. Peeples' career offers an example of rural people living outside of expected consumeristic standards whilst still serving their communities in a professional capacity.

This chapter has worked to offer a history of the region that is now known as Hampton County, explore socially relevant periods in the region's history, argue the importance of the upper regions of the Lowcountry in our historical understandings of the area, and highlight the diversity in the region through class and race. It has further explored the racial divide in death cosmologies, funereal practices, and views of the formation of the funeral industry from the colonial period and into the twentieth century. These differences affect how the people of Hampton County, and previously upper Beaufort District, engaged with the landscape and their communities when members died. With these simultaneous and sometimes contradictory views, let us now approach the burial grounds of the region.

Chapter Two: Selected Burial Ground Analysis

"Gravestones can be read like books; each stone contains the abbreviated story of a life."

-Lynn Rainville, Hidden History

A word to the wise: do not conduct intensive field research of multiple burial grounds in the middle of July in South Carolina. I have conducted that experiment for you, my findings being my own heat stroke and a visit to a rural emergency room to investigate a very suspicious bite that might've indicated Lyme disease but fortunately turned out to be nothing. Unfortunately, the *Chicago Manual of Style* does not offer any guidance on the proper citation of the above sources. I trust, dear reader, that you will take me at my word. Heat stroke and worrying bites aside, the summer of 2021 and the subsequent survey at the beginning of 2022 offered an enriching tapestry of funerary art throughout the Hampton County region. Over the twenty-six burial grounds I was able to access, I found that each held at least one form of stylistic continuity with another, in the case where markers were present – whether it be Walker/White slabs, locally poured concrete with impressed inscriptions, or, in two cases, cedar markers.

Ultimately, this thesis cannot support an entire analysis of all twenty-six burial grounds in the space allotted. Therefore, I have selected five burial grounds that I believe offer a diverse and emblematic sampling of the mortuary landscape of the area and are geographically spaced throughout the entirety of the county – the Solomons family burial ground, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard, Black Swamp Baptist churchyard, Hamilton family burial ground, an unnamed burial ground in a wooded area that I've termed the Forest of Rest for ease of identification, and the Lebanon Methodist churchyard [Map 5]. They were carefully selected to provide a useful representation of the broad population and prevalent cultural themes of

Hampton County throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. To bolster the discussion, primary examples from the remaining burial grounds surveyed will be incorporated to further contextualize the burial grounds under study here. It is important to note that of the five burial grounds selected for discussion, none are the stereotypical "gardens of the dead" that resulted from the rural cemetery movement.[1] Hampton County does have larger burial grounds, such as the Ebenezer/Salkehatchie cemetery as well as the Lawtonville Cemetery, which undoubtedly have a place in the contextualization of the rural cemetery movement in the Hampton County region. These are not the types of burial grounds of interest for this research.

Smaller family burial grounds and churchyards are far more frequent in the area and are therefore more emblematic of the common individual and their place in the burial landscape. Many Hamptonians throughout the century chose, and continue to choose and care for, family or faith based burial grounds. Upkeep varies, as do stone materials and layout. I will be examining overarching patterns in epitaph use, motifs, and stone style to understand the common sentiments surrounding death at the time. This method leads to a better understanding of the people that made their homes in the "hinterlands" of the South Carolina Lowcountry in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ultimately, these stones are utilized to understand broad themes in burial and mortuary practices at the relevant period, and therefore broaden the scholarship on the Lowcountry and its people in their entirety.

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[1] For more on the rural cemetery movement, see Stanley French, "The Cemetery as Cultural Institution: The Establishment of Mount Auburn and the 'Rural Cemetery' Movement," *American Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (Mar. 1974): 37-59; Jeffrey Smith, *The Rural Cemetery Movement: Places of Paradox in Nineteenth-Century America* (Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2017); and Thomas G. Connors, "The Romantic Landscape: Washington Irving, Sleepy Hollow, and the Rural Cemetery Movement," in *Mortal Remains: Death in Early America,* eds. Nancy Isenberg and Andrew Burstein (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 187-203.

Barring the Forest of Rest, which has no extant markers, all applicable markers in the four remaining burial grounds were photographed, and their applicable information entered in a spreadsheet. Main categories included the name of the deceased, age at death, inscription and epitaph transcription, stone material, stone shape, gender of the deceased, motif, mood of inscription and epitaph, condition of stone, and descriptors assigned to the deceased. Inscription and epitaphs were organized under the following moods: Biographical, Familial, Descriptive (of deceased), Religious, Pessimistic, Optimistic, Acceptance, Sentimental, and Simple. These factors were then used to understand the gender breakdown of each burial ground, percentages of stones with motifs, the most popular motif used, most common descriptors per gender, percentage of stones repaired or replaced, and average age of death breakdowns by gender. These breakdowns help quantify the extant markers in each burial ground for an easy understanding of main themes, aid in understanding any gender disparities in death, and contextualize the burial grounds in relation to one another.

What these surveys suggest is that despite burial ground size or layout, all grounds with extant markers reflect the geographies of power and the wealth disparity of the region. Highly ornate stones exist in tandem with affordable mail order stones, or the lack of markers at all. The Forest of Rest and the Lebanon Methodist Auxiliary Churchyard are emblematic of alternative burial processes and the diversity of burial grounds for Black Americans in the region, Black Swamp offers an elite point of comparison and an example of the information wealth can afford on markers, the Solomons burial ground offers a case study in the politics of German identity in the region throughout multiple generations, and Prince Williams Primitive Baptist Churchyard allows an understanding into the diverse layout of a congregation and a religious movement understood as predominantly belonging to the upcountry of the state. These burial grounds offer

a picture of the diversity of lived experience in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the Hampton County region.

Prince Williams Primitive Baptist Churchyard

The Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard (PWBC) is located on SC State Road 25 and is roughly equidistant between the towns of Brunson and Hampton, near the top of the county. It is not fenced in. Without the original church structure, it is hard to understand whether the older burials were closer to the original church, as is common in many churchyards. The church is no longer active, and historically was a white church with enslaved members throughout the antebellum period.[2] The history of the church is partially available on the informational plaque [Fig. 1] standing sentinel by the road, which tells us that the church was previously part of the "nearby Coosawhatchie Baptist Church (now Beech Branch)" but became Prince Williams Baptist in 1813. By 1840, the church "broke with the Savannah River Association" due to its belief in Primitive Baptist ideology, which was not supported by the association's Missionary path. The plaque was erected by the congregation in 1975 and states that the church building was built before 1859. The original building is no longer present, being replaced by a modern brick structure. Sandra Samz' compilation of local history of the church and the church meeting minutes prior to its break from the association confirms the plaque information, and contextualizes the missing church structure, stating that the church "had to be demolished due to the threat of injury" in 2012.[3]

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[2] The meeting minutes of the church from 1812-1840 list the following enslaved members: Nan (1821), Hannah (1823), Flower (1825), Stipney (1826), Moriah (1826), Jinn (1826), Ester (1827), Sarah (1828), John (1828), Sammy (1829), Sibba (1830), Nelly (1830). "Names of Those Received 1812-1840," in *Prince Williams Baptist Church 1812-1840,* ed. Sandra Harrison Samz, (Asheville, NC: Sandra Samz, 2021), 107-111.

[3] Samz, *Prince Williams,* 2.

The PWBC is characterized by a large quantity of pristine stones, repair work to original stones, six cedar markers, and the only example found in this study of a Victorian mourning motif on any extant marker – carved by R.D. White. This is the only example of his work I found in the burial grounds surveyed. Of the seventy-two burials relevant to this research, 18 (25%) are women, 17 (23.6%) are men, 20 (27.8%) are children, 15 (20.8%) have blank markers, and 2 (2.8%) have no discernable gender based on their markers alone. The following estimates only include markers that have applicable birth and death information, or any information on the deceased at all. There is no way to know the gender or age of those buried under markers with no information, such as cedar markers.

The average age of death for women in PWBC is 47.9 and for men 40.4. Children's average age at death is 4.[4] 33% of women are referred to as wives, 11% as daughters, 16% as mothers, and one each as married, faithful, and friend. 39% of women have no descriptors at all. One man is referred to as a husband and father, another honest, and another as married. 76% of men have no descriptors at all. 25% of children are referred to as sons, 30% as daughters, and one as a sister.[5] 35% of children had no descriptors at all. 50% of stones have a motif, the most common across all burials being a dove. 7% of stones show signs of repair and 11% are replacement stones. 43% of stones are well preserved.[6] Religious epitaphs are most common at 55%, which makes sense for a churchyard. Those that are not religious are primarily optimistic over pessimistic (7% to 3%). Inscriptions are primarily familial at 23%. This is due to the large

[4] For children who passed before their first birthday, a decimal was used for this calculation. For instance, Infant Simmons was born and died on the same day, making them effectively one day old. 1/365 is 0.003, which was used in the aggregate sum and average calculation. All ages under 1 year old were rounded to the third decimal point. This format was used for all following burial grounds.

[5] Three of the children labelled as daughters were also labelled as infants.

[6] There are five stones in PWBC that I am not certain have been replaced or not. They are not included in this estimate. Well preserved stones fall under the following categories: pristine (10), very clean (10), good (1), and clean (10).

number of women's inscriptions relating them to their husbands or families, and the number of children's burials linking them to their parents.

The PWBC offers multiple avenues of historical understanding for this region of South Carolina – it contextualizes the realities of religion in upper Beaufort District, the stones offer a record of some members and their status in life, and the presence of the church offers an alternative to the belief that Primitive Baptists were predominantly in the upcountry of South Carolina. Kimberly Kellison states that Primitive Baptists' "greatest strength was clustered in the up-country congregations that grew out of a Separate Baptist tradition" while also stating that the movement took root "in less urbanized and populated areas."[7] This suggests an understanding of the Lowcountry as populated and dense, where the Upcountry remained more sparsely populated. This isn't true for the Hampton County region, which is situated firmly in the Lowcountry but is so often ignored for the immediate coastal area. The PWBC, then, shows that the Lowcountry applies to the history of the Primitive/Missionary Baptist schism of the 1820s and 30s as much as the Upcountry, and offers an avenue to understanding the economic outlines of such a congregation.

The six extant cedar markers in this burial ground are remarkable. Of the six, two are carved in a humanoid shape, with one having a footboard in the same shape [Fig. 3]. The remaining four are headboards, with three having corresponding footboards [Fig. 4]. Cynthia Connor writes about the presence of similar markers in a nineteenth century Black American cemetery in Huger, S.C. that "appear to represent the human head and upper torso."[8] Little notes

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[7] Kimberly R. Kellison, "South Carolina Baptists, The Primitive Missionary Schism, and the Revival of the Early 1830s," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 110, no. 3/4, (2009): 155-156.
[8] Cynthia Connor, "Archaeological Analysis of African-American Mortuary Behavior," in *The Last Miles of the Way*, ed. Elaine Nichols (Columbia, SC: South Carolina State Museum, 1989), 54. She also notes humanoid markers

the presence of a similar wooden marker shape in a rural area of Lee County, North Carolina, stating that these markers are present in roughly equal numbers for both white and Black burial grounds in the state.[9] Due to the mention of many enslaved members of the church in the meeting minutes, I believe that the humanoid cedar markers may represent Black burials. This contradicts common understandings of the burial color line in the Southeast. This is not to suggest that Black and white burials were *never* kept separate, indeed, that is often the case. What it *does* suggest, however, is that the color line was not immutable or ever present – in life or in death. Without an archaeological study or burial records to prove this hypothesis, it is impossible to know the background of those buried under these cedar markers.

It is also plausible that the humanoid style was a burial marker form co-opted by white members of the church. The humanoid shape found here is also present in the Bowers family burial ground, located approximately one and a half miles away. Multiple members of the Bowers family were members at Prince Williams Baptist, meaning that the humanoid headboard style was likely familiar to them.[10] Christina Brooks argues that enslaved Americans could "manipulate, modify and transform the European planter's landscapes, beliefs and material culture."[11] It is significant that the only other place I have found the humanoid shaped markers are near one another – it is possible that whoever placed the markers saw them at Bowers, or vice versa, and decided to mimic the style, which was originally coopted from Afro-American traditions from the enslaved community. Given that PWBC also has traditional cedar headboards

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for two graves at Chicora Wood in Berkeley County, S.C. She doesn't offer much in the way of analysis regarding these markers in particular, but it is useful to know they are present in known Black American cemeteries.

[9] Little, *Sticks & Stones*, 249.

[10] The Bowers family burial ground boasts twelve extant cedar markers, four of which are humanoid in shape. The members from the Bowers family are found in Samz, *Prince Williams,* 105.

[11] Christina Brooks, "Exploring the Material Culture of Death in Enslaved African Cemeteries in Colonial Virginia and South Carolina," *The African Diaspora Archaeology Network Newsletter* (September 2011): 5.

marking other burials, I believe the humanoid shape of these markers is culturally significant. All cedar markers in the burial ground have experienced similar levels of decomposition, meaning they are likely from similar time periods. It is possible that the humanoid cedar markers were a way for some Black members of the church to differentiate themselves in the burial ground. Whether these markers are for white or Black individuals, these markers are exciting examples of a dual-sided cultural exchange between Afro-American and Euro-American burial traditions in nineteenth century South Carolina, proving that both white and Black members of the community engaged with the other's cultures and burial practices.

The joint marker of Elder Philip Terry and Ronella Kelehear Terry offer a glimpse into some of the church's history [Fig 5]. The marker itself is polished granite with the only burning lamp motif found in this survey. The stone was likely placed when Ronella passed in 1971 at the age of 80. Philip died a year later at the age of 83. They were born in 1890 and 1889, respectively. It's likely their children selected their stone as it includes their eight children's names.[12] The stone had poinsettias at its base at the time of the survey, in January of 2022. This is one of the stones in PWBC that receives continued care. The moniker "Elder" on Philip's stone indicates that he was a pastor at PWBC, presumably at the time of his death.[13] Philip would not have been paid for his work – most Primitive Baptist churches met once a month, had no mission programs, and preachers were called to preach. They were not educated, like other Baptist preachers often were.[14] He is listed in the 1920 census as the head of household and a farmer, who is able to read and write. By 1930, he is listed as a laborer at the lumber mill. The

[12] The stone reads: "From this union/the following children were born/Zachariah Porter/Raphael Ira/Eunice Anna/Nell Virgie/Thelma Leola/Debbie Olean/Philip Medicus/Otto Lenwood."
[13] The term Elder was used by Primitive Baptists as a nod to biblical, or primitive, precedents.
[14] "Educated preachers were too elite to identify with those kinds of people." Interview with Thomas Terry, July 9, 2021.

1940 census lists him again as a farmer, working 60 hours a week. This census confirms that Philip did not complete any education past grade five, and Ronella none past seventh.[15] That Philip's stone lists him as Elder at the time of his death indicates that Primitive Baptist churches were still following their traditions well into the twentieth century in this area of South Carolina.

Mary E. Lightsey's (1844-1862) grave is the only one to have extant wooden fencing in the PWBC. Where the fencing is missing many posts and shows the relentless marching of time, Mary's stone is an immaculately preserved marble slab. The stone is one of nine extant signed stones observed in my survey of the area – and the only one signed by R.D. White.[16] Even without a maker's mark, the skill and craftsmanship evident on the stone immediately places it in the Walker/White carving tradition – clear and concise lettering with variable font styles, crisp and exactingly straight lines, and architecturally influenced style are all present here [Fig 6]. The stone is a marble pedimented slab, with sunburst finials adorning the top corners. Small flowers, visible only up close, are the outermost corners of the sunbursts, making even these embellishments to the main motif intricately detailed and personalized. The motif itself, however, is what immediately draws the viewer's eye to this stone – a version of the mourning portrait that rose to popularity in the Victorian period.[17] In deviation from the mourner as female in the standard mourning portrait, the mourner on the Lightsey stone is male, presumably Mary's husband, M.M. Lightsey. The mourner's head is slightly bowed, with his right hand lifted and

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[15] 14th (1920), 15th (1930), and 16th (1940) South Carolina Census, Hampton County Population Schedules, FamilySearch Database.

[16] The stones are located in the following burial grounds: Solomons (2, J.E. Walker and Bro., Sav. Geo), Black Creek Primitive Baptist (2, E.R. White), Ebenezer/Salkehatchie (2, E.R. White), Zahler (1, W.T. White), Thomson (1, Walker Sav.), Sandy Run Baptist (1, W.T. White).

[17] Diana Combs does a magnificent job of linking these mourning motifs on gravestones to the mourning portraits that were popular during the eighteenth century – stating that the "mourning woman bent in grief goes back at least to the Greek reliefs and grave stelae of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., as does the vase or urn." Diana Williams Combs, *Early Gravestone and Mortuary Art in Georgia and South Carolina* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 94.

placed against his forehead in despair. His left arm hangs loose at his side, a wreath of roses clutched in his hand. He leans against a shrouded urn atop a column. The background shows a tree some distance away at the bottom right, and a small gravestone rises crookedly from the ground in the bottom left [Fig 7].

The mourner presents an interesting assemblage of successful craftsmanship and awkward ratios – the hand is too small for the coat, the legs too short in relation to the body of the mourner, the feet are almost comically small. The hair of the mourner is masterfully carved, with clear delineations for various locks visible in the stone. The mourner's face is young in appearance, with a strong nose and mouth. The eyes are not as clearly defined. The entire body of the mourner is out of proportion with the rest of the image – the pedestal on which the shrouded urn sits is almost wider than the body of the mourner, but barely comes up to his waist. In comparison to the simple rounded stone in the background, the scale indicates a hulking monolith of a marker upon which a very small urn sits. The coat of the mourner is very long for his body, but care was taken by R.D. White to add lines detailing the bunching of fabric, a collared shirt is clearly carved and easily distinguishable from the coat itself, and a tie is delicately carved and clear down his chest. The shroud of the urn is equally formed, with convincing lines indicating a flowing and light fabric, different entirely from the heavier coat of the mourner. Taken in pieces, the mechanical competence of the carver is evident – it is only when the observer takes a step back and sees the motif in its entirety that the picture becomes jumbled and out of sync with the other elements in place. It is possible, of course, that R.D. White modeled the mourner after M.M. Lightsey and that the man was awkwardly built – but more likely R.D. did not have the skills to do portraiture in the same way that he possessed skill for the clean lines of lettering and the sunbursts in the top corners. Considering that Mary's death

occurred in 1863, this may have been earlier in R.D.'s career – and as the popularity for mourning portraiture was waning considerably, it is unlikely he'd had much practice with this style of motif.

While the visual components of the Lightsey stone drawers the viewer in initially, the inscription adds an additional component of sadness:

> SACRED/To the Memory of/*Mary E*,/Wife of/M.M. Lightsey/Died Feb 25th 1862./*Aged 18 Years and 16 Days*/She was an affectionate wife/And beloved by all./Blessed are the dead, who die/in the Lord./*Not hers to linger here on earth,/Consum'd by slow decay:/Death, like a sudden whirlwind came/And swept her life away*

Mary was a young woman of eighteen, already a wife, whose stone is assuredly ornate due to her early departure from life. Ornate stones for young individuals are also found in the Solomons family graveyard, for Sarah Rosomond Solomons; and in the Robertville Baptist churchyard, for Robert E. Sweat and Ben N. Buckner. A gendered divide is evident in these four markers – the young women are seen in relation to their communities, or for Mary in relation to her husband, while the young men are seen in relation to their accomplishments in the martial world.

The Mary E. Lightsey stone is a primary example of mourning Victoriana in Hampton County, situating the area and its people in the cultural trends of the period. Mary's stone indicates a level of wealth for at least one family at PWBC that is outside of common understandings of the economic backgrounds for those engaging with Primitive Baptist churches at the time – the 1860 census lists her at age 16, already married to her husband Millidge M. Lightsey. He is listed as a farm laborer, with an estate worth $300 – roughly $170,000 in today's currency.[18] The Lightseys didn't own their own farm, then, and while they weren't destitute, they

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[18] Figures achieved using the MeasuringWorth website - https://www.measuringworth.com/dollarvaluetoday/?amount=100&from=1880#.

weren't wealthy people.[19] It is possible that Millidge purchased the stone without thought to cost, or that the church raised the funds together to purchase the stone. Whatever the way it was purchased, Mary's stone is a treasure in the burial landscape of Hampton County.

Riley H. Freeman (1871-1902) is buried next to his daughter, Ruth Elverta Freeman (1897-1899). His marker is meticulously clean but broken in half, its top portion leaned against the remaining half [Fig. 8]. They are in a popular mail order style, something that was easily ordered from a Sears Roebuck catalogue at the time, and are both well cared for. Even though Riley's stone is broken, it is clean and has been propped up after falling, indicating continued care of these stones. Riley is listed as male and the head of household in the 1900 Census, two years before his death in May of 1902. He was a farmer at the time, could read and write, and owned his home in the Peeples township – an area that no longer exists today. His wife, Carrie, is listed, as well as a son, Elmo, born a year before, possibly twin to Ruth, who had already passed.[20] Neither Carrie nor Elmo have extant markers in the PWBC. They may have been buried elsewhere, or simply don't have markers. It is more likely that Carrie remarried and is buried elsewhere, and Elmo moved away or is also buried elsewhere. Riley and Ruth's stones are useful in tandem with the census records as they also reveal clues to the socioeconomic layout of a Primitive Baptist congregation at the turn of the twentieth century – while the stones indicate that the Freeman's weren't overtly wealthy (Riley's stone is child-sized, after all), they *were* able to afford a marker for both Riley and Ruth, and they owned their home.

Riley's stone closely mimics Ruth's in size and motif. Both are child sized marble slabs and have a dove motif. Doves are the most common animal motif in the burial ground, and are

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[19] 8th (1860) South Carolina Census, Beaufort District Population Schedule, FamilySearch database.
[20] 12th (1900) South Carolina Census, Hampton County Population Schedule, FamilySearch database.

often used as linkages to the Christian faith. They are usually seen as holding an olive branch in their beaks or as a reference to the Holy Ghost.[21] Since these stones are in a churchyard, dove motifs make sense, but doves this is not usually a common motif choice for adults.[22] On closer inspection, Ruth and Riley's stones hold key differences. Ruth's dove is more detailed, with an eye, beak detailing, and feather lines present [Fig. 9]. Riley's is a simple outline of a dove with no detailing. Both are raised against a recessed background that is rounded and includes a decorative border. The doves on both stones show the side profile of the bird in mid-flight. Including Riley and Ruth, eight stones in the PWBC have dove motifs – Julia Emmer Woods (1886-1924), Infant Simmons (1904), Infant Simmons (1906), Zeckariah P. Terry (1910-1911), Garon Kelehear (1904-1906), and Carrie R. Thomas (1878-1919). Julia's stone is a replacement, likely a copy of the original, and is the only stone that shows a dove carrying an olive branch. Carrie's stone holds the most detailed dove of the bunch, with a clear eye and beak detail and feather detailing present not only on the wings and tail but dimpled on the body of the dove as well. There is no decorative border around the circular inset, as is present in Ruth, Riley, Garon, and Zeckariah's stones [Fig. 10].

Of the seven with their original stones and motifs, no dove is exactly alike, despite them all having matching lettering and style. These stones show that while stones became more readily available and easier to order in the twentieth century, they were still subject to small stylistic changes over a small timeframe. While gravestones were becoming more easily accessible and affordable, they did not become identical. Seven stones that look identical with a brief glance

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[21] Douglas Keister, *Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography* (New York: MJF Books, 2004), 79.
[22] "Usually the Dove of Promise occupies the center of the tympanum of a stone cut for a child or an adolescent, although it can be found on stones for adults as well." Richard E. Meyer, ed., *Cemeteries and Gravemarkers: Voices of American Culture* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1989), 41.

become full of small individual differences that tell the viewer more about mass produced stones in the early twentieth century.

Julia Emmer Woods (1886-1924) died in childbirth in the Peeples township at the age of 37. Her death certificate lists her as a housewife at the time of her death.[23] Her stone is one of the few extant examples that has been replaced and tells the viewer who installed the new marker [Fig. 11].[24] While this information is useful for understanding continued familial care throughout generations for burial grounds, there is no way to tell in most instances what the original stone looked like, unless they are buried next to a relative with the original stone remaining, or the original has been kept at the burial site, as is the case for Sarah E. Solomon's markers in the Solomons burial ground. In Julia's case, she is buried between a seeming nonrelative – an Edward P. Sauls – and George Woods (1883-1953), her husband. George's marker is a simple marble ground stone.[25] It is likely that her original stone was a mail ordered marble slab of some kind, her footstone is the original, an aged marble piece with her initials carved into it. There is no way of knowing if the individuals who replaced her stone stayed true to the original source material regarding motif and text, but it is likely they kept the original inscription, which reads: "Asleep in Jesus/Sweet Sleep/Dear Mother/Dear Wife," which was common language for stones into the early twentieth century, when Julia died. As stated above, the motif shows a dove holding an olive branch – the only one in PWBC. It's unclear if this was present on the original marker, or if liberties were taken with the original motif.

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[23] Certificate of Death for Mrs. Julia E. Woods, "South Carolina Deaths, 1915-1965," FamilySearch database.
[24] Other examples are found are found on original and replacement stones: Selina Cantey's marker (Lebanon Methodist main churchyard, original, erected by her sons,) the cenotaph of George Mosse (Black Swamp Baptist churchyard, his descendants), Sarah Lawton's marker (Black Swamp, replacement, erected by Lawton family association), and Lawrence LeRoy Bowers' marker (Black Creek Primitive Baptist churchyard, original, erected by his mother).
[25] A ground stone is a stone that is slightly raised and placed horizontally with the earth. They are similar to ledger stones, which are flush with the ground.

George and Julia rented their home in 1920, four years before Julia's death, and they were listed as a farming family. They had six children, two daughters and four sons, ranging in age from fourteen to two.[26] The very bottom reads: "Restored 2013 by twin sisters/J Nell Woods & J Nina Woods," who may be her grandchildren, as they are not listed as her children in the 1920 census. It is also possible they are the children she died whilst giving birth to. No other Woods have extant markers in the PWBC, but it is clear that George and Julia's stones have someone caring for them.

The stones of PWBC offer nuance and complexity to common scholarly understandings of Primitive Baptist congregations as poor rural individuals. While many of them did lead rural lifestyles, they were not all poor. Additionally, the varying levels of cleanliness and repairs in the churchyard offer a visual understanding of continued community and generational care in tandem with marker neglect. Where some burial grounds are completely neglected and others are pristine, PWBC is unique in offering examples of both instances in one burial ground, and therefore an example of individualistic grave care as opposed to the communal approach a managing body would take. It appears no one group or person tends to the whole burial ground, but individuals care for their own in the PWBC.

The Solomons Family Graveyard

The Solomons family graveyard is situated on a small dirt road near Garnett, South Carolina.[27] This family burial ground offers a unique perspective on a singular family in the Beaufort District throughout the eighteenth century. It is a well-kept hamlet surrounded by dense pine trees and the graves are encircled by a chain-link fence. Situated in front of the entry gate is

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[26] 14th (1920) South Carolina Census, Hampton County Population Schedule, FamilySearch database.
[27] The exact coordinates for the Solomons burial ground are 32.679001, -81.327781.

an iron archway, "Solomons" proudly displayed at the top, with geometric patterning down either side of the supports. The burial ground itself has been layered with gravel, upon which a few sturdy patches of grass poke through. The grave markers are oriented in orderly rows, all facing east. It does not appear to be an active graveyard, but the grass surrounding the burial ground was mowed upon each of my visits. This is common for many burial spaces in Hampton County, the burial grounds do not need to be active, indeed most are not, for their upkeep to matter.[28] Additional clues to continued care include the multiple stone repairs that are evident on the markers themselves, utilizing various techniques, none of which are recommended by common preservation guidelines but are indicative of care being taken with these stones, most likely a descendant.

Twenty-five markers in the Solomons burial ground are applicable to this research.[29] Eight (32%) of the burials are women, 9 (36%) are men, 7 (28%) are children, and one marker (4%) has no information on the deceased. 71% of children are referred to as daughters and 29% as sons. The average age of the children buried at Solomons is 1.8 years old.[30] 33% of the men's markers include familial and community-based descriptors. This is a noticeable deficit compared to the women's markers, of which 66% hold descriptors. It is most common for the women to be described as wives only, but Elizabeth A. Williams Solomons and Esther Elliott Solomons hold five and four descriptors, respectively. Elizabeth's stone is particularly interesting in that she is described as a consort and wife, as well as a Christian, mother, and friend. Esther's stone focuses

[28] This is not the case for all of the burial grounds surveyed for this research – Zahler is an example of a defunct burial ground that has not been maintained in some time. It seems to depend solely on local memory and familial ties to the burial ground in question.
[29] I have counted the replacement marker and original marker of Sarah E. Solomons as one marker for the sake of these figures.
[30] Cornelia Freelove Solomons' age was not included in this average as the last number of her birth year is not legible. She is included in the children's category for gender as she is identified as a daughter on her stone.

on her interpersonal accolades, identifying her as a wife, but also pious, virtuous, and amiable. Only one of the men at Solomons is described as a husband – William P. Solomons. Even in this instance, he is first identified as a Friend. This differential is common for burials of the nineteenth century in which the common belief was "a woman's identity [was] defined by her relationship to men: first to her father and later to her husband."[31] This gendered precept dominated American Victorian culture from the 1830s into the 1880s, also known as the period of American sentimentality, in which the nation was a masculine body pursuing excellence for the country. Following the ideology of separate spheres, the women were required to remain at home and rear the next generation, or more specifically, white women had to remain at home.[32] White hegemony and control of the female body, both white and black, created a society in which women were mothers and wives, and to deny these roles was to risk the social order. For Black women who were enslaved, white hegemony required complete control over reproduction.[33] The women of the Solomons family were white and are identified on their stones solely in relation to their children, husbands, and fathers. Markers for the women interred in Solomons burial ground tell us that they were, at least in death, wholly assigned to these roles by those who erected their stones.

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[31] Lynn Rainville, *Hidden History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2014), 33.

[32] "In this view the masculine national body, the 'sinews of a new nation,' is opposed to the feminine—and to slavery. But at the same time women were responsible for managing the relation between national embodiment and national bodies […] the imagination of a national embodiment nonetheless repeatedly excluded the racial and gendered body." Shirley Samuels, ed., *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 4.

[33] For more on the intersection of race and gender in the nineteenth century U.S., particularly in relation to abortion politics, see Nicola Beisel and Tamara Kay, "Abortion, Race, and Gender in Nineteenth-Century America," *American Sociological Review* 69, no. 4 (Aug. 2004): 498-518.

The most startling gender differential amongst the adults in the Solomons family plot is lifespan. The women's average age at death is 40.4 where the men's average is 64.3.[34] Only three of the women buried in the Solomons burial ground lived to see their forties, and of those, only Elizabeth A. saw her thirties. This is in stark contrast to the Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard, in which women lived slightly longer than men on average. This could be due to a larger sample from which to draw from, a genetic cause in the case of the Solomons, or simply bad luck. There is only one motif present in the Solomons burial ground – a flaming urn on Sarah E. Solomons' original marker, discussed further below. The most common stone shapes are arc top slabs at 35% and pedimented slabs at 31%. 23% show signs of restoration work and another 23% have had their original stones replaced.[35] The majority of the stones are discolored at 38%. The most common stone material is marble at 76%. 30% of epitaphs are religious. 42% of stones have no epitaph. 34% of inscriptions are familial. Two stones exhibit maker's marks – both from the Savannah branch of the Walker stone carving family.[36]

Saul Solomons (~1776-1848) has the earliest birth year of any markers with extant stones in the Solomons burial ground [Fig. 12]. He is buried next to his wife, Esther Solomons (1781-1840). He is presumably the patriarch of the remaining Solomons buried here. His marker is a unique example for the funerary landscape of Hampton County because his stone mentions his birthplace of Leipzig, Germany – spelled Leipsic on the stone, which reads as follows:

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[34] The men's average was calculates using Saul Solomon's age as 72 and Walter Lee Solomons as 21. Saul's marker attests that he died at "around 72 years of age." Walter's birth year's last digit is illegible. I believe him to have been in his early 20s due to his dying in 1871 and his birth year having 185[?] legible, meaning the oldest he could have been, if born in 1850, is 21.

[35] Replacements are identified by modern methods and materials that were not available at the time of death listed on the stone. For instance, the polished granite ground marker with sandblasted lettering would not have been available for Ettie Jean Ramsay, who died in 1918.

[36] Although only Saul and Esther's stones are marked, I believe Sarah Rosomond, Sarah E., and William P.'s stones to also be Walkers.

Sacred/to the memory of/Saul Solomons/Who died on the 1st March 1843/In about the 72nd year of his age./He was Born in Leipsic,/Germany/but for upwards of the last 50 years/he has resided in Colleton/and Beaufort Districts,/about 45 of which in the latter.

Saul's stone, in conjunction with the other markers in Solomons burial ground, offer records of multiple generations of a German immigrant's family in rural South Carolina at the turn of the nineteenth century. While not iconic, this stone employs multiple lettering styles – "Sacred" is curved at the top of the slab in blocked lettering, all cleanly achieved. The stone itself is a tall slab, made of marble, with a slightly pedimented top and an excised border within the stone face, creating the appearance of a circular slab oriented within the pedimented one. A repair has been performed on the stone at some point, there is a large crack running parallel to the ground near the bottom of the slab, with metal bolts fastened to the bottom sides supporting the stone. There is also evidence of a concrete patch being used to effectively glue the two pieces of the slab back together. Someone cared to keep this stone upright and legible – a truth seen across this burial ground in various examples.

Saul's stone offers another gem – a maker's mark for J.E. Walker & Brothers in Savannah, Georgia [Fig 13]. The only other marker I have found with a signature for this branch of the Walker family's carving business is in the Thomson family burial ground, connected to the Union Methodist churchyard approximately a half mile away. Walker/White maker's marks, in every other extant example in the region, commonly reside on the bottom right corner of slabs, or in the center bottom of any signed chest tombs or ledger stones, and are always in simple script.[37] Saul Solomons' stone, however, boasts a large etched ribbon at the bottom center, in

[37] A ledger stone is a slab that lays horizontally across the burial, on or near to the ground. An example of W.T. White's signature can be found on the Mary Elizabeth Zahler ledger stone in the Zahler Cemetery in Fig. 25.2. A chest tomb is a solid rectangular raised grave marker with stone sides placed horizontally to the ground. They resemble a chest, hence the name. See Fig. 25.1 for examples of chest tombs in the Black Swamp churchyard.

which "J.E. Walker & Bros" adorns the left ribbon face, and "Savannah Geo" adorns the right. This is the only example of the Walker & Brothers company using this specific maker's mark that I have found in the area.

It is difficult to identify Saul in the pre-1850 census records, due to only heads of households being listed and there being a Saul Solomons and a Hart Saul Solomons listed in the 1820 census, but an amalgamated Hart & Saul Solomons by 1830. I believe Saul to be the Saul Solomons listed in the 1820 census as he has multiple dependents listed where "Hart Saul" Solomons has none. It is possible that the Solomons were a Jewish family. Given the proximity to Charleston, a cultural hub for Southern Jews, it is not impossible that Saul/Hart traveled further inland to settle and make his home. James William Hagy notes a Hart Solomons, born in Germany, in a list of Jews present in Charleston throughout the colonial and antebellum periods. Hart is first on record in Charleston in 1799.[38] The stones in the Solomons burial ground have no specific clues to a Jewish faith, but this does not mean that the family was not Jewish. They may have been nonpracticing, or were simply interested in stones that conformed stylistically to others in the area.[39]

The 1830 census lists Saul's son, Henry Elliott, and the Saul & Hart Solomons entry has dependents in their household that translate to the ones listed for Saul in 1820.[40] The 1838 State and Territorial Census for St. Peter's Parish simply lists Saul with a four member household and

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[38] James William Hagy, *This Happy Land: The Jews of Colonial and Antebellum* Charleston (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 21.
[39] For more information on Jewish life and culture in Charleston, see: Barnett A. Elzas, *The Jews of South Carolina* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott, 1905). For information on Jewish burial/memorial practices in South Carolina and the South more broadly, see: Barnett A. Elzas, *The Old Jewish Cemeteries at Charleston, SC* (Charleston, SC: Daggett, 1903); Solomon Breibart, "The Jewish Cemeteries of Charleston," *Carologue: A Publication of the South Carolina Historical Society* 9 (Summer 1993): 8-9, 14-16; and Ryan K. Smith, "The Hebrew Cemeteries," in *Death and Rebirth in a Southern City* (Baltimore, MA: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020).
[40] 4th (1820) and 5th (1830) South Carolina Census, Beaufort District Population Schedules, South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

Henry with a five person household.[41] If census data were all the source material available on Saul, a researcher would not be able to glean much from this information – but with his grave marker, we are able to understand not only possible immigration patterns to Hampton County at the time, but also ascertain Saul's children and wife's names, which are not listed in the census.

Esther is buried next to Saul and her marker has a maker's mark from Walker & Brothers, but it is in the traditional Walker/White style, in simple clean lettering at the bottom right of her slab. Her inscription reads as follows:

> She was an/example of piety and virtue/blessed with an amiable disposition/which secured for her the esteem/of all who knew her./She has gone to reap the reward/which is prepared for the righteous.

The qualities of piety, virtue, and an amiable disposition present Esther as the quintessential white woman of the nineteenth century. Paralleling the religious ending to her inscription, her epitaph is a version of a poem titled "Epitaph," found in a collection of essays and poems by Philip Frenau. It is unclear whether Frenau wrote a poem intending it to be used as an epitaph, or if he saw it on a stone in another graveyard and decided to record it.[42] Esther's stone is mildly reminiscent of Gothic revival architecture. The flat top slab is enhanced by the main body of the stone appearing inset to the main corners, creating a rounded pediment inlay [Fig. 14]. Multiple lettering styles are used, as on Saul's stone, with a craftsman's precision. Interestingly, the stone has machine etched lettering on the back, something that was not available at the time of Esther's death and would not have been achievable by hand for J.E. Walker & Bros. The stone is

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[41] 1838 South Carolina State and Territorial Census, Beaufort District, FamilySearch database.

[42] Her epitaph reads: "In life contented and in death resigned/To blissful mansions flew her spotless mind/Attending angels bore her to that happy shore/Where pain afflicts the righteous soul no more." For Frenau's version, see *The Miscellaneous Works of Mr. Philip Frenau Containing His Essays, and Additional Poems* (Ann Arbor: Text Creation Partnership, 2011), 189.

assuredly of the period, as the maker's mark is present. It is possible that a descendant, tracing their genealogy, had her name machine etched into the back in order to provide her maiden name – Elliott. This also explains her son, Henry Elliott's, middle name.

The children of William P. Solomons (1809-1857) and Henry Elliott Solomons (1802-1869) make up most of the burials in Solomons cemetery. Henry is buried next to his second wife, Elizabeth A. Solomons (1804-1843), neé Williams. Henry's stone is a marble slab with an ogee top.[43] The face features clean lettering in various styles. It has cracked horizontally near the top of the stone and has been repaired with two metal bolts on either side, running perpendicular to the crack [Fig. 15]. The census lists Henry as a planter with real estate worth $40,000 and a personal estate valued at $81,000.[44] Three of the markers in the burial ground list Henry as their father and a C.A. Solomons as their mother – presumably Henry's first wife. This matches the 1860 census, which lists Caroline E. Solomons as Henry E. Solomons' wife. Of the seven children listed, only Walter Lee (185[?]-1871) has a marker in the Solomons burial ground.[45]

I believe William to be another of Saul and Esther's children, and brother to Henry. He is buried in between his wife, Sarah E., and his daughter, Sarah Rosomond. His marker is another marble slab with an ogee top, with the main face carved in relief with filigree borders [Fig. 16]. There is no maker's mark visible, but this is undoubtedly a Walker/White stone. There are multiple lettering styles present, as on Saul and Esther's, all done with the exacting eye particular to the Walker/Whites. The only record of William readily accessible is in the 1850

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[43] See Figure 30 in Appendix 1 for a visual guide to common slab shapes for an understanding of an ogee top.
[44] In 1860, $40,000 is the equivalent of roughly $23 million, and $81,000 is $46.6 million. These figures were achieved using the MeasuringWorth website, https://www.measuringworth.com/dollarvaluetoday/?amount=100&from=1880#.
[45] The other two children of Henry and Caroline with markers in Solomons are Susan A. and Mary – both of whom died before 1860 (1857 and 1854, respectively).

Slave Schedule for Saint Peter's Parish in Beaufort District as the enslaver of forty-six people – 18 women, 12 children, and 16 men.[46] This indicates a fair amount of wealth on William's part, which is reflected in his and his wife and daughter's markers. It is possible that the people enslaved by the Solomons were buried in the nearby Breeler Field burial ground situated roughly 1500 feet behind the Solomons family burial ground on the same dirt road – a much larger burial ground than was possible to fully survey for this project. The markers are organized in rough family units with some outliers, and there are more recent burials in Breeler Field than in Solomons. Most stones are broken and seem to have been vandalized. A research team, armed with multiple volunteers and toolkits outside of history would undoubtedly produce many answers from Breeler Field regarding a relationship to Solomons.

Sarah E. Solomons (1816-1840) is buried one grave from her daughter, beside her husband, William P. Her grave is marked by two stones, a replacement headstone standing upright and the original headstone lying face up along the grave [Fig 17]. It is broken into five pieces, with sections missing but overall intact and legible. It is a stroke of luck that the original was left to compare with the replacement, a concrete mold with impressed letters, as none of the inscription was carried over to the replacement, which conveys only Sarah's name, date of birth, and date of death. The original is undoubtedly a Walker despite the lack of a maker's mark. Sunburst finials adorn the top corners of the stone. The lettering is clean with multiple scripts evident, which are akin to the roman lettering samples on Saul and Esther's stones. The motif is a technically perfect flaming urn on a pedestal, raised against a recessed dimpled background [Fig. 18]. This is a hallmark of Scottish stone carving, a legacy which Thomas Walker came

[46] 7th (1850) South Carolina Census, Slave Schedule, FamilySearch database. Their ages ranged from one to sixty-five.

from and shared with his sons and son-in-law, John White. If Sarah's maiden name was included in the original, it is no longer legible on the stone, and it is not included in the replacement. She was twenty-three at the time of her death in 1840, a month short of her twenty fourth birthday. Her epitaph is a sorrowful one: *Leaving a disconsolate husband, and/two innocent children, to deplore/their irreparable loss.* The second portion of the epitaph is largely illegible, but the first two lines are legible and are the beginning lines to the hymn "Forgive, Blest Shade! The Tributary Tear." by Anne Steele.[47]

It is unclear why the replacement marker for Sarah E. is as plain as it is, but it indicates either a loss of wealth that was evident in the family while William P. was alive, or that there was no desire to spend a large amount on a replacement. The simple concrete marker with impressed lettering would have been made locally and could have been done by most folks with the time and the equipment. It is possible that it was made by the same individual who poured and pressed Hettie and G. Randolph Ramsay's stones, although Randolph's exhibits a different font than Sarah and Hettie. Hettie's stone also has a spelling error in which Solomons is spelled "Slomons" [Fig. 19].

Sarah Rosomond Solomons (1835-1857) has the most ornate stone in the Solomons burial ground [Fig. 20]. The clean marble slab is situated in the back right corner of the burial ground. It grabs the eye despite the large crack running just off center of the entire marker. A floral border decorates the top, in swirling banners, daisies are cut in fabulous detail and

[47] The second half of the hymn can be found on Amanda M. Miller's chest tomb in the Black Swamp Churchyard. The hymn was printed various times in a multitude of hymnals and books of religious poetry. Anne Steele (1717-1778) was an Englishwoman who wrote many hymns and religious poetry throughout her life. She was raised Baptist – which might indicate that the Solomons were Baptist as well. See Cynthia Y. Aalders, *To Express the Ineffable: The Hymns and Spirituality of Anne Steele* (Milton Keynes, U.K.: Paternoster, 2008); J.R. Broome, *A Bruised Reed: The Life and times of Anne Steele* (Harpenden, U.K.: Gospel Standard Trust Publications, 2007).

encircled in filigree outlines that swirl inwards to encircle smaller daisies towards the middle. A small teardrop resides squarely in the middle of the motif, with a recessed middle highlighting a small leafy plant. The stone has been set in a large concrete slab to keep it together, which has been painted white at some point. The iconography of this stone is not the only notable feature – Sarah's stone is crammed with lettering, the cost of which would have been astronomical for the period. Multiple lettering styles flow across the entirety of the stone face – the inscription an homage to a young woman of twenty-two. The inscription reads:

> Sacred/to the memory of Sarah Rosomond/daughter of/Wm P. Solomons/who departed/this life/on the 12th Dec. 1857/In the 22nd year of her age/She was the last of/a useful family/and her death cast a universal gloom/in the community in/which she lived

It is possible that multiple members of the community in which Sarah lived raised the money to erect this stone, which undoubtedly cost a fair amount considering the artwork gracing the top and the sheer amount of lettering on the stone. Considering her father's large estate, it is also possible she inherited a fair sum that was used for her burial. There is no mention of a husband, and as her surname remains Solomons, she did not marry before her death. Floral imagery of a blossom falling before its time is a common hallmark of the time – most frequently utilized in a broken bud motif often found on small children's graves.[48] Floral imagery is evoked in the double inscription for Sarah, as well. The text holds portions from Felicia Dorothea Hemans' "The Hour of Death" and William Cullen Bryant's "The Death of Flowers." Bryant's piece is, in particular, most applicable and to the point – *The fair, meek blossom that grew up/And faded by my side,/In the cold moist earth we laid her/when the forest cast the leaf/And we wept that one so lovely/Should have a life so brief.*[49] This stone evokes a great sense of loss, but it is easy to forget

[48] Keister, *Stories in Stone,* 43.
[49] This is pulled from the last stanza of the poem.

that the wealthy are able to afford such memorialization – this does not indicate a stronger loss, merely one that was able to be expressed due to wealth.

The Solomons family burial ground was likely once located on the Solomons land. It is unclear what Saul's economic position was when he arrived in South Carolina, but the stones of his family indicate that they undoubtedly earned the status of planter family before losing a large quantity of wealth and likely their plantation in the aftermath of the Civil War. The grandiosity of the marble slabs in Solomons offer stark contrast to the simple concrete markers that mark others. It is indicative of a possible loss in fortune after the death of Sarah Rosomond and William P. Solomons in 1857 – and as much of their wealth was produced from the labor of those they enslaved, the Civil War and resulting Reconstruction undoubtedly affected the family's finances. This small burial ground offers information into the immigration patterns of the eighteenth century in South Carolina, and how one might rise to prominence in the U.S. when engaging in the Atlantic Slave trade. Furthermore, the proximity of Breeler Field suggests that those enslaved by the Solomons, and their descendants, are buried there.

Lebanon Methodist Churchyard & Auxiliary Churchyard

The Lebanon Methodist Church is located on a small dirt road off SC Highway 321, a few miles outside of the small township of Scotia. The church itself is a simple white building on blocks. It faces a cotton field, and its fellowship hall is a simple overhang with picnic tables underneath it. I have divided the churchyard into two separate burial grounds for study – the main churchyard (LMM) and the auxiliary churchyard (LMA). The LMM is situated around the church itself and is surrounded by a chain-link fence. The LMA is located to the left of the church, when facing the building. It is not fenced in and has more recent burials than the LMM. There is no overt explanation for the separate burial spaces, but after calling Dawn Cole, listed

on the cemetery association sign posted outside of the LMM, she confirmed that this separate area is for the Black members of the church.[50] There are markers in the LMA that are homemade and indicate that the family of the deceased could not afford to pay for a marker. These styles of stones are not present in the LMM.

Both of Lebanon Methodist's churchyards are characterized by a large quantity of broken, dirty, illegible, and weathered grave markers. The LMM is predominantly organized into familial bordered plots. All plots are sandy with no grass, despite grass growing outside of the plots. The LMM holds 143 stones applicable to this research. Women and men are equally represented at 39 each (27.3%). There are 40 (27.9%) children's markers, 13 (9%) blank stones, and 12 (8.4%) markers do not have enough information included to ascertain the gender of the deceased.[51] The average age at death for adults is almost equal, with women at 47.8 and men at 48.9. The average age at death for children is 3.8. [52] 46% of women are referred to as wives, 28.2% as mothers, and 12.8% as church members. 7.6% of women have three or more descriptors and 15.3% have no descriptors at all. 20% of men are referred to as husbands, 17.9% as fathers, and 15.4% as church members. 17.9% have three or more descriptors and 53% have no descriptors at all. These trends are in line with the other burial grounds in this study, with men having less descriptors overall and being less related to their families than women, but LMM is unique in that it has more men with descriptors on average than other surveyed burial grounds. 32.5% of children are described as sons and 30% as daughters. 12.5% of children are referred to as "darling," but the most unique descriptor for children's markers in LMM is "Little Sufferer"

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[50] Phone conversation with Dawn Cole, October 10, 2023. Cole says that burials in the LMA began in the 1800s and continue to this day.

[51] I have included Margariet M. Cubsted Prince in the children's category, despite being married, because she was 17 at the time of her death in 1911.

[52] This estimate does not include the four men's, four women's, or four children's stones whose birth and death information was either illegible or not included on the stone.

on the stone of Carrie L. Stokes (1865-1873). 63% of the stones in LMM have no motif. The most prominent motif is tied between generic floral and a lamb at 3% of applicable stones each. Gendered handshakes and foliage came in a close second at 2%. 4.9% of stones show signs of repair and 7% are replacement stones. Of stones with epitaphs, 60% are religious.

The LMA is characterized by rounded body slabs, broken markers, and two unique concrete markers in which the information was written by hand while the concrete dried. It has twenty-three stones that are relevant to this research: 6 (26.1%) of which are women, 7 (30.4%) are men, 4 (17.4%) are blank markers, and 6 (26.1%) do not include enough information to ascertain the gender of the deceased. There are no discernable markers for children, though some of the blank or undiscernible stones may be for children. The average age at death for adults is 45.3 for women and 48.1 for men.[53] 50% of women are described as mothers and 50% as wives. 16.7% of women have no descriptor. Only one man is referred to as a father – Patrick Jones, who is also described as faithful, tender, and a friend. 42.9% of men have no descriptor. 52% of markers in LMA have no motif. Of those that do, floral motifs and urns are tied at 27.3% each. 17.4% of burials have a concrete mound, or arced body slab, over their grave. There are no significant amounts of repairs or replacements. 56% of markers have epitaphs, of which 46.1% are optimistic in nature.

T.V. Shuman's (1868-1908) marker in the LMM is the only one in the surveyed area to have an Odd Fellows motif [Fig. 21]. The motif shows an eye with rays of light emitting from the bottom over a three-link chain, which curves upward towards the eye. Below both is skull and crossbones. The three links are undoubtedly the symbol of the Odd Fellows – while the skull

[53] This estimate does not include the two women's markers and one men's marker that are illegible or do not include birth and death information.

and the eye may indicate a local motif or simply a choice by whomever decided to place the marker.[54] T.V.'s marker is a useful source for understanding the shape of fraternalism in Hampton County at the turn of the twentieth century. Masonic emblems are found more often on markers in Hampton County, but they were also a more popular and well-known fraternal organization. Since T.V.'s marker has Odd Fellows symbolism, there was at one point an Odd Fellows lodge in the area. Members may have largely bought their own markers, their relatives opted to not include Odd Fellows symbols on the marker, or extant examples may be lost or simply in larger burial grounds than were surveyed for this project.

John G. Goettee's (1809-1850) marker is in the LMM. He is buried next to his wife, Eliza (1815-1883). His marble slab is not signed but is a Walker/White marker, identifiable by the accented pediment at the top. His second portion of his inscription reads as follows: "He was an affectionate/Husband & Father & kind Master/He was for many years a/member of the Baptist Church/at Black Creek." This inscription offers two points of interest: a kind Master and his church membership as a Baptist. It's possible that John was previously Baptist and converted to Methodism, or that Lebanon Methodist used to be Black Creek Baptist church. No other stone mentions membership at Black Creek specifically, and those that mention a church mention a Methodist one – such as Alan Causey's stone, which lists him as a member of the "M.E. Church South at Lebanon on the Black Swamp Circuit." It's more likely John converted.

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[54] Societies like the Masons and Odd Fellows utilized variations of their organization's symbols based on location, and sometimes personal preference. "Although organizations attempted to keep private their ceremonies and the symbolic meanings of their emblems, they simultaneously wished to project a vital and prosperous public identity […] Institutional emblems, such as the square compass of the Free-masons, the three links of the Odd Fellows […]" The book later identifies the three links as representing friendship, love, and truth. Gerard C. Wertkin, ed. *Encyclopedia of American Folk Art* (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2003), 200 & 293.

To the point of being listed as a kind Master – it can be argued that this was not uncommon for the time, but other enslavers buried in Hampton County don't list this descriptor on their markers, even when other descriptors and long inscriptions and epitaphs are common. This indicates that whoever erected his stone saw this as an integral part of John's identity, as normal as putting his role as a husband and father on his stone. While I was unable to find census records with John listed, his wife, Eliza, is listed as the head of household in the 1860 census as a planter with real estate worth $8,500 and personal property worth $49,000.[55] This suggests that Eliza took over as head of the household, at least on paper, after John's death and ran their sizeable estate which, as a planter, would require slave labor.

The marker of Leonard Joyner (1868-1938) in LMA is a unique example of locally poured concrete markers. His stone is in the shape of a cross on top of a rounded slab [Fig. 22]. The center of the cross boasts a ribboned motif, and the lettering itself is in different sizes and is fairly even. His stone is beginning to sink. Other unique stones are simple concrete slabs, small in size, with handwritten inscriptions. This would be achieved as the concrete dried, with some sort of pencil shaped object. One reads: "H.C. died/March/15/1910" [Fig. 23]. The other simply has the deceased's initials: B.W.R. [Fig. 24]. These are some of the only extant examples of handwritten markers in Hampton County.[56] These markers are just as valuable as the most ornate stone in the burial landscape, and are especially illuminating when utilized in close proximity to wealthy individuals' burials, such as the Goettee's in LMM. The lack of this form of marker in

[55] In today's currency: $8,500 = roughly $4.8 million and $49,000 = roughly $28.1 million. Figures achieved using the MeasuringWorth website, https://www.measuringworth.com/dollarvaluetoday/?amount=100&from=1880#.
[56] One other can be found in the Varnville town cemetery [Fig. 32]. While it is clear someone handwrote the inscription, the stone itself is weathered to the point of illegibility.

LMM and their relegation to LMA supports my theory of economic separation in the cohesive Lebanon Methodist churchyard.

Black Swamp/Robertville Churchyard

The Black Swamp Churchyard (BSC) is attached to what is now the Robertville Baptist church, located at the crossroads of Robertville, SC. Robertville is in the top corner of what is now Jasper County, but remained a part of Beaufort District, and then Hampton County, until 1919. Historically, the congregation has been comprised of wealthier individuals than was normal for Baptists, particularly in this area of South Carolina.[57] The Black Swamp Baptist church was established in 1786 and was moved in 1811 to the crossroads where the BSC and Robertville Baptist church are today.[58] The church's history is defined by membership from the wealthy Jaudon, Lawton, and Robert families – which produced Henry Martyn Robert of Robert's Rules of Order fame and is the namesake of the town. The BSC is characterized by the only slate markers within the realm of this field research, chest tombs, a large amount of possible Walker/White stones, a significant portion of the markers giving the reader biographical information regarding birth and death places for the deceased, backdated markers placed by genealogical groups, Confederate memorialization, and ornate stones dedicated to children.

There are ninety-three stones in the BSC applicable to this research. 26 (28%) of those buried are women, 33 (35.5%) are children, 30 (32.3%) are men, 2 (2.2%) of markers have no information to allude to the gender of the deceased, and 5 (5.4%) of the markers are blank. The

[57] Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country,* (Oxford University Press, 1995), 164.
[58] While some extant markers have death dates as early as 1816, Eric W. Plaag argues that the burial ground was likely not established until 1833. Many of the earlier members of Black Swamp are buried in the Robert family burial ground, closer to the original location of the church. Eric W. Plaag, *The Means of Grace: A History of the Robertville Baptist Church* (Boone, N.C.: Charley House Press, 2021), 14-33.

average age of death for adults in BSC is 56.5 for women and 52.9 for men. The average age at death for children is 3. Just over a third of women are referred to as wives, 19% have three or more descriptors, 15% are described as church members, and 15% have no descriptors at all. 10% of men are described by their affiliation with the Confederacy, 6% are described as fathers, one (3%) is described as a husband, 6% are described by their occupation (a Reverend and a doctor), and 6% are described as church members.[59] 50% have no descriptors. Floral motifs are the most common at 10%. 66% of stones have no motif. The most popular stone shape is an arc top slab at 16%, with pedimented a close second at 13%. Repair work is not common in BSC, with only 2% of stones having obvious signs of repair. 10% are replacement stones.[60] Most epitaphs are religious at 19%, and 12% with descriptive epitaphs coming second. 37% of inscriptions relate familial information. 17% are possible Walker/White markers.

The chest tomb[61] of Cordelia Lawton (1798-1856) is one of four in the BSC is an excellent example of the skill with which Walker/White stones are carved, and one of the few iconographic examples to be found in the survey area [Fig. 25].[62] As is the case with many chest tombs, the horizontal placement of the main stone face has caused acid rain and other environmental causes to wear the once beautifully crafted lettering away in some cases. The entirety of the stone face is an homage to high Victorian funerary custom. The eye is immediately drawn to the excellently rendered willow and urn motif in a recessed background. A

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[59] The stone of Martin Swift (1793-1834) lists him as "Rev. Martin Swift." The use of the term "Reverend" rather than the traditional "the Reverend" is a unique vernacular usage for Baptists in the Hampton County area, and other Baptist groups throughout the South.

[60] This estimate includes cenotaphs and any obviously postdated markers. It does not include stones I was not certain were replacements or not.

[61] Reminder that chest tombs are a solid, rectangular, raised grave marker with stone sides. They resemble chests, hence the name.

[62] Other examples include Mary E. Lightsey's marker (PWBC) and Sarah E. Solomon's marker (Solomons). Only Mary's is signed.

flaming urn is utilized here, in contrast to the more popular shrouded urn that frequents other markers in the area. This is also a relatively late example of the willow and urn motif, whose period of popularity had all but died out by 1850.[63] Cordelia's stone offers an example of the elites of the upper Beaufort District holding on to Victorian mourning customs, despite their being outdated by this period. These frameworks were unattainable for much of the population, therefore cementing Cordelia's status in death. Sunburst finials adorn the top and bottom corners as well. Despite mottled discoloration across the stoneface, the motif has valiantly held against the tests of time. Each frond of the willow is distinct from its neighbor, all exact in their lining and discernable from the raised and emotive willow trunk, curving in excellently rendered natural patterns throughout the foliage of the tree. To the left of the tree, the flaming urn stands atop a pedestal. Some detailing from the urn itself is lost to time – still, the flames are carved in such a way that they almost flicker to life on the stone face, making one wonder how emotive the carving must have been when new. There is an unidentifiable object in the extreme left of the motif – possibly a copse of trees.

The art of Cordelia's stone is not the only treasure – the inscription and epitaph offer even more. Like Saul Solomons' stone in the Solomons burial ground, Cordelia's stone offers biographical information for the deceased and provides location and cause of her death. No other stone included in this survey provides a cause of death, though ten others in the BSC provide location of death. The stone reads as follows:

In memory/of the/Worth and Virtues/Mrs. Cordelia P. Lawton/wife of/Alexr. J. Lawton/She was born in Germany, Europe/25th December 1798/ and when a small child brought by her parents/to this Country./She removed to Black Swamp, Beaufort District, So. Ca./as the wife of him who mourns her loss,/about 19 years since a stranger/and by her active and pious attention/to all the duties of life/secured the affectionate respect/of a wide circle of friends/She

[63] James A. Hijiya, "American Gravestones and Attitudes Towards Death: A Brief History," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 127, no. 5 (Oct. 1983): 341.

died in her home of Paralyses/10th September 1856/Aged 57 years 8 months and 16 days. She was strong in faith in her Saviour/and professed his name as a Baptist/more than 20 years/As her life was useful so her end was peaceful.[64]

Both Cordelia Lawton and Saul immigrated from Germany to Beaufort District – we know that Cordelia came as a child, where Saul immigrated in his twenties, meaning they spent the majority of their lives in South Carolina, Cordelia nearly all of it. Who, then, made the choice to include this information on these stones, and why? Why was it important to include their place of birth? These clues indicate that either the loved ones of the deceased found it integral to their identity, unlikely in Cordelia's case due to her early arrival in the country, or that they were simply wealthy enough to afford a longer inscription and found it important to list the outlines of their lives on their markers. These stones offer a material connection to a period in South Carolinian history in which European heritage was not eradicated in the first generation of immigrants. The stones of both Cordelia Lawton and Saul Solomons offer a brief interlude on the eve of the Civil War that allows for us to see a Lowcountry in which the domination of the white and Black binary had not yet fully eclipsed the highly variable landscape of settlement that was so prevalent in the eighteenth century.[65]

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[64] At the time of surveying, Cordelia's stone was largely weathered. This inscription is complete thanks to the work of Ruth Rawls on FindaGrave, 16 September, 2013, https://tinyurl.com/4ac5rez8.

[65] With American citizenship relying on the racialized standard of "free white immigrants" as a requirement for naturalization, whiteness became a construct that European immigrants had to engage with. These racial factors would affect European immigrants across the early years of the country, beginning with groups like the Irish, Scots, and Germans, and continuing for new immigrants while Saul and Cordelia watched, already settled in the area for a few decades. Still, whiteness was a category in which European settlers often donned and utilized to their own social needs to succeed in early American culture. For an in-depth look at this phenomena, see Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 13-14.

The Thirza (1812-1817) and Eusebia Lawton (1815-1816) markers are side by side, one row behind the chest tombs of their parents, Alexander and Martha Lawton.[66] Both markers are likely postdated by the children's parents, once they decided to be buried in the BSC, as their death dates are over a decade before the BSC was likely in use. Nevertheless, the stones were made in the nineteenth century and likely placed before the parent's deaths to ensure a family plot. Both slabs are half round at the top with checked scotia shoulders, and appear to be made of slate. Thirza is listed as the second daughter, and Eusebia the third. Thirza's stone is in better condition than Eusebia's, but there is evidence of a few superficial cracks and one small chip on the top right corner. There is a border running from under the tympanum and motif along the sides of the stoneface with a dimpled and ribboned pattern that is not present on Eusebia's. The tympanum reveals an urn and willow motif against a dimpled background – a hallmark of the Scottish stonecarving tradition.[67] Two willows frame the urn at the center, which is almost as tall as the willows themselves, and does not stand on a pedestal [Fig. 26]. The skill with which the motif is carved and the dimpled background of the motif on Thirza's stone hint at Walker/White craftsmanship, but the lettering does not match extant signed examples in the area. It is possible that the lettering styles changed, or more likely, another stone carver utilized the Scottish tradition. The same dimpled background is evident on Eusebia's stone, but the motif differs slightly – there is only one willow, and there is a flaming urn in the center. Flames are normally indicative of eternal life when seen in cemeteries [Fig 27].[68] The traditional urn is more often seen, as is the case with Thirza's. The sisters died one year apart, which explains the slightly

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[66] Based on the dates on all respective markers, it appears Cordelia was the second wife of Alexander, and Martha the first.

[67] "Walker also frequently included a punched background […] a characteristic of Scotch-Irish stonecarving." Combs, *Early Gravestone Art,* 22. For an example of a signed Walker stone with this punched or dimpled background, see Fig. 3.3 in *Early Gravestone Art*, 108.

[68] Keister, *Stories in Stone*, 123.

different motifs – the stone carver was undoubtedly the same, as the lettering is identical, and the dimpled background and willow are also present and identical on both. The artist improved slightly in their work by the time of Thirza's death. Eusebia's stone exhibits far more cracking and weathering than Thirza's. Both stones provide a place of death for the girls, who "died on Blackswamp."

The markers for Ben N. Buckner (1885-1917) and Robert E. Sweat (1837-1861) are unique examples of stones that celebrate those who died in war – in Ben's case, during World War I, and in Robert's case, the Civil War.[69] They are useful examples of what individuals chose to put on markers honoring those fallen in war when they have the resources to do so, and don't rely on the military issued markers for burials that are often the best and most affordable option for others. Ben's marker is the simplest – a marble slab in the popular mail order style, its front face is significantly weathered and contains nothing that immediately catches the eye. The back of the stone, however, has every available inch covered in script, with his parents detailing his loss and the religious hope of a reunion in Heaven [Fig. 28]. Here is an excerpt:

> He was called to serve his/country and responded not by/admitting that it was [hard to?]/leave his home and loved ones/but at the same time expressing his perfect willingness to/serve his country in its time/of need. On Nov 27 1917 God/called our boy to a better/and happier world. It was/hard so very hard to give him/up, and we do miss him so much.

There are contradictory dates on the back of Ben's marker – Oct. 8, 1917, is curved at the top of the long epitaph, Nov 27, 1917, is listed as his death date within the text proper. It seems likely that October 8th is when Ben left for service, and he passed shortly after leaving home. The sheer amount of text on this marker indicates a fair amount of money spent, despite the cost reductions

[69] Robert's marker is not the only one in BSC commemorating a Confederate soldier's loss, but it is the most ornate in BSC. The stone of Edward P. Lawton (1832-1862) offers biographical information and a place of death, and is a smaller, but equally useful example of Confederate memorialization and marital commemoration in BSC. Other burial grounds in the surveyed area typically have an added plaque to an official Confederate military marker, so the stones of BSC are unique for the area. This is likely due to the above average income of the congregation.

involved from completely handmade stones to mail order ones. It appears that Ben's parents elected to order their own in order to memorialize their son further than a military marker would be able to.[70]

The Robert E. Sweat (1837-1861) obelisk is a beautiful piece of craftsmanship in the BSC in that it includes a large amount of biographical information about the deceased, is preserved well, informs the viewer who erected it, and it has the only palmetto motif found in this survey area [Fig .29]. The marble obelisk exhibits evidence of frequent cleanings, and while the main stone face is remarkably well kept, the other sides show signs of crumbling and wear. There is no signature on this obelisk, though whoever carved the palmetto was highly skilled [Fig. 30].[71] Crumbling aside, the tree is rendered in exquisite detail, and is undoubtedly a nod to Robert's home state of South Carolina. The front side of the obelisk holds Robert's lengthy biographical inscription, the back the palmetto motif, the left side an epitaph of his last words, and the right-side information on his Christian faith. The main stone face reads as follows:

> Erected/by/many Citizens/of St. Peter's Parish/To the memory of/Robert E. Sweat,/of Washington/Light Infantry,/Hampton's Legion,/So. Ca. Volunteers:/who died at/Culpepper C.H. Va./on 19th August 1861/of a wound in the/left arm received/at Manassas Plains/on the memorable/21st July '61,/Aged 24 years 6 mos./and 26 days.

Money was raised to erect this marker by the community that Robert was a part of, and the amount of detail provided on his death is remarkable. It is likely that this monument was placed a few years after his death, due to the amount of money that would need to be raised. It is also possible that the marker was erected decades later, during the Lost Cause Movement, but based

[70] Official military markers made of stone became available for deceased Union soldiers in national cemeteries in 1873. Fearing overcrowding, official markers were approved for 'private, village, or city cemeteries" in 1879. This would have been applicable for a marker in 1917, at the time of Ben's death. Mark C. Mollan, "Honoring Our War Dead: The Evolution of Government Policy on Headstones for Fallen Soldiers and Sailors," *Prologue Magazine* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2003), https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2003/spring/headstones.html.

[71] That said, the lettering on this obelisk is identical to that of the Catherine Faber monument in the St. John's Lutheran churchyard in Charleston – which is discussed in Combs, *Gravestone Art*, 198-199.

on the level of craftsmanship I believe it to be hand carved in the nineteenth century within a few years after Robert's death.

Matilda Frances (1850-1854) and Oliver Solomons (1852-1854) share an adult-sized pedimented slab further from the church, near the trees surrounding the BSC [Fig. 31]. There is no motif, and the lettering is precise and clean with multiple lettering styles. It is possibly a Walker/White. The unassuming stone holds a wealth of information on the two children, however:

> This stone/marks the place where are deposited/side by side the remains of/Matilda Frances Solomons/who died at Savannah/July 22nd 1854/Aged 4 years 3 months and 11 days/And of Oliver Bostick Solomons/who died at same place/July 24th 1854/Aged 1 year 10 months and 14 days/Children of Samuel & Mary/A.E. Solomons/For such is the Kingdom of Heaven

There are no extant markers for Samuel or Mary in the BSC, making it unclear why their children are buried here. They may have moved away or changed church affiliations. Nevertheless, at the time of Matilda and Oliver's death, the couple were able to afford an adult-sized marble stone with a fair amount of lettering, perhaps they decided to combine the stone for the two to afford a more descriptive marker. We are not told what Matilda and Oliver died from, but as they both died in Savannah, Georgia, it seems the family may have traveled between Beaufort District and Savannah frequently, which would not have been uncommon for those of means in the nineteenth century.

The ornate markers in the BSC offer more information on a select amount of those buried here than is available in other burial grounds. The wealthy were able to afford more memorialization, and often did so. Still, as has been seen in the discussion of other markers in burial grounds with less information on the stones themselves, utilizing the stones in conjunction with written records (when available) allows for insight into the lives of the less wealthy. For

those whose information is not included on their markers, or for those that have no extant markers, some information can still be gleaned from their places of rest, as is evident for an unnamed burial ground outside of the Wynn cemetery near Hampton.

Forest of Rest

The Forest of Rest lies in a wooded area right off of County Highway 25. It is located a few hundred feet away from the Wynn/Winn cemetery. If one were to walk around the fencing on the right side of the Wynn/Winn cemetery and venture a short way into the woods, they would find themselves in the middle of an unmarked burial ground that is, to the best of my knowledge, no longer in use. I have coined this area the Forest of Rest, as I was not able to discover the original name if there was one. This does not mean that there is no name for the burial ground, only that I did not have the connections or resources to contact a large array of individuals in the area who might know more. Christina Brooks argues that the state of a burial space cannot be a clear indication of continued care either, because so-called "unkempt and unorganized" burial spaces are often still cared for and live in "the community's consciousness."[72]

Both my grandfather and Edna Hamilton know of the burial ground, but had no information other than that it was used by Black Hamptonians. My grandfather claims to have seen the last burial in passing in his youth: "I remember as a boy when they buried – I was just a child and we lived there on Rabbit Branch, which meant I was probably less than ten years old. Which meant – it's been seventy-five years or longer, since they had a funeral there."[73] Edna knows that the burial ground is there and has a long history: "it was an old, old cemetery. It was

[72] Brooks, "Exploring the Material Culture," 7.
[73] Interview with Thomas Terry, July 9, 2021.

a cemetery when we were kids- when me and your granddaddy were kids growing up." Edna and my grandfather have no knowledge of who is buried there, only that there are burials present.[74] Using my handheld GPS device, I have attempted to create a map of the possible burials in the Forest of Rest – see Map 6 for a visual outline. I tagged fourteen possible burials in the wooded area. There may be more, and there may be less – I worked to the best of my ability to mark areas that had depressions in distinct burial shapes, keeping in mind organic markers and attempting to understand the overall layout of the burial ground. Some burials may have been omitted, as I avoided any depressions that weren't large, and could therefore be children's burials. There is also the possibility of overlapping burials. This burial ground would undoubtedly benefit from a more thorough study from a researcher with an archaeological background.

Black funeral customs in South Carolina remain a focus of study due to the continuation of African elements in burials and funerals into the present day. Cynthia Connor argues that "black mortuary behavior in South Carolina is a unique synthesis of West African and European traditions," which can often be understood through the misinterpretations of white viewers.[75] For instance, it is common for white Americans to view a Black American burial ground as unkempt, or not taken care of. In my grandfather's case, he identifies the Forest of Rest as "left and isolated and destroyed," but this is simply a Eurocentric view of how a "proper" burial ground should look.[76] While it appears that this burial ground has been left and is no longer active, and it certainly is isolated – most of the county is – it is not necessarily destroyed. The presence of organic markers – particularly trees – are important and common in African, and subsequently,

[74] Interview with Edna Hamilton, January 6, 2022.
[75] Connor, "Archaeological Analysis," 53.
[76] Terry interview, July 9, 2021.

Black American burial customs in places where African influence survived the brutality of American slavery. I believe the Forest of Rest to be one of these examples – it is wooded, a common burial practice for those of African descent enslaved in the area, and it is likely that the larger holly trees found interspersed among the grave sites serve as markers for some of the burials.[77] Ultimately, it is impossible to tell if these trees were meant as such by whomever utilized the burial ground in the 1940s. The space looks different than it did almost eighty years ago, and the amount of foliage makes it unclear which correspond to burials and which have grown from dropped seeds, etc.[78]

My grandfather's reminiscence of the burial in the Forest of Rest in the mid-1940s is useful for understanding both the longevity of certain burial practices in the Black community of Hampton County and markers that are not there anymore. He recalls that a material known as lighterd knot was, to his memory, the material of choice for markers in the Forest of Rest at the time of burial. Lighterd knot is a pine limb full of sap – also known as fatwood, and is most commonly used for starting fires. The wood can become full of sap in this way from natural destruction, such as a forest fire, or by intentional burns set by humans. The presence of the sap makes the wood last longer than it normally would, though none were evident by the time of my survey, and since the region has always been characterized by the "pine barrens" it would be an easy material to find. As for the burial customs of the time, he remembers "a lot of weeping and wailing," which is what he identifies as the reason he remembers this funeral at all.[79] This is

[77] Brooks identifies the woods as a place of burial for enslaved communities in VA and SC – and looks at these wooded areas as a "creolized landscape" in which white ideas of use for the space differed from those of Black views. Brooks, "Exploring the Material Culture," 7.
[78] "Such memorials are difficult to identify if oral traditions are not preserved. Hundreds of bushes and trees stand in older cemeteries, and it is no longer clear whether they mark burials or are simply landscaping." Rainville, *Hidden History,* 25.
[79] Interview with Thomas Terry, July 9, 2021.

indicative of a continuation of burial customs that were evident and noted upon in Black communities in South Carolina since the eighteenth century.[80]

The Forest of Rest cannot be broken down into neat percentages representing grave markers like the other burial grounds explored in this research. This is all the more reason to include it, as it highlights the disparities present within the necrogeography of Hampton County. The Forest of Rest reminds us of the realities and presence of the burial color line in Hampton County, despite the possible blurring of the lines in places like the Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard and the Lebanon Methodist churchyards. It also highlights the people and burials that are missed when dealing only in grave markers. A stone with information on the deceased is easier for the researcher to identify a source, but they should never be considered the only source material in a burial landscape. The Forest of Rest is just as important to understanding the history and shape of Hampton County's past as all its other burial grounds, and serves as an important reminder that no collection of markers is representative of the true whole of a community.

Findings

Of the five burial grounds analyzed in this section, four have extant markers. Of these four, the Lebanon Methodist main churchyard (LMM) holds the largest number of relevant markers, with the Black Swamp churchyard (BSC) a close second and the Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard (PWBC) third. The total size between the six range from 23-143 applicable stones. These numbers show that while this research focuses on smaller burial

[80] This could be a continuation of ring shouts, a facet of enslaved burial culture, in which mourners would "combine music and dancing in a counterclockwise circle" around the grave. Christina Brooks' research shows that these ring shouts continues in South Carolina well into the 20th century. Brooks, "Exploring the Material Culture," 15.

grounds, there is still significant variety in the size of smaller rural burial grounds, and wealth of knowledge to gain from the stones and layout.

From a gendered perspective, adult men and women remain roughly equal in burial representation across all burial grounds with extant markers.[81] Markers that do not offer enough information regarding the gender of the deceased are present in significant quantities in PWPB, LMM, and the Lebanon Methodist auxiliary churchyard (LMA). Children's burials are present in all burial grounds, barring LMA. BSC holds the highest percentage of recognizable children's burials at 35% (33 of 93). It is likely, however, that in the case of the other burial grounds, children were simply given small concrete markers with no information, and their numbers are higher and more on par with the BSC. This indicates a similar gender breakdown across all six burial grounds with markers. While the genders are represented equally in the burial ground, a discrepancy exists for age at death, for adults and children.

Average age at death, separated further by gender, across the burial grounds allows further understanding of death, and quality of life, at the time of burial for those in Hampton County. Women have higher ages at death on average in only two of the six graveyards with extant markers – BSC and PWPB. Both have women living roughly four years longer than men, on average. Children remain around the three-year mark in all but Solomons, in which their average age at death is 1.8 years old.[82] With BSC and PWPB being some of the largest sampled burial grounds in this research, women's age at death being higher may mean that larger sample sizes show a roughly equitable age at death across gender lines. Solomons offers a unique familial case study, and possible outlier for Hampton County, in which women lived

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[81] See Table 1 in Appendix 2.
[82] See Table 2 in Appendix 2.

significantly shorter lives than their male counterparts and children died at much younger ages. The Solomons burial ground may also be more accurate for the nineteenth century specifically, as other larger burial grounds hold burials across larger timeframes that may serve to equalize gender disparities in death. The average age of children buried in all other burial grounds with extant markers remaining the same across such a large timeframe suggests a depressing and somewhat constant statistic regarding child mortality in Hampton County.

The Forest of Rest, while lacking extant markers, is useful for the machinations of memory in local communities, and the Black community of the Hampton County region, more specifically. Despite having no fencing, artificial landscaping, or markers, individuals in the community remember the burial ground. The Forest of Rest is just as viable as those explored in this thesis that hold markers, because it challenges presupposed notions of "proper" burial, and is a testament to the importance and necessity of oral history and local remembrance in locating burial grounds. The Forest of Rest also allows for a deeper understanding of alternative burial ground methods, in which the burial ground may be viewed as "a living monument, this perpetual spiritual and physical regeneration is comparable, if not superior, to any stone monument."[83] It also offers a stark reminder of enforced inequality across the color line, even in death.

Stylistic changes in the burial landscape of Hampton County are useful well into the twentieth century and worthy of inclusion here. There is much to be learned from funerary architecture and its changing face throughout the machination of not only burial markers, but of the country. While markers were mass-produced beginning in the nineteenth century, engravers

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[83] Elaine Nichols, "Introduction," in *The Last Miles of the Way: African-American Homegoing Traditions, 1890-Present* (Columbia, SC: South Carolina State Museum, 1989), 14.

were employed by said operations to complete the lettering. "Human touch," as it were, remained on parts of the markers – and the machine created stones can still offer a sense of individuality, as seen in the multiple dove motifs present in the Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Personalization by locals to otherwise generic markers are present, too. There are multiple markers present in the Black Swamp churchyard that boast beautiful floral motifs, obviously done by hand despite the main stones being simple mail-orders stones from the period [Figs. 33, 34, 35]. There are no maker's marks on these stones. Nevertheless, the carvings indicate local artistry, care for the dead, and a hybridization of mechanized burials and deeply personalized elements.

Furthermore, folk markers are present in many of the burial grounds surveyed, a medium that began long before and continued well past the so-called "golden age" of marble monoliths and master carvers in the eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. The stones of Patrick Noonan (BSC), Josephine Russell (LMA), Perry Rowell (LMM), Ella Simmons (PWBC), and Hettie and Randolph Ramsay (Solomons) offer examples of locally made markers that work to still emulate styles and motifs of professionally made markers in the area, continuing well into the twentieth century [Figs. 36-39, 19]. Taken in tandem, the highly expensive ornate stones found in the burial grounds of Hampton County live alongside folk markers, natural markers, mass produced markers, and the lack of markers altogether. Here is a burial landscape that proves a highly variable and useful source for understanding this region of South Carolina and aids in the understanding of rural life and death in the United States more broadly.

Conclusion

"My task would not be so much to 'wrap them up,' as one New England professor advised me, but rather to 'open them up' for continuing exploration by others with similar or separate interests."

-Peter H. Wood, Black Majority

The burial grounds of Hampton County are worthy of study and have much to offer in the way of furthering burial studies and, by proxy, cultural understandings of rural peoples in the American South. The Southern regions of the United States contain the largest portions of people living in rural areas at 24.2% of the region's population.[1] Rural areas, and by extension, rural people, are the subject of harsh stereotypes (positive and negative) in the cultural milieu of the country. Sociologists such as Daniel Lichter and David Brown argue that "rural areas and small towns often remain misunderstood and are too frequently ignored, overlooked, or reduced to stereotypes," listing such examples as rural America as a cultural deposit box for urban areas, as backwaters for hyper-conservatives, or as a place of natural consumption for urban peoples.[2]

The sociological concept of the rural-urban continuum, as described by Michael Bell as "the idea that community is more characteristic of country places than cities" is useful here for understanding how individuals in Hampton County saw themselves in the past, and today. Scholars such as Lichter and Brown argue that this continuum is no longer present, due to connecting factors such as the internet and easier modes of transportation have made harsh rural-urban divides more fluid – but Bell rightly argues that if a group of people in a community

[1] The national average is 20%. "Nation's Urban and Rural Populations Shift Following 2020 Census," United States Census Bureau website, accessed September 1, 2023. https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2022/urban-rural-populations.html.
[2] Daniel T. Lichter and David L. Brown, "Rural America In an Urban Society: Changing Spatial and Social Boundaries," *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011): 566.

believe a thing to be true, such as rural people being more community based, then it exists and has real social consequences. It does not matter if such a thing is quantifiably true, only that said social actors believe it to be so.[3] Lichter and Brown are right in that, empirically, rural and urban peoples are more similar than they believe themselves to be. Nevertheless, it is imperative to adopt a view in which two things are true at once: rural America is not its stereotypes and should be included in scholarly studies of the "American people," *and* they believe the differences about rural living to be true. They are active participants in perceptions of their social difference, not merely recipients of urban stereotypes. Scholars should not dismiss this social paradigm, lest they risk erasing the voices of the very people they are trying to include.

Burial studies in the United States must include rural voices and keep this paradigm in mind, as well. The South Carolina Lowcountry comprises two-thirds of the state – yet cities like Charleston and Beaufort remain the common focus in burial scholarship. This thesis is one step towards bridging this gap. The goal has been two-fold: contribute to Southern burial scholarship *and* utilize the burial ground as a way of performing history in an inclusive way, engaging all parties across the economic spectrum as they lived in the region. Wealth disparity is clear in the burial landscape of Hampton County. As Stephanie McCurry proves that the poor and wealthy lived in close proximity in the upper regions of the Lowcountry, so too are they buried in proximity. As Chapter One argues for the varied and diverse lived experience of all who made Hampton County home, Chapter Two ultimately concludes that their burial grounds emulate their social realities. The wealth disparity is undoubtedly still present in the burial ground, but every person dies, rich or poor. Their burials can tell us just as much about their culture and

[3] Michael M. Bell, "The Fruit of Difference: The Rural-Urban Continuum as a System of Identity," *Rural Sociology* 57 (1992): 65. Bell is arguing this case for a small English village, in which members of the community, when interviewed, identified themselves and different socially from people living in urban areas. Their view of themselves affected their lived reality in their communities, and the way they viewed themselves and their fellow social actors.

community as written records can, and indeed often more so, as the graveyard has the peculiar duty of representing human connection and understanding regarding death.

This is a region that has maintained small family and church-oriented burial into the present day. A gravestone may be the only record of an individual, or perhaps the easiest to access. A headstone can be an important starting point to guide the researcher further in the realm of written records, or the first step towards a community member asking questions about the history of the area. Material culture is *always* a boon to written records – especially in the case of poorer communities. History remains a written field, through and through, but there is hope for change and the viability of alternative sources. Burial analysis and death scholarship is one such avenue. This thesis is a love letter to multiple frameworks and source bases – oral history, material culture, and written records work in harmony to make it what it is. It would not be as thorough a study without even one of these pieces. It is my hope that these transcriptions and field research contribute to understandings of the region and situate Hampton County's burial landscape in understandings of the Lowcountry's burial practices and burial grounds.

It is my plan to donate the inscriptions and photographs completed during the survey work to the South Carolina Tombstone Transcription Project and the FindaGrave databases. Both resources were immensely useful springboards for my own research locating burial grounds in the Hampton County region, and it is my hope that these transcriptions and photos will help bolster the database for other researchers and locals.[4] South Carolinians have begun to demonstrate increased interest in the burial grounds that surround them, particularly as the Lowcountry faces erosion and burial ground loss as waterways encroach on the stones and the

[4] The South Carolina Tombstone Transcription Project is located here: http://www.usgwtombstones.org/southcarolina/hampton.html.

high humidity of the area destroys inscriptions. This has led to a multitude of inscription projects in various counties – but many rely on individual interest and are hard to locate if you don't know what you're looking for, such as the Forest of Rest. They also don't include a description of the stone or photos. Even from localized preservation perspectives, interest continues mainly in Charleston and Beaufort – Hampton County is largely ignored. Despite there being little monetary effort on the part of the state government to preserve graves in Hampton County, there is proof of familial care in many of the smaller graveyards I found along dusty back roads.

James A. Hijiya asserts that interpreting gravestones as sources requires the assistance of "information extraneous to the stones themselves" in order to fully understand a gravestone as a source.[5] This research has sought to prove the effectiveness of utilizing a source base that is interdisciplinary and nontraditional to access deeper understandings of the burial landscape in the rural South. I believe that this approach is useful for a plethora of other locations and time periods, as well as a necessary step for the continuation of good and useful historical research. It is my fervent hope that this thesis offers a starting point for unlimited avenues of scholarly work to utilize new and creative source bases and historical methodologies. In the case of the burial grounds and the markers themselves, they are semi-permanent changes to the landscape itself, connecting the past to our present, and offering glimpses into the workings of life and death in a rural community. These burial grounds are important to further understandings of the entirety of the Lowcountry, and of the many different people who lived and died in Hampton County.

This thesis has earnestly pursued the expansion of burial scholarship for the South Carolina Lowcountry, as well as a deeper understanding of the region's large swathes of rural

[5] James A. Hijiya "American Gravestones and Attitudes toward Death: A Brief History," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 127, no. 5 (1983), 340.

communities. The burial grounds of Chapter Two showcase a variated burial landscape that emphasizes a diverse lived experience for those who lived and died in Hampton County. The markers, and sometimes lack thereof, offer proof of a staunch economic and racial disparity that followed many to the grave. The burial grounds also prove that the poor did not live all in one area whilst the wealthy remained in their enclaves of Charleston and Beaufort. Hampton County is a worthy addition to understandings of the Lowcountry's mortuary landscape. The markers themselves provide a rich vein of source material for understanding the lives of those who are otherwise left out of written records. Furthermore, the burial grounds of Hampton County offer understandings of those who lived there throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, how they positioned themselves in their communities, and how they saw the world around them. The picture that forms is one of a diverse rural area that defies common conceptions of rural America, deepens understandings of mobility throughout the Lowcountry, and offers alternative ways of doing history.

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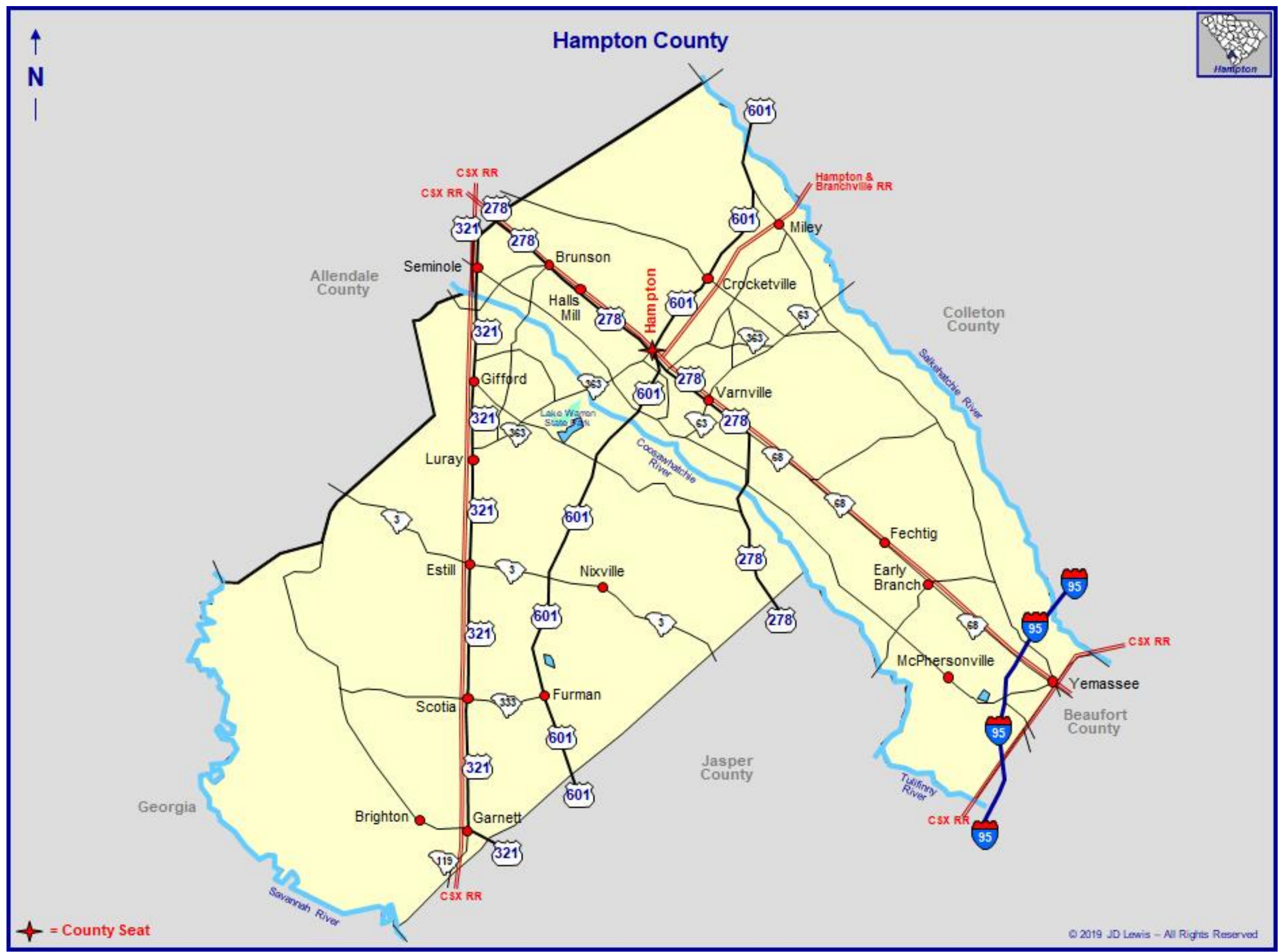
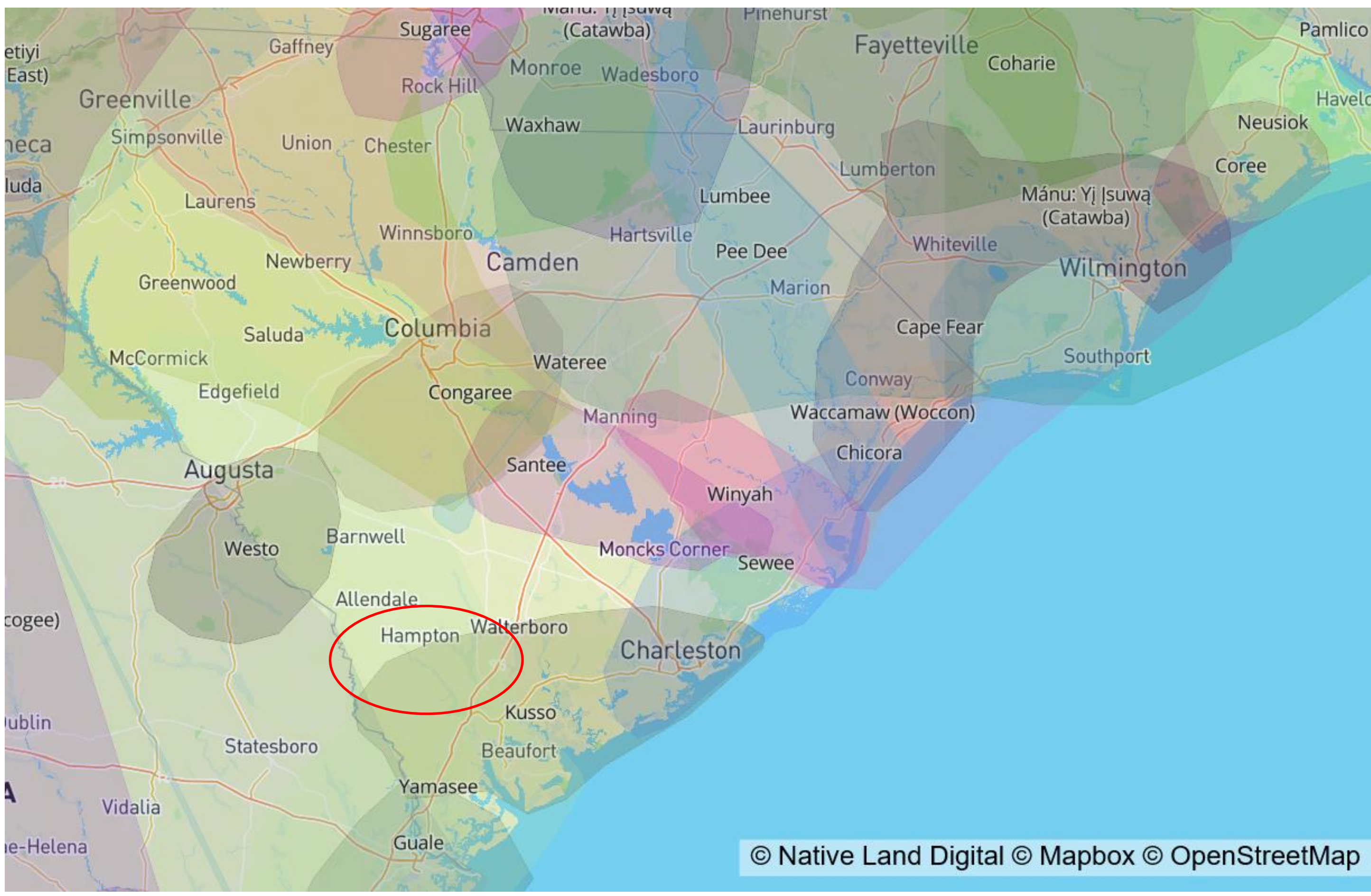
APPENDIX ONE: MAPS AND IMAGES

Map 1: A map of the regions of South Carolina, with Hampton County circled by author. Map created by the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Accessed on 11/2/2021.

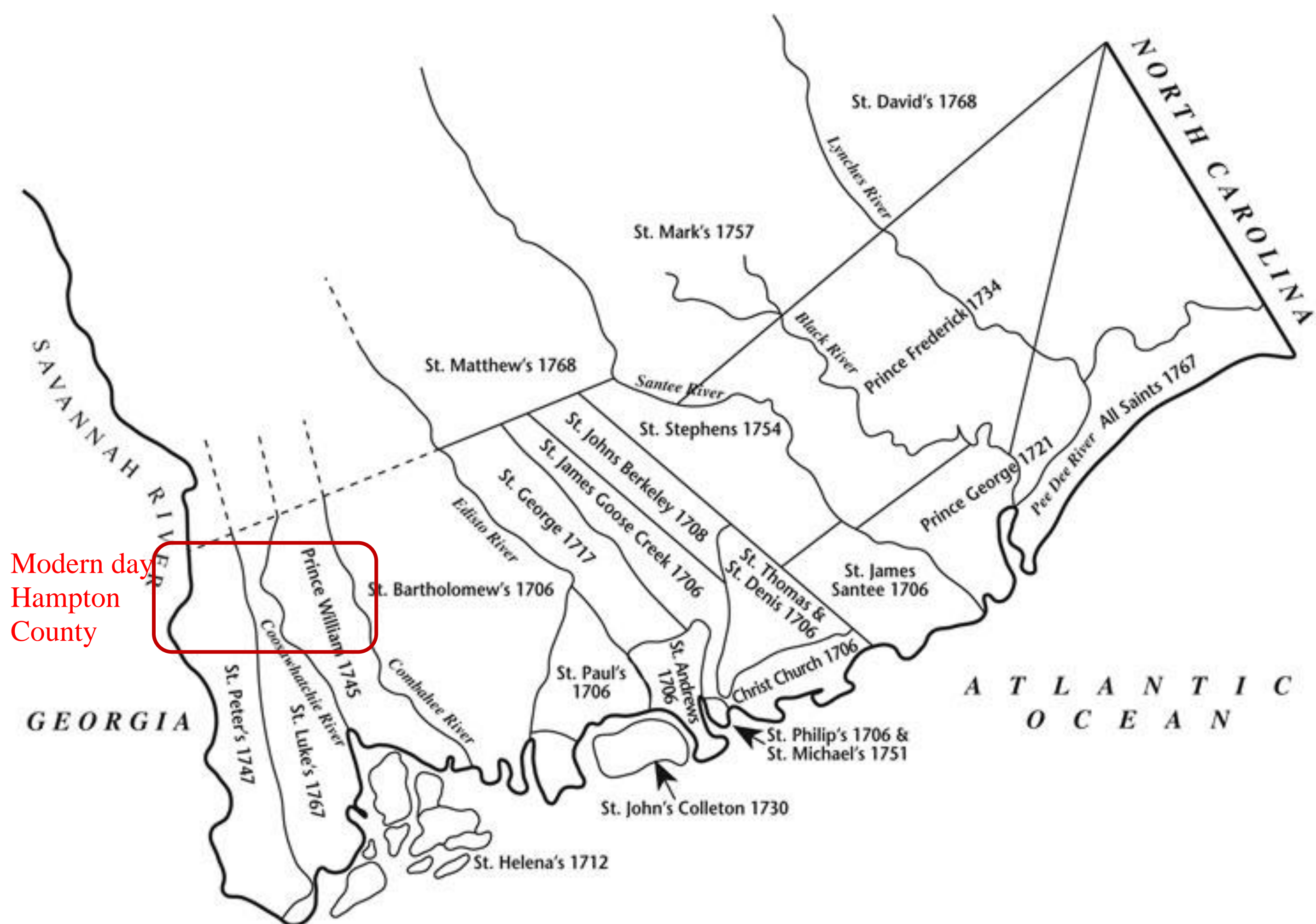


Map 2: A map of Hampton County, circa 2021. Features include roadways, waterways, and larger towns. Map accessed on Carolana website – "Hampton County, South Carolina" https://www.carolana.com/SC/Counties/hampton_county_sc.html. Accessed on February 16, 2022.



Map 3: A map of the area known as Hampton County with historical Native lands overlayed, with Hampton County indicated by author. Map created by the Native Land Digital project, https://native-land.ca. Accessed on February 6, 2022.

Figure 1: Traditional Headstone Shapes illustration. Memorials of Distinction website, https://tinyurl.com/wdjrkjx3. Accessed July 30, 2022. Note that the peon top is referred to as pedimented in the text, after Combs' lexicon.



Map 4: Parish lines of colonial South Carolina, circa 1768. Symbols demarcating where modern day Hampton County lies added by author. Map created by the South Carolina Archives Index: County Records: https://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/guide/countyrecords/parishes.htm.

Map 5: Locations of surveyed burial grounds discussed. Created by author on Google My Maps.

Figure 2: Marker for Prince Williams Baptist Church. Taken by author.

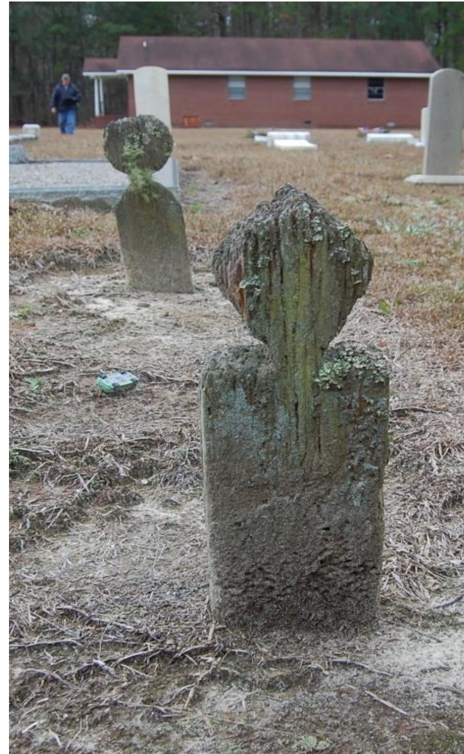


Figure 3: Humanoid cedar headboard and footboard, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 4: Cedar headboards, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 5: Philip Terry and Ronella Kelehear Terry marker, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 6: Mary E. Lightsey marker, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 7: Mary E. Lightsey marker detail, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 8: Riley H. Freeman marker, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

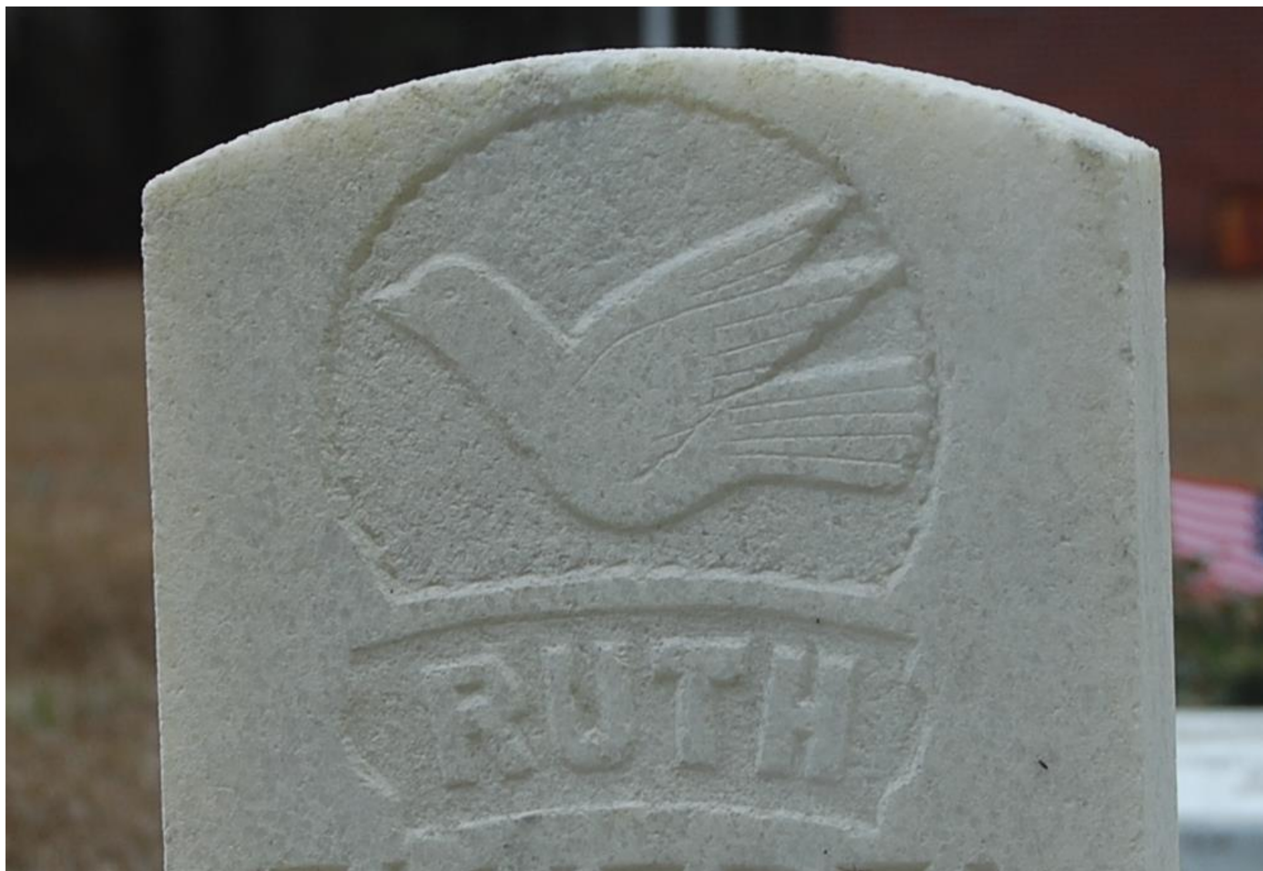


Figure 9: Detail of Ruth Elverta Freeman stone, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Photo taken by author.

Figure 10: Detail of Carrie R. Thomas stone, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Photo taken by author.

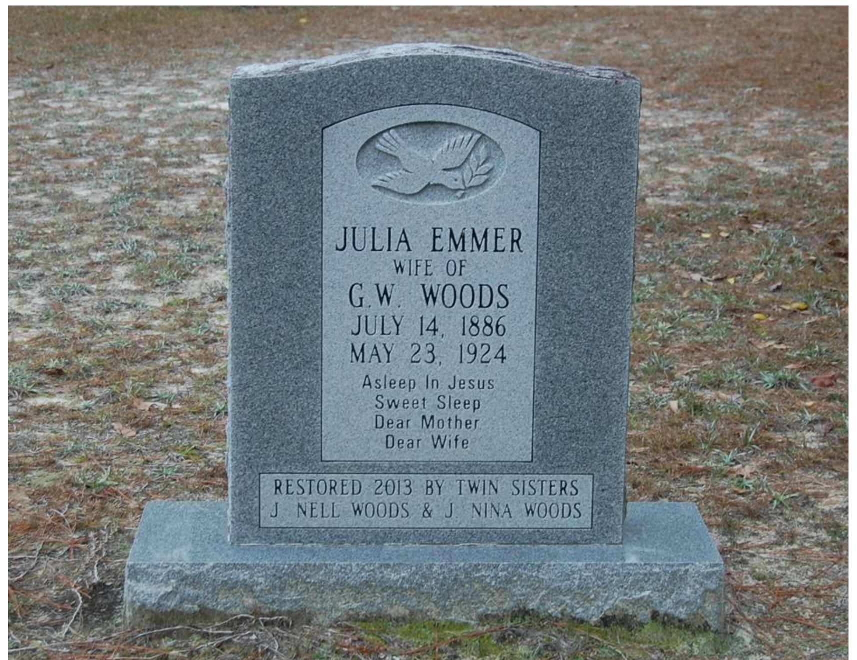


Figure 11: Julia Emmer Woods marker, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 12: Saul Solomons marker, Solomons family burial ground. Taken by author.

Figure 13: Saul Solomons marker detail, Solomons family burial ground. Taken by author.

Figure 14: Esther Solomons marker, Solomons family burial ground. Taken by author.

Figure 15: Henry Elliott Solomons marker, Solomons family burial ground. Taken by author.

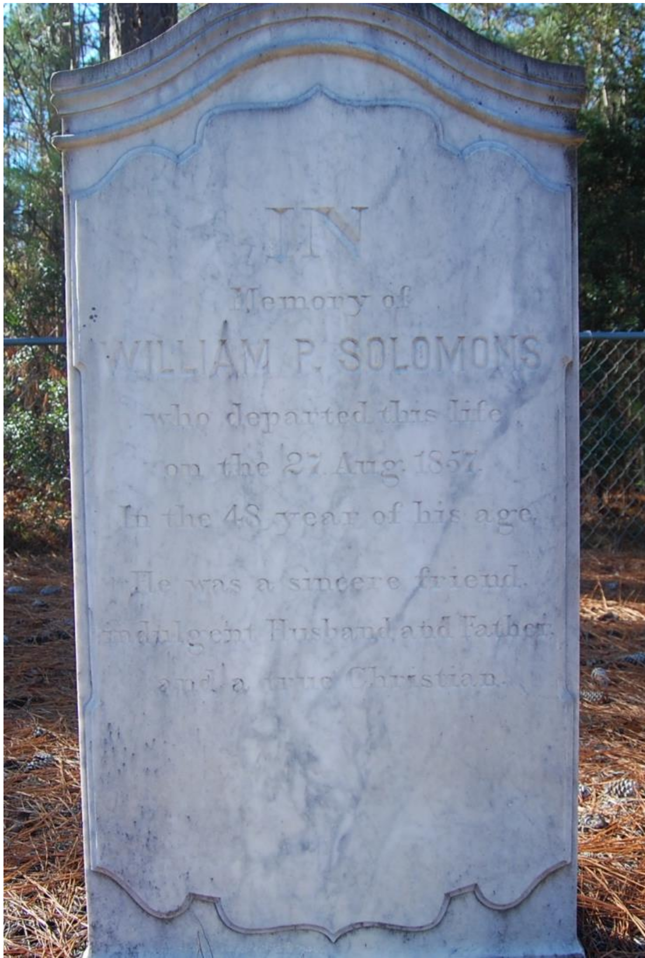


Figure 16: William P. Solomons marker, Solomons family burial ground. Taken by author.

Figure 17: Sarah E. Solomons markers, Solomons family burial ground. Taken by author.

Figure 18: Sarah E. Solomons original marker detail, Solomons family burial ground. Taken by author.

Figure 19: G Randolph Solomons and Hettie Solomons markers, Solomons family burial ground. Taken by author.

Figure 20: Sarah Rosomond Solomons marker, Solomons family burial ground. Taken by author.

Figure 21: T.V. Shuman marker detail, Lebanon Methodist main churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 22: Leonard Joyner marker, Lebanon Methodist auxiliary churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 23: H.C. marker, Lebanon Methodist auxiliary churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 24: B.W.R. marker, Lebanon Methodist auxiliary churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 25: Cordelia Lawton marker, Black Swamp Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 25.1: Chest tombs, Black Swamp Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 25.2: Mary Elizabeth Zahler marker, with W.T. White signature at bottom center. Zahler Cemetery. Taken by author.

Figure 26: Thirza Lawton marker detail, Black Swamp Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 27: Eusebia Lawton marker detail, Black Swamp Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 28: Ben N. Buckner marker, back side. Black Swamp Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 29: Robert E. Sweat marker, Black Swamp Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 30: Robert E. Sweat marker detail, Black Swamp Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Figure 31: Matilda Frances Solomons and Oliver Solomons stone, Black Swamp Baptist churchyard. Taken by author.

Map 6: Possible locations of burials, Forest of Rest. The red markers indicate burial locations, purple the Forest of Rest as a whole, and yellow the Wynn cemetery. Created by author on Google Maps.

Figure 32: Handwritten concrete marker, name illegible. Varnville Cemetery. Photo taken by author.

Figure 33: Charles Augustus marker detail, Black Swamp churchyard. Photo taken by author.

Figure 34: Jacob A. Bostick stone detail, Black Swamp churchyard. Photo taken by author.

Figure 35: Jacob Samuel Bostick stone detail, Black Swamp churchyard. Photo taken by author.

Figure 36: Patrick Noonan stone detail, Black Swamp churchyard. Photo taken by author.

Figure 37: Josephine Russell stone, Lebanon Methodist auxiliary churchyard. Photo taken by author.

Figure 38: Perry Rowell stone, Lebanon Methodist churchyard. Photo taken by author.

Figure 39: Ella Simmons Smith stone, Prince Williams Primitive Baptist churchyard. Photo taken by author.

Figure 40: William Youmans stone, Black Creek Primitive Baptist Churchyard. Photo taken by author.

Figure 41: Edward P. Lawton stone with C.S.A. commemorative plaque. Black Swamp Baptist Churchyard. Photo taken by author.

APPENDIX 2: TABLES

TABLE 1: GENDER BREAKDOWN PER BURIAL GROUND AND RELEVANT MARKER TOTALS PER BURIAL GROUND

BURIAL GROUND	Total #	M	F	C	N/A	U
Prince Williams Bap.	72	17	18	20	15	2
Solomons	25	9	8	7	1	0
Lebanon Main	143	39	39	40	13	12
Lebanon Aux	23	7	6	0	4	6
Black Swamp	93	30	26	33	5	2

TABLE 2: AVERAGE AGE AT DEATH ACROSS GENDER PER BURIAL GROUND

BURIAL GROUND	M	F	C
Prince Williams Bap.	40.4	47.9	4
Solomons	64.3	40.4	1.8
Lebanon Main	48.9	47.8	3.8
Lebanon Aux.	48.1	45.3	N/A
Black Swamp	52.9	56.5	3

TABLE THREE: OCCURRENCES OF STONE REPAIR, PRESERVATION, AND REPLACEMENT PER BURIAL GROUND

BURIAL GROUND	Repaired/Restored	Replaced	Preserved (Cleaned, etc)
Prince William Bap.	7%	11%	43%
Solomons	23%	23%	0%
Lebanon Main	4.9%	7%	0%
Lebanon Aux.	0%	0%	0%
Black Swamp	2%	10%	19%

TABLE FOUR: PERCENTAGE OF MOTIF OCCURRENCE AND POPULAR MOTIFS PER BURIAL GROUND

BURIAL GROUND	% Markers w/ Motif (Total #)	Most Popular
Prince William Bap.	50%	Dove
Solomons	8%	Floral/Flaming Urn (tied)
Lebanon Main	37%	Floral/Lamb (tied)
Lebanon Aux.	48%	Floral/Urn (tied)
Black Swamp	34%	Floral