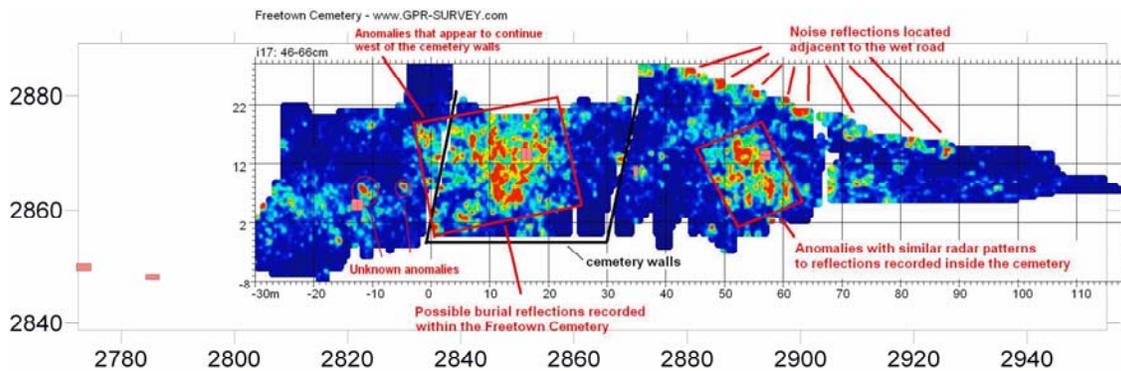


Archaeological Testing of Freetown Cemetery and Reconnaissance of Freetown, Grand Bahama Island

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Report Number 125

By Daniel T. Elliott

**The LAMAR Institute, Inc.
Savannah, Georgia**

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Introduction

The archaeological study of the Freetown Cemetery by the LAMAR Institute followed the recent Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey of the cemetery, which was reported by Drs. Dean Goodman and Kent Schneider (Goodman 2007). Their remote sensing study identified several radar anomalies that merited further investigation to determine if these represented human graves. Their survey suggested that the existing cemetery stone enclosure contained only a portion of the human burials at the site. Radar anomalies on the east and west sides of the stone enclosure were recommended by Goodman for “ground truthing”, or verification, by archaeological test excavation. Fieldwork to accomplish this task began on September 6 and was completed on September 14, 2007. The field crew consisted of LAMAR Institute historical archaeologists Daniel Elliott and Rita Folse Elliott. Laboratory analysis and reporting was completed in November 2007.

Project Background

The study area is located on the south-central coast of Grand Bahama Island. The study area is bounded on the south by the active beach and the Atlantic Ocean. The project setting is presently quite rural and undeveloped. Two areas were examined by the present study; the Freetown Cemetery and the Freetown settlement. The Freetown Cemetery is located approximately 800 m east of the Freetown settlement. Aerial views of the project location are shown in Figures 1 and 2. General views of the cemetery environment are represented in Figures 3 and 4.

Grand Bahama Island is one of the larger islands in the Bahama Island chain and is located in the northern part of the Bahamas chain. It has relatively low topographic relief, reaching a maximum elevation of about 40 feet above sea level. The island is underlain by limestone and coral rocks, which were formed by sedimentary processes when the area was submerged beneath the ocean. The island contains many areas with karst topography and limestone outcrops, including the study area.

Documented settlement of Grand Bahama Island dates to the early decades of the 19th century, although the island was certainly populated prior to that by aboriginal peoples and others. The original settlers were called the Lucayans by the Spanish explorers of the 15th century (Ives 1880; Shattuck 1905; Albury 1976; Craton 1986; Craton and Saunders 1992; Keegan 1992, 1997, 2007; Barratt 2002, 2004; Granberry 1988; Bahamas Ministry of Education 1986, 1991; Bahamas Historical Society 1979-2007; Wright and Shattuck 1905). Lucayan sites on Grand Bahama Island include cave burials and open air habitation sites. Regarding the Lucayan and other aboriginal settlements on Grand Bahama Island, the following summary information is provided:



Figure 1. Project Area (Google Earth 2007).

Skulls, bones, and artifacts have been found in the caves at the Lucayan National Park. In western Grand Bahama Island, Deadman’s Reef, a popular snorkeling reef, is home to one of the most important local archaeological sites discovered to date. The Lucayan Indians were thought to be some of the early dwellers of Grand Bahama Island—and a recent dig along the eroding beachfront of Deadman’s Reef helped to answer many questions.

Unearthed from the dig were many artifacts belonging to the Lucayan Indians, including hearths, animal bones, pottery pieces, and shell beads. This discovery was dated back to around 1200 to 1300 A.D.

Along with this site, the bones of pre-Columbian Lucayans were found in an underwater cave system, indicating an ancient burial site. Both of these discoveries helped to confirm that the Lucayans were among the first settlers of Grand Bahama Island (Bahamas.com 2007).

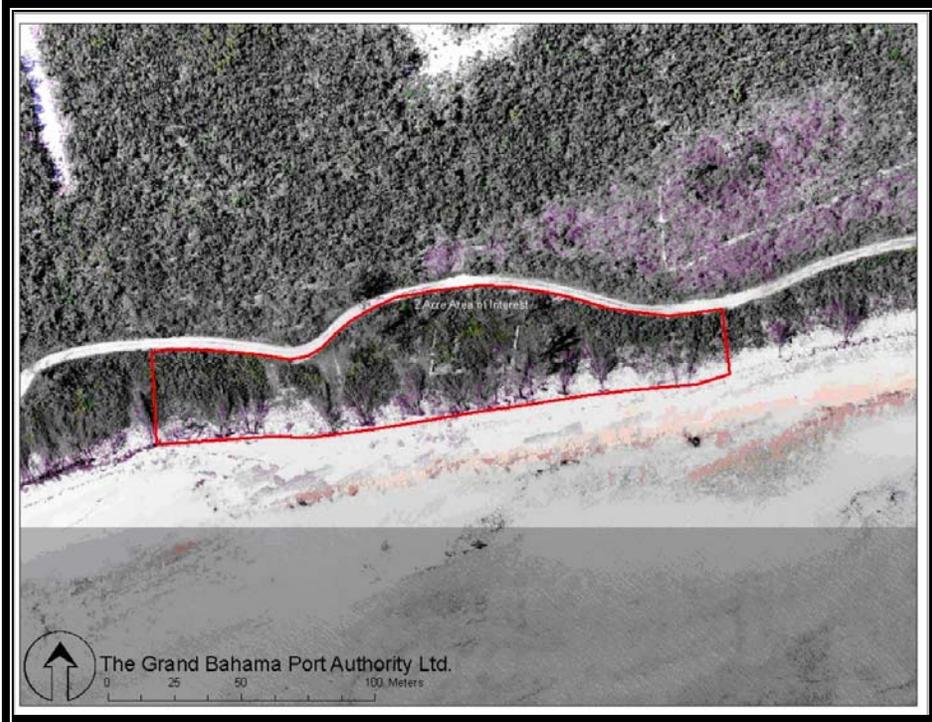


Figure 2. Primary Study Area, Freetown Cemetery (Goodman and Schneider 2007).



Figure 3. West View from Freetown Cemetery.



Figure 4. East View from Near Freetown Cemetery.

The imprint of Spanish exploration and colonization on Grand Bahama Island, other than the extinction or removal of the Native American population, was minimal. The Spanish did not settle the island, except perhaps for very brief periods while foraging for supplies. Numerous 16th century Spanish ships met their demise in the treacherous waters off Grand Bahama Island and at least one of these has been documented archaeologically (Armstrong 1993).

The Bahamas were settled by a group of Puritans. They established a settlement on Eleuthera in 1649. In 1666 other British colonists established a settlement on New Providence Island (Edwards and M’Kinnen 1805; Craton and Saunders 1992).

During the American Revolution (1775-1783), the Bahamas were sporadically occupied by American troops under command of John Paul Jones. The Bahamas were a Spanish colony in 1782, but colonial rule was short-lived (Lewis 1991). In 1783 the Bahamas were a haven for British Loyalists and their slaves, as well as Loyalist Creeks and Seminoles (Bethell 1992; Siebert 1972, 1975; Saunders 1983; Howard 2002). Grand Bahama Island was not a significant scene during this era and no Loyalists are reported to have settled on the island.

Despite its large size Grand Bahama Island was one of the least developed islands in the Bahamas during the Plantation era. Barratt (2004:211-214) noted that a plantation was established at West End, Grand Bahama Island by the end of the 18th century. He also notes another plantation at Eight-mile Rock in the early decades of the 19th century.

Historian James Stark (1891:147-148) stated that the first [European] settlement of Grand Bahama Island occurred in 1806, although he noted annual use of the island by

“lumbermen of the other islands for the fine timber with which it abounds”. The basis for Stark’s statement about the 1806 settlement was not ascertained for this study. Five settlements that were listed on Grand Bahama Island by Stark in 1891 were McLean’s, Carrion Crow Harbor, Freetown, Golden Grove, and Eight-mile Rock (Stark 1891:147-148). He noted the principal employment of the inhabitants was agriculture, sponging and fishing, and he noted that the island possessed no good harbor for large vessels. Figure 5 depicts a portion of a Fielding Lucas, Jr. 1823 map of the Bahamas showing Grand Bahama Island. No settlements or improvements are indicated on this map, although many maritime features are shown in the areas off shore (Lucas 1823).



Figure 5. Portion of Map of the Bahamas (Lucas 1823).

Nineteenth century population estimates for Grand Bahama Island are spotty at best. The estimated population of the Bahamas in 1819 included 8,589 Creoles and 2,566 African-born slaves. Between 1819 and 1834, the slave population in the Bahamas declined by about 1,154 (Johnson 2000:1300). Johnson noted one reason for the demographic shift in population in the early 19th century was differential mortality rates. Bahamian Creoles had a shorter life expectancy than Bahamians who were African born.

The total population of Grand Bahama Island was enumerated by census as follows: Statistics for the population of Grand Bahama Island from the 19th century are unavailable. The population of the Bahamas, by one estimate, was placed at 16,500 people just prior to emancipation (1834). Of these, 9,000 were slaves (Underhill 1862: 472). At the turn of the 20th century, the population of Grand Bahama Island was 1,269. The residents of Freetown were probably a significant percentage of this figure, although, by 1901 several other settlements had been established on the island.

Table 1. Population Census, Grand Bahama Island.

Census Year	Population	
	Grand Bahama	All Bahamas
1838	N/A	21,794
1845	N/A	26,491
1851	N/A	27,519
1861	N/A	35,487
1871	N/A	39,162
1881	N/A	43,521
1891	N/A	47,565
1901	1,269	53,735
1911	1,824	55,944
1921	1,695	53,031
1931	2,241	59,828
1943	2,333	68,846
1953	4,095	84,841
1963	8,230	130,220
1970	25,859	168,812
1980	33,102	209,505
1990	40,898	255,095
2000	46,994	303,611

(Source: Bahamas Census 1901-1990, cited in Craton and Saunders 2000: 200, Table 12; BahamasGuide.com 2007; Bahamas.gov 2007).

Many factors affected the population of the Bahamas. Severe storms were one such influencing factor. The Out Islands of the Bahamas experienced a devastating hurricane in 1919. This event may partially account for the population decline on Grand Bahama Island between 1911 and 1921. The population of Grand Bahama Island increased more than 75 percent between 1943 and 1953. This increase was largely due to the massive logging operations that were implemented during that period by Wallace Groves (Craton and Saunders 2000:192, 237; BahamasGuide.com 2007; Bahamas.gov 2007).

Slavery was an active social institution in the Bahamas until emancipation in 1834 (Riley 1983; Saunders 1990a, 1990b; H. Johnson 1991, 1996; Farnsworth 1996:1-23; W. Johnson 2000). Freetown, Grand Bahama Island, most likely sprang up in the transitional period between slavery and emancipation. The lack of documentation suggests that no large slave populations or plantations existed on Grand Bahama Island during the period of enslavement. Because of its remoteness and relative inaccessibility, the settlers of Freetown were left unmolested for more than a century.

The Bahamas underwent many changes in the decades after 1834. Many former slaves faced economic hardships and continued in a subservient role to the wealthy elite (Saunders 1996). The settlers of Freetown probably had more autonomy than many freed blacks in the Bahamas because of Freetown's remote location. Most of the large

plantations that had operated in slavery times were not located on Grand Bahama Island and this economic legacy helped to foster Freetown's remoteness. The people of the Bahamas attained independence from Great Britain in 1970.

Through time the waters surrounding Grand Bahama Island were treacherous and particularly so in the days of the sailing ship. Because it was difficult to navigate the waters in the area, it was a favorite haven for pirates. Pirates were especially plentiful in the Bahamas in the 17th century. After 1718 the pirates were subdued by Royal Governor Woodes Rodgers—himself a former pirate. Among the more notable pirates who frequented the waters and islands of Bahamas were Steve Bonner, Anne Bonney, Joseph Burgess, Thomas Carter, William Catt, Arthur Davis, Benjamin Horngold, Captain William Kidd, Henry Morgan, Captain Jack Rackham (aka Calico Jack), Woodes Rodgers, Edward Teach (aka Blackbeard), Roger (Charles) Vane, and George Watling (Defoe and Johnson 1724; Stark 1891; Woodbury and Rogers 1951; Storr 2004; Bahamas Ministry of Tourism 2007). Archaeological study of pirates and their settlements is a popular subject (Skrowronek and Ewen 2006). Port Royal, Jamaica is a more elaborate example of a pirate-infested urban settlement that has been the subject of archaeological research. Barratt (2004) notes that the West End of Grand Bahama Island also served as a haven for pirates.

Grand Bahama Island was a refuge for shipwrecked sailors and passengers of wrecked sea vessels. Oral tradition attributes the earliest African settlers on the island as being marooned enslaved people who escaped their bondage when shipwrecked. This is certainly a likely scenario and one which the population of Freetown may have been hidden from slave owners (and others who may have had the desire to return these marooned Africans to the slavery system) for decades.

Wrecking became one of the important economic pursuits for the residents of Grand Bahama Island. Wrecking was both a legitimate and illegal enterprise:

More often than not, Grand Bahama Island was viewed as a perilous landfall, due to the treacherous shallow reefs surrounding it. So many ships would collide with the reefs that "wrecking" became a major livelihood of what few inhabitants there were, most of whom lived at West End. In hard times it wasn't unheard of for the townspeople to actually try and lure ships onto the reef with a well-placed lantern at night (Bahamas.com 2007).

Edward Bean Underhill noted in 1862 that the total value of imports for 1856 was 189,398 British pounds, compared to 96,304 British pounds that were derived from wrecks (Underhill 1862: 477). Underhill gives a good description of wrecking in the Bahamas:

A considerable trade is carried on in sponges, which are abundant among the islands, and in shells; but the great support of the place is the wrecking business. Scarcely a week passes without one or more valuable cargoes being brought into Nassau for sale, from wrecks on some of the numerous shoals and reefs, which endanger the traffic carried on by the United States with Cuba and Central America. Sometimes these wrecks are suspected of being purposely effected, to the damage of the owners and underwriters, but to the gain of the captain and his crew, through collusion with the wreckers. The boats employed in this profitable but gambling traffic, are small schooners of from twenty to

forty tons, manned almost entirely by black men, who, by long habit, have become daring and skilful sailors (Underhill 1862: 476-477).

The dozens of houses that once festooned Freetown are now a series of archaeological ruins. Archival and historical accounts of vernacular architecture in the Bahamas are helpful for understanding how the dwellings in Freetown may have appeared. Stark (1891:188) published a photograph of an African hut in the Bahamas, which is reproduced in Figure 6. While Stark probably did not actually visit Grand Bahama Island in his travels, his description of the dwelling and this photograph are probably typical of local domestic architecture of the people living on the island in the 19th century. Stark (1891:186) described examples of African-style houses in the Bahamas, which had survived to the late 19th century,

Their houses are built mostly of wood, but some have limestone walls, while the roofs are covered, some with shingles and others with a thatching of palmetto leaves. It is rare to see a house with glass windows; board shutters take their place, and fire places and chimneys are unknown. A little fire out of doors for cooking, made of dead wood gathered in the forest or thickets...is all that is required in this warm climate. The walls are not sheathed or plastered, and the furniture is of the house is of the rudest and most simple kind. In the day time they live out of doors in the open air, so that in riding through the suburbs the whole population comes under review (Stark 1891:186).

Craton and Saunders (2000:104) illustrate three photographic examples of Afro-Bahamian dwellings from the 19th century. These are reproduced in Figure 7. Citing several historical accounts, Craton and Saunders (2000:103) describe the typical homes of Africans and Creoles in the Bahamas as,

...no more than huts, and many were 'little better than collections of boards knocked together and thatched with palmetto straw, with just a bed, table and chair, and a few cooking utensils, by way of furniture'. Most were two- or three-roomed boxes of unpainted wood, either flat on the ground or raised on limestone rocks at each corner, though others had walls of plastered limestone rubble, wattle and daub, or...thatched palmetto on flimsy wooden frames. Besides palmetto thatch...some houses were roofed with native cedar shingles. Nearly all had simple plank doors in front and back and top-hinged plank shutters over wooden rough frames. In-built fireplaces and chimneys were completely unknown, despite winter temperatures that could fall below 10 degrees C. Though privies cut in the rock were screened by rough outhouses, separate kitchen shacks were uncommon (Craton and Saunders 2002:103).

Freetown

The history of Freetown, Grand Bahama Island remains largely unexplored by historians. Some information about the settlement was gleaned from online resources (Bahamas.com 2007):

Freetown, now commonly called "Old Freetown," is one of the oldest settlements on Grand Bahama Island. This community is distinguished for being one of the areas where slaves settled after they were freed. Most of the indigenous people of Grand Bahama came from Old Freetown (especially the elders) and moved to other areas as they sought a better way of life for their families. Some moved to Water Cay because it was a lucrative sponging, farming, turtle, and fishing village. Others moved to areas such as

Sweeting's Cay, McLean's Town, Pelican Point, High Rock, West End, Eight Mile Rock, Pinder's Point, Hawksbill, and Freeport.



Figure 6. African-style Hut (Stark 1891:188).

All of these housing examples presented here may serve as analogs for gaining an understanding of the early architectural styles at Freetown, Grand Bahama Island.

Some of the names associated with this historical village are:

- Cooper—descendants of William and Peter Cooper
- Hield—descendants of Johnny and Margaret Hield
- Laing—descendants of Frank and Polian Laing
- Nesbitt—descendants of John and Addi Nesbitt

The men in Old Freetown made a living by sponging in areas such as Andros Mudd, Abaco Birth, Western Rollers (west Of Walker's Cay), and Water Cay. They left their families and stayed out to sea up to three months at a time. They also caught crawfish and turtle. Other marketable products were Manila (Sisal), dogwood bark, sugarcane (which was grown in abundance), syrup, which they made locally, lemon, and grapefruit, all of which were sold in Nassau to support the men's families.

The women farmed while the men were out to sea. They raised sweet potatoes, cassava, beans, pigeon peas, guinea corn, engine corn, sand peas, cabbages, onions, peanuts, and benny. The soil in Old Freetown was very fertile, producing many types of ground produce, and the residents harvested crops in abundance year after year for the use of the family. The women also dug wild yam, uncton, and bay rush, some of which they sold. Uncton was used to make starch for bread and cereal and to starch clothes. Bay rush was used basically for the same thing.



Figure 7. Three examples of Afro-Bahamian Dwellings (Craton and Saunders 2000:104).

The industries of sponging, craw fishing, and farming were embraced until sponging died out and the way of life began to change. The residents sought jobs at the sawmills in Pine Ridge, Burma Road, and Oakes Field (Nassau). Some people left home to go work on "The Project" in the United States. There they picked apples and peas and performed other jobs required by the company. After World War II, everything again changed for the residents of Old Freetown. Jobs on land became plentiful and life at sea was basically phased out (Bahamas.com 2007).

Local resident Erika Gates (2007) provided this recent summary of Freetown:

The story of the early settlement called " Freetown" begins with legislation adopted by the British Parliament in 1807 that prohibited the trafficking of slaves on the high seas. Nearly two decades later, on June 27, 1828, the British Navy, *HMS Monkey*, intercepted a Spanish slave trader ship, *Midas*, bound to Havana, and filled with human cargo in deplorable condition, with dozens of slaves having perished on the way to Cuba.

It is believed that slaves who escaped to the south shore of Grand Bahama during this Spanish/British naval skirmish, survived and built up the settlement known as Freetown, aptly named for the place where they found themselves free of the shackles of slavery.

Diverse housewares and chamber pots from this early settlement were found by a group of hikers (including Erika Gates...) along the old road to Freetown, now renamed The Heritage Trail.

The discovery of substantial remnants [of] stone boundary walls also used to contain live stock, house foundations, a standing house wall, several wells, and a nearby cemetery with several graves marked by piles of stones, confirm that this may have been one of the first locations where freed slaves scrambled ashore to begin new lives.

Freetown was a significant settlement in Grand Bahama that warranted mention on a map of the Americas produced by James Sark of Boston in 1871 (Gates 2007).

Ms. Gates, who owns and runs a local heritage/eco tour company, has extensive experience hiking in the vicinity of Freetown and her observations of the many ruins and stone walls are an important source of information. This is particularly true since many of the areas where she had observed ruins are now thickly overgrown in heavy vegetation (Erika Gates, personal communication, Freetown, September 11, 2007). Her observations were partially confirmed by the LAMAR Institute's reconnaissance.

Jamaican Dogwood Bark Industry

Recognition of the medicinal value of dogwood bark dates back at least to the early 18th century. William Byrd wrote of its use for treating his survey team who was stricken with the fevers that occurred in late September during their survey of the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina in the 1730s. Byrd stated, "Several of our men had intermitting fevers, but were soon restored to their health again by proper remedies. Our chief medicine was dogwood bark, which we used, instead of that of Peru, with good success. Indeed, it was given in larger quantity, but then, to make the patients amends, they swallowed much fewer doses" (Byrd 1841: 39).

Continued interest in the medicinal properties of dogwood bark continued throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries (Nicholson 1812:145; Braithwaite et al. 1845:97-98; Drysdale et al. 1883:406; Sudworth 1898:83; Vejux-Tyrode 1902:405-407; Shoemaker 1908:742-744). Barratt (2002) noted that Freetown participated in the dogwood bark industry, which continued until at least 1908 and he wrote, "...500 pounds of dogwood bark had been gathered and sent to Nassau market from Freetown..." [excerpt from a 1908 report from The Commissioner of Grand Bahama] (Barratt 2002, cited in Gates 2007). The bark was harvested from the wetlands surrounding Freetown and then shipped to Nassau. Jamaican Dogwood (*Piscidia erythrina* and *Piscidia piscipula*), also known as Fish Poison Tree, grows in the Bahamas, Florida and the West Indies. The bark from this tree has potent medicinal properties and it was harvested for that purpose. The genus *Piscidia* is a deciduous tree that grows from 20-25 feet in height (Nicholson 1812:145; Braithwaite et al. 1845:97-98; Drysdale et al. 1883:406; Sudworth 1898: 83; Vejux-Tyrode 1902:405-407; Brunton et al. 1886:207; Apolloherbs.com 2007; Botanical.com 2007). The species that was most likely harvested in the Bahamas is *Piscidia piscipula* (Austin 2004: 515).

Malaria raged in the 19th century and it was particularly rampant in the southeastern United States. Quinine was the primary drug used to treat malaria. The C.S.A. troops were in dire need of drugs to treat malaria but Quinine was in scarce supply, since it was derived from a Peruvian bark and was effectively banned from the Southern U.S. by the U.S. Naval blockade. The October 19, 1861 issue of the *Tennessee Baptist* newspaper discussed dogwood root bark as a substitute for quinine. It reported,

The *Statesville Express* says, that Lieut. Colonel John A. Young of the 4th Regiment North Carolina State Troops, urges the importance of furnishing the army at Manassas with a large supply of Dogwood root bark as a substitute for quinine. We can say, from considerable experience, that dogwood bark, steeped in water or spirits, is the best remedy for chills and fevers we ever saw (*Tennessee Baptist* 1861:4).

Newspaper articles that further supported the substitution of red dogwood bark for quinine as a treatment for the "autumnal fevers" appeared in several Texas publications in May, 1862. One example from the *Austin State Gazette* stated:

Substitute for Quinine--The extremely high price of quinine renders it very difficult for persons of moderate means to purchase it, and yet it has been considered almost indispensable for the cure of our summer and autumnal fevers.

The best substitute for it, (if indeed it be not equal to the quinine itself) may be obtained with all ease by taking the inside bark of the red dogwood (thought to be preferable to the white dogwood) cut it up fine and put it into a kettle covered with pure water; then boil it down to the consistency of molasses or jelly. During the process of boiling it should be strained once or twice to free it from all impurities. After thus being boiled down it may be put away in bottles. When wanted for use, it can easily be made into pills by mixing with flour.

The writer of this has known three cases of severe chills and fevers cured within the last thirty days, by taking a few pills of three or four grams each, in twenty-four hours, taken every hour.

This information is obtained from an eminent Texas physician and chemist, who has thoroughly tested the preparation in his last year's practice--B.--Nat. Union (*Austin State Gazette* 1862:5).

J.J. Chisholm, Medical Purveyor for the Confederate States of America, advertised "Medicinal Barks Wanted" in a July 1862 issue of the *Charleston Mercury* newspaper (Chisholm 1862a:2). His advertisement stated:

Medicinal Barks Wanted.

The barks of the following plants are much wanted in the army, to be issued to the troops as a preventative of Country Fever:

Bark of the root of the dogwood.

Bark of the wild cherry.

Bark of the willow.

40 cents per pound will be paid for the above articles if properly dried and delivered to the Medical Purveyor in Charleston.

July 9.

J. J. Chisolm,
Medical Purveyor,
C.S.A.

A later advertisement by Dr. Chisholm (1862b:2) from August 6, 1862 *Charleston Mercury* stated:

The following prices will be paid for the following Medical Barks and Roots, if carefully gathered and dried, upon delivery at the Medical Purveyor's Office, 212 Main-street, Columbia:

Poplar Bark	per lb	10 cts.
*Wild Cherry Bark		80 "
*Dogwood Bark		80 "
*Sassafras Bark		25 "
*Persimmon Bark		25 "
*Willow Bark		20 "
*Slippery Elm Bark		30 "
*Red Oak Bark		10 "
Snake Root		50 "
Blackberry Root		30 "
Queen's Delight Root		25 "
Blood Root		30 "
Bone Sett		10 "
Pleurisy Root		25 "

*The inner bark of the trunk and branches, or the bark of the root, is required. The outer coarse bark from the trunk should be removed with a chaiding knife before the inner bark is peeled off.

August 4
J. J. Chisolm,
Medical Purveyor.

The wholesale price paid for dogwood bark by the C.S.A. ranged from 10-80 cents per pound. This represented a lucrative commodity and the people of Grand Bahama Island may have helped provide the bark to the C.S.A., in conjunction with their participation in the blockade running. Once the American Civil War ended, the demand for dogwood bark probably declined as Peruvian Cinchona bark was made more available. The market for dogwood bark did not disappear entirely, however, as noted by Barratt (2002).

The advent of better hygiene practices and improved medicines for treating malaria and yellow fever, which were spurred on by the U.S. experience in constructing the Panama Canal, probably led to further decline in the demand for dogwood bark (Avery 1915:80). The discovery in the 1880s of mosquitoes as the vector that spread these diseases to humans resulted in major advances in medicine. Dogwood bark, which had proven effective for treating the symptoms of these diseases, was not a cure. The discovery of various sulfur drugs in the early 1930s further negated the worldwide demand for dogwood bark. The 1918 edition of the United States Dispensary contained this entry for *Piscidia*:

Piscidia. *Piscidia Erythrina* L, Jamaica Dogwood. Dogwood Bark. Ecorce du Bois de chien. Ecarce de Piscidie. Mulungu. Murungu.—This is a leguminous tree growing throughout the West Indies and the neighboring countries, being found in Florida, Texas, Mexico, and the northern portion of South America, and yielding to commerce a very valuable wood. From time immemorial the bark has been used for catching fish. The leaves, twigs, and root bark are collected, macerated with the residue from the distillation of rum or with lime water, then transferred into baskets, and the latter dragged up and down the water until the fish are stupefied.

In 1844 William Hamilton called the attention of the profession to the plant (P. J., Aug., 1844) as a powerful narcotic and analgesic. The bark of commerce is in pieces of 5 to 10 cm. in length and about 8 cm. in width, having a thickness of 1.5 cm. The outer surface of some of the pieces is of a dark gray-brown, while others are of a yellow-brown, with no shade of gray present. The bark is frequently studded with flattened protuberances of a lighter color than the surrounding cork. The central part of the bark is much lighter colored, and, when wet or freshly broken, is of a peculiar blue-green color. The inner part of the bark is of a dark brown color and very fibrous. It has a strong odor resembling opium when broken into pieces. It is acrimonious, and produces a burning sensation in the mouth and pharynx....

The action of the drug upon the lower animals has been studied by J. Ott and A. C. Nagle with similar results. (Jamaica Dogwood, Parke, Davis & Co., 1881.) The conclusions reached are, 1. It is narcotic to frogs, rabbits, and men. 2. It does not affect the irritability of the motor nerves. 3. It does not attack the peripheral ends of the sensory nerves. 4. It reduces reflex action by a stimulant action on the centers of Setschenow. 5. It produces a tetanoid state by a stimulant action on the spinal cord, and not by a paralysis of Setschenow's centers. 6. It dilates the pupil, which dilatation passes into a state of contraction upon the supervention of asphyxia. 7. It is a salivator. 8. It increases the secretion of the skin. 9. It reduces the frequency of the pulse. 10. It increases arterial tension by stimulation of the vasomotor center. 11. This increase of pressure is soon succeeded by a fall, due to a weakening of the heart itself.

The exact practical value of the drug has not been determined, nor are the results produced in man, by doses approaching toxic, known. Hamilton took a drachm, when suffering with severe toothache, on going to bed. He first felt a violent sensation of heat internally, which gradually extended to the surface, and was followed by profuse perspiration, with profound sleep for twelve hours. On awaking, he was quite free from pain, and without the unpleasant sensations which follow a dose of opium. Various practitioners have reported good results from its use as an anodyne in neuralgia, nervous insomnia, whooping cough, etc., but in other hands it has failed to do good. H. C. Wood found it in one case of neuralgia to produce great nausea and gastric distress without evincing the slightest narcotic effect... (United States Dispensary 1918: 1130-1131).

The medical importance of Jamaica Dogwood had waned by the mid-20th century. It continued to be listed in medical books, where it was recommended as a wide variety of ailments (Shoemaker 1908: 742-744; Paul 1920:175). It should be noted that, in addition to its medicinal uses, Jamaica Dogwood was a useful hardwood and an excellent timber for wharf construction (Brisbin 1888:124-125).

Economic activities in which the residents of Freetown may have participated included blockade running in the American Civil War (Tinker 1984; Bahamas.com 2007; Craton and Saunders 2000). Vast quantities of commodities of various types, other than the previously mentioned dogwood bark, were smuggled through the U.S. Naval blockade to Confederate States of America ports. The Bahamas served as a trans-shipment point in this clandestine enterprise. Most of those on Grand Bahama Island who benefited from the blockade lived on the West End. The population of this part of the island nearly doubled as a result of the blockade. As a result of the economic boom from Blockade running, the British colony able to pay off all of its debt.

Rum running was another illicit activity that helped support the Bahamian economy during the Prohibition years in the United States (Goodsoe 1930; Craton and Saunders 2000; Bahamas.com 2007). The residents of the West End of Grand Bahama Island saw the majority of this activity. As with the lucrative Blockade running, the rum running was a great economic boon to the Bahamas. When the 14th Amendment was repealed in the U.S. and Prohibition was ended, many residents of the Bahamas felt an economic pinch.

By the 1940s and 1950s the population of Grand Bahama Island had dwindled to only a few hundred people (Bahamas.com 2007). Wallace Groves, a Virginian who had been living on Grand Bahama Island since the 1940s, conceived of a development plan for the island, which he presented to the Bahamian government in 1955. His vision ultimately led to the creation of the Grand Bahama Port Authority, Inc., which he directed. The Hawksbill Creek Agreement was signed and that agreement:

... granted 50,000 acres of land to Groves' company, The Grand Bahama Port Authority Ltd., with an option of adding an additional 50,000. To encourage investment, it also freed the Port Authority from paying taxes on income, capital gains, real estate, and private property until 1985—a provision that has since been extended to the year 2054. Soon after the Agreement was signed, Groves began to enact his vision. He convinced the shipping tycoon D.K. Ludwig to construct a harbour (the Lucayan Harbour) and in 1962 he brought in Canadian Louis Chesler to develop the tourist center of Lucaya (Bahamas.com 2007).

The residents of (Old) Freetown were removed from the area after their property was acquired by the Grand Bahama Port Authority, Limited, shortly after 1955 (Cornell University 1960; Barratt 2002). Marked headstones in the Freetown Cemetery include Cooper and Laing, only a small percentage of Freetown families.

Previous Research

Previous archaeological research at Freetown has been extremely limited. On July 2, 2007 Drs. Dean Goodman and Kent Schneider, scientists with the Geophysical Archaeometry Laboratory, performed a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey of the Freetown Cemetery study area. Goodman and Schneider (2007:1) summarized their project:

The purpose of the survey was to help delineate the boundaries of the cemetery and to determine if unmarked burials are located outside the known grounds of the cemetery. Three areas contain anomalies that may be burials. These are areas within the cemetery walls, west of the cemetery, and east of the cemetery... The method to predict the existence of burials is based on the GPR results from this study, in which similar anomalies within the cemetery are matched with reflection features outside the cemetery. Using this method, the maximum area in which relative certainty can be assigned to possible burial locations is from X= -15m West to X= +65m East Assuming targets outside the cemetery near x=-10m are not identified as burials from subsequent archaeological investigation, then the western most extent of burials may be even smaller and confined mostly to the western wall of the cemetery. Likewise if the larger reflecting area east of the Freetown Cemetery ... does not have burials at these locations after archaeological investigation, then great confidence can be placed on the interpretation that the cemetery is completely confined within the present day walls.

Goodman and Schneider's GPR survey was an ambitious undertaking given the rugged and rocky terrain conditions at the Freetown cemetery. Their study consisted of systematic radar coverage using a 400 MHz antenna, over 5,041 meters of the project area. The approximate size of the study area was two acres. The 0 grid point on the GPR Survey was placed at the southwest corner of the stone cemetery enclosure and the baseline paralleled the orientation of the south cemetery wall. Figure 8 shows an overlay of the GPR Survey on the newly established Freetown Cemetery site grid.

Methods

At the request of Desmond Carroll, Grand Bahama Port Authority, Ltd., the LAMAR Institute developed a research proposal for archaeological delineation of a historic cemetery site in the Bahamas. The Grand Bahama Port Authority wished to rigorously define the cemetery boundaries so that the area can be protected from future ground disturbance. The Freetown Cemetery is located on the primary dune on the south shore of Grand Bahamas Island. The present study sampled portions of a two acre tract near the early settlement of Freetown, Grand Bahama Island. The property presently is covered with beach vegetation that was partially cleared to facilitate an earlier Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) study (Goodman and Schneider 2007). The GPR survey findings identified several clusters of GPR anomalies to the east and west of a fieldstone enclosure, which may represent unmarked human graves. The study area is divided into three parts: the area enclosed by a fieldstone wall that has a parallelogram configuration; the area East of the wall; and the area West of the wall. GPR survey identified subsurface radar anomalies

in each of these three areas. The area within the rock wall contains many anomalies and several graves marked with headstones or rock mantles. The GPR results from the rock wall-enclosed area served as a check on the findings in the other two areas, since many of the anomalies inside the rock wall almost certainly represent human burials. The Eastern area contains multiple anomalies in a large cluster. The Western area contains several strong anomalies just outside of the rock wall, as well as other stray anomalies of undetermined character further to the west. Other GPR signals that were located adjacent to the road were interpreted by Goodman and Schneider as water reflections and not likely to be human remains.

The LAMAR Institute was retained by the Grand Bahama Port Authority, Limited to explore a sample of the various GPR anomalies that were identified by Goodman and Schneider. The purpose was to determine if these anomalies represented human graves. The LAMAR Institute’s work began with topographic mapping of the cemetery site and surrounding study area. This was accomplished with the aide of a Sokkia total station and TDS Recon data collector. Archaeologists mapped features including the stone enclosure, tombstones (both marked and unmarked), stone cairns or rock piles, and suspicious stone clusters of undetermined character. They also mapped the stone deposits that formed a massive natural seawall along the shoreline also were mapped. Other mapped features included the coast road, the high tide line, and a line of disturbed limestone boulders on the east side of the study area. Archaeologists mapped the nine test unit locations. LAMAR Institute established several benchmarks, or datum, were established for mapping purposes. These positions were located on the UTM grid (NAD 27, Bahamas) with the aid of a Trimble GPS handheld receiver and a Garmin V GPS handheld receiver. Archaeologists transcribed epitaph information from the tombstones and took digital photographs of the grave markers.

The project began with a thorough review of the GPR data gathered by the previous work of Goodman and Schneider (2007). A list of grid point coordinates of their best-defined anomalies was compiled, so that those areas could be identified on the ground during fieldwork. The anomalies were ranked based on their size, apparent outline, probable depth and extent.

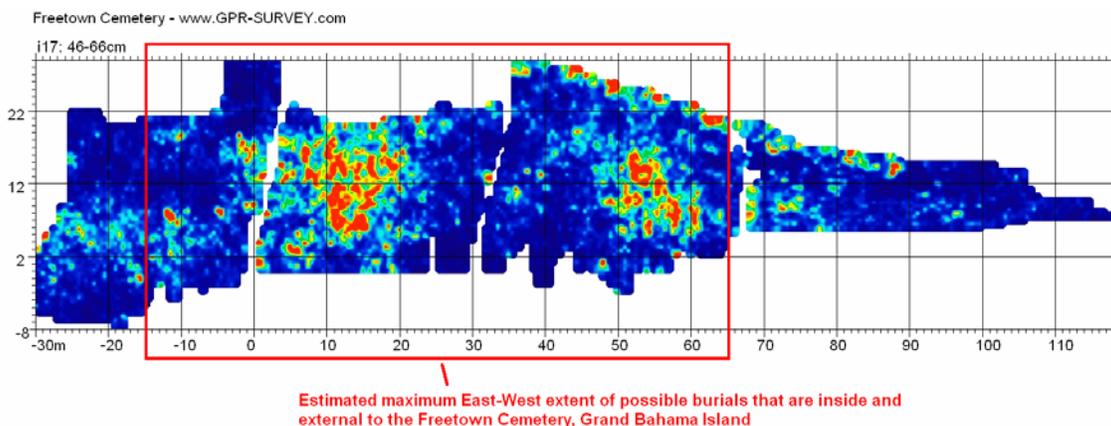


Figure 8. An Overlay of the GPR Survey on the Newly Established Freetown Cemetery Site Grid (Source: Goodman and Schneider 2007:8).

Archaeological fieldwork at the Freetown Cemetery began by establishing a site grid that was aligned with the UTM Coordinates (NAD27 Bahamas). The last four digits of the Easting and Northing coordinates served as the site grid coordinates. Two datum points were established and were designated Datums A and B. These two reference points were located by Trimble and Garmin V GPS receivers, which resulted in sub-meter accuracy. Datum A was at 2872 East, 2863 North and Datum B was at 2921 East, 2864 North. A third datum (Datum C) was later established within the cemetery enclosure at 2839.15 East, 2862.12 North. The site topography and various cultural and natural features were then mapped. Selected cultural features and general views of the site were digitally photographed. Reconnaissance survey was conducted on the periphery of the cemetery and the locations of notable cultural features or artifacts were recorded using a Garmin V GPS receiver.

Archaeological excavation is an important tool for verification of the GPR data. Beyond verification or denial of human remains, archaeology has the potential to provide a better understanding of the age, arrangement, and ethnic affiliation of the cemetery's occupants. Excavations in the form of exploratory test units were conducted in this project to verify, or "ground-truth" the results of the previous GPR survey. The survey also employed non-destructive methods, including the use of metal probes and a metal detector.

The present fieldwork included site mapping and exploratory test unit excavation to define the eastern and western extent of the graveyard. The test units were strategically placed to explore a number of GPR anomalies that were identified by the GPR survey. The emphasis was placed on delineating the outer extent of the possible graves on the eastern and western sides of the fieldstone enclosure. These test units were hand-excavated and each measured 2 m by 1 m in plan. The test units were of sufficient depth to examine beneath the primary root mat and organic-rich topsoil zone. The shallowest test extended 25 cm below ground surface, while the deepest test measured 123 cm below ground. The purpose of these test units was to expose the upper portions of any grave shafts that may have been present. By uncovering, carefully cleaning, mapping and photographing the various soil stains and soil disturbances, any human grave shafts could be identified, if they were present.

The anticipated findings included rectangular and/or hexagonal grave shafts, which are slightly larger than a human body. The use of coffins at Freetown cemetery is problematic and currently unknown. Burials in shrouds but without coffins may be manifested as oblong stains.

Once the upper soil zone was removed by shoveling and appropriate plan views mapped and photographed, the metal detector was employed. Archaeologists used this to search for deeply buried metal, which might indicate coffin hardware. The metal probe also was used to test the soil compaction and the presence of deeply buried stones. Probing is another method that archaeologists use to understand soil disturbances and buried features.

A sufficient number of GPR anomalies were sampled by archaeological excavation so that the confines of the cemetery on the eastern and western sides can be confidently determined. The cemetery boundary to the south is defined by the Atlantic Ocean and the beach strand, while the boundary to the north is defined by an area of wetlands that is located immediately north of the dirt road that passes along the north edge of the study tract. At a minimum, the proposed excavation sample was to include at least seven exploratory test units. Two additional tests were excavated, bringing the total area of excavation to 18 square meters. All excavations were backfilled upon completion.

The general intent of the excavation project was to inflict a minimum of damage to the buried resources while maximizing the archaeological information for a more informed delineation of the human burial populations present. The fieldwork plan was not to explore every GPR anomaly, but to sample a sufficient number of anomalies to provide the information necessary for the establishment of an accurate cemetery boundary. The archaeological study concentrated on the high probability areas covered by the GPR survey within the two acre project area. No artifacts were removed from the site by archaeologists. Selected artifacts were photographed and measured for later identification. The soil from the excavations was visually examined for artifacts but not screened.

As Goodman and Schneider point out in their report, the GPR survey findings may not represent the entire inventory of human burials at the site. The LAMAR Institute also cannot guarantee that 100% of the burials were identified by the proposed archaeological study. The archaeological study was intended as a “good-faith” effort to define the cemetery boundaries and better understand its internal composition. The archaeological study generally defined the extent of graves within the study area.

Laboratory Analysis and Reporting

The data from the study area was returned to the LAMAR Institute’s laboratory in Rincon, Georgia for analysis and reporting. A topographic map and a series of other maps of the site were produced. A technical report of findings was prepared detailing the results of the fieldwork and laboratory analysis.

Nine test units were excavated to assess Freetown Cemetery’s boundaries and its internal composition. Each of these tests measured 2 m by 1 m. Of these, four tests were located west of the stone enclosure, three were located east of the stone enclosure, and two were placed within the stone enclosure. The soil of these nine test units was removed by shovel and trowel. None of the soil was screened, but it was carefully examined during excavation for any artifact evidence. Furthermore, a metal detector was used to survey the floor and walls of the excavation units and the excavated soils for any indications of metal artifacts but none was found.

No artifacts were collected by this archaeological study. Rather, scaled digital photographs were taken of selected artifacts and these images serve as the record of

artifact findings from the study. In most instances, the UTM coordinates for these artifacts were also recorded.

The LAMAR Institute met with Desmond Carroll of the Grand Bahama Port Authority on September 14, 2007 to discuss project results and preliminary interpretations. Grand Bahama Port Authority representatives shared these findings with Keith L. Tinker, Director of The National Museum of the Bahamas, Antiquities, Monuments and Museum Corporation (AMMC) in a September 21, 2007 meeting. The LAMAR Institute team provided a management summary to Grand Bahama Port Authority representatives for purposes of discussion at that meeting.

Background information about the history and prehistory of Grand Bahama Island and Freetown were gathered following the completion of fieldwork. The results of this research are shown in this report bibliography. It should be noted that many of these academic citations were not physically examined for this study. Rather, this compiled bibliography is intended as a starting point for future studies at Freetown. Other bibliographies of the Bahamas include additional sources of information about the natural and cultural environment (Fang and Harrison 1972; Cash et al. 1991).

Results and Interpretation

Freetown Cemetery

The archaeological survey team mapped Freetown Cemetery and surrounding areas. The resulting topographic map is shown in Figure 9. Nine test units, each measuring 2 m by 1 m, were excavated in the Freetown Cemetery study area. The location of each test is shown in Figure 10. The findings from each of these tests are described below. That discussion is followed by the results from the limited archaeological reconnaissance at the settlement of Freetown.

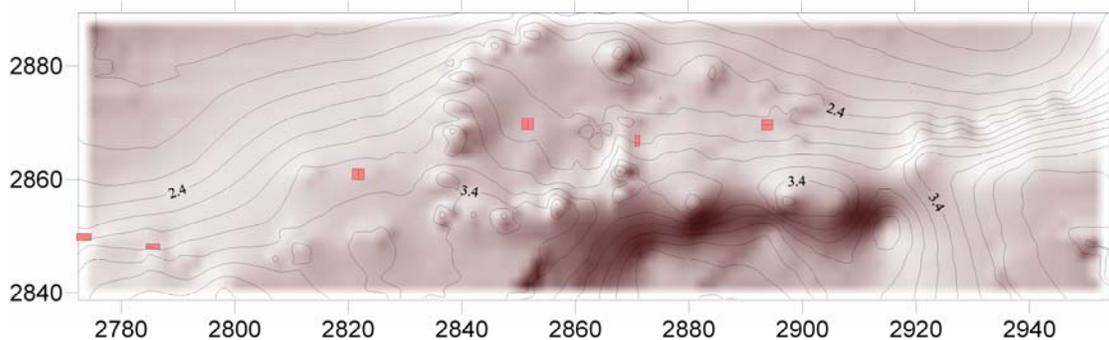


Figure 9. Freetown Cemetery Topography (Test Units Shown in Red).

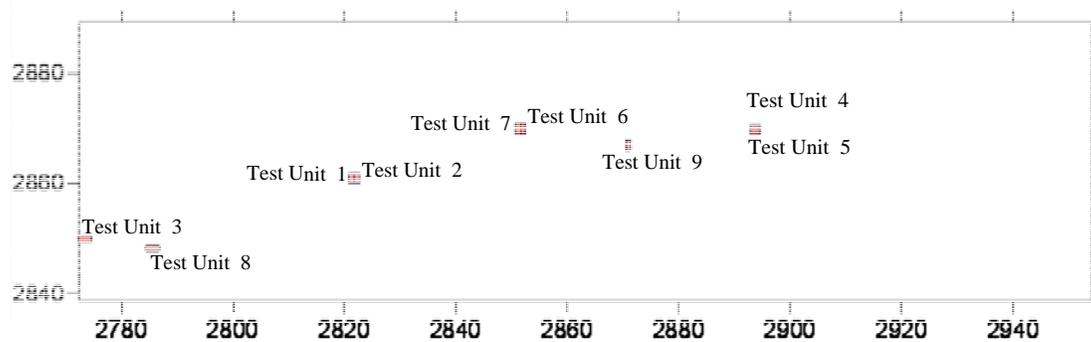


Figure 10. Freetown Cemetery, Test Units.

Archaeologist Laurie Wilkie (2007) summarized the difficulties in identifying historic cemeteries in the Bahamas:

Preservation of bone is such in the northern Bahamas that these burials would not be visible to the untrained eye. The outline of a burial pit, the inclusion of grave goods, human teeth and a small amount of other human bone is probably as much as remains. The burials are there all the same, and could be easily missed by those involved in construction activities. It is the practice of Bahamian and Caribbean people to bury loved ones in houses and houseyards, around churches, in beach areas, as well as in raised cairns in fields.

There is no reason to think that a single burial ground or cemetery exists at the site, but rather, multiple instances of group and individual burials, in multiple plots scattered across the landscape. Potentially, any area of the property could be the location of burial sites. It is inevitable that any number of burials would be desecrated during massive land-moving activities at the site. Such burials could only be located through extensive, time-consuming and expensive complete archaeological excavation of all areas where the subsurface of the land would be impacted, whether for the creation of the marina or the building of homes (Wilkie 2007).

Wilkie’s words of caution, which were directed towards the situation on New Providence Island, apply equally to the situation at Freetown, Grand Bahama Island. Historic cemeteries are difficult to locate and delineate, even for trained professionals. Human burials can be expected to occur in a variety of settings and groupings. Cultural belief systems, such as Christianity, Islam, or various African religions, played an important role in mortuary behavior and these burial traditions likely experienced changes over time. The vestiges of the Freetown cemetery are immediately obvious, even to the untrained eye. The stone wall enclosure and the numerous tombstones (both marked and unmarked) reflect the ancient use of this area as a cemetery. Archaeology was brought to bear at Freetown cemetery to refine our understanding of the cemetery’s limits and its internal composition.

Archaeologists relocated the GPR anomalies that were identified by Goodman and Schneider (2007). A subset of these anomalies was then chosen for archaeological testing. Archaeologists excavated nine test units in the Freetown Cemetery vicinity. The findings in each test unit are described below. The grid locations of the test units are provided in Table 1.

The GPR anomalies that were identified by Goodman and Schneider may represent a variety of buried features or natural objects other than human remains. These may include natural deposits of vegetation or stone, other cultural features, or large manmade objects deposited by storms and hurricanes. As noted by Goodman and Schneider, the presence of groundwater can create pseudo-anomalies in certain instances. Other factors that adversely affect GPR signals include the presence of large metal items and salt water. Generally, however, the GPR results are consistent with the results from GPR surveys in other coastal and beach sand settings that have been explored by the LAMAR Institute. The archaeological investigations serve to identify a substantial sample of interesting GPR anomalies.

Table 2. Test Unit Locations, Freetown Cemetery.

Southwest Corner		Test	
East	North	Unit	Long Axis
2822.00	2858.90	1	N-S
2823.00	2858.90	2	N-S
2772.60	2848.00	3	E-W
2896.40	2869.80	4	E-W
2896.60	2868.80	5	E-W
2852.60	2867.70	6	N-S
2851.60	2867.70	7	N-S
2784.40	2846.90	8	E-W
2874.20	2865.00	9	N-S

Test Units 1 and 2 were placed to investigate a strong and large GPR anomaly of unknown character on the west side of the study area. This GPR target was mapped by Goodman and recommended for investigation. Test Unit 1 was a 2 m North-South by 1 m East-West unit. This was expanded by the addition of Test Unit 2, another 2 m by 1 m unit with the same orientation. Together they formed a 2 m by 2 m sample.

Test Unit 1 was located from 2858.9 to 2860.9 North and 2822 to 2823 East. Level 1 of this unit was excavated to a maximum depth of 48 cm below surface. Soils in Level 1 consisted of grayish brown (10YR5/2) very coarse sand and limestone rocks. Level 2 of Test Unit 1 was excavated to a maximum depth of 62 cm below surface. Soils in Level 2 consisted of a slightly lighter yellow brown (10YR5/3) coarse sand and rocks. The greatest concentration of rocks in Test Unit 1 was located in the southern one-third of the unit, although rocks were present throughout. The center of Test Unit 1 was relatively clear of rocks. Bioturbation resulting from crab burrows and roots were observed throughout Test Unit 1, as was the case for all of the excavations in and around the Freetown cemetery.

Test Unit 2 was located from 2858.9 to 2860.9 North and 2823 to 2824 East. It was placed immediately east of Test Unit 1. Test Unit 2 contained many more limestone rocks compared to Test Unit 1. The smaller rocks were removed during excavation and the larger ones were left in place. Test Unit 2 was excavated in two levels to a maximum depth of 61 cm below ground surface. Soils in Test Unit 2 consisted of grayish brown (10YR5/2) very coarse sand and limestone rocks. A metal detector was used to search for any metal in Test Units 1 and 2, but no metal was identified in the excavation walls or floor. No artifacts were recovered from either test unit.

The archaeological investigation in Test Units 1 and 2 did not identify any human remains, nor was any evidence found to suggest that the GPR anomaly represented a human burial. No artifacts were discovered in these two tests. No soil stains or features indicative of a burial or burial shaft were visible. The results of these two excavations suggest a deep, natural deposit of limestone boulders and cobbles that are not the result of human activity.

Figure 11 is a photographic view of Test Units 1 and 2 at the base of Level 1. Figure 12 is a photograph of Test Units 1 and 2 at the base of Level 2. Figure 13 is photograph of the excavation at its maximum depth at the base of Level 3. Figure 14 is a plan drawing of Test Units 1 and 2 at the base of Level 1. Figure 15 shows these units in plan drawing at the base of Level 2. Figure 16 shows the south soil profile of the two units.

Test Unit 3 investigated a suspicious stone cluster on the far western side of the study area, which was beyond the area of interest identified by Goodman's GPR survey work. This test unit was located at 2848-2849 North and 2772.6-2774.6 East. Test Unit 3 measured 2 m East-West by 1 m North-South. Due to the presence of large rocks and the lack of artifacts and features, this test unit was excavated in one vertical level to a maximum depth of 70 cm below ground surface. Soils in this excavation consisted of very pale brown (10YR7/2) coarse sand, limestone slabs, and roots. Figure 17 shows a plan view of Test Unit 3 prior to excavation. Figure 18 depicts a plan view of the test unit at the base of Level 1. Figure 19 shows the south soil profile of Test Unit 3.

This excavation yielded no evidence of cultural material. The suspicious limestone rock deposit that was observed on the ground surface proved to be a natural stone deposit. The vicinity produced no archaeological indications of human burials. This investigation revealed a natural deposit of limestone boulders and cobbles. This stone cluster was not considered to be of human origin. No evidence of human graves was indicated from this test. No artifacts were recovered from Test Unit 3.

Test Units 4 and 5 were placed on the eastern edge of the area of interest identified by Goodman's GPR survey. These two tests were placed on top of a suspicious stone cluster. Test Unit 4 was located at 2869.8-2870.8 North and 2896.4-2898.4 East. Test Unit 4 measured 2 m East-West by 1 m North-South unit and was located immediately north of Test Unit 5.



Figure 11. South View of Test Units 1 and 2, Base of Level 1.

Test Unit 5 measured 2 m East-West by 1 m North-South and was located immediately south of Test Unit 4 at 2868.8-2869.8 North and 2896.6-2898.6 East. Figure 20 is a photograph of the rock pile in Test Unit 4, prior to excavation. Figure 21 shows a plan drawing of Test Units 4 and 5 prior to excavation. Figure 22 shows a plan drawing of the two test units at the base of Level 1. Figure 23 shows the East soil profile of Test Units 4 and 5.

The excavation of Test Units 4 and 5 revealed a dense deposit of naturally lain limestone boulders and large cobbles. No indication of human activity was suggested from these excavations. No human burials, grave shafts or feature stains were identified and no artifacts were discovered.

Test Units 6 and 7 were placed within the stone wall enclosure of the Freetown Cemetery. The test units were located just east of a suspected tombstone. Test Unit 6 measured 2 m North-South by 1 m East-West and was located immediately west of Test Unit 7 at 2867.7-2869.7 North and 2852.6-2853.6 East.



Figure 12. South View of Test Units 1 and 2, Base of Level 2.



Figure 13. South View of Test Units 1 and 2, Base of Excavation (Note the stepped-down area excavated into the flat, sandy floor of the base of Level 2).

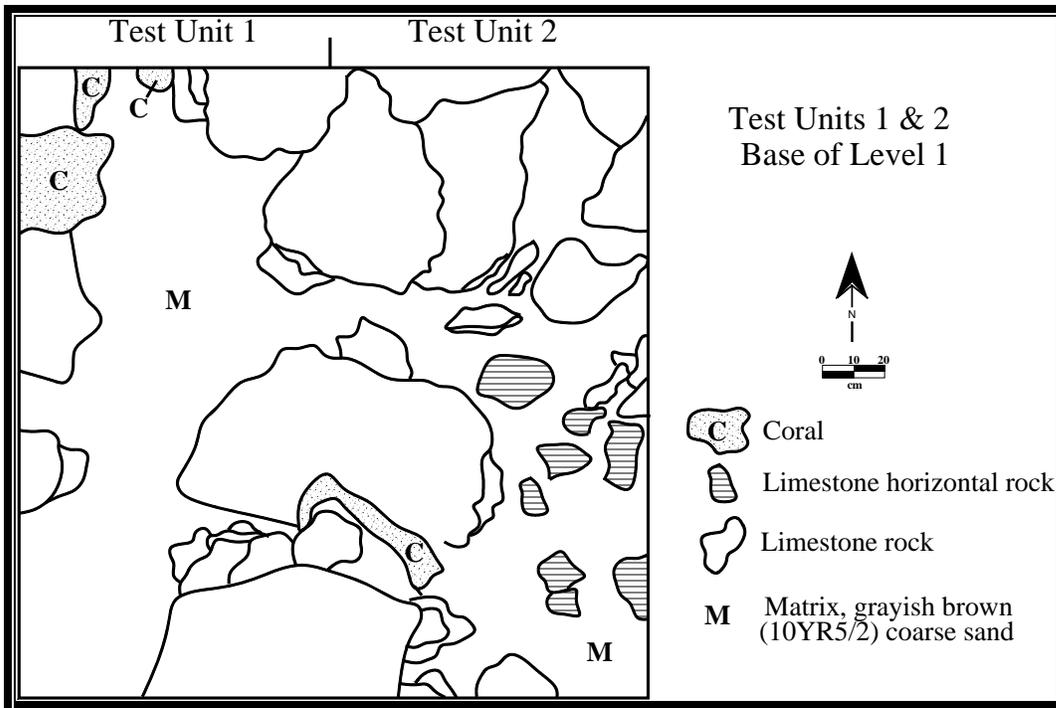


Figure 14. Test Units 1 and 2, Plan of Level 1.

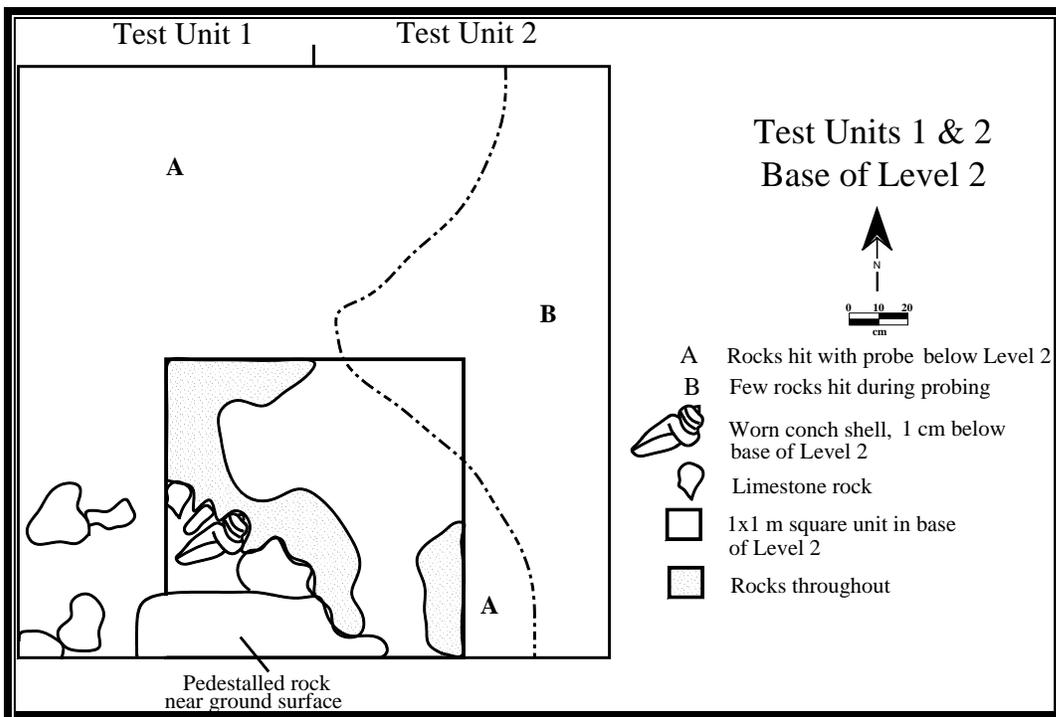


Figure 15. Test Units 1 and 2, Plan of Level 2.

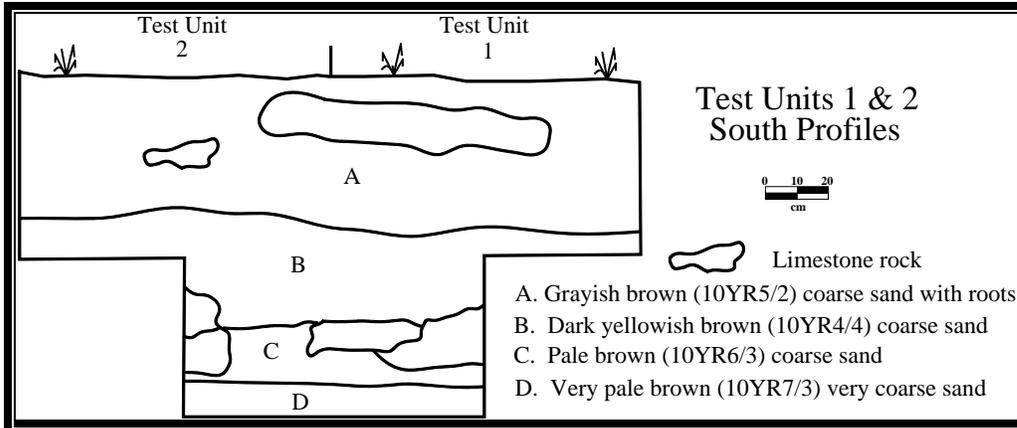


Figure 16. Test Units 1 and 2, South Profile.

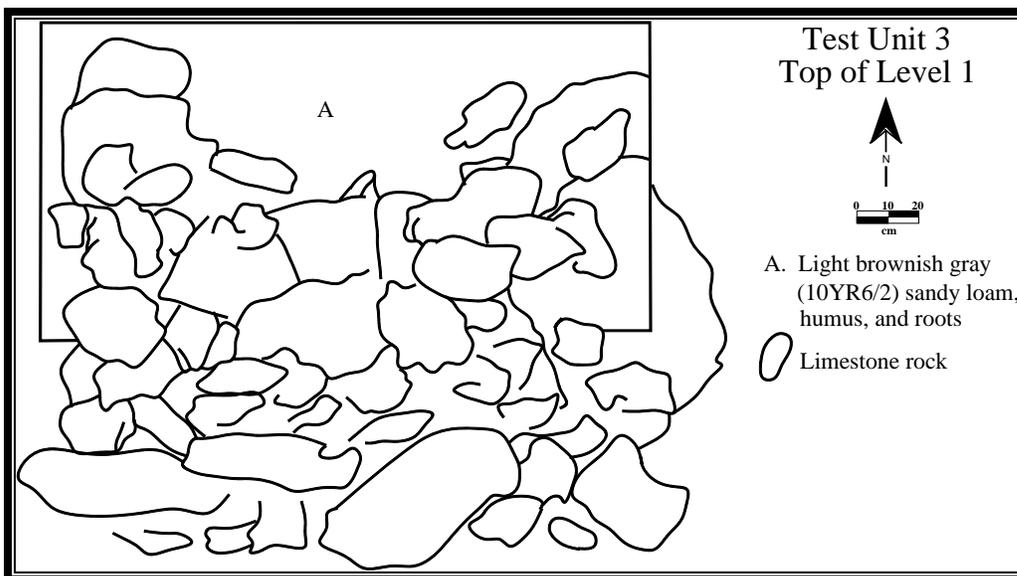


Figure 17. Test Unit 3, Plan at Ground Surface.

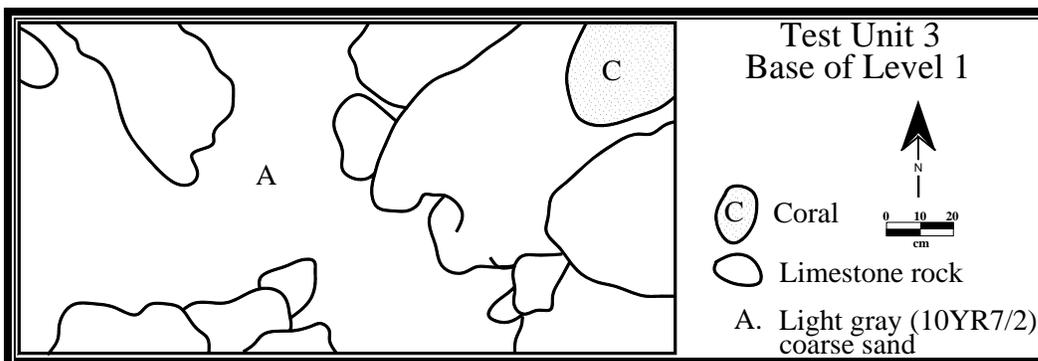


Figure 18. Test Unit 3, Plan at Base of Level 1.

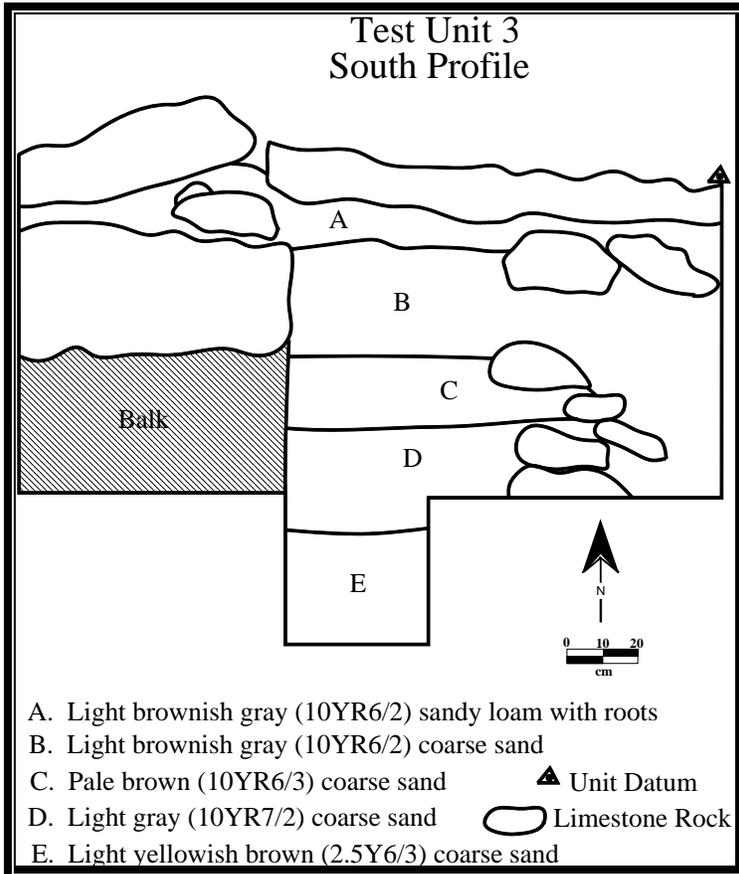


Figure 19. Test Unit 3, South Profile.



Figure 20. Test Unit 4, Rock Cluster at Surface.

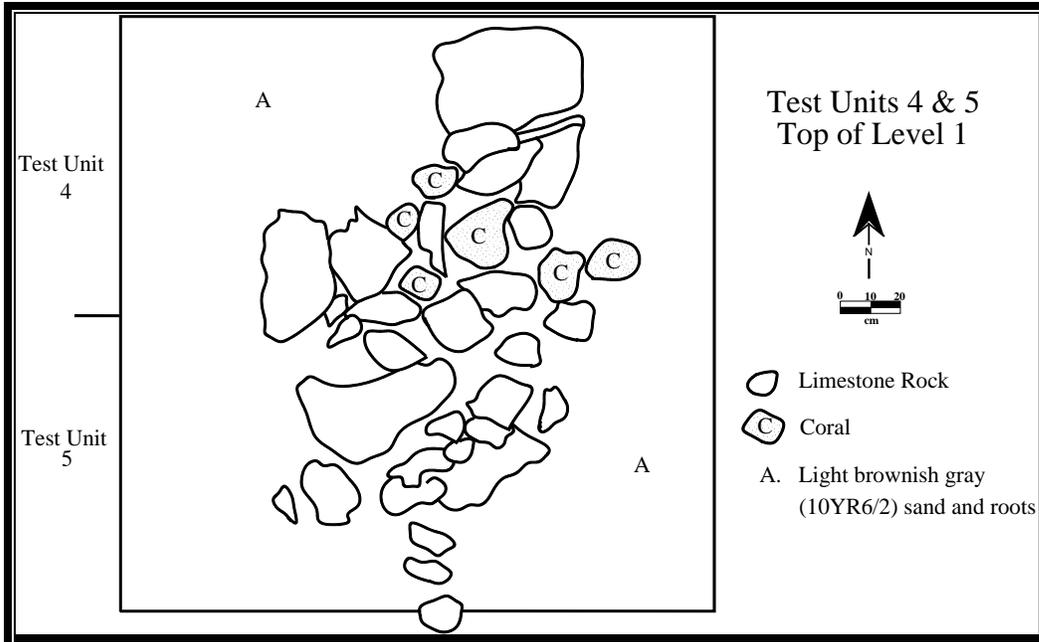


Figure 21. Test Units 4 and 5, Plan at Ground Surface.

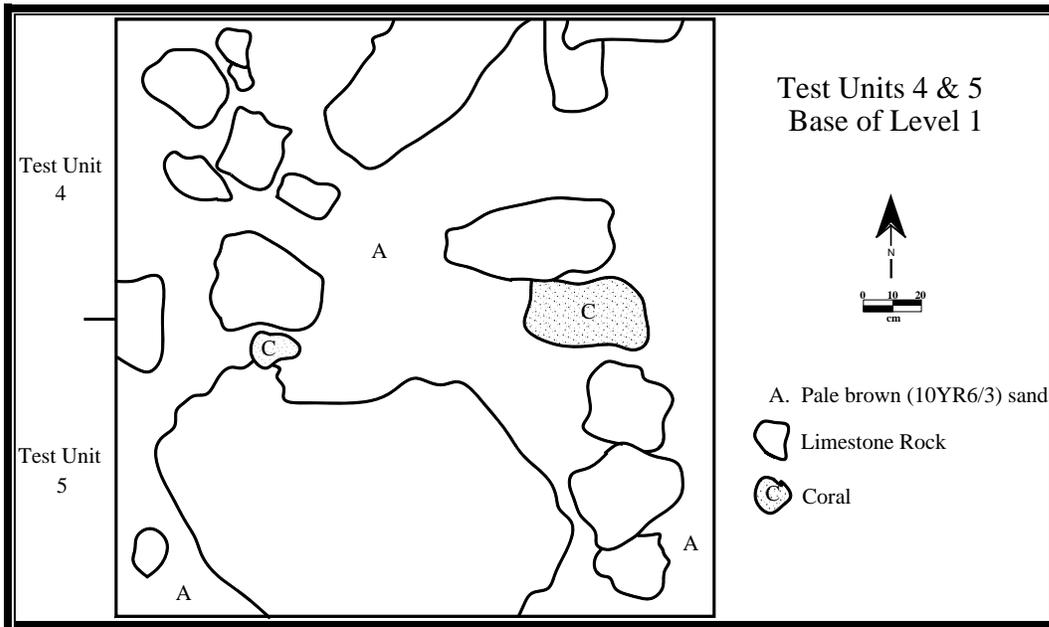


Figure 22. Test Units 4 and 5, Plan of Level 1.

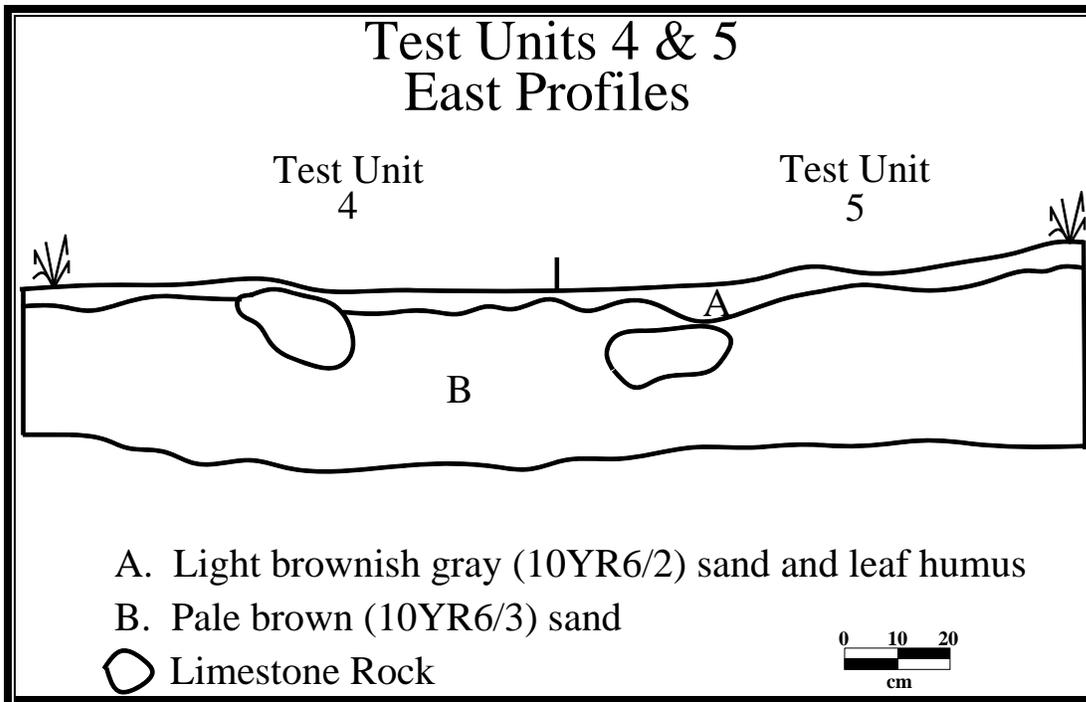


Figure 23. Test Units 4 and 5, East Profile.

Test Units 6 and 7 were placed within the stone wall enclosure of the Freetown Cemetery. The test units were located just east of a suspected tombstone. Test Unit 6 measured 2 m North-South by 1 m East-West and was located immediately west of Test Unit 7 at 2867.7-2869.7 North and 2852.6-2853.6 East.

Test Unit 7 measured 2 m North-South by 1 m East-West and was located immediately east of Test Unit 6 at 2867.7-2869.7 North and 2851.6-2852.6 East. Figure 24 shows a photographic view of Test Units 6 and 7, prior to excavation. Figure 25 is a photographic view of these two units at the base of Level 1 and Figure 26 shows the plan view of both units at the base of Level 1. Figure 27 shows a south soil profile of these two test units.

The excavation of Test Units 6 and 7 was terminated at the depth of 25 cm below ground surface, following another consultation with Desmond Carroll. A metal detector was then used to scan the area of ferrous metal readings and dozens of positive hits were noted. Many metal readings also were encountered in the adjacent, unexcavated soils. None of these probable metal artifacts within the cemetery's stone walls was investigated further. Excavation of Test Units 6 and 7 was terminated at this juncture to avoid any disturbance of the underlying human remains.



Figure 24. Test Units 6 and 7, Ground Surface, Facing West.



Figure 25. Test Units 6 and 7, Plan of Level 1, Facing West.

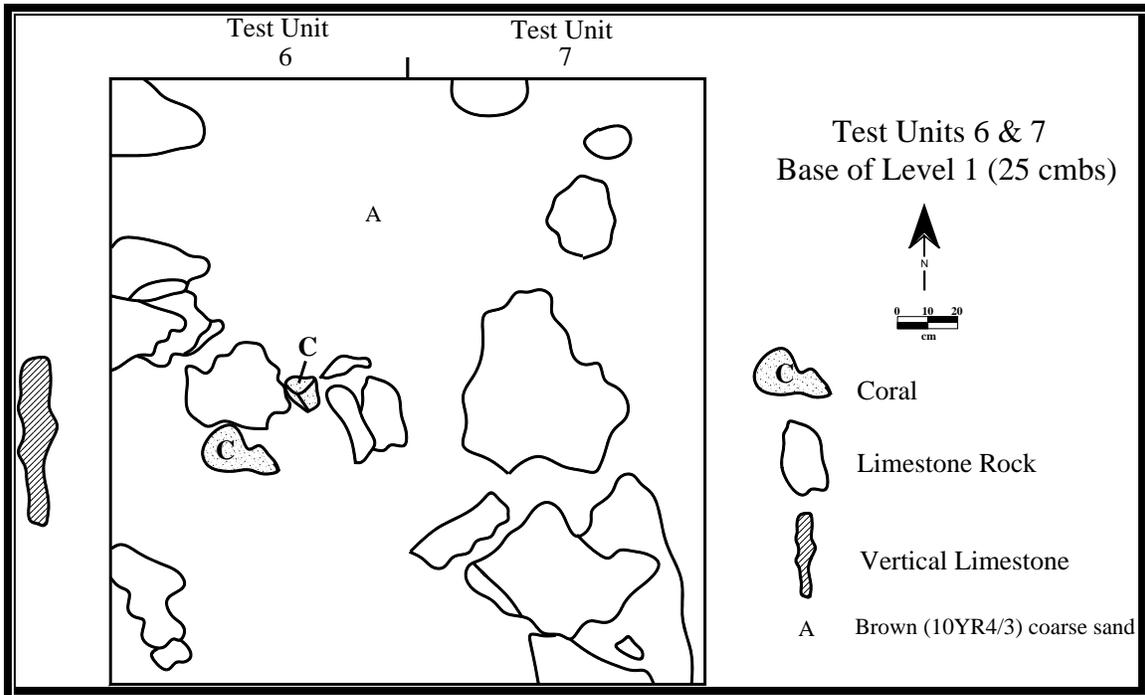


Figure 26. Test Units 6 and 7, Plan of Level 1.

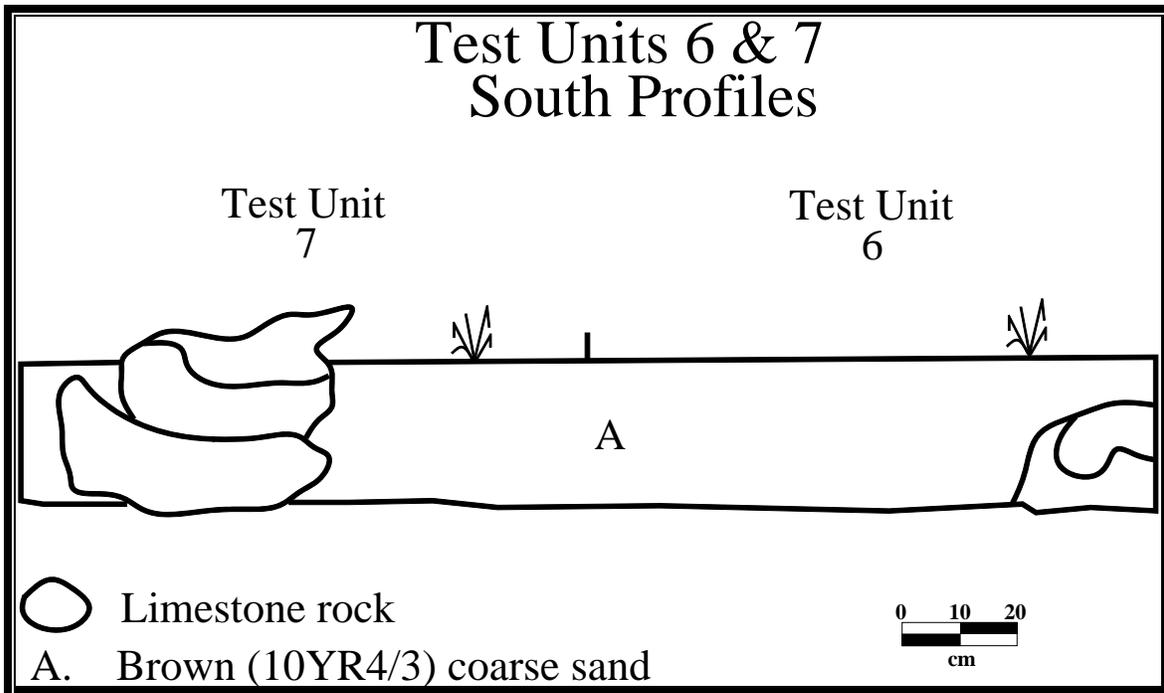


Figure 27. Test Units 6 and 7, South Profile.

Test Unit 8 investigated a large stone rock pile on the western side of the site. This stone cairn was west of the area of interest identified by Goodman's GPR survey, but exploration of this feature was recommended by Desmond Carroll during a site visit. Test Unit 8 measured 2 m East-West by 1 m North-South. It was located from 2846.9-2847.9 North and 2784.4-2786.4 East. Figure 28 shows a western photographic view of the rock pile at Test Unit 8, prior to excavation. Figure 29 is a southern photographic view of Test Unit 8 at the completion of excavation. Figure 30 depicts a plan drawing of Test Unit 8 prior to excavation. Figure 31 shows a south profile of Test Unit 8.

The findings from Test Unit 8 indicated that the stone rock pile was definitely of human origin, although its function remains unknown. It measured 5 m North-South by 2 m East-West and was 1.5 m in height. Approximately one half of this large stone rock pile was excavated. It revealed an intentionally-placed elongated oval pile of small to medium-sized limestone boulders and smaller cobbles, which were resting on a thin zone of light gray sand. No evidence of human remains was indicated from the excavations, nor were any artifacts, features or burial shafts discovered. This stone pile could date to either the prehistoric or historic period but in the absence of any associated artifacts, it remains non-diagnostic.



Figure 28. Test Unit 8, View at Surface, facing West.



Figure 29. Test Unit 1, View of South Profile.

Test Unit 9 was placed just east of the stone enclosure in an area of suspicious, vertical limestone slabs. These upright slabs were considered possible evidence of a stone crypt. Test Unit 9 measured 2 m North-South by 1 m East-West. It was located from 2865-2867 North and 2874.2-2875.2 East. Figure 32 is a photographic view of Test Unit 9, prior to excavation and Figure 33 shows Test Unit 9 at the base of Level 1. Figure 34 shows a plan drawing of Test Unit 9, prior to excavation. The location of the exploratory 50 cm by 50 cm test within Test Unit 9 is also shown in this diagram. Figure 35 represents the east soil profile of Test Unit 9. Excavation of Test Unit 9 revealed the stones to be of natural origin and of haphazard deposition and no indications of human burials, burial shafts, or artifacts were discovered.

Tests Units 4, 5, and 9 revealed the extremely rocky subsurface character of the study area east of the cemetery enclosure. These tests yielded no suggestion of any human activity and the boulder deposits in this area appear to be the result of wave action or other natural processes such as storms and hurricanes. The dense deposit of subsurface boulders probably resulted in the GPR anomalies that were observed by Goodman and Schneider.

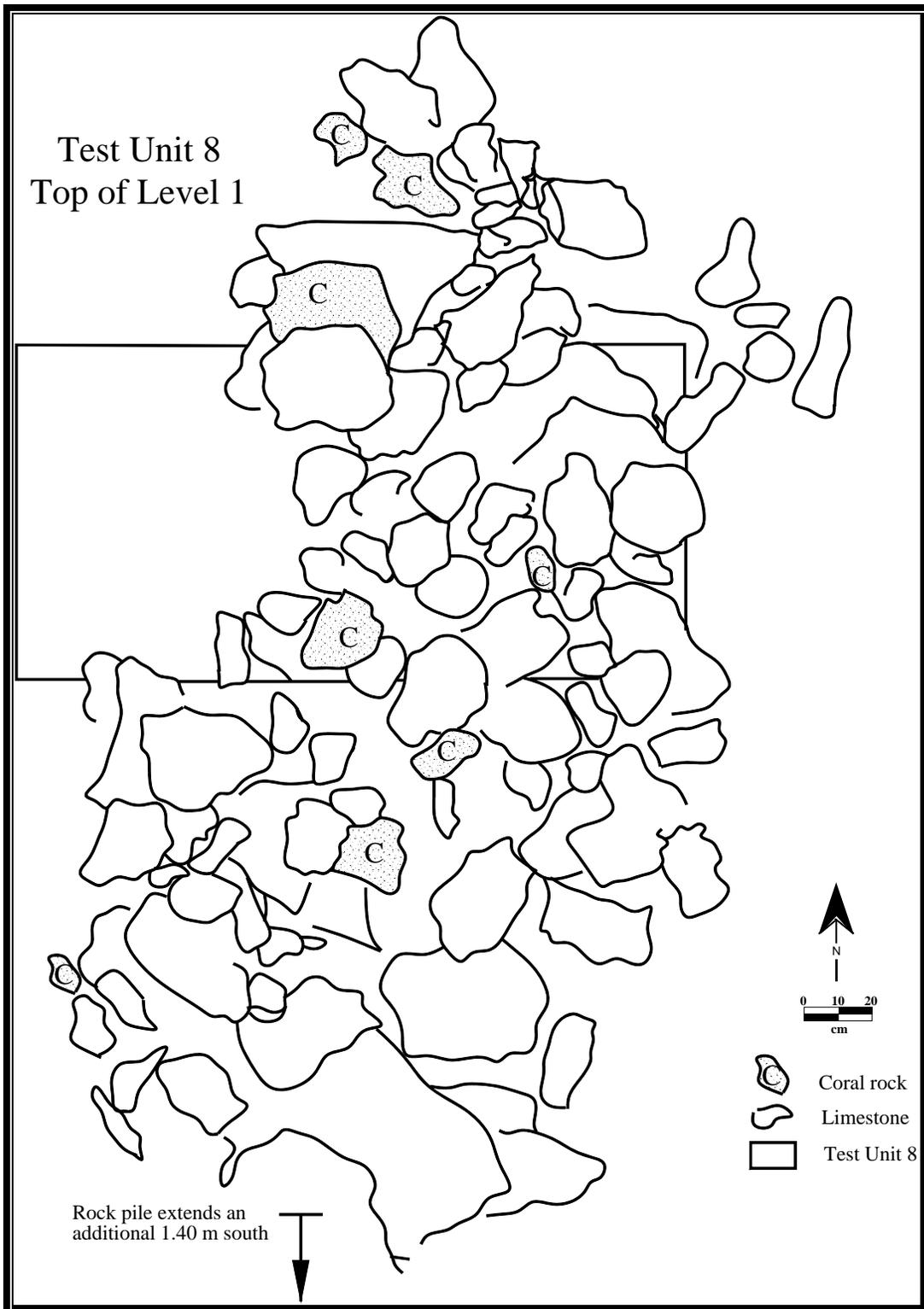


Figure 30. Test Unit 8, Plan at Surface.

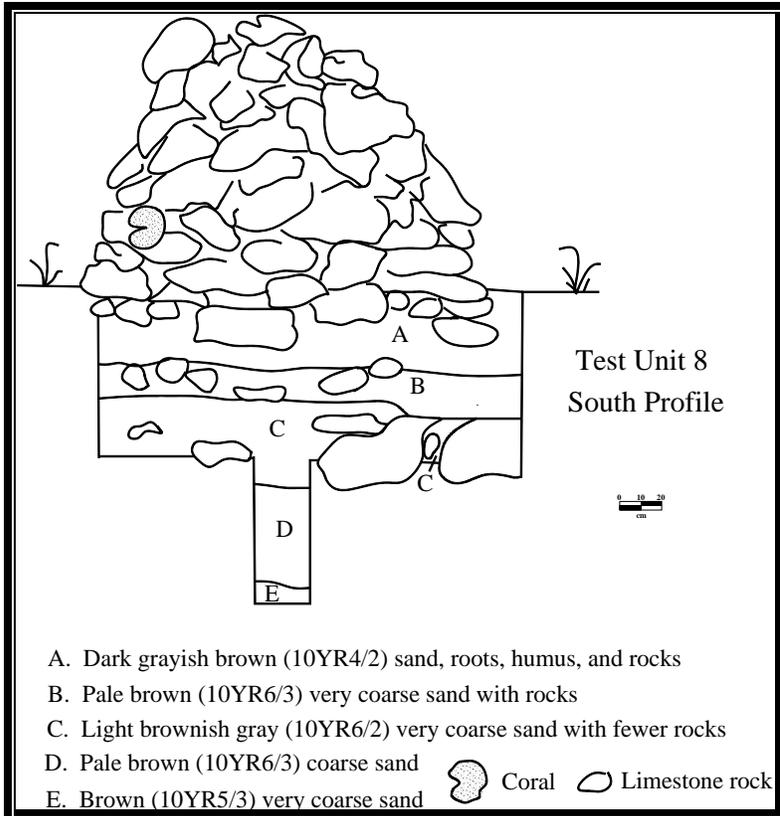


Figure 31. Test Unit 8, South Profile.



Figure 32. Test Unit 9, South View at Surface.



Figure 33. Test Unit 9, North View of Level 1.

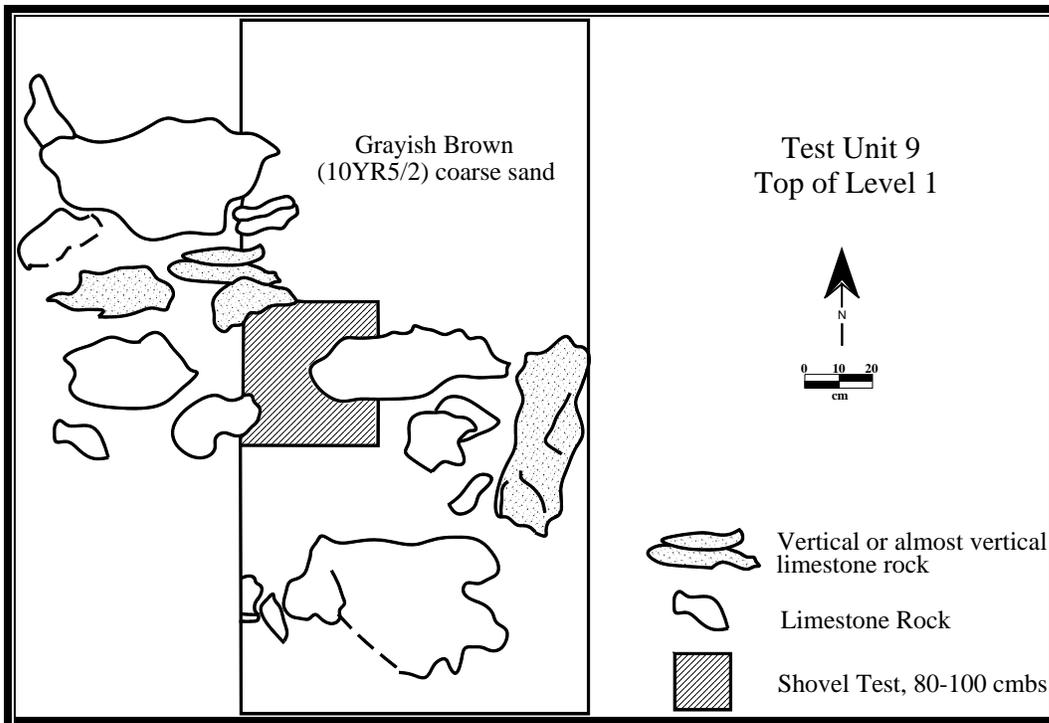


Figure 34. Test Unit 9, Base of Level 1.

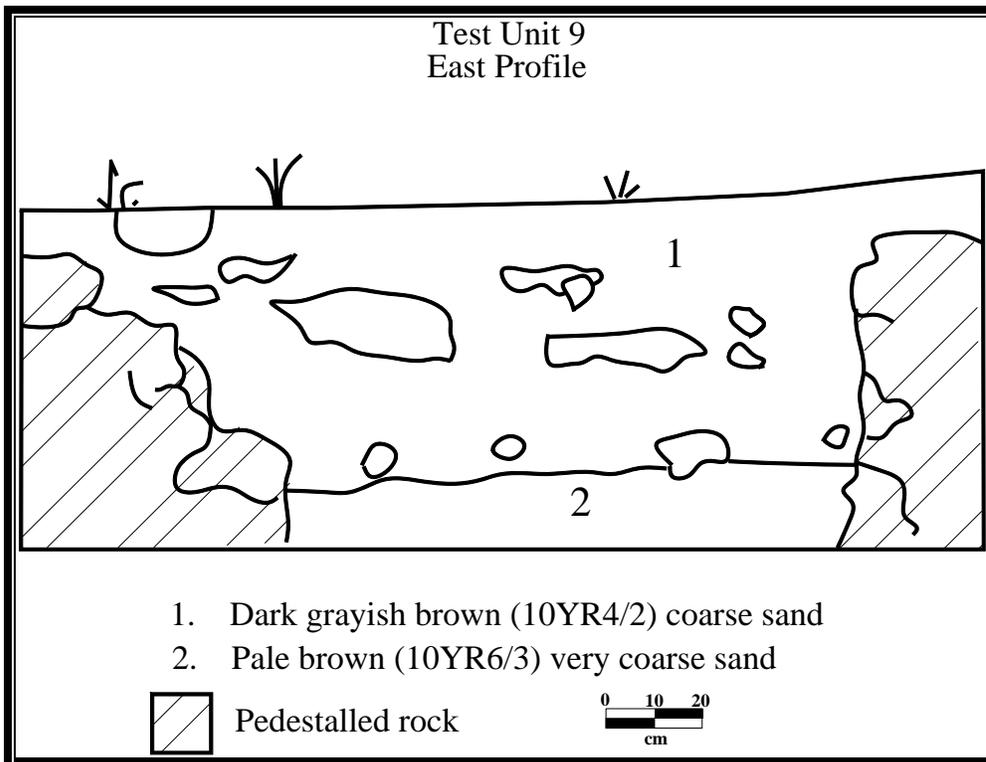


Figure 35. Test Unit 9, East Profile.

The two test units within the large stone enclosure, Test Units 6 and 7, were only excavated to the shallow depth of 25 cm below ground. The digging was terminated at that elevation to prevent any disturbance of underlying human graves. These shallow tests, however, provided important information on the subsurface character of the cemetery within the stone enclosure. Metal detector survey of the 25 cm deep floors of Test Units 6 and 7 suggested the presence of numerous buried metal items. These are likely coffin hardware and/or buttons and buckles associated with the burials. Metal probing within the enclosure also revealed an extensive deposit of stones that formed a mantle over the marked graves. Some areas within Test Units 6 and 7 were devoid of stones, which suggested that the distribution of stones was linked to the human grave shafts. Stones were probably placed over the shafts to prevent disturbances to the graves.

All of the marked tombstones and obvious upright unmarked tombstones are located within the large stone enclosure. None was identified outside of this enclosure. One tombstone on the northeast side of the enclosure may provide clues to the relative age of the stone enclosure and the graves that it encloses. If the grave was aligned facing east of the headstone, then the stone wall was built on top of the grave shaft. If so, this indicates that the stone wall post-dates at least some of the graves within the cemetery. The areas immediately adjacent to this wall may have been disturbed during the construction of the wall and this disturbance may have resulted in the disappearance of a few tombstones in this vicinity. Alternatively, the wall may have been erected after some of the graves

without marked headstones on the periphery became “lost” in the jumble of natural rock piles. The recommended site buffer, 7 m to the west and 5 m to the east of the stone enclosure, should provide protection for any graves that were masked by, or adjacent to, the stone wall construction.

Stone Clusters

Thirty-eight clusters of limestone rocks and coral were identified by LAMAR Institute archaeologists on the surface of the site and the outer dimensions of each of these were carefully mapped. At the onset of the project it was unclear whether these stone piles were the result of human activity or if they were generated by natural processes of wave and storm action. In retrospect, most of these likely represent natural stone piles and bear no relevance to the Freetown Cemetery. A few notable exceptions probably are the result of human activity, although their function remains problematic. One of these was sampled by Test Unit 8. Several examples of these clusters were illustrated in the previously presented figures and many others were documented with digital photographs that are part of the permanent archival record.

Tombstones

Twenty-nine tombstones were recognized by the present study. All of these were confined to the area within the stone wall enclosure. Only three of the 29 markers possessed any inscriptions. These three stones appear to have been rearranged from their original locations. Consequently, all of the human burials within the cemetery are presently unidentified. The grid locations of the tombstones are provided in Table 2 and their spatial distribution is shown in Figure 36.

Tombstone 2 was actually two tombstones that were stacked on each other. The more complete specimen stated: “IN MEMORY OF CARYLINE COOPER AGE: 49”. The other was a lower fragment that stated: “A COOPER AGE 47”. Both of these were nicely shaped limestone markers with hand executed lettering. The “N” on the first marker was reversed, although the subsequent “N” in Caryline was not. Tombstone 2 is shown in Figure 37.

Tombstone 3 was a complete nicely-shaped, limestone marker, which stated: “IN MEMORY OF ORAL LAING”. As with the previously described marker, the “N” in “IN” was reversed but the “N” in Laing was not. All three of these stones (two different pieces at Tombstones 2 and Tombstone 3) may have been made by the same craftsman, based on their stylistic similarity. Tombstone 3 is shown in Figure 38.

Tombstone 1, 2, 3, 4, and 20 were the only cut stones observed. Tombstone 1 was a complete upright, neatly-shaped limestone marker with no apparent inscription. Tombstone 4 was the basal stub of a nicely made limestone marker with no visible inscription. Tombstone 20 was a complete, well-shaped limestone marker with no apparent inscription. It is shown in Figure 39. The remaining 23 tombstones were crude upright limestone slabs, or rock clusters that probably represent graves. All 29 of these tombstones were located within the confines of the cemetery rock wall. Additional large

limestone slabs were noted within the enclosure. A number of these also may represent tombstones but because they were displaced and with no obvious workmanship on their exterior, they were not classified as tombstones. We suspect that many additional graves are located within the stone wall enclosure but their surface evidence is lacking.

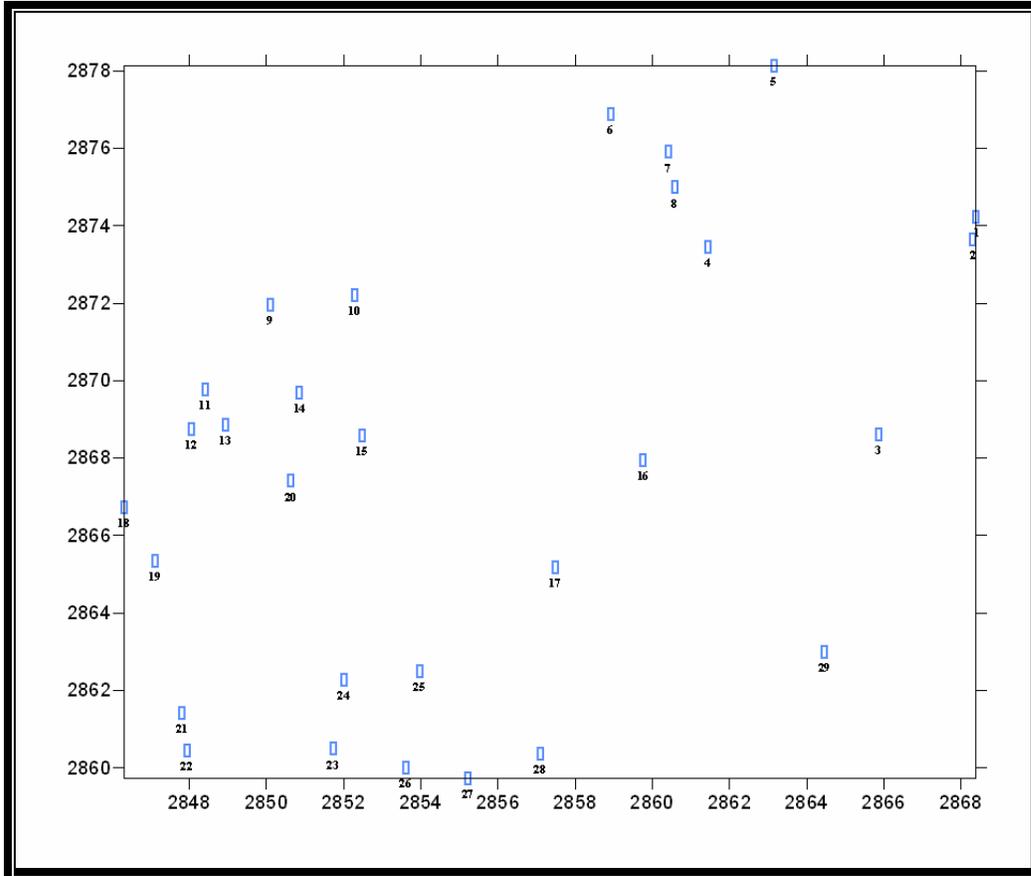


Figure 36. Tombstone Locations, Freetown Cemetery.

In addition to the cemetery delineation project, the Grand Bahama Port Authority requested that The LAMAR Institute team spend one day of archaeological reconnaissance examining the abandoned settlement of Freetown. Freetown was situated several hundred meters west of the Freetown cemetery site. This reconnaissance included a partial walkover of the settlement and very limited test excavations. Several North-South transects were made through the core of the settlement and three East-West transects were made. Archaeologists placed two small test excavations (Test Units 10 and 11) in one area of the site. Otherwise, the reconnaissance was confined to surface examination and recordation. Most of the settlement remains unexplored. Many features and refuse deposits were observed and the potential for intact buried remains was recognized in many areas of the settlement. Figure 40 shows a plan drawing of the approximate route of the survey transects and the notable building ruins and other cultural features.

Table 3. Tombstone Locations.

North	East	Description	Comments
2874.22	2868.39	Tombstone 1	
2873.65	2868.31	Tombstone 2	Cooper (2)
2868.61	2865.86	Tombstone 3	Laing
2873.45	2861.43	Tombstone 4	
2878.13	2863.15	Tombstone 5	
2876.90	2858.92	Tombstone 6	
2875.91	2860.41	Tombstone 7	
2874.99	2860.58	Tombstone 8	
2871.96	2850.10	Tombstone 9	
2872.21	2852.28	Tombstone 10	
2869.77	2848.40	Tombstone 11	
2868.75	2848.04	Tombstone 12	
2868.86	2848.93	Tombstone 13	
2869.68	2850.85	Tombstone 14	
2868.59	2852.47	Tombstone 15	
2867.95	2859.76	Tombstone 16	
2865.18	2857.48	Tombstone 17	
2866.72	2846.30	Tombstone 18	
2865.36	2847.11	Tombstone 19	
2867.41	2850.63	Tombstone 20	
2861.42	2847.81	Tombstone 21	
2860.44	2847.93	Tombstone 22	
2860.50	2851.73	Tombstone 23	
2862.27	2852.00	Tombstone 24	
2862.50	2853.97	Tombstone 25	
2860.00	2853.60	Tombstone 26	
2859.73	2855.22	Tombstone 27	
2860.36	2857.10	Tombstone 28	
2863.00	2864.47	Tombstone 29	



Figure 37. Tombstone of Caryline Cooper.



Figure 38. Tombstone of Oral Laing.



Figure 39. Tombstone 20, Freetown Cemetery.

Freetown Reconnaissance

Archaeologists conducted a limited reconnaissance of the Freetown settlement. The areas covered by this effort are shown (in magenta) on Figure 40. The areas examined in the vicinity of the Freetown Cemetery are not shown on this map. The areas reconnoitered were the Beach Road, the beach, a bulldozed trail that paralleled the Beach Road, a series spur trails of bulldozed roads, and four cross-country transects in the areas between the Beach Road and the bulldozed trail. The bulldozed trails, while they appear to be cleared of vegetation from the aerial photograph, were actually heavily overgrown and had only poor to fair ground surface visibility. Visibility along the surface of the Beach Road and the beach was excellent. Surprisingly, few artifacts were observed on the Beach Road or along the beach. The four cross-country transects passed through areas with very thick vegetation. The two easternmost transects traversed areas with many historic artifacts, rock walls, and rock piles. The archaeologists located two building ruins on the easternmost transect.



Figure 40. Plan of Freetown Reconnaissance.

One dwelling ruin was designated Building 1 and it was located near the presumed eastern end of the Freetown settlement. The archaeologists were led to this ruin by Desmond Carroll. The southwest corner of this ruin was at UTM E751989, N2942579. Figure 41 is a photographic view of the North Elevation of Building 1, facing Southwest. The dwelling ruin measured 7 m East-West by 6.8 m North-South. The building's short axis was oriented 10 degrees West of Magnetic North. The thickness of the north wall of this ruin was measured 30 cm. The north wall had a central, single doorway that was flanked by two window openings. The wooden window frames and door jam were absent. This building ruin appears to have been a single-story dwelling with high ceilings or a loft. The building wall was constructed of limestone rocks that were dressed with a lime and sand stucco. No evidence of a chimney was seen. A fragment of wood from the dwelling was located just south of the building wall. It contained machine cut square nails and it exhibited evidence of burning.

Building 1 was investigated by two small 50 cm by 50 cm test units. One test unit was placed within the house ruin and the other was placed South of it. The test outside of the house yielded a variety of mid to late 19th century artifacts. The test within the dwelling contained no artifacts. Both tests revealed flat limestone pavers that may indicate that the interior and exterior of the building was completely paved with limestone slabs.

A metal detector was used to survey the vicinity and the resulting metal readings suggested a dense deposit of ferrous metal was present, although no metal artifacts were found in the test units. This may indicate that many small metal objects, such as nails, are deposited beneath the limestone paving at this house site. These artifacts and other surface indications at this house ruin suggest that the dwelling was abandoned in the late 19th or very early 20th century. It may represent a habitation from the earliest period of the town's existence (circa 1830s or 1840s). The limited excavations done at this dwelling ruin suggest that important archaeological deposits exist at this site.

Test Unit 10 was placed approximately 20 cm West of the rock wall and approximately 1 m Northeast of the northeast corner of Building 1. This 50 cm by 50 cm unit was excavated in one level to a maximum depth of 22 cm below ground surface. Figure 42 shows a photographic view of Test Unit 10, fully excavated. A large horizontal limestone slab was encountered at that point and the excavation was terminated. Soils in the test unit consisted of: 0-10 cm, black (10YR2/1) loam, humus and roots, and 10-22 cm, very dark brown (10YR2/2) sandy loam. All of the artifacts were recovered from 10-22 cm below ground. Test Unit 10 yielded a variety of mid-19th century historic artifacts. These artifacts were analyzed and photographed in the field and then returned to the test unit before backfilling. These artifacts are shown in Figure 43. These included:



Figure 41. Building 1, Freetown, Facing Southwest.

- 1 Red sponged (Greek key motif) whiteware plate or platter sherd
- 1 Blue sponged whiteware hollowware sherd
- 6 Undecorated whiteware sherds (5 hollowware, 1 unidentified vessel base)
- 3 Olive green bottle glass sherds
- 1 Case bottle olive green glass sherd
- 2 Medium green bottle glass sherds
- 2 Clear curved bottle glass sherds
- 1 Four-holed ribbed milk glass clothing button
- 1 Marine shell fragment
- 3 Unidentified animal bones



Figure 42. Test Unit 10, Freetown, Facing West.



Figure 43. Artifacts from Test Unit 10, Freetown.

Test Unit 11 was placed within Building 1. The center of the test unit was located approximately 3 m from north wall and 1.4 m from the east wall. This 50 cm by 50 cm test unit was excavated in one level to a depth of 15 cm below surface. Soils in this unit were similar to those described for Test Unit 10. Archaeologists encountered a large horizontal limestone slab at 15 cm below grand surface and excavation was terminated at that depth. Figure 44 is a photographic view of Test Unit 11, fully excavated. No artifacts were located in this test.

Building 1 was flanked on the west side by a low rock wall that was approximately one meter wide and one meter in height. The wall was dry-lain and composed of uncut limestone rocks that were randomly stacked. The resulting rock wall was relatively neatly shaped and squared off. The long axis of this wall was oriented 20 degrees West of Magnetic North and it extended an undetermined distance in both directions from Building 1.



Figure 44. Test Unit 11, Freetown, Facing Northwest.

Building 2 was discovered about 20 m East of Building 1. It was a rectangular ruin and its southwest corner was located at UTM E752010, N2942581. The ruin of Building 2 was a low, cement stucco and limestone rock wall that measured 7.6 m East-West by 7.2 m North-South. The height of the building foundation at its southwest corner was 70 cm. The width of the west, east, and north walls were consistently 70 cm, whereas the width of the south wall was 1.4 m. The face of the building wall on all four sides was sloped inward and the top surface was flat. The short axis of this building was oriented 20 degrees West of Magnetic North. This ruin probably represents a foundation for a wooden superstructure that is now completely absent. No evidence of any staircase was seen. One spirits bottle was located just outside of the northwest corner of this ruin. Figure 45 is a photographic view of Building 2. No excavation was attempted in this area.



Figure 45. Building 2, Freetown.

An exposed well shaft was recorded at UTM E752029, N2942575. The shaft was rectangular at the surface and gradually transitioned to a cylindrical shape at greater depth. The upper part was lined with limestone rocks and cement stucco and the lower section was apparently dug through solid limestone bedrock. It was an estimated 1.5 m in diameter. The shaft was open to a depth of about 2 m and was filled with vegetation beneath that depth. No water was observed in the shaft. This was the only well identified by the reconnaissance, although a local informant noted at least two others had been identified by hikers (Erika Gates personal communication September 11, 2007). Figure 46 is a photographic view of the well.

A wide variety of 19th and early to mid 20th century refuse was observed in many areas of Freetown. The types of discarded artifacts ranged from abandoned cars and trucks to many hundreds of smaller items, including bottles, tinware, ceramics, and conch shells. Bottles of many descriptions were scattered all over the town. The vast majority were spirit or soft drink bottles. Many were stashed in convenient crevices along the stone walls. The sheer quantity of broken (and complete) glass bottles was quite impressive. Photographs of a few examples are shown in Figures 47 and 48.



Figure 46. Well, Freetown.



Figure 47. Mid-19th Century Case Spirits Bottle, Near Building 1, Freetown.



Figure 48. Dense Deposit of Early 20th Century Bottles, West of Building 1.

Summary

Freetown Cemetery

The archaeological survey confined the eastern extent of the cemetery to the area just east of the stone enclosure. None of the archaeological tests east of this stone wall indicated any evidence of human burials. This area was extremely rocky and littered with large and small limestone boulders. The boulders formed many clusters, but these clusters are likely the result of natural wave and storm action, rather than human activity. A seven meter buffer east of the stone enclosure is recommended for preservation pending further archaeological investigation.

The archaeological survey constricted the western extent of the cemetery to the area approximately seven meters West of the stone enclosure. The strong anomaly that was located further to the West was determined by archaeologists not to be a human burial. The GPR anomalies identified by Goodman that were located immediately West of the stone enclosure were not explored by the present study and these areas should be protected pending further archaeological investigation.

No archaeological evidence was observed to suggest that the cemetery extends either north or south of the stone enclosure. The area to the north contains the coast road, a thin zone of dry ground and wetlands. The area to the south contains a dense deposit of large limestone boulders and very dynamic beach sand. A two meter buffer to the north and south of the stone enclosure should be sufficient protection for this resource.

Figure 49 shows an overlay map of the 29 mapped tombstones with the GPR anomaly map. The interpretation by Goodman and Schneider that the anomaly cluster concentrated in the center of the stone enclosure is a cluster of burials may well be correct. It should be noted however that quite a few tombstones are plotted in areas devoid of any significant GPR anomaly.

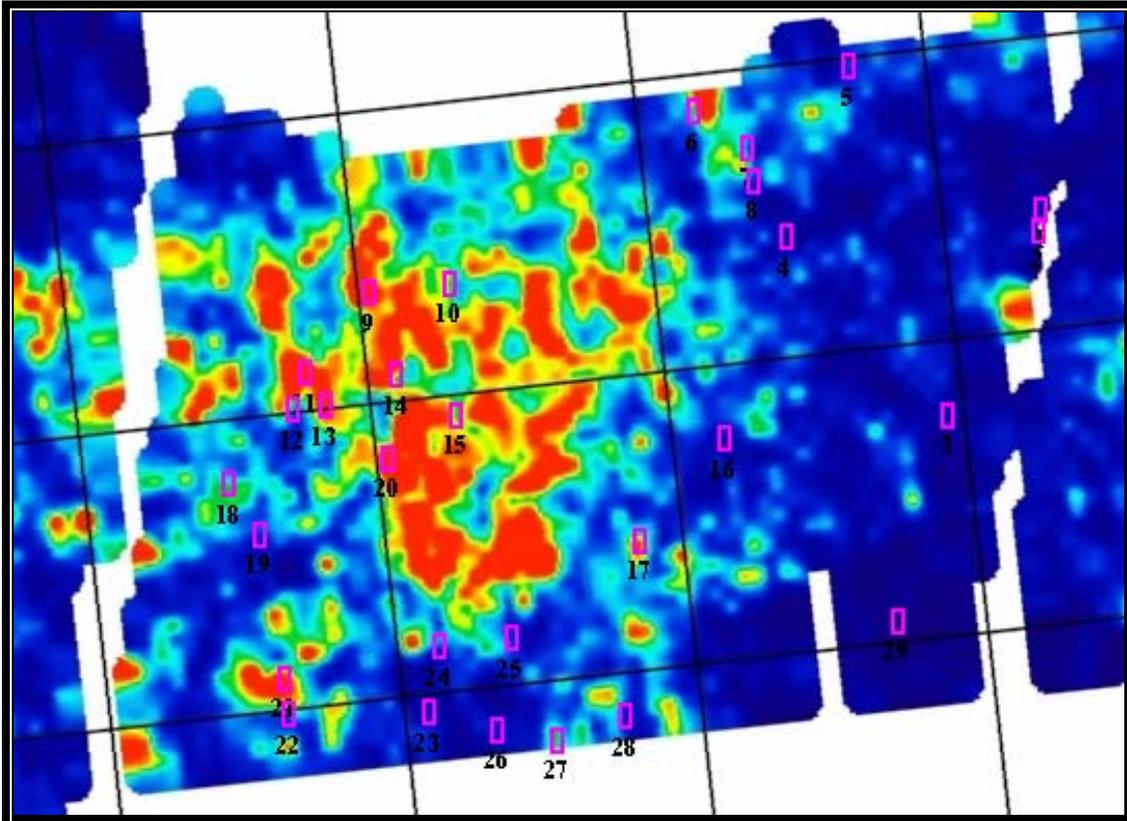


Figure 49. Tombstones Superimposed on Goodman’s and Schneider’s Plan of GPR Anomalies, Freetown Cemetery (Tombstones are shown as numbered magenta rectangles and are not to scale).

The LAMAR Institute’s archaeological explorations helped to refine the boundaries of the Freetown Cemetery. Its dimensions are now more accurately defined, based in large part on negative archaeological evidence on targeted GPR anomalies and/or surface rock piles. Because of the extremely rocky terrain, however, accidental discoveries of unknown burials remains a possibility in the general area and property managers should be aware of this remote potential.

Freetown Settlement

The archaeological reconnaissance of Freetown settlement resulted in a partial delineation of the town’s limits. The reconnaissance effort identified a very small sample of resources within an area measuring approximately 150 m Northwest-Southeast by 800 m Northeast-Southwest. The main body of the settlement is approximately 800 m

southwest of the Freetown Cemetery. The road surface between the settlement of Freetown and the cemetery contains a very light surface scatter of mid 19th century ceramics.

Surface inspection along the beach shoreline, both East and West of the Freetown Cemetery yielded very few artifacts associated with Freetown. A single, unglazed Colonoware sherd was discovered on the beach at UTM E753335, N2942948. A medium-sized ship's timber, which contained a series of small brass square nails was discovered on top of a limestone boulder deposit at UTM E753016, N2942877. This sole beam may represent a beam or plank of an 18th or 19th century shipwreck and more substantial portions of this wreck may be located nearby, or it may have floated in from a considerable distance. No trace of any ballast stones was observed from the beach reconnaissance, unless they were limestone ballast.

The archaeological reconnaissance of the Freetown settlement also produced some understanding of the internal composition and degree of integrity of its archaeological remains. The surface reconnaissance of the remainder of the town revealed many stone walls, stone concentrations (which may represent building ruins), and abundant 19th and early to mid 20th century artifacts. The settlement appears to be concentrated north of the coast road and south of the east-west well boring path (visible on a 2005 aerial photograph). The east-west extent of the settlement was not determined and the north-south boundaries require additional study before the site limits can be firmly established. An intensive archaeological survey of the Freetown settlement is recommended.

The LAMAR Institute's brief reconnaissance investigations at the Freetown settlement do provide some basis for discussion of this archaeological site and its significance. Ruins, artifacts and subsurface features indicate that this is a substantial site capable of revealing important aspects of early Grand Bahama Island history. Clearly more archaeological and historical research is needed at Freetown if the site or various portions of it is to be properly managed, developed and interpreted to the public.

The immediate research task that we recommend is an intensive archaeological survey of the entire Freetown settlement. Suggested standards and guidelines for an intensive archaeological survey may be found in various academic sources. The State of Georgia survey standards, which could serve as an example for the Freetown situation, are available online at http://georgia-archaeology.org/GCPA/standards_for_survey/.

Historical research should be an integral part of any future study of the Freetown settlement. This research should include a review of relevant materials at the Bahamas Archives in Nassau. It should also include the gathering of oral traditions and stories about Freetown from its surviving inhabitants.

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